



# *The Tamesis Trust*

Registered Charity No 1159891  
*Patron:- The Rt Hon Richard Benyon MP*

## **Thames Heritage Boat Museum receives full planning approval.**

A new Thames museum based at Beale Park near Pangbourne, has just been granted full planning permission by West Berkshire council, following the submission of a Reserved Matters Planning Application for Appearance, Landscaping and Scale.

The Principal Planning Officer who recommended approval stated: "the proposal provides a unique opportunity to display maritime artefacts and boating memorabilia which is of historic value and an educational asset. Given that the site is currently used for tourism the proposed use complements this and will deliver both a social and economic benefit."

The site is indeed perfect for the proposed Museum, with well established visitor facilities at the picturesque Beale Park Wildlife Park and Gardens which already attract some 150,000 visitors per year to the area. It also has the added benefit of water access to the Thames allowing the Museum to feature working exhibits on the water as well as static ones ashore.

The Tamesis Trust established in 2015 is the new charitable trust responsible for the proposed Museum project and have already lined up an impressive array of important historic river craft and other related artefacts for display. Working together with various related historical and boating organisations this collection is expected to be increased as the project progresses, with the aim that the Museum will become a working hub of information and display, celebrating the wonderful boating history of what is arguably Britain's most iconic waterway - The River Thames.

The whole project is expected to cost around £1.25M and inquiries have already been made toward potential funding possibilities, so now that full planning permission has been secured the real work on this task can begin, making the new Museum a reality.

This really is a wonderful chance to bring our largely forgotten boating heritage to a much wider audience, stimulating and entertaining people now and for future generations to come. So please do help spread the word about the project, raising public awareness further will always be important and if you can help with funding then even better, please do get in touch with the Tamesis Trust.

**ENDS**

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## **Notes to editors**

### **About The Tamesis Trust**

The Tamesis Trust is a registered charity (CIO - charitable incorporated organisation) formed in 2015 to establish, run and maintain a Thames Heritage Boat Museum at Beale Park near Pangbourne, celebrating the wonderful boating history and heritage of the River Thames.

The Trust objects are:- The Advancement of Education in the History of Navigation on the River Thames by the Conservation, Maintenance and Display of all types of craft associated with the River, and or related artefacts and records of any kind and in any format, for the benefit of the public by exhibition in a Museum or otherwise and through publication, lectures and events.

The most important exhibits currently intended for display are:

Consuta - Steam Umpire launch built in 1898 in Goring by S.E Saunders, she was built as an experimental launch using a new and revolutionary light weight monocoque construction using thin wood veneers stiched together with copper wire to become the first successful plywood construction, this was patented as 'Consuta Plywood' and was used in various forms over the next 50 years in the building of marine and aviation craft. Listed in the Guinness Book to this effect.

Cygnnet - A very early Steam River Launch built by J.I. Thornycroft in 1870, taken out of service in 1919 and kept hidden away in store she is possibly the oldest completely original river launch in the world. Listed in the Guinness Book to this effect.

Donola - Steam Saloon launch built in 1893 for local Reading businessman Mr A. Palmer, of 'Huntely and Palmers' Biscuit fame (once the world's largest biscuit factory). She was later used as a Thames Conservancy Inspection Launch and attended many important River events over her many years of service before being retired in 1969.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the river Thames was transformed from a waterway carrying commercial traffic using primitive "flash locks" (removable sections in weirs) which by the early 1900's were being replaced with the modern "pound lock", this led to a remarkable expansion of Thames pleasure boating during Victorian times.

### **For further information, images and interviews, please contact**

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