

PLAIN SAILING AHEAD FOR THIS MARITIME MATRIARCH



CUTTY SARK CONSERVATION GREENWICH, UK

The Cutty Sark is the last surviving example of a 19th century tea clipper, a historic legacy that merits her unique status as the only Grade I listed ship in England. In 2004 a comprehensive programme of conservation work began to restore this aging beauty to her former glory, and secure an income to maintain her for the enjoyment of visitors for many years to come.

Misfortune struck in 2007 when fire swept through the ship. Thankfully, our team had already begun dismantling her so much of the original timber survived. This was painstakingly repaired by hand using traditional methods, and reinforced with glass fibre for its future preservation. When this sensitive conservation work was complete, transformation of the site into a state of the art visitor complex could begin.

For BuroHappold Engineering, this involved elevating the massive ship 3m above her dry dock and on to her new permanent steelwork. This operation required considerable technical skill, and was achieved in careful phases in which she was lifted just 100mm at a time. The dock below was then transformed into a stunning new viewing gallery and museum. At street level, the glass roof swells up through the pavement and around the ship like a wave while her hull breaks through into the museum below, the geometric glass radiating out from it like ripples in water, affording visitors beneath a unique and breath-taking view.

Our work throughout this project was underpinned by the marriage of thoughtful conservation and pioneering design, which ultimately enabled the Cutty Sark to once again sail amongst us on the bank of the River Thames, an iconic reminder of Britain's remarkable maritime past.

CLIENT
The Cutty Sark Trust

ARCHITECT
Grimshaw

PROJECT VALUE
£40 million

SERVICES PROVIDED BY
BUROHAPPOLD
Structural engineering, ground engineering