New life for the derelict Sheerness Dockyard



Once a symbol of Britain’s proud naval heritage, the future of Dockyard Church now lies in the hands of Kent’s aspiring young business leaders.

The majestic Dockyard Church, Sheerness has had a checkered history. It was built in the 1820s to serve the officers and workers of the then newly constructed Royal Naval Dockyard at Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppy.

It continued in use for a time after the Dockyard closed in 1960. Later it became a sports facility and a store. In 2001, the church was gutted by fire and the beleaguered building’s future looked uncertain.

Since 2015 this much-loved local landmark has been in the care of the Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust. With money from the National Lottery, the trust is now set to restore and transform the building for a brand new chapter as an Enterprise Centre that will support local young people to build thriving new businesses.

In partnership with the Kent Youth Support Trust, the project will provide: school leavers’ support and training; business premises; business mentoring and career development initiatives.



Kent Youth Support Trust Trustee, Chris Foulds believes the impact of the project will be far reaching across the community.

“The creation of business and employment opportunities for young adults in Sheerness will help drive the economic growth which we are seeking to generate."

Community benefits

Along with economic benefits, the project will also provide the local community with much needed facilities. A community café and event space venue will be available for local and regional hire. The project will also include the conservation and installation in the main body of the church of the great Dockyard Model.

On the brink

“This is a building which just a few years ago appeared to be on the brink of collapse,” says Will Palin, Chair of the Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust. “The church will now become the focus of major investment to give it a new future at the heart of life in the region”

More information on the project can be found on the Trust’s website.