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Norfolk wind farm boat starts transfers to Greater Gabbard

A boat specially designed by a Norfolk company to cope with North Sea conditions will start ferrying workers to offshore wind farms from Monday.



The Ginny Louise can achieve 27 knots and is equipped with a moon pool for camera surveys

The Ginny Louise, operated by Docking-based Tidal Transit, will transfer workers from Lowestoft to the Greater Gabbard site off the Suffolk coast.

The £1.5m vessel can cope with waves of up to 7ft (2m) - conditions which would force similar boats to stay in port.

The £300,000 five-month deal has created three new jobs at the firm.

Tidal Transit's commercial director Leo Hambro said the boat was designed for stability to deal with rough conditions and to make it safer when people are transferring from the boat to the wind turbine platform.

"This boat has been designed to make it as safe as possible in conditions which are beyond the capability of the majority of vessel in the sector now," said Mr Hambro.

The Ginny Louise, which can reach 27 knots and has a range of up to 150 miles offshore, has a crew of four and can berth 12 passengers.

It features a kitchen, bathroom, internet and entertainment facilities allowing wind farm engineers to live and work on-site over several days.

The vessel, developed with Spanish boat builders Mercurio Plastics, is the first in a fleet of 10 planned by the west Norfolk company.



The Ginny Louise has a range of up to 150 miles offshore

Mr Hambro said: "We moved from being a small day charter fishing business to being a real player within the offshore service sector.

"It's a booming area and there's a distinct shortage of capable boats to maintain, service and carry technicians to and from the wind turbines.

"There hasn't been much development of technology, so if we can start from scratch with a purpose built offshore wind support vessel that solves a lot of the problems the utilities are facing, there's great potential for us to invest further."



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