



The Worshipful
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Shipwrights

Case Study - Ollie Boosey - Engineering apprentice (funded 2019-20)

Elite Sailing, Chatham, Kent

www.elitesailing.co.uk



Ollie, aged 17, joined Elite Sailing in September 2020 and has always had a genuine passion for boats and the marine world. He has lived on a barge with his parents for many years. A keen sailor, he also teaches at the local cadets and owns a small catamaran.

We had a chat with Ollie at the end of his first year to review his progress. This is what he said....

Making his mark...

"This first year has been great as I have got involved in everything from waxing and polishing, antifouling, sanding, varnishing, to fitting automatic fire extinguishers, acid wash decks, wiring lights, clean ovens, sponge out bilges, cleaning inside the boat. I've even put bed sheets in cabins, stock the boats with food, help with pulling up and removing sails, do stock takes on boats etc – you name it I've done it!

Recently I have been helping to fix cracks on the front of one of the boats. This involved feathering back the holes and mixing and applying epoxy. At college we have learned about hand tool fittings and engineering drawings, electrical connections and circuits.

Ollie Boosey – Elite Sailing

Skills and knowledge...

I've really enjoyed working on the engines, not only because it is interesting and I often learn something new, but it also often feels like a good day's work when I have fixed an engine and you get a sense of accomplishment. I also enjoy working on the outside of the boats doing waxing, polishing, and antifouling because it is a good time to be able to work independently. I also think that my apprenticeship has benefited the company by offering new perspectives from a younger mind. I often try to make suggestions of better ways to do things and help with decision making whenever I get the chance. I also remind my coworkers of how things work when I ask them questions, giving them an opportunity to explain it to me! The company brings in lots of new people from around the country and so it impacts the local shops and restaurants because people spend money eating out.

Over the course of this year I have grown in confidence quite a lot. With this confidence I have also gained more responsibilities at work. I am often left to work individually which I enjoy as it gives me a chance to work at my own pace. I have had to deal with clients and sell products to them and help with the handover of the boats between courses. I am also often left to lock up the office at the end of the day. I enjoy having more responsibility because it makes me feel useful and more like part of a team than just a helper.

I have also undertaken further training – I've done my day skipper theory and day skipper practical. This was very useful for me to have at work because if we need to move a boat, I can prepare it on my own. This makes for an effective use of time and effort rather than two people doing it.

What about the future?

By the end of my marine engineering apprenticeship, I hope to have completed most of the RYA courses that elite sailing provides such as: VHF radio, diesel engine, and costal skipper and yacht master. This will set me up for a large variety of good jobs such as, skippering cruise ships or cargo ships, or an engineering job on many different boats. I could also become a freelance instructor or marine engineer. The possibilities are endless and so it would be difficult for me to see where I'll be in the future. But I find this uncertainty very exciting and inspiring actually."

