



National Historic Ships



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Skills in maritime heritage receive double boost

- **£110K award from Heritage Lottery Fund**
- **Online skills network goes live**

National Historic Ships has launched Shipshape Network – a new initiative to promote skills relating to historic vessel conservation. The UK-wide Network will reach out to all those with an interest in ship preservation, providing a communications and marketing framework for the sector. The associated website includes the National Directory of Skills & Services, offering free listings for over 500 specialised craftsmen and facilities.

Shipshape Network has focussed particularly on four key regions, where a natural concentration of maritime services has been identified around a body of water – Mersey, Thames Estuary, Solent & Bristol Channel. National Historic Ships will be working with organisations and individuals within these areas to promote regeneration of skills via increased training opportunities.

Shipshape Mersey is the first region to announce a flagship training project of this kind. £110K has been awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under its Skills for the Future programme* to the National Waterways Museum, in partnership with National Historic Ships. This grant will promote furtherance of skills via a training scheme at the Heritage Boatyard, Ellesmere Port. Three 18-month training placements will be funded, covering boat repair and shipwright skills, practical boat handling techniques, and an understanding of the ethics behind historic vessel conservation.

Trainees will also be given an opportunity to broaden their experience of workplace environments by visiting other sites within the Shipshape Network, including:

- Project Boleh, Portsmouth - currently conserving junk yacht *Boleh* (Shipshape Solent)
- Brinklow Boat Services - a well established boatyard with experience of working with both metal and wood (Shipshape Mersey)
- Windermere Steamboat Museum - working on a unique collection of historic leisure vessels (Shipshape Mersey)
- Harker's Yard, Pioneer Skills Centre, Essex - maintains sailing smack *Pioneer* as well as restoring other historic vessels and building new craft (Shipshape Thames Estuary).

A key outcome of the scheme will be the development of accredited modules, allowing trainees to be formally assessed on what they have learned through a system which will then be transferable to students on related courses, based elsewhere in the UK.

Martyn Heighton, Director of National Historic Ships, said: "Listing historic vessels on the National Register of Historic Vessels is not enough. If we are to conserve these treasures from our maritime past for future generations, it is vital that we grow the skills to look after them. This project is a step in the right direction to achieving this."

John Inch, Manager at the National Waterways Museum, said: "It is absolutely fantastic to get this funding. It is vital to our ambition of creating a sustainable working boatyard at the Museum. As well as maintaining and restoring our historic boats, it will help us to keep these important heritage skills alive by allowing us to train more people."

Trainee vacancies will be advertised through The Waterways Trust & National Historic Ships towards the end of 2010. For more information on the project or to discover other opportunities via the Shipshape Network, please visit: www.shipshapenetwork.org.uk.

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Notes for Editors:

National Historic Ships advises the Department of Culture, Media & Sport and a range of grant giving organisations on priorities for ship preservation and is the official voice for historic vessels in the UK. It maintains the National Register of Historic Vessels, which lists over a thousand significant craft including vessels from the National Waterways Museum collection.

www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk

Shipshape Network is a National Historic Ships' initiative which provides a UK-wide communications and marketing framework for everyone with an interest in ship preservation. It promotes the regeneration of associated heritage skills & facilities in regions across the UK, with the Heritage Boatyard a key player in the Shipshape Mersey region. www.shipshapenetwork.org.uk

The Waterways Trust is a national charity which works in partnership with individuals, communities and organisations to conserve, restore, improve and interpret all aspects of the UK's inland waterways. It owns and operates three waterways museums. www.thewaterwaystrust.org.uk

The **National Waterways Museum** at Ellesmere Port, together with the Waterways Museum at Gloucester Docks and Canal Museum at Stoke Bruerne, house the designated inland waterways collection. Together with the Waterways Archive, these museums bring to life the fascinating story of our waterways.

www.nwm.org.uk

The National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port is on South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH65 4FW. Follow the brown signs from the M53 Junction. There is free parking there. It's a 15 minute drive from Chester, 25 from Manchester and 45 from Liverpool. The Museum is a ten minute walk from Ellesmere Port train station and 20 minutes from the bus station. www.nwm.org.uk/ellesmere

*** *Skills for the Future***

The Heritage Lottery Fund's *Skills for the Future* programme is supporting heritage organisations across the UK to create new training places. Grants range from £100,000 to £1million for a number of traineeships with an emphasis on high-quality work-based training. The programme will help equip organisations to engage with the widest possible range of people and inspire them to get involved with heritage.

Heritage Lottery Fund

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK. Website: www.hlf.org.uk. For more information please contact Katie Owen, HLF press office, on tel: 020 7591 6036/07973 613820.