# Traditional boatbuilding skills project in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard secures Heritage Lottery Fund support

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The project aims to ensure the ongoing preservation of traditional boatbuilding skills through the creation of a Centre of Excellence for Traditional Boatbuilding within Boathouse 4, an important building in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Development funding of £240,800 has also been awarded to help PNBPT progress its plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

Boathouse 4, an iconic building within the Historic Dockyard constructed during the massive 1930's rearmament period, will be restored and opened to the public as the Boatbuilding & Heritage Skills Training Centre. Visitors will be able to watch traditional boatbuilding in action as well as enjoy fun, tactile and engaging exhibitions on the building and the fascinating story of small boats in the British Navy, including the display of several small craft from the Trust's own collection. The centre, based in the very boathouse used during World War 2 to construct the secret three man midget X-Craft submarine, will be the perfect setting for visitors to discover the astonishing history of small boats in the Navy, from Captain Bligh cast off the Bounty in a 23ft launch to the Cockleshell Heroes in their canoes.

The centre will house a traditional boatbuilding academy and will also offer many opportunities for people to get involved with our maritime heritage, including short courses and family weekend programmes, sessions with local schools and a volunteering scheme. Therefore, as well as securing the future of Boathouse 4, this project will help to create the next generation of craftsmen to preserve iconic ships such as HMS Victory and HMS Warrior. Graduates will leave the academy with valuable carpentry and engineering skills, enabling them to develop careers in the broader heritage and marine sectors.

Peter Goodship, PNBPT Consultant Chief Executive, said: "We are immensely grateful to have received this first-round pass for what we believe is a first-class project. Not only will it increase the diversity of uses for the Historic Dockyard buildings, but it will also help us to engage further with the local community in Portsmouth and increase its sense of ownership of our boatbuilding heritage."

Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East, said: "We're delighted to be giving our initial support for plans to restore and adapt Boathouse 4. The project's focus is very much on training and heritage skills - something that the Heritage Lottery Fund has been championing for a number of years. Whilst this is just the beginning of the journey, we would like to applaud the Trust for its tenacity and commitment and look forward to liaising closely with them in the coming months."

**Notes to editors**

A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award. On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

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**Further information**

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