

BT4C Report: Passenger Survey carried out at Chepstow Station on the 18th August 2008. Compiled by Jim Jenkins.

Introduction.

The survey was carried out at Chepstow Station with the permission of Arriva TW. The BT4C Team were assisted by volunteers from STAG and the Chepstow Rotary Club.

It a year since the last survey was carried out on Monday 6th August 2007. The total numbers of passengers recorded arriving and departing from Chepstow this year was 480 compared with 444 last time.

Changes.

- Since December 2007 Arriva TW services have extended their service to Cheltenham Spa instead of Gloucester. This is much more convenient for those wishing to travel to Cheltenham and provides more service connections to the Midlands. The improvement has received little publicity but we expect that it will have attracted more passengers in that direction.
- Since December 2006 FGW have removed train connections at Severn Tunnel Junction. This has severely worsened train services between Chepstow and Bristol and to the Portsmouth line. FGW have told us that despite their cuts that numbers using the service to Bristol have increased.
- For our survey this year we set out to discover which station people were heading for and where they had come from when they returned.
- Another welcome improvement at Chepstow is the recent opening of the Booking Office. This has been open a few weeks and Tony now opens up at 6am until mid afternoon on weekdays and on Saturday mornings. He provides much needed and timely advice to help passengers decide the best way to proceed on journeys to varied destinations.

Survey.

The survey is in two parts:

- A footfall survey recording the numbers of people joining and alighting from each train.
- An hour by hour assessment of where people were going to or arriving from. We did quite well establishing where people were going but we had great difficulty coping with sudden influxes of passengers, anxious to get home and not wanting to be bothered with questions!
The information we received from 94% of outgoing passengers was good and we decided to use this to draw our conclusions as to where people travel to and from Chepstow. This is a reasonable assumption since the great majority of travellers will be making return journeys to or from the town.

Footfall Results.

The total numbers of passengers recorded arriving and departing from Chepstow this year was 480 compared with 444 last year an increase of 8% a slight increase in the trend of about 6-7% shown in previous years. A continuing upward trend in passenger numbers despite the worsened service to Bristol.

Once more the figures confirm that Chepstow station is patronised well throughout the day and doesn't have the pronounced unidirectional pattern of a typically commuter stations.

Most journeys (68%). to and from Chepstow are in the Cardiff direction. Only a third (32%) are towards Cheltenham.

The number of freight movements during the day was up from 10 to 16.

Chepstow Passenger Survey.

These conclusions are based on information obtained from 94% of departing passengers. The other 6% either refused to say or could not be asked. The information obtained from passengers arriving at the station was too little to be regarded as representative. Passengers arrived from a few stations not mentioned as destinations these were: Kemble, Penarth, Pontypridd, Swansea, Neath and Llanelli.

In general 85% of journeys are to destinations within a 30 mile radius of Chepstow, extending to Cheltenham Spa.

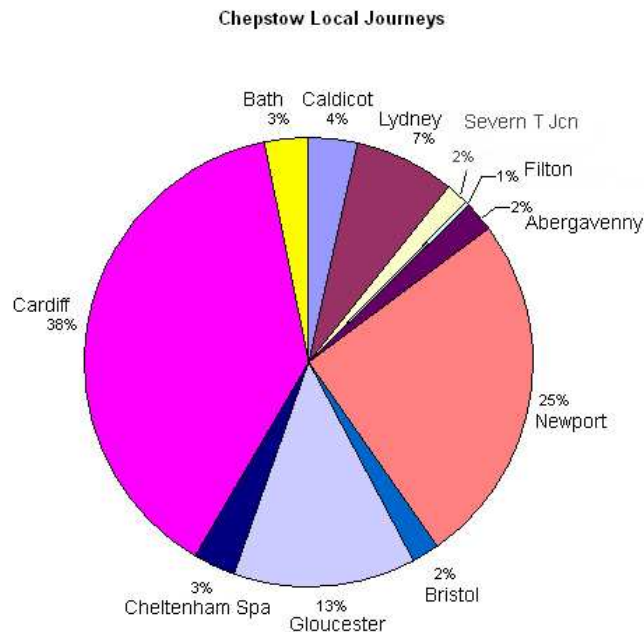
The other 15% of passengers were travelling to destinations widely distributed around the country including:- Southampton, Swindon, Reading, Bracknell, Birmingham, Tamworth, Watford, Crewe, Wrexham, Wigan, Macclesfield, Skegness, Scarborough, and Newcastle, About a quarter of this 15% were going to London (Paddington).

79% of passengers were embarking on journeys that didn't involve changing trains and 21% were out setting with the prospect of changing once or more.

Examining the local journeys (less than 30 miles for this exercise) is interesting.. It is not surprising that Cardiff, our capital city, is the most popular destination. A third of all journeys from Chepstow are to Cardiff.

The number of people using the train for Bristol is lower than expected accounting for only 2% of local journeys. This is inconsistent with Andrew Griffith's (FGW) claim that journeys from Chepstow to Bristol have increased since FGW took over the Cardiff- Portsmouth franchise in December 2006. One has to wonder where FGW get their information!

Percentage of Train Journeys in a 30 mile radius from Chepstow.



Map to Show the Destinations of Train Passengers from Chepstow on the 18th August 2008.



Comments on the Survey Results.

The results have provided a useful number of facts which should help us in our campaigns.

We would like to thank all the passengers who willingly helped us and to those who indicated their support for our efforts to get better train services.

Ticket sales information held by Arriva TW was deemed to be “commercially sensitive” and could not be passed to us.

The direct approach has the advantage of not being corrupted by the present fare structures which often encourages people to buy more than one ticket for a single journey

This Passenger Survey has given us a much clearer understanding of where people are using the train for their journeys. It shows where people are going and where they are not!

- It is not surprising that few people are choosing to go by train to Bristol our nearest city, since FGW cut out their connections at STJ. **It was a surprise that only 4 people did so in a whole day!**
This illustrates the detrimental impact of increasing journey times through lengthening the waiting time at STJunction..

- We knew that Cardiff was a popular destination and the survey showed that the city accounted for a third of all journeys to/from Chepstow. Very few people travel to stations on the Maesteg line beyond Cardiff.
- With present services twice as many people travel to the west from Chepstow compared to the east.
- Another surprise was the wide distribution of destinations around the UK accounted for by 15% of travellers. This is indicative of the type of travellers using Chepstow. We did not establish whether people were residents or visitors but it reinforces our belief that Chepstow deserves to be served directly by the Arriva CrossCountry services and that local services should be integrated and connect with other inter city links.
- Cheltenham Spa was the destination for 3%. Few people are yet aware of these direct services. More would use the service if it was promoted.
- The car park was full before 9.00am. If the station is to continue to attract off-peak travellers it needs a larger car park at the station.

Better Trains for Chepstow Campaign. www.bettertrains4chepstow.org

Better Trains 4 Chepstow
Passenger Number Survey (Date: 18 August 2008)

Schedule			Actual		S/N	From	To	Number		ROLLING STOCK & Comments	
Hr	Up Min	Dn Min						Hr	Min		
6		19	6	19	S	Cnm	Mtg	2	0	2X158	
6		44	6	44	S	Wos	Cdf	5	2	2X170	
6	49		6	50	S	Cdf	Cnm	7	2	2X158	
7		28	7	30	S	Bhm	Cdf	24	1	3X170	
7	49		8	14	S	Cdf	Cnm	14	14	2X150	
8	14				N	Cdf	Not			2X170	
8		27	8	28	S	Cnm	Mtg	30	4	2X158	
9	14				N	Cdf	Not				
9		27	9	32	S	Cnm	Mtg	25	5	2X150	
9		47			N	Not	Cdf				
9	49		9	49	S	Mtg	Cnm	5	6	2X158	
10	14		10	15	N	Cdf	Not			2X170	
10		47	10	48	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
10	49		10	49	S	Mtg	Cnm	14	5	2X158	
11	14		11	15	N	Cdf	Not				
11		27	11	27	S	Cnm	Mtg	30	7	2X158	
11		47	11	47	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
12	14		12	16	N	Cdf	Not			3X170	
12		27	12	27	S	Cnm	Mtg	15	5	2X158	
12		47	12	48	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
12	49		12	50	S	Mtg	Cnm	3	11	2X158	
13	14		13	15	N	Cdf	Not			3X170	
13		47	13	51	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
13	50		13	54	S	Mtg	Cnm	16	13	2X158	
14	14		14	17	N	Cdf	Not			2X170	
14		27	14	27	S	Cnm	Mtg	7	1	2X153	
14		47	14	49	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
15	14		15	14	N	Cdf	Not			3X170	
15		27	15	35	S	Cnm	Mtg	7	11	2X158	
15		47			N	Not	Cdf				
15	49		15	49	S	Mtg	Cnm	3	22	2X158	
16	14		16	14	N	Cdf	Not			3X170	
16		47	16	52	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
16	50		16	54	S	Mtg	Cnm	3	19	2X158	
17	14		17	18	N	Cdf	Not			2X170	
17		27	17	27	S	Cnm	Mtg	14	12	2X158	
17		49	17	50	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
17	49		17	49	S	Mtg	Cnm	5	32	2X153	
18	14		18	14	N	Cdf	Not			3X170	
18		27			S	Cnm	Mtg	4	12	2X158	
18	49		18	56	S	Mtg	Cnm	3	26	2X158	
18		56	19	04	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
19	14		19	17	N	Cdf	Bhm			3X170	
19		27	19	30	S	Cnm	Mtg	1	2	2X153	
19		49	20	00	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
20	35		21	00	N	Cdf	Not			3X170	
20		27	20	30	S	Cnm	Mtg	2	10	2X158	
20		50	20	53	N	Not	Cdf			3X170	
20	52		21	10	S	Mtg	Cnm	3	6	2X158+2X158	
21	19		21	21	N	Cdf	Bhm			3X170	
21	51		21	51	S	Mtg	Cnm	0	3	2X158	
22		27	22	27	S	Cnm	Cdf	1	4	2X158	
23		27	22	40	S	Cnm	Cdf	1	1	2X158	
00	08				S	Mtg	Gtr			BUS	
								JOIN	ALIGHT	Travel East	Travel West
TOTAL Number of Passengers								244	236	153	327
								480		480	

