

Stena Line reports high-salaried urbanites boosting traffic across North Sea

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Stena Line, leading ferry operator, has reported that new segments of the UK population have boosted numbers using rail and sail packages to Holland by 23 per cent this year.

The new trend-bucking figures show a year-on-year increase for January to June 2009 on the Stena Line dutchflyer service across the North Sea. This success has however not been confined to just the last 12 months. The dutchflyer (<http://www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry/rail-and-sail/holland/why-holland/>) service, which comprises rail travel to Harwich from London Liverpool St and East Anglian railway stations, combined with ferry crossing to the Hook of Holland and onward travel to any station in Holland, has been experiencing increasing popularity across the last few years. Stena Line reported 39 per cent annual growth in dutchflyer traffic between 2007 and 2008.

The success of the dutchflyer rail and sail (<http://www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry/rail-and-sail/holland/>) package comes against the backdrop of a 2.8 per cent year-on-year decline in passengers leaving the UK out of BAA's seven airports, Eurotunnel's 15.8 per cent dip and a 5.3 per cent decrease in English Channel ferry traffic from 2007 to 2008.

While previously, travellers using Stena Line's dutchflyer service had been predominantly cash-poor students and backpackers, Experian 'Mosaic' research to identify and categorise those currently using dutchflyer recognised that 26.71 per cent fell into the 'urban intelligence' group, which subdivides into two main types of traveller:

- Counter cultural mix - young, well informed professionals; trendy city dwellers
- City adventurers - 20-something high-flying singles with pressurised, high-salary jobs; often London-based

Lars Olsson, Stena Line's commercial manager for travel on the North Sea, said, "The rising popularity of Stena Lines rail and sail (<http://www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry/rail-and-sail/holland/book/>) service over the past year has been a significant trend in itself, but it's interesting to note that the main travellers contributing towards dutchflyer's growth are now young, trendy city-dwellers and ambitious, workaholic singles.

"These groups have started considering alternatives to air travel because they're less cash-rich and even more time-poor than in the past, so the overcrowded chaos at airports and exorbitant departure taxes are deterrents. The dutchflyer service links London and East Anglia with Dutch cities via rail stations and ferry decks from £35 one-way.

"We're seeing a particular increase in dutchflyer passengers taking the overnight ferries so that they arrive at their end destination early the next morning without having had to pay accommodation costs in euros or endure 4am check-in for a flight".

Notes to editors:

BAA airport statistics provided by the BAA press office. Eurotunnel and Channel ferry statistics provided by the Passenger Shipping Association.

The Mosaic classification system of UK consumers was provided by Experian.

About Stena Line (<http://www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry/>):

In the UK alone, Stena Line offers two daily crossings on its Harwich to Hook of Holland route as well as over 30 daily crossings on its five different routes to Ireland (Stranraer to Belfast, Fleetwood to Larne, Holyhead to Dublin, Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire and Fishguard to Rosslare) providing fast and efficient crossings with excellent onboard services and facilities.

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