



ANNUAL REVIEW 2025/26

SEA
CADETS

WELCOME FROM HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL



As Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps, I would like to congratulate its volunteers and employees on delivering another memorable year of unique experiences and opportunities for young people, made possible by their dedication and the remarkable generosity of Sea Cadets' supporters.

I was particularly pleased to see cadets involved in the Tall Ships Races 2025 and aboard the powerboat TS John Jerwood, who accompanied the 'Little Ships' back to France for the commemorations marking the 85th anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuation. Cadets are able to excel on such high-profile international voyages because of the confidence and competence developed by learning skills closer to home. I am grateful to the instructors who make this progression possible.

I am also encouraged by the way cadets themselves are helping to shape the future of the Corps. By actively seeking their views and ensuring that these inform its strategy, Sea Cadets continues to set an example in meaningful youth participation.

The charity continues to invest in the facilities, equipment and volunteer support needed to provide the highest-quality experience for cadets. I look forward to seeing many more young people discover their talents and fulfil their potential through Sea Cadets.

HRH The Princess Royal
Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps
Patron, Marine Society & Sea Cadets (MSSC)

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR & CEO



Sea Cadets' year was once again defined by our determination to help every single cadet benefit from the amazing activities we deliver. This brought significant growth in the number of beyond-unit training days (to over 70,000) and qualifications awarded (37,000), along with a record total of 537 Duke of Edinburgh's awards. And with environmental factors regularly affecting weather conditions and water quality, our volunteers worked extremely hard to keep cadet boating hours above the 400,000-mark.

Cadet satisfaction levels remained high, with 90% reporting a safe and supportive environment and 88% valuing the skills they gained – reflected by a positive trend in cadets staying with us for longer. Meanwhile, our efforts to provide more support and opportunities for volunteers saw their average length of service reach 60 months – a welcome increase of over 10%. With our long-term growth ambitions in mind, we continued to build our capacity to welcome more cadets – opening 35 new sections, with 26 in the marginalised communities where our presence can make the biggest difference.



During 2025/26, grant-in-aid from the Ministry of Defence increased, but did not cover the rising costs of our core activities. MSSC's fundraising, earned income and wider support remained essential to sustaining delivery and investing in the Sea Cadets Experience. We continued to diversify our income and strengthen relationships with the donors and supporters whose generosity makes so much possible. Their contributions to our TS Royalist appeal enabled new sails and generators to be fitted in early 2026, completing an overhaul expected to benefit around 6,000 cadets over the next decade.

Our offshore voyages remain a highlight of the Sea Cadets Experience. The journey begins in local units across the UK, where young people develop practical skills, resilience and confidence, supported by dedicated volunteers. Through the voices of our cadets, volunteers and employees, more decision makers are hearing about the difference Sea Cadets makes to young people and their communities.

As we look ahead, our priority is to protect and strengthen these opportunities, building on the contribution of our independent charity, local units, volunteers and supporters. We will continue to make the case for a sustainable future that puts young people first and preserves the strengths of our charitable model. Together, we remain committed to helping more young people gain life-changing experiences with a lifelong impact.

Jeremy Penn MBE
Chair, MSSC

Guy Holloway
CEO, MSSC

THE SEA CADETS EXPERIENCE IN 2025/26

ADVENTURE AFLOAT

Our volunteer instructors, boat station teams and offshore crews did an incredible job of delivering a total of **416,248** cadet boating hours in 2025/26 – giving cadets the knowledge to take on any nautical challenge. Boating time was down by just 1.7% on 2024/25, despite a significant increase in extreme weather and related environmental concerns. This exceptional effort ensured we met our key KPI of **30** boating hours per cadet for the **fourth** successive year – meaning every young person was able to develop their skills in rowing, kayaking, sailing or powerboating.



My favourite part of being a sea cadet is the opportunities I have been able to take advantage of. I have obtained a Power Boat Level 2 qualification through the RYA, which most 15-year-olds would never get a chance of doing, and I'm being supported in my wish to become an instructor in both powerboating and seamanship. My unit has given me confidence throughout my cadet career, with volunteers helping me whenever I've doubted myself.

Cadet Valentine, Newark Unit



LEARNING FOR LIFE

Within almost **400** local units (each an independent charity), our passionate volunteers empowered young people to progress through the ranks using over **600** bespoke learning modules – with **150** published or updated in 2025/26. These included a new water safety theory session to help cadets identify hazards and reduce risks, and in-depth navigation modules to boost understanding of charts, tides and essential regulations.

A new offshore syllabus was piloted and rolled out to provide a more holistic experience, incorporating adventure and life skills alongside the traditional focus on navigation, seamanship and teamwork. We also launched an updated 'Cadet to Volunteer' programme to help older cadets make a seamless transition to volunteering – allowing them to pass on their experience while giving back to their units and boosting their CVs.



Sea Cadets has been a gateway to learning skills I never thought I'd have – all while having fun and forming lasting friendships. I've gained qualifications in first aid, drill, seamanship, catering, meteorology, and even become a sailing instructor. Completing my BTEC Level 2 and my Duke of Edinburgh's Awards taught me discipline and leadership, while promotion boards and competitions pushed me to challenge myself and support others.

Cadet Isabel, Scarborough Unit



MAKING AN IMPACT

Our expanded Cadet Training Programme resulted in an **18%** increase in the number of qualifications awarded in 2025/26, to **37,655**. Meanwhile, our continued efforts to provide exciting courses at our regional training centres and boat stations meant that total beyond-unit training days increased by 24%, to **70,689**.

FEEDBACK ON THE SEA CADETS EXPERIENCE

(based on 1,239 cadet responses to our 2025/26 Impact Survey)

92%

said Sea Cadets had given them useful qualifications (up from 89%).

64%

said it had improved their physical health (up from 61%).

76%

felt a positive impact on their overall wellbeing (new measure).

60%

said they'd been helped to decide what sort of job they want to do (up from 58%).

77%

said they now feel that others can depend on them (up from 76%).

Sea Cadets has improved my cadet's self-confidence and resilience and helped them find new interests. In the past year they have sailed into Loch Ness; completed their Gold DofE expedition; rock-climbed a famous local landmark; seen dolphins and orcas onboard TS Royalist; and learnt to kayak, to name a few.

Parent of a Swansea Unit cadet



My cadet has gone from being quite timid and inactive to someone who seeks training and opportunity. I never thought they would go on residential training not knowing anyone else, but they embraced it and had an absolute ball!

Parent of a Chiswick Unit cadet

PARENT AND CARER FEEDBACK

92%

said Sea Cadets has improved their young person's ability to work in a team (no change).

82%

said they were better able to avoid risky or anti-social behaviour (up from 81%).

78%

said they would be more likely to find a job (up from 77%).

61%

said their young person's day-to-day happiness had improved greatly (new measure).

A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

Sea Cadets supports young people on a journey of growth and development – empowering them to discover their own unique passions and find their place in the world.

A PLATFORM FOR SUCCESS

The welcoming environment of the Sea Cadets family gives young people new mentors and role models who instil respect, self-discipline and strong values – inspired by the customs and traditions of today's Royal Navy. And the unique camaraderie of a Sea Cadets unit doesn't just provide amazing opportunities to forge new friendship networks and gain life skills; it builds confidence and resilience through the challenge of earning qualifications and promotions.

Our research has shown that this formula has a major impact on cadets within just six months – at which point they have a sense of improved wellbeing, feel positive about their post-18 destinations, and are motivated to contribute to their communities.

HOW SEA CADETS CHANGED ME



“ I think what makes cadets so worthwhile is how much it helps you grow without you even realising. When I joined, I wouldn't have spoken up in a group or taken the lead in anything. Now I'm a lot more comfortable doing

that, whether it's helping others, getting involved in activities, or talking to new people.

It's not just about qualifications or big events either. Some of the best parts are the smaller moments: laughing on parade nights, working through challenges together, and just the overall atmosphere. Everyone supports each other, but you're also encouraged to push yourself and try new things. Cadets has helped me become more confident, more independent, and more willing to step outside my comfort zone.”

Cadet Leah-Paige, Bradford Unit





“ Sea Cadets has made me much more confident and helped prepare me for the future. It has also given me amazing experiences, friendships, and memories that I will always value. The best thing about my unit is the strong community feel. Everyone supports each other and

we always have fun while learning new skills and taking part in activities and events together.

Becoming a paddlesports and rowing instructor has been my proudest achievement as a cadet. It's rewarding to help others build confidence and find their own passion for activities on the water. I'm also proud to represent my peers as a First Sea Lord's Cadet, which has developed my leadership qualities while teaching me how to take responsibility and be approachable. I enjoy meeting other cadets and hearing their ideas and experiences – it helps me to ensure their voices are heard.”

Cadet Satvik, Leicester Unit



“ I joined Sea Cadets out of pure curiosity – to try something new at a time when I very much lacked a purpose. When I first joined, I was embarrassingly bad at rowing, hated the idea of drill, and was a terrible public speaker. After many

hours of prep, practice and feedback I learned to love these aspects. I have also gained so many qualifications – including Offshore Watch Leader on TS Royalist – and have been an advocate for our charity with ministers and MPs.

Sea Cadets is an electric environment, and I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to be part of it. Encouragement from volunteers and fellow cadets pushes you to do better and there is never a moment when you don't feel inspired to go and do the next thing. The vocational skills you gain along the way outweigh any skills you learn in formal education.”

Cadet Bracken, Long Eaton Unit (now a Sea Cadets volunteer and National Trustee Committee Member)



“ I take great pride in my experiences with my unit, as they have provided me with new skills and valuable opportunities for personal development. I used to be very nervous around water, even though I wanted to join the Royal

Navy. However, with the support of the volunteers and my fellow cadets, I was able to overcome that fear and enjoy various boating activities. Along with participating in drill, this has not only boosted my confidence but has allowed me to enhance my abilities in a supportive environment.

Being involved in local community events through Sea Cadets is so fulfilling; it brings me joy to actively contribute to society and foster connections with others. Overall, Sea Cadets has taught me discipline and the importance of teamwork while greatly increasing my conviction in my plans for the future.”

Cadet Wisdom, Dunstable Unit

VALUING VOLUNTEERS

Our incredible volunteers remain the driving force behind everything we deliver for young people.

REALISING POTENTIAL

We worked hard to enhance our volunteers' experience in 2025/26, because their satisfaction and ongoing development is so crucial to supporting growing numbers of cadets. Improvements to our District Leadership & Management course empowered many more volunteers to take on fulfilling and influential roles beyond their units. Meanwhile, new processes made it easier for volunteers to use previous qualifications and experience to progress within Sea Cadets – reducing the need to repeat training; speeding up promotions; and encouraging more cadets to become volunteers at 18.

The tireless efforts of our Volunteer Support Team enabled our volunteers to complete **16,100** mandatory training courses during the year – in health & safety, safeguarding, and EDI (equity, diversity & inclusion). With resources focused on helping our adults deliver even safer and more inclusive activities, volunteer recruitment fell slightly during the year. However, we were delighted to welcome **1,632** new volunteers to Sea Cadets in 2025/26, with streamlined systems halving the onboarding process from over three months to under **50** days.



As a cadet, it's so important that you're constantly surrounded by people that want to help you. I very much look up to the volunteers at my unit. You realise that if you're struggling or something's on your mind, you can go and talk to them. They make the unit feel like a second home.

Cadet Harry, Gosforth Unit



RETENTION AND RECOGNITION

Total volunteer numbers at the end of the year were **8,727** – down just 0.5% on the previous year thanks to a 10% increase in the average volunteer's length of stay, from 54 to **60** months. This welcome trend was reflected in feedback confirming the tangible wellbeing benefits of volunteering at Sea Cadets. **79%** of 1,905 volunteer respondents to our 2025/26 Impact Survey said that their voluntary service has helped them make friends and feel less isolated; **65%** felt that it improved their mental health, with **55%** reporting better physical health. Over a third also agreed that their volunteering had helped them find a job or advance in their career.

Our volunteers' positive impact on cadets and communities was recognised with several national honours during the year. Our Greenwich, Twickenham and Sefton units were proud to be the only cadet force groups among just 231 local charities to receive a King's Award for Voluntary Service in 2025, known as the group equivalent of an MBE. Two members of those unit teams also received individual awards for their outstanding contributions to developing young people, with an MBE for Sefton's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr (SCC) Fay Taylor RNR, and a British Empire Medal for Greenwich's WO2 (SCC) Chris Gunton RNR.



VOLUNTEER VOICES

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When my sons joined Sea Cadets, I saw first-hand the positive impact the organisation had on their confidence, development, and opportunities. Wanting to give something back to an organisation that had supported my family so much, I initially volunteered in a small way, helping with cleaning and administration. Over the past 15 years, I have served as secretary, treasurer, and chairperson before moving to the instructional side – qualifying at HMS Raleigh as a Petty Officer and now supporting our junior cadets.

One of the greatest rewards has been watching young people discover talents and ambitions they never knew they had. Sea Cadets helped spark my younger son's passion for first aid, which ultimately led him to pursue a career in nursing – he has recently graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Adult Nursing.

Seeing the difference volunteering can make to young people's lives, whether through new skills, increased confidence or future career aspirations, is incredibly rewarding.

PO (SCC) Denise Harvey, Worcester Unit



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I used to pick my daughter up from Sea Cadets and heard that the unit was looking for someone to help with their band. I became the Bandmaster and Junior Training Officer and really enjoy being someone cadets can talk to and build trust with. Sea Cadets has allowed me to utilise my skills and develop them further. Having paraded all over the world as an Army musician, nothing came close to marching down The Mall as part of the Sea Cadet Corps Band.

S/Lt (SCC) Pete McCullagh RNR, Southampton Unit

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AN EPIC YEAR OF OFFSHORE ADVENTURE

An offshore voyage is a highlight of the Sea Cadets Experience and the ultimate opportunity to consolidate theory into practical learning at sea.

INTERNATIONAL AMBASSADORS

2025 was a particularly special summer of sailing, marking the tenth anniversary of our flagship TS Royalist – following the completion of its comprehensive refit during the winter. Over **500** cadets benefitted from the unique challenge of a Royalist voyage, including those who produced an impressive showing in the 2025 Tall Ships Races. Up against almost 40 experienced crews from around the world, our young team were named ‘Best Crew in Parade’ at the opening ceremony; finished second in the first leg sprint from Le Havre to Dunkirk; and received the ‘Most Environmental Crew’ trophy upon reaching Aberdeen.

MY TALL SHIPS RACES EXPERIENCE

by Cadet William, Leamington & Warwick Unit:



“ You learn each other’s strengths really quickly: some were great on the helm, some in the sail locker. The sail change on day three took two hours in a properly gnarly swell – it was exhausting, but we did it because we worked as

one unit. I’m afraid of heights, but by the end I was at the very top of the mast, hoisting flags. I just said yes; if I’d said no, I’d never have known I could do it.

Arriving in Aberdeen at 9.30pm, hundreds of people were on the quay clapping us in while other ships gave us gun salutes. Five days earlier we didn’t know each other; now we were hugging on deck because we’d finished fourth in class and fifth overall. We’d gone for the experience and ended up achieving something real together. Nobody missed their phone. It was all about the experience, the people, the sea.”



Another offshore highlight saw cadets on board TS John Jerwood join the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships on their 85th anniversary return to France – where cadets proudly assisted HRH Prince Michael of Kent at several official ceremonies. Both voyages demonstrated why offshore training is so effective in building confidence and developing teamwork skills – and contributed to a total of over **50,000** hours at sea for **1,391** cadets in 2025/26. Overall time spent under training amounted to just over **116,000** hours, when including the domestic onboard learning that supports a wealth of recognised qualifications.

“Escorting the Little Ships across the Channel made me feel proud and connected to the past. It was amazing to helm the ship and see the bioluminescence during the night voyage. I made new friendships with cadets from other units, which improved my teamwork skills as we were always working together – whether marching, mooring, cleaning, or on watch.”

Cadet Catrin, Ross-on-Wye Unit

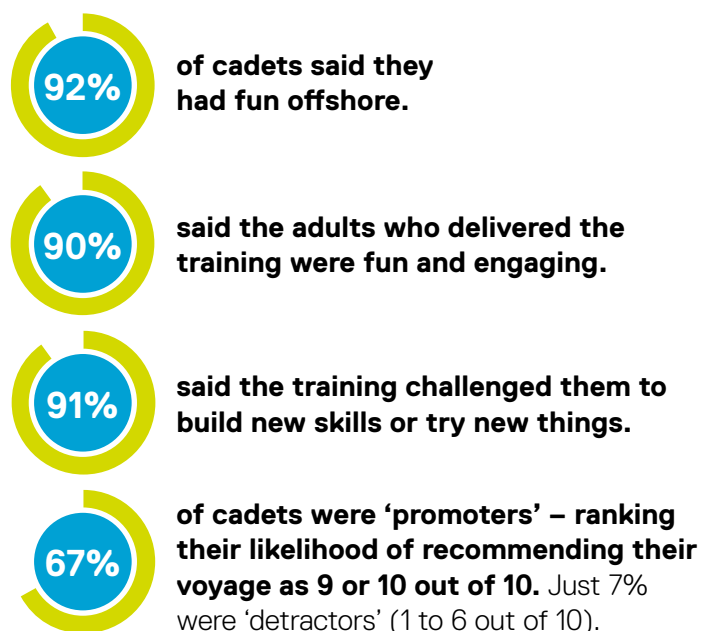
MAKING VOYAGES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

Sea Cadets is now the leading sail training provider within the Association of Sail Training Organisations, accounting for more than **21%** of all training berths annually and offering **39%** more training spaces than the next largest provider. We also remain determined to break down the financial barriers to participation, by providing substantial subsidies for all cadets and generous bursaries for those in most need. Thanks to the kindness of our donors, we have been able to award bursaries totalling almost half a million pounds since 2024 – reducing the cost of a week at sea to just **£51** for eligible cadets.

“I arrived with no prior knowledge of yachting, but in six days I gained two new RYA qualifications, made new friends, and improved my teamwork and leadership. Controlling the sails, laying the anchor and helming proved that pushing myself outside my comfort zone is exhilarating and rewarding. I now feel more confident in embracing new opportunities.

Cadet Carrie of Weymouth Unit on her TS Sir Stelios voyage

CADET FEEDBACK ON THEIR OFFSHORE EXPERIENCE



The Net Promoter Score among offshore cadets was **+60**, representing an extremely positive indicator of overall satisfaction.



WORKING WITH THE ROYAL NAVY

During 2025/26, support from the Ministry of Defence and Royal Navy contributed to cadet activities through funding, facilities, equipment and personnel, alongside the resources and voluntary effort brought together by MSSC and local units.

DEVELOPING SKILLS AND EXPLORING INTERESTS

During the year, **30%** of cadets had opportunities to meet serving Royal Navy personnel, in units and on visits to ships and establishments. Activities included **13** District Naval Awareness Weeks at HMS Raleigh and engineering challenges at the Fleet Air Arm Museum, giving young people practical insights into teamwork, technology and maritime careers.

At RNAS Yeovilton, cadets earned Gold Wings through the 2025 Cadet Naval Aviation Course, developing their understanding of flight operations, air navigation and aerobatic manoeuvres with support from instructors from 727 Naval Air Squadron. In spring 2026, the Bronze Wings course at RNAS Culdrose gave **32** cadets opportunities to visit squadrons and learn from pilots, navigators and aircrew.

RECOGNISING CADET ACHIEVEMENT

At MSSC's Annual Court in October 2025, the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Paul Beattie CBE, recognised the charity's work in providing opportunities, maintaining a safe environment and helping young people develop life skills and technical knowledge. His subsequent visit to TS Royalist (below) gave cadets an opportunity to demonstrate the seamanship and teamwork they had developed through offshore training.

Among cadets responding to our 2025/26 Impact Survey, **87%** reported feeling connected to the Royal Navy, compared with 75% in 2024/25, while **67%** said they were more likely to join in future, compared with 65%. Opportunities to meet serving personnel form part of a wider programme that helps young people explore their interests, develop transferable skills and make informed choices about their futures.

Royal Navy veterans, serving personnel and reservists accounted for **22%** of our volunteers. Their experience forms part of a diverse volunteer community united by a commitment to helping young people develop and succeed.





SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

Cadets and volunteers contributed to communities across the UK, hosting veterans' breakfasts, visiting former service personnel in care homes, and taking part in litter picks and beach cleans. Units also raised funds and awareness for Armed Forces charities and provided bands and standard bearers for Armed Forces Day parades. These activities helped young people develop a sense of service, responsibility and belonging.

In May 2025, cadets played an active part in the 80th anniversary commemorations of VE Day. Bognor Regis Unit took part in an event on board HMS Duncan, while City of London Unit featured in a BBC report from HMS Belfast. A Sea Cadets platoon joined veterans on The Mall for the procession and flypast, and members of Rickmansworth & Watford Unit attended the Westminster Abbey Service of Thanksgiving.



HONOURING HISTORIC CONTRIBUTIONS

At our National Trafalgar Day Parade in October 2025, **400** cadets demonstrated their physical training and musical skills in Trafalgar Square before marching down The Mall. For the first time, six cadets from Bermuda St George's Unit travelled over 3,000 miles to join their peers in commemorating Trafalgar and recognising our naval heritage. The Reviewing Officer, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, praised the discipline, teamwork and volunteer support behind a "magnificent" parade.

Cadets and volunteers also supported Remembrance activities across the country. In the House of Commons, Al Carns MP, then Minister for the Armed Forces, remarked that "cadets play such an important part ... with sea cadets right at the forefront." For the second year, Sea Cadets was represented in the Westminster Abbey Field of Remembrance. Her Majesty Queen Camilla visited our plot to pay tribute to 59 former members of the Sea Cadet Corps who died in conflicts, military action or voluntary service.



CREATING YOUNG LEADERS

A POWERFUL VOICE FOR CADETS

We continued to give cadets a greater say in shaping their organisation. Seven new volunteer roles were created to promote our Cadet Voice initiative – ensuring the proportion of units holding cadet forums grew from 50% to **60%**. Cadet Voice members also advocated for the social and economic impact of Sea Cadets at the two main party conferences in autumn 2025; their positive engagement with politicians included hosting a well-received discussion on the benefits of volunteering.

“I’ve been on a lot of panels at conference but honestly the standout one was run by the fantastic sea cadets! It was such a great, interactive session ... each young person spoke so well.

**Louise Sandher-Jones MP,
Armed Forces Minister**

“Being a National Cadet Voice representative has been really important to me because it means I can speak up for other cadets and help make a positive difference to their cadet experience.

Cadet Luka, Haringey Unit

Both party conferences saw our young people share personal stories of how Sea Cadets volunteers have given them confidence, resilience and essential life skills. This helped to win influential support for our campaign for every UK adult to be granted 35 hours of statutory volunteering leave each year. Cadet Voice members also made their peers’ views heard during government consultations on the National Youth Strategy. As well as having a former cadet (now a volunteer) sitting on the strategy’s Youth Advisory Group, cadets gave direct evidence to House of Commons meetings of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs.



A GOLDEN YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT

Sea Cadets' flourishing Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme continued to be a popular option for our aspiring young leaders, with over **1,000** enrolments in 2025/26. The Gold Award celebration at Buckingham Palace in May 2025 was a special opportunity for 26 of our achievers to be acclaimed for their hard work and determination. Cadet-turned-volunteer PO (SCC) Miles Hayward gave a speech on his DofE experience to the 2,000 guests – explaining how his 30-mile River Thames expedition inspired him to become a paddlesports instructor and environmental campaigner.



Another memorable moment at the palace saw our volunteer lead on DofE, Lt Cdr (SCC) Steve Coles RNR, personally thanked by The Duke of Edinburgh himself. Retiring in 2025 after more than half a century of support for the Award, Lt Cdr Coles had given his last 12 years of service to transforming Sea Cadets' DofE programme – enabling over 3,000 young people to complete an award.



Completing my Gold DofE has significantly improved my leadership and teamwork skills, especially when I was lucky enough to complete my expeditions on the yachts. Through Sea Cadets, I am developing my instructor skills to inspire other cadets, particularly within sailing. My long-term plan is to become a senior sailing instructor in three years' time.

Cadet Harry, Sevenoaks Unit



LEADING UNDER PRESSURE



We were delighted that two of our young leaders were among the 12 finalists of Cadet Vocational College's Westminster Award. Petty Officer Cadet Ben of Thurrock Unit and

Cadet Sergeant Charlie of Stafford & Rugeley Unit progressed from an initial field of 4,000 exceptional candidates – drawn from all the UK's cadet forces and youth groups. Following strong nominations highlighting their community work, both excelled during a week of outdoor leadership exercises and a summer expedition of adventure sports and conservation work. After being presented with ILM Level 3 certificates in Leadership & Management at a House of Lords reception, they are now passing on their skills to the next generation of leaders as Sea Cadets volunteers.



Another dynamic challenge saw an impressive Sea Cadets team win the trophy for fastest cadet forces crew in 2025's Junior Leaders Field Gun competition – a unique test of endurance, coordination and precision. In perfecting

the art of assembling and transporting historic field guns, the 18 cadets and young volunteers vastly improved their communication and teamwork during an intense week at HMS Collingwood. Showing outstanding sportsmanship and respect for others, they also earned the Endeavour Trophy for the best crew both on and off the track.



Winning the field gun trophies was definitely unexpected, but reflected the commitment and effort everyone put in. Even though we come from different units and backgrounds, we all came together to inspire and encourage each other. I left as a stronger leader with a deeper understanding of how much can be achieved through teamwork, trust and shared goals.

PO (SCC) Arlo Bridges, Hastings Unit



A YEAR OF GROWTH FOR ROYAL MARINES CADETS AND JUNIORS

PART OF THE FAMILY

An integral part of the Sea Cadets family, Royal Marines Cadets gives **1,700** young people opportunities to develop teamwork, self-discipline and practical skills through land-based adventure training. At the 2025 Royal Marines Families Weekend at Commando Training Centre Lympstone, cadets marched alongside veterans and met serving personnel, including the First Sea Lord, General Sir Gwyn Jenkins KCB OBE ADC. The weekend gave cadets opportunities to share their achievements and learn more about the traditions associated with their training.

CTCRM Lympstone once again hosted our showpiece Gibraltar Cup competition in May 2025, when an outstanding Walton-on-the-Naze Detachment team achieved Lima Company's first victory in 22 years. All 48 competitors had already won through a hard-fought selection process, but gave their all during challenges designed to test endurance, teamwork, navigation and communication. Third-placed Hull Detachment also enjoyed a remarkable competition, with Cadet Corporal Jessica receiving the Best Section Commander trophy and Cdt Cpl Katie named Best Individual Medic (jointly with Marine Cadet Damian of Jersey Unit).



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The obstacle course of 'Bottom Field' was a real moment of discovering my own strength, as I was able to get over the six-foot wall which I had never managed before. The Merlin helicopters landing just metres in front of us, and the surreal feeling of taking off, was also something I'll never forget. I loved every second of it.

Cadet Adam, Walton-on-the-Naze Detachment

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POSITIVE PROGRESS

A record **182** detachments are now operating across the UK, thanks to units' recent efforts to open Royal Marines Cadets (RMC) sections. Our passionate RMC volunteers are committed to instilling the self-discipline and determination cadets need to push through any challenge – typified by a successful National Cadet Sergeants Board in July 2025. After a vigorous weekend of assessments in the field at Leek Training Area, 40 skilful and tenacious candidates achieved the highest rank in Royal Marines Cadets, becoming role models who will inspire their peers across the UK.

“I enjoyed practically everything about the promotion board, particularly the way the directing staff expected us to just crack on and work. It was on us to stick to timings, and I think it fostered a really good sense of camaraderie and teamwork in the candidates. Royal Marines Cadets has had me on countless courses meeting hundreds of great people. It has got me enjoying the outdoors and hiking – bettering me physically, mentally and socially.

Cadet Maxim of Stockton-on-Tees Detachment



DEVELOPING JUNIOR SEA CADETS

We opened **20** new Junior Sea Cadets sections for 9 to 11-year-olds during the year, reaching a new high total of **465**. To ensure our **3,600** juniors make the step up to becoming full sea cadets, we continued to enhance our junior training programme – with an emphasis on bringing science, technology, engineering and maths to life through active learning. Our inspirational juniors' volunteers helped **836** cadets to win British Science Association 'CREST Awards', by delivering hands-on sessions from our range of over **40** STEM modules.



Our volunteers also launched a bespoke Sea Cadets programme for the national Arts Award qualification – empowering juniors to develop creativity, communication skills and critical thinking. Meanwhile, a new Earthshot Challenge competition was developed to encourage juniors to explore imaginative solutions to environmental challenges – inspiring them to lead practical action in their communities.

“Being a Junior Cadet makes me proud and happy. I love learning new things and being part of our team. I've grown more confident, believe in myself, and can't wait for all the adventures ahead.

Cadet Sofia, Marlow Unit

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

With a record 1,056 sections supporting cadets at the end of 2025/26, our ongoing investment in building our capacity is laying the foundations for future growth.

ENGAGING EVERY YOUNG PERSON

While limited resources for recruitment meant overall cadet numbers were down slightly, at **13,722**, the average length of stay continued to rise (from 26 to **28** months since April 2024) as cadets responded to our efforts to deliver more relevant and engaging training. As we work to develop new policies to make Sea Cadets even more inclusive, we're proud to be supporting a higher-than-average proportion of young people (**22%**, compared to 17%) who identify as disabled, neurodiverse or having special educational needs. Among these were growing numbers of cadets with autism and/or ADHD, who are now receiving enhanced support thanks to new training and resources provided for volunteers in 2025/26.



SPREADING THE WORD

Community outreach remains a key pillar of future growth, and we increased the number of schools we visited from 72 to **98** – engaging **18,691** young people through 162 classroom sessions. We also opened **six** pilot 'SeaVenturers' sections to offer a lighter-touch experience of Sea Cadets. The initiative has allowed us to bring nautical fun and learning to new communities, while attracting volunteers who may not have considered a uniformed cadet forces group. By giving these nine to 11-year-olds a positive introduction to a cadet-style environment, we hope that they will be more likely to consider becoming a sea cadet in future.



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Since joining SeaVenturers, I've made new friends, learned new skills, and had lots of fun doing STEM activities. I'm happier answering questions now, and helping others in my group. I even helped lead some of the taster sessions at our open evening!

SeaVenturer Maryam

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REACHING THOSE IN NEED

Extended to include Scotland for the first time, our summer On The Water programme helped growing numbers of marginalised young people to access a transformational first taste of boating and watersports. The amazing facilities of our Port Edgar, Midlands and Royal Docks Boat Stations delivered a total of **2,710** sessions, serving participants from the Edinburgh region, Birmingham and London respectively. This meant we could give **1,113** young people (up from 966) the chance to try everything from kayaking to windsurfing while earning **160** recognised qualifications (up from 132).

87% of participants (up from 82%) were impacted by at least one form of marginalisation, with **72%** coming from economically disadvantaged areas. By introducing these children – and the community youth groups who support



them – to our activities, we are making Sea Cadets a trusted option for On The Water participants looking to build on their new skills and confidence.

OUR FUTURE READY STRATEGY

Three years into our five-year strategic plan (developed jointly by cadets, volunteers and employees), we continue to chart the course which has enhanced our training and safeguarding; created a safer and more supportive environment; and delivered the funding and facilities we need to grow.

Our main objectives for 2026/27 will build on these achievements and make our organisation even more inclusive, youth-centred and adaptable. They will help us meet the growing demand for what we offer, while

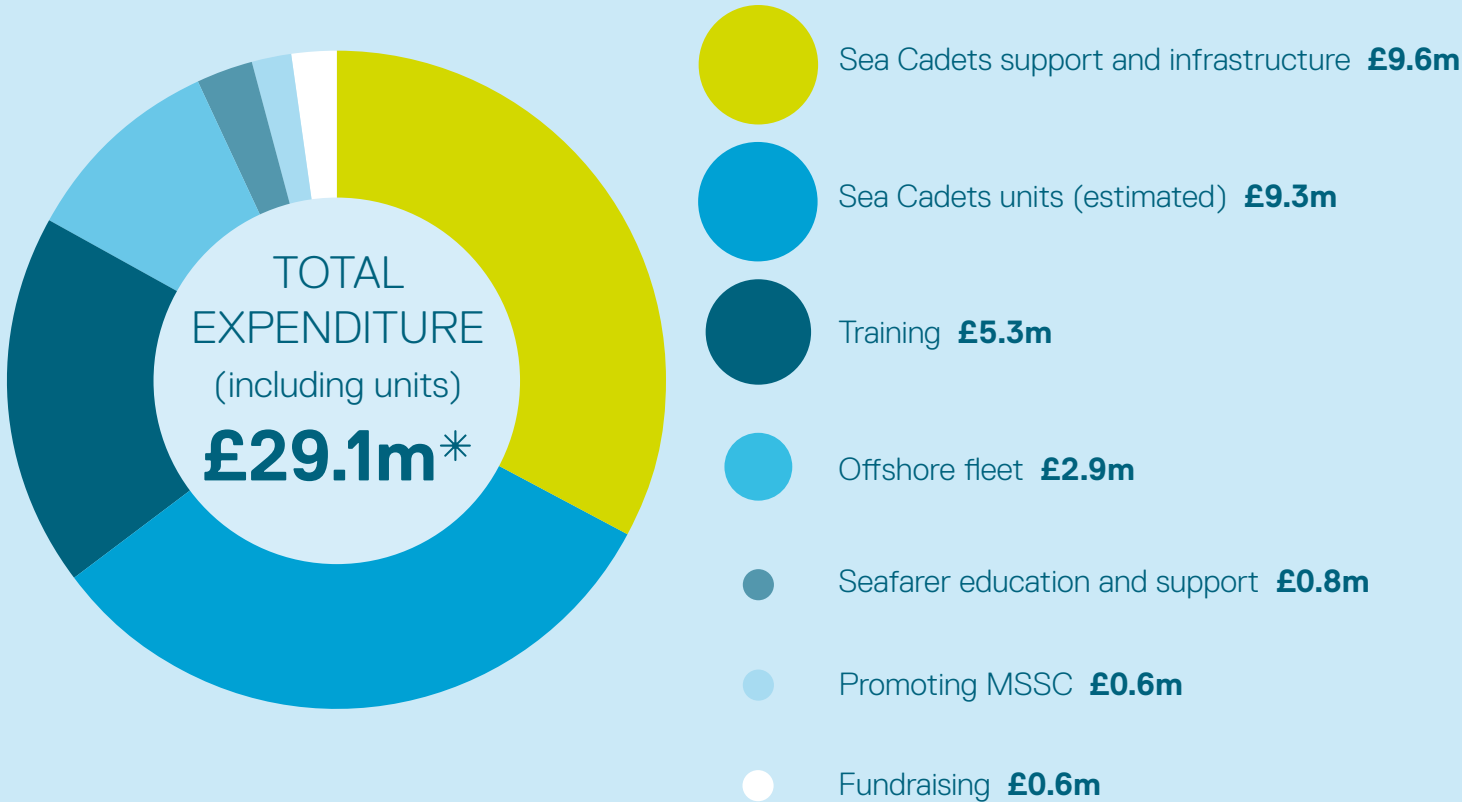
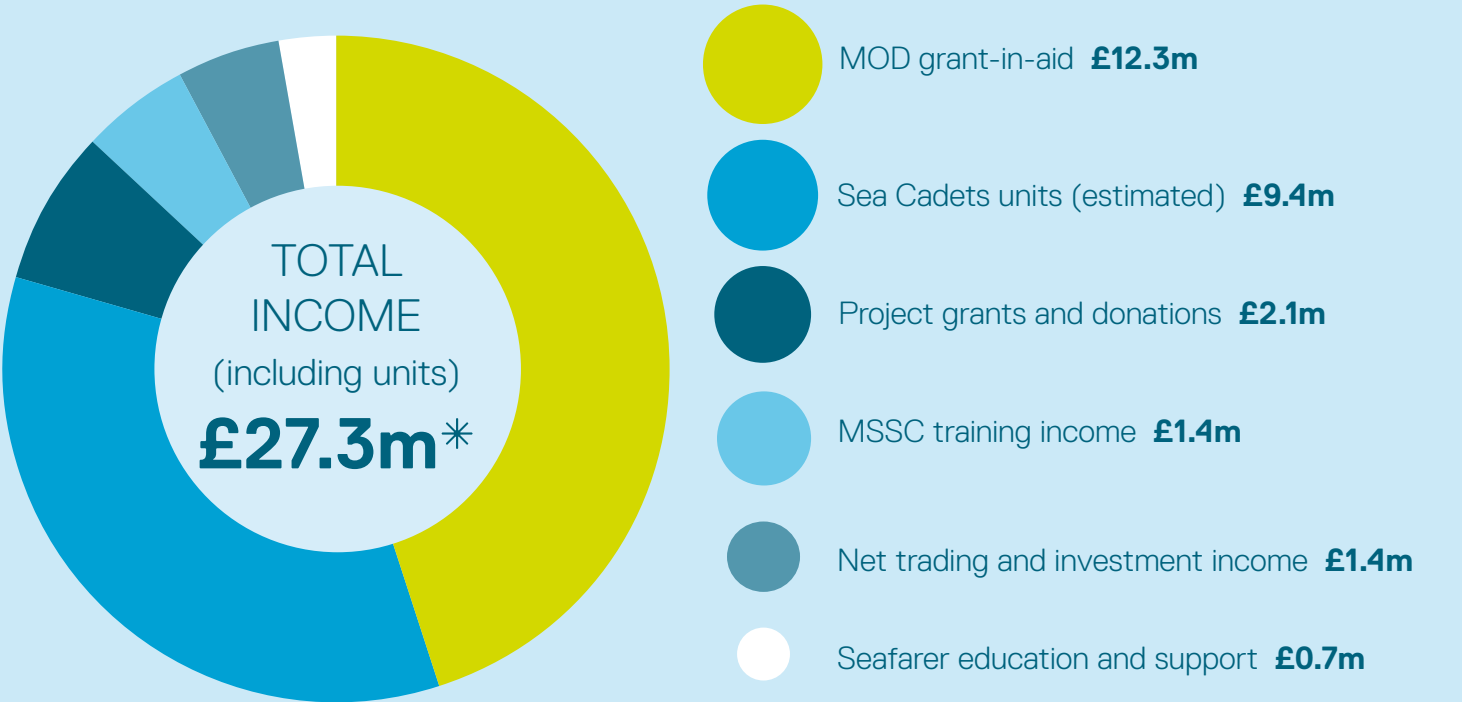
ensuring that our training continues to engage young people, reflect developments in maritime technology and equip cadets with skills relevant to education, employment and everyday life.

And because everything we do relies on our volunteers and employees, we will redouble our efforts to provide the tools they need to deliver the best possible Sea Cadets Experience – one which equips cadets with the skills, confidence and values that will allow them to launch well in life.

OUR TOP TEN GOALS FOR 2026/27

- 1 Cadet training expanded**, with new Air Rifle Centres, Regional Shooting Hubs and Unit Drill Hubs operating and new STEM-based careers modules launched.
- 2 Growth in district-level training delivery**, within a new framework for beyond-unit activity.
- 3 More units holding Cadet Voice forums**, up from 60% to over 75%.
- 4 More opportunities to develop skills and explore careers through Royal Navy engagement**, with careers fairs and STEM workshops in each area and a new Royal Marines Troop Experience course launched.
- 5 Maritime career opportunities for cadets increased**, with 20 careers awareness webinars and 300 cadets enrolled on the Level 1 Maritime Studies course.
- 6 Further support for volunteers and employees**, with a volunteer mentoring framework implemented in two areas and over 30 employees given management and leadership training.
- 7 More young people supported**, with a net increase of over 500 cadets during the year.
- 8 Increased capacity for future growth**, with over 15 new sections/units opened.
- 9 Progress on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**, with improved access to guidance and support; two new e-learning packages developed; and an accessibility audit tool implemented.
- 10 Essential support delivered**, through £4.1m in fundraising and the refurbishment/redevelopment of two boat stations.

FINANCIAL REVIEW



*estimated

Finances of Marine Society & Sea Cadets activities

Raising funds is vital for supporting our 393 Sea Cadets units, each a charity in its own right. Including income generated by these independent units (based on the latest available results), total estimated income for Marine Society & Sea Cadets' activities in 2025/26 was £27.3m. Total estimated expenditure on all activities in the year was £29.1m, with 93% of this expenditure going on Sea Cadets activity.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Total income of the MSSC charity, excluding units, amounted to £18m (24/25: £23.6m), a decrease of 23% on the previous year, reflecting the £5.9m received for 202 Lambeth Road in 2024/25. Excluding this one-off transaction, income was up by £268k or 1.5%.

MSSC raised £2.1m (24/25 £2.3m) through a variety of fundraising activities. Fundraising costs totalled £0.6m (24/25 £0.7m), resulting in a return on investment of £3.48 for every £1 spent (24/25 £3.40). Fundraising income supported both national priorities and local delivery, helping MSSC invest in cadet activity, facilities, equipment, outreach, training, offshore opportunities and support for seafarers.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) provided £12.3m in grant-in-aid during 2025/26, an increase of £0.3m. Support in kind included premises for Sea Cadets' stores, six area offices, three training centres, offshore offices and berthing, and ad hoc training activities. The MOD also provided 11 Royal Navy personnel on loan, while the Royal Navy supplied fuel for offshore vessels, uniforms and specialist stores items. This contribution formed part of the wider funding, resources and voluntary effort brought together by MSSC and local units to deliver the Sea Cadets Experience.

As we continued to deliver a wide range of activities for around 14,000 cadets, total expenditure was £19.7m (24/25: £19.3m) excluding units – an increase of 2% mainly due to salaries, the cost of training delivery, and restricted/designated projects using funds received in previous years.

BALANCE SHEETS AND RESERVES

Total net assets/reserves of the charity at 31 March 2026 were £40.5m (24/25: £41.4m). Of this, £14.7m (24/25: £15.3m) was comprised of tangible and intangible fixed assets.

Total funds at year-end included £13.3m (24/25: £14.4m) of restricted funds, along with £25.2m (24/25: £23.9m) in endowment funds invested to provide long-term income for the charity. There were also £0.8m (24/25: £1.9m) of designated funds for cadet outreach and boat station development. After accounting for £0.6m (24/25: £0.6m) of fixed assets, this left unrestricted funds comprising free reserves of £0.6m (24/25: £0.7m).

MSSC does not retain MOD monies as part of its reserves. It remains the aspiration of the charity to increase its level of free reserves to safeguard its activities in the event of any shortfall in public funding.

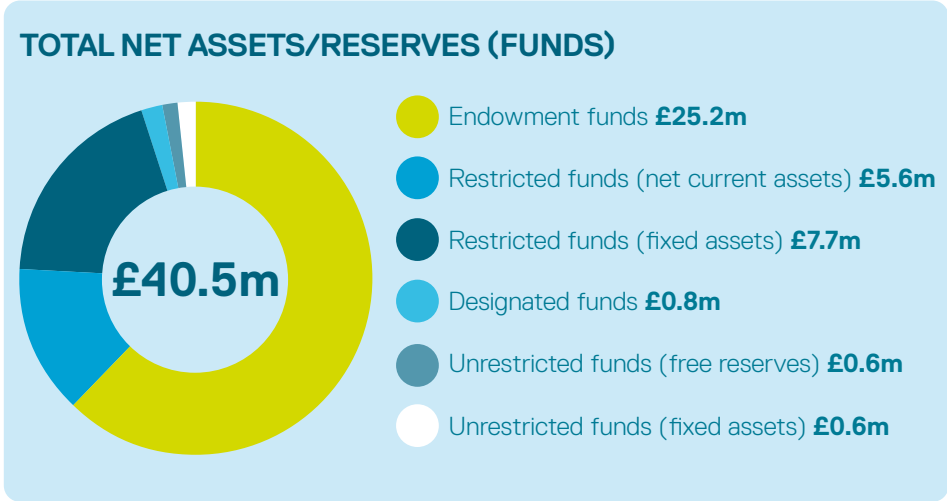
THANK YOU

MSSC would like to thank the many unit chairs, treasurers and other committee members who, together with our cadets, instructional volunteers and our many supporters, raised an estimated:

£9.4m to support individual Sea Cadets units

We also remain sincerely grateful for the ongoing assistance of our many other supporters, a number of whom are listed later in this review.

This financial review is intended to give an understanding of the overall summary financial position of MSSC for the 2025/26 financial year and is based upon the audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026. These are available to download from our website ms-sc.org or from the Director of Finance & Digital at the MSSC National Support Centre.



THANK YOU

A huge thank you to our MSSC donors, who have helped us to realise our vision of equipping young people to launch well into life.

Your donation means that no young person has to miss out on gaining the skills they need because they can't afford it.

STATUTORY FUNDERS

Ministry of Defence
Department for Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

TRUSTS, FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATES

Annie Tranmer Charitable Trust
ASTO (UK Sail Training)
BAE Systems
BGS Cayzer Charitable Trust
BMT Group
Corporation of Trinity House
Connaught Trust
CRH Trust
Denholm Group
EBM Charitable Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
Gerald Culliford Ltd
Greenwich Hospital
Gosling Foundation Ltd
Helen Jean Cope Charity
Inchcape Foundation
Jack Petchey Foundation
Maud Elkington Charitable Trust
Michael Uren Foundation
National Lottery Community Fund
Pom Charitable Trust
RNVR Officers' Association Ltd
Royal Society of St George
Schroders Plc
Sir Donald and Lady Edna Wilson
Charitable Trust
Smith Charitable Trust
Square Rigger Club Charity
Stelios Philanthropic Foundation
Ted Fort Foundation
Tindall Riley
Ulysses Trust
Worshipful Company of Saddlers
Worshipful Company of Salters



Worshipful Company of Shipwrights
Wyfold Charitable Trust

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Mrs Cate Bell
Mr Edward Bell
Mr Conrad Blakey OBE RD JP
Ms Sara Brown

Mr John Denholm CBE
Mr Nicholas Ferguson CBE
Mr Alan Marsh MBE FICS
Mr Gordon William Noon
Mr Christopher Seow
Mr Derek Stouph

People, honours and committees

PATRON OF MSSC & ADMIRAL OF THE SEA CADET CORPS

HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO
GCStJ GSO CD

PRESIDENT OF MSSC

Admiral Sir Philip Jones GCB DL

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr Jeremy Penn MBE (Chair)
Ms Léonie Austin (Vice Chair)
Ms Christine Baldwin MRICS –
retired October 2025
Miss Laurelle Brant
Mr Stuart Curl
Mr John Denholm CBE
Mr David Dingle CBE
Mr Gareth Hampton
Mr Andy Helliwell –
appointed October 2025
Mrs Kirsten Hopkins
Mr Stephen Peck
Dr Kate Richardson OBE –
appointed October 2025
Mr Jonathan Robertshaw
Ms Deana Rouse MBE –
appointed October 2025
Mr Michael Schofield
Mr Steven Smith OBE
Ms Honor Wilson Fletcher MBE FRGS FBES –
appointed October 2025
Vice Admiral Sir Jonathan Woodcock KCB
OBE – retired October 2025

COMMITTEES

Finance, Investment, Remuneration & Audit
Committee (Chair: Stuart Curl)
Policy Development & Nominations
Committee (Chair: Léonie Austin)
Safety, Safeguarding, Inclusion &
Risk Committee (Chair: Stephen Peck)
National Sea Cadet Advisory Council
(Chair: Steven Smith OBE)

VICE PRESIDENTS

Mr Tony Allen
Dr Louise Bennett
Vice Admiral Sir Tom Blackburn KCVO CB
Mr Conrad Blakey OBE RD JP –
appointed October 2025
Ms Liz Cassidy
The Reverend Canon Bill Christianson
Mr Martin Coles CBE –
appointed October 2025
Mr David Derbyshire

Mr Michael Everard CBE
Mr Simon Figgis
Dr Sheila Fitzpatrick MBE
Mr Andrew Given
The Rt Hon The Lord Greenway Bt
Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou –
appointed October 2025
Rear Admiral Sir Jeremy de Halpert KCVO
CB FRIN
Mr Eric Hutchinson
Mr David Jeffcoat
Commander John McK Ludgate RD DL RNR
Mr Alan Marsh MBE FICS
Mr Alex Marsh
Mr John May CVO OBE DL
Sir Alan Massey KCB CBE
Captain Sir Ian McNaught KCVO MNM FNI
Lord Jeffrey Mountevans
Captain Nigel Palmer OBE MNIM
Dame Mary Richardson DBE
Captain David M Robinson MBE EXC FNI FRSA
The Earl of Romney
Mr Clive I de Rougemont
Mr Richard Sayer
Rear Admiral David Snelson CB FNI
Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope GCB OBE DL
Sir David Steel KBE DL
Mr Patrick L M Stewart CVO MBE WS
Mr Henry Thornton
Vice Admiral Sir Jonathan Tod KCB CBE
– deceased 16 September 2025
Commodore Bill Walworth CBE RFA MNM
Mr Colin Wilcox
Vice Admiral Sir Jonathan Woodcock KCB OBE
– appointed October 2025
Mr Robert Woods CBE

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

Chief Executive:

Guy Holloway –
commenced May 2025

Mr Martin Coles CBE –
retired May 2025

Captain Sea Cadets:

Captain Neil Downing RN –
retired December 2025

Captain Hannah MacKenzie VR RN –
commenced January 2026

Director of Finance & Digital and Company Secretary:

Jenny Howard

Director of Young People, Volunteer & Business Support:

Paul Wilkinson MBE

Director of Sea Cadet Learning:

Heather Williams

Director of Fundraising & Communications:

Daniel McAllister

Director of Human Resources:

Petrina Brooker

Director of Maritime Training & Development:

Darrell Bate

THE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS 2025

Mr Paul Wilkinson MBE, Director of Young
People, Volunteer & Business Support for
MSSC was made a **Member of the
British Empire in recognition of his
outstanding service to youth work.**

Ms Nina Villa BEM, Vice-Chair of
Cheshunt Unit, Chair of London Area,
was awarded a **British Empire Medal
for voluntary service to young people.**

THE KING'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE 2025

Awarded to Greenwich, Deptford &
Rotherhithe Unit (TS Dreadnought);
Sefton Unit (TS Starling); and
Twickenham Unit (TS Saumarez) for
**volunteering impact which has made
an outstanding difference to their
communities.**

THE KING'S NEW YEAR HONOURS 2026

Lt Cdr (SCC) Fay Taylor MBE RNR,
Commanding Officer of Sefton Unit,
North West Area, was made a **Member
of the British Empire in recognition
of her outstanding voluntary
service to the Sea Cadet Corps.**

WO2 (SCC) Chris Gunton BEM RNR of
Greenwich Unit, London Area, was
awarded a **British Empire Medal for
voluntary service to young people.**

Lt (SCC) Nadine Daly RNR received a
Royal Navy Commendation for her
leadership and dedication as Commanding
Officer of Clydebank Unit, Northern Area.
We also congratulated Salisbury Unit's
Commanding Officer, S/Lt (SCC)
Jordyn Bond RNR, who was awarded a
British Empire Medal for his services
to Defence.



Produced by MSSC
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Tel: 020 7654 7000 Visit: ms-sc.org

Marine Society & Sea Cadets, a charity registered
in England and Wales 313013 Scotland SC037808

Patron of MSSC & Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps:

HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO GCSTJ GSO CD

President of MSSC:

Admiral Sir Philip Jones GCB DL