
Northern Isles ferry investment - Improved passenger facilities and port operations

30 November 2018

Passengers using the Northern Isles Ferry Services are set to benefit from improved on board facilities with investment worth more than £2 million from the Scottish Government.

The programme of upgrades will include the introduction of 66 new sleeping pods on each of the Aberdeen vessels, along with new cinemas, shops, games areas, and entertainment zones for younger travellers.

Additional fin stabilisers will be purchased for both vessels, reducing the risk of disruption and providing improved resilience to services.

The investment will also bring benefits to freight customers with the introduction of nine new port tractors to improve shore side operations and reduce maintenance costs.

Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Paul Wheelhouse, said:

“The Scottish Government fully recognises the importance of these ferry links to the residents and businesses of the Northern Isles and wants to ensure they continue to support the economies of Orkney and Shetland, as well as Scotland as a whole.

“We have spoken with key stakeholders to identify measures that will help achieve that aim. These improvements will upgrade the passenger experience and freight operations, while also bringing added resilience to the services.

“This investment underlines our commitment to providing the best possible ferry services on the Northern Isles network and our continued support for the island communities that rely on them.”

Serco’s Managing Director of NorthLink Ferries, Stuart Garrett, commented: “We welcome this investment from the Scottish Government which will add to the existing quality lifeline service that links the Scottish mainland to the Northern Isles.

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“The investment will build on the series of on board improvements that Serco has introduced since we began operating the service in 2012, which have led to 98% of customers surveyed rating their overall experience as positive.”

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Notes to editors:

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