

PRESS RELEASE

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Sandbanks Ferry Company meets with local MPs to discuss plans to return chain ferry to service

In light of local concerns over the suspension of the chain ferry service which links Sandbanks to Shell Bay in Studland, the operators of the Sandbanks Ferry recently met with local MPs to discuss the efforts being undertaken to bring the service back into operation as quickly as possible.

Richard Drax, Member of Parliament for South Dorset, and Robert Syms, Member of Parliament for Poole, visited the Sandbanks Ferry Company senior management team in the ferry office at Shell Bay, Studland. During the meeting, the MPs were presented with a detailed briefing of the current repair situation and the measures the ferry company has undertaken to investigate alternative options for customers while the ferry is out of service.

Richard Drax MP commented: "There is little doubt in my mind that this breakdown could not have been foreseen or prevented. I understand from the company that the driveshaft, made with specialist steel, is designed to last the lifetime of the ferry. I fully appreciate that both the ferry operator and local people and businesses are suffering at what is the busiest time of the year. Following my meeting, I am reassured that the company is doing all it reasonably can to get the ferry back in service, which is expected in October."

Robert Syms MP added: "During the meeting with the Sandbanks Ferry Company, we discussed potential measures to offer an alternative car or foot passenger service while the ferry is under repair. I am satisfied that the ferry company has investigated all potential avenues and that at present, due to sea conditions and landing infrastructure, there are no viable alternatives which enable the company to operate a safe replacement vessel in the short term."

Mike Kean, managing director of the Sandbanks Ferry Company, said: "We are very grateful that Richard Drax and Robert Syms were able to meet with us. We were pleased to provide both Members of Parliament with assurances that we are doing everything in our power to return the ferry service as soon as possible.

"We wholly appreciate the frustrations and difficulties the ferry service suspension is causing to the local community, and so we are very grateful for the understanding and patience of our customers while we work through this issue. We will continue to work in close harmony with local businesses, residents and organisations as we focus on bringing the ferry service back into operation at the earliest possible opportunity."

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