



## SAIL TRAINING REPORT

### Sail Training Programmes – Funded Activity Report 2025/26

The Disabled Sailors Association (DSA) provides a range of structured, sail training activities, for around 50 people, designed to make sailing accessible to people of all abilities. Training takes place, both on the Association's wheelchair accessible yachts, and in specially designed dinghies that are engineered to be inherently safe, as they cannot capsize or sink. This allows participants to build confidence and skills, in a supportive and controlled environment under the tutelage of our qualified and experienced Skipper.

The training programmes are dynamic, in that they have to be structured to meet the ability of the person taking part in the activities; this will quite often mean training the person, in great detail, to understand why an activity needs to be carried out in a particular way so that they can then, verbally instruct someone, to complete the operation which they are physically unable to do. This attracts a diverse group of participants, with over half of our learners being of school or college age, between 13 and 25. A few people come to sailing later in life but all are seeking new challenges, rehabilitation opportunities or pathways into maritime activity, that would otherwise be inaccessible.

In addition to introductory and recreational sailing, the DSA plays an important role as a foundation for further progression. DSA training is frequently used as a stepping stone, for individuals looking to gain broader maritime knowledge, practical experience and sea miles. This enables participants to move on to formal qualifications and more advanced sailing opportunities.

The impact of this training pathway is evident in recent outcomes. In the past year, nine individuals successfully achieved recognised sailing qualifications as a direct result of DSA training. Looking ahead, this figure is expected to grow significantly, with projections indicating that around 25 people will gain qualifications during 2026.

In 2025, we had at least ten competent crew members and two Day Skippers. We do not conduct the formal assessments ourselves, as candidates are required to complete their RYA examinations independently, so we do not usually have further contact with them afterwards. However, the qualifications gained, open doors for young people to go onto careers in the maritime industry – for a disabled person, these are truly life-changing opportunities.

Through its innovative approach, specialist equipment, inclusive ethos, and thanks to your support, the DSA continues to open up sailing to a wider audience, while supporting meaningful progression within the sport. We design build and operate all of our facilities ourselves and are unique in the world.

Thank you for investing in this transformative voyage.

