



# Ocean Youth Trust South

*Giving young people the skills to succeed in life*



## Making a lasting difference

A voyage with Ocean Youth Trust South is not just about learning to sail, but about developing qualities which matter in everyday life.

A voyage can focus on:

- Confidence
- Working in a team
- Coping with unfamiliar experiences
- Communication
- Taking responsibility
- Learning new skills
- Perseverance in the face of challenges
- Getting on with people
- Making lasting friendships



These are all skills and qualities which employers, families and communities need.

## An award-winning charity

OYT South is the first sail training charity to have won The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Our Chief Executive, Mark Todd, was the inaugural winner of the Maritime & Coastguard Agency's Award for Command Commitment to Sail Training, the highest professional recognition available in sail training.

## History and record of success

Ocean Youth Trust South is a registered charity (no. 1079959) which grew out of the Ocean Youth Club, founded in 1960. We work with around 450 young people each year, taking them to sea as active crew members in a purpose-built sail training vessel. We have come to be recognised as one of the leaders in the field of sail training, and in the last five years *John Laing* has almost always been filled to capacity – and with a waiting list for sailing volunteers.

We work with other charities, mainstream and special schools, local authorities, social workers and youth workers, who refer young people to sail with us, and although we do offer mainstream voyages, especially in school holidays, the majority of young crew members are disadvantaged or vulnerable in some way. This can include young carers, siblings of life-limited children, young offenders, young people not in education, training or employment, children who have been bullied, abused or neglected, homeless teenagers, victims of crime, children in care and many more. Many organisations send young people year after year.



## Case studies

**Lucy** first sailed with us aged 14 on a voyage arranged through Hampshire County Council's Adoption Team. She was adopted after a traumatic early life and had since been bullied; she had very low self-esteem, and was withdrawn and nervous.

Despite this, she did her best on the voyage, helping others who were younger or less physically able, and at the end was told she had been an excellent crew member. She was overwhelmed and said she wasn't used to doing anything well or having other young people look up to her!

Her social worker felt the voyage had made a dramatic difference to her confidence. She has since sailed twice more with us and though she still struggles at times, the voyages seem to have kick-started a lasting change, in particular making her much more willing to try new things.

She is now volunteering in a residential care home for the elderly, and has a place at college. A couple of years ago it was hard to imagine a happy and settled future for Lucy; now that seems more likely than not.

**Adam**, aged 17, was referred to us by a Hampshire school, who said he was at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) due to difficulties in social interaction and a lack of confidence.

He earned his first-ever real qualification on the voyage and the school reported afterwards: "He absolutely loved it; didn't want to leave! He also says (unprompted) that he feels more confident too. Overall great stuff.

"He has since secured a job interview for a McDonalds training scheme and we have been working on talking about the voyage as a way to present himself in a positive light to prospective employers.

"I feel that we couldn't have found him a better experience to bring him on a bit."



## Client comments

“The Wheatsheaf Trust works with a wide variety of people in Southampton, including young people not in education, training or employment. Sail Training is one of the most powerful tools we have found for teaching people self-confidence, teamwork, trust and the ability to take responsibility – which are exactly the qualities employers look for.”

**Jonathan Cheshire, Chief Executive, the Wheatsheaf Trust.**

“Sail Training voyages are an inspirational way of engaging disaffected or out of touch young people. They offer a structured environment enabling young people to remain focused on given activities which give positive outcomes. When young people, removed from their immediate environment, have a positive and enjoyable experience and are able to achieve tangible and real targets it allows confidence and self-esteem to grow and gives them a platform to build on and to raise their aspirations. Sail Training voyages are able to make a very positive and often life changing difference to young people disengaged and in danger of becoming NEET.”

**Zandra Ranger, Coordinator for the Gosport Local Children's Partnership.**

“A voyage in *John Laing* with OYT South takes young people outside their normal environment and gives them the opportunity to change their perception of themselves. Having shared in the job of sailing the boat, cooking, cleaning and looking after one another they come away with a great sense of achievement and improved self-confidence and social skills. It can have a profound effect on those who have had negative experiences at school: most of the tasks are practical and physical and a history of failure can be transformed into an experience of 'I can' “.

**Lucinda Neall, author of *About Our Boys* and *How to Talk to Teenagers*. She runs workshops for parents, teachers and youth workers on bringing the best out in young people. Lucinda also leads a week-long self-realisation course, *Building a Better Future*, for ex-offenders and recovering addicts, and self-development workshops for troubled teenagers.**

## Measuring outcomes, providing evidence

Those who arrange voyages for young people are given a report afterwards including comments from the skipper and watchleaders; details of certificates and qualifications earned; comments from young people themselves; and the results of a self-evaluation exercise which asks young people to give themselves marks out of 10 in a range of areas at the start of the voyage and again at the end, so we can see how they feel they have changed. Results from 399 participants in 2012 included:

- Feeling confident: +26%
- Working as a team: +12%
- Learning new skills: +14%
- Coping with unfamiliar experiences: +20%
- Getting on with people: +9%
- Dealing with setbacks: +19%
- Learning from successes and mistakes: +12%
- Communication (speaking and listening): +12%
- Compromise and negotiation: +14%

## How you can help

1) Finding groups of young people or individuals to sail in the remaining vacant berths this season. There are places suitable both for disadvantaged and mainstream young people, and there are also voyages for adults. Up-to-date details here: <http://www.oightsouth.org/availability.asp>.

2) Making a donation. OYT South is always looking for funds in the following areas:

- Bursary funding for young people who cannot afford to sail
- Vessel maintenance and equipment
- Salaries, office costs etc.

Details here: <http://www.oightsouth.org/sponsorship-donations.asp>

3) The skills acquired on our voyages are vital to the success of any business. Please contact us about corporate or teambuilding experiences for adults.

## Further information

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