

# NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS UK



Watching the wind on *Bessie Ellen*, by Del Hogg.



## Annual Review 2023 - 2024



## Our Remit

National Historic Ships UK (NHS-UK) receives an annual grant from the Department of 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

2023-2024 saw the launch of a new five-year [Forward Plan](#) after an online survey assessed sector needs and priorities. It set out the following key areas of focus: funding; skills and training; sustainability and climate change; outreach and awareness.



Between the fjords on *Noorderlicht*, by Amy Lawson.



## The National Registers

Integral to the work of NHS-UK are the National Registers which include: 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. Sixty craft were added to the database and 10 vessels benefited from the Small Grants Scheme, supported by the Historic Ships Insurance Policies run in conjunction with Winter & Co (Marine) Ltd.

An online Vessels for Sale list was created to help find new custodians for vessels on the Registers and keep track of ownership changes. Declarations of Intent to Deconstruct were published for the lightship *North Carr* and the

lifeboat *William & Kate Johnston* with the latter being found a new home within its former service area. Digital recording of HMS *President* was facilitated in partnership with National Museum of the Royal Navy and NHS-UK participated in stakeholder workshops for HMS *Unicorn*.

Two online forums were created to support lug-rigged craft and museum ships, and a research internship hosted via the University of Oxford examined social and economic impacts for the latter. The National Heritage Memorial Fund commissioned a detailed piece of research into the NHF in collaboration with NHS-UK and ongoing support was given with stakeholder surveys and interviews.



Journey to the big refit, by Neil Holmes.



## Vessels at Risk

An 'At Risk' assessment was undertaken of the NHF based on a survey of vessel owners and series of vessel visits, with a traffic light system introduced to highlight and monitor the risk rating of individual craft. Related guidance was published, outlining the help NHS-UK can provide in at-risk situations, the best approach to adopt and what process to follow. The publications [Recording Historic Vessels](#) and [Deconstructing Historic Vessels](#) were improved for accessibility and readability purposes, with changes aimed at the visually impaired who use screen readers.



The *Chieftain* free after lockdown, by David Stearne.



*Trinity* lighthouse boat at sunrise, by Dan Brand.



Dusk round the pond, by Lawrence Williams.

## Skills & Infrastructure

Three successful Shipshape Network Hub events were hosted at National Museum of the Royal Navy, Hartlepool (North), the Historic Dockyard Chatham (South-East) and the Pioneer Sailing Trust, Brightlingsea (East). Working with delivery providers, a new Traditional Seafarer Introductory certificate was launched for those aged 14 plus.

A workshop on writing statements of significance was delivered to the Heritage Engineering Marine Technician apprentices enrolled by Pioneer Sailing Trust. In partnership with the Maritime Heritage Trust (MHT) and Historic England, the Heritage Harbours scheme continued to develop and expand.

Dedicated web pages and a location map were provided by MHT, with 12 Heritage Harbours announced during the year.

## Online Activity, Outreach & Engagement



*Mariette Crew*, by Clive Blount.



*Sailing on Maybe*, by Paul Boomsma.

Thanks to a grant from the Philip Nicholas Charitable Trust of £13,670, the Shipshape Network web pages were upgraded, involving the improved design and layout of 80 project pages, 16 zone and hub pages and a new streamlined search function for the Skills & Services Directory. A photographic exhibition showcasing the 2022 winners was opened by the Deputy Mayor of Medway at the Historic Dockyard Chatham, with sponsors and guests enjoying a short trip

and lunch on board sailing barge *Edith May* beforehand. In November, the NHS-UK Annual Awards film premiered on YouTube, celebrating achievement across the sector through the Flagship, Volunteer and Conservation Awards, as well as winners of the popular Photography Competition with its theme of ‘In all weathers’. The Royal Yacht *Britannia* was chosen as the Awards venue in this Coronation year and the film received over 1,400 views.



*Away*, by George Fisk.



*Hard at it*, by Stacey Belbin.

## Meetings & Events



A blue Blackwater morning, by Chrissie Westgate.



Bessie Ellen, by Paul Boomsma.



Jolie Brise, by Clive Blount.

In addition to being on the organising committee for the annual UK Maritime Heritage Forum held at National Museums Liverpool, NHS-UK was a joint host for the RINA Historic Ships Conference at Royal Museums Greenwich, where Director Hannah Cunliffe chaired a session and the final Q&A. Working with MHT, a webinar was held for historic vessel owners on the topic of governance, supported by the legal firm Bates Wells who provided 20 free 1-1 sessions for attendees.

With over 200 meetings and events attended by NHS-UK staff throughout the year and 50 historic vessels visited, highlights included: the ICMM Globoat Seminar, the Engineless Sailing Jolly, the HMS Victory Technical Committee dinner, opening the Society for Sailing Barge Research’s new Archive, Exeter Heritage Harbour Festival, the RNLI 200 exhibition launch in Chatham and participation in the Heritage Council at DCMS.



# Personnel

## Staff & Volunteers

- Hannah Cunliffe  
Director and Chair of Council;
- Paula Palmer  
Resources Manager;
- Victoria Wallworth  
Policy, Projects and Course Manager;
- Peter Green, Projects Manager  
(maternity cover, ended March 2024);
- Luis Vicente  
Projects Officer;
- Kathryn Jones  
Administration & PR Co-ordinator;
- Stuart Anderson  
Registration Volunteer;
- Rachel Galbraith  
Research Intern (3-week placement).

## 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.



Fuel boats *Tadworth* and *Bordesley* by Kev Maslin.



Like a mirror, by Tony Kiddle.

## Award Winners 2023:

### Marsh Volunteer Awards

- Individual – Colin Barton, The Excelsior Trust;
- Team – Friends of Lady Daphne (FOLD);
- Shipshape Network (joint) – The volunteers of the Sutton Hoo Ship's Company;
- Shipshape Network (joint) – The Pilgrim of Brixham volunteers.

### Martyn Heighton Excellence in Conservation Award

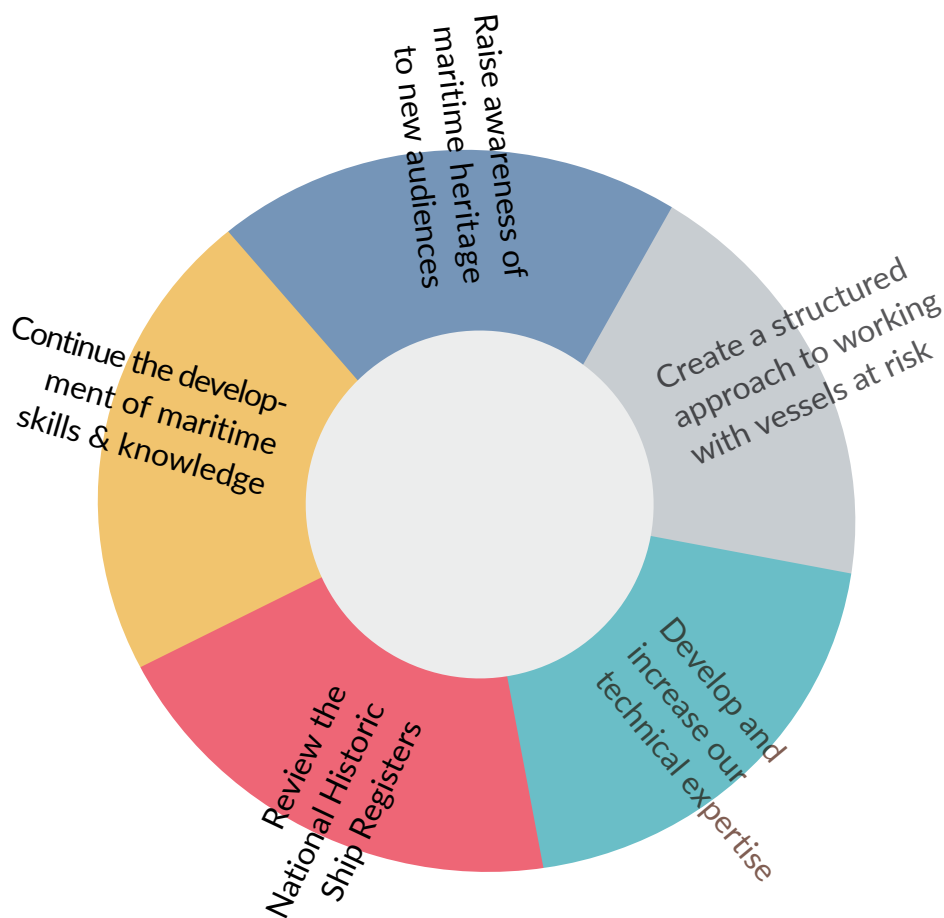
Winner: Hull City Council, *Spurn* Lightship.  
Highly Commended: Johnson and Loftus Boat Builders, *St Vincent*.

### Flagships of the Year 2024:

National: Paddle steamer *Waverley*  
Operational: Steam tug *Challenge*  
Operational: Brixham trawler *Provident*  
Static: Spritsail barge *Lady Daphne*.

**Photography Competition winners** can be found on the back of the 2025 Calendar.

# Measuring progress | Milestones reached in 2023 – 2024



## Strategic Priorities 2023 – 2024

### Review the National Historic Ship Registers:

- Assessment of lifeboat group completed (8% of all vessels on National Registers) with final 11 lifeboat visits.
- 30 tugs scored and 12 visited.
- 37 statements of significance written or updated.

- Guidance on Recording and Deconstruction made accessible.

### Continue the Development of Maritime Skills and Knowledge:

- Three Hub events held.
- Shipshape Network web pages upgraded and re-designed.
- Traditional Seafarer Introductory Certificate launched.
- New case study on replication filmed for HVC course.

### Develop and increase our Technical Expertise:

- Big Ship and Lug Rig Forums established.
- Monitoring commission undertaken for National Lottery Heritage Fund on steam tug *Challenge*.
- Participation in steering group for Historic Ships research commissioned by the National Heritage Memorial Fund.

### Raise Awareness of Maritime Heritage to new Audiences:

- Awards ceremony streamed online.
- Photography Exhibition held at Historic Dockyard Chatham.
- Outreach including conference presentations, interviews and webinar hosting.
- Online engagement across three platforms with followers totalling 15,000.

### Create a structured Approach to working with Vessels at Risk:

- At Risk Assessment undertaken of NHF.
- Traffic Light system implemented.
- At Risk Guidance published.



# Financial Statement | 2023 – 2024



Gentle ripples, by James Crisp.

## *Income and Expenditure* 2023 – 2024

Dept. of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) grant	228,276
Other revenue	18,894
<b>Total</b>	<b>247,170</b>

### *Service delivery costs*

Salaries	165,799
Pensions	13,162
NIC	15,797
<b>Total</b>	<b>194,758</b>

### *Information, communication & technology*

Service contract	8,556
Office supplies	883
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,439</b>

### *Communications & marketing*

Printing	6,531
Subscriptions	1,728
PR/event hosting/public shows	3,985
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,244</b>

### *NMM service level agreement charges* 14,004

### *Professional fees & finance sundry*

Awards and prizes	1,493
Consultancy	21,248
Insurance	814
Grants	5,450
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,005</b>

### *Council & team outreach*

Travel	5,054
Accommodation	2,135
Subsistence	1,099
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,288</b>

### *Total expenditure \** 267,738

### *Income-expenditure out-turn* -20,568

\*Additional expenditure due to maternity cover costs and drawn from the NHS-UK's small reserve fund.



Way out on the Bowsprit, by Lucy Tulloch.

## Contact

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