



Councillor Jones,
Cabinet Member for Culture & Recreation,
Civic Centre,
Newport,
NP20 4UR

20th February 2008

Newport Ship: The Next Steps

Dear Councillor Jones,

The Friends of the Newport Ship would again like to congratulate Newport City Council for their enlightened approach to the management of the Newport Mediaeval Ship and progress of the project since its discovery in 2002. We fully appreciate the continued financial support NCC are offering to the project in the periods between HLF funding tranches, and as you are no doubt aware, we have recently awarded £10k to the project from our own fundraising. We are not asking for any additional funding, but merely seek to clarify the City Council's position on display of the Ship in the context of City regeneration.

The project has three major phases, namely; Recording, Conservation and Display.

The first phase; recording accurately the dimensions and features of all the ship timbers in three dimensions, is now nearing completion. The Ship Team, largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has used new technology to record the ship timbers in only three years. In doing this they have pushed forward the boundaries of what is possible in archaeological recording.

During this phase the Friends of the Newport Ship and the Ship Team together have run a succession of well-attended open days. Here they have shown and explained the significance of the ship and the processes of her care to the people of Newport and beyond. The project has certainly excited public interest and one of the most frequent questions at open days has been; how, where and when will she be displayed permanently?

We will soon be entering the conservation phase where, at least initially, it will be difficult to admit the public because of the chemicals being used. There will also be less to see than in the recording phase because the tanks will be covered.

The conservation phase of the ship will take only a few years because each individual timber is relatively small. This phase will be shorter than for some other ships, where a substantial part was still in one piece. The conservation timescale, then, is comparable to the time needed to plan, design and develop a display facility.

It is thus timely, indeed urgent, to think seriously about how and where the Newport Ship will be displayed. An excellent and inspirational display, properly supported by education and outreach facilities, will make a considerable contribution to the future of Newport and is no more than the international significance of the Ship warrants.

We, the Friends of the Newport Ship, would be interested to know the Council's current thinking about the display of the Ship in the context of the regeneration of the City.

Yours sincerely,

S.C.Rutherford, Chairman. Friends of the Newport Ship

Some Good Examples of Ship Display in Europe

Oslo www.khm.uio.no/vikingskipshuset/english.php

Roskilde www.vikingskibsmuseet.dk

Mary Rose www.maryrose.org

Vasa <http://www.vasamuseet.se/InEnglish/about.aspx>

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