



Dart Harbour

Cruise Dartmouth

Expanding our cruise
business



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Background

Dart Harbour is a trust port – we do not have shareholders and we don't make a profit, instead all our income from running the port is re-invested back into the river. As part of our strategy, we have a number of important goals, in particular:

- To sustainably develop Dart Harbour to benefit the local community,
- To identify new opportunities to deliver value in support of our mission,
- To maintain the essential character of ... the bustling port of Dartmouth,
- To develop the business with larger vessels (e.g. cruise, superyacht) whilst avoiding negative impacts.

At present Dart Harbour takes around a dozen cruise ships per year. We can typically take vessels up to 180m, occasionally 200m with the right tidal conditions on the mainstream buoys in the town centre. This limits our market to small expedition and luxury ships, which are a good fit for Dartmouth, and an expanding sector of the market, but are still relatively niche. Most modern ships in the premium and luxury sector are too large for Dartmouth. Larger ships have the ability to bring significantly more income to the harbour and the town, and so we decided to look at options to enlarge our cruise facilities.

Conversations & Consultation

We want to find out what our stakeholders think of this plan before we implement it, so we plan to discuss it in a number of ways:

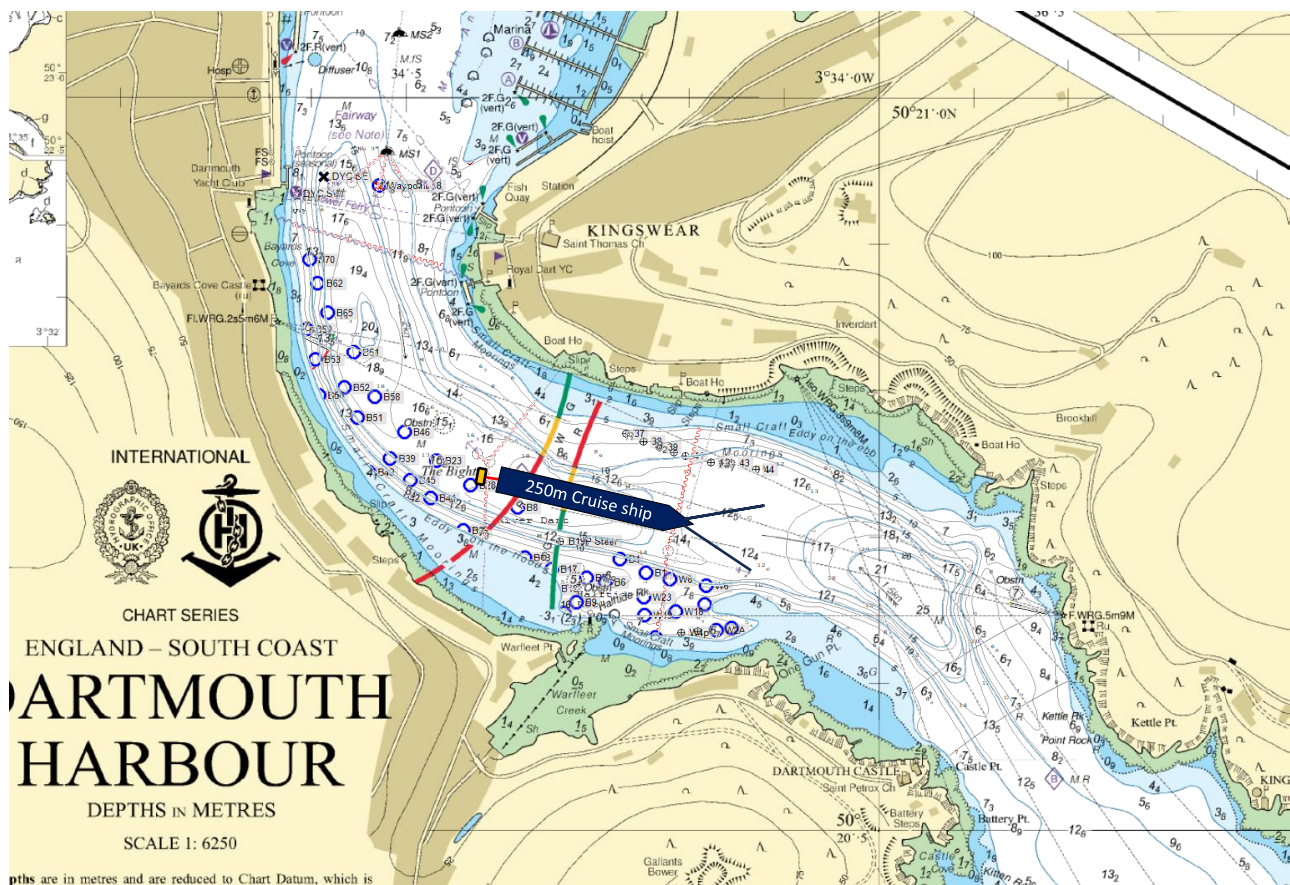
- By publishing this document, along with a feedback survey. This can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/dartcruise>
- By encouraging anyone interested to pop into the Harbour Office in Dartmouth, to have a conversation about what we want to do, and any concerns they may have, or opportunities they want to explore.
- By having a workshop session, open to all, to discuss this project, and what hopes and fears people may have, and hopefully allaying any concerns and exploring potential opportunities. This will take place at 18:30 on 31st August at Dartmouth Guildhall
- By using social media, local papers and our website to ensure that all are aware of our plans.
- By setting up a Dart Cruise Forum, to ensure long-term engagement with local businesses around the opportunities that cruise ships bring to the town.
- By discussing our plans in detail at our stakeholder consultation groups, and with key local partners.

This new mooring is within our powers under our Act of Parliament, so no specific permissions are required, hence why we are carrying out this voluntary consultation.

These plans are not set in stone. We believe that they represent a great opportunity for Dartmouth, but we will listen to the community to see whether there is general approval, whether there are any improvements that could be made, and whether our controls are appropriate.

Our plans

After looking at various options to enlarge our existing moorings, we have developed a plan to re-instate a former large ship mooring to the south of the Lower Ferry, with a new buoy, which will allow significantly larger cruise ships to dock in the town.



As seen on this diagram, the new buoy will be in a similar location to the existing B28 yacht mooring.

The ships will be 'Mediterranean moored' to this buoy – with mooring ropes from the stern of the ship to the buoy, whilst the bow will be held in position with the ship's own anchors. This allows more flexibility of ship length, and avoids placing a mooring buoy in the middle of the channel, where it would cause an obstruction to all traffic. Ships would swing outside the harbour entrance and come in astern, with the assistance of a tug to the buoy.

This is a similar setup to that used in the port of Fowey for many years. We will be carrying out simulator trials of this during summer 2023 using a leading maritime simulation provider, considering a variety of weather and tidal conditions and various ships, to verify the safety of the proposed arrangements, and as training for our pilots.

Initially, we plan to limit ships to around 240-250m length as we gain real life experience, with the potential to increasing size later on. As well as cruise ships, this mooring will be able to accommodate almost all of the Royal Navy / RFA fleet, tall ships and other similar vessels from time to time.

Our existing mainstream moorings will still be available for ships up to around 160m length, with no change to the current manoeuvre.

Cruise ships will continue to tender to the Town Jetty security area. The tender run will take less than 5 minutes.

We will need to relocate or remove two existing Dart Harbour yacht moorings, which we do not expect to cause any significant issues.



The above image gives an impression of the appearance of a 250m length ship (Crystal Serenity) on MSO buoy, as seen from South Embankment, near the harbour office.

This will allow us to target a wide range of cruise lines, including

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|---|--|
| Premium destination focussed cruise lines <i>Viking Cruises, Oceania*, Azamara*, Explora</i> |  |
| Luxury cruise lines <i>Seabourn, Silversea*, Regent*, Hapag Lloyd*, Ritz Carlton and Crystal</i> |  |
| British destination focused cruise lines <i>Saga, Fred Olsen and Ambassador</i> |  |
| French & German cruise lines <i>AIDA, Compagnie Française de Croisières, Nicko and Phoenix Reisen</i> * - We can already take some of these lines' ships with restrictions – the new mooring would allow us to take any of their ships |  |

We will continue to bring smaller expedition sized cruise ships into our existing moorings.

We do not have the ability to take very large and mass market cruise ships, and do not feel that these would be a suitable fit for the town in any case.

In 2023 Falmouth and Fowey are taking 18 and 7 ships respectively into port that cannot currently fit in Dartmouth, but will be able to under our new plans. We are confident that we can attract similar or greater numbers, particularly given our success in building up our existing market over the last few years. Dartmouth is a very attractive cruise port, with an excellent cruise passenger experience, and cruises to the British Isles is a growing segment of the market.

By 2030, we expect to have around 30 cruise calls per year (10 by small ships on the current moorings, 20 by mid-sized ships on the new mooring), and in the region of 25,000 cruise passengers per year

Economic Benefits

Across Europe, each port of call passenger contributes an average of around €80 to the local economy. This includes port costs, shore excursions, and local spend in the town – in shops, cafes and attractions. In Dartmouth, we expect that figure is somewhat higher – we tend to attract more luxurious premium and expedition ships, whose passengers are more affluent, and we are an ideal shopping destination – a wide range of interesting boutique shops that are very attractive to cruise passengers.

This has been confirmed to us anecdotally. For example the Castle Ferry takes around 50 extra people on a cruise ship day than a regular day, and several shops have asked for copies of our cruise schedule, to ensure that they schedule extra staff, and cafes report busy days when cruise ships are in the port.

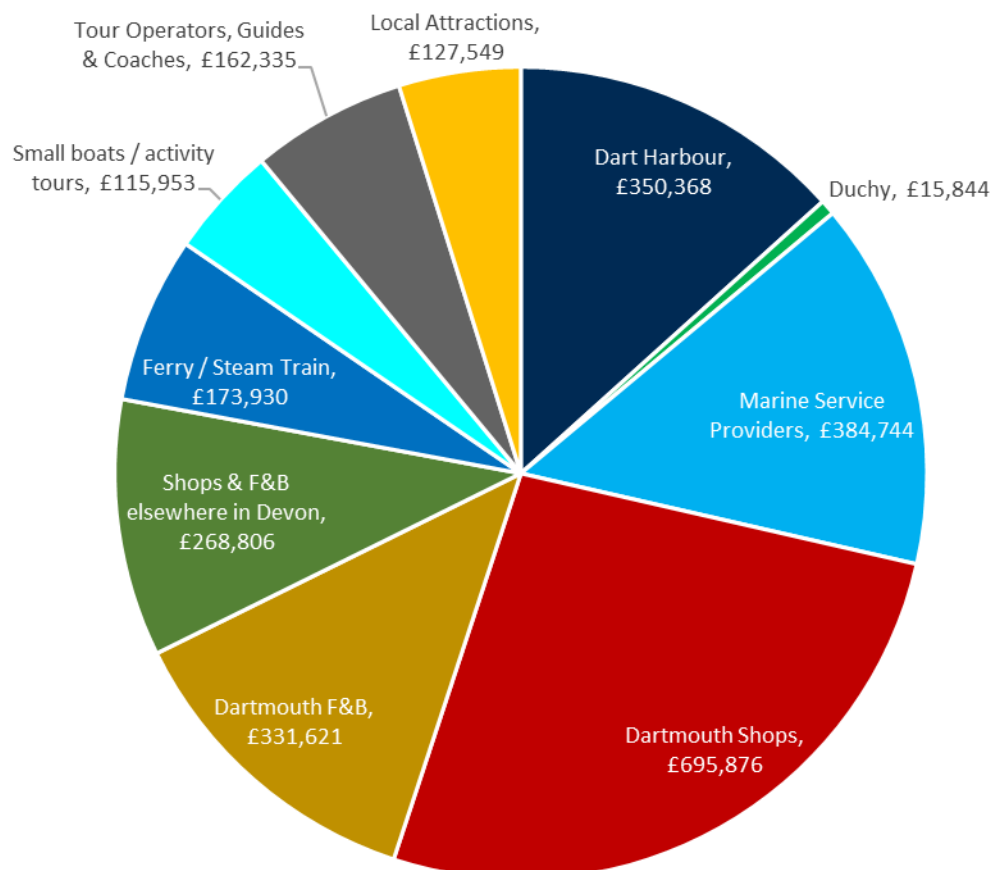
Cruise ships are a very good fit for Dartmouth. In general, the concerns with tourists are around traffic, parking and availability of housing. Cruise passengers have none of these issues, so can bring in much needed extra revenue to the town without making the town a less attractive place to live and visit.

By 2030, we expect:

- Around 30 cruise calls per year (10 by small ships, 20 by mid-sized ships)
- Around 25,000 cruise passengers per year
- Around £2.5 million annual benefit to the local economy, mostly within Dartmouth & Kingswear
- Around £300,000 net revenue to Dart Harbour, after approximately £50,000 annual costs. This will around 15% of our annual budget.

Each ship is expected to bring an average of around £80,000 benefit to the local economy.

A very approximate breakdown of this benefit is shown in the following chart. The businesses and organisations who benefit include:



- Marine service providers, such as tugs, port agencies, pilots and security contractors
- Local shops, bars, cafes and restaurants, and their suppliers, including local artists and artisans; principally in Dartmouth, but also across South Devon
- Dartmouth visitor information centre
- Local attractions, including boat trips, ferries, steam railways, National Trust, English Heritage, adventure tour operators.
- Tour guides and coach operators

This breakdown is based on data from CLIA, typical excursion programmes and current tariffs. It should be considered to be indicative only but is a useful guide to the types of businesses likely to benefit from additional cruise traffic in Dartmouth.

There is also the potential benefit to the wider tourism economy, from cruise passengers who wish to return, hotels for joining crew and service providers, increased visibility of Dartmouth in the international tourism market, and increased day and staying visitors coming to see the ship. This has not been quantified in the above estimates.

Benefits to the harbour

Dartmouth has always been a commercial port, and the mix of traffic is part of its charms. Attracting cruise ships allows us to continue to provide a pilotage service, keep the main channel clear, and provide large vessel moorings. They also contribute to the bustling atmosphere of the port. Without cruise ships, we would struggle to host tall ships, superyachts or naval vessels in the harbour.



Picture showing the 177m Length Queen Frederica moored in the 1970s on the former mooring which we plan to reinstate.

The new MS-0 mooring will also be available for occasional visits by other ships – for example we would have the capacity to moor almost any Royal Navy or RFA vessel or to attract tall ship events. We do not intend to use the mooring for long-term layup of ships.

We expect to be making over £300,000 from cruise ships by 2027. This money is used to invest in the river, in facilities for all users. We intend to spend around £300,000 providing improved mooring facilities for larger cruise ships, but the ongoing costs for cruise ships on the river is low, and the investment should be fully paid back by around 2026.

The additional income from cruise ships will

- Allow us to employ one or two additional river officers or apprentices, to cope with the additional workload.
- Allow us to more rapidly invest in other areas of the river in our long-term capital plan, including additional pontoons for yachts, upriver facilities, pump-out, toilet and shower facilities and environmental projects
- Include a levy – currently planned as being £1 per cruise passenger - which will provide additional support to the Dart Harbour Community Fund – supporting local charities and groups, particularly those providing access to the estuary and surrounding countryside to young and disadvantaged people.
- Help the harbour to diversify our business, reducing our reliance on the yachting sector

Shore excursions

It is often questioned why cruise ship passengers go on tour, depriving the town of income from them. In short, this is an integral part of cruising, and not one we would change here, but also not something that causes concerns. Less than 50% of cruise passengers take a tour, so most passengers are remaining within the town. Most tours are from half to three quarters of a day, so passengers still have plenty of time to spend exploring and spending money in Dartmouth.

In addition, tours help manage the density and flow of passengers, and allow the benefit to be spread wider across South Devon. Dartmouth does not normally have long distance tours, instead a few coaches are likely to go to Slapton, Buckfast Abbey, Dartmoor, Kents Cavern and similar locations, or by boat or train to Totnes, Greenway or Torbay.

We actively promote non-coach tours – using local ferries, riverboats, the steam train, paddleboards / kayaks, ribs or walking to leave the town. These make for much more interesting tours for passengers, but also help reduce congestion at the Embankment bus stops. Because most tours leave in the early morning, there is rarely conflict between cruise tour busses and regular arriving coach tours, which normally arrive after 10:00.

Shore excursions also help tell our story well – passengers on shore excursions typically rate ports higher, and want to come back in the future.

How can my business take advantage of cruise traffic

We will be starting a Cruise Forum, which will be open to all local businesses that would like to take advantage of cruise ships coming to town. We have a number of cruise industry experts available who can offer advice on what is likely to appeal to cruise passengers. Visitor attractions may also be able to be introduced to shore excursion operators, or included in our Cruise Dartmouth guide, which we use to market the port to cruise lines.

South Devon College has course for tourism related qualifications, and we are working with them to see how their students can benefit from our plans.



Safety

We recognise that Dart Harbour is relatively small, and large vessels have the potential for an increased risk. We are confident that we can consistently manoeuvre and moor large ships safely in this location. Safety is our biggest priority, and we would not consider this if we were not happy with safety. The stern-first arrival is a more challenging operation, but it is not uncommon, and we have previously carried out this manoeuvre in the Dart for 200m ships mooring on our current mainstream buoys.

- The water depth in the harbour in this area is excellent, and will allow large ships to lie safely at the buoys in any condition of tide
- We will conduct extensive simulator trials at a highly regarded simulator, to look at manoeuvres on a range of vessels in various conditions of wind and tide. This will also train our pilots to ensure that they are fully competent to carry out the manoeuvre. The results of this simulation will be available for cruise lines and other interested parties.
- Following the simulation, we will be able to set limits of tide and weather for the new mooring.
- We intend to start more cautiously, only allowing smaller ships at first, and with more strict limits for tide and weather than we consider necessary, until we have built up experience and confidence in the new arrangements.
- We have witnessed similar manoeuvres at Fowey, which has a more challenging entrance channel than the Dart, and are confident that we can operate in a similar way. One of our pilots is also a pilot at Fowey, with many years experience carrying out this manoeuvre.
- The position of MS0 buoy keeps the length of the manoeuvre to a minimum, and avoids the turn at Kingswear which caused an incident during the arrival of Saga Pearl in 2018.
- Our new pilot boat 'Mallard' allows us to board the ship well clear of the harbour, giving ample time for a discussion between the ship's Captain and the Pilot, to ensure that the operation runs smoothly and safely.
- We will use experienced contractors to design and install the new mooring, ensuring that it is more than adequate for the loads it will experience in use.
- MS0 buoy will be positioned to minimise tide on the beam of the ship.

Navigational Safety for other vessels

We have carefully considered the impact of a large vessel moored in the bight. The buoy location will be able to be quite close to the current line of buoys, so causing minimal restrictions to vessels heading further upstream when it is unoccupied. The buoy will be lit with a low-range light, to ensure safety at night.

Similarly, the ship will be positioned towards the Dartmouth side of the river, giving a 60+m wide channel for other traffic – the white sector on the Bayards Cove navigation light will be completely clear. We would not bring large vessels of more than around 90m length past a cruise ship on MS0 buoy, but there will be no restrictions on regular traffic like the local ferries, fishing fleet and yachts using the channel with a ship moored in this location.

As today, we would use harbour vessels to keep the channel clear for the arrival and departure of the ship. The location of MS0 will make this a simpler and less disruptive procedure than the current moorings.

A large vessel moored on MS0 buoy will make it more difficult to sail in the bight, particularly racing. For this reason, we have said in our controls that we will not have a ship on the MS0 buoy on Wednesday evenings, on Saturdays during the junior sailing season, or during regatta, except with the permission of RDYC or the Regatta Committee, to avoid disrupting long-standing events.



Photo shows view of Kingswear from the bridge of a departing cruise ship

Sustainability

Pollution

Contrary to popular belief, cruise ships do not pollute the water. Whilst in the Dart they do not have any discharges – waste water is treated onboard, and held until the ship is offshore. Garbage is retained onboard and landed at other ports for recycling. Ballast water and bilge water are not discharged in Dartmouth.

Cruise ships do burn significant quantities of fuel oil, so do produce a significant carbon footprint, though the industry is working hard on reducing this – the cruise industry is leading the global shipping industry in this area. CO₂ is a global, rather than a local pollutant, so there is effectively no disadvantage to Dartmouth of the CO₂ being produced here rather than in another port. Other pollutants are significantly reduced – amounts of Sulphur and Nitrous oxides are regulated, with the former being less than 0.1% of the fuel. Cruise ship engines tend to be clean burning – there may be a small puff of smoke as engines start up on departure, but otherwise the smoke is virtually invisible, with minimal particulate matter.

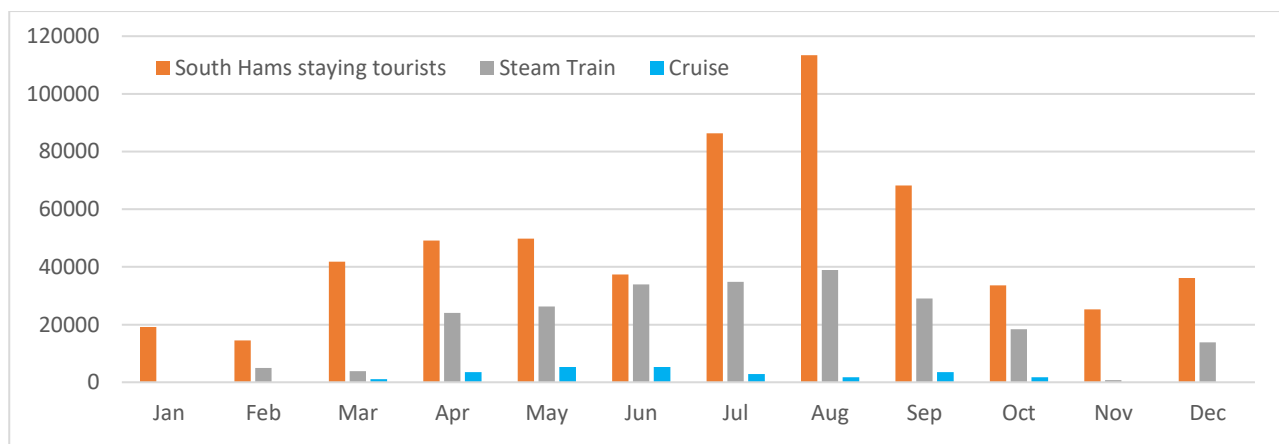
Larger and more modern ships are significantly more efficient than smaller, older ships, so the ships we are targeting for our new mooring are expected to be much more environmentally efficient than the ships we currently attract.

Impact on the river bed

We have frequently carried out dive inspections and other checks of the river bed in this area, and are confident that there will be negligible impact of a new mooring or ship's anchors in this location, as the bottom is mud, with no plant life or other fragile habitats that could be damaged.

Seasonality & Overcrowding in the town

A great advantage of the cruise industry is that the peak season for 'Round Britain' cruises – the typical itineraries that visit Dartmouth is May-June and September. During July and August the ships tend to head further north to Scandinavia. This means that the Dartmouth peak cruise season doesn't hit the peak land-based tourism season, helping to spread visitor numbers out into the shoulder seasons.



The chart gives an indication of expected cruise ship passenger numbers, compared to typical passenger numbers on the Dartmouth Steam Railway, and staying tourist numbers in the South Hams.

We intend to put a passenger limit in place, to avoid overcrowding the town. This will be initially set at 2500 passengers, reducing to 1500 in July and August. Even a 2500 passenger vessel is only likely to result in a similar number of additional people in the town as 3 steam trains (1800 people), so it is an amount of people that the town can comfortably absorb, making Dartmouth bustling but not overcrowded, and of course without causing any pressure on parking, whilst a more typical 1000 passenger ship would be equivalent to a single busy steam train arrival.

Town Jetty is our cruise ship tender area. Larger ships have the potential to cause congestion here, but we have detailed plans to effectively manage these flows. Our tender berths can take flows of over 1000 people per hour, so passengers can rapidly board the vessel at the end of the day. In the morning, the peak time for cruise passengers landing is well before the jetty becomes busy with local traffic, so it can be well used. With the reduction of the number of local passenger boats on the river, the loss of a berth on cruise ship dates is very rarely a problem.

Impact on homes & views

In Dartmouth and Kingswear views of the river are a very big part of the charm of the location. For many people, the constantly changing bustling nature of the harbour is a big part of that view, and we have a lot of positive comments about large ships coming into the town, however we recognise that some people may have a concern.

The location we have chosen for MS0 buoy should reduce the number of properties with a significant impact to their views. The below map gives an idea of where the impacts will be. We have deliberately put in place controls to limit the number of cruise ships using this mooring per year, to ensure that the impact to views is only temporary, and cruise ships remain a pleasant novelty, rather than a nuisance.



Blue: side view of ship restricts view up river.

Green: side view of ship restricts view of Warfleet area of Dartmouth

Purple: stern view of ship partially restricts view towards harbour mouth and/or of Kingswear

Yellow: stern view of ship partially restricts view towards harbour mouth and/or Gunfield area

Red: Generally too high for the ship to restrict the view, but will still be fully visible in the river.

The ship will be at least 120m from the closest waterfront properties in Dartmouth. For comparison, this is the equivalent of the length of Coronation Park. There should therefore be no privacy issues. We will put appropriate restrictions in place to ensure that noise from PA systems and passengers on deck is kept to a minimum – engine noise is rarely an issue on cruise ships.

Controls

We do not want to see Dartmouth being overrun with cruise traffic, to the detriment of the town. We therefore propose putting some limitations on ourselves, to ensure that cruise ships remain a pleasant part of life in the town, not a routine annoyance.

- No more than 30 cruise ship calls per year on MS0 buoy
- No more than 6 overnight cruise ship calls per year on MS0 buoy
- No long-term lay-ups of any ships on MS0 buoy
- No more than 2500 cruise passengers in Dart Harbour at any one time. During July and August, this number reduces to 1500.
- No open loop exhaust gas scrubbers allowed to be used in Dart Harbour
- PA Announcements on deck restricted to be kept to a minimum and restricted to operational and safety announcements only. A deck party is acceptable for sailaway, provided it is before 8pm, and starts no more than 1 hour before departure.
- Any cruise calls during Regatta to be agreed by the Regatta Committee
- In order not to impact with RDYC sailing, unless otherwise agreed with RDYC, no ships on MS0 buoys after 18:00 on Wednesdays, or on Saturdays during the Junior sailing season, or during the schools / junior sailing weeks.

Any changes to these controls will be consulted with the Dart Harbour user groups.



Cruise ship 'The World' Departing Dartmouth

Have your say

Fill in our online survey - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/dartcruise>

Come and see us in the harbour office and chat to the Harbour Master

Join our workshop session, open to all, to discuss this project. This will take place at 18:30 on 31st August at Dartmouth Guildhall