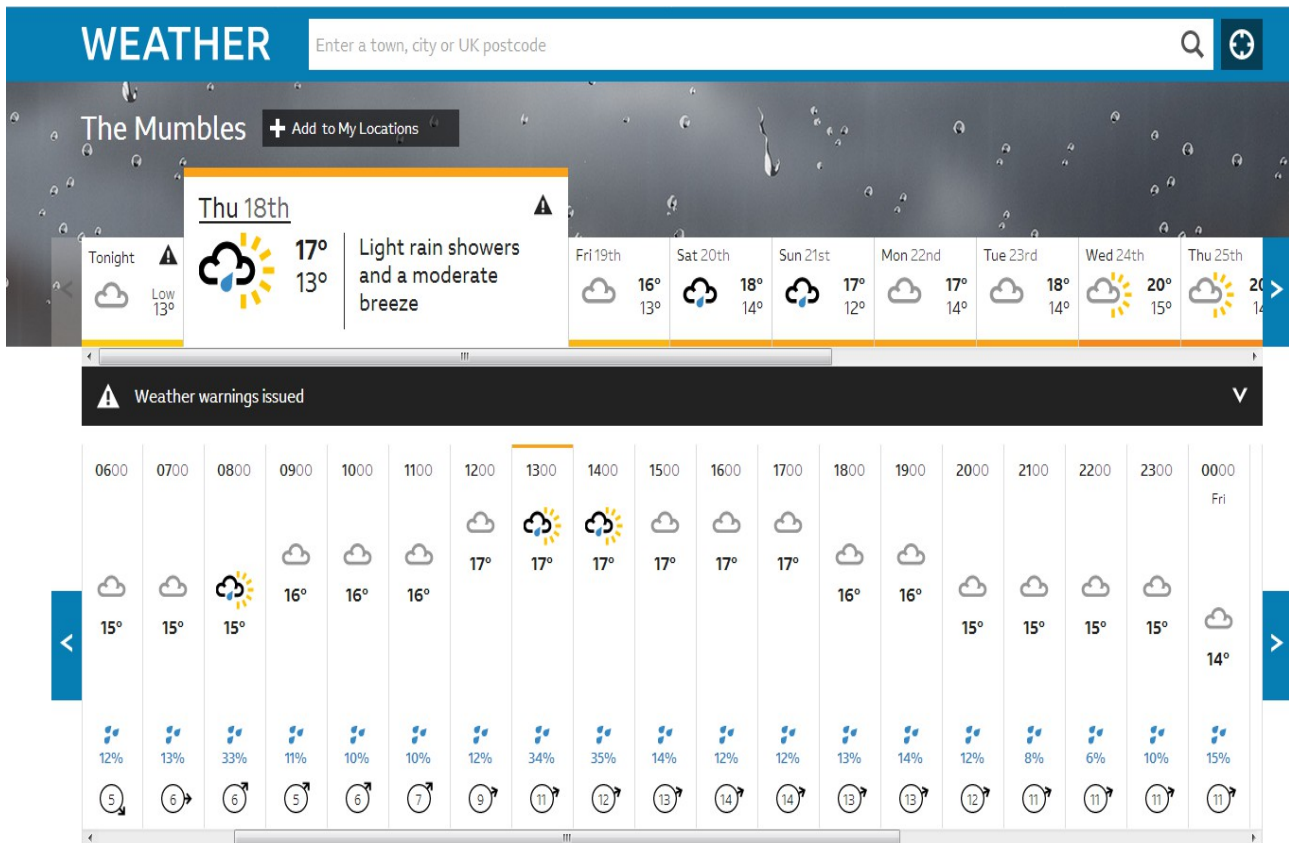


Please take note of the forecast for today!! You might be advised to anticipate a little wetness.



An early 8.30 start this morning; a lot to do and see today! Our bus for today, the X10 will take us to Swansea bus station, and our Day in Mumbles. Good job you remembered the bus now starts once more from Custom House Street, and very handy bus stop it is too!



Raj; phone in hand seems rather jumpy. Others waiting with him seemingly unaware unaware of his concern; bar one - me!

Here's the X10 and in an orderly fashion we start to board.

Raj hangs back at the rear of the group.

"Morning Raj, all well I hope"?

"Fingers crossed this time Mario he replies as his left foot lands on the first step up into the bus, so far so good".

Having taken a count to check all are here, I too board and take a seat. As it happens, I am next to Raj.



The bus pulls away.

Raj's phones rings.

I hold my breath as Raj slowly puts it to his ear.

A muted voice; ominous message perhaps?

A few seconds pass.

Then relief floods over his face like the Severn Bore racing up the Bristol channel.

Two or three heads turn towards us as a triumphant 'Yesssssss' is directed to the phone.

"Child minder turned up then Raj? Those listening-in do not get the full portent of my simple question. Well done, so you are now finally with us on a bus pass trip". A relieved Raj settles back in his seat, his expression that of a man pardoned just as the noose was tightening around his neck. I explain to Kim Bell. On the last three occasions that Raj has tried to come on a trip, his daughter has contacted him on that same mobile, just as he is in the act of boarding the bus. It happened once as I handed him his train ticket to Bath, and a phone call asking him to come home as her child minder hasn't turned up. By the way Kim, I hope you have the mints ready".

With a smile on her face she turns to husband Stephen, who produces a large bag from his rucksack. yes, they are Werther's Original Cream Toffees!



"Did you know mentions Stephen that they are named after a little village of Werther where they were first created"

"OK where is Werther then, asks Reg" - he does like to ask questions.

Unfazed, back comes Stephen, "It's a town in the district of Gütersloh in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia in ...

"Germany" adds Stan!

Not to be left out. Kim tells Stan that they were first advertised on British television in the early 1990's and featured an older man

giving a Werther's butterscotch to his grandson. The grandfather spoke with an American accent but was latter localised, thankfully, to Received Pronunciation

The bag is quickly passed along the bus. Sounds of conversation die away from the front to the rear as the Werthers get to work on sticking your teeth together.



Moving smoothly, we travel along what this road, can you recognise it, heading for Cardiff Bay. This makes a nice change as the last bus pass trips all seemed to head westwards out of Cardiff.



Beside which, we get to pass close to the Wales Millennium Centre, stopping there to collect a few of our group who find it easier to join us from the Bay.



Of course many of you know the building by its nickname. What do you think that might be?
All on board and off we go again.

Passing Techniquet; which is having an extensive remodelling



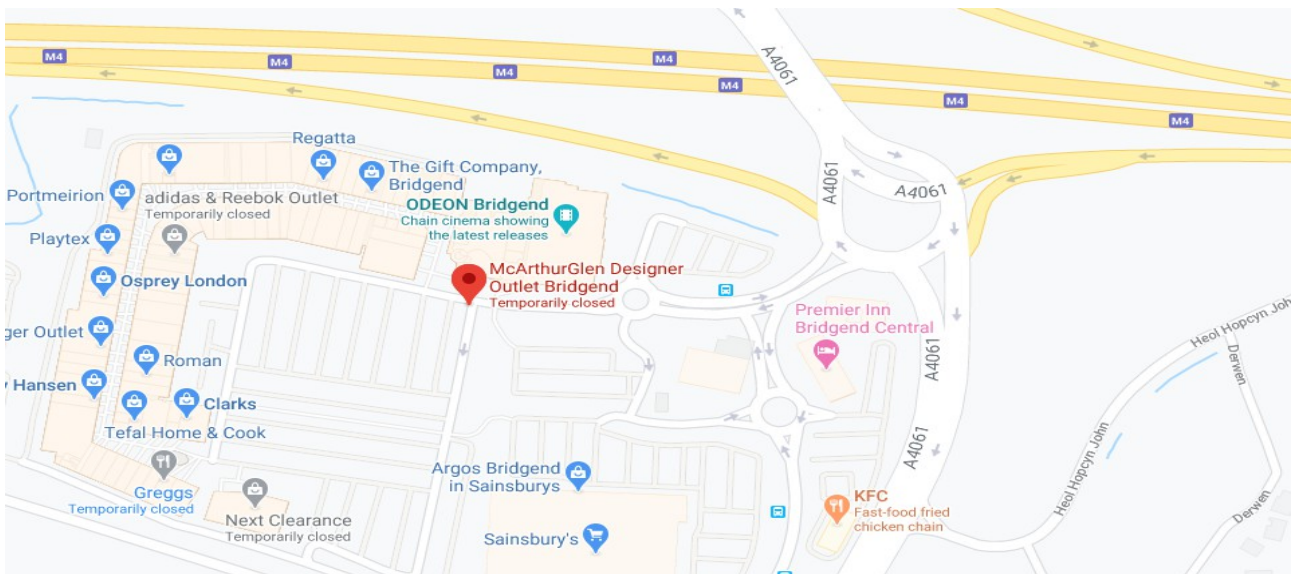
we join the Cardiff Bay Link Road to head north,



and then join the M4 going westward.



There are two stops before Swansea, the Bridgend Designer Outlet. We will not have time for doing any there shopping today. "Shame says Gwen, I do like a bit of retail therapy".



Eventually we leave the M4 and take the A483



which leads of course to the an outpost of that vast emporium of a business named after a river. I wonder if in aeons to come people will think it strange to name a river after an online store?



After Gwen payed homage by waving her credit card, we are soon on the outskirts of the city and just before turning into the bus station. look; we pass a former lunch venue.



Can you remember the name of this tower and the name of the pub in which we had our lunch?



The bus has arrived on time so it's now 9.50.



Time for coffee! However we will not be stopping at Greggs inside the bus station, but move briskly through the Quadrant shopping centre

until we come to what looks like, and in fact turns out to be, a troupe of belly-dancers busy

entertaining the passers-by,; most of whom didn't then pass by!



One of our group; no name will be revealed, offered to stand in for the centre manager in the middle of this group photograph.



Moving on, with some of the men a little slow to get moving, we leave the centre and walk down Union Street



.....and then turn left into Portland Street towards our coffee stop; the iconic Kardomah Cafe.



