A second meeting of campaigners for the foundation of Hillary’s National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck was advertised in The Morning Chronicle on 23 February 1824. The newspaper notice encourages people to attend the General Meeting on 4 March 1824. The notice also summarises their first meeting at the City of London Tavern, which took place on 12 February 1824, showing that several MPs, clergy, noblemen and gentlemen formed a committee to make sure their effort was properly organised. The City of London Tavern would have been familiar to such gentlemen as a regular venue for meetings of the many charities and benevolent societies of the early 19th century.

Few surviving records have emerged showing the kind of campaign activity that Sir William Hillary, George Hibbert (Chairman of the West Indies Merchants Company) and Thomas Wilson (MP for London) carried out to encourage wealthy and influential people of the time to support their cause, which suggests they did this mainly through conversation. Finding partners and building relationships to spread the word of their campaign message was a key method. However they achieved it, this campaigning trio had much success in persuading noblemen and gentlemen to attend their first public meeting to discuss the practicalities of forming Hillary’s institution.

The Morning Chronicle, 23 February 1823 – advertisements and notices
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The City of London Tavern in Bishopsgate, London, where the RNLI was formed
Courtesy: RNLI

The City of London Tavern
NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM SHIPWRECK

A PRELIMINARY MEETING OF NOBLE- MEN AND GENTLEMEN, held at the City of London Tavern, on Thursday, the 12th of February, 1824.

THOMAS WILSON, Esq. M.P. in the Chair:

Resolved unanimously, That this Meeting, taking into consideration the frequent loss of human life by shipwreck, and believing, that by the frequent exertions of practical men, and the adoption of practicable measures, such calamities might often be averted, are of opinion that a NATIONAL INSTITUTION should be formed (to be supported by voluntary contributions and subscriptions), for the preservation of life in cases of SHIPWRECK on the COASTS of the UNITED KINGDOM; for affording such immediate assistance to the persons rescued as their necessities may require; for conferring rewards on those who preserve their fellowcreatures from destruction; and for granting relief to the destitute families of any who may unfortunately perish in attempts to save the lives of others.

Resolved unanimously, That with a view to the formation of such an Institution, a General Meeting of the Nobility, Gentry, Merchants, Traders, and others, be convened for Thursday, the 4th March, at the City of London Tavern, at Twelve O’clock precisely, or such other day as may be found more convenient.

Resolved unanimously, That the following be a Provisional Committee:

Henry Barhag, Esq. M.P.
Lord Amulius Beauchier
e.
Henry Blanchard, Esq.
John William Buckle, Esq.
Captain Burns Dundas, R.N.
Samuel Gurney, Esq.
George Hibbert, Esq.
Samuel Hope, Esq.
George Lyall, Esq.
Rev. H. H. Norris.

Mr. Wilson having left the Chair, it was Resolved unanimously,

That the best Thanks of this Meeting be given to Thomas Wilson, Esq.

for his able conduct in the Chair, and for his zeal in the support of the

RESOLUTIONS he signed by the Chairman, and advertised in the London Papers.

THOMAS WILSON, Chairman.

N.B. The Public will observe that the above Meeting has been postponed from the 25th instant to the 4th March.
An article in the *Rising Sun* on 16 March 1824 reports on the campaigners’ second London meeting at which the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck was officially formed on 4 March 1824. They had managed to summon strong support from the movers and shakers of the time such as William Wilberforce MP and Dr Charles Manners-Sutton, the Archbishop of Canterbury. The King himself attended and agreed to be Patron of the institution. The newspaper article also shows how crucial it was to the campaign to gain support from other maritime organisations like the Admiralty, Lloyd’s and Trinity House, and financial backing through charitable pledges and subscriptions, to be able to put its plans into action.

Source 15: National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck is officially formed (continued – page 2)

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1. Why is it important to advertise public meetings for a campaign? Why do you think the type and location of the meeting place chosen in the 1800s would have been important?

2. What impression does *The Morning Chronicle* notice give of the campaign?

3. How does the *Rising Sun* article provide evidence of the reasons why the National Society for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck succeeded in getting set up?

4. Are all campaign activities today recorded/advertised in some way? List the ways that campaign activities might be recorded/advertised.

5. What campaign activities might take place today that are not recorded? Where might these activities take place?