



NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS UK

The official voice for historic vessels in the United Kingdom

# POPULATION VIEWS

## ATTITUDE & OPINION FACT FILE

THE NATIONAL HISTORIC  
SHIPS UK SURVEY

# 2021

What the public thinks of heritage transport...







# NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS UK

The official voice for historic vessels in the United Kingdom

In 2021, National Historic Ships UK collaborated with the Federation Skills Trust to carry out a national survey of over 1,200 British adults to better understand the level of interest and support for the heritage transport sector in our country.

This research has provided some key insights into public perception and set a benchmark so that, going forwards, we can continue to measure changing attitudes and progress.

## Survey Headlines

As many as 1 in 4 (24%) British adults like to visit heritage transport sites and as many as 1 in 5 (20%) have done so in the last 5 years.

We also know that as many as 1 in 5 (18%) say they have an interest in heritage transport and 14% want to learn more about heritage transport projects - including ships, boats and vessels - that are near to them.

These baseline results demonstrate the sense of value which heritage transport - such as ships, boats, planes, railways and road vehicles - has for the British public.

**1 IN 4 ADULTS**  
LIKE TO VISIT HERITAGE TRANSPORT



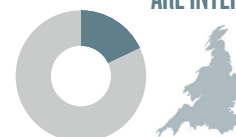
Like to visit heritage transport sites including maritime

**10 MILLION**  
HAVE VISITED IN THE LAST 5 YEARS



The estimated number of British adults (20%) that have visited a heritage transport site in the last 5 years

**18% OF ADULTS**  
ARE INTERESTED



The proportion of adults that say they have an interest in heritage transport

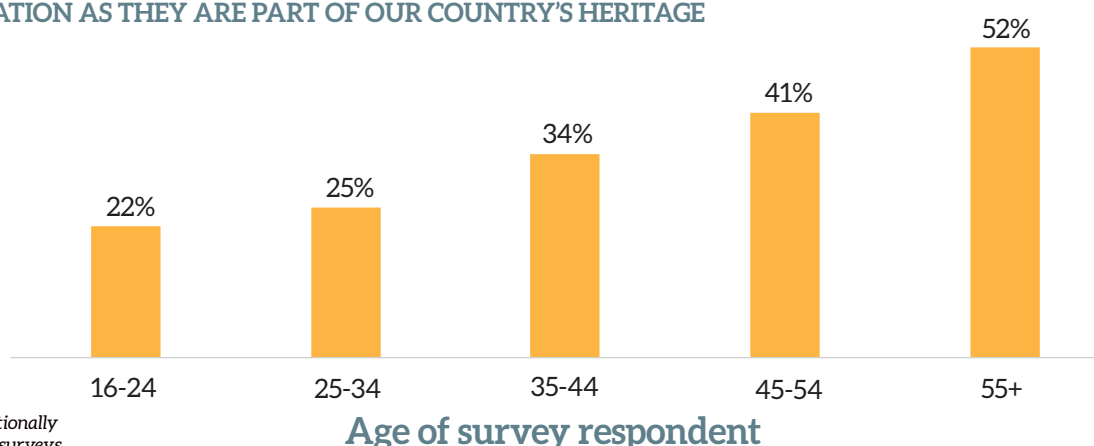
## Protecting and Preserving our Cultural Heritage

Overall, around 4 in 10 (39%) British adults agree that heritage transport should be preserved as it is part of our country's heritage. A similar proportion (38%) agree that maintaining our heritage transport is important as it is part of our country's culture.

However, when reviewing levels of agreement across different age groups, it is clear that this view is gradually eroding and further action is needed to ensure that school leavers and younger adults continue to engage with our heritage.

Agreement with the statement...

**WE SHOULD PRESERVE HERITAGE TRANSPORT LIKE VEHICLES, BOATS AND SHIPS, PLANES AND AVIATION AS THEY ARE PART OF OUR COUNTRY'S HERITAGE**



Base: 1,232 Nationally representative surveys

Amongst adults under 35, the proportion that recognise the significance of heritage transport falls to around 1 in 4, whereas the equivalent proportion exceeds 1 in 2 amongst adults aged 55+ (52%).

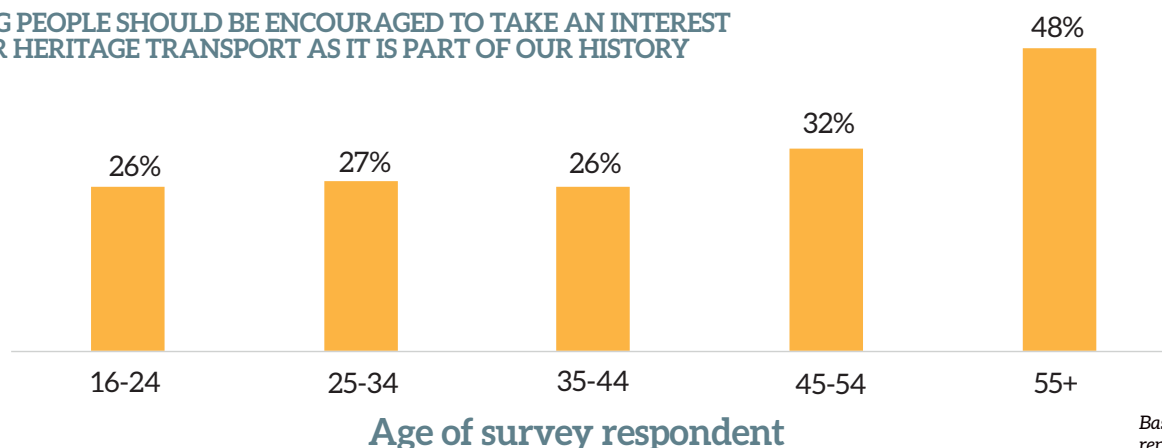
## Making our heritage more accessible

More than 1 in 4 (26%) of young people would welcome greater encouragement to take an active interest in our heritage transport, seeing it as an integral part of Britain's history. Older generations feel the same, with almost half of those surveyed aged 55+ recognising the importance of involving young people with the heritage.

We need to make heritage assets more accessible to young audiences, exploring new ways of demonstrating their potential through participation and learning, skills training and well-being activities.

Agreement with the statement...

**YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO TAKE AN INTEREST  
IN OUR HERITAGE TRANSPORT AS IT IS PART OF OUR HISTORY**



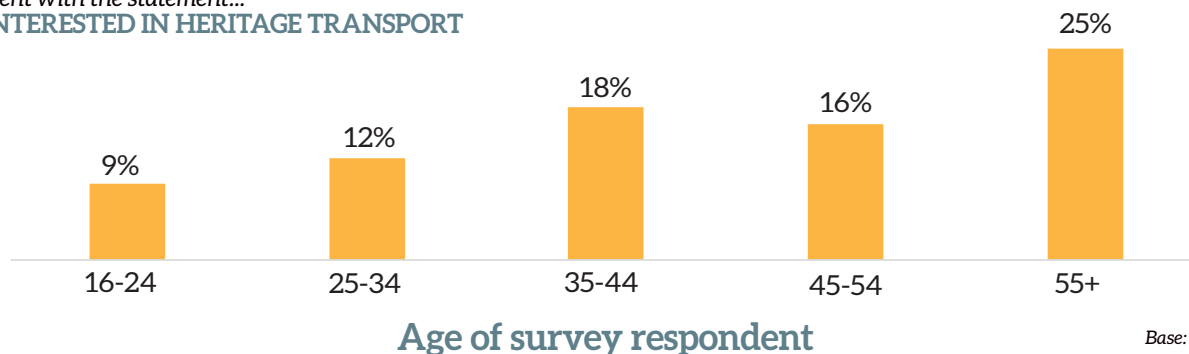
## Creating a sea-change

This survey shows current interest in heritage transport amongst 16-24 year olds at a worryingly low level of 9%. If we can't build greater enthusiasm amongst those who are the future caretakers of our heritage, Britain's surviving historic vessels will become at increasing risk.

A survey of historic vessel owners carried out by National Historic Ships UK in 2009 also indicated an ageing sector workforce with 67% of employees being 45+. In 2012, 'Mapping Heritage Craft' by Creative & Cultural Skills highlighted the large number of people aged 60+ working in the heritage sector generally, compared with the rest of the economy.

Agreement with the statement...

**I AM INTERESTED IN HERITAGE TRANSPORT**



As the Government funded independent advisory body set up to represent the interests of historic vessels, National Historic Ships UK has committed to raising awareness of maritime heritage to new audiences as one of five key priorities in its **Forward Plan 2019-2023**.

Our Shipshape Heritage Training Partnership Project (SHTP), funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund, has already provided new entry routes into the sector for 26 young people via traditional sea-faring and museum ship-keeping training placements.

The results of this short survey will help us focus our activities and will be reflected in the shape and direction of future projects. **To find out more, visit our website [www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk](http://www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk)**