



# Annual Report 2016-17



**SUPPORTING FISHERMEN AND MARINERS  
SINCE 1839**



## Impact - Appreciation For Grants

**A total of £1.4 million was paid in grants during the past year. From the many letters of appreciation received at Central Office, we know how our grants make a real difference to seafarers and their families in need. Extracts from just a few are given below:**

“I am writing to inform you that our new adjustable bed arrived yesterday. The carers are very impressed with it and their job will be a lot easier (*without an adjustable hospital style bed carers would not attend Paul*), you wouldn't even tell it has the special features when it's made up with the bedding. I cannot thank the Charity enough for providing the funding – without the Shipwrecked Mariners I don't know where we'd be at the moment.”

“My mother has asked me to write and convey her heartfelt thanks for your cheque; she has also asked that I say how grateful she has been for your help and support over the years which has been much appreciated. Her move into residential care has gone smoothly and hopefully she will not feel isolated moving forward, having company and being cared for 24/7.”

“To all at Shipwrecked Mariners and to all the people for their generous donations that helped me immensely in my recovery from a liver transplant – thank you.”

# The Society's Purpose



**The Shipwrecked Mariners' Society** provides financial help to merchant seafarers, fishermen and their dependants who are in need. We pay an immediate grant to the widow of a serving seafarer who dies, whether death occurs at sea or ashore. Regular grants are paid to former seafarers, their widows and partners, whose circumstances justify on-going support. Special grants are made to meet particular needs in crisis situations. We also make funeral grants. Practical assistance is given to seafarers of any nationality shipwrecked on the coast of the British Isles.



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## Our Patron



**HRH**  
**The Princess Royal**

# Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society

(Shipwrecked Mariners' Society) Instituted 1839, incorporated 1850 and registered under the Charities Act 1960. Registered charity no.212034

## Patron

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

## President

Admiral Sir George Zambellas GCB DSC DL FRAeS

## Vice-Presidents

The Rt Hon Lord Brabazon of Tara PC DL, Mr Anthony West DL, Mr William Everard CBE

## Ex-officio Vice-Presidents

H E The Lt-Governor of the Isle of Man

H E The Lt-Governor of Jersey

H E The Lt-Governor of Guernsey

The Right Hon The Lord Mayor of London

The Right Hon The Lord Provost of Edinburgh

The Right Hon The Lord Provost of Glasgow

The Right Hon The Lord Mayor of Belfast

The Right Hon The Lord Mayor of Cardiff

The Lord Provost of Aberdeen

The Lord Mayor of Birmingham

The Lord Provost of Dundee

The Lord Mayor of Kingston-upon-Hull

The Lord Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The Lord Mayor of Plymouth

The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth

The Prime Warden of the Worshipful

Company of Fishmongers

The Master of the Honourable Company  
of Master Mariners

The Deputy Master of Trinity House

## COUNCIL (TRUSTEES)

**Chairman:** Mr George Greenwood\*

**Treasurer:** Mr Richard Coleman FCA\*

Captain Roger Barker MNM

Mr Eamonn Delaney KSG\*

Commodore Laurie Hopkins RN

Captain John Hughes FNI

Mr Rob Jardine-Brown

Commodore Mike Mansergh CBE

Captain Nigel Palmer OBE MNM\*

**Deputy Chairman:** Mr Anthony Fawcett FCA\*

Captain Graham Pepper FNI\*

Mrs Liz Price

Mr Michael Seymour\*

Captain John Vercoe\*

Mr Tim West

Commander Rosie Wilson OBE RN\*

\*Executive Committee Members

**Bankers:** CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4JQ

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc, 44 South Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1DS

**Solicitors:** George Ide LLP, 52 North Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1NQ

Blake Morgan, Harbour Court, Compass Road, Portsmouth PO6 4ST

**Investment Advisers:** Sarasin & Partners LLP, Juxon House 100 St. Paul's Churchyard, London, EC4M 8BU

**Auditors:** Sheen Stickland LLP, 7 East Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1TR

**Chief Executive:** Commodore Malcolm Williams CBE RN





## Where we are



## Centenary of the introduction of Merchant Ship Convoying in WW1

The Shipwrecked Mariners' Society marked the centenary of the introduction of the ocean convoying of merchant ships in WW1 by Chief Executive, Commodore Malcolm Williams, filming a video covering the history and impact of the convoy system.



By the beginning of May 1917 Britain had lost over a thousand merchant ships and 6,000 lives. It had only 6 weeks supply of food left and was facing the prospect of starvation as well as losses of goods and raw materials that could not be sustained, and risked us losing the war. Convoying had been rejected by the Admiralty and Ship-owners as late as February

1917 but these dire circumstances forced a change of policy and following the success of an experimental convoy from Gibraltar to Plymouth in early May, the first transatlantic convoy of 12 vessels left Hampton Roads, Virginia on 24 May, with only one ship failing to reach its destination. Protection was provided by the Royal Navy and the United States Navy. In addition to food, raw materials, manufactured goods, oil, military equipment and munitions, over 1 million American troops were transported across the Atlantic in convoy and only 637 men were lost as a result of German submarine attacks. It was found that merchant ship, losses in convoy were ten per cent of those suffered by ships making independent passage and the number of German submarines sunk increased.

During the First World War, the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society assisted more than 50,000 merchant mariners, fishermen and their dependants, passengers and military personnel by providing clothing, food, accommodation and rail warrants, while also supplying financial assistance to widows, orphans and aged parents of lost mariners.

Malcolm Williams, said: "The introduction of the convoy system was a late but vital decision which ensured that the war was prosecuted to a successful conclusion and the country did not starve. It saved many lives too."

The decisive role and sacrifice of the men of the Mercantile Marine in WW1 was recognized by King George V in conferring on them the title of the 'Merchant Navy': the fourth service.

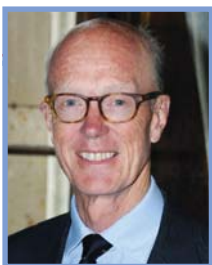


To view the video visit:

<http://shipwreckedmariners.org.uk/world-war-one/centenary-merchant-ship-convoy-ww1/>

Or for those of you with the facility to do so, scan the QR code here





## Chairman's Report

Charities are exhorted to measure their impact: the brief stories of the assistance we provide - see the examples on pages 11-12 - are eloquent testimony to the effect that our modest grants can have on the circumstances of an individual or a family who are in financial need.

*"On behalf of my wife and myself I would very much like to express our sincere gratitude to you and all at the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society. It was an overwhelming occasion when I opened your letter;*

*how can one possibly begin to express the huge sense of not only gratitude but relief that we both feel, and complete disbelief that somehow, in this day and age, we found help and understanding, which seems to be a thing of the past."*

On behalf of my fellow trustees I am pleased to report that over the last year we have:

- Made regular grant payments in 1,541 cases affecting 1,880 people at a cost of £1.1 million.
- Awarded 549 one-off grants at a cost of £272,000.
- Received 565 new applications for assistance.
- Accepted 113 new regular beneficiaries.
- Completed 302 three-yearly regular grant recipient case reviews.

Our regular grant recipients' average age remains 75 and ranges from 41 to 101. The average age of new regular beneficiaries was 70. Forty-nine per cent had fishing backgrounds, thirty three per cent Merchant Navy, while the balance served in both and or the Royal Navy.

*"My mother was a regular beneficiary of the Society and really appreciated that she was remembered twice a year and always put the money to good use. When Dad died she went out to clean offices to augment her widow's pension. She was content with her lot - very independent, almost to the end when she admitted that it was time to get some help. Many, many thanks for the part your Society took to enhance her life."*

Regular beneficiaries reported that the top five specific uses after general living expenses to which their grants are put were: paying utility bills, house repairs, clothing, household equipment and council tax.

For one-off grants the average age of an applicant was 61½ which has been steadily falling over the years. Many of the grants were awarded to those who were unemployed and on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and those on Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) unable to find work owing to illness or a disability. Many do not have readily transferable skills.

The principal categories of support requested were for basic household appliances, carpeting, arrears of rent and council tax, beds and mattresses and general living expenses. The number of cases where we have been asked to help towards rent and council tax arrears has been rising in recent years and tripled this year compared with last.

Total grant expenditure amounted to £1.4 million, 69% of all our expenditure and 'charitable activities' was £1.8 million or 90% of all expenditure. We deliberately budget for an operating deficit. This year it was £527,000, offset by the increase in the value of our investments. Investments generated 54% of our total income. Donations from the public into our large collecting mines and in response to our Christmas, Easter and Seafarers Awareness Week appeals were at a record high of £161,000. Twenty-eight of our 50 large mines were opened and yielded £7,500. My thanks to those stalwart Agents who look after them so well despite the ravages of time, vandalism and the sea air. Legacy income was, disappointingly, significantly lower than last year but such fluctuations are to be expected and we are always extremely grateful and admire those who remember us in



this way and who are thereby making a contribution to the welfare of future generations of fishermen and mariners. It is very important that we maintain diversity in our sources of income because we believe that the support we provide will be needed for as long as we are an island nation.

Trustees aim to balance the needs of current grant recipients against those of potential future beneficiaries while ensuring that the Society does not turn anyone away who is in need and meets our criteria for assistance. We rejected 18% of those who applied this year mainly due to their income being above our weekly threshold so there is considerable unmet need. We are able to direct many of them to other sources of charitable support. The net income criteria we use in assessing applications are reviewed and adjusted each year to take into account any changes in pension and benefit payments and the guidance the Joseph Rowntree Foundation provide on acceptable Minimum Income Standards (MIS) for different household types. The £728 regular grant, the equivalent of £14 per week, is among the lowest such payments made by occupational benevolent charities. We wish it could be more.

Our Skill and Gallantry awards are now in their 166th year and the meritorious actions of this year's winners are set out on page 16 to 20 followed by citations for the four Lord Lewin awards to Honorary Agents for their outstanding service to the Society and our beneficiaries.

I would like to place on record the Society's thanks to Mr Michael Cartwright who has been a Director of our Trading Company for 17 years and its Chairman for the last 14. During that time the Company has successfully maintained our customer and supporter base and grown the sales and donation income despite the ever increasing cost of postage, postal strikes, the impact of the recession and changing social habits - a long and highly successful innings. The card company provides the core of our long term supporters. Their generosity enables us to respond to cases such as this:

*Mr. I, aged 71 with 32 years sea service, had been issued with an eviction order as the landlord intended to let a relative have the property. Having lost his wife at the beginning of the year, he was somewhat stunned by his situation but was actively looking for alternative accommodation. With a net weekly income of £186 and only £1,000 in savings he asked if we could help with removal costs, a rent deposit and rent in advance, which we did.*

Mr David Briggs has succeeded Michael Cartwright as company Chairman.

Captain John Rose has recently joined us as a Trustee after a career at sea, in shipping and port operations. He was awarded the Merchant Navy Medal for his work in successfully promoting the reporting of hazardous incidents at sea and the lessons that could be learned from them.

#### **Our key aims for the coming year are:**

- Continuing our enduring task of helping fishermen and mariners and their dependants in need
- Maintaining the rolling programme of three-yearly reviews of beneficiaries' circumstance
- Finding new avenues to spread the word about our work to those who may need our assistance and to those who might wish to support us
- Subject to affordability, increasing our regular grant in line with inflation
- Increasing our knowledge of additional sources of help, advice and assistance to those in need

Finally, I wish to record my appreciation for the contribution and commitment that my fellow Trustees give to the Society and their support to me as Chairman for the last 3 years, and to the Central Office staff for their diligence and cheerful commitment to their work which enables us to provide a timely, effective and efficient response to those who find themselves in need.

**George Greenwood**





## Chief Executive's Report

Our regular grants assist with budgeting, they can be spent on what the recipient regards as necessary for them and, through the three-yearly review process, we can check on changes in their circumstances that might require further advice and support. For example:

*When our Honorary Agent visited an elderly couple it was apparent that their health had deteriorated to such an extent that they were both likely to be entitled to the severe disability premium and one of them to the Carer's premium. This gave them an additional £158 per week and although it took them over our income limit and their regular grant had to be withdrawn, they were significantly better off than before. Had they not been supported by us it is likely that they would not have benefited from this extra income.*

The full rationale for all our grants is set out on page 10. In some cases they help people to remain independent at home through, for example, the provision of a stairlift, an electric powered vehicle or a bath to shower conversion for which there are no disabled facilities grants available, even when this need has been endorsed by the local Council's occupational therapist.

*Mr S aged 76 and his wife have health problems that have made it difficult to bathe and so were asking for help to replace their bath with a shower. Social Services had been approached and had supplied a stool to go in the bath but this hadn't really solved the main problem, which was getting in and out of it. They had been told that it would take up to two years before funding for this adaptation was considered by the local authority. With a net weekly income of £253 and no savings they could not afford to pay the £2,054 required. We could and did.*

*Mr H, aged 66, with a net weekly income of £212 and no savings had been advised that until he had a suitable hospital type bed he wouldn't be allowed home. We funded it.*

I still remain astonished by how uninformed many of those who comment on social matters are and do not fully understand the circumstances in which many of the people who are typical of those we support live. In response to concerns about rising utility bills people are exhorted to switch suppliers. 'Switching' is a concept related to the internet. Sixty-four per cent of our regular beneficiaries are not on it, although that number is slowly reducing, and besides they are of a generation that expect customer loyalty to be rewarded.

Among occupational benevolent charities, the maritime charities that make regular grant payments are amongst the lowest payers. It is important therefore that we are at least able to keep pace with inflation which, after a period of quiescence, is returning. Because this is a long term commitment, we conduct periodic actuarial reviews to determine the affordability of any increases.

Things are not going to get any easier for any generation with the cost of living increasing, a cap on benefits for those out of work and rising state pension ages. Many of our

beneficiary group will continue to find it difficult to get employment in their later years with only manual skills to offer and with physical disabilities such as arthritis. We are beginning to see the impact of increasing longevity, a good thing, but often accompanied by poor health. While life expectancy for our beneficiaries is on average less than that of the general population if you make it to 85 it's better – the benefits of a tough life apprenticeship!

The Fundraising Preference Service came into existence in July in response to poor practices by some charities in the way they used donors' personal data. We have never passed our supporters' data to third parties and with the new general data protection regulations (GDPR) coming into force next year, we hope to be able to continue with our long standing 'opt-out' approach to future supporter communications. Those who buy our cards and respond to our appeals are extremely generous and donated just under £86,000 towards our work last year.

On the 24th May we released a video to mark the centenary of the first transatlantic convoy of WW1 from Hampton Roads to Britain. With only six weeks supply of food in the country by May 1917, owing to the destruction of our merchant ships, some positive action had to be taken and the convoy system was introduced.

Our annual photographic competition, now in its fifth year, is run on-line to encourage a younger generation to consider supporting us and to celebrate our enduring relationship with the sea. It attracted 1,330 entries from 408 individuals. The winning image, "Beams" was taken by William Pollard. My thanks to our expert panel of judges: Sunday Times Picture Editor, Ray Wells; Picture Editor of the i, Sophie Batterbury and Amateur Photographer Editor, Nigel Atherton. See page 24.



We could not work without our Honorary Agents, many of them volunteers from all walks of life but who have one thing in common, that they are prepared to give their time to help those in need whether it is through doing casework, looking after one of our large or small collecting mines or just spreading the word about us within their communities. All their efforts are very much appreciated. In February, I ventured into East Anglia to see 7 of our Honorary Agents, visited 3 mines, met several beneficiaries and ended up talking to the Stevenage Offshore Cruising Association, a thriving but firmly landlocked group of sailors.

*"I would like to thank the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society for your most generous grant of £750. I am still astounded by its enormity – rest assured it will be used to pay some of my debts. This gift will have a huge impact on our day-to-day living. My husband would have been proud to know his time as a fisherman would have impacted us in such a way. He too would have been grateful."*

I would particularly like to thank my team here in Chichester, Stephen, Sami, Alison, Barbara, Joyce and Sylvia for their hard work and good humoured professionalism. We couldn't do without them.

**Malcolm Williams**



## The Support We Provide

The Society fulfils its charitable objectives primarily through a variety of grants: Regular; Special or one-off; Immediate; Death Benefit (to former Life members), Funeral and Shipwreck.

### The Regular Grant is important for the following reasons:

- It is a significant proportionate increase in a beneficiary's income, aids budgeting and helps recipients avoid arrears or going into debt.
- It establishes an on-going relationship between ourselves through the local Honorary Agent with the beneficiary which is more than just financial and which can be particularly important to those who live alone.
- The regular biannual contact, particularly where cheques are handed out, enables our Honorary Agent to see beneficiaries face-to-face at least twice a year and to discuss financial and other matters of concern.
- The associated three-yearly reviews provide an opportunity to find out if additional assistance is required.
- It is the recipient's decision as to how the grant is spent.

### The Special or one-off/crisis grant enables the recipient among other things to:

- Purchase and replace defective white goods and other items such as beds and carpets.
- Remain mobile within the home, for example, through the installation of a stairlift.
- Make adaptations to deal with infirmities and disabilities, for example, to replace a bath with a walk-in shower, or provide a riser / recliner chair, thereby enabling them to remain independent at home.
- Get out of their homes without assistance or with reduced assistance through improved mobility, for example, by providing an electrically powered vehicle.
- Cover the cost of private occupational therapist (OT) reports connected with the above.
- Pay for essential household repairs, for example, to tackle damp problems, replace doors and windows thereby helping them to remain in their own homes.
- Pay for heating, pay off priority debts (eg. utility bills and Council Tax).
- Buy clothes and shoes.
- Take a rare holiday.



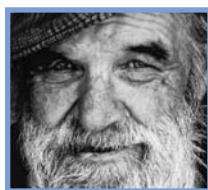
## The Impact that it has:

- Mr. C, aged 22 with 5 years sea service, had suffered injury to his arm and fingers and was 'signed off' for at least eight weeks. He was receiving Working Tax Credit giving him a net weekly income (after housing costs) of £48 and with no savings he was worried about keeping up with the rent and other bills. We gave an £800 cash grant to help him until he was ready to return to sea.
- Mr. T, in his thirties, had to leave the sea after 8 years service following an accident and was now wheelchair bound and receiving Industrial Injuries benefit. The wheelchair caused him pain if he had to use it for long periods. We covered the cost of an Occupational Therapist's report to identify a suitable replacement. His net weekly income after housing costs was £107 and he had no savings. As this specialist chair, along with added cushioning and safety features was priced at £3,910 we contributed £1,140 and the balance was shared between two other charities and his family.
- Mr K, in his late twenties had been at sea for 11 years. Married with two young children he was about to be evicted because he had complained to the landlord about damp and other poor conditions in the house. He was able to move with the assistance of his family. He then contracted pneumonia, became unemployed and was on a net weekly income of £98. They were waiting for Housing and Council Tax benefit to come through and had been unable to pay the rent on the new property. We paid off the arrears of £1,390.
- Mr. T, aged 64, left the sea after 42 years owing to his wife's health problems and now acts as her full time carer. With a net weekly income of £257 and savings of £130 we were being asked to help towards a new cooker which we were pleased to cover as well as awarding a regular grant.
- Mrs. L, 63, the widow of a seafarer who had 29 years at sea, was struggling on her net weekly income of £69 from Jobseeker's Allowance. She had no savings. As she has to use public transport and there are not many employment opportunities in her village the chance of finding work were very remote. Her flat was very cold and it was clear that as the winter advanced she would have to choose between heating and eating. We covered the cost of a delivery of coal at £282 and made an additional cash grant.
- Mr D, aged 50 with 7 years sea service, was on a weekly net income of £41.07 with no savings. He was asking for help towards the cost of bus travel and some new clothes. He was unemployed and needed to complete his Maritime Education Foundation course if he was to stand a chance of further employment at sea. He did and we covered the £330 cost.





- Mr I, aged 38 with 20 years at sea, was walking home from a neighbour's house when he was hit by a car and killed. He left a wife and four young children; nine, six and five year old twins. We made an Immediate Relief payment of £1,900.
- Mr L, aged 26 with 18 months at sea with no income and no savings was recovering from nerve damage to his hand following a knife wound sustained when he was preparing a meal for the crew of the fishing boat he was on. SAIL were advising him and had managed to get Council Tax and rent rebates awarded but his application for Employment and Support Allowance was still being processed. We made a grant of £800, £474 to cover rent arrears that had built up and the balance to be administered by our Honorary Agent for his immediate needs.
- Mr K, aged 58 with 4 years sea service, on a net income of £269.20 with no savings has brain damage following an assault and had recently been diagnosed with throat cancer. He and his wife, who is 68 and his carer, were asking for some help to replace threadbare carpeting and their sofa which the caseworker described as being so old that you were virtually sitting on the floor. We gave a grant of £1,433.
- Mr. K, aged 40 with 24 years at sea, and his family were struggling on a net weekly income of £144.35 with no savings. SAIL were working with the family to ensure they were in receipt of all the benefits and rebates they were entitled to. Following serious surgery, Mrs. K has been left with significant on-going health problems and her husband has now left the sea to care for her and their two small children. He was actively looking for alternative employment to allow him to be home more. The request was for some furniture for the childrens' bedroom and some redecorating which we were happy to cover at £745. They have no savings. With such a low income it was also decided to award an additional cash grant of £1,000 to help with their immediate needs.
- Mr I, aged 51 with 20 years at sea was on a net income of £169.17 and no savings. He had been off work since October 2015 and he and his wife had been struggling to keep up with their mortgage payments as well as other basic living costs. He had reached an agreement with his mortgage provider so that he didn't fall into debt with his payments and SAIL had completed a benefits check. He was desperate to get back to sea to support himself and his family but couldn't get a berth without updating his first aid certificate. We covered the £600 cost of the five day course.



## Financial Review



These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting & Reporting by Charities (SORP) 2015 (FRS 102).

### Principal Sources of Income

#### Overview

Total Income (including investment income) for 2016/17 was £1.5 million with expenditure of £2 million. Overall there was a £1.3 million operating deficit, similar to last year. The Trustees budget for an operating deficit but plan for this to be offset by income from investments and gains on investment assets. Overall Net Income after returns on investments was £2.3 million compared to Net Expenditure the previous year of £1.1 million.

#### Investments

Investments generate income that is key to supporting our beneficiaries. This year the value of our investments has increased to £25.8 million from £23.2 million. A total return (TR) policy is operated which requires the investment managers to fund our budgeted yearly operating deficit from either income or capital: the TR for 2016/17 was 5.8% of the rolling average portfolio value. The Finance Committee meets annually and additionally as required, and investment performance is monitored by Council quarterly.

#### Legacies

Receipts this year at £196,000 were down on last year. We are enormously grateful to those who choose to remember us in this way; their gifts are put to good use in helping the next generation of seafarers and their dependants. Legacies are a vital but inherently unpredictable source of income.

#### Donations / Fundraising

Public donations through our Agencies, which includes our collecting mines, and direct to Central Office and from Appeals (see Trading below) amounted to £161,000, a 17.5 per cent increase on last year. We are most appreciative of the generosity of those who support us in this way.

#### Grants

Grants from Seafarers UK (SFUK) and Trinity House, London, are essential to our work and we maintain a close dialogue with both organisations so that they are aware of our needs.

#### Trading

This has been a good year for Shipwrecked Mariners Trading Limited, the Society's wholly owned trading subsidiary which sells Christmas, birthday and correspondence



cards and related items by mail order through its supplier, Impress Publishing, via the seasonal shop at Central Office, the Honorary Agents and the Chichester Cards for Good Causes outlet. Turnover at £82,000 was 2.6% up on last year: a pleasing result given the highly competitive nature of this market and the impact of ever rising postal charges and changing social habits with the growing use of social media to send greetings. The Company covenanted £6,509 to the Society. This, together with just under £86,000 worth of Appeal related donations means that the Company continues to make a significant contribution to the Society's funds as well as advertising our work to the wider public: our card buyers are our greatest group of supporters, and very loyal and generous too. Some of them have been buying our cards for over 50 years and are extremely generous in their support of the Society's work. Our cards are ambassadors for us and we are continually aiming to increase the number of card buyers.

## **Expenditure**

### **Costs of Raising Funds**

These relate largely to the cost of the annual Appeal and wider publicity throughout the year which is aimed at both potential donors and those who might refer potential beneficiaries to us for assistance.

### **Charitable Activities**

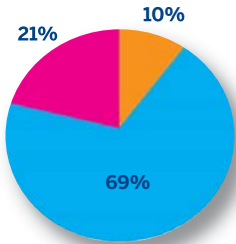
Charitable Activities amounted to £1.8.million, which was 90% of all expenditure. Of this figure £1.4 million, 69% of all expenditure, was on grants to individuals.

## **Reserves Policy and Designated Funds**

The Trustees aim to maintain sufficient funds as reserves in order to generate the income required to carry out the purpose of the Charity. Without this the Society would be unable to respond to need to the extent that it does or would have to increase its fundraising activities and associated expenditure, and in so doing be largely competing with other charities in the maritime sector. Every five to six years the Society conducts a full actuarial review against various scenarios to determine whether we will have sufficient financial resources to meet the projected demand. Interim reviews are conducted as required.

Following a review of reserves the trustees have decided to split the Society's Unrestricted Funds into four components; an Unrestricted General Fund with sufficient resources in short term realizable investment assets and/or cash to support administrative overheads and regular grants for a period of at least twelve months; an Investment Property Fund, which holds the freehold of the Head Office building; an Unrestricted Designated Fund to provide income to support the regular grants and an Unrestricted Designated Fund to provide income to support one-off grants for twelve months. The level of designated reserves will be reviewed on an annual basis.





## Awards For Skill and Gallantry 2017

### The Lady Swaythling Trophy



#### For Outstanding Seamanship

**Professionalism, good judgement, outstanding seamanship and crew teamwork ensured the safe and timely recovery of the 7 survivors of the Fluvius Tamar.**

On the evening of 13th January, the MV *Norstream* responded to a Mayday call relayed by HMCG from the MV *Fluvius Tamar*, who had reported at 2348 that she was sinking 35 nm NE of North Foreland in the Dover Strait Traffic Separation Scheme. The *Norstream*, a 20,000 ton 180 metre long Finnish owned and flagged Ro-Ro cargo vessel under charter to P&O Ferries, operating on the Zeebrugge to Tilbury route was on her way to Tilbury. Under the command

of Captain Patrik Norrgård with Marek Rowiński as the Chief Officer she was the closest vessel to the reported incident and responded immediately reaching the scene 15 minutes later.

There was a north-westerly gale blowing, force 8-9, with waves of 4-6 metres. Sea temperature was about 6 degrees C. Visibility was good.

The casualty, *Fluvius Tamar*, a 90 metre long 3,000 ton general cargo vessel with a crew of seven, was on passage to Spain. The crew had noticed that the bow was dipping and was starting to go down. They prepared the lifeboats and sounded the alarm. The vessel began to sink and by the time the crew had reached the poop deck, the life rafts were already afloat and the crew were in the water.

Taking into account the weather, the Captain of the *Norstream* decided to stop at a range of 2-3 cables to the NE of the sinking ship. She arrived just two minutes before the casualty's bow submerged. In the meantime the lookouts spotted 6 flashing lights apparently from lifejackets seconds before *Fluvius Tamar* disappeared. This was at 0030. After a couple of minutes the lookouts reported two liferafts and one open lifeboat.

A paramount consideration for *Norstream's* Captain was to keep a safe distance from the sinking ship. It was not known how fast *Fluvius Tamar* would reach the sea bottom. The depth was 40 metres and Captain Norrgård estimated that it could take a couple of minutes. *Fluvius Tamar* had an 'air draft' of 22.5 metres so there was a risk to his ship. Additionally, he was concerned that loose parts of the sunken vessel and her mooring



ropes could get into the ferry's propellers. He manoeuvred the *Norstream* so as to give a lee for the survivors on the port bow. The port side pilot door, 3.5 metres above the waterline and 44 metres forward of the propellers, was opened and the pilot ladder lowered.

To avoid sucking survivors into the propellers the ferry approached in such a way that all survivors were located ahead of the pilot door with the wind 45 degrees on the starboard bow, giving a heading of approximately 315 degrees. Using her bowthrusters and working the port engine astern and the starboard ahead to maintain position the wash from the port propeller kept the survivors ahead of the danger zone aft. Crucial to this manoeuvring was Chief Officer Marek Rowiński who took charge at the pilot door reporting distances to the survivors by radio to the bridge and then risking his own life by hanging out from the door to grab them and help them get to the pilot ladder.

With a drift of 2 knots Captain Norrgård was concerned that the rolling ferry and the strong drift could crush survivors once they were alongside. The ferry's drift was in fact creating a kind of water cushion 1-1.5 metres between the ferry's hull and the survivors.

Precise ship handling and effective communication allowed the ferry to approach the first survivor safely. The crew struggled to lift him as he was weak, possibly suffering from moderate hypothermia. He was unable to climb the pilot ladder. His immersion suit was waterlogged. At the third attempt, synchronizing the lift with the crest of the swell, four crew men managed to drag him onboard at 0045. Recovery of the second and stronger survivor was easier but it still required three men.

The next task was the recovery of the liferaft with the remaining five crewmen inside it. The liferaft was about 80-100 metres forward of the second survivor and in a dangerous position under the port bridge wing. It could have been hit by the flared bow as the *Norstream* pitched and rolled. Fortunately the second survivor was picked up quickly allowing Patrik to move his vessel ahead. The liferaft was secured by heaving lines but was hitting the ferry's hull badly. The five survivors were brought onboard safely and quickly by the pilot ladder. The recovery was completed by 0100.

The first helicopter arrived on Scene at 0046 an hour after the Mayday. The survivors were taken ashore in two helicopters.



## Individual Commendations



### Mr Freddie Hedger RNLI Senior Lifeguard

**Skill, determination, stamina and bravery ensured that a body boarder in severe difficulty was rescued**

This incident took place at approximately 1630 on 8 August 2016 at Croyde beach in North Devon. A wide sandy beach, Croyde is popular with swimmers and surfers and is considered one of the best surfing beaches in the UK. The surf

that helps make the destination so popular also creates a dynamic and sometimes dangerous leisure environment.

It was a sunny day with a brisk north-westerly wind (force 4) and a 5-6ft challenging 'messy' surf with rip currents on both sides of the patrolled zone. At 1600 one of the Lifeguards, Sean Deasy, had been tasked to carry out water patrols on the Rescue Water Craft (RWC) and was actively patrolling the rip currents on either side of the flagged patrol zones.

At approximately 1630 Senior Lifeguard Freddie Hedger elected to go on water patrol using a rescue board (a form of extended surfing board). He made his way to the southern end of the rip current and entered the water. On his way out he teamed up with Sean to help clear the area of novice surfers, who were drifting out of the black and white flags and into the southern rip current.

At this time Freddie became aware of a surfer and body boarder further out to sea, both of whom appeared to be in some difficulty. He immediately informed Sean, who made his way towards the two casualties on the RWC, closely followed by Freddie on the rescue board. Both lifeguards witnessed the surfer physically struggling with the sea conditions and he was clearly frightened. He had stopped helping the female body boarder who was with him and she was now in serious trouble. Sean attempted to grab the woman but had some difficulty getting close enough to rescue her with the RWC due to the large surf, which was breaking heavily on the sand bank.

Freddie was on scene quickly and made the decision to leave his rescue board and swim towards the female casualty in order to assist with the RWC recovery. On his arrival he found her face down and unconscious. Freddie lifted her face out of the water to allow her to breathe and worked hard to protect her from the waves that were continually breaking over both of them. On one pass the RWC driver witnessed Freddie and the casualty get dragged under by a wave, disappearing from sight in the aerated and turbulent water.

As Freddie struggled to keep the woman afloat against the surf, the RWC made further attempts to rescue the pair but was hampered by the waves and undertows. Despite his exhaustion, Freddie managed to grab the handle of the rescue sled (at the stern of the

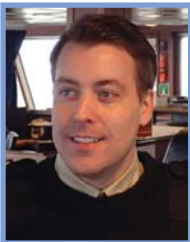
RWC) with one hand. Using his other hand to hold the casualty's head above water, he signalled to Sean to drag them along as he did his best to keep them both afloat.

Close to complete exhaustion, Freddie and the casualty were towed approximately ten metres before he could hold on no more. Fortunately, the tow had by then taken them closer to the beach and, as they slipped from the back of the sled, Freddie could now touch the bottom. At this point he signalled the RWC to return to shore and ready the casualty care pack. The casualty was unaware of what was happening around her and unable to help. Freddie started to make headway and, as he got to waist depth, a member of the public came to his aid, closely followed by Sean.

Once ashore the casualty, who was barely conscious, began vomiting and was clearly in a bad state. Both an ambulance and helicopter were called to the beach. As senior lifeguard on the beach Freddie's presence of mind and leadership were crucial in helping other emergency services with the rescue. Despite his exhaustion Freddie stayed with the casualty as she was taken to the top of the beach where she was handed over to the ambulance crew and spent a night recovering in hospital.

The following feedback was received from the surfer who had been with the casualty at the start of the incident:

**'I've described to others many times now how I was in awe of his swimming ability as the conditions had changed quickly and it was extremely difficult to control myself let alone keep someone else afloat ..... if Freddie hadn't swum out there like he did and didn't give up until he had her, it would have been a very different story.'**



## Captain Jamie Wilson

**Leadership, professionalism and skilled seamanship ensured the support and rescue of 907 migrants.**

Captain Jamie Wilson was in command of the 4,491 ton UK-flagged multi-purpose ROV (remotely operated underwater vehicle) support vessel *Deep Vision* when, between 28 January and 1 February 2017, the ship, which was on a commercial charter in the Mediterranean, participated in a series of nine search and rescue operations off the coast of Libya. He and his crew helped to rescue a total of 907 migrants – including a significant number of women and children. They provided emergency assistance, including water, food and lifejackets to those in distress and helped to transfer survivors to coastguard, naval and humanitarian support vessels.

*Deep Vision*, as a ROV support vessel conducts underwater survey work among other activities. It is 85 metres long with two bow thrusters, two stern thrusters and two controllable pitch main propellers. It has a helideck. She normally operates with 55-60 people onboard and can accommodate 70. The crew is 17-19 strong depending on the operation.

In a remarkably concentrated period of time, they gave essential support to emergency services and responded promptly and professionally to distress messages. They worked



intensively to provide frontline assistance to migrants on extremely overloaded RIBs, providing a lee to minimise the effects of the sea conditions until those onboard had been safely recovered.

The events all happened approximately 14-40nm from Libya (and 120nm south of Lampedusa) and the coastal city of Zawia from where most of the migrant boats/rafts apparently depart.

The vessel was also on an increased security level being in Libyan waters, so not only were the crew dealing with migrants they were also implementing additional security measures.

The first incident took place on 28th January. *Deep Vision* received a distress message relayed from MRCC Rome and was instructed to proceed with all available speed to assist a migrant vessel in distress. The wind was SSW force 4 with a 1 metre sea. This was the first time any of the crew including Jamie had been involved in any type of rescue at sea. There were a few distress positions at first and *Deep Vision* conducted search patterns along with Coastguard vessels until a raft was located. They were then designated On-Scene Commander as further vessels arrived. Dynamic positioning was used to maintain position for launching the rescue boat to aid those in the raft. There had been two fatalities in the raft, young children, which had a large emotional impact on the Captain and crew. A French naval vessel arrived and took care of the bodies and took the 84 men, 23 woman and 25 children onboard for passage to Italy.

The second incident took place the next day in similar conditions. A migrant vessel was spotted on radar heading towards *Deep Vision*. Their rescue boat gave out water, food and life jackets to the 125 migrants who were on the raft until the rescue ship MV Aquarius arrived.

For the third incident on 31st January *Deep Vision* was again On-Scene Commander. There was a westerly wind force 3 with a 1m sea. This was a night time operation which made manoeuvring more testing. During the operation the wind increased to 25 knots and with it the sea state but the migrant boat was wooden and a little more seaworthy than the rafts. Manoeuvring to provide a lee was conducted using manual controls. The migrants were transferred to an Italian Coastguard vessel.

The next six rescues involving 650 migrants took place on 1st February with weather conditions similar to the previous day. Fatigue was now an issue because the previous rescue had taken all evening. So with only a few hours sleep *Deep Vision's* crew was faced with multiple boats all in close proximity and all overcrowded. Manoeuvring was conducted using hand steering moving from one raft to the next to provide assistance until the migrants were taken off by an Italian Coastguard vessel. All 6 SAR events that morning happened within the space of 6 hours.

Captain Jamie Wilson led his team with immense dedication and professionalism, exercising high standards of seamanship and upholding the finest traditions of the sea in going to the aid of those in danger. Fellow crew members spoke highly of his support in very difficult and emotional circumstances.

## The Lord Lewin Awards 2017



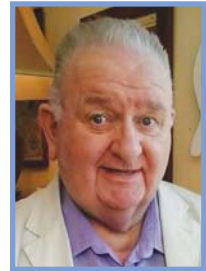
### Mr Philip Hili - Malta

Not many people know that we have an Honorary Agent in Malta and we have had the good fortune to have had Philip Hili as that Agent for the last 21 years. He began as an agent for the Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society. Then in 1996 the Society took over the administration of all their regular grants throughout the UK and Malta and in 2001 they transferred their beneficiaries to us.

In his own words Mr Hili recalls, "I got to know the Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society when I took on my first job after finishing college as a clerk with the local Malta branch of the National Union of Seamen in 1968. My Head Office was in Clapham. Part of my duty as a clerk with the NUS during that period was to help with the distribution of grants to Maltese beneficiaries of the Royal Alfred Seafarers Society. I had to prepare the letters and cheques for Mr Jack Russell, the local NUS branch secretary. When he retired in 1974 I was promoted to take over as secretary. With the NUS responsibilities came the work for the Royal Alfred. Those were wonderful days. I had the opportunity to visit the UK for the first time – Clapham Junction in the 90's in order to attend the Annual General Meeting of the NUS. Many of the local seamen served in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and we used to help them apply to the Royal Alfred for financial assistance." When Mr Hili took over there were about 60 beneficiaries, sadly there are now only three. Throughout his time as our Honorary Agent Philip has been utterly reliable and his beneficiaries have greatly appreciated his work on their behalf. This voluntary work over many years merits our special recognition.

### Mr Bruce Coltman - Newcastle and Blyth

Bruce Coltman is a retired Police Officer who also worked for the Tyne Port Authority and began supporting the Society as an Honorary Agent in 2009 covering the Newcastle area and Blyth. He had been a SSAFA caseworker for ten years before that. He was persuaded by the late Liz Richardson, then deputy director of Nautilus Welfare Services, to join us.



Over the years Bruce has supported a number of regular beneficiaries hand delivering cheques to people's homes and checking whether any additional support is required. In addition to his regular beneficiaries he has also supported numerous applications for one-off grants. As well as completing the reviews due for the regular beneficiaries in his area he has also stepped in to complete reviews for other Honorary Agents who have been unable for whatever reason to complete them for us. Bruce's enthusiasm for his role is second to none and when he is asked to visit someone in need and complete an application on our behalf his response is immediate.

Bruce always shows compassion for our beneficiaries and is meticulous in the completion of application forms, which are comprehensive and precise. His report writing is exceptional and the grants team always get a really good sense of the individual's circumstances and needs. His voluntary contribution to the Society's work deserves our particular recognition.







## Fundraising

### Mr Robert Phipps - Teignmouth

After we lost contact with our previous Honorary Agent, Mr Robert Phipps, who has his ice cream kiosk adjacent to our large collecting mine in Teignmouth, took pity on it as it had become neglected, and took it upon himself to restore and paint it. That was in 2010. Since then he has taken very good care of it

and it collects significant amounts of small change after customers have purchased their ice creams – over £800 since he took it over. Recently the adjacent Dawlish Town Council insisted that our large mine there be removed for health and safety reasons. The Council had agreed to take on its upkeep but they had failed to honour the commitment. Mr Phipps, who is a Teignmouth town councillor, put up a strong defence for it to remain and that the Council should maintain it, but was sadly unsuccessful. He subsequently made arrangements to have it removed to his garden and is in the process of refurbishing it and will use it to replace the Teignmouth mine which owing to the ravages of time will shortly be beyond further repair. Looking after our aged mines is a challenge and we are fortunate to have some enthusiastic HAs to take on the task and in Robert Phipps we have a volunteer who merits our particular recognition.

### Captain Robert Asplet - Jersey

Captain Asplet has been the Society's volunteer Honorary Agent in Jersey for 21 years. He took over the position in 1996 after a working life spent at sea from the age of 14 when he joined the Thames Nautical training college, HMS Worcester. After leaving the sea in 1986 he became and remains a member of the Jersey Pilotage Board. He also heads up a small group of enthusiasts who maintain and operate six Jersey Heritage Trust boats which range in age from 12 to 120 years. The large collecting mines are important to us as you have heard both in generating donations and being the only physical manifestation of our existence. Most of our people look after one mine but Captain Bob likes a challenge and looks after three; one in Gorey, one at New North Quay, St Helier and the other at West Park, St Helier. He has done an excellent job, regularly painting and refurbishing them and generally keeping them looking as presentable as possible despite the ravages of time and the salt air. The mines continue to collect well – averaging around £400 per year: a significant contribution to our income over the years and a major commitment by him. Commitment that deserves our special recognition.



## Help us to Help Them

**There are many ways you can help us to provide a lifeline for seafarers and their families in need:**

### By Making A Donation

Donations, however large or small, may be sent to Central Office at any time.

### By Making Your Gifts Tax Effective

Providing you pay income tax or capital gains tax, all your donations can be treated as Gift Aid. This means that for every £1 that you donate, the Society can claim an additional 25 pence from the taxman. It is only necessary to sign one form to cover all donations until you notify us otherwise. Please complete and return the attached reply card.

### Regular Giving By Standing Order

If you would like to make a regular donation by standing order please let us know and we will send you the necessary form. The Society very much appreciates such regular support, which provides a steady source of income and helps us plan for the future.

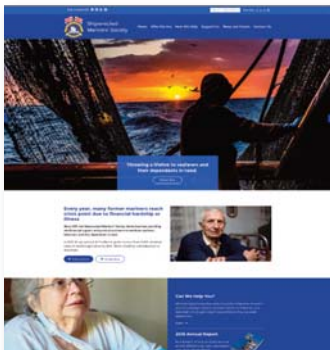
### By Remembering the Society In Your Will

If you are making, or renewing your Will please remember the needs of our seafarers and their widows in financial distress. Your gift could make a real difference to them for years to come. You may wish to consider either:

- A residuary legacy - which means you leave the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society all or part of your estate once other gifts to family and friends have been distributed or
- A pecuniary legacy - which is a fixed sum of money.

**Please let us know if you would like further advice on legacies.**

## Website and Social Media



The Society's website [shipwreckmariners.org.uk](http://shipwreckmariners.org.uk) has extensive and interesting content - and it's mobile friendly too - so take a look. It's regularly updated with latest news, and along with our social media channels, is the fastest way to keep up-to-date with what's happening here at Central Office and around the country. So please, 'Like' us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter - and check out our YouTube Channel too!



# Maritime Photographic Competition 2017

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## Winner - Coastal Views Category

"The Stacs of St. Kilda" by John Dyer



## Overall Competition Winner

"Beams" by William Pollard



## Winner – People & Recreation Category

"Surfing into the Wind" by Roy Curtis



## Winner - Ships & Wrecks Category

"The Tide that Never Came" by Alex Iacobet



## Winner - Working at Sea Category

"Mackerel Fishing – Homeward Bound"  
by John Roberts





## Impact - Appreciation For Grants

### Continued

“We would just like to thank you all for the financial support over these last few months. Your help has been so generous and really has helped us through some very difficult times. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.”

“Lorna and I would like to thank you very much for getting us two new doors. We appreciate your help and kindness; the new doors have made such a big difference in the heating of the house. Once again, thank you.”

“I would like to thank you for the items you have bought for me. Life will be so much easier for me to cope with. I didn't know you existed when my husband died and I was left with six children. It's lovely to know there is help out there and I can't thank you enough for the help you gave me.”

“Pauline says the powered reclining chair has changed her life and she cannot thank the Society enough for its kindness. She is in constant pain and the chair enables her to watch TV in comfort.”

“Thank you so much for the washing machine, it is perfect. I am so grateful for what the Society does for me and I tell everyone how good you all are.”



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