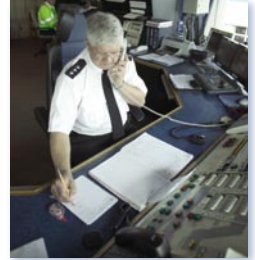




Customer Service Standards

Your guide to our service to you



In partnership with the







Managing Director's introduction



I hope you will find this document both informative and useful and that it will give you a better understanding of the service and standards you can expect from Le Crossing Company Limited.

Le Crossing manages and operates the Dartford-Thurrock Crossing on behalf of the Highways Agency.

The Crossing comprises two northbound tunnels and the southbound Queen Elizabeth II Bridge spanning the River Thames joining Essex with Kent. This is an integral part of the M25 orbital motorway network East of London as well as a key part of the national road network.

In line with the Highways Agency's Corporate Plan 'Customers First', this booklet provides customer related information and covers such areas as:

- how we maintain and ensure safety here at the Crossing
- how we provide for any special needs
- the benefits of the Electronic Toll Collection system, DART-Tag
- how to become a DART-Tag customer
- how you can provide feedback about our service

Your views and opinions matter to us and are essential in helping us to continually improve the level of service we are able to provide to you on behalf of the Highways Agency.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Peter Goddin'.

Peter Goddin
Managing Director



Our Service Commitment to you

We are committed to providing a high quality service to our customers and in doing so will:

- be courteous, helpful and professional treating all of our customers with dignity and respect
- ensure, as far as we are able, that you have a safe, reliable and informed journey through the Crossing
- take reasonable steps to meet any special needs
- respond promptly to all enquiries about our service
- provide you with regularly updated information
- handle DART-Tag accounts accurately and promptly
- treat any information you provide to us in strict confidence, within the law
- ask you for your comments and suggestions
- strive to continuously improve the service we provide to you.



Ensuring Safety

In managing one of the country's most high profile and busiest parts of the national road network on behalf of the Highways Agency, the safety of our customers, our staff and the infrastructure is of paramount importance to us. The following are therefore examples of systems and procedures we have in place to ensure this:

- an ongoing schedule of maintenance to the bridge and tunnel structures
- regular monitoring of safety equipment
- regular update and refresher training for our staff
- automatic fire detection system in the tunnels
- a leaflet for all customers specifically on safe driving in tunnels*
- a Public Address system to communicate with customers in the tunnels or at the Plazas
- CCTV's monitoring throughout the Crossing
- emergency telephones located at 50 metre intervals throughout both tunnels, and at 120 metre intervals on lane one of the QEII bridge, with a direct link to our Control Room
- a direct link from our Control Room to the Emergency Services which bypasses the 999 number
- a system of receiving advanced notice of severe weather conditions in order to 'pre-treat' the carriageway surface and approach roads to prevent freezing occurring
- all vehicles carrying Dangerous Goods are checked vigorously prior to being escorted through the tunnels separately from normal traffic
- abnormal loads and, in exceptional circumstances certain types of other vehicle, are escorted through the tunnel separately in the interests of safety to other road users
- immediate response for vehicle recovery plus removal of debris and speed of repair to damage or defects
- regular security check patrols across all of our site
- contingency plans which are regularly reviewed, tested and updated together with the Emergency Services, the Highways Agency and our staff.

* If you would like a copy of this leaflet please let us know (see our contact details at the back of this booklet).

Our Standards of Service

Telephone calls

In order to provide a quicker response, particularly during busy periods, we have introduced a clear and easy to use automated telephone service. This aims to:

- enable your call to be answered within five rings
- direct your call to the appropriate department
- provide you with up-to-date information on any traffic problems at the Crossing

Any complaints or queries received by telephone, if not immediately resolved at source, will be logged and responded to within ten working days of receipt.

Written communication

If you write to us, we will respond back to you in writing and aim to provide you with a full reply within ten working days of receipt of your letter. However, where this is not possible, we will tell you why and when you can expect a full reply.

E-mail communication

If you e-mail us, we will respond back to you via e-mail and aim to respond to your query within ten working days, although a considerably shorter response time will invariably be achieved.

Privacy and confidentiality

Specifically relating to our DART-Tag customers, in handling your affairs we will:

- respect your privacy
- ensure security in dealing with your personal details
- deal with your account on a strictly confidential basis, within the law

Our Services to You

About you ... the Customer

We have a wide diversity of customers within the travelling public, all with differing needs but all with a common purpose – to be able to use the Crossing with ease, in safety, with a minimum of delay and free of hassle. In seeking to accommodate the needs of all Crossing users as far as we possibly can, we currently provide the following services:

Services:

Accessibility

Although our service does not require many customers visiting our offices, our premises are nevertheless accessible to all.

Acrophobic & Claustrophobic drivers

For those customers who have a fear of driving over the bridge or through the tunnels we offer the service of being driven in their own vehicle by one of our Traffic Officers. (Please note that there is a requirement to complete and sign an insurance disclaimer for this service.)

Cyclist transportation

Customers cannot cycle over the bridge or through the tunnels. However we do offer free transportation for individual cyclists, without prior notice, with a cycle rack fitted to a patrol vehicle, or by using a trailer for a number of cyclists travelling as a group.

We always endeavour to deal with cyclists promptly but this service is dependent on operational requirements at any particular time. Access to the pick-up points for cyclists are as follows:

Kent Cycle route from Junction 1a Northbound, adjacent to the Holiday Inn Express – past the Crossing Offices to the waiting area to the left of the Toll Plaza.

Essex Cycle track from Junction 31 Southbound, adjacent to the A282 main carriageway, to the Essex Point Control Building.

Also from London Road adjacent to the Ibis Hotel, up the slip road Northbound, to Essex Point Control Building.

Please note that this facility is only available to cyclists and there are NO facilities to transport or allow pedestrians to cross.

Disabled driver exemption

Under the conditions of The A282 Trunk Road (Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme) Order 2002, it is the vehicle that receives the exemption from the charging scheme, not the individual i.e. Blue Badge holder. To qualify your vehicle must be exempt from Road Fund Tax under Sections 18 or 19 of The Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994.

For each journey the Collector will carry out the necessary check of your tax disc on your behalf to assist in ensuring you have as smooth a journey as possible through the Crossing.

Information

We provide regularly updated information to all of our customers via our automated telephone service which gives details of particular traffic problems at the Crossing, together with information on any planned tunnel or bridge closures for maintenance works.

Our website also provides information on both the Crossing generally, including a section on Frequently Asked Questions, plus details of our DART-Tag service.

We also seek information and comments from our customers through surveys, meetings with various stakeholders e.g. the Road Haulage and Freight Transport Associations, plus we are looking for customers who would be willing to attend Customer Focus Groups with us. If you would be interested in attending one of these, please e-mail us at **forum@lecrossing.co.uk**

Our Premium Service – DART-Tag

Our DART-Tag service offers customers the ability to prepay at a discounted rate.



DART-Tag provides customers with a faster, easier and cheaper way through the Crossing. This facility is supplemented by a specialist support team who are dedicated to providing customer satisfaction in all aspects of Tag related issues.

As part of the DART-Tag service we offer regular statements and the facility to manage your Tag account via our web site below:

www.dartfordrivercrossing.co.uk/dart-tag

We regularly invite our DART-Tag customers to participate in surveys and provide us with feedback which we consider a valuable asset in our research for continuous improvement in this service.

If you are interested in finding out more about this service, or would like to become a DART-Tag customer, please pick up an application form from one of our booths next time you travel through the Crossing, or you can visit our web site and register on-line or simply give us a call.



How you can help us

You can help us by:

- driving safely and considerately at all times
- being considerate to our staff, treating them with respect and dignity
- having the correct money ready to pay the toll charge due
- ensuring that you comply with all safety signs and requests from our staff
- having your account details ready when calling to top-up your DART-Tag account
- giving us your comments and suggestions for improvements to the service we provide by either letter or e-mail, or by responding to any surveys or attending any forum meetings we set up



How to contact us

By telephone

Our telephone lines are open from 8.30am to 5pm on Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours, you are able to access information on the latest traffic situation plus scheduled bridge/tunnel closures only.

Please call **01322 221603**.

Please note that for DART-Tag enquiries, you should call **01322 280200**.

In writing

You can write to us at Le Crossing Company Limited, South Orbital Way, Dartford, Kent DA1 5PR.

Via e-mail

For any general enquires, please e-mail us at:

admin@lecrossing.co.uk

If you have any ideas or suggestions on how we can improve the service we provide to you, please e-mail us at:

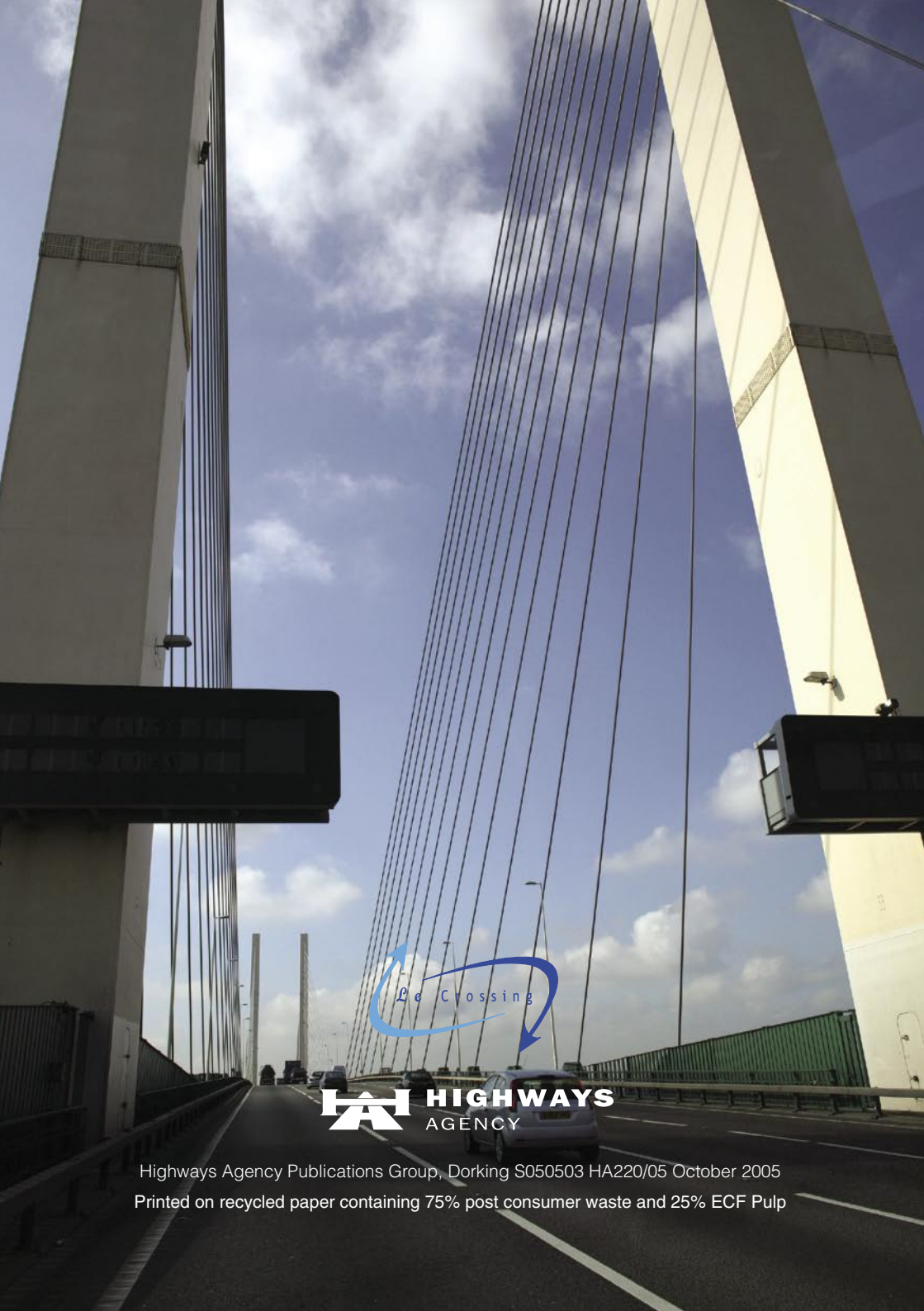
forum@lecrossing.co.uk

If you have specific queries or questions relating to our DART-Tag service, please e-mail us at:

dart-tag@dartfordrivercrossing.co.uk

Our website

To gain further information about both the Dartford-Thurrock Crossing and the Highways Agency, including responses to 'Frequently Asked Questions', please visit our website at **www.highways.gov.uk/dartford**



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