



NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS UK
The official voice for historic vessels in the United Kingdom

Keeping History Afloat

The Canal & River Trust, in partnership with National Historic Ships UK (NHS-UK), has been awarded £210,800 from the Heritage Lottery Skills for the Future Fund programme to run six boatbuilding traineeships at the Heritage Boatyard, National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port. The Keeping History Afloat project was launched in 2011 to help regenerate traditional boatbuilding skills, with a focus on the restoration of the inland waterways collection based at the Museum.

The trainees work towards a level 2 NVQ Diploma in Marine Engineering, accompanied by a traditional skills matrix. Throughout their 18-month placements, they are also given the opportunity to broaden their experience by spending time at a range of other sites including: the Windermere Steamboat Museum, the Boatbuilding Academy Lyme Regis and commercial boatyard Brinklow Boat Services. They receive specialist conservation training from the Collections Manager, following the guidelines set down in the NHS-UK publication 'Conserving Historic Vessels'.



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As a legacy of the project, a series of learning units have been developed and formally accredited by the awarding body Edexcel to become a new level 3 BTEC Diploma in Historic Vessel Conservation. This course will be offered for the first time later this year at the International Boatbuilding Training College (IBTC), Lowestoft, and comprises 280 learning hours, covering topics such as historic vessel significance, vessel evaluation and stabilisation, recording and deconstruction, building replicas and different conservation processes.

For more information on the Keeping History Afloat project and the new BTEC qualification, please visit: www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk / www.shipshapenetwork.org.uk

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