

[News story: Charities encouraged to bid for life-saving cash](#)

Transport Minister Nusrat Ghani is urging maritime charities across the UK to enter this year's Rescue Boat Grant Fund competition, which she launched at Shepperton Marina today (10 July 2018).

The fund is now in its fifth year, and so far has given charities £3.6 million, helping them buy almost 100 boats and other craft, as well as nearly 4,000 items of crew kit and more than 1,400 other pieces of equipment to support their life-saving work.

It has already helped Loch Lomond Rescue Boat buy a vertically mounted winch to launch in higher waters and Ferryside Lifeboat to get a hovercraft to help navigate shallow waters. Other winners have bought kayaks for inland riverbank searches or crowded beaches, and rafts to help people affected by floods.

Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Our search and rescue services attend more than 40,000 incidents a year, saving countless lives and assisting hundreds of thousands of people every year.

This money will provide volunteer rescue teams with advanced lifeboats and equipment which could make the difference when it comes to saving lives.

It means if anyone gets into trouble on or around our waterways, help is never far away.

[Rescue Boat Grant Fund video](#)

Last year's fund helped buy 14 new lifeboats and maritime equipment including lifejackets, helmets, boots, ropes, knives and torches.

The competition comes as part of Maritime Safety Week, which highlights the work being done across the UK to cut the number of lives lost at sea or on rivers. So far this week, the Maritime Minister has met the UK Chamber of Shipping and visited Shell's London headquarters to discover more about its Partners in Safety initiative to drive down casualties at sea.

Tomorrow (11 July 2018), Nusrat Ghani will host an MP round table meeting on fishing vessel safety to promote recent work to improve safety in the industry, which is currently the most dangerous in the UK with 92 lives lost since 2006.

The minister will also visit the Royal Yachting Association and meet RNLI

personnel and volunteers saving lives on the Thames.