

## Milton Keynes Community Boat Electra: Sponsored Cruises Appeal 2023



A cruise on Electra – the all-electric canal trip boat launched in 2021 – gives a totally different view of Milton Keynes. It offers the chance to spend time in nature, discover our waterway heritage, and relax with family and friends.

The volunteer team who run Electra want to make trips more accessible to people in our community who wouldn't normally get out into the 'blue-green space' of the canal and nearby parks. Our aspiration is to run up to 40

Sponsored Cruises each year that are free of charge for community groups representing those who are disadvantaged, vulnerable, have restricted mobility, are socially isolated, or who are refugees starting to make a home in Milton Keynes. Can you help us?

### Serving the whole community

Electra's purpose is to provide public trips and private charters than enable everyone in Milton Keynes to enjoy a 'waterway park' experience. In so doing, we also raise awareness and funds to support the new Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park project.

In 2021/2022 we have taken 4,000 guests on canal trips, including 17 Sponsored Cruises. Feedback is extremely positive, with guests highlighting relaxation, enjoyment of the waterway environment, and discovering a new view of Milton Keynes, as key benefits. People are curious about an all-electric boat which they see as another 'first' for MK, and they like our green agenda of working with local suppliers and partners for food supplies and activities.

We reach a wide age range of guests, including those with disabilities, who come from all local MK postcodes. However, anecdotally it is clear that our guests do not yet reflect the whole MK population, and that we need to do more to raise awareness and remove barriers of access. Our early research suggests that barriers can include finance, illness, disability, mental health issues, lack of access, lack of awareness, and cultural barriers relating to use of open space.

By offering free or part-funded cruises to groups who will benefit we can start to overcome these barriers and provide enjoyable waterway experiences for all.

### Funding sought

Each Sponsored Cruise costs on average £250. This gives up to 12 guests a free 2.5 hour cruise with refreshments, and enables the Electra team to administer the scheme, if needed helping with transport. The cruise can alternatively be run in 'Trail & Sail' format for up to 24 people with groups walking one way and cruising the other. Cruises normally run from Campbell Wharf to Linford Wharf but may by arrangement run from other locations.

**Our 2023 Sponsored Cruise Appeal is to fund cruises for families in need and for Ukrainian refugees:**

- **Individual Sponsor: £250 to support one cruise**
- **Corporate Sponsor: £1,000 to support four cruises**
- **Partnership Sponsor: £2,500 to support ten cruises**

Appeal Donations can be paid by BACS with the donor name as reference:

Bank name: CAF Bank Ltd Account name: Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust

Sort code: 40-52-40 Account number: 00034293

All Sponsors are acknowledge with a listing on our website. Corporate and Partnership Sponsors are be acknowledged each year in a panel on the boat.

Sponsors may suggest group/s that they would like to see benefit from the scheme.

**For further information, please contact the Electra Appeal Team at [electra@bmkwaterway.org](mailto:electra@bmkwaterway.org)**