

PRESS RELEASE



Plans unveiled for new luxury floating hotel in Edinburgh

Plans for Scotland's first luxury static floating hotel were lodged today with the City of Edinburgh Council. The former Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB) tender, MV Fingal, will be converted into a 23 bedroom hotel, berthed permanently at the Prince of Wales Dock in Edinburgh's historic port of Leith.

The £3.5m investment by the Royal Yacht Britannia's trading company, Royal Yacht Enterprises, will see this classically designed ship transformed to provide the ultimate in luxury, offering a wide range of bedroom suites, cabins with private balconies, duplex apartments, and a stunning Presidential Suite.

The 'boatique' hotel is expected to open in 2019 and create at least 30 permanent new jobs in the hospitality industry, added to the 170 already employed directly at *Britannia*.

The hotel concept has been created by the Pedley Group and all the bedrooms will be named after Stevenson lighthouses nominated by the NLB. The interior design has been inspired by Fingal's rich maritime history, blending the avant-garde expectations of discerning guests with the functional necessities of luxury retreats.

(See artist's impressions of exterior of Fingal, the Presidential Royal Suite and Breakfast Lounge)

Developing Fingal represents natural organic growth for the award-winning team at *Britannia* and, as well as business synergies and operational efficiencies, the hotel will generate an income stream that is not reliant on visitors to the Royal Yacht but will nevertheless help secure its long term future.

The Royal Yacht Britannia, berthed at Ocean Terminal in Leith, attracted a record 350,000 visitors last year and is renowned for providing the very highest standards of customer experience: having been officially assessed as Scotland's Best Attraction for the last 11 years running by national tourism agency, VisitScotland.

Britannia's Chief Executive Bob Downie said, 'Having excelled in the visitor attraction market for nearly 20 years, we are very much looking forward to the challenges of operating in the luxury hotel market and the benefits it will generate for *Britannia* over the years to come'.

One of the UK hospitality industry's most eminent and respected figures, Peter Lederer, past UK Hotelier of the Year, and former Chairman of the Gleneagles Hotel said, "This new 'boatique' hotel has the potential to be the best hotel experience in Edinburgh and given the quality of the *Britannia* experience, I am really looking forward to seeing a new benchmark in Scotland."

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Notes for Editors:

1. *Britannia* is owned by The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust (Registered Charity No. SC028070). The Trust's responsibility is to maintain and preserve *Britannia* in keeping with her former role and to display her to the public as a key part of British maritime history. Income generated from running the Royal Yacht as a visitor attraction and events venue goes towards preserving the yacht for future generations. *Britannia* is the official headquarters of the Association of Royal Yachtsmen.
2. The Pedley Group is a new company formed by Alan Pedley and Stephen Flanagan. Alan has previously manufactured and installed over 180,000 hotel rooms in 61 countries for most of the world's leading chains including; IHG, Hyatt, Hilton, and Marriott. Stephen is a brand strategist who specialises in the concept, creation and delivery of projects that have a poignant voice and cultural impact.
3. Launched in 1963, Fingal was the last ship to be built by the Blythwood Shipbuilding Company in Glasgow. Like all NLB Ships, Fingal was Leith registered but spent most of her service life working out of Oban for 30 years, followed by her last six working years, based in Stromness, Orkney, before being sold to a private owner who lovingly maintained the ship for 14 years before *Britannia* purchased the vessel in August 2014.