



**Ocean Youth
Trust Scotland**

Youth work on the waves
Inspiring young people

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



PATRON'S MESSAGE

It was wonderful that OYT Scotland came through COVID and returned to taking young people on adventures under sail.

The season started with the Four Nations voyage, with a group of young women from Wales aboard Alba Explorer. A very busy sailing season followed culminating in being awarded the Inverclyde Chamber of Commerce Award for Diversity in November.

In December the Trust received the honour of the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Volunteering Award, which recognises the contribution of our volunteers both past and present in empowering young people and providing them with skills and opportunities.

We are delighted that the Trust has remained the world leading sailing charity and are delighted to be the patrons of this wonderful organisation.

Your proud patrons,
Curly and Barbara Mills

OUR BELIEF

Ocean Youth Trust Scotland believes that all young people, regardless of circumstance or ability, should have the opportunity to realise their true potential in order for them to live healthy, fulfilling lives – and make a positive contribution to their community.

OUR MISSION

Ocean Youth Trust Scotland exists to inspire young people through youth work on the waves. Residential voyages aboard our fleet of sail training vessels provide a uniquely powerful and effective environment for the personal development of young people from a diverse range of backgrounds throughout Scotland and beyond.

OUR VOYAGES

Ocean Youth Trust Scotland voyages are inherently safe, however the unpredictable environment aboard our vessels presents real physical, mental and emotional challenges. It is a genuinely life-changing experience with many unique learning opportunities.





“ At the start, I struggled with tying some knots and I got really annoyed with myself. However, I persevered and by putting in the effort and seeing it as a challenge, by the time the second voyage came around, I was able to do all the knots and that made me feel really good. I even went on to help other people. ”

Young Person

CHAIR'S REPORT

As the storm of Covid-19 began to pass over the horizon, we looked forward to the 2022 sailing season with huge optimism. Many of our regular clients had seen their trips carried forward for two years in a row, and we were delighted to welcome them back.

Some of the Board members, including the past Chair, stayed on for an extra year to see the Trust through Covid. They were tasked with many difficult decisions, that were necessary to maintain the future success of the Trust, and we are indebted to them for their hard work and commitment.

The Board took some time out to develop a revised strategy, designed to ensure that the Trust continues to be a safe, effective and efficient organisation. The focus will continue to be on developing the youth work programme, investing in our people and our infrastructure, and building a sustainable organisation. We were delighted to establish the Youth Voice, a group of young members who will

work as a junior Board, and will ensure that we keep the needs of young people very much at the heart of the organisation. Renewed focus will also be on raising the profile and reputation of the Trust, as we find ourselves in a very competitive marketplace for funding and sponsorship. We are so grateful for our regular funders who have been by our sides for many years. We will be reaching out over the next year to seek partnerships with new sponsors, and we are planning a relaunch of our Friends Scheme.

All of this will ensure that we can continue to deliver sailing voyages that challenge, develop and delight our young people, staff and volunteers alike. My sincere thanks to everyone involved in making this possible.

Best Wishes,

Lucie Aitkenhead

A photograph of two women in patterned blouses talking, overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent background. The woman on the left has long blonde hair and is wearing glasses. The woman on the right has shorter blonde hair.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The 2023 season got off to a great start with 2-week women only voyage visiting all four nations. Throughout the year we continued to deliver successful trips every week, and we were thrilled that 586 young people were able to experience our life-changing personal development voyages.

While 2020 and 2021 had seen our Change Tack with Cashback programme delivered in a truncated format, we were at last able to fully recommence activities in 2022 and deliver the programme to 121 young people from 11 local authorities. We are ever grateful to our long-standing clients for their continued support, patience and loyalty; we are also grateful for the new clients, who gave us the chance to show how a sailing voyage with OYT Scotland can change the lives of young people.

None of this would be possible without

the commitment of our staff and volunteers. Covid continued to pose significant challenges during the 2022 season, with positive tests demanding often last-minute staffing changes, however the dedication of these individuals allowed us to adapt and continue providing youth work on the waves. This commitment was recognised formally when in December 2022 we were awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Volunteering Award. We are hugely grateful to our staff and over 300 volunteers who all share in this achievement, and without whom our life changing work could not be delivered.

Fair Winds,

Hazel Wiseman

Hazel Wiseman



SKYE'S STORY

Learn about Skye's transformative experience on board

WHAT WAS YOUR SITUATION BEFORE JOINING OYT SCOTLAND?

Before this experience I would stay in my room a lot, on my own on my phone.

HOW WAS YOUR VOYAGE?

It was great. It's made a big difference in my confidence. It's helped me stand up for myself and be more confident about saying no to people who weren't good to me.

This has helped me understand the benefits of working as a team too. When we were on different watches, if others needed help, I got involved with my team and it meant we got the job done quicker and everybody felt better.

DID ANYTHING CHANGE AFTER YOUR VOYAGE?

The experience has opened my eyes to what's possible and being part of this has really changed me.

It has made me realise that instead of sitting about doing nothing I could actually be doing something with my life.

It has also made me think about my behaviour and realise that instead of doing things that are stupid and can hurt someone, I can do something good instead because I'll get more from it and feel better about myself.

“ The crew and the volunteer watch leaders were world class! They were knowledgeable, experienced in their own fields, clear, direct and used humour to engage the young people like I have never seen before. Not one question or insight was missed to celebrate or to learn from. ”

- Group Leader



OUR JOURNEY

IN APRIL 2022,

we commenced our first full sailing season after the Covid-19 pandemic.

With support from 224 volunteers, we were able to welcome aboard 539 young people across a total of 605 young person berths.



BY AUGUST 2022,

we had eaten 779 of the 1,091 potatoes that would be consumed in that year aboard our vessels.



BY JULY 2022,

we had set sail on 50 of the 101 voyages that would take place this season.

IN NOVEMBER 2022,
we were awarded
Inverclyde Chamber of
Commerce's ICON
Award for Diversity.

BY JANUARY 2023,
our annual refit project
was well underway,
with both vessels on
the cradle in Fairlie
Boat Yard.



IN DECEMBER 2022,
we were awarded the prestigious Queen
Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Volunteering
Award.

This achievement recognised the long-term
commitment and support of our volunteers who
work tirelessly both on and off-shore to provide
transformative experiences to young people.

BY MARCH 2023,
we had delivered a
total of 1,100
accredited SQA
qualifications and 321
RYA qualifications.

CASHBACK FOR COMMUNITIES

2022 was the third and final year of Change Tack with Cashback, our Phase 5 project for the Scottish Government's Cashback for Communities programme. During this time, 95 young people from across Scotland participated in an intensive 12-month intervention programme aimed at changing attitudes and behaviours of those most at risk of anti-social behaviour, offending/re-offending or entering the criminal justice system, as well as increasing attainment and attendance in school.

The programme explored risk-taking behaviours on land and at sea whilst also developing young people's confidence, resilience, teamwork, personal and social skills. In addition to achieving SQA and RYA qualifications, the programme encouraged young people to make their own 'Passage Plan for Life', evaluating risk-taking behaviours and the impact these have on themselves and their communities.



“ In school it's all about either passing or failing subjects. On the boat if you did things wrong people were more encouraging and understanding. They would help you until you got it right. ”

Young Person



121

young people engaged

88

workshops delivered

661

SQA units delivered

106

RYA Start Yachting certificates

Change Tack with Cashback was designed to achieve six outcomes:

OUTCOME 1: Young people build their capacity and confidence

OUTCOME 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills

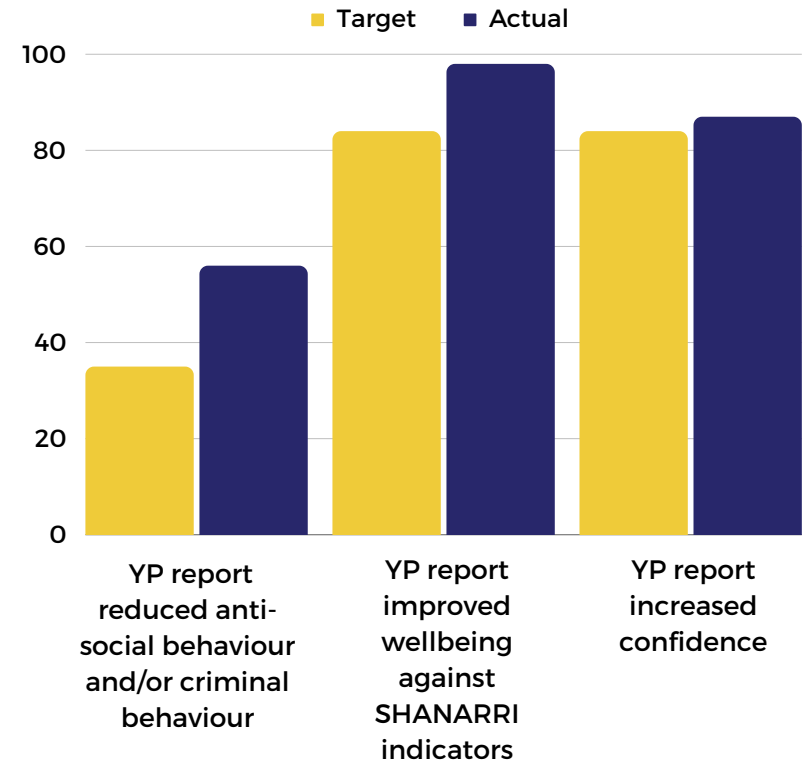
OUTCOME 3: Young people's health and wellbeing improves

OUTCOME 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options

OUTCOME 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities

OUTCOME 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system.

Each group engaged in Year 3 of the programme received two voyages, 10 youth work sessions and two outdoor activity sessions. These activities included archery, mountain biking, canoeing and raft-building, and they gave young people an opportunity to consolidate the skills they had gained throughout the programme.



“ The experience on the boat has helped develop lots of skills that will be useful to talk about when applying for a job.

I feel proud of myself for going out and doing something different and getting out of the wee box I was living in. ”

Young Person

“ The experience has opened my eyes to what’s possible and being part of this has really changed me. It has made me think about my behaviour and realise that instead of doing things that are stupid and can hurt someone, I can do something good instead because I’ll get more from it and feel better about myself. ”

- Young Person





JAMIE'S STORY

Read about the impact of our Assisted Berth Scheme (ABS) from Jamie and his family.

WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE BEFORE ENGAGING WITH OCEAN YOUTH TRUST SCOTLAND?

My son was having to be home-schooled due to being bullied at school. With the added pressure of lockdown, this added to his anxieties and mental health. He was keen to get out there and live life but due to his confidence being low, our finances and being so rural, this was very difficult as a family to find a safe, guided adventure. He was lonely which was heart breaking for us and that's when we found OYT Scotland.

WHAT DID YOUR YOUNG PERSON GAIN FROM A VOYAGE WITH OYT SCOTLAND?

He loved the travelling and meeting new people.

He gained a sense of adventure, of meeting new people and realising that

he was capable of doing anything he applied himself too.

WHAT DID YOUR YOUNG PERSON GAIN FROM A VOYAGE WITH OYT SCOTLAND?

He appeared more confident and spoke more freely to people. He was keen to try other adventures and travel and see more of the world. Also being keen to pursue his bosun training.

Without the Assisted Berth Scheme my son simply couldn't have gone on his voyage. We are a low-income family, I live with M.S. and it can be hard finding the money or help to give everything to your child that they deserve. My son is amazing and deserves the same opportunities and chances as the next child. The scheme made the difference between him going or not going.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are at the heart of OYT Scotland. In 2022, we had 224 dedicated volunteers from across the UK. These individuals came from a variety of backgrounds and brought not only their skills and experience on board, but also enthusiasm and a passion for youth work on the waves.

To ensure our volunteers felt confident supporting our programme of youth work voyages, we delivered training both at sea and ashore. 53 volunteers attended 3rd Mate or 1st and 2nd Mate Skills Weekends, 40 attended Bosun's Training, 8 completed their Coastal Skipper and 6 completed their Day Skipper qualification. We also had 35 new or returning volunteers complete an Induction Weekend.

Throughout the season, these individuals gave young people a safe and inclusive environment where they felt able to challenge themselves through the medium of sail training.



ANNUAL TRAINING SEMINAR

Our 2023 Annual Training Seminar was the busiest yet, offering a total of 17 courses, 275 training places, and awarding over 50 RYA tickets in areas such as Radar, First Aid, Diesel Engine Maintenance and VHF SRC.

This event was the first in-person seminar since the Covid-19 pandemic, and the value of the experience was evident.

Young people from several Cashback for Communities groups were invited to attend the Saturday dinner and present a short film about their experiences of sailing and the project as a whole.

“ What an amazing weekend. The stories from the young people will stay with me. ”

Steve Young, Vice Chair

OUR GROUPS

In the 2022-23 period, the Trust sailed with a total of 44 groups from 23 of Scotland's 32 local areas.

We delivered 8 voyages to Scout groups, 2 voyages to Boys Brigade units, 3 young carer voyages, 3 Employability voyages and 3 Leadership voyages. We also delivered two Gold and one Bronze Duke of Edinburgh residential voyage, as well as one all-female four nations voyage with The Outdoor Partnership.

“ The OYT Scotland experience is totally unique. It takes young people right out of their comfort zone and places them in an environment that presents them with challenges that rely on working with others, communication, respect for each other, discipline and having trust in each other.

The staff and crew are fantastic and the non-judgemental connection they make with young people allows young people to learn in a safe environment. The physical hands-on elements of the experience along with a healthy diet and sleep patterns had a beneficial impact on young people's mental health and well-being. ”

Group Leader





FINANCIAL REPORT

The start of a new year on the water in April 2022 saw a return to more normal operations after two years of restrictions. The Trust is very much indebted to our volunteers, funders and supporters for helping us through what was an exceptionally challenging period.

It was a safe and successful year, underpinned by a solid financial performance. All voyages are supported by bursaries or grants to a greater or

lesser degree, which allows as many young people as possible to benefit from the experience of being at sea. Fundraising makes up the greatest part of our annual income and is crucial for the sustainability of the Trust. We are hugely appreciative of the difference that ongoing support makes to the success of the charity.

We finished the year with a small surplus of income over expenditure. However,

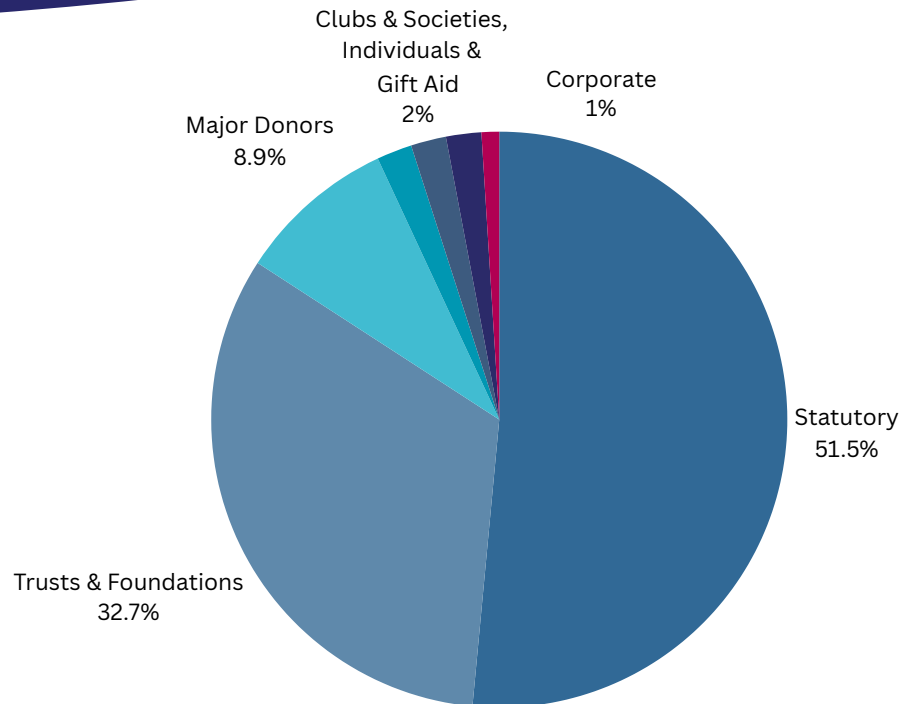
our investments saw a decline in their fortunes and overall the Trust posted a manageable deficit of (18,460). The Trust ends the year in a satisfactory financial position with a good balance sheet. The General fund covers three months running costs and stands at £203,851. Our designated asset fund, mainly our vessels, has a balance of £173,710, and we have a Vessel replacement fund of £709,313.

FUNDRAISING

Without the valuable support of our donors we could not continue to provide life changing youth work on the waves to disadvantaged young people.

The Trust raised £591,245 in the year to 31st March 2023 from a variety of funders, including many who have been donating for several years.

We are grateful for that continued support and to those who have supported the work of the Trust for the first time. There is a need to support the true cost of voyage fees to some level for all young people who sail with us, and our fundraising will always play a critical role in allowing us to do that.



KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

Key contributions included £244,492 from the Scottish Government's CashBack for Communities programme and £33,122 from the National Voluntary Youth Work Organisations Support (NVYOS) Fund. Trusts and Foundations also played a pivotal role, with The John Scott Charitable Trust contributing to our skipper's salaries, and a grant from the People's Postcode Lottery Trust allowing us to purchase a new hybrid van. Clubs and Societies, notably ASTO, continued to be reliable funders.

Individual donations rose to £10,212, a marked increase from £6,820 in the previous year, and Gift Aid raised a total of £14,506.



ASSISTED BERTH SCHEME

Fundraised by us through a number of grants and donations, our Assisted Berth Scheme (ABS) ensures that financial situation is not a barrier to accessing transformative youth work experiences by offering vital funding to the young people most in need. The scheme is guided by a set of criteria, however no individual is excluded from applying if they feel that their situation qualifies for a grant.

Over the last year, the scheme has supported 155 young people towards brighter futures through youth work on the waves.

“ Accessing the voyage has given our members a sense of optimism for the future and that there is a bigger world out there and amazing experiences to be had as opposed to the previous view that the world starts and ends in Drumchapel. ”

Group Leader

OUR SUPPORTERS

Principal Supporters: Barbara and Curly Mills

Major Supporters:



The John
Scott
Charitable
Trust



Other Supporters:

We would like to extend our thanks to OYT Scotland's Young Ambassadors and Shore Groups (Clyde, Aberdeen & North East), all of the individuals who have donated this year, the trusts and foundations who have supported our work, as well as our much-valued volunteers.

Our Partners:

We would like to thank the following organisations for their partnership work:





Ocean Youth Trust Scotland

Youth work on the waves
Inspiring young people

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