

THE MAGAZINE FOR MSSC SUPPORTERS

SEAFARER NEWS

Spring 2023

ms-sc.org



NEW HORIZONS

We are offering potential seafarers more apprenticeship options thanks to a new partnership

COMING ASHORE

A new placement scheme is creating a smoother transition to shoreside roles

LIFE AT SEA

A seafarer and a cadet share stories of coping with mistakes

WELCOME & CONTENTS

Welcome to your spring issue of *Seafarer News*. We're expanding the courses and opportunities we offer seafarers, and reflecting on how our Regeneration strategy helped young people and maritime professionals with the impact of the pandemic. In our feature, learn about apprenticeship opportunities with our new partner UKSA. And head of equity, diversity and inclusion for MSSC shares his view. Please send your feedback to seafarernews@ms-sc.org

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MSSC
MARINE SOCIETY & SEA CADETS

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MARINE SOCIETY NEWS

Learn@Sea adds two new courses

Marine Society is continuing to grow its Learn@Sea suite by adding two new courses that will bolster the range of content available for seafarers worldwide.

Engineering@Sea is an introductory course and covers the broad range of main, auxiliary and electrical engineering systems found on merchant vessels and the relevant regulations. This will benefit any seafarers who carry out marine surveys, repair ships, run system evaluations and keep up to date with environment law.

Safety@Sea covers a number of safe working practices, all underpinned by the International Safety Management (ISM) Code. This requires that all activities on a vessel take place within a structured system, to ensure that they go through risk assessment and are carried out in accordance with the safety regulations.

Both courses are now live on the Learn@Sea dashboard and available to buy at the standard course price of £9.99. To buy a course or find out more, go to marine-society.org/learnatsea



Help with tackling new technologies

In this ever-changing digital landscape, we are constantly striving to find new ways of making our daily lives more efficient. However, some people who have not been as exposed to digital methods of communication, content creation and admin, might need some support. Therefore, Marine Society is offering our seafarers and volunteers a free course to help them in their maritime role. The 14-week course, Level 1 Essential Digital Skills, is available to those aged 19 years or older.

The modules include using devices and handling information; creating and editing; and communicating and being safe online. These will allow the user to develop their digital knowledge and help them to thrive at work. This will improve employment opportunities for participants in a variety of sectors, and will also help with managing household finances, budgeting and organising effectively using digital platforms.

Michael Langford, Chair of Eastern Area, District Chair for North East Yorkshire and Unit



Chair at Harrogate Sea Cadets, said: "It's a really great course if you are short of confidence with computers and the internet. Most people will pick up something new and the moderators are very patient. It can give you confidence that you know more than you thought."

For more information, please contact our Centre Manager, Jeanette Hallas, at jhallas@ms-sc.org.

Coming Ashore launches work placement scheme

Marine Society's Coming Ashore programme is now in its fourth year and has helped nearly 120 seafarers transition to shoreside roles.

The programme now offers a work placement, the Sea to Shore Placement Scheme (SSIPS). This gives employers the chance to find interns, hopefully leading to permanent roles.

The benefit for participants is to experience life ashore before making a permanent change,



Coming Ashore Mentee Nazmus Sakib (centre) with Thomas Starr (left) and Philip Placey from Thomas Miller P&I Ltd

to see if the sector is what they hoped for and their skillset aligns with the role. Nazmus Sakib was the first Coming Ashore mentee to obtain a work placement through the new scheme at Thomas Miller, the managers of the UK P&I Club. The placement catered specifically to Nazmus' interest in maritime law and claims, and reaffirmed his decision to move his career ashore.

"The two-week placement gave me the chance to work directly with the claims team and work on a real-life case," Nazmus explains. "I know now that when I finish my master's degree, I can meet the expectations the UK P&I Club has for me. It has made my journey much clearer."

One of the UK P&I Club's regional claims directors, Thomas Starr, was delighted with Nazmus' input and says the initiative is very positive for seafarers: "As an employer of ex-mariners, it's only right that we give back to the industry and help people get some insight."

To register your interest in offering an SSIP you can complete a form [here](#).

SEA CADETS NEWS

The Big Help Out

Sea Cadets is excited to mark King Charles III's coronation by championing The Big Help Out campaign to encourage volunteering.

Beginning on 8 May and continuing through summer, The Big Help Out, supported by the Royal Household, is a fantastic opportunity for Sea Cadets and other charities to promote local causes. Units will join in with events in their communities and host open days to attract new volunteers and cadets.

The Big Help Out was launched by Shaping the Future with Volunteering, a coalition of charities of which Sea Cadets is a member.

You can keep up-to-date with Sea Cadets' coronation plans at sea-cadets.org/Coronation and get involved by finding your nearest volunteering opportunity at thebighelpout.org.uk



Regeneration: delivering on our plans

We're proud to announce that we have exceeded many of the goals set in our 2021 Regeneration plan following the pandemic, including providing an average of 30 hours of boating per sea cadet, opening 21 new junior sections and funding a new Midlands Boat Station. Marine Society has also developed three new Learn@Sea courses and expanded support for seafarers through the Coming Ashore scheme.

We plan to build on these successes with an ambitious new five-year strategy that we'll share with you soon. Our achievements are thanks to the dedication of our employees, volunteers and partners. We're committed to supporting young people and seafarers and can't wait to reveal our plans in the next issue.



Gibraltar Cup returns

After months of training, royal marines cadets gathered at Commando Training Center Royal Marines in Devon to compete for the Gibraltar Cup in March. Over a weekend, cadets tackled a range of tasks in weapons handling, navigation, sleeping out overnight, teamwork and a series of physical challenges.

These assessments encourage detachments to work together for a common goal, capturing the mindset and determination of the Royal Marines. Coming out on top to take home the cup was Guildford Detachment (pictured).

Following a break due to the pandemic, cadets were excited to attend and proud to have reached this level. RMC David from Preston Detachment said it was the "Experience of a lifetime".



Cadets break records with DofE Awards

We're delighted to report that 2022/23 was a record-breaking year for Duke of Edinburgh's Award enrolments and completions at Sea Cadets. Thanks to the enthusiasm of our cadets and the support of our volunteers and instructors, we registered over 1,266 cadets for DofE to March 2023, compared to 1,105 the previous year.

Sea Cadets offers a unique variety of expeditions in addition to the traditional hill walking, including paddling, mountain biking, rowing, sailing and, new for 2023, offshore sailing.

DofE in numbers
2022/23:

415+
cadets earned
DofE awards

27
cadets earned
Gold Awards



A NEW ALLIANCE

We are expanding our apprenticeship programme through a new partnership with the UK Sailing Academy, to create more opportunities for young people to train and work in the maritime sector

With a national shortage of deck crew and growing demand for certificating existing crew, we are widening the apprenticeships we offer through a new partnership with the UK Sailing Academy (UKSA). To meet the workforce shortage, we want to engage with new employers in England across the sector. We will be working in tandem with several workboat employers, including Boskalis, Fugro (GB), SeaCat Services, Veolia, Red Funnel and Williams Shipping.

We have a further 20 places to fill this year. There is no cost to levy-paying employers for the training, while for smaller firms the contribution is just 5%. Our objective is to plug the UK skills gap, estimated to reach four million roles in the next two years.

“We are thrilled to partner with a renowned maritime organisation that shares our passion for high standards of training and will enable us to expand the number of apprentices training in the maritime sector,” says Darrell Bate, Director of Maritime Training and Development at MSSC. “We look forward to developing our offer with UKSA in response to the growing employer demand for relevant skills.”

MSSC is partnering on two apprenticeships with UKSA: Level 2 Port Operative and Level 3 Workboat Crew Member. The Port Operative apprenticeship lasts between 12 and 18 months and focuses on preparing aspiring seafarers for both cargo and passenger roles within the maritime sector.

‘The more opportunities on offer, the more young people we can get into the workplace to start long-term maritime careers, fulfilling vital roles’

The role of a Port Operative ensures that businesses and organisations deliver cargo safely and on time; it is an essential cog in the wheel, ensuring a smooth and efficient service can be carried out. They are responsible for loading, unloading, handling and storing cargo from container and transport vessels at a port.

Workboat Crew Member apprentices will undertake a two-year programme designed to give young people or existing crew all the certifications, skills and knowledge they need to work on a wide variety of coded commercial vessels. These range from tugs and multi-purpose workboats, to fast pilot boats and crew transfer vessels taking personnel out to installations

offshore. Apprentices will gain STCWs, EDH, AEC, Slinger and Signallers and Crane Operators Certificates as well improving English and maths to Level 2 standard.

“Industry partnerships like this are incredibly important for creating more pathways in maritime,” says Ben Willows, CEO of UKSA. “The more opportunities on offer, the more young people we can get into the workplace to start long-term maritime careers, fulfilling vital roles in the maritime industry.

“We are always looking for local and regional businesses to partner with us for the apprenticeship programme to provide vital work placements so it would be great to hear from anyone who is interested.”

To learn more about the different apprenticeship opportunities available and how to apply, go to marine-society.org/apprenticeships

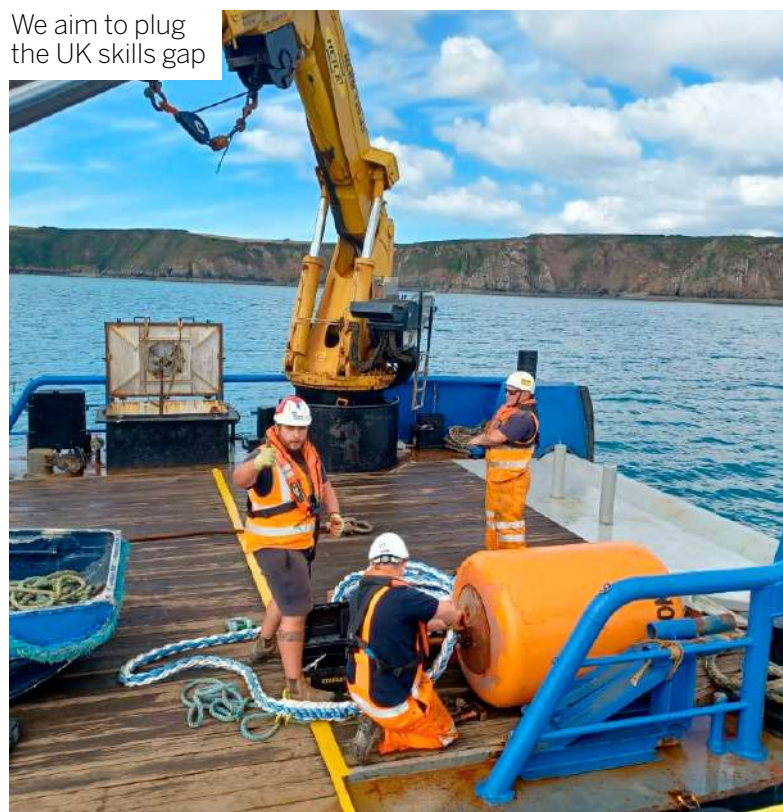
20
new
apprenticeship
places to fill this
year



UKSA: Williams Shipping



A UKSA staff member (right) with James from Marine Society outside UKSA's headquarters



We aim to plug the UK skills gap

ALL INCLUSIVE



We have created a new equity, diversity and inclusion plan to make sure everyone feels welcome and like they belong at MSSC. Our new Diversity & Inclusion Lead, **Tony Malone**, tells us more

EDI, or equity, diversity and inclusion, is a technical term for two things: how we celebrate, include and remove barriers that prevent people from participating in our activities, and a way to describe the work we do to ensure everyone feels that they belong to our community.

EDI looks at 'protected characteristics', which include: race, age, gender identity, faith/no faith, maternity and paternity, disability, sex, socio-economic status and sexual orientation. We also include others such as emotional and mental health, and accessibility.

Not everyone understands EDI, or why it's so important. I sometimes use this description, which can help to explain it: Equity is inviting everyone to a dinner party and ensuring every person has a chair that fits them at the table, or space for their wheelchair. Diversity is everyone having enough food for their diets and faiths. Inclusion is being asked to dance afterwards – it is feeling included and welcome at the party.

Prioritising EDI

The charity needed an EDI action plan because we want to get this right. We have planned it out in depth so that we can be open, transparent and honest about our progress, and provide clear goals: to be more inclusive and welcoming to all.

By its very essence, the international nature of the work carried out by Marine Society supports a diverse range of beneficiaries.

At last year's Cadet Conference, where cadets share their views and ideas, of the many cadets there, four out of the top six calls for change were about EDI. At number one was that "MSSC look to include more ways that disabled young people can participate in Sea Cadets activities".

This is a clear request for us to be more relevant to young people's views on inclusion. By making these changes, we ensure we are supporting our volunteers with the language, terms and knowledge for them to confidently have these conversations.

Self reflection

It is never easy to read about any potential barriers to participation, but it is essential to do this so that we improve. The 2022 EDI report, available at ms-sc.org/equity-diversity-and-inclusion, demonstrates one of our strengths: the transparent way we share what we do. The report highlights in detail the experiences of marginalised people and communities within Sea Cadets and gives them a voice for us to listen to and learn from.



The audit has generated 52 recommendations for MSSC to implement. The charity's new strategy to 2028 also includes ways for us to meet these, alongside an EDI action plan.

Moving forward

Change is essential so that we can remain relevant to all our beneficiaries. This will require policy reviews, updates and new opportunities for giving feedback. It will also include the opportunity for growth and learning in new ways.

In my role, I hope to take the charity's EDI strategy forward, towards transformation and happiness. My job is not only to meet the requirements of the strategy, but to look for opportunities to ensure we leave no one behind.

BOUNCING BACK ONBOARD

Dealing with setbacks or mistakes is challenging at the best of times, but what about when you're at sea, away from your usual support network?

THE SEAFARER VIEW: "SOMETIMES, I'LL STAND ON THE BOW OF THE SHIP AND JUST LOOK OUT TO SEA"



**Chief Officer/DPO
Spencer Wyles**

Some situations onboard are challenging, and navigating them can be stressful, requiring a lot of patience and resilience. I'm finding this more so now, as a Chief Officer, but the challenges are also what make the job so rewarding.

As a cadet you have to be focused and take your responsibilities seriously, but often, because everything is new, it can feel like an overwhelming amount of work to complete your task book and studies, while immersing yourself in life onboard. It takes persistence to keep on top of everything.

At any rank, mistakes will happen. We are only human. But how you deal with the stress and challenging situations these mistakes bring determines how the rest of your time at sea goes, when you can't go home at the end of your shift.

In my experience, when faced with a problem it's best to be honest. Admit a mistake. Never try to lie your way out of a situation – I've seen this go so wrong for many people. On days like this at home, you might reach out to your friends and family, but at sea there are fewer ways to get some perspective.

I have found that I cope in a number of different ways: if the problem is people-related, I'm always the first to apologise and calm the situation down and reflect on what may have happened. For bigger problems that I've been overthinking, I hit the gym and the punch bag – it really helps me switch off and hit refresh.

Sometimes, if I'm low on energy, I'll stand on the bow of the ship and just look out to sea. We are so lucky to work in this environment and I cannot tell you how many times I've done this and had some dolphins appear, or a turtle, whale, shark or manta ray, and I relax and begin to forget whatever I'd been worried about.

THE CADET VIEW: "I WAS ABLE TO TRY AGAIN BECAUSE OF THE ENCOURAGEMENT I RECEIVED"



**Able Cadet
Hannah**

Sea Cadets provides a safe space to try things. If I don't understand something, the volunteers will take time going over it in a different way, so that I get it. My favourite thing I've done with Sea Cadets is definitely going offshore. I've been on

TS Royalist and TS Jack Petchey. But sometimes things go wrong and you have to learn to handle it. On my very first Seamanship course, I only got a partial pass, but because of the support of the volunteers at my unit, I went and did it again and passed, and now I have my Intermediate Seamanship badge too! I was able to try again because of the encouragement I received, and having my knowledge tested. Our volunteers let us know that it's OK to get something wrong.



WE NEED YOU TO HELP TRANSFORM YOUNG LIVES!

Thousands of young people are on the waiting list to join Sea Cadets. Many thousands more would benefit enormously from the skills, teamwork and sense of adventure we could help them develop.

- **Become a volunteer:** Ensure these young people can receive our support in navigating life's challenges and seizing its opportunities. Use your existing seafarer skills in a flexible volunteering role that can fit around your other commitments.
- **Become an instructor:** You could be providing life-changing learning experiences or hours of fun on the water.
- **Become a local unit trustee:** Even if you have limited time, you can help to raise vital funds and build community partnerships.

We believe that our volunteers are on the same journey of growth and development as our cadets. And you don't need to be an 'expert' or have a military background. With the backing of your local unit and the National Support Centre, you'll be able to access everything you need to thrive in your chosen role – from advice and training to recognised qualifications.

If you want to boost your CV while improving the lives of young people near you, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact your local unit or fill in our online form at sea-cadets.org/volunteer

The best thing about being a Sea Cadets volunteer is...

"Supporting young people with different needs and backgrounds."
CROYDON VOLUNTEER

"Instructing powerboating and participating in events, camps and offshore voyages."
ROSYTH VOLUNTEER

"Meeting new people, being part of a community and having fun. And the sense of pride when you help cadets achieve a challenging goal."
PORTSMOUTH VOLUNTEER