

Preparations well underway for refit of Torpoint Ferry

Monday 16 March in preparation for being towed to Falmouth. Weather permitting the ferry will be towed to A&P Falmouth's dry dock facilities on Friday 20 March.

LYNHER is one of three ferries operated by Tamar Crossings which provide a vital 24 hour chain ferry service in all weathers for up to 8,000 vehicles a day, including emergency vehicles, and around 1,500 pedestrians each day, 365 days a year.



Achieving this requires a significant planned maintenance programme. While the majority of maintenance is carried out while the vessels are afloat or during off peak periods while an individual vessel is not on scheduled service, some maintenance activities have to be carried out during refits in dry dock conditions.

"The ferries can only be towed in relatively calm sea states and low wind conditions" explained David List, General Manager for Tamar Crossings. **"This means that adverse weather can, and has in the past, significantly impacted on the actual dates of the towing operations in both directions."**

"We are obviously hopeful that the tow will be able to go ahead on schedule. If, however, the date has to be changed at short notice we will provide information through our website, social media and other means. We will also publish regular updates on the progress of the refit on our website."

This week work was carried out to replace the main chains on the ferry which needs to be done ahead of the refit. Ferry chains need to be replaced every three years



and, where possible, we try and match these works with the refit programme to avoid damaging newly recoated deck surfaces where the chain has to be handled.

Changing main chains is a major engineering exercise - each chain is over 650 metres long and weighs 23 tonnes - and involves the ferry itself being used to pick up the old chain and feed in

the new chain. Part of the process is 'pulling slack' - getting the right amount of slack and tension into the chain so that it will match operational requirements. The whole process typically takes 2-3 days depending on tide timings.

LYNHER's refit is part of the ongoing cycle of refits of the ferries, with the scale and scope of works due to be carried out similar to the recent refits of PLYM and TAMAR. This means the ferry should be back in service in early to mid-May.

The refits also give Lloyds Register and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) the opportunity to carry out their five yearly dry-docked inspections which are aimed at ensuring that the ferries are in a good condition, and that they are safe to operate.

From 16 March until the LYNHER returns to service, the normal one ferry overnight half hourly service will run between 9.30pm and 6.45 am (on the hour and at 30 minutes past the hour from Torpoint, and at 15 and 45 minutes past the hour from Devonport). A two-ferry service will run every fifteen minutes during the rest of the day, with a ferry departing from both Devonport and Torpoint on the hour and at 15, 30 and 45 minutes past the hour.



