

Battle of the Atlantic Museum Takes Shape in Birkenhead

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A new museum dedicated solely to the Battle of the Atlantic — the longest continuous military campaign of the Second World War — is set to open in Summer 2026 at Woodside Ferry, Birkenhead, on the banks of the River Mersey.

The project, led by award-winning heritage organisation Big Heritage, will transform the site of the former U-Boat Story into a global centre of remembrance, education, and engagement — supported by major organisations such as the Royal Navy and United States Navy, alongside key local partners such as Cammell Laird at Veterans Launchpad.

As the first museum in the world solely focused on the Battle of the Atlantic, it will tell the full story of the campaign — including a completely reinterpreted presentation of U-534, now placed in the broader context of the U-boat conflict. The museum will also showcase never-before-seen artefacts and documents, bringing new light to one of history's most consequential struggles.

"The Battle of the Atlantic shaped the course of the Second World War, and yet its full story has never been told in one place — until now," said Dean Paton, Director of Big Heritage who also manage the iconic Western Approaches Museum in Liverpool where the campaign was overseen.

"This new museum will not only honour the courage and sacrifice of those who served, but also connect that legacy to the communities who helped secure victory — including those still working on the banks of the Mersey today. From Cammell Laird apprentices preserving U-534, to veterans helping bring exhibits to life, this is history built by the people, for the people. We are telling a global story, but it will very much have a Merseyside accent."

The new museum is fittingly located next to Cammell Laird, whose shipyards were crucial during the Battle of the Atlantic and who are now actively supporting the initiative. The museum has also partnered with Veterans Launchpad, a charity assisting British Armed Forces veterans facing mental health, addiction, or economic challenges by providing much needed services such as housing and employment advice.

A team of veterans will contribute directly to the museum's creation, working across exhibits, collections, and site development.

"We're incredibly grateful to be part of this remarkable project," said Rob Lockyer, Independent Living Coordinator at Veterans Launchpad. "The chance to contribute to the creation of a museum honouring military history — especially one with such deep naval significance — means a great deal to our veterans them. It's more than just a job and it's a meaningful way to reconnect with their identity and continue serving in a new way. There's a lot of work behind the scenes on this and justifies why Big Heritage earned their Gold Level award by the Ministry of Defence for their support of veterans and their families."

Weekly updates on the scheme will be made available on the Western Approaches Museum social media accounts from August.

The museum has been part funded by a grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

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More information on Veterans Launchpad can be found here:

<https://veteranslaunchpad.org.uk/>

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