

# 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)

---

## [40,000 students to study across the world with new Turing Scheme](#)

- Over 120 universities across the UK awarded grants under £110million Turing Scheme – as well as over 200 schools and colleges
- 48% of participants to come from disadvantaged backgrounds as scheme levels up opportunity across regions of the UK
- USA, Australia, and South Korea amongst over 150 countries students supported to work and study

40,000 students will be able to study and work abroad thanks to the UK Government's new Turing Scheme, with universities and schools due to be told this week that their bids for funding have been successful.

Over 120 UK universities, as well as schools and further education colleges across the country, will be awarded grants from the £110m Turing Scheme – which will see 48% of places go to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

As part of the new global scheme, Canada, Japan and the United States are amongst over 150 international destinations where UK students will be funded to take up work and study placements – alongside popular European countries like Germany and France.

At the heart of the UK Government's post-Brexit vision is an ambition to create a truly Global Britain where we learn, work and trade with countries well beyond Europe's frontiers. The Turing Scheme, which has replaced the UK's participation in Erasmus+, gives young people the opportunity to benefit from working and studying abroad, while boosting our ties with international partners in the process.

The scheme also aims to improve social mobility across the UK by targeting

areas which had seen lower uptake of the Erasmus+ programme, including across the Midlands and North of England – with education providers in the West Midlands set to receive the most funding.

UK Government Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The chance to work and learn in a country far from home is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – which broadens minds, sharpens skills and improves outcomes.

But until now it has been an opportunity disproportionately enjoyed by those from the most privileged backgrounds. The Turing Scheme has welcomed a breadth of successful applications from schools and colleges across the country, reflecting our determination that the benefits of Global Britain are shared by all.

By strengthening our partnerships with the finest institutions across the globe, the Turing Scheme delivers on the Government's post-Brexit vision, and helps a new generation grasp opportunities beyond Europe's borders.

Ministers have set out a range of measures to improve access to international opportunities through the programme, including funding for travel and expenses such as passports and visas, as well as a grant for living costs, to tackle the barriers some students face to studying overseas.

Extra support has also been guaranteed for preparatory visits to make sure placements meet the needs of participants with disabilities and special educational needs.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart said:

Living, studying and working abroad is an invaluable way to broaden the mind, learn new skills and experience different cultures. It's great that this scheme will give Scottish students from all backgrounds the opportunity to take up placements right across the globe.

The UK Government is working hard to create a truly Global Britain, in which the benefits of enhanced relationships with nations around the world are felt in every part of the country. The Turing Scheme is a major step forward in reaching this goal.

UK Government Universities Minister Michelle Donelan said:

Our schools, colleges and universities have worked tirelessly to make this programme a success, and I am grateful to them and their global partners who have truly embraced this opportunity for

international collaboration.

I look forward to seeing the innovation and expertise our students, pupils and vocational learners bring back to this country from their journeys to every corner of the globe – from Canada to Japan, and Australia to the United States.

The total number of individual placements supported this year through the £110m scheme stands at over 40,000 – exceeding the Department for Education's own estimates. This includes 28,000 placements for university students – compared with only 18,300 under Erasmus+ in the academic year 2018/9.

The Turing Scheme, announced by Education Secretary Gavin Williamson last year, is named after pioneering UK war hero and father of modern computing Alan Turing, who studied abroad at Princeton University before going on crack the Enigma code in World War Two.

Vivienne Stern, Director, Universities UK International, said:

The Turing Scheme will create opportunities for thousands of students from all over the country to gain experience working and studying abroad. We know from the evidence we have collected that students who have such experience tend to do better academically and in employment outcomes – and that this is especially true for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

We want more students from a wider range of backgrounds to get these sorts of opportunities and believe, that if they do, the UK economy will benefit in the long run.

David Hughes, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges, said:

The opportunity to work, study or compete abroad is so important for the life chances of all young people. It's encouraging to see colleges taking up all that Turing can offer – including colleges that are newer to international partnerships – exploring exchanges across a broad range of countries.

Student mobility will be crucial post-pandemic as the world reopens and learners from all backgrounds access their chance to develop technical and personal skills, build their confidence and experience other cultures.

The full list of higher education institutes, schools, and further education and vocational education and training providers awarded funding is available [here](#).

---

## [New UK Government Covid testing centre opens in Knightswood](#)

The UK Government has today (Friday 06 August) opened a new walk-through coronavirus testing centre in Knightswood, Glasgow.

The test centre located at Glasgow BMX Centre (G13 3LS), is part of the largest network of diagnostic testing facilities created in British history. In Scotland, this comprises of eight drive through sites, 55 walk-through sites, 42 mobile units, plus the Glasgow Lighthouse Lab which is working round the clock to process samples.

In Scotland, the UK Government is providing all COVID testing and test processing outside of the NHS.

PCR tests must be booked in advance at: [NHS Inform](#) or by calling 119. People should only book a test if they have coronavirus symptoms (a high temperature, a new and continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) or have been instructed to do so by a clinician or NHS contact tracer.

Lateral flow test kits are also now available for pick up without an appointment at local walk-in or drive-through test sites from 8am – 8pm each day. Tests can also be ordered online or by phone by calling 119. For more information and to order a test kit online, go to: Coronavirus (COVID-19): getting tested in Scotland – [gov.scot](#)

Health Minister, Lord Bethell, said:

We have built the largest network of diagnostic testing facilities in British history to ensure that everyone can get tested for covid-19 regularly. As a result, the UK is now a testing juggernaut, performing more tests than any comparable European country, which is helping to break chains of transmission, save lives and detect variants of concern.

New walk-in sites like this one make it even easier to get a test no matter where you live. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, I urge you to book a test today and follow the advice of NHS Test and Trace if you are contacted, to protect others and stop the spread of the virus.

UK Government Minister for Scotland, Iain Stewart said

The UK Government continues to provide the bulk of testing in

Scotland, a programme which is vital to our recovery from this pandemic. Alongside the roll-out of UK Government-funded vaccines, testing is helping us to manage the virus, slow down the rate of transmission and protect communities.

This new walk-through facility in Glasgow is the latest in our extensive network of testing centres supporting people in all parts of the UK.

Simon Venn, Mitie Chief Government & Strategy Officer, said:

Our priority during the pandemic is to support the nation's efforts to fight COVID-19 and help keep the country running. Testing is a critical part of the UK's strategy to combat coronavirus and we're proud to support the UK Government with this vital task. A big thank you to all the NHS staff, Mitie employees and other frontline heroes in Glasgow who are working tirelessly to keep us all safe.

---

## **Highways England signs a further two unifying agreements with the recovery industry**

Highways England has signed two further unifying agreements with the recovery industry, with the National Tyre Distributors Association (NTDA) and independent recovery industry work providers Green Flag, Allianz Partners, LV=Britannia Rescue, GEM Motoring Assist and Call Assist.

These agreements were signed by Highways England's Acting CEO Nick Harris at this year's PROFCON 21 event at Brooklands Motor Museum in Surrey on 29th July 2021.

They see Highways England making a commitment to both NTDA and the Independent Recovery Industry Work Providers to work together to improve communications and achieve best practice across the industry, whilst encouraging vehicle recovery operators (VRO's) and commercial tyre technicians to always work safely on the network.

The new agreements, which were initiated by the Professional Recovery Operators Federation, follow a ground-breaking industry first last March 2020, which saw Highways England sign an initial agreement to unite with strategic stakeholders within the independent recovery industry.

Nick Harris, acting Chief Executive, Highways England says:

In March 2020, Highways England signed a strategic partnership agreement to unite with the independent recovery industry. Since signing the agreement, we have taken positive steps to update recovery protocols on motorways and to improve our day-to-day operational communications between vehicle recovery operators and Highways England.

I am pleased to be signing two additional strategic partnership agreements with the independent recovery work providers and the NTDA. These agreements, which have been made possible by the help and support of PROF, further demonstrates Highways England's commitment to work more closely with the recovery industry.

With a range of independent bodies operating within the industry and Highways England responsible for the network they operate on, it became clear that further operational and strategic guidance would benefit all parties, which is how the initial agreement was born.

Since signing the original agreement just over a year ago, great progress has been made in working more closely with the recovery industry.

This work includes:

- the formation of a new Highways England Recovery Industry Executive Committee chaired by Nick Harris
- the creation of seven new operations led regional recovery groups, to improve day-to-day operational communication between VROs and Highways England.
- producing a new joint working protocol guidance document covering the recovery of large vehicles on the network
- launching a new direct 'Recovery In' phone numbers to enable improved two-way communication between VROs and Highways England traffic officers.
- creating four new recovery focussed signs to help support the safety of VROs working on our network and provide motorists with information and awareness of a VROs presence and recovery activity.

Richard Goddard, President of the Professional Recovery operators Federation (PROF) said:

I am very proud that PROF has played a pivotal role in initiating these independent strategic partnership agreements with Highways England. Highways England has been proactive in uniting industry stakeholders, vehicle recovery operators and independent industry work providers.

I am delighted that we are moving forward collectively to meet the challenges ahead and look forward to working with our strategic partners to improve safety, standards and public awareness on the strategic road network.



Damon Jowett, Head of Service Delivery, Green Flag said:

We're thrilled to be signing a strategic partnership agreement with Highways England to help achieve best practice across the industry and ensure drivers receive the best possible recovery service on England's roads.

Stefan Hay, Chief Executive of the NTDA said:

We are delighted to be entering into this new strategic working relationship with Highways England which is extremely important, and already proving to be highly productive, for the Association.

The level of access the NTDA and its members now have at both operational and executive level within Highways England is unprecedented and will, undoubtedly, prove to be extremely valuable in ensuring safer roadside working for those REACT trained commercial tyre technicians deployed across the strategic road network.

Neil Worth, Chief Executive of GEM Motoring Assist said:

As an organisation we have spent the past 90 years working to achieve safer roads for everyone, be they our members, recovery operators or the wider community.

Highways England's input into our Blue Light Aware resource has been invaluable and this agreement will allow us to strengthen and develop our partnership work for the benefit of GEM members and all road users.

Ben Johnson, Director of Networks at Call Assist said:

Call Assist is passionate about working with Highways England and likeminded work providers, as we all share best practices to ensure we continue providing a first-class assistance service.

Highways England recognises recovery operators as an essential service and the importance in the role they play helping to clear incidents and keep traffic moving.

The principal purpose of the agreements is to guide the working partnerships in line with national agreements and guidance from within the vehicle recovery industry.

The agreements have given the opportunity for all involved to identify areas

of joint working and respective areas of interest. It sets out a commitment to work together towards issue resolution and closer partner working in the future.

For those who do break down on a section of England's A roads or motorways it will mean they can expect to receive a more consistent recovery service, with improved communications between Highways England traffic officers and recovery operators.

Information for VROs about working safely on motorways, along with downloadable guidance materials, are available on the [Highways England recovery operator webpage](#).

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

---

# **[Temporary protection for more applicants to the Settlement Scheme](#)**

News story

Those who apply late to the EU Settlement Scheme, and joining family members, will have rights protected while their application is determined.



EEA citizens and their family members who apply late to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) will have their rights protected as the Home Office continues to support those wanting to stay in the UK.

More than [6 million applications](#) were made to the hugely successful EUSS before the 30 June 2021 deadline for those resident in the UK by the end of the transition period, with more than 5.1 million grants of status. Those who applied by the deadline already have their rights protected pending the outcome of their application (and of any appeal).

The Home Office has put in place comprehensive arrangements to enable those with reasonable grounds for missing the deadline to apply to the EUSS.

While the numbers applying late have been small compared to pre-deadline application numbers, to provide further reassurance to late applicants the government will protect their rights until their application and any appeal is decided.

The government will also take a similar approach with joining family members, who will have temporary protection for three months after their arrival in the UK and pending the outcome of an EUSS application made during that period (and of any appeal).

Minister for Future Borders and Immigration Kevin Foster said:

Every day thousands of people are being given status through the hugely successful EU Settlement Scheme. We've worked hard to ensure the vast majority applied before the 30 June deadline and are now supporting those making late applications.

Granting temporary protection to those who apply late to the scheme, and to joining family members, demonstrates our continued support to ensure everybody eligible is granted the status they deserve.

The government has informed the European Commission and is working to implement this generous approach to provide further clarity to EU citizens. Further details will be published in due course.

In the meantime, employers and landlords are advised to get in touch with the [Employer](#) and [Landlord](#) Checking Services if they have a prospective employee or tenant who has confirmation of a late application to the EUSS.

Published 6 August 2021