Last surviving D-Day landing craft opens in



Six-year project to restore ship and open it up to the public is completed thanks to £4.7million National Lottery support.

Landing Craft Tank LCT 7074 has opened to the public at The D-Day Story museum in Portsmouth.

The landing craft is the last surviving example of more than 800 tank carrying landing craft that served at D-Day on 6 June 1944. *LCT 7074* carried 10 tanks and crew members to Normandy.

> “Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, visitors to the D-Day Story will be able to immerse themselves in the important narrative of this outstanding piece of maritime heritage.”
>
> Stuart McLeod, Director of England, London & South at The National Lottery Heritage Fund
>
> Elderly man with medals standing inside landing craft in front of tank
>
> D-Day veteran James Rawe

Visitors will be able to step on board to learn more about the history of the ship, explore two refurbished tanks and visit the upper deck, bridge and gun deck.

The project has also recreated the bridge, wheelhouse and the crew's living spaces so visitors get an impression of life at sea on the landing craft.

Rescued and restored to former glory

In 2014, after being rescued from Birkenhead Dock by the National Museum of the Royal Navy and the National Heritage Memorial Fund, a programme of National Lottery funded work began to restore the ship to its former glory.

> "When she was rescued by the museum, she was rusty, unloved and covered in barnacles having spent many years submerged at Birkenhead Dock. But now she is transformed".
>
> Nick Hewitt, Head of Collections and Exhibitions at the National Museum of the Royal Navy

This included new coats of paint, a replacement funnel, important electrical works and fitting replica guns and rocket launchers.

A new home in Southsea

In August 2020, following delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, *LCT 7074* took to the sea one last time. A highly ambitious and complex move saw the 59-metre, 300-tonne craft transported from the Naval Base to its new home outside The D-Day Story in Southsea, Portsmouth.



?????*LCT 7074* makes its move to the D-Day Story Museum, Southsea

Nick Hewitt, Head of Collections and Exhibitions at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, said: "The restoration of *LCT 7074* has been a long and arduous project for the team at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, but to see her outside The D-Day Story and to know that so many visitors will be able to experience her first-hand is a fantastic feeling.

"When she was rescued by the museum, she was rusty, unloved and covered in barnacles having spent many years submerged at Birkenhead Dock. But now she is transformed. I would like to extend my thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for the grant that made this work possible."

Stuart McLeod, Director of England, London & South at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: *"*We are delighted that after six years of dedicated work, *LCT 7074* is restored and ready to welcome visitors on board.

“Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, visitors to the D-Day Story will be able to immerse themselves in the important narrative of this outstanding piece of maritime heritage.”



Trainee Scott Dixon



Lottery funding

Undergrowth, Isle of Wight Railway. Credit: John Faulkner



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Full steam ahead for Merseyside ship following emergency grant