

Services 19 and 318 – Consultation Report

In January 2012 we ran an online survey to consult customers about possible improvements to services 19 and 318. We received nearly **100** responses, which provided a good sample of views. The key findings were as follows:

- **83%** of respondents were 'in favour' or 'strongly in favour' of our plan to extend Route 19 from Northumberland Park to Cramlington. Only **6%** were 'against' or 'strongly against' this.
- **72%** of people were 'in favour' or 'strongly in favour' of our plan to further extend some peak-time service 19 journeys to Bedlington and Ashington, replacing the 318. **11%** were 'against' or 'strongly against' this.
- **84%** of respondents thought that a special fare between Holywell, Seaton Delaval and Northumberland Park would be a popular way to improve links with the Tyne & Wear Metro. **16%** thought that this would not be popular.
- **26%** of people said that they would use the 19 more frequently if we better match bus times with work finish times at Cobalt, even if this means that buses run every 15 minutes rather than every ten minutes from Cobalt to Northumberland Park between 1600 and 1800. **40%** said that this would not affect their travel patterns. **12%** would use the 19 less frequently.
- **90%** of respondents were 'in favour' or 'strongly in favour' of our plan to serve North Shields ferry terminal in both directions when a new road opens between the terminal and Dock Road. Only **2%** were 'against' or 'strongly against' this.

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

- Requests for newer buses.
- Concerns about the short connection times between buses and ferries in North Shields.

We will be making the following changes to services 19 and 318 from **Sunday 25 March 2012**:

- Route 19 will extend from Northumberland Park to Cramlington with financial support from Cobalt. Buses will run hourly on Monday to Saturday daytimes via Holywell, Seaton Delaval, East Cramlington, High Pit, Cramlington town centre and Horton Drive.
- Service 318 will be withdrawn. Customers travelling between Cobalt and Cramlington will be able to use the 19 to make their journey. However, the 318 will not be replaced between Cramlington and Ashington because there are not enough people travelling on this section of route to sustain the service. The significant extra funding required to serve this area cannot be justified at present and we are unable to run the service without financial support.

- Special fares will be available between Seaton Delaval, Holywell and Northumberland Park to improve links with the Tyne & Wear Metro and to reduce the cost of travelling to major places in Newcastle and North Tyneside.
- Buses will run every 15 minutes (rather than every ten minutes) between Northumberland Park and Cobalt Business Park during the morning and afternoon peak periods. However, the bus times will better match work/start finish times.

The half-hourly Monday to Saturday daytime service between North Shields and Northumberland Park will continue to run as now, but with some minor timetable changes. Evening and Sunday journeys, which are run by another bus company, will be unchanged.

In the meantime, we will continue to work with property developers in North Shields to ensure that the new road between Dock Road and the ferry terminal is open as soon as possible. This will allow us to serve the terminal in both directions and improve connection times between buses and ferries.