

2018 is another record year for Isle of Man cruise visits

The Isle of Man received its highest number of cruise visits ever in 2018 with 24 cruise ships carrying 8,391 passengers welcomed to the Island, along with 6,026 crew.

There was also a 20% increase from 2017 in cruise passengers participating in an organised shore excursion with a total of 4,493 visitors enjoying the many guided tours, heritage sites, world- renowned vintage transport, bespoke and artisan activities, along with local produce being sent onboard, as well as local entertainment.

Rob Callister MHK, Political Member for Visit Isle of Man, commented:

‘I would like to thank the Cruise Isle of Man team, the ‘cruise welcomers’, volunteers and the network of local businesses who have worked extremely hard this year to ensure that the Isle of Man’s cruise tourism enjoyed another successful year and for their help in enhancing the Island’s reputation as a high quality destination for cruise ships.

‘We already have 38 vessels booked in for 2019, with the first cruise ship on the 11th April and the final call on 3rd October, so we are also starting to extend the length of our cruise season. We are expecting 12,189 passengers and 7235 crew in total in 2019, so a significant increase on this year’s total which demonstrates the growing popularity and profile of the Isle of Man within the global cruise industry.

‘In addition, we already have 13 cruise ships booked for 2020.’

The Cruise Isle of Man team developed several new excursions for 2018 to enhance the wide range of tour experiences already available to cruise visitors although the year’s most popular attraction remained the Steam Railway and the most visited heritage site was Castle Rushen.

The growth in the number of cruise visitors and accompanying crew has provided many local businesses, such as specialist retailers and tour guides, with opportunities to sell their products

and services to a new market and significant volumes of locally produced food and drink were shipped out to visiting vessels.

In addition, a range of entertainment has been provided by local performers throughout the year for cruise visitors, both on-board and at the Sea Terminal.

Longer term, the prospects for attracting increased cruise business to the Isle of Man were boosted earlier this year when Tynwald supported in principle the creation of a 240-metres long deep water berth in Douglas harbour, costing £11m, as part of the Isle of Man Harbours strategy.

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