



13 May 2013

Free crossing alternatives during tunnels closure announced

Following the recent announcement that the historic Grade II-listed Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels will close for refurbishment on 20 May 2013 for around 13 months, owners the Tyne & Wear Integrated Transport Authority (TWITA) have released further details on the alternative transport options being put in place for tunnel users.

During the closure, a free, timetabled shuttle bus service for pedestrians and cyclists will operate between the tunnel entrances from 6am and 8pm, 7 days a week.

The bus will have capacity for 24 passengers and 16 bikes and will run every half an hour. Pick-up / drop-off points will be located at Tyne Street, Jarrow and at Tyne View Terrace, Howdon.

Due to restrictions imposed by the vehicle, the use of wheelchairs on the shuttle bus cannot easily be accommodated. People affected by this are advised to contact tunnelvision@bradleyomahoney.co.uk or call 07821 537 106 to discuss ways in which TWITA could assist them.

Space for pushchairs, scooters, children's tricycles, bike trailers etc is very limited. Therefore, it may not be possible to travel with these or other bulky items at busy times. No dogs except guide dogs will be allowed on the shuttle bus.

More...

A night service will also be provided by tunnel operators TT2, assisting TWITA, for night shift workers who pre-register.

TWITA project director Paul Fenwick said: "By providing a free, timetabled shuttle bus service across the river we hope to maintain the loyalty of the pedestrians and cyclists who are using the tunnels in increasing numbers.

"The Transport Authority wants to encourage more cycling and walking through the tunnels once they re-open so it is important to maintain the pedestrian and cyclist link across the river while the tunnels are closed for refurbishment.

"It was also important to ensure that shift workers who use the tunnels to get to and from work are not disadvantaged by the closure.

"Although financial constraints mean we could not justify running the shuttle bus 24/7, we have come up with a scheme to help shift workers which I hope meets their needs. I would ask them to be patient while the Night Service beds in and to allow more time for their journeys.

"We are asking shift workers needing the service to pre-register because there is limited capacity on the Night Service and we would not want anyone just turning up and taking a seat which could prevent someone else from getting to work on time."

The complimentary transport and overall tunnels refurbishment is being funded from the Tyne Tunnels revenue account so there will be no financial burden on council taxpayers.

Ends

Notes to editors

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More....

To see a copy of the shuttle bus timetable please visit:

<http://www.tynepedestrianandcyclisttunnels.co.uk/bus-timetable/>

Night shift workers can register for the Night Service by downloading a form from

<http://www.tynepedestrianandcyclisttunnels.co.uk/night-service/>

To see a virtual model of the tunnels post-refurbishment go to:

<http://www.tynepedestrianandcyclisttunnels.co.uk/tour-the-tunnels/>