



# GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE THE SKILLS TO SUCCEED IN LIFE

Ocean Youth Trust South runs voyages for young people in our sail training vessel *Prolific*, which was built in 2005 as a tribute to the herring-fishing vessels in operation along the Norwegian coast during the 19th century. The ship is a fantastic hybrid of historic design and modern-day construction.

*Prolific* is a Bermudan ketch, 32 metres long including the bowsprit. She has accommodation for 12-15 young people plus staff, with a huge saloon with room for everyone for meals, briefings, games and more; a good navigation area with lots of space for young people to get involved and plenty of galley space. More information about *Prolific* can be found on our website at <http://www.oytysouth.org/our-vessel-prolific/>

## VOYAGES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11-25

Ocean Youth Trust South's residential sailing opportunities allow young people to develop confidence in sailing the boat; make friends; work as a team; learn new skills; earn recognised qualifications; face new challenges; have a lot of fun; and go home with a real sense of achievement.

The young people may come as a group booking (which can include adult leaders, though this is not always necessary), or as smaller groups or individuals.

Young people take part in all activities on board – sail handling, steering, navigation, cooking, keeping watch. We don't decide in advance where the boat will go: there is a start and finish port, but what happens in between depends on the weather and on what the young people want to do.

## WHO CAN SAIL WITH US

Young people from all backgrounds can sail with us, regardless of ability to pay. School holidays often involve mainstream voyages (including individuals doing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Gold Residential, or young people looking for an adventurous holiday); but we also work with those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable in some way, particularly in term-time.

This includes 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, young people with physical and/or learning difficulties, children in care and many more. We work with other charities, mainstream and special schools, local authorities, social workers and youth workers, who refer young people to sail with us.



**“ONE OF THE BEST TRIPS I HAVE BEEN ON. I GOT TO LEARN NEW THINGS I HAD NEVER DONE BEFORE, I WOULD RECOMMEND IT TO ANYONE!”**

**BEAUTY, 13**

## 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, including:

- 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
- Mental and physical wellbeing

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

## SAILING QUALIFICATIONS

Ocean Youth Trust South offers sailing qualifications through the Royal Yachting Association (Start Yachting or Competent Crew certificates). Great for keen young sailors developing their skills; but invaluable for young people who struggle in school and may not get many academic qualifications.

An RYA certificate is about much more than mastering basic sailing skills. It is evidence that a young person can:

- Listen and concentrate
- Work with others
- Take responsibility
- Join in with routine activities as well as the exciting ones
- Practise things they initially find difficult or challenging, without giving up

All these are skills which will help young people to move on in life.

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 watch leaders.

**“YOU CAN DO IT ON YOUR OWN – JUST BECAUSE YOU AREN’T GOOD AT ONE THING, YOU CAN ALWAYS FIND SOMETHING ELSE YOU CAN DO.”**

JP



JP was 13 when he left mainstream school which he says had “written him off” because he couldn’t read and write. He was depressed and could see little hope for his future, and says “My mum was very concerned for me”. He started at a school which catered for his severe dyslexia – and which also sent him sailing with OYT South. He says he learned a vital lesson on that voyage: “You can do it on your own – just because you aren’t good at one thing, you can always find something else you CAN do.” He excelled at practical tasks and teamwork, and returned for three further voyages before leaving school.

Now JP is in his thirties. He still has issues with literacy, but he got an HGV licence and worked as a fuel tanker driver before setting up his own oil delivery company and taking on his first employee. He has managed to buy his own home, and he is a confident, happy and outgoing individual. JP is convinced that his time with OYT South was the turning point in his life.

He identifies three things that made a difference:

- On the boat, he could see the point of what he was trying to learn. In school, measuring angles with a protractor made no sense to him. At sea, he found that navigation involved angles, but he could understand why
- He was inspired by our staff and volunteers: “They were all very passionate, wanting to be there, not just doing it for a job”
- He learned skills that he still uses in his daily life, from tying knots and cooking meals to assessing risk

## AN AWARD-WINNING CHARITY



- First sail training charity to have won The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service
- Chief Executive Mark Todd was the inaugural winner of the Maritime & Coastguard Agency’s Award for Command Commitment to Sail Training
- Sail Training Vessel of the Year 2016, awarded by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency and the Association of Sail Training Organisations
- The title of Young Sail Trainer of the Year 2018 was awarded by Sail Training International to Peta Koczy, then OYT South’s Staff Skipper - effectively making her the best under-25 sail trainer in the world
- In 2019, one of our staff, Holly Vint, was named Best Potential Sail Training Skipper by ASTO and the MCA. She went on to skipper *Prolific* for two seasons