

# Our autism friendly guide to using the Shields Ferry



# Shields Ferry

## A guide for travellers with autism, and parents/carers of people with autism

We recognise that travelling can be stressful. This is especially the case for people with autism.

We want to make sure that our customers feel as comfortable as possible when they use the Shields Ferry. We have teamed up with National Autistic Society to create a guide that can also be used as a tool to help you prepare you, a child or the person you are travelling with for their journey on the Shields Ferry.

## BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

The Shields Ferry travels across the River Tyne, between North Shields and South Shields.

The ferry service operates a regular 30-minute frequency from both sides of the river. This means that it usually leaves South Shields at 15 minutes and 45 minutes past every hour during the day. It leaves North Shields at on the hour and 30 minutes past the hour.

You can see the full timetable on our website here: [Timetable | nexus.org.uk](https://www.nexus.org.uk/timetables/shields-ferry)

It takes about seven minutes to cross the river on the ferry.

We have two ferries, called Pride of the Tyne and Spirit of the Tyne.



They are very similar but not identical. Most days there will only be one ferry in service.

# AT THE FERRY LANDING

The ferry landing looks like this at North Shields



It looks like this at South Shields



There is a waiting room at each landing but no other facilities.



There may be other people waiting to board the ferry too, including people with bicycles or dogs.

## TICKETS

You can buy a ticket when you get on the ferry, from the ferry crew. You will need to pay for this with a bank card, cash is not accepted.

It costs **£2.30** for a single journey – that is from one side to the other.

A return journey, where you can go back to the place you started, at any time that day, costs **£3.70**.

Up to three children aged 11 and under can travel for free on the Shields Ferry when accompanied by a fare-paying adult.

If you have a Tyne and Wear Concessionary Travel Pass – which is a pass for people aged 66 and over, or disabled people - a single journey on the ferry is **60p**. This ticket is valid 9.30am Monday-Friday and all day at weekends and public holidays. You can travel free on the Shields Ferry if you have a Metro Gold Card.

If you become a regular visitor on the Shields Ferry, you can save money on your ticket by using a Pop Pay AS You Go card.

Find out more about that here: [PAYG on Ferry | nexus.org.uk](https://www.nexus.org.uk/PAYG-on-Ferry)



## GETTING ON THE FERRY

When the ferry pulls in, the barrier will rise.

The ferry crew will open the doors to the ferry and lower the ramp. It will look this.

Let the customers off the ferry first, before you get on.



# ON THE FERRY

Buy your ticket from the ferry crew, as detailed above.

There are 3 ferry crew on every journey



You can ask them for assistance if you need help with anything, and you must follow their instructions at all times.

Once on the ferry, you can sit on any empty seat.

There are no seat reservations.

There are seats on a lower and upper deck.

If you would like better views of the river, you might like to sit on the upper deck. It might feel breezy or cold there, depending on the weather.



If you would prefer more shelter, you can sit in the lower deck.



You might hear different noises on the ferry, such as engine noises, noises from other vessels on the river, other people talking, or you might hear announcements from the crew over the tannoy.

You might also be able to feel the motion of the ferry in the water.

## GETTING OFF THE FERRY

As the ferry pulls into the landing, you can make your way to the exit. Make sure you have all your belongings with you. There might be a queue of people waiting to get off.

Once the ramp is down, you can make your way off the ferry and off the ferry landing.

If you get off in South Shields, the town centre is a five-minute walk away.

In North Shields, the town centre is ten minutes away, and involves walking up a steep bank.



## ASKING FOR HELP

There are ferry crew on every ferry journey.

You can ask them for assistance any time on your journey.



## DISRUPTIONS

We know it can be difficult when journeys are delayed or disrupted. We want the ferry to run on time, all the time, but sometimes things happen that mean it can't.

In cases of very bad weather, including very high winds or thick fog, the ferry cannot operate for safety reasons.

In these situations, you might be able to use a local bus or Metro to get to where you need to go.

If you use social media, follow us on Facebook or Instagram. We share details of all major disruptions here.



## USEFUL LINKS

These web pages might help you plan your journey and find out more about the Shields Ferry Safety and accessibility on the [Shields Ferry Safety and accessibility | nexus.org.uk](https://nexus.org.uk/shields-ferry-safety-and-accessibility) Information and history about the [Shields Ferry About Shields Ferry | nexus.org.uk](https://nexus.org.uk/shields-ferry-about-shields-ferry)

If you have any feedback, suggestions or concerns following a journey on the Shields Ferry, please contact our

**Customer Relations team** on **0191 20 20 747**

or email [customerrelations@nexus.org.uk](mailto:customerrelations@nexus.org.uk)

This guide was created in partnership with The National Autistic Society. The National Autistic Society is here to transform lives, change attitudes and create a society that works for autistic people.