

## Cruise Britain closes 2024 on a high note

Cruise Britain's annual winter event in London closed the association's year on a high note and was the perfect springboard to 2025. Charting the course for 2025 will be a new Steering Group (including many familiar faces) with incumbent Chair, Ian McQuade, confirmed for a second tenure.

Port and destination membership stands tall with over 40 ports and destinations represented, from new member Stornoway in Scotland's Outer Hebrides through all four UK home nations and the Crown dependencies of Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey (Channel Islands). The nationwide port community is joined by a range of vital service providers including ground handlers, shore excursion specialists, port agents, stevedores, car parking operators and key industry stakeholders.

The Steering Group of Mary Bond (Seatrade), Perry Dack (Solent Stevedores), Ian Diaper (Portsmouth Int. Port), Gary Hall (Belfast Harbour), Isla Haddow (Denholm Port Services), Rebekah Keeler (ABP Southampton), Kate O'Hara (Fowey Harbour) and James Stangroom (Bristol Port) begins a three-year term at the beginning of 2025 and will be joined by new cruise line representative, Kai Algar, Marine and Port Planning Manager, Fred Olsen Cruise Line. Continuing at the helm as Chair and with the support of the incoming Steering Group including Kay Greenway, Cruise Britain's Director, will be Ian McQuade (Portland Port).

November's sixth London event saw 120 attendees including 34 cruise executives from 20 cruise operators gather for a multi-faceted day including two very different trips on the River Thames, a speech by the Governor of The Tower of London and a Great British Pub Quiz designed to inform and educate. Cruise Britain gathers members together three times every year with spring sessions focussing on regulation, legislation and imminent challenges. Summer events take the association 'on the road' to a member port and on board a cruise ship; 2024 saw members travel to Belfast and onto TUI Cruises' Mein Schiff 3. In addition, virtual sessions look to inform and discuss using wide-ranging member knowledge.

Cruise Britain's support for its members has included in-person visits the length and breadth of the UK particularly to represent the views and economic importance of the shoreside cruise sector. Collaborative work with stakeholders has increased over the course of the year and includes cruise operators, CLIA UK & Ireland, CLIA Europe, UK Chamber of Shipping, VisitBritain, Government departments and the signing of an MOU with Cruise Ireland. Work with Cruise Ireland complements the new understanding with fellow European cruise associations which looks to address misconceptions and share best practice.

'2024 has been another successful year for Cruise Britain and its members', said Chair Ian McQuade. 'Our thanks must go to all the cruise lines that we've worked with and who are increasing their presence in Britain and British Isles waters; and also to all our generous sponsors for events across the year. Our membership is immensely supportive and this is reflected in the presence that the association is able to maintain. Our springboard to 2025 is looking on a firm footing and I look forward to next year'.