

Lifeboat Fund charity pledges to raise £1.1million to help the RNLI build new lifeboat

Civil Service charity The Lifeboat Fund today pledged to raise £1.1million to help pay for a state-of-the-art new RNLI lifeboat in its 150th anniversary appeal.

The Lifeboat Fund will continue a proud tradition of supporting the RNLI by fundraising throughout the UK for a new Shannon class lifeboat over the three years 2015 to 2017.

The charity aims to secure the naming rights to the new lifeboat, enabling the vessel to go into service in the summer of 2017 as Civil Service No 53, at Wells-next-the-Sea RNLI lifeboat station in Norfolk.

Lifeboat Fund Chair Sir Peter Housden KCB said: 'I am delighted our charity has been offered the opportunity to fundraise for the Shannon and we are thrilled to grasp this challenge. The Shannon is a remarkable vessel, taking life-saving at sea to new levels.

'The Lifeboat Fund's commitment to fundraise for such an incredible boat is the charity's biggest and most important challenge to date. I am grateful to my colleagues and all friends of the charity who will help deliver and support our 150th Anniversary Appeal.'

RNLI Chief Executive Paul Boissier said: 'This will become the 53rd lifeboat that The Lifeboat Fund has helped the RNLI bring into service – the original cost just £300 almost 150 years ago. Time and technology have moved on since then, but what has not changed is the dedication of supporters such as The Lifeboat Fund whose efforts enable our volunteer crews to save lives at sea.

'The Lifeboat Fund is an extraordinary force for good in this country, with a long and magnificent record of support for our volunteer lifeboat crews. Its commitment to raise £1.1million for a new lifeboat at Wells is an incredibly tough challenge, which I am confident they will achieve. On behalf of everyone at the RNLI I would like to thank The Lifeboat Fund for its significant support.'

Having donated about £5million since it was founded in 1866, The Lifeboat Fund is now the longest-standing supporter of the RNLI and one of its biggest

contributors. The 150th anniversary appeal will be a Civil Service-wide effort with all sorts of fundraising events taking place throughout the UK. All supporters of the charity, including British Telecom and Royal Mail, will be encouraged to take part.

The fundraising efforts will go towards paying for a Shannon class lifeboat which costs £2million. Local RNLI fundraisers in Wells-next-the-Sea have already raised £163,000 with the aim of reaching a target of £250,000 towards the new lifeboat.

The Shannon class lifeboat is at the cutting edge of lifesaving technology. With a top speed of 25 knots. The Shannon is powered by water jets rather than propellers, offering unparalleled agility and manoeuvrability.

Characteristics of raw speed and the ability to work effectively in shallow water and in confined spaces give the RNLI's volunteer crews an even better chance of saving someone when their life is on the line.

ENDS

Notes to editors

The Lifeboat Fund started in 1866 when a group of civil servants invited colleagues to help them raise £300 to buy a lifeboat for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Due to the success of that appeal, the charity was born. To acquire naming rights to the new Shannon class vessel, The Lifeboat Fund must raise £1.1million of the total purchase price.

Key facts about The Lifeboat Fund

The Communications and Public Service Lifeboat Fund (its registered name) is an official charity of the Civil Service. Both the Royal Mail and British Telecom have a long history of engagement with the charity; serving and former employees still give valuable support.

The charity benefits from giving by serving and retired employees and from legacies. For example, civil servants the length and breadth of the UK organise fundraising collections and promote the lifesaving work of the RNLI. All money raised by The Lifeboat Fund goes to support the vital work of that organisation.

In its recent appeals, The Fund supported RNLI crew kit, lifeboat maintenance, and crew and lifeguard training.

Learn more about The Lifeboat Fund

For more information please explore our Lifeboat Fund website or our Twitter account and YouTube channel.

Registered charity numbers are: 248421 (England & Wales) and SC041904 (Scotland).

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RNLI online: For more information on the RNLI please visit <http://www.rnli.org/>. News releases and other media resources, including [RSS feeds](#), downloadable photos and video, are available at the [RNLI News Centre](#).

Key facts about the RNLI: The Royal National Lifeboat Institution is the charity that saves lives at sea. Our volunteers provide a 24-hour search and rescue service in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland from 236 lifeboat stations, including four along the River Thames and inland lifeboat stations at Loch Ness, Lough Derg, Enniskillen and Lough Ree. Additionally the RNLI has more than 1,000 lifeguards on over 180 beaches around the UK and operates a specialist flood rescue team, which can respond anywhere across the UK and Ireland when inland flooding puts lives at risk.

A charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736). Charity number CHY 2678 in the Republic of Ireland.