

## Milton Keynes has 'the boat with no name'



### **A brand new all-electric community trip boat, to be based in Campbell Wharf Marina, has a problem. It has no name.**

The charity building the boat, the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust, is appealing to the public for help, seeking suggestions for a name, ready for the boat which will be launched next spring.

BoatyMKBoatface, Jolly Roger, Super Trouper, Black Beard and Lekky Boatie have already been suggested, but the Trust is looking for ideas that reflect its 'state of the art' electric power and eco-friendly specification, together with its location on the Milton Keynes part of the Grand Union Canal.

Based on a 54' traditional narrowboat design, the electric motor will provide a unique experience, gliding almost silently along the canal and without any emissions associated with traditional diesel powered boats. The boat will carry up to 12 passengers and be fully accessible, with lavatory provision and access lift for wheelchair users.

The Trust's chair, Jane Hamilton, said

"We have commissioned this boat not only to provide a community facility but to also raise funds to take forward proposals for the brand-new waterway park, with a wide canal at its heart linking Bedford & Milton Keynes."

James Clifton, the Trust's volunteer leading the search for a name, commented,

"It will bring a breath of fresh air to local people, particularly those furloughed or working at home, allowing them to enjoy the scenery and open spaces along this beautiful stretch of canal."

"The trip boat will be fully Covid-compliant", he noted.

James asks for suggestions to be emailed to [boatname@bmkwaterway.org](mailto:boatname@bmkwaterway.org) by Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January, so the boat can be launched with a name. Our new boat shown below is taking shape at Colecraft.



MK Community Boat taking shape

## **Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust**

Website: [www.bmkwaterway.org](http://www.bmkwaterway.org)

Media contact: James Clifton, B&MK Waterway Trust; mobile: 07710-175410;  
email: [james.Clifton@b-mkwaterway.co.uk](mailto:james.Clifton@b-mkwaterway.co.uk)

The final decision on name will be made by the Trust's MK Community Boat Management Team in liaison with project partners who have enabled the boat build.

The service plans to run from May to December in 2021 and carry up to 4,000 passengers a year, subject to Covid-19 restrictions, on a wide variety of trips that will offer 'something for everyone' – from short 'eye-spy' family cruises to Friday night 'bubbles and bites', relaxing days out in nature and walkers' one-way hops.

This will be the first all-electric trip boat to be built by Warwickshire-based boatbuilders Colecraft Engineering, run by Gary Cole along with a team of 20 supporting steelwork, carpentry, engineering and sales staff. They have built more than 30 trip boats built since 2010, including two for Longleat Safari Park, and twelve for the Olympic Games in 2012. The narrowboat will use an all-electric propulsion unit from Fischer Panda. The electric propulsion batteries will be capable of being charged from both mains power and on-board solar panels.

The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust is funding the construction of the boat with contributions from Crest Nicholson, via Milton Keynes Council's £106 funding for the Campbell Wharf development, the Milton Keynes Community Foundation, and donations from Trust members.

### **Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust**

The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust was established in 1995 to promote a new 16 mile Waterway Park with a new broad canal connecting the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes to the Great Ouse in Bedford. The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Its role is one of advocacy for the Waterway Park. Having successfully established an alignment, now protected by policy in three Local Plans, the Trust is currently working with partners to establish a strong business case for the project as part of the infrastructure being planned in Oxford to Cambridge Arc. The Trust works with a range of partners to ensure opportunities to integrate the Waterway into development and deliver local benefits are maximized. <https://www.b-mkwaterway.org.uk/>