Cruise ship calls up 50% for Capital Cruising's Scottish ports

Cruise ship calls in 2023 for Forth Ports' Capital Cruising business on Scotland's east coast are set to jump by 50%, with around 150 (2022: 100) cruise ships, carrying an estimated 225,000 passengers, expected to visit Edinburgh, Fife and Dundee this year.

The cruise calendar in Scotland traditionally runs between April and October each year and the 2023 season kicks off on 11 April with the arrival of the Viking Venus into the deep anchorage near Newhaven with thousands of passengers visiting the attractions of Scotland's capital city.

Edinburgh is a globally popular destination and viewed by the cruise market as a "marquee" cruise destination with iconic attractions, events, heritage and culture. Most importantly the city is known for welcoming cruise lines and cruise passengers. The 150 cruise ships will sail directly into the Port of Leith, Rosyth and Dundee's cruise berth as well as anchorages in the River Forth for Newhaven and South Queensferry.

The 2023 Dundee season will see a bumper year for the city with 14 cruise calls booked, starting on 13 May with the arrival of the Ambition. In 2022, the port welcomed four cruise ships.

The 2022 cruise season saw the restart of the industry after lockdown during the global pandemic. The 2022 season welcomed over 100 cruise calls and 26 inaugural ship visits to Scotland with a further 62 ships visiting their London facilities, which will also see strong growth this year.

The Tallink Victoria 1 Cruise Ferry which is currently being provided by the Scottish Government as safe accommodation for displaced people from Ukraine, is the first cruise vessel to receive a shore power connection within the Imperial Dock in the Port of Leith. By switching to shore power, the vessel is now able to switch off all of its fossil fuel powered generators, and with Forth Ports' electricity being provided through non fossil fuel generation, this is a significant step forward on the journey to net zero for the port.

Commenting, Rob Mason, Head of Cruise for Forth Ports' Scottish operation, said: "It is brilliant to see the cruise industry return so strongly and continue to grow this year and we are extremely pleased that we have provided the Victoria 1 Cruise Ferry with shore power.

"Since the restart of the industry last year we have been working hard with the city, destination partners and the wider cruise industry to meet all of the industries challenges and deliver another success cruise season. We know that there are significant economic benefits to the country as hundreds of thousands of passengers visit our cities and we look forward to welcoming them this year."

In line with the cruise industry's commitment to sustainable tourism practices, significant work is being undertaken to ensure Edinburgh is recognised as a sustainability driven destination, with extensive destination development work also continuing to connect local providers with tour operators and cruise lines.

Recent success has been demonstrated with EZ Bike Tours located next to the port now providing to the Cruise lines environmentally friendly electric bike tours of the city as a shore excursion option. Forth Ports' commitment to reducing its own carbon footprint as well as that of its customers has already been demonstrated this year with the Port of Leith becoming the first large mainland commercial port in Scotland to provide a shore power connection which allows ships to switch off any diesel powered

generators or engines.