

NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS UK



Clinging on, by Chrys Tremththamor.



Annual Review 2024 - 2025



Our Remit

National Historic Ships UK (NHS-UK) receives an annual grant from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) based on the following remit:

- to act as the primary source of independent and objective advice to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, other government departments, the Devolved Administrations and public bodies on matters which directly or indirectly involve or affect historic vessels and the environments in which they are found
- to act as a source of advice to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other grant-giving bodies across the UK on maritime conservation priorities, and applications they receive relating to funding historic ships, their environments, and associated projects
- to provide leadership and strategic vision across the UK historic ships communities and wider maritime sectors by acting as the official voice for historic vessels, pursuing proactive engagement with the sector, the UK government, the Devolved Administrations, public and private agencies, and communities at large.

Activities & Achievements

We are currently working towards the priorities set down in our [Forward Plan 2024-2028](#). During this financial year, a [Review](#) of outputs over the previous five-year period of 2019-2023 was published on our website.



Shetland zulu with bumpkin, by John Cadd.



The National Registers

A key objective is maintenance of the National Registers which comprise: the National Register of Historic Vessels (NRHV); the National Historic Fleet (NHF); the National Archive of Historic Vessels (NAHV); the Overseas Watch List (OWL); and the UK Replica List. 42 craft were added to the database and the website was updated to include a refreshed home page, useful links section and multi-image features.

Work to review registered service vessels continued, culminating in a [Report](#) summarising the assessment of 157 historic lifeboats. This confirmed NHF status for 16 lifeboats, with five retaining their existing status and 11 being newly identified as sufficiently significant to merit this recognition. The Registers Review Working Group then began scoring registered tugs as the next group of vessels within the service category.

The annual 'At Risk' analysis of NHF vessels was completed, finding little change since the last survey 14 months previously, with 10% of the Fleet considered at risk of being lost and a further 20% of concern and requiring ongoing monitoring.

New guidance entitled [Managing Health & Safety on Major Projects](#) was published to assist with large scale vessel conservation work, helping to ensure that traditional skills remain accessible for these types of projects.

Continued support was given to larger institutions reviewing their historic vessel collections, in particular National Museum of Northern Ireland and Swansea Museum. Over 70 craft were advertised through the Vessels for Sale List and a new home was secured for the Looe Lugger *White Heather* following a 'last chance to save' campaign.



Butterfly Kiss, by Annabelle Brown.

Don't Rock the Boat

A need was identified for specialist guidance on stability for static floating vessels and a project was set up in partnership with marine consulting engineers Beckett Rankine, supported by a grant of £9,995 from Lloyds Register Foundation. After five months of research and case study visits, a [67-page document](#) was produced highlighting regulatory requirements and setting standards for best practice. Aimed at historic vessels no longer in operational use, it seeks to help their owners assess, manage and improve structural safety, working in conjunction with contractors and service providers to the industry.



Painting by numbers, by David Stearne.



Powerwashing *Mayflower*, by Kaden Gardener.



Prime satisfaction, by Kim Hogg.

Learning and Skills

A second training workshop was developed on *Understanding the Conservation Gateway* and made available alongside the existing workshop on *Writing Statements of Significance*. Suitable for trainees, apprentices, volunteers and maritime heritage professionals alike, these bookable sessions are proving popular. Both workshops continue to be part of the Heritage Engineering Marine Technician apprenticeship course programme at Pioneer Sailing Trust and were also delivered to staff at the Canal & River Trust.

The Traditional Seafarer Introductory Certificate was offered by various providers including Sea-Change Sailing Trust onboard engineless barge *Blue Mermaid* as part of their funded Skippers for the Future scheme. A traditional skills taster day was held for staff from Royal Museums Greenwich and *The Golden Hinde* at St Katharine Docks as course marketing and bursaried places were made available for a three-day voyage thanks to support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Forums, Meetings & Events



Ready to tack, by Philippe Saudreau.

Two Big Ship Forum sessions were held with a focus on interpretation and the use of AI, as well as international case studies in conservation. The Lug Rig Forum also met bi-annually and has grown in membership, facilitating UK-wide connections to encourage shared knowledge and learning. Throughout the year, we visited

more than 60 historic vessels and attended over 95 in-person or online meetings. Highlights included presenting at the UK Maritime Heritage Forum, a team outing on PS *Waverley*, taking part in the Heritage Debate, visiting the Southampton Boat Show and attending a garden party for the arts and heritage sector at Buckingham Palace.



The mighty *Niagara* heading up river, by James Crisp.

Outreach & Engagement



New porthole, by Greg White.



Shiny happy vessel, by Luciana Rosot.



Master carver, by Kim Hogg.

A new partnership with the Royal Society of Marine Artists and the Wapping Group of Artists led to the launch of 'Afloat or Ashore', a painting competition with prizes for work depicting vessels on the National Historic Ships Registers. The best artworks were featured in an exhibition at Exeter Customs House later in the year.

Separately, almost 500 entries were received for the NHS-UK Photography Competition with winners announced in the annual Awards film on location at Lake Windermere. An exhibition showcasing the previous year's top photographs was opened

with a special preview at The Historic Dockyard Chatham in July and a retrospective of all competition winners entitled 'Vessels & Voyagers' was on display at Dover Museum & Bronze Age Boat Gallery for a two-month period.

The medium of film also proved a successful means of raising awareness for traditional skills with the production of *Wind, Tide and Oar*, a compelling exploration of engineless sailing from Huw Wahl funded by Arts Council England. Premiering at *Cutty Sark*, the opening night included a panel session hosted by the NHS-UK Director.



Personnel

Staff & Volunteers:

- Hannah Cunliffe
Director and Chair of Council
- Paula Palmer
Resources Manager
- Victoria Wallworth
Policy, Projects and
Course Manager (job share)
- Peter Green
Field Worker
- Luis Vicente
Projects Officer and Policy, Projects
and Course Manager (job share)
- Kathryn Jones
Administration and PR Co-ordinator
- Stuart Anderson, Registration Volunteer
- Phil Mikulski, Communications and
Administration Volunteer.

Council of Experts: (bi-annual meetings)

Andrew Baines, Stephen Beresford, Wyn Davies;
Helen Doe, Linda Fitzpatrick, Paul Jeffery,
Eric Kentley, Robin Masefield, John Megoran,
David Newberry, Simon Stephens and
Stuart Wilkinson.

Award Winners 2024:

Marsh Volunteer Awards:

Individual – Christopher Barlow,
The West Wales Maritime Heritage Society

Team – The Wick Society Boat Team

Shipshape Network – The Pythoneers,
Chesterfield Canal Trust

Lifetime Achievement – Pam Bathurst,
The Medway Queen Preservation Society.

Martyn Heighton Excellence in Conservation Award:

Winner: Bernard Condon, lifeboat

Grace Paterson Ritchie

Highly Commended: Boathouse 4 at Portsmouth
Historic Quarter, replica CMB4R.

Operational Flagships of the Year 2025:

Lugger *Barnabas*

Steamship *Sir Walter Scott*

Motor yacht *Llanthony*

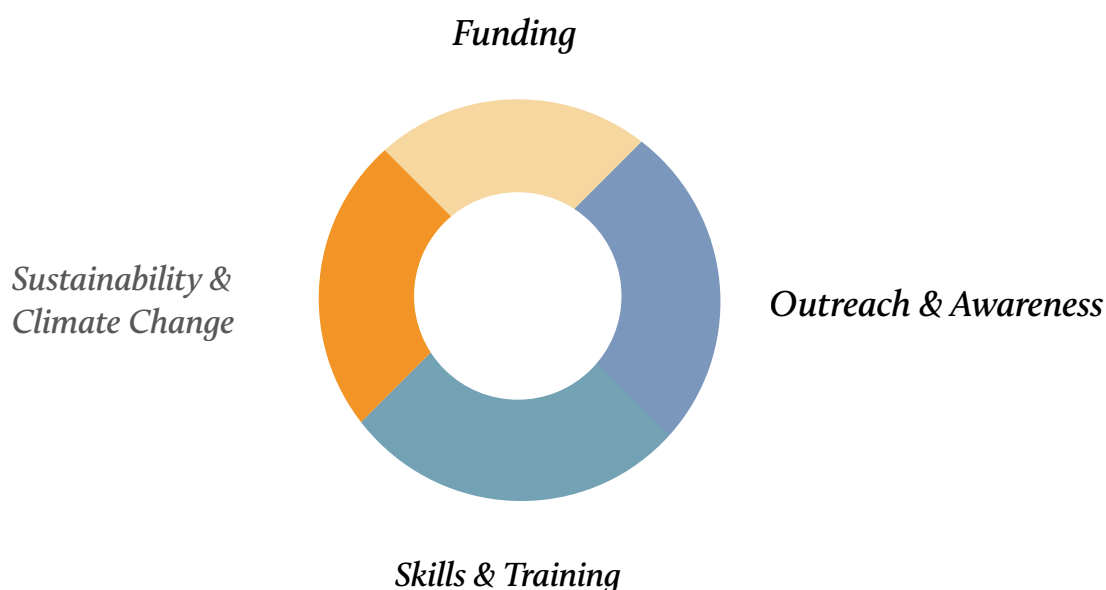
Narrowboat *Dane*.

Photography Competition winners can be
found on the back of the 2026 Calendar.



Martha II, by Chrissie Westgate.

Strategic Priorities 2024– 2028



Measuring Progress | Milestones Reached in 2024 – 2025

FUNDING

- Updated the [List of Funding Sources](#) available to support historic vessels
- Gave a Knowledge Briefing to Heritage Fund staff
- Collaborated on [Historic Ships Research](#) with the National Heritage Memorial Fund and Heritage Fund to gain a deeper understanding of sector need
- Issued 10 grants totalling £7,400 through our Small Grants Scheme, supported by Winter & Co (Marine) Ltd
- Introduced a [Discounts Scheme](#) for registered historic vessel custodians.

SKILLS & TRAINING:

- Held a taster day for the [Traditional Seafarer Introductory Course](#) at St Katharine Docks
- Developed second [Training Workshop](#) on the Conservation Gateway
- Appointed two new markers to the [Historic Vessel Conservation Course](#), uploaded a case study on replication and hosted a student webinar
- Supported recognition of four [Heritage Harbours](#): Ipswich, Bideford, Ramsgate and Gloucester
- Held two Shipshape Network Hub events – National Museums Liverpool (North) and Boathouse 4 (South-East).

SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE:

- Attended mobile heritage advocacy groups hosted by Heritage Alliance and National Transport Trust sharing learning on sustainability issues including use of fuels.

OUTREACH & AWARENESS

- Hosted painting competition in partnership with the Royal Society of Marine Artists
- Held exhibition preview and 'in conversation' event at the Historic Dockyard Chatham
- 'Vessels and Voyagers' exhibition hosted by Dover Museum
- Joined Railway 200 programme as a partner celebrating links between rail and maritime
- Premiered Awards film on YouTube in November achieving 1,200 views
- Partnered with the International Congress of Maritime Museums distributing 23 free copies of *Conserving Historic Vessels* to 16 countries and introducing a new discount offer for its members
- Cited as a case study in *Heritage on the Brink*, published by Heritage Alliance
- Featured in classic yachting magazine *Goose* with a full cover image and 13-page spread on the work of NHS-UK.

Financial Statement | 2024 – 2025



Blue Mermaid, by Shaun Mills.

Income and Expenditure 2024 – 2025

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Dept. for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) Grant | 232,837 |
| Other Revenue | 31,211 |
| Total Income | 264,048 |
| Service Delivery Costs | |
| Salaries | 163,102 |
| Pensions | 14,293 |
| NIC | 15,325 |
| Total | 192,720 |
| Information, Communication & Technology | |
| Service Contract | 8,400 |
| Office Supplies | 358 |
| Total | 8,758 |
| Communications & Marketing | |
| Printing | 4,260 |
| Subscriptions | 2,111 |
| PR/Event Hosting/Public Shows | 9,270 |
| Total | 15,641 |
| NMM Service Level Agreement Charges | 14,068 |
| Professional Fees & Finance Sundry | |
| Awards and Prizes | 2,332 |
| Consultancy | 15,352 |
| Insurance | 854 |
| Grants claimed | 4,400 |
| Total | 22,938 |
| Council & Team Outreach | |
| Travel | 2,509 |
| Accommodation | 1,773 |
| Subsistence | 1,095 |
| Total | 5,377 |
| Total Expenditure | 259,502 |
| Income/Expenditure Out-turn | 4,546 |



Mariquita at dawn, by Will Davies.

Contact

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Photography competition entrants



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport