

Port of Southampton's summer season starts on a high

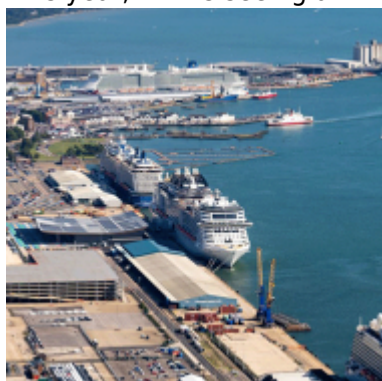
ABP Port of Southampton welcomed a record number of cruise vessels in May, kick-starting the summer cruise season for 2024.

26 different cruise ships with a total of 71 calls, both turnaround and transit, and over 400,000 guests were hosted by the leading UK cruise hub last month. Among them Celebrity Apex and Queen Anne.

Nearly one million cruise guests have passed through the port and destination so far in 2024.

Thea George, senior cruise manager, said: 'We've had a great start to the year with January to April seeing an increase in cruise calls as the months progress and our summer season has started in earnest with a record 71 calls in May.'

This year, ABP is seeing an increase in cruise ships utilising the shore power facility at the



port compared to the previous year. In May, 20% of the cruise visits plugged into shore power.

Stuart Baker, Maritime UK Solent, said: 'ABP Southampton and Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), have jointly invested in the shore power infrastructure to support sustainable operations in the port.'

Cruising supports thousands of jobs and businesses in the city and area. In 2023, the Port of Southampton welcomed 2.75m passengers and the cruise sector generated over £1bn for the local and regional economy and 2024 is well on its way to increasing these benefits to the local and regional economy.

The port is also working in partnership with GO! Southampton by launching a new initiative called the Welcome Volunteer Programme. This initiative, driven by passionate volunteers with local knowledge, aims to enhance the experience of transit passengers by educating them about the city and its offerings.

The Welcome Volunteers are stationed at the cruise terminals to guide and help passengers.