

Adventure under Sail for Falkirk Young Carers



Thanks to the generous support from **The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights**, a group of **young carers benefited from Adventure under Sail in autumn 2015**. This group of vulnerable young people had been identified through our partnership with Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carears. These youngsters were deemed as being at risk of attaining poor outcomes in life due to their caring role. Their Adventure under Sail was part of our Scotland-wide New Horizons Sailing Programme for young people not in employment, education or training. Although the voyage had received support from CashBack for Communities – a Scottish Government programme, your help provided vital match funding so that this project could happen.

Ten young carers from **Falkirk** aged 16-19 accompanied by their youth workers set sail on 28th September 2015 on Alba Venturer, our 70 foot sailing vessel to explore the waters of the Firth of Clyde. Sailing some 80 nautical miles, they visited Tarbert in Loch Fyne, and Holy Loch before returning to James Watt Dock in Greenock. The first time sailors took on all the challenges of sailing the 70ft yacht, Alba Venturer. They learned to navigate and steer the boat, hoist and drop the sails, tie knots and cook for the whole crew of 18 – not easy when you're feeling sea sick!

All the young people threw themselves into the experience and worked hard to achieve the goals they set themselves both as a team and individually. They said:

"I learned to ask more questions and to ask for help when I needed it" – Robbie (17)

"For me the qualifications I get from this is massive. I left school with very little. A lot of people go into an interview and say I'm really good at communicating and working in teams and they're not – but we've got the proof of it." – Sophie (17)

"It makes you stand out from everyone, to be able to talk about this. It's something completely different and everyone will be interested." – Eireann (16)

On their return to Greenock they were joined onboard by **Scottish Justice Secretary Michael Matheson**. The group – now well versed in sailing - gave the minister a tour of the sailing vessel giving him some tips on making tea while tipped over when sailing to windward, chatting through the logbooks they completed while on their voyage, and sharing some of the goals they have set themselves post voyage. After meeting them, **Justice Secretary, Michael Matheson** commented:

"It was fantastic to see first-hand today the difference this programme is making to the young people involved and to hear what they have learned from the experience and how it will help them when they get back home. Their enthusiasm for the future was infectious"



With all the young people looking to their future after school the confidence gained and lessons learned during the voyage will make a difference for everyone in the group. All members of the crew received the accredited Royal Yachting Association's **Start Yachting Award**, the Scottish Qualification Authority's Communication module Level 3 **Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing**. The young carers also had an opportunity to relax at night with games and music, celebrate a birthday on board and explore the shoreline.

Young carers showing Michael Matheson, MP for Falkirk and Minister for Justice around the boat and discussing what they learnt on their Adventure under Sail



Falkirk young carers group meet Stewart McMillan, MSP for Inverclyde