

Voyage of Discovery Fund Report 2023

Worshipful Company of Shipwrights Total Donation - £2,000

Our sincere thanks and appreciation for your support of our work and the donation of £2,000 from the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights in 2023. The funds have been used for our Voyage of Discovery Fund scheme in support of the following groups of young people who benefited from the Cirdan experience in the 2023 season.

Youth Organisation in Plymouth - £150

A new Community Interest Company that delivers youth work to three communities in Plymouth. Their aim is to empower young people to believe in themselves, feel safe and take control of their futures.



Entering Portland Harbour.

“It was a blast! The views of the sea and the scenery over the voyage were beautiful”.

The objectives of the youth organisation are to make young people feel more confident with more self-belief, they feel safer, and that young people feel they have aspirations and control over their lives and futures. Their mission is to build trusting relationships with young people,

to provide safe spaces for them to be able to take control of their futures and to work with young people to break down barriers through activities, projects, and events.

All the young people come from deprived areas in Plymouth. These areas have very limited access to services and poor transport links. The group on the voyage have all been chosen due to recent issues like bereavement, substance misuse at home, parents with mental health issues, and parents in prison. It was thought that a week residential aboard one of our vessels would have a big impact on these young people and provide an invaluable respite opportunity for this group.



*What did you learn from the experience? ...
“How to coil like a Pro.
How to Knot like a boss.”*

Steering Queen Galadriel.

The voyage with Cirdan helped improve confidence and self-esteem, improved communication skills, better team working abilities, and improved emotional and mental wellbeing.

The group of 14 sailed for 7 days in August aboard Queen Galadriel.

“I learnt to be open to new opportunities; to have routine.”



Time for a swim.

Children & Young People's Project run by a London Borough - £350

The project offers a range of targeted services for children and young people aged 10 to 17 years old. The impact of COVID-19 has compounded the effect of "adverse childhood experiences" (ACEs) that many young people in this London borough have already experienced. The project aims to alleviate this impact and positively divert young people at risk of child exploitation. There is a particular emphasis on supporting young people who do not always engage with services. To achieve this the project provides young people with access to a range of positive activities and supports their emotional wellbeing.



Keeping watch.

Many young people were deeply affected by the experience of lockdown and prolonged absence from school. A sustained absence of structure, routine, exercise, meaningful work and interaction with both their peers and adults will have long lasting consequences for many children. Those who were already disadvantaged, either because of where they live, poor mental health, their family's income, or an already challenging home life have been disproportionately affected. This voyage offered the young people the opportunity to experience a new adventure which will have a positive impact in the long-term.

"It's been a fantastic experience and adventure where I have learnt multiple skills at once."

The young people who came on the voyage all come from complex backgrounds and some will have experience of being in care. Some also had additional needs such as autism and other neuro diversities.



In the Solent.

The voyage with Cirdan provided an opportunity for the young people to experience positive group dynamics and meaningful, purposeful, and practical work. This helped to engage the young people, rebuilding their confidence and self-esteem. It was also a place to have fun, after what may have been challenging times in their lives. A place to 'reset the dial' and prepare children to re-engage with school and learning by developing positive relationships with their peers.

A group of 12 people sailed for 7 days in August aboard Queen Galadriel.

“The highlight for me was the learning opportunities and watching the young people having fun and increasing their confidence on the vessel.” – Group Leader

Sea Cadet Group - £500

This group of Cadets are part of the SCC (Sea Cadet Corps) and are in a rurally isolated area which is a rural / coastal town and is in the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods in their County. It is also one of the 40 - 50% most deprived neighbourhoods for income deprivation affecting children and 20 - 40% most deprived neighbourhood for education, skills, and training.



Safety briefing.

The young people in the unit, some of whom have learning difficulties and/or identified educational needs, come from a diverse range of backgrounds including low-income families with more than half receiving free school meals or the pupil premium.

“It massively helps team building and creates a bond and memories they will remember for years to come.” – Group Leader

The Sea Cadet group aim to give young people an experience that will help them grow into the person they want to be in a safe and friendly environment. Through various activities and adventures, they learn teamwork, respect, loyalty, self-confidence, commitment, self-discipline, honesty and how to be the best version of themselves.

Although the SCC has some vessels there is limited opportunity for this unit to access these. However, the experience that Cirdan provides, the activities involved, and skills learnt during

the voyage align closely to the Sea Cadet Training Programme (e.g. seamanship, navigation, meteorology, teamwork).



Raising the mizzen.

Whilst the voyage gave the young people the chance to gain RYA accreditation and gain SCC qualifications, this was secondary to the opportunity to gain self-confidence, boost self-esteem, increase teamwork skills and develop leadership skills. In addition to this they were able to gain life skills including cooking, cleaning, and budgeting.

A group of 13 sailed aboard Faramir for 7 days in October.

“I loved it, and I would definitely do it again. I really enjoyed spending time with the crew and my mates and learning new things like new ropes and how to sail.” – Ellie



Enjoying a well-earned rest.

Voyage to Recovery

Our **Voyage to Recovery** project in 2023 involved ten NHS Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) services collaborating to circumnavigate the UK with a relay crew of 80, mainly young people, from around the UK who have experienced early episodes of psychosis. They were accompanied by the same mental health professionals who are working on the recovery programmes.

Within the broad group of young people who are being supported by specialist Early Intervention in Psychosis services, there are many who because of mental health problems, or adverse life circumstances, that have extremely isolated and limited lives, with little meaning or structure, or opportunity for personal growth.



At the helm of Faramir.

“It is hard to sum up in words as the impact is far stretching and different for each person. They have all overcome challenges, grown as young people and have shown resilience and the ability to trust in themselves and others. It has been life changing and the group have spoken about how they want to continue this motivation after the trip.”

– Group Leader

All the young people who participated in the voyages are taking part in a three-year recovery programme after experiencing their first episode of psychosis. To enhance the effectiveness of the programme, the EIP teams include sailing adventure therapy with Cirdan which supports personal growth by providing a series of challenges, adversities, and achievements, in a supportive social context, and a radically novel and inspiring

environment. Unfortunately, whilst the sailing has proved to be an extremely effective aspect of this therapy, it falls outside of statutory funding.

A circumnavigation of the UK with 10 EIP groups is again planned for 2024 providing we can raise sufficient funding to support them.

The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights has provided support towards 2 of the legs in 2023 as follows:

EIP Group A - £500



Celebrating achieving RYA accreditation.

“I learnt that I am capable of achieving things I never thought possible if I put my mind to it.”

The **EIP A** group were the tenth and final leg of the 2023 Voyage to Recovery sailing from Hartlepool to Ipswich in June, with 14 people (including their leaders) aboard Faramir for 6 days. This was the longest leg of the whole EIP circumnavigation and with the weather against the group most of the way proved to be one of the most challenging. Despite the seasickness all the group felt a great sense of achievement in completing the voyage and said it would have a lasting impact on their lives.

EIP Group B - £500



Happy faces at the end of the voyage.

“In my opinion the sailing residential is paramount to removing the stigma our service users experience in regard to Mental Health.” – Group Leader

The **EIP B** group were the fourth leg of the 2023 Voyage to Recovery from Cardiff to Holyhead in May, with 10 people (including their leaders) sailing aboard Faramir for 6 days. Although some of this voyage was quite rainy and grim, the sighting of many dolphins was an experience the group will not forget, and this helped balance out the difficult overnight passage. The group maintained their positivity throughout and overall, this was a great voyage with 264 miles travelled and a particularly nice sail up Cardigan Bay to Abersoch.

“I’ve laughed so much and learnt a lot. I’ve loved how peaceful it’s been looking out at the ocean, but also really enjoyed how challenging it has been too.”
