29th September 2015

PRESS RELEASE. For immediate release

NEW THAMES SAILING BARGE WILL REQUIRE CARGO

The Sea-Change Sailing Trust provides action-centred learning and seamanship training to disadvantaged and socially excluded young people and vulnerable adults. Many are from deprived communities or have learning difficulties, as well as many who are challenged by traditional educational settings, experiencing social exclusion or at risk of offending.

Outcomes include improving key skills, developing self-belief, developing the ability to work as team players, developing leadership skills and learning maritime skills. Clients benefit from an alternative approach to learning in a structured and safe yet challenging environment.

Capacity is restricted by the need to charter barges whilst having their own will enable them to expand their service by up to 30%. Construction has started of the first full-sized, trading, steel Thames sailing barge since 1930. Building their own new barge will significantly reduce Sea-Change’s operating costs whilst increasing sustainability.

Once operational in 2017 the new barge will have cargo-carrying capabilities, offering young people more opportunities to develop their organisational and leadership skills. She will not have an engine and so will develop real sailing skills in a low carbon environment.

The charity is looking for companies located in areas bordering the Thames estuary who see benefit in shipping goods under sail within this area, perhaps between North Kent and Harwich for example. It will contribute towards their corporate and social responsibilities and provide substantial media and marketing opportunities.

Trust Administrator, Don Ramsay explained that what we are going to do will be unique in their field in this country and will fit well with the policies and aspirations of organisations such as the [International Windship Association](http://wind-ship.org/).

At the same time, you will be benefitting society and assisting to train young people who are considering maritime careers. Please read the Sea-Change ethos below:

THE SEA- CHANGE ETHOS

For a sail training vessel to have value beyond the virtues of voyaging for its own sake, she must carry commercially viable cargo, and she must do so without mechanical assistance. To be a vital part of a venture which delivers the real goods to their destination using only wind and tide is not only to discover the obvious satisfactions of muscle-cracking labour, it is to appreciate one’s place in the natural world. Using only vernacular artefacts we cannot hope to defeat the elements. The best we can do is to work with them and, so far as is humanly possible, turn them to our ends.

Anyone working under sail alone soon learns to accept those things which cannot be changed. They also develop the fortitude to alter what can and must be altered. Understanding the difference between the two is a basic key to wisdom which few adults today ever achieve. When a young person steps ashore after discharging a cargo they have personally worked across days and nights of deep water and shoal, they will look up at the towering spars and begin to know their true worth as individuals.

It’s as simple as that. The cost in money terms is minimal by today’s standards. The pay-off in turning lives around will be incalculable.

[Tom Cunliffe](http://www.tomcunliffe.com/). Writer and broadcaster, Sea-Change Appeal Patron

Learn more at <http://www.seachangesailingtrust.org.uk>

Contact don@seachangesailingtrust.org.uk

