UK's sole surviving D-Day landing craft saved

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LCT 7074 will now be restored in time for the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

The story of LCT 7074 is a tale of survival against the odds.

She’s the only known tank landing craft (LCT) left in the UK to have taken part in the 1944 D-Day landings and one of only 10 still in existence anywhere in the world.

It’s remarkable when you consider more than 800 LCTs took part in the landings. Their job was to deliver tanks and armoured vehicles to the beaches of Normandy under heavy bombardment.

Never built to last

She’s also a real survivor given that she was never meant to survive for very long. LCTs were built in a hurry to do a specific job, and they were never intended to last.

[quote=Prof. Dominic Tweddle, Director General at the National Museum of the Royal Navy]“Now thanks to National Lottery players, we can pay our respects to her and ensure many thousands of visitors have a chance to go onboard."[/quote]

“They were huge seagoing craft, built crudely and quickly, everyday workhorses that were unrecognised for their effort,” according to Professor Dominic Tweddle, Director General at the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN), which has been instrumental in the efforts to save LCT 7074.

She also survived being sunk. In 2014, she was partially submerged in East Float Dock, Birkenhead, and lay semi-derelict following a chequered post-war career involving a stint as a floating nightclub. A grant of almost £1million from the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) that year enabled NMRN to rescue and move her back to Portsmouth.

Survival secured

But today the craft's future survival is secured. A £5m grant from the National Lottery will see her fully restored and in 2019 she will become the centrepiece of the new D-Day Museum in Southsea – just in time for the 75th anniversary of Operation Overlord.

The project “Resurrecting a D-Day Hero” is a partnership between NMRN and Portsmouth City Council and secures a sustainable future for this exceptional survivor.

“Now thanks to National Lottery players, we can pay our respects to her and ensure many thousands of visitors have a chance to go onboard,” added Tweddle.



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LCT 7074 on Gold Beach on 7 June 1944, the day after D-Day. © Imperial War Museums image record A 23941



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The D-Day Landings involved 7,000 ships which landed 160,000 soldiers National Museum of the Royal Navy

UK's surviving D-Day landing craft gets restoration go-ahead