

## Laser and Magic Roundabout Consultation Report

This note summarises the results of our consultation with users of the Laser and Magic Roundabout services, which was carried out in August 2009 to inform changes that were introduced on 25 October 2009. A total of 2,500 questionnaires were distributed on buses in Sunderland, South Shields and Houghton-le-Spring, providing a good account of customers' views.

The key findings were as follows:

- **64%** of respondents were 'strongly in favour' or 'in favour' of our plans to separate Magic Roundabout services 33 and 42 to improve reliability. Only **2%** were 'against' or 'strongly against' this idea.
- Nearly three quarters of consultees said that we should use bigger buses on service 42 to provide more seats and alleviate overcrowding.
- **43%** of respondents thought that service 42 should operate direct via Tunstall Village Road and Silksworth Terrace to the old terminus at Church View. **28%** said that we should reverse the previous circular route, whilst **14%** said that we should keep small vehicles to avoid making any changes to the service.
- **56%** of consultees said that they would travel more if the frequency of the Laser service was increased to every ten minutes. The remaining **44%** said that this would not affect their travel patterns.
- **52%** of respondents were 'strongly in favour' or 'in favour' of our plans to re-route Laser buses between Hetton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring, where journeys that run to/from Low Moorsley operate the short route via the A182, whilst those that start/finish in Houghton-le-Spring serve Hetton Downs. Only **5%** were against this.
- **73%** of consultees were 'strongly in favour' or 'in favour' of our plan to divert Laser service 35 via Silksworth, replacing the Magic Roundabout service 33. **15%** were 'against' or 'strongly against' this idea, whilst **8%** had 'no view'.

Several other comments were made in the consultation, although not in response to the specific questions. There were **three** particular themes in the points made:

- Concerns about the extended journey times for people who use Laser service 35 to travel to Sunderland from places south of East Herrington, including Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton-le-Spring and Newbottle.
- Requests for earlier morning buses from Low Moorsley to Sunderland.
- Concerns about access to Bede College, which is situated on Durham Road in Sunderland, as customers will have a longer walk to/from service 35.

In view of these comments, we will closely monitor the reliability of the revised services to minimise journey times. We have also added new early morning journeys to Prince Bishops service 20, which offers quicker journeys between Houghton-le-Spring and Sunderland.