

PORTLAND PORT UK

PRESS RELEASE – July 6th, 2019

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Portland Port welcomes Norwegian Spirit and Saga Sapphire



Norwegian Spirit and Saga Sapphire in Portland Port 06.07.19

The 2019 cruise season is now well under way at Portland Port and today is set to be another busy day with the double call of the Saga Sapphire and the inaugural visit of Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Spirit.

Norwegian Cruise Line has a 50-year history in the cruise business and has been visiting Portland for a number of years. The arrival of the Norwegian Spirit on her inaugural call further enhances the expanding relationship between port and cruise line. Ian McQuade, General Manager (Commercial), commented "The inaugural call of the Norwegian Spirit is very exciting for the port. We have been privileged to welcome a number of NCL visits over the last few years but this is a first for this class of vessel". The welcome return of the Saga Sapphire is also significant as the vessel will soon be leaving the Saga fleet as they take delivery of two, new, ultra-modern vessels. "We have been fortunate enough to have welcomed the Saga Sapphire to Portland Port in the past, but we will not be seeing her for much longer. A scheduled call next March is expected to be the last time we see her before retirement" said Mr. McQuade. "The forthcoming visit of Saga's brand-new ship Spirit of Discovery, as part of her inaugural cruise signifies the start of a new chapter in the history of Saga Cruises".

Having two ship's alongside at the same time is becoming a more regular occurrence this season. It is the second time during 2019 that the port has seen both of its main commercial berths occupied by cruise ships on the same day, a situation which will be repeated a further 5 times during the balance of the summer.

The visit of the Norwegian Spirit also marked another first for Portland Port as the new gangway system was used for the first time. Having previously invested in extending and improving the mooring arrangements on both the Outer Coaling Pier and the Deep-water Berth, this latest investment is aimed at improving the passenger experience as they disembark and embark the vessel. Mr. McQuade said "the multiple size and shape of cruise ships now calling at Portland Port leads to a wide range of door positions. In order to better service these ever-changing requirements the port has designed and built a flexible gangway arrangement which will enable us to reach the highest doors. After much planning it is great to see the new system being used in anger for the first time".