

HMS Queen Elizabeth visits Scotland for the first time

Press release

The Royal Navy's Fleet Flagship, HMS Queen Elizabeth, has arrived in Glen Mallan, Scotland, as part of final preparations before her first operational deployment.



HMS Queen Elizabeth has arrived in Glen Mallan, Scotland. MOD Crown Copyright.

Sailing in along the Firth of Clyde, the 65,000 tonne aircraft carrier has spent the last two weeks at sea testing and trialling her latest equipment, before berthing at the new Northern Ammunition Jetty for a routine onload of operational stores.

HMS Queen Elizabeth is the first of the Royal Navy's fleet to visit the new £64 million facility, built by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

Operated by Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) through Defence Munitions, the Northern Ammunition Jetty is specifically designed to support the surface fleet, allowing them to continue entering and berthing at Glen Mallan.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

HMS Queen Elizabeth has a very proud affiliation to Scotland and it is only fitting she returns before her first operational deployment later this year.

The £64m investment into the new Northern Ammunition Jetty reaffirms our commitment to supporting our core capabilities and defence estate across all corners of the UK.

Captain Angus Essenhigh, HMS Queen Elizabeth Commanding Officer, said:

We are very proud of the close connection our ship has with Scotland, especially with our affiliated city of Edinburgh.

HMS Queen Elizabeth embodies the best of British engineering and craftsmanship, including Scottish shipbuilding, and it is a privilege to return to her birthplace of Scotland.

DIO project works undertaken include: the installation of four new navigational aids to ensure safe passage through the confined waterway in Loch Long, two new modular fender spacer units that move with the tide to prevent the aircraft carrier flight deck from coming in to contact with the jetty and the installation of dolphin mooring points to ensure the aircraft can be securely berthed.

Craig MacDonald, DIO's Project Manager, said:

It is fantastic to have HMS Queen Elizabeth berthed at Glen Mallan for the first time.

DIO previously worked closely with contractors and local partners to ensure vital infrastructure upgrades were completed in time to prepare for the visit and I would like to thank everyone involved.

This is the first time HMS Queen Elizabeth has visited Western Scotland, after she initially became a familiar sight on the River Forth where she was assembled.

HMS Queen Elizabeth is due to sail for Portsmouth at the end of the month, and will deploy to the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and East Asia later this year, as part of the UK's Carrier Strike Group.

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