

Update 43A New Year Special Edition

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A couple of worthy "extras"!

What's been happening with GKE 68, and what's about to happen with FoCT!



GKE 68 – A Chance to See....

Those who made it to the Faversham Transport Festival last May will have seen some progress on the bus. Things have moved on a bit since then and, as promised, there's an opportunity to see the current stage of restoration, courtesy of South East Coachworks. The visit has been arranged for

Saturday 3rd February, 10.30 – 12.30

Nu-Venture will lay on a bus, leaving Bus Stop 19 at Chatham Waterfront Way at 09.30. Please note there will be no other pick-up points. Alternatively those wishing to visit may, of course, make their own way. SEC's premises are at the top of Preston Street, just a couple of minutes' walk from Faversham station. Note that parking can be difficult in Faversham.

The SEC Workshop Manager Paul Chapman and his team of Coachbuilders Tom, Bradley and Owen will be on hand to answer questions and describe the work.

The Future (Stage 1)

Great news! On the Wednesday before Christmas we heard that our application to the HLF for Resilient Heritage funding had been successful. This is for the first stage of the exercise, which is to draw up a plan to be implemented by a further grant (subject to another application). Producing the plan will work out what needs to be done, who we will need to involve, what we will need to produce, etc. Actually doing all that will be for Stage 2, which may take a few years to realise fully. An idea of the areas involved is given by this list of "approved purposes" on which the initial grant of £10,000 is to be spent -

- A review of ambitions, opportunities, challenges and threats;
- A summary of operational context, competition, potential partnerships, and comparator business models;
- An analysis of operational and maintenance costs, storage options, and income-generating opportunities;
- A costed programme of interpretation and audience engagement activities;
- An outline marketing & communications plan, including plans to thank National Lottery players;
- A fundraising strategy, five-year timetable and income & expenditure plan; and
- A review of FoCT's board, including a skills audit and recommendations on recruiting new Trustees and diversifying the Board.

This is a major step forward, and thoroughly necessary if we are to have GKE 68 used and respected as a valuable community asset, the Medway Heritage Bus.

I should add that we need HLF permission before announcing this success through public press releases. But we thought our closest friends should know!