

Cruise Specialist Joins Port of Dover

A business development expert who has worked for one of the world's leading cruise lines has joined the Port of Dover in a drive to bring more ships to the UK and to showcase Kent and Dover as a top-cruise destination.



Sonia Limbrick joins the Port of Dover as Head of Business Development (Marine), whose cruise market attracts the likes of Celebrity Cruises, Azamara Club Cruises, Disney, Crystal Cruises, Saga, Fred.Olsen and AIDA.

Prior to joining the UK's second busiest cruise port, Sonia was with Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and was instrumental in putting its upmarket brand, Azamara Club Cruises, on the map in the UK and Ireland during her time as the brand's Business Development Manager.

It's this experience and insight into the high end, luxury marine travel market which she now aims to channel into the Port of Dover, promoting the very best of Dover and Kent to an international market.

"It's important to have an understanding of the expectations of cruise lines and their guests - what they are looking for in a port, what their guests expect when they arrive," she said. "I live just along the coast from Dover, I grew up in Canterbury, so I know what fantastic attractions Dover and the surrounding county of Kent have to offer to cruise guests.

"A large proportion of cruise guests come from US, Canada and Europe and for them, Dover is an iconic place to sail into with its castle and White Cliffs. Our aim is to build on that history. I want more cruise lines to not only come into the Port of Dover but also to stay longer on each visit. We can truly deliver destination immersion here in the garden of England."

Prior to moving to cruise, Sonia spent nearly 15 years working for Eurotunnel; during that time she held positions within operations, business development and as Eurotunnel's Brand Manager.

Barbara Buczek, the Port's Director of Corporate Development, said:

"Sonia's strong background in cruise sales and her success in growing Azamara's business in the UK will

give us a valuable insight into what the industry wants from us. Sonia will be focusing on strengthening Dover's relationship with cruise lines and other stakeholders within the travel industry."