



# VOLUNTEERS

## OCEAN YOUTH TRUST SOUTH COULD NOT TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITHOUT OUR VOLUNTEERS.

In 2011, Ocean Youth Trust South became the first sailing charity to receive The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, equivalent in status to the MBE. This was presented to us by HRH The Princess Royal.



We have around 120 active volunteers.



### At sea

Some are trained and qualified to sail with young people on board *Prolific*. Each year, around 80 volunteers between them give over 1,000 days to sail on our voyages. More than a quarter of our volunteer sea staff are aged 25 or under. Young people who do really well on a voyage may be invited back to train as volunteers (which can mean years of free sailing): those over 16 can sail as bosuns, responsible for basic maintenance and safety checks; those over 18 can train as watchleaders.

We provide extensive training to our volunteers. This includes online courses in subjects ranging from Safeguarding to Food Hygiene, as well as an annual shorebased training weekend which covers topics ranging from GMDSS radio, first aid, radar and diesel engines through to youthwork, sustainability, mental health, disability awareness and more.

Volunteers come from all walks of life. Young crew members whose backgrounds have given them limited horizons and low aspirations will meet up to six or seven volunteers on any voyage – and perhaps hear about jobs, activities and interests they have never previously encountered.

### On shore

Volunteers make an enormous contribution to our vessel refit and maintenance. Without them, this work would cost us tens of thousands of pounds each year in labour.

Some volunteers provide invaluable work in the office, helping with administration, processing booking forms, filing etc.

Others help with fundraising and researching grant opportunities, or attending events, or encouraging young people from their local area to sail, as well as supporting the staff team in many different ways and providing invaluable assistance when *Prolific* visits their region.

**“THE BEST THING ABOUT A VOYAGE IS WATCHING A YOUNG CREW MEMBER CHANGE FROM SOMEONE WHO MAY BE WITHDRAWN, AFRAID TO TRY NEW THINGS AND NOT EVEN SURE IF THEY WANT TO BE ON THE VOYAGE AT ALL — BECOMING SOMEONE WHO IS CONFIDENT, JOINING IN WITH EVERYTHING, MAKING NEW FRIENDS, AND GOING HOME WITH A CERTIFICATE, DETERMINED TO TELL EVERYONE WHAT A GREAT TIME THEY HAVE HAD — AND HOPEFULLY TO COME BACK SOME TIME!**

**STEVE LACEY,** **FIRST MATE AND RETIRED YOUTH WORKER** ”

**“I FIRST SAILED WITH OYT SOUTH AS A TEENAGER, AFTER WHICH I WAS INVITED BACK FOR VOLUNTEER TRAINING. SAIL TRAINING IS A REALLY POWERFUL FORCE FOR GOOD. I’VE SEEN FIRST-HAND HOW YOUNG PEOPLE WITH POOR TRACK RECORDS OF BEHAVIOUR ON PAPER ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ON THE WATER. YOUNG PEOPLE CAN BE COMPLETELY CAPTIVATED AND ENGAGED BY SAIL TRAINING IN A WAY YOU DON’T SEE WITH ANY OTHER ACTIVITY. NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER! THE ABILITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD NEVER BE UNDERESTIMATED: YOU JUST NEED THE RIGHT KEY TO UNLOCK THEIR IMAGINATION, AND SAIL TRAINING IS THAT KEY. I’M SO LUCKY I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAIL WITH OYT SOUTH AS A YOUNG PERSON AND NOW AS A VOLUNTEER. SAIL TRAINING HAS DEVELOPED ME AS A PERSON IN NUMEROUS WAYS AND I CREDIT IT WITH THE LEADERSHIP, CONFIDENCE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS THAT I NOW USE IN MY DAY-TO-DAY JOB AS A PAEDIATRIC RADIOGRAPHER.**”

**TOM, VOLUNTEER WATCHLEADER**

