

NOTE FOR EDITORS: THE CONTENTS OF THIS RELEASE ARE EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 MONDAY, MARCH 23RD

TEES VALLEY GETS CONNECTED WITH NEW TRAVEL SERVICE

A new internet information service providing a one stop shop for all travel services in the Tees Valley has gone 'live' today (**Monday, March 23rd**).

Under the 'Connect Tees Valley' banner, the portal—originally a concept of Transport for Tees Valley, the new City Region transport board which is part of the Tees Valley Unlimited partnership— involves all organisations involved in providing transport services in the area.

It provides up-to-date information on bus, rail, road, walking and cycling, with links to taxi and community transport services. There is also a journey planner and there will be live traffic updates showing the current position on the trunk road network.

The website www.connectteesvalley.com has been developed by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit and consultants Steer Davies Gleave and has been part-funded by the Local Government Association. It has been launched today to coincide with an update of the dedicated cycling information website www.doitbycycle.com operated by the Sustrans organisation.

Says the current Chair of Transport for Tees Valley, Councillor David Lyonette, the Cabinet Member of Transport with Darlington Borough Council "This initiative, which builds on the work we have already done in the borough on the Local Motion project, demonstrates what can be achieved with all organisations involved in transport provision working together.

"Transport for Tees Valley will be involved in the further development of the website and we will be encouraging people to give us their views and suggestions, via an on-line comments form."

Explains Jonathan Spruce, Senior Assistant Director of the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit "We would like to thank all those organisations who worked with us on the development of the site which we see as the first step in the development of a travel information service which meets the needs of local people and hopefully encourages more of them to make full use of all forms of transport.

"We do want as much feedback as possible because it is important that the information is useful and relevant to the travelling public."

Adds Councillor Peter Jackson, Cabinet Member for Transport with Hartlepool Borough Council “At a time of recession, it is vital that we continue to provide good quality transport links to all parts of the Tees Valley so that people can go about their everyday lives. This website will provide people with high quality information on the options that they have for travelling.”

Councillor Charles Rooney, Executive Member for Transport with Middlesbrough Council comments “This website is an exciting development in providing high quality information to people living and working in the Tees Valley, as well as the large number of visitors that we have. It is the first stage of a wider programme of increasing travel information across the Tees Valley.”

Says Councillor Mary Lanigan, Cabinet Member for Transport at Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council “In many parts of our Borough, access to transport is fundamental to people going about their normal business. This new website will provide people information on transport options from their home, allowing people to be better connected to employment, health and leisure services.”

Explains Councillor Robert Cook, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council “Transport is a fundamental part of the Tees Valley’s plans for regeneration, and this is a very good example of how we can all work together to produce a cost effective solution to providing people with better information on travel choice. It will help people work out quickly whether they can take up employment opportunities as well as giving businesses that rely on the transport network up-to-date information.”

NOTE FOR EDITORS: Please find attached screenshot from the new website. For further information please contact Peter Dodson, telephone 07753 910536, or Jonathan Spruce, telephone 01642 264840.