

Leith MP dismisses claims for Britannia revival



Deidre Brock MP yesterday dismissed calls by the Conservatives to bring the Royal Yacht Britannia back as a working ship as 'daft'.

You can see the Edinburgh MP in full flow here, and the moment when she was rapped over the knuckles by one Tory MP, James Gray MP for North Wiltshire, for calling the ship 'it'.

Inside Westminster: Tory gets upset, not at the daft idea of bringing back the Royal Yacht, but that [@DeidreBrock](#) called Britannia 'it'. pic.twitter.com/dkpA4q59RM

– Meanwhile In Scotia (@MeanwhileScotia) [October 11, 2016](#)

Before the parliamentary debate Ms Brock said:-

"The Royal Yacht Britannia is a beautifully kept museum piece. The plan to bring it back as a working ship is just daft.

"The ship is a floating curiosity from a bygone era and it is staying put in Leith – not just because one of the propellers has been melted down into a statue of a Royal Yachtsman.

"By remaining at the Ocean Terminal, Britannia can actually give something back to society, bringing in money to help regenerate a poorer area, rather than leaching further from the public purse.

"Given the austerity being inflicted upon us, surely even the Tories would flinch at the idea of recommissioning a Royal Yacht.

“As benefit sanctions leave the most disadvantaged people to go hungry, as the working poor join claimants in the foodbank queues, how can anyone justify recommissioning a Royal Yacht? Which budget do they want to cut for that?

“Flashboat democracy has no place in the modern world – which has changed utterly from the day in 1997 that Britannia was decommissioned, never mind the world in which it was commissioned in the first place.

“If Tories want to see economic revival then they must act to ease austerity and properly invest in our people, our infrastructure and our public services, not throw money at baubles from a bygone era.”

The campaign to reintroduce the Royal Yacht Britannia to revive international trade was begun by Jake Berry MP for Rossendale and Darwen. He explained that it would be economic, patriotic and crucially would be at a low cost. He said that many members of the public have supported his cause, some even sending him a cheque to help. Mr Berry said during the debate : “There are several proposals for what type of ship we should build, as well as proposals to recommission the existing royal yacht Britannia, which stands proudly in Leith docks. They should all be explored, but I will talk about my personal preference, which is to build a new royal yacht along the lines of the proposals put to the Government in the 1990s.

“The future royal yacht project envisaged a new ship that would be slightly smaller than Britannia but similar in design. Crucially, it would have an increased range and a much-reduced crewing requirement and would be much cheaper to run. It has been estimated that the ship would cost about £100 million to construct and could be funded either through private donations—for example, by giving industry naming rights for certain decks and rooms—through a private finance initiative model or through public fundraising.”