



National Historic Ships UK

FORWARD PLAN | 2019 – 2023

FORWARD PLAN

As the independent advisory body set up by Government to represent the interest of historic vessels, *National Historic Ships UK* (NHS-UK) has identified a number of key goals on which to focus its energies over the next five years. These reflect sector feedback and demand, as well as highlighting issues which are central to our work. Whilst NHS-UK will continue to deliver its usual services as set down in its core remit and aims – see www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk/about – it will, in addition, prioritise funding and implementing the following objectives:

1/ REVIEWING THE NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS REGISTERS

Following the *Year of the Registers* in 2011 and a public consultation on proposals for the *National Historic Fleet* (NHF) in 2013, we have developed a new methodology for assessing vessels in groups of like craft under a revised scoring system. We will seek funding to increase our capacity, so that a full review of the Registers can be undertaken to these guidelines. This will be done in conjunction with the *National Small Boat Register* (NSBR)

and will ensure the Registers are up to date going forwards. As part of this, we will:

- implement the new mechanism for assessing registered historic craft
- review both the *National Register of Historic Vessels* (NRHV) and the NSBR to identify any changes to the NHF
- visit any vessel to whom a change in Fleet status will apply
- produce statements of significance for all vessels in the NHF
- run stakeholder events to inform the sector about the review process.



Previous page: [Photo Competition 2018](#)
Graceful lines, by Russell Anlay.



Right: [Photo Competition 2014](#)
Deckhands, by Chrissie Westgate.

2/ DEVELOP AND INCREASE OUR TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

An important part of our remit is the provision of expert advice to Government, local authorities, the *Heritage Lottery* and other funding bodies, historic vessel owners and multiple sector stakeholders. In the last twelve years, we have been called on to give advice in relation to some 89 funding applications and have provided guidance on a range of high profile vessel or maritime skills projects. To ensure we continue to meet demand, we will:

- strengthen the membership of our *Council of Experts* and call upon this body as required to assist with technical queries
- establish a subject specialist network which corresponds to groups of vessels on the Register. This will act as a source of advice for both NHS-UK and the sector on different types of craft.

3/ CREATE A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO WORKING WITH VESSELS AT RISK

One of the most challenging aspects of our work is managing vessels at risk. Under current legislation, there is no protection for craft on the NRHV or NHF meaning that NHS-UK is not able to prevent a vessel from being destroyed or scrapped if a decision is taken to end its life, although we make every effort to seek a viable alternative. To help vessels at risk, we will:

- update and re-publish *Recording and Deconstructing Historic Vessels*, the first two volumes of our three-part guidance series *Understanding Historic Vessels*
- introduce a traffic light system for vessels on the NHF to highlight and help us reduce the number of craft at risk
- develop and publish a guidance paper for vessel custodians detailing the level of help we can offer in at-risk situations, the best approach to take and the process to follow
- improve the display and type of material held in relation to craft on the *National Archive of Historic Vessels* (NAHV).



*Right: Photo Competition 2018
Puffer *Spartan* and her
skipper, by Alan Kempster.*

*Below: Photo Competition 2018
Radio Caroline dramatics,
by Stacey Belbin.*



4/ CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARITIME SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

In addition to our direct work with historic vessels, we are also concerned with their supporting infrastructure and the regeneration of traditional maritime skills to ensure that the facilities and knowledge necessary to maintain, operate and conserve these craft in accordance with their significance survives. We will continue our work in this field by:

- completing the second phase of the *Heritage Lottery* funded *Shipshape Heritage Training Partnership* (SHTP 2) project to introduce 16 young people into the maritime heritage sector
- expanding the range of assignments, case studies and learning tools offered in our *Historic Vessel Conservation* distance learning course
- increasing the activities of *Shipshape Network* hubs and creating new regions to ensure improved UK-wide coverage.

*Right: Photo Competition 2018
VIC32 passing the Titan Crane at the site
of the former John Brown shipyard,
Clydebank, by Graeme Phanco.*



5/ RAISE AWARENESS OF MARITIME HERITAGE TO NEW AUDIENCES

Over the last twelve years, NHS-UK has worked hard to inspire confidence in the sector and form a connection with custodians of the many vessels which fall within our remit. With the establishment of strong links in the field, we feel our main stakeholders have a better understanding of what we do and how we can help them. Going forwards, we are keen to look beyond our immediate sector and encourage engagement and participation in maritime heritage from the wider public by:

- promoting events and activities open to historic vessels which are likely to have a broader appeal
- building on the success of our annual photography competition to create a new outreach scheme which will engage the public with vessels on the NRHV
- using opportunities created by anniversaries or events, such as the centenary of the First World War or the *City of Culture* initiative, to find ways to link historic vessels to current news stories and public celebrations.



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WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

If, by 2023, the following outcomes have been achieved, we will consider this Plan has been successful:

- the *National Registers* are in good health with a robust process in place for on-going assessment
- the number of vessels at risk has reduced and they are better recorded
- our capacity to provide technical advice has increased
- the SHTP 2 trainees have graduated with a strong record of sector employment
- current students have completed the *Historic Vessel Conservation* course and more have signed up
- new regions have been added to the *Shipshape Network* giving better UK coverage
- we have undertaken a further outreach project and logged engagement with new audiences.

*Below: Photo Competition 2018
Pinky and Gracie, by Chrissie Westgate.*



We welcome any comments on this Forward Plan and, for more information on our progress and activities, please visit our website www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk

You can also write to us at:
National Historic Ships UK, Park Row,
Greenwich, London SE10 9NF.

*Left: Photo Competition 2014,
Final adjustments, by Mark Grocock.*