

Dover Cruise and international maritime charity Stella Maris open new cruise crew lounge

Stella Maris, the Port of Dover, Carnival Cruise Line, the Merchant Navy Welfare Board and Bishop Paul Hendricks attended the launch of a new crew welfare lounge at the Port's Cruise Terminal 2. The Terminal is often used for turnaround cruises, so welcomes thousands of crew members every year.

The facility, which has been funded by Stella Maris, is the only one of its kind inside a cruise terminal. It has seating for around 25 people and is a quiet haven for crew to spend their breaks and speak to family uninterrupted. In addition to refreshments, there is also free Wi-Fi and entertainment including a TV, pool table and dartboard. Most importantly, port chaplains from Stella Maris will be available to give practical, pastoral and spiritual support.

Peter Wright, Head of Cruise at the Port of Dover said: "Port of Dover is recognised across the cruise industry for its exceptional customer service – we look after everyone, and none more so than the crew members who work so hard to provide memories to last a lifetime for our cruise lines and their guests.

"Thank you to Stella Maris for providing this wonderful lounge, giving the crew easy access to their own space that they can use for socialising, relaxing and connecting with their loved ones."

Tim Hill MBE, CEO and National Director of Stella Maris UK said: "The new crew welfare facility will be an oasis for cruise ship crew visiting Dover. It is a welcoming space where Stella Maris chaplains and volunteer ship visitors will be on hand to offer friendship and support whenever it is needed.

"Crew members spend months away from their families and deserve a place where they can rest and truly feel at home while they are in port. I am grateful to our chaplaincy team in Kent and the South of England, and to the Port of Dover, for working together to create this much needed facility."

Stella Maris is an international maritime charity supporting seafarers, fishers, and their families in the UK and around the world, and the largest ship-visiting network in the world. The opening included a ribbon cutting, and an official blessing from Bishop Paul Hendricks, Auxiliary Bishop for the Kent Area.