

Clerk to the Committee for Infrastructure
Room 410
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

24 August 2026

Dear Sir / Madam

HARBOURS BILL – COMMITTEE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Cruise Britain is pleased to provide a response to the Committee for Infrastructure's Call for Evidence on the Harbours Bill.

Cruise Britain is a joint initiative between cruise ports, destinations and service providers such as ground handlers and port agents. The organisation is focused on raising Britain's profile as a world-class cruise destination. Our membership-based organisation provides a network across the entire country, including the devolved administrations and regions, aimed at supporting and delivering a seamless cruise operator and visitor experience.

We work to create an effective, consistent and visible cruise destination brand whilst respecting national and regional identities. It is these national and regional identities that help make our islands an outstanding cruise destination. Through our members we can bring together the cities and countryside, culture and heritage, scenery and activities that make a truly memorable cruise itinerary.

Since the first cruise ship arrival in 1996, Belfast has seen unprecedented growth in both cruise calls and visitor numbers. From just two cruise calls in 1996, Belfast is now the third most popular destination in the UK and Ireland for one-day cruise ship calls and welcomes over 300,000 cruise-related visitors each year, adding an estimated £20-25 million to the local economy.

Belfast Harbour is currently constructing a new £90 million dual-purpose deepwater quay at the D3 site on the County Down side of the port. This 340-metre facility will serve as a major cruise berth capable of accommodating some of the world's largest cruise vessels. Attracting these larger vessels and, therefore more visitors, will boost the positive economic impact that cruise tourism brings to the region.

Registered address: 2nd Floor, Nucleus House, 2 Lower Mortlake Road, Richmond upon Thames, TW9 2JA, UK. Registered no: 9610261 England & Wales

Cruise Britain fully supports the investment and ambition shown by Belfast Harbour to date. We know that they want to deliver even more investment to boost the tourism sector in their region and ONS reclassification is a key means of doing so.

This crucial change – which is effectively a technical accounting fix only – will allow Belfast Harbour to prudently borrow to deliver the recently launched 2025-50 Masterplan. This masterplan sets out £1.3bn planned investment in port infrastructure. For example, this would include the pilot and eventual roll out of renewable shore power for vessels using their berths - a key step to help decarbonisation and a step that cruise operators are supportive of.

Our association supports the Harbours Bill which, alongside the Harbour Order, will enable the ONS reclassification process to commence. Ultimately, it will ensure a more competitive footing enabling delivery on investment plans. This Bill will therefore have a positive impact for the cruise sector and for tourism growth in the region.

Yours faithfully

Kay Greenway

Kay Greenway
Director
Cruise Britain

Signed on screen