# TUI cruise vessel becomes largest ship ever to sail into Portsmouth harbour

Portsmouth harbour has been the backdrop for many spectacles, today (Friday 26 May) it was the turn of cruise line TUI, as their ship Mein Schiff 3 took the title of largest ship ever to sail into the city.

Measuring 293.3m in length and weighing 99,536 in gross tonnage TUI cruise ship Mein Schiff 3 takes the accolade of the largest ship to ever sail into Portsmouth harbour, demonstrating the growing capabilities of Portsmouth International Port to manage a wider range of ships.

With 2400 mainly German speaking passengers onboard, Mein Schiff 3 arrived in Portsmouth at 6.30am for guests to enjoy exploring the city's  world class attractions and also those further afield, highlighting the increasing draw of the city as a destination.

Mike Sellers Portsmouth International Port's director said: "We've seen many major milestones in our ambitions to grow the reputation of Portsmouth International Port and this TUI call marks another.

"The investment in extending our berth to accommodate larger vessels through to promoting the city's reputation as a destination has seen cruise activity grow year on year.

"We outlined in our Masterplan where we want to be in the future, with a focus on sustainable innovation and working with partners who share our vision. It's fantastic to see real evidence of our plans taking shape and with more positive news to share over the coming months shows Portsmouth's position as a leading marine and maritime city."

Investment in the port's infrastructure is part of an ambitious strategy to continue growth as a leading player in the maritime industry and one of the UK's most sustainable ports. A new pilotage service also launched earlier week, which means the port has a dedicated service to make sure pilots are able get on board ships and navigate vessels safely.

Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Portsmouth City Council's cabinet member responsible for the port said: "Today's arrival is hugely positive for the city and another step forward in Portsmouth's plans to become a world class destination for cruise.

"With the multi-million carbon neutral terminal extension due to open this summer means we're offering bespoke facilities for our visitors to the port and the wider city. As a council owned port its success has an impact on the contribution to essential services, so achievements like today's impressive cruise call has wide-ranging benefits for the whole city, with each visit estimated to bring £1.5m in the local economy."

Mein Schiff 3's arrival is known as a port of call visit where hundreds of passengers will be heading to excursions local and regionally. Shaping Portsmouth ambassadors were on the quayside to welcome passengers, with some of the team fluent in German and able to tell them what Portsmouth has to offer.

Andrew Williamson, Portsmouth International Port's passenger operations manager said: "We've been working hard over the last few years listening to the industry and creating facilities that are required to become a leading cruise port, which meets our focus on the small to medium sized, boutique, luxury, expedition market.

"Investing in our infrastructure has been essential and we're now in a position where we can

accommodate larger vessels in the bracket of 300m on our primary berth, in addition we can look after smaller vessels on multiple berths.

“Portsmouth lends itself effortlessly to the cruise market, from world-class attractions, to a major sheltered harbour close to the main shipping channels, making the city an appealing option for lines.

“Our highly anticipated terminal extension is due to open this summer and we’re excited for the profile this will bring. Our approach is to set the bar high for passengers from the start of their adventure.”

Portsmouth is expecting  75 cruise ship calls in 2023.