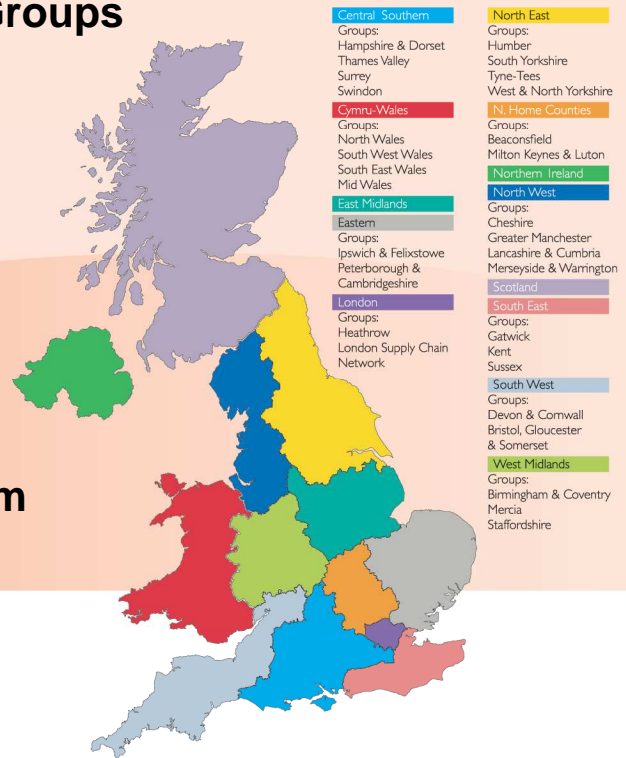


News from the Nations, Regions & Groups

CILT(UK) North West Region Lancashire Group

23rd September 2010

Visit to Seatruck Ferries, Heysham



A rare opportunity to visit a working ferry terminal and enjoy an “access all areas” tour was enjoyed by seventeen members of Lancashire Group at a recent visit to the Port of Heysham, hosted by Seatruck Ferries.



Group members were welcomed by Seatruck Ferries Managing Director (Irish Sea) Alistair Eagles CMILT and enjoyed some splendid food and drink prior to the main event. Alistair then gave a very detailed and interesting overview of the Irish Sea ferry market and the development of Seatruck Ferries. A company who operated one route with one chartered ship in the mid 1990's to their current position of operating three routes across the Irish Sea, with eight vessels in their fleet and another four vessels currently being built in Germany. By the end of 2012, they will have twelve vessels in their fleet.

Seatruck Ferries define their service as that of a “freight only specialist”, who can offer the unaccompanied trailer freight market a range of services designed with their specific requirements in mind. Alistair talked about the specific advantages of sending freight “unaccompanied”, and how the location of the ports that his company operate from (Heysham/Liverpool /Larne/Warrenpoint/Dublin) helped haulage companies to reduce road miles by being closer to “the areas of production of goods to the areas of consumption of goods”.



Following his presentation, Alistair escorted our members to one of his new vessels, the 115 trailer capacity "Clipper Panorama". This vessel, built in Spain in 2009 was built to the maximum permitted dimensions for a vessel to operate from the ports of Heysham and Warrenpoint. Prior to going onboard, the group were shown the modern linkspan, installed at a cost of £5Million in 2008, to service the new ships. Once onboard, the members were able to watch the ships loading operation and were shown how the trailers are secured to the deck of the ship for the duration of the journey.



A look around the drivers' accommodation and communal eating facilities was then topped off by a visit to the ships bridge, where Captain Andy Bradbury welcomed members onboard his €35Million vessel. Our youngest attendee at the event, Christopher Smith (aged 9 – we like to get them interested young in Lancashire!) was allowed to sit in the Captains seat and was given some personal instruction by Capt. Bradbury on the various communications and navigation equipment used onboard ship.

For the mechanically minded, a visit to the ships engine control room and a chance to actually look at the two ships engines (which was well received by a number of members – the writer of this article included) was a real bonus to the visit.

After giving our thanks to Capt. Bradbury for kindly allowing us to look around his vessel we headed back the office for a welcome drink, and a question and answer session. On behalf of all the members in attendance, Chairman of Lancashire Group, Lee Rossall MILT, thanked Alistair and his colleagues Kevin Gilland and Matt Seal for giving up their time to host this event.

Company branded gifts were handed out, and Alistair also very kindly presented our youngest attendee Christopher with a scale replica model of the ship he had just visited, one of only one hundred built.

Lancashire Group Committee would like to thank Alistair Eagles CMILT, Capt. Andy Bradbury and everyone involved at Seatruck Ferries again for organising an excellent event.

By Lee Rossall MILT
Chairman
CILT(UK) Lancashire Group