

## **TORPOINT FERRY REFIT**

Torpoint ferry PLYM is scheduled to be taken out of service on Saturday, 29 April in preparation for being towed to Falmouth for her five yearly refit. Weather permitting the ferry will be towed to A&P's dry dock facilities on 5 May.

The PLYM is one of three chain ferries operated by Tamar Crossings which provide a vital 24-hour ferry service in all weathers for up to 8,000 vehicles and 1,500 pedestrians each day, 365 days a year, between Devonport and Torpoint.

Achieving this requires a significant planned maintenance programme. Whilst 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.

Each of the three ferries undergoes a full refit every five years. PLYM is the first of the ferries to undergo a refit during this five-year cycle. TAMAR's next refit is scheduled to take place in April 2024, and LYNHER's in April 2025.

The refit duration is approximately 6 weeks and this means that the ferry should be back in service in mid-June.

The refits also give Lloyds Register and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) the opportunity to carry out their 5-yearly dry docked inspections which are aimed at ensuring that the ferries are in a good material condition, and that they are safe to operate.

As these ferries can only be towed in relatively calm sea states, the weather can have a significant impact on the programme. In the event of date changes due to issues outside our control, we will provide information through our website and social media channels. We will also be providing regular updates on the progress of the refit on our website.

### **PLYM Refit FAQ's**

#### **Why do the ferries have to undergo a refit?**

The ferries provide a vital 24-hour service in all weathers for up to 8,000 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 when an individual vessel is not on scheduled service, some maintenance activities have to be carried out during refits in dry dock conditions. The refits are essential to maximise the life of the ferries and ensure that we continue to provide a safe and reliable service.

#### **How often do refits take place?**

Each of the three ferries undergoes a full refit every five years. PLYM is the first of the ferries to undergo a refit during this five-year cycle. TAMAR's next refit is scheduled to take place in April 2024, and LYNHER's in April 2025.

### **What work is carried out during a refit?**

PLYM's refit will include a number of key elements, including

- A mandatory dry docking to allow a survey of the underwater hull to ensure the material state is sufficient to safely last a further five years. This is a statutory requirement and satisfactory completion is required to allow the issue of a Chain Ferry Certificate by the regulatory authority, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.
- Replacing systems and equipment that are becoming obsolete or have reached end of life, including chainwheel drive couplings and bearings together with propulsion motor electronic drive components.
- Repainting the vessel both above and below the waterline.

### **Who is carrying out the refit?**

The refit is being carried out by A&P at their dry dock facilities in Falmouth.

### **How long does the refit take?**

The refit usually takes about six weeks to complete. We will be working closely with A&P to ensure that the works are completed on schedule and the ferry is back in service as quickly as possible. Some of the work is weather dependent and this can affect the overall duration – an allowance has been made for this.

### **Why do the ferries have to be sent away for the refit?**

While the majority of maintenance is carried out while the vessels are afloat or during off-peak periods when an individual vessel is not on scheduled service, some maintenance activities and inspections have to be carried out during refits in dry dock conditions.

### **How long does it take for the ferry to travel to Falmouth?**

The ferry has to be towed 44 nautical miles from Torpoint to Falmouth. This journey usually takes around six hours to complete.

### **Why does the weather affect the date of the refit ?**

The ferries can only be towed in relatively calm sea states and low wind conditions, so adverse weather can impact on the actual dates of the towing operations in both directions.

### **How will you provide a service during the refit?**

During the refit period the service will be provided by the two remaining ferries, one leaving each side of the river every 15 minutes (on the hour and 15, 30 and 45 minutes past the hour), and the normal single ferry, half hourly, night service from 2200 to 06.30.

### **Will the ferry go back into service as soon as it returns to Torpoint?**

Once the ferry has returned to Torpoint, the towing gear needs to be removed and the ferry put back on its chains and prepared for service, which takes a few days to complete.