



LINKING WALES & THE SOUTH WEST
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SEVERN LINK NETS ITS FIRST 'FLYING CAT'

WORK IS UNDERWAY TO PAINT AND REFIT THE FIRST MODERN BRISTOL CHANNEL FERRY

Press Release

Tuesday 15 December 2009

Ferry operator **Severn Link**, who in November announced plans to launch the very first regular modern ferry service across the Bristol Channel, connecting Swansea and Ilfracombe, has taken delivery of the first ferry in its fleet.

The 360 passenger, 34 knot Kvaerner 'FlyingCat' passenger catamaran has been purchased from Isle of Wight operator WightLink for a seven figure sum and is the first delivery in a two-vessel deal due to be completed in the New Year. The ferry, which previously operated as the 'FastCat Shanklin' under Wightlink ownership, has now been lifted from the water at Portchester in Portsmouth and is currently undergoing a full exterior repaint, rebranding and overhaul.

Once the repaint is complete, Severn Link will move the as yet unnamed ferry to its new base in Swansea, where a full interior refit will commence prior to the vessel going into service in March 2010. The entire refurbishment is expected to cost in the region of £100,000, with all suppliers for the interior refit being sourced wherever possible from Swansea and South Wales.

Geoff Metcalf, Managing Director of Severn Link, said, "Completion of the purchase by Severn Link of the 'FastCat Shanklin' from Wightlink Ferries brings closer to fruition the company's plans to run ferry services in the Bristol Channel commencing in Spring 2010. This excellent modern vessel will make a crossing from Swansea to Ilfracombe fun, fast and affordable."

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Notes to Editors: Severn Link is currently in the process of obtaining the necessary approvals and weather permits from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, which will all be in place prior to the new vessel being transferred from Portsmouth to Swansea.

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