

The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust – Director of Estates and Preservation Application Pack

The Preservation of The Historic Dockyard Chatham, this unique 80-acre historic estate, is at the core of the mission of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust since its establishment in 1984. Our estate with 52 Grade I and II* Listed buildings, of which 47 are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, is a unique historic environment and the most complete dockyard of the age of sail.

The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust (the Trust) is looking to appoint a new Director of Estates and Preservation, a vital role in a planned and open succession process. The current postholder will retire in Spring 2024 and move to a new role in the management of site-wide preservation projects. This appointment process provides the opportunity for a lengthy handover and transition process.

The Estates and Preservation Director will play a critical role in meeting our Preservation charitable objective, promoting excellence in the care, conservation and stewardship of this world-class heritage site. The postholder will provide strategic leadership for our broader estate management and preservation programme, ensuring excellence in the care and presentation of our buildings and estate, and instrumental in delivering our overarching strategy of Preservation Through Re-use, including the development and unlocking of hidden and under-utilised Trust assets.

As a key member of our Strategic Leadership Team, you will play an important role in shaping our wider organisational development, representing the Trust at the highest level with key stakeholders, and taking a leading role in site-wide operation and development. You will work closely with the Chief Executive, Senior Leadership team, Trustees, and subsidiary boards in leading this vital area of our charitable activity.

This is an exciting time to join the Trust as we achieve our long-held ambition to become financially self-sustaining on a revenue basis, near the end of the current Corporate Plan period and commence the process of the development of the next Strategic Plan.

About Us

The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust is an independent charity established by government in 1984 to take ownership of the Historic Dockyard Chatham, the former dockyard of the age of sail, immediately following the closure of the dockyard and naval base.

The Trust has two charitable objectives:

- To secure for the public benefit the preservation of the Historic Dockyard at Chatham in a manner appropriate to its archaeological and historical importance
- To promote and foster for the public benefit a wide knowledge and understanding of the archaeological significance of the Historic Dockyard.

The Trust is a fully accredited museum - collecting, preserving, studying and exhibiting objects and materials connected with the:

- history and role of the Dockyard and its people
- the development of Royal Navy warship design and construction
- the use of the River Medway by the Royal Navy and its support services.

Today the Trust follows an overarching strategy of preservation through reuse, bringing the Historic Dockyard's buildings and structures back into new uses as museum / visitor attractions and as places where people live and work.

Approximately £75m of grant income (capital) has been raised since 1984 along with considerable joint venture funding that has turned the dilapidated, post-industrial site into a thriving mixed-use community. This strategy has seen most of the estate's 100 buildings (47 Scheduled Ancient Monuments) brought into a variety of productive uses.

Today the Dockyard is a thriving mixed use heritage estate, welcoming in excess of 160,000 visitors annually, home to over 160 organisations employing in excess of 1000 people, a thriving University and higher education campus, and a residential community for over 400 people. The Historic Dockyard Chatham generates an estimated £30M annually into the Kent and Medway economy.

The success of the approach results in the Trust now being able to balance its largely self-generated revenue with its annual cost base, although grant income will always be a legitimate income stream as our programmes and aspirations develop and grow and for further capital development. A strongly entrepreneurial, development and growth culture exists within the organisation and our people are essential to our success with staff development a key focus.

History

The Royal Navy's presence on the River Medway at Chatham dates back to Tudor times. During the 17th century Chatham Dockyard provided the Royal Navy with its principal fleet base, whilst in the 18th century it became Britain's principal warship construction and repair yard building the largest ships of the fleet, a role it retained until the early 20th century. During the heyday of the age of sail (1700 – 1850) a complex series of defences were constructed to protect the dockyard from attack by land or sea, and Chatham became an important garrison town, home to the Corps of Royal Engineers from 1812.

The naval and military presence in Chatham peaked during the two 20th century World Wars, but declined sharply thereafter, resulting in a period of significant reductions in defence land holdings during the early 1980's that led directly to the formation of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust in 1984 to take ownership of the Historic Dockyard, the former dockyard of the age of sail, immediately following the dockyard's closure.

The closure of the dockyard in March 1984 had a huge impact on the people who lived and worked in the Medway Towns where the dockyard had been the principal employer for over 400 years; had underpinned its technical education provision and provided the community with a sense of identity and pride.

Vision

The most complete and best-preserved dockyard of the Age of Sail will increase its impact through innovative reuses of our heritage assets making it ever more relevant to all users, providing excellent experiences for all and inspirational learning for the widest audiences.

Strategic Objectives

Preservation

To set the benchmark in maintaining excellence in the sympathetic preservation and use of The Historic Dockyard, its buildings, ships, and collections through diverse re-use. Excellence in management of the heritage environment and building use will remain essential in

preserving the unique, award-winning, historic character of the site.

Learning

To engage the widest audiences in learning about the significance and role of the former Royal Dockyard at Chatham and its people in supporting the Royal Navy from sail to steam to nuclear power over a 400-year period.

Utilising on-site heritage assets as the foundation for an industry leading museum and heritage site, we will maximise our reach and capacity whilst maintaining quality in delivering inspirational programmes and engaging activities which will incorporate the best use of digital technology and outreach activities.

Excellence

Providing excellence in everything we do, we will deliver an unmatched, inspirational, and memorable experience for all users of The Historic Dockyard – whether visitors, tenants, residents or students – that exceed their expectations and maintains a balanced ecology of uses.

Governance

In accordance with the Articles of Association there are eleven trustees, all of whom are the Directors and also members of the Trust, which is a company limited by guarantee. The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, the Secretary of State for Defence and Mr John Spence OBE DL are also members of the Trust company.

The Board of Management sets the set the long-term strategic objectives of the Trust, agrees corporate priorities and reviews performance. The role of the Board is also to ensure the distinct legal obligations and charitable objectives are fulfilled, ensuring high standards of corporate governance are maintained, with effective control systems and decision-making processes in place.

In addition to the Board of Management, the Trust has five formal Sub Committees:

- Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Audit and Compliance Committee
- Remuneration Committee
- Interface Land Committee
- Nominations Committee

Furthermore, the Trust has a range of trading subsidiaries within the wider charity Group:

- CHD Trading Limited – Retail and Catering
- Master Ropemakers (Trading) Limited – Rope sales
- Historic Dockyard Property Limited – Residential estate management
- Historic Dockyard Property (2005) Limited – Property development

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

We are passionate about ensuring there is a strong mix of people across our organisation who represent a variety of backgrounds, experiences and skills. Equality, diversity and inclusion and ensuring that the Historic Dockyard is welcome and inclusive for everyone is a strategic priority. We believe that by having a diverse organisation, we can collectively make better decisions and better represent the communities who we serve.