



Edwin Fox

Strategic Plan

2024-2027



Edwin Fox
1853

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Introduction

As the Marlborough District Council assumes guardianship of the Edwin Fox and its historic collection, now is an ideal time to reevaluate the museum's priorities and develop a new strategic plan.

This plan will address key challenges facing the Edwin Fox Maritime Museum in 2024, such as preservation, conservation, funding, and climate change. By focusing on the next three years, we can build a solid foundation and craft a strategy to meet these challenges. By 2027, we aim to be well-positioned to leverage investment and development opportunities to create an upgraded museum facility, further establishing the Edwin Fox as a national asset.

In the long term, the Edwin Fox Maritime Museum will need significant investment to stabilise the ship in a more suitable environment, enhance our facilities, transform our collection space, and develop a hospitality hub to attract visitors. Success will hinge on creatively utilising our own resources, as well as fostering partnerships with supporters and the global network of heritage organisations with whom we collaborate. With continued support from the heritage sector, iwi and the local community, the Edwin Fox Maritime Museum will evolve into a modern, inclusive, and dynamic museum experience.

This strategy will outline the preservation needs for the ship and the steps required to create an optimal space that offers inspiring and engaging experiences while safeguarding the ship for future generations. By 2027, we aim to have a comprehensive conservation management plan and a feasibility study on the museum's future as an international attraction.

To prepare for future opportunities, this plan identifies the key priorities for the Edwin Fox Maritime Museum. It aligns with the core values of the Marlborough District Council Heritage Strategy and reaffirms our commitment to the responsible guardianship of the Edwin Fox.

We have defined three overarching goals for the immediate future; beneath which are a set of key activities and projects that will define our work.



Our Goals

Preservation and Conservation of Maritime Artefacts

Ensure the long-term preservation and conservation of maritime artefacts, documents, and historical vessel.

Actions:

Secure funding and grants dedicated to preservation efforts.

Develop conservation programs and partnerships with experts and institutions.

Implement best practices for artifact preservation, including climate control, pest management, and regular maintenance.

Enhance Public Engagement and Education

Increase public awareness and appreciation of maritime history and culture through engaging educational programmes and exhibits.

Actions:

Create interactive and dynamic exhibits that appeal to a diverse audience.

Develop educational programmes, workshops, and tours for schools, families, and maritime enthusiasts.

Utilise digital platforms and social media to reach a wider audience and provide virtual tours and online resources.

Ensure Financial Sustainability and Growth

Establish a stable financial foundation and explore opportunities for growth to support the museum's mission and activities.

Actions:

Diversify revenue streams through admissions, grants, memberships, donations, and merchandise sales.

Develop strategic partnerships with other cultural institutions, iwi, sponsors, and the local community.

Implement effective marketing strategies to attract visitors, sponsors, and donors, and to enhance the museum's visibility and reputation.

Position our museum as a compelling investment opportunity for potential investors.

Background

The Edwin Fox has been given Category I registration from Heritage New Zealand.

The Edwin Fox ship is:

- The last surviving ship that transported convicts to Australia
- The last wooden Crimea War troop carrier
- One of the worlds oldest surviving merchant sailing ship
- A pioneering refrigeration Ship
- The oldest wooden vessel that brought immigrants to New Zealand

We are launching this strategy from a solid foundation, marked by numerous successes and accolades both locally and internationally. Since the Edwin Fox Society was established in 1965, volunteers and staff have achieved significant milestones. After being towed to Shakespeare Bay in 1967, where it stayed for almost 20 years, the ship was later refloated and relocated to its current position in a dry dock on the Picton waterfront, where it is preserved as a hull alongside an informative museum. Over the past decade, investments have been made in the preservation of the hull and its collections.



Timeline

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- 1853** Edwin Fox is built in Sulkea in the Ganges region of India by shipbuilder Thomas Reeves. Her first mission was to transport 496 troops of the 51st French Regiment to the Baltic Sea.
- 1855** Purchased by Duncan Dunbar and refitted to carry civilian passengers and cargo.
- 1857** Edwin Fox operated on one occasion in 1857 as transport for Chinese labourers to Cuba.
- 1858** Chartered to the British Government, this time transporting convicts from England to Western Australia. Between 1858 and 1872 she made numerous trips between England and the East carrying mixed cargoes, including rice, coffee, cotton, cinnamon and general cargo.
- 1861** She made five voyages carrying troops between England and Bombay. During this time, her ownership changed on several occasions.
- 1867** She was converted to a barque - slower than a sailing ship, but requiring fewer crew.
- 1872** Her last voyage as an Anglo-Indian trader.
- 1875** She became an immigrant ship and chartered to the Shaw Savill & Company to carry immigrants from England to New Zealand.
- 1878** She made her last two voyages to New Zealand, in 1878 to Nelson and in 1880 to Lyttelton.
- 1885** She made her last journey between England and New Zealand in June 1885 when she arrived in Dunedin.
- 1887** She was towed to Picton on 12 January where she continued to serve as a refrigerator hold until 1900 when the Picton Freezing Works were built. She was later turned into a coal store for the freezing works.
- 1905** She became a landing platform and coal hulk.
- 1965** Norman Brayshaw founded the Edwin Fox Restoration Society and purchased the Edwin Fox for one shilling. The Edwin Fox was moved to Shakespeare Bay where she lay unattended for 20 years.
- 1986** She was towed into Picton Harbour.
- 1999** Placed in the dry dock where she is housed today.
- 2001** A roof was installed to protect the ship from the elements.
- 2013** Edwin Fox Society's preservation project received a World Ship Trust Award, the last of its kind to be officially given out due to the winding up of the World Ship Trust, based in London.
- 2014** The book *Teak and Tide* by Nigel Costley released with the support of Marlborough District Council.
- 2015** The ship and museum were taken over by the newly formed Marlborough Heritage Trust (supported by the local council) in 2015 to help safeguard her for future generations.
- The Edwin Fox features in the *Coast*, a BBC factual television series.
- 2023** Marlborough Heritage Trust ceased to operate and the museum and collection sold to Marlborough District Council.

Strategic Framework

Our Values

The Edwin Fox Maritime Museum is committed to values that will guide our operations and practices.

Preservation of Maritime Heritage

To establish the benchmark in maintaining excellence in the preservation and use of the Edwin Fox, including its structure and collections, through innovative and diverse strategies.

World Class Learning

To engage the widest possible audience in learning about the significance and history of the Edwin Fox. We aim to maximise reach and capacity while maintaining the highest quality, delivering innovative and inspirational programmes, providing outreach activities, and incorporating digital technology where appropriate.

A Spirit of Innovation

To continuously develop engaging and sustainable methods for the guardianship and celebration of the Edwin Fox. Our goal is to enhance the connection between the past and the present, providing an enriching experience for all visitors now and in the future.

In this Three-Year Strategic Plan, we outline our short and medium-term priorities. We are preparing for the increasing needs of maintenance, preservation, and conservation while fostering and encouraging greater visitor engagement.

The priorities set out in this Plan will be realised through an implementation plan – Appendix A.

Our Mission

To preserve and celebrate the Edwin Fox's rich maritime heritage through careful preservation, captivating exhibitions, and educational programmes. We aim to deepen understanding of maritime history, connect visitors with the past, and inspire future generations to value and protect our shared heritage.

Our Vision

To be a premier maritime heritage destination, celebrating the legacy of the Edwin Fox and fostering a deep connection with maritime history through immersive, educational, and engaging experiences for all visitors.



Our Three-Year Priorities

Our strategy for the Edwin Fox Maritime Museum is grounded in a commitment to excellence, steering us towards our long-term vision.

We concentrate on six key priorities that drive this strategy and are put into practice through our implementation plan. This approach ensures a balance between preserving our iconic ship, its

collections, and heritage assets, and leveraging the resources they offer, while also broadening our educational impact through both physical and digital channels.

Preservation

Visitors

Facility

Partnership

Learning

Sustainability

Priority 1 - Preservation

At the heart of our maritime museum is a commitment to preserving and showcasing our rich maritime heritage.

Priority 1 focuses on conserving our invaluable artefacts, documents, and historic vessel, while investing in state-of-the-art preservation techniques to protect our legacy for years to come. The museum's collections and their care and accessibility are core priorities, driving audience engagement. We aim to set the highest standards in preserving and utilising the Edwin Fox ship and its collections through innovative display methods and best management practices, ensuring the ship's unique historical character is preserved.

We will achieve this through:

- a. Excellence in facilities management – creating an environment that ensures the protection and preservation of the assets.
- b. Seeking increased investment in planned preventative maintenance to levels that lead to continuous improvements across the maritime centre.
- c. As income grows, increase the amount and proportion of expenditure devoted to the planned and preventative maintenance of our buildings, environment, ships and galleries.
- d. Professional stewardship of the collections includes employing the latest conservation and care techniques to ensure objects can contribute their full value well into the future.
- e. Establishing a panel of experts to guide us through the necessary steps to implement the highest standards in preservation.

Priority 2 – Facility

Priority 2 focuses on the essential aspects of our infrastructure, ensuring it is maintained to the highest standards.

This involves continuous improvement to our facilities to ensure a safe and engaging environment for visitors. By developing dynamic, educational exhibits, we aim to inspire and educate future generations while safeguarding our maritime legacy. Our facilities not only house our treasures but also offer a secure and inviting experience for all who visit.

We will achieve this through:

- a. Implementing a well-planned and timely building management programmes.
- b. Renewing and refreshing of the permanent galleries in the main building.
- c. Refreshing and promoting the boat shed as a hospitality area, offering a meeting space with a difference.
- d. Refresh and consolidate the gift shop and front desk area.
- e. Offsite collections will be looked after within purpose-designed environments.
- f. Work on increasing access to the museum from the foreshore and ferry terminal.
- g. Deliver communication and interpretation that make our collections more accessible.

Priority 3 - Learning

Marlborough families make up a small portion of our visitors, and we aim to attract more.

We will be a vibrant place for learning with programmes based around our exhibitions, utilising the unique spaces and experiences only we can provide. The learning environment will be stimulating, memorable, and appropriate to the varied learning styles of our visitors, including educational and school groups, preschoolers, families, and lifelong learners. Incorporating digital technology and outreach activities, we will connect with and educate our visitors. Our museum will offer safe, creative spaces for families, and display improvements will enhance the educational offerings.

We will achieve this through:

- a. Transforming our education offering by expanding its reach, relevance and points of difference.
- b. Putting the needs of learners first by rethinking our model of engagement, working flexibly and responding promptly to their feedback.
- c. Establishing a new onsite 'learning programme' inspiring curiosity and wonder. We will also establish a more varied and targeted programme of facilitated study visits.
- d. Ensure learning environments and curriculum links are embedded in our exhibition.
- e. Grow our learning student numbers with digital resources being a key part of achieving this extended reach.
- f. Further developing formal education programmes, outreach and activities – working in partnership with schools and local universities.
- g. We will encourage research access to our collection for the advancement of knowledge about our collection and the world around us.

Priority 4 - Visitors

Priority 4 centres on creating an exceptional visitor experience, ensuring that every individual who steps into our maritime museum feels welcomed, engaged, and inspired.

Our goal is to provide an enriching and memorable journey through our maritime heritage, offering interactive and educational exhibits that captivate diverse audiences. The visitor experience is paramount, as it not only supports our mission but also builds a loyal community of maritime enthusiasts and advocates.

We will achieve this through:

- a. Further development of the museum into a playful, exemplary, relaxing, creative, diverse, and destination-oriented environment. At the same time, enhance the experience for current visitors with compelling stories and engaging content.
- b. Invest in ongoing enhancements across the Maritime Centre – implementing 1,000 small improvements that together create a significant impact.
- c. Maintaining our position as a valued cruise ship visitor attraction.
- d. Embrace and invest in digital technology and outreach programs to enrich our storytelling both on-site and for diverse global audiences, while acknowledging that the authentic experience of visiting the site remains our core asset.
- e. Maintaining our quality assurance accreditations from TripAdvisor (Certificate of Excellence) and Qualmark (Silver) every year with an aim to achieve Qualmark Gold.
- f. Being relevant to and inclusive of our many communities and diverse audiences, including Māori, Asian, Pacific, European and many others who call Marlborough home.
- g. Setting visitor growth targets and establishing extra initiatives to boost onsite visitation.
- h. Develop strategies to bring visitors back on board the ship.

Priority 5 – Partnership

Priority 5 emphasises the importance of building and nurturing strategic partnerships to enhance our maritime museum's reach and impact.

Collaborating with local, national, and international organisations, educational institutions, and cultural institutions will enable us to share resources, knowledge, and expertise. These partnerships are vital for developing innovative programmes, securing funding, and expanding our audience. By working together, we can create a network of support that enriches our museum's offerings, promotes our maritime heritage, and ensures our mission's long-term sustainability and success. A museum's reputation is its most valuable asset, and the Edwin Fox Maritime Museum has diligently cultivated strong, mutually beneficial relationships.

We will achieve this through:

- a. Actively collaborating with our local heritage sector to implement the Marlborough District Council Heritage Strategy and support aspirations related to cultural and creative development.
- b. Strengthening our descendants and membership programme.
- c. Become a leader in heritage preservation and museum services within the tall ships sector by strengthening our relationships with Heritage New Zealand, Museums Aotearoa, The Ministry of Arts, Culture & Heritage, The Royal Institute of Naval Architects, Australian Institute of Maritime Archeology, and the International Congress of Maritime Museums.
- d. Develop further opportunities for engagement with the Ministry for Arts, Culture & Heritage, Heritage New Zealand and other significant heritage bodies.
- e. Build long-term relationships with strategic funders who can share in our vision and support our goals for development.
- f. Growing and developing our volunteer support base, providing meaningful opportunities for career development and the wider wellbeing benefits offered by volunteering.
- g. Be a valuable and effective partner for regional and national stakeholders alike.

Priority 6 – Sustainability

Priority 6 underscores our commitment to sustainability, focusing on both financial stability and environmental stewardship.

Ensuring the long-term viability of our maritime museum requires a balanced approach to funding, encompassing diverse revenue streams such as grants, donations, memberships, and partnerships. Simultaneously, we are dedicated to minimising our environmental footprint by adopting eco-friendly practices, enhancing energy efficiency, and promoting conservation efforts. By integrating sustainable financial strategies and environmental responsibility, we aim to safeguard our maritime heritage while contributing to a more sustainable future for generations to come.

We will achieve this through:

- a. Maintaining and growing the use of the maritime centre's diverse income streams ensuring that new uses do not adversely affect the core purpose.
- b. Operate in a manner that is socially, culturally, environmentally and economically responsible.
- c. Securing diversity in our funding base.
- d. Developing new and existing income streams.
- e. Maximise income from our commercial activities.
- f. Deliver value for money.
- g. Be worthy of support by being acknowledged as a world-class institution through our collection, research, and publications.

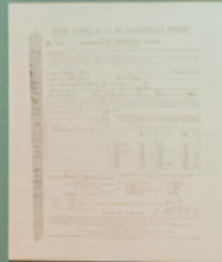
RANTS



Southern Migrations

Transporting Government sponsored British migrants to the new 'colonies' was big business in the 19th century. The Edwin Fox was chartered by the Shaw Savill Company to convey passengers and cargo to Australia. The ship then made four voyages on the longest emigration route in the world - England to New Zealand.

"Young, single men and women were encouraged to migrate: the males to become labourers and the females as potential wives and mothers in a country with few European women."



"The departure of an emigrant ship - emigrants were leaving their home country, probably forever, on a one hundred day voyage in hope of a better life."



Appendix A: Implementing the Plan

We will implement the Three-Year Strategic Plan in stages as follows:

Year 1

Establish the groundwork for the Three-Year Strategic Plan, focusing on essential building and collections maintenance and refresh projects.



Year 2

Concentrate on accelerating growth, expanding our reach, and increasing revenue.



Year 3

Invest in partnerships to shape our future beyond 2027, preparing for a future of excellence, innovation, and continued investment.

Year 1

Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble team of experts Windlass conservation project Te Papa expert knowledge exchange programme Research preservation & support structures Improve pest management programmes Dry dock wall treatment programmes Research infrastructure to protect the bow from environmental elements
Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Policies & Procedures, align with MDC's and museum best practice Install heat pump for upstairs gallery Replace outside rotten signage (new branding) Refresh displays Replace cracked downpipes in dry dock Install adequate IT hardware (including a till) Research infrastructure to allow visitors back on the ship Repaint window frames Chemical wash the external brickwork of museum building
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the requirements of Marlborough schools Develop new education programme Continue digitisation project Cataloguing Continue historical research
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh gift shop/entry experience Launch new website and branding Refresh brochures Develop marketing strategy/target spending Continue to develop PR with comms team Improve signage around ship closure and preservation project
Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors' tour/engagement Memorandum of Agreement with Edwin Fox Bequest Society Attend relevant conferences and submit papers Produce newsletters on a regular schedule and increase circulation Strengthen the relationship with museum landlord Build good local relationships (community groups, museums) Develop strong relationships with government departments Create descendant skill database Expand descendants' programmes (2025 muster) Strengthen iwi relationship Improve database of descendants
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a donations/fundraising programmes Assess environmental footprint and recommend actions Improve shop stock to increase revenue (less is more approach) Return entry fee to 2023 boarding price

Year 2

Preservation	Produce one comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan in partnership with Experts Panel Further develop oral histories Install infrastructure to protect bow
Facility	Renewal of exhibition space Install new dock ramp Install infrastructure to allow visitors on board Replace museum carpet Upgrade kitchen facilities
Learning	Complete digitisation projects Complete cataloguing on database Develop touring exhibition
Visitors	Destination Marlborough package Grow off season visitor numbers (= funds) Grow the number of local visitors
Partnership	Strengthen Year 1 partnerships Investigate the possibility of applying for UNESCO World Heritage site status
Sustainability	Develop multiple streams of income Increase entry price once visitors allowed back on the ship

Year 3

Preservation	Install new support structures
Facility	Have a planned and budgeted maintenance programme in place
Learning	Review new education programme to ensure it's meeting targets
Visitors	Set new visitor growth targets
Partnership	Begin developing a ten-year strategic plan with partners
Sustainability	Develop investor pitch/financial forecasting Commission a feasibility study into future museum developments

