

FAQs - Cruise Ship Conversation

- **Why are more cruise ships being encouraged?** Dart Harbour is a trust port – we don't make any profit, but instead re-invest in operating and improving the Dart Estuary. The income from these ships will help with this work – at around £300,000 per year by 2023 we would expect this income to make up around 15% of our annual budget. We plan to ring fence some elements of this additional income for use on environmental projects on the Dart Estuary, and as contributions to the Dart Harbour Communities fund, which is used to help support organisations encouraging young and disadvantaged people to experience the river and its surroundings. More, larger ships, also increases our resilience, diversifies the harbour, and increases our team's skill.
- **How many ships/ how big / how many passengers?** By 2030 we would hope to be bringing around 20 cruise ships to the new mooring per year, plus around 10 calls to the existing mainstream buoy. We expect the new mooring to accommodate mid-sized ships of up to around 250m in length, bringing a total of 25,000 cruise passengers to the town annually – around 10% of the number that arrive by steam train. We will have a passenger limit to prevent overcrowding.
- **Where will they moor?** By reinstating a former mooring, which we are calling MS-0 buoy, we will be able to accommodate mid-sized cruise ships to south the of the Lower Ferry. Small expedition & luxury cruise ship will continue to moor as currently on the mid-stream buoys opposite town jetty.
- **How will passengers get ashore?** The ships will tender ashore to the Town Jetty as today.
- **How will this change benefit local people, business, traders and river users?** More visiting cruise ships will lead to around £3 million annual benefit to the local area by 2030. Businesses such as shops, cafes and ferries have told us about increased revenue on cruise ship days, and we believe this will continue to increase with more ships, with benefits also being felt by tourist attractions, marine businesses, tour guides and transport providers amongst others.
- **Will the harbour or the town require any new infrastructure?**
A new mooring buoy we are calling MSO will be required. In addition we may look at minor upgrades to Town Jetty. No new infrastructure is expected ashore as, at any one time, we wouldn't expect the town to have any more visitors than it currently accommodates.
- **Will overcrowding of the town become an issue during the peak months of July & August?**
Cruise calls tend to be either side of high season when the town has plenty of space. We will have a passenger limit to prevent overcrowding.
- **Is it really possible to manoeuvre and moor larger vessels safely in such a small harbour?**
We are carrying out simulator trials, and expect that ships of up to around 250m in length will be able to use the harbour safely, and without significant impact on other river users or the local community. The manoeuvre to the new mooring is expected to be somewhat simpler than to the current mainstream moorings, and the water is much deeper. Ships will enter the river stern-first with pilot and tug assistance, and will moor their stern to the new buoy, with their bow held in place with the ship's anchors. A similar technique is used in Fowey and works well
- **What about navigational safety for other vessels?** There will still be ample space for other boats to pass. We won't allow cruise calls on this mooring during regatta, or RDYC regular scheduled racing without the agreement of the clubs involved.
- **Will existing moorings be affected?** Only two yacht moorings in this area will be impacted.

- **Is the harbour deep enough?** The water is much deeper at the reinstated mooring, MS-0 buoy, than the current mainstream moorings. Mooring is expected to be somewhat simpler.
- **What will happen in poor weather conditions?**
As part of a simulation exercise we will set limits. In poor weather ships wouldn't be able to call.
- **Larger cruise ships have caused incidents in the past. How will this be avoided?**
A few years ago a ship swung wide off Bayard's Cove. We now board pilots much earlier to give more time to adjust speed. In addition, ships using MSO will not have to make this turn.
- **What about the environmental impact?** Contrary to common belief, cruise ships do not pollute the water in ports, with no discharges of waste. They do have a significant carbon footprint, but the industry is making great strides to reduce this, and the more modern ships we would be attracting are much more efficient. CO2 is a global rather than a local pollutant, so the impact on Dartmouth would be no different to if the ship was in a different port.
- **Will my view be affected?** For many people, large ships in the harbour enhance the views of this vibrant port, whilst others may be concerned. The location of MS-0 buoy will minimise the impact on views, with the ship well out in the river, and not restricting key views. We will limit the total number of calls per year.
- **How will pressure on the town or other river users be avoided?**
Cruise calls tend to be either side of high season when the town has plenty of space. We do not want to overload the town, and will have controls in place on the size of ship, number of calls per year and the environmental impact. We won't allow cruise calls on this mooring during regatta, or RDYC regular scheduled racing without the agreement of the clubs involved. We will put in place a limit of 2,500 reducing to 1,500 in July and August and can change if necessary. Cruise passengers do not use up parking spaces or housing in the town.
- **Who does the harbour authority intend to consult and how?** We currently have several forums in place, through which we routinely consult with key stakeholders. To reach a wider audience & more members of the local & business community, we have developed a 'Cruise Ship Conversation' via our website, social media and face to face discussion. We plan to have a '**Cruise Forum**' meeting regularly to help local businesses make the most of cruise ships and help us monitor control measures effectively.
- **What opportunities are there be for the community to make comments?** We have an online survey at surveymonkey.co.uk/r/dartcruise , and you are also welcome to come and chat about this proposal in the harbour office, to email harbourmaster@dartharbour.org or to attend our workshop on 31st August at 18:30 in the Dartmouth Guildhall.
- **Is planning permission or any other statutory consent needed to make this change?**
This mooring was last used in the 1970s. To reinstate its use there is no requirement to apply for any special planning or marine consents. As a Harbour Authority we have a duty to fulfill our statutory responsibilities as well as an ongoing commitment to work to benefit the river, all its users & the local community. Our plan for more cruise ships takes these duties and commitments into account.