



## Chair's Report

**Thank you to everyone who has worked hard this year to support the sustainability of Dawlish and its inhabitants in making changes that will make a difference to healthier lifestyles, and reduce our environmental impact over the longer term.**

**Events organised throughout the past year have been as follows:**

### **Dawlish Transition Sustainable Travel and Tourism Forum 2018**

Carolyn Ballard, Chairperson, Dawlish Transition welcomed everyone to the Forum, explaining that it was a follow up to our first Sustainable Travel and Tourism Forum in 2012, that had brought together key stakeholders to find a solution to the creation of a safe route for the Exe Estuary Trail into Dawlish Town Centre. Dawlish has excellent travel links with its coastal railway line, bus services, and cycling and walking routes, offering visitors and residents the opportunity to leave their cars at home and make better use of public transport. This in turn would ensure better protection for our environment, with improved air quality (less particulates from diesel engines), lower levels of global warming (due to less carbon dioxide emissions from petrol cars) and less dependency on oil which is gradually running out.

**Cllr. Phil Bullivant**, Portfolio holder for Recreation and Leisure, Teignbridge District Council made an introductory speech explaining how important it is for us to work together to protect our beautiful coastline, countryside and coastal towns, and how our visitors are so important to the economy of the area. The ability to explore using sustainable travel methods is an area that will continue to be important now and in the future.

**John Burch**, Deputy Director of Operations, Confederation of Passenger Transport gave a wide ranging and interesting talk about the Confederation's breadth of operations in representing the bus and coach industry. The Greener Journeys survey has shown that travelling by bus contributes to improved air quality, and multi operator ticketing schemes such as Plus Bus, that links rail and bus service are well received. Bio gas buses are being introduced in low emission cleaner air zones of larger cities.

The chance for Dawlish and Dawlish Warren to gain Coach Friendly Status is of interest to tourism providers. The ongoing issue of attracting coach drivers to stay longer in the Town and therefore to bring greater benefit to the Dawlish trading economy was discussed, as coach parking is further away from the Town Centre at Sandy Lane. Due to the geography of Dawlish this is difficult to solve: a park and ride scheme or promotions offered to firms, for their individual drivers to make use of, may provide a solution.

There is concern that Community Transport drivers within the 'Permit Sector', outside the remit of CPT, are under scrutiny, requiring a Driver Certificate of Professional Competence; with associated 35 hours of training required within a 5 year period. This is important for health and safety reasons but is costly for not for profit organisations such as Dawlish Community Transport with its volunteer drivers.

**Paul Clark**, Operations Manager, Stagecoach South West, explained how the Hopper routes, 'hop on hop off', enabling passengers to visit the area's attractions, started in Torbay- Route 2 takes passengers from Exeter to Newton Abbot via Dawlish and Dawlish Warren; how the Stage coach bus app enables passengers to track their bus journey; how Stagecoach is developing its late evening network linking hotels, restaurants and bars with a £3.40 ticket when train services have stopped. Buses are wifi enabled and enable passengers to message, listen to music, surf the net, and watch films on their devices; very different from making the same journey by car.

Exeter Bus Station is due to be updated with improved facilities by Winter 2020, linked to a new Leisure Centre. It was recognised that the development is very much needed and improved facilities for drivers are also important. South Street will take on some route stops while this is happening.

The possibility of providing a quicker service linking town centres and Exeter key stops such as the RDE Hospital at peak times is felt to be important for residents. The development of more bus priority lanes in urban areas is also considered to be important to improve bus journey times during congestion.

**Lewis Ward**, Regional Development and Programme Manager, Great Western Railway reported on latest developments and plans for its future, with faster and more reliable services such as the bi mode Intercity Express trains running from London to Penzance. Local passengers would be able to catch these trains at St. David's Station, Exeter and to take advantage of increased numbers of seats at peak times. Other improvements include free wifi on all GWR trains, investment to upgrade the South West sleeper service and the scoping of the reinstatement of the Exeter to Okehampton line as a secondary route to develop the resilience of the line in the face of storms such as in 2014.

Questions raised focused on the need for improved links between bus and train services through rover ticketing and the need for improvements at Dawlish Station with disabled , family and elderly, and cyclist access to and from the down line.

**Graeme Smith**, Coastal Officer, Teignbridge District Council took us through the history of our coastal Railway line and the effects of storms and rough seas throughout its history. He explained the plans to develop a coastal transport system and how Network Rail are being approached to allow a temporary pontoon to be put in place each Summer to allow for passenger ferries to stop at Dawlish and link the Town to neighbouring coastal resorts such as Teignmouth , Torquay and further along. This was recognised as important for the Dawlish economy and for tourism.

The Dawlish Heritage Trail, funded as part of the Coastal Communities grant for Destination Dawlish is part of his responsibility and he will be looking to work with local Community groups to seek to ensure that this is put in place during the coming year. There will be various stops giving historical information starting from a waiting room at the Station, some points will feature technological access to information in an innovative way. The Trail will provide focal interest for visitors and locals alike.

**Roger North**, Cycle and Walkway Engineer, Devon County Council outlined the plans for the route through Dawlish Town Centre and on to Teignmouth, following the original Sustrans plan for the route. A further bid will be made to the Coastal Communities Fund to enable its development. The need for more

cycle parking close to shops and eateries on either side of the Lawn was highlighted. There are plans for a new bridge taking the cycle route over the Brook and back towards the Strand at the lower end of the Lawn to facilitate travel around Dawlish and to encourage cyclists to stop in Dawlish Town Centre.

A Vote of thanks to all speakers was given by from Dawlish Transition Chairperson, Carolyn Ballard. This was followed by a delicious selection of gluten free refreshments made by Kay's Cakes.

Thanks go to Andrew Turpin for liaising with and inviting most of our expert speakers. Although the event was not as well attended as we would have liked due to other events local and National, it was certainly a real success in bringing those interested in Sustainable transport and tourism together and promoting the idea of leaving the car at home.

At the same time, Sue Brader and Angie Weatherhead braved the inclement weather to promote the Dawlish Walking Festival at the Cyclist event organised by Teign Estuary Transition:

In 2018, Dawlish Transition took over the organisation and management of the Dawlish Walking Festival. The festival had been run by Sustrans in 2016 and 2017 as part of a wider 'Destination Dawlish' project. Dawlish Transition was ideally placed to take the festival forward, with its focus on encouraging local residents to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle to protect Dawlish and its environment for the future. The festival in 2018 built on previous arrangements and sought to increase further links with local community organisations and groups.

With the continued generous sponsorship of Scott Richards Solicitors and the efforts of volunteer walk leaders, the majority of walks in the festival programme were free. This was in direct contrast to the charges made by many other walking festivals and was felt to be key to encouraging people to participate. The 2018 programme included a variety of walks suitable for all abilities and many different interests, and featured several new walks. These included walks on architecture, past and present places of worship, photography, 'Walk the Bounds', a beach clean with First Dawlish Scouts and a community litter pick in the Dawlish Countryside Park with Trefoil Guild.

The 2018 Dawlish Walking Festival ran over 10 days and 668 people (adults and children) took part in the walks. The festival was a day shorter than in 2017, did not include a bank holiday weekend, but still attracted more walkers than in 2017 (668 compared to 650).

Following on from the success of the 2018 Dawlish Walking Festival, we have just approached Scott Richards to see if they would be willing to sponsor for another year. The provisional dates are April 27 to May 5/6 2019.

Our thanks go to Sue Brader for taking responsibility for the Festival organisation. Angie Weatherhead, for all her hard work, above and beyond the call of duty.

It is recommended that in 2019, the work in organising and supporting the running of the Walking Festival is shared with other Transition members.

Community links:

Dawlish Against Plastic: Sue Brader has also been proactive in ensuring that Dawlish Transition is linking as a community ally of Dawlish Against Plastic. Sue is a member of their working group and Transition members have helped with the monthly beach cleans  
Another link has been fostered through an information giving talk to the Rotary Club and also through continued membership of the Dawlish Neighbourhood Plan group throughout the year in order to promote sustainable solutions for the future of Dawlish.