

# New Medway Steam Packet Co. (Medway Queen Preservation Society)



## Mission Statement and Forward Plan

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*Photo: Medway Queen at Gillingham Pier – Mick Appleyard.*

### Change Control

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09/04/25	Combined previous drafts, formalised header page	R Halton	28/04/25

New Medway Steam Packet Co. Ltd.  
Medway Queen Preservation Society  
Registered Company No. 2100358 Charity No. 296236

## **Mission Statement**

**Registered Charitable objects:** to advance public education in the maritime history of Great Britain in particular by the restoration and preservation of the paddle steamer Medway Queen.

The ultimate aim of MQPS is to restore PS Medway Queen to a position where she can be taken to sea operating under her own steam power. In the meantime, the very existence of Medway Queen continues to be a tangible reminder of the river Medway's extensive maritime history and heritage, providing as it does a valuable learning resource for all, including local people, both adults and children.

PS Medway Queen is included in the National Historic Fleet, registered by National Historic Ships – UK. Registration number 46.

## **Brief History**

For a full history please visit the website [www.medwayqueen.co.uk](http://www.medwayqueen.co.uk).

The Medway Queen was launched in 1924 and ran an operational service to various towns on the River Medway in Kent and across to Southend On Sea. This ran from 1924 to 1963, with a break in the Second World War when she was converted to a naval minesweeper. In May/June 1940 HMS Medway Queen took part in the evacuation of the troops from Dunkirk, making seven trips and saving thousands of troops. In 1946 the ship was returned to the NMSPCo and refurbished to excursion standards. In 1965 Medway Queen was sold and went to Binfield on the Isle of Wight where she became a clubhouse and restaurant. Later she hosted a nightclub until the Medway Queen Club ceased trading in 1974.

The Medway Queen returned to the River Medway in 1984. In 1985 the Medway Queen Preservation Society (MQPS) was formed and work commenced on the restoration of this historic ship. The society purchased the title New Medway Steam Packet Company Ltd. from P&O and registered as a charity.

The restoration of the hull was completed in 2013. Work has continued since then to maintain the hull and restore the interior of the ship. The refit of the forward and aft saloons has been completed, and a stair lift has been installed. Onboard toilets have been installed, including separate male and female toilets, and a unisex disabled toilet with baby changing facilities. These and the galley are to modern requirements but elsewhere the aim is to preserve the heritage of the ship.

## **Forward Plan as at February 2025**

### **Medium Term Plan**

Over the next three to five years the Board of the New Medway Steam Packet Company aims to continue the restoration of the interior of the Medway Queen and to maintain the hull and interior fittings. During this time the ship will continue to be on public display and open to the public as much as possible.

We have links to various sectors of the local community, and we will continue to expand this. Cooperation with other groups including “Wheels of Time”, schools, Medway Archives Centre and similar organizations will continue to be developed.

Our workforce is entirely voluntary, using commercial contractors where necessary. Current income derives mainly from society membership, donations and heritage related grants. The Board wishes to promote the ship’s facilities for hire for various events (music evenings, parties, conferences, weddings, etc.). This will require a major marketing task over the next 2 years, but the events will provide a much-needed revenue stream contributing towards operational and restoration costs.

Medway Council have announced their intention to develop the area where the company's workshop and Medway Queen Visitor Centre are currently located. Whilst final plans have not been presented, Medway Council have verbally communicated their desire to support the MQPS to continue to have a presence at the same location on the western arm of Gillingham Pier. Medway Council have indicated that they wish to work with the MQPS and to accommodate our requirements where possible. Whilst a timeline has not been presented by the council, if this work goes ahead, it will be a major task over the coming years to vacate the workshop and Medway Queen Visitor Centre, and to move into new premises. Costs to the MQPS cannot be established until the proposed plans have been agreed.

It is understood that within 4-5 years the ship will need to be taken out of the water for maintenance and a plan is needed to prepare physically and financially for this. We will also need to identify a suitable facility for this work.

### **Long Term Plan**

It is clear that in order to achieve the ultimate object of NMSPCo/MQPS, to bring the ship to a position where she is able to steam under her own power a substantial amount of work needs to be done. It will be a necessary to identify grant sources for this project. At present we are only aware of the National Lottery Heritage Fund as a provider of the level of funding required.

We need to obtain the knowledge to be able to write suitable bids and to determine and seek assistance from our political and technical allies in gaining the initial and ultimate grants. We are aware that grant providers will almost certainly require match funding, and we therefore need to determine the level of match funding required and to examine ways in which we can achieve that.

We will need to determine the overall scope of work required and the level of funding necessary for the project. It is doubtful that the work could be carried out in stages or without professional specialist facilities.