

Zero emission commuter ferry service to link Belfast and County Down town by 2024

Commuters between the County Down town of Bangor and Belfast will soon be able to take a fast ferry to get to work after an operator confirmed it will commence a new zero-emission service by 2024.

Condor Ferries, which is headquartered in Guernsey, said it will operate the “world’s most advanced zero-emission commuter ferry” between the seaside town and the city.

The pilot service will run from Bangor Marina to Belfast’s Titanic Quarter with an expected journey time of around 30 minute.

The vessels will be powered by the Artemis eFoiler – technology developed by Belfast-based Artemis Technologies – which will enable them to fly above the water. As a result, they will use up 90% less energy than conventional ferries and create a more comfortable ride.

Due to come into operation in 2024, the route will act as a pilot scheme for fast passenger ferries currently under development by the Belfast Maritime Consortium, which Condor Ferries has just joined.

“We are always looking to the future, and this includes exploring ways of reducing our carbon emissions,” John Napton, Condor Ferries’ CEO, said. “As an experienced commercial ferry company, we are therefore happy to join the consortium and help to develop this concept into an operational mode of transport.”

One of the founding members of the consortium is Dr Iain

Percy, CEO and founder of Artemis Technologies.

“Belfast will get a glimpse of the future when the pilot service commences operation, but it is just the beginning,” he said. “We are already receiving interest from around the globe as governments and cities across the world seek sustainable transport alternatives that balance the requirement for people to continue to move around with the need to reduce carbon emissions.”

Condor Ferries operates a number of commercial ferry routes between the Channel Islands, mainland UK and France. The company was acquired in 2020 by the Columbia Threadneedle European Sustainable Infrastructure Fund.

The Belfast Maritime Consortium is a 14-member syndicate which has brought together a range of industry, academia and public bodies, including, Artemis Technologies, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour, Belfast Met, Catalyst, Condor Ferries, Creative Composites, Invest Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Advanced Composites Engineering (NIACE), Power NI, Queen’s University Belfast, Spirit AeroSystems, and Ulster University.