

# All aboard new £19.2m Greenock cruise facilities

Construction of a new Greenock cruise ship visitor centre is underway as part of a £19.2 million development which will welcome passengers and crew from some of the world's largest and most luxurious vessels to Inverclyde.

The project, led by Inverclyde Council, is part of the £1 billion Glasgow City Region City Deal funded by the UK and Scottish governments, with contributions from Peel Ports (£8m), operators of the existing Greenock Ocean Terminal, and the George Wyllie Foundation via the Dunard Trust (£1.5m).

The development is expected to increase visitor numbers to some 150,000 passengers a year and provide a £26m boost to the Scottish economy.

The dedicated cruise ship visitor centre will feature an arrivals/departure hall as well as a museum paying tribute to the late, world-famous artist George Wyllie, who worked as a Customs Officer in Greenock and lived for many years in Gourock, and a high-end restaurant and roof terrace with panoramic views of the River Clyde.

A new 200-metre floating pontoon was recently completed by the port operators as part of the overall project.

Work on the visitor centre has resumed following the appointment of a new contractor after the original builder withdrew for financial reasons.

The building is expected to be completed by summer 2022.

Leader of Inverclyde Council, Councillor Stephen McCabe, said:

This is an important milestone in a development which is of huge significance to Inverclyde, the wider City Region and Scotland.

We want people from near and far to discover Inverclyde and making a positive first impression with a striking visitor centre – coupled with our famous warm and friendly welcome – will help to do that and encourage our guests to return again in the future.

The building will also be an asset for the local community outside of the cruise call season and is part of the ongoing regeneration of Greenock Town Centre so there are many benefits of what will be a first-class facility.

UK Government Minister for Scotland, Iain Stewart, said:

This fantastic new visitor centre represents a major step forward

in the regeneration of Greenock.

It will provide a real boost to the local economy and community while offering visitors a warm welcome and a taste of Inverclyde's culture and heritage.

The UK Government is investing more than £1.5bn into City Region and Growth deals right across Scotland, helping create jobs and drive growth as we recover from the pandemic.

Scottish Government Tourism Minister, Ivan McKee, said:

I am pleased to see such a remarkable development, especially given the strains of the pandemic.

This new visitor centre at Greenock Ocean Terminal will make a significant contribution to the local area, supporting economic growth in the local community and the wider city region whilst promoting tourism.

The Scottish Government is contributing £500 million over 20 years to the Glasgow City Region City Deal.

The investment in this project through the deal will contribute to the region's economic recovery by creating jobs, and providing the commercial infrastructure to support and attract businesses to the local area.

The new berth and visitor centre will also free up space at the busy Greenock Ocean Terminal, which was originally built as a container terminal, for freight business.

Peel Ports Clydeport Director, Jim McSporran, said:

This is fantastic news. The overall investment in the cruise terminal is crucial to the remarkable growth of cruise traffic at Greenock, and this magnificent new visitor centre will allow us to create a welcoming and comfortable environment for passengers.

We are building a major cruise business on the Clyde and, despite the impact of the pandemic on the global industry, we are back in business.

Thanks to the success of Greenock Ocean Terminal, more people than ever will be taking a cruise to Scotland and boosting both local and national tourism.

The first cruise ship to call at Greenock since the start of the pandemic arrived a fortnight ago with almost 50 booked in for the rest of this year,

including MSC Virtuosa, pictured, which is the biggest vessel in gross tonnage to call at the ocean terminal and is scheduled to stop off locally seven times in total during the 2021 season.

More than 100 ships are due in 2022.

The striking new state-of-the-art visitor centre was designed by Richard Murphy Architects and is being built by Heron Bros.

The facility will welcome passengers and crew during the busy cruise call season and will also be an asset for the people of Inverclyde and other visitors for things like exhibitions, conferences and functions.

To find out more about what Inverclyde has to offer, visit [www.discoverinverclyde.com](http://www.discoverinverclyde.com)