



# PLAIN SAILING

THOUSANDS OF TRAVELLERS PASS THROUGH THE PORT OF TYNE'S INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER TERMINAL EVERY YEAR, THANKS TO A LASTING RELATIONSHIP.

46

YEARS THAT DFDS SEAWAYS HAVE BEEN OPERATING FROM THE PORT OF TYNE

Shipping giant DFDS Seaways has been connecting Britain and Europe since 1866 and has been operating from the Tyne for 46 years.

The current daily service between the Port of Tyne's International Passenger Terminal at North Shields and Ijmuiden, Amsterdam, has been operating since 1995.

Following a series of acquisitions, the largest of which was Norfolkline in 2010, the business has been restructured into DFDS Logistics and DFDS Seaways.

Max Foster is UK Passenger Director of DFDS Seaways. "We have up to 100 people – depending on the season – working in North Shields," says Max. "Since we integrated the business, we have increased the focus on our North East team, who are responsible for the national marketing and customer support for all our passenger routes."

Last year there were 696 sailings on the Tyne to Amsterdam route which represents 180,960 nautical miles travelled.

"We have a lot of customers who use us for short breaks and mini-cruises or for weekend city breaks," Max explains. "But by far the highest proportion of our customers use us to get to their holiday destination and take their car with them."

The catchment area extends beyond the North East to the North West and Scotland as Port of Tyne is the most northerly port for seaborne passenger traffic to the continent. In the other direction the route's area covers Germany and the Netherlands.

560K

PASSENGERS IN 2013

"The nice thing about the Port of Tyne is that it's an easy access port, you don't have to go through a city but you do have easy links to major roads."

Max Foster  
Managing Director, DFDS Seaways

A large part of the traffic is also made up of freight.

"I don't think there is ferry route in Europe that can survive without freight," says Max. "This route is perfect for freight customers, particularly with time sensitive cargoes such as flowers."

"For passengers this route has delivered an unheard of success story. In the last five years we have added approximately 100,000 extra passengers. It's a very important route for us and, after our Channel activities, it is the most important part of our passenger business."

He adds: "The year is developing nicely and we are looking to increase our number of passengers from 565,000 to 570,000."

"We have seen a couple of trends developing over several years, one of which is the growing popularity of short breaks and mini cruises."

"But we have seen the economy picking up strongly within the past two or three years and now the reason for a mini trip is not necessarily to save money but rather to explore new things, in addition to a main holiday. Amsterdam is a key destination but we offer popular packages to Haarlem in the Netherlands, and Belgium's Christmas markets.

"Also the growth in the cruise segment is seeing people who are not sure they want to go for two or three week cruise happy to try out a mini cruise."

"The nice thing about the Port of Tyne is that it's an easy access port, the terminal is just the right size offering a laid back, welcoming experience."

The route's success is good for the region, bringing traffic into the North East from the continent to visit the region's cities, coast and countryside. DFDS Seaways also sells around 20,000 tickets every season for football matches at Newcastle and Sunderland. And while a significant proportion of incoming travellers go on to Scotland, DFDS Seaways works closely with NewcastleGateshead Initiative and VisitEngland to help persuade these holidaymakers to spend a night or two in the region.

"We bring employment, we bring tax income and we bring customers into the region," says Max.

"We have been working with the Port of Tyne for a long time it's a trustful and reliable relationship if there are ever problems, we get together and fix them."