

Vaughan Gething AM/AC

Assembly Member for Cardiff South & Penarth

Aelod Cynulliad dros Dde Caerdydd a Phenarth



Monthly Report

Improving our local transport infrastructure is one of my main priorities. It is an issue that features heavily in my assembly postbag. Over the last couple of months I have been contacted by a number of Penarth residents concerned about our rail network.

I know lots of people cycle over the barrage whilst even more make a frustrating journey by car out of Penarth each day. Many Penarth residents commute to work on the train. Recently published figures show a 78% increase between 1998 and 2016 in the number of passengers using Penarth train station. With commuter demand set to rise it is essential that the region has a high quality, high capacity passenger rail network.

I have recently been contacted by a number of Penarth residents over concerns of disruptions to rail services in the area. I'm sure that many of you will be aware that in October the Wales' Rail Franchise was taken over by Keolis Amey. I know that many of you will have experienced the delays and cancellations to services that occurred in the weeks following the handover. I understand and share the frustration that these delays have caused. In November residents raised with me their concerns following the announcement by Transport for Wales that there would be imminent changes to rail services in Penarth. The proposed changes would have seen a significant reduction in services and a replacement bus service. Thankfully the changes did not take place.

Residents have raised concerns with me over the shortage of rolling stock during this period. I understand that there were a number of trains out of ser

vice for repairs. There is also concern over the rolling stock replacement in order for our trains to meet European standards for disability access. Whilst Arriva and now Keolis-Amey operated the rail services they do not own the rolling stock. As no upgrades and or modifications had been made to bring the stock up to standard, there were concerns about who had responsibility for this.

I've recently met with constituents and Penarth Councillors to discuss their concerns. I have written to the Minister for Transport and Transport for Wales for reassurance that this level of disruption to rail services will not take place again. I have received responses from both the Minister and Transport for Wales apologising for the disruption to services during this period. I understand that there were problems caused by the shortage of rolling stock which they inherited from Arriva and exacerbated by the severe weather. I have been reassured that service levels are now back to normal and they do not anticipate any restrictions to services in the coming year.

There is some really positive news for Penarth, with numerous improvements and enhancements planned for the Penarth line over the next year. Stations will be refreshed and ticket vending machines will be installed at all stations. Older trains will be replaced by refurbished trains which will provide significant increases in capacity. There will also be a £40million investment in the current fleet, which will fund additional services and accessibility improvements.

Holocaust Memorial Day

The 25th January is Holocaust Memorial Day, the anniversary of the liberation of the former Nazi concentration and death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. Holocaust Memorial Day is an opportunity to reflect on the tragic events of the Holocaust, remember the victims and also pay tribute to the survivors. To mark the event I attended a memorial service at City Hall. The theme of this year's commemoration is 'Torn



Vaughan signing the Book of Commitment

from Home'. It was especially poignant hearing from Renate who left Prague at the age of 5 on the Kindertransport. She never saw her parents again. At the Senedd I signed the Holocaust Educational Trust (UK) Book of Commitment pledging my commitment to

Holocaust Memorial Day. We must continue to do all we can to challenge antisemitism, prejudice and bigotry in all its forms.

New Park & Ride Plans for St Mellons

I am delighted that St Mellons in my constituency will benefit from a new park & ride railway station. Since my election in 2011 I have campaigned and supported the case for a new



Vaughan with Ken Skates AM at the announcement.

railway station in the East of the constituency. A new railway station will improve access to jobs, reduce pollution and help to alleviate congestion. As part of

the wider South Wales Metro this will have a hugely positive impact on the constituency. It is not just about infrastructure; it is about people and the

opportunities, services and facilities available to them.

New Train Station at Loudoun Square

I joined Buteown Councillor Saeed Ebbrahim along with Transport for Wales in Butetown to talk about the future of public transport and in particular the Metro. We spoke specifically about the new Loudoun Square station that is planned as part of the South Wales Metro. We have been assured that the community will be consulted on these plans within the next year.

I Heart Unions Week

This week is I Heart Unions Week, an opportunity to reflect on the enormous contribution of trade unionists to all of us. I am proud to have been a trade union member for more than half my life and a former GMB shop steward. I am pleased to support the campaign.

Time to Talk About Mental Health

Thursday 7th February was Time to Talk about mental health day. It is a great opportunity to say that we that we should be talking about mental health every day. It's a chance for everyone to be more open about mental health - to talk, to listen, to change lives. On this theme I also

attended an event at the Pierhead showcasing the success that Build Sound Minds is having in improving young people's emotional wellbeing. As part



Speaking at the Build Sound Minds event.

of the Build Sound Minds campaign, the Blues Programme has run in schools across Cardiff and is making a significant difference to pupils emotional wellbeing.