

the seafarers' charity



Rolling Updates: 2022

The Seafarers' Charity has forged strong links with organisations and individuals who care and are working towards the same goal as us, improving the lives of seafarers.

Here is an update on the charity's recent activity for our amazing network of advocates out there in their local communities supporting seafarers.

December 2022

Catherine Spencer, former CEO of The Seafarers' Charity, received an [OBE](#) in the New Year Honours. The award recognises Catherine's services to seafarers during her 3 years as CEO. Her tenure coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and mass redundancies at P&O – a 3 year period of unprecedented crisis for seafarers. During this time The Seafarers' Charity dispersed over [£10m in grant funding](#) to support maritime welfare charities to respond to seafarers' needs.

In 2022 The Seafarers' Charity awarded over £3 million to 61 different organisations supporting maritime welfare in the UK and internationally

Our convening and advocacy powers have been put to good use to support the [Nautical Institute](#) to open their membership to people working in the fishing industry throughout the world. We view this as recognition that the skills and professionalism required in modern day fishing is equivalent to that of other maritime professions. The Seafarers' Charity chaired a working group to develop a formal memorandum of understanding between the Fishing Industry Safety & Health (FISH) Platform and The Nautical Institute. The aim is to develop a strategy to achieve long-term positive change in worldwide commercial fishing. The interests of fishing will also be represented at a global level via the input of professional expertise to the Nautical Institute's technical committees which represent members' interests at the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

November 2022

Following an open recruitment process and some strong competition, Tina Barnes, previously the Charity's Head of Impact, was promoted to Impact Director and now leads the charity's grants and advocacy programmes.

The [Safety Net for Fishing Families](#) was presented to a delegation of international safety experts at a conference in Thailand which included representatives from the ILO and IMO. The fishing Safety Net was used as a basis to create a [Safety Net for UK Seafarers](#) in partnership with the MNWB. Both are useful bespoke resources to support budgeting and money management during the current cost of living crisis.

The Seafarers' Charity is creating a list of **fishing memorials** around the UK with a view to launching a new event in 2023 (more details on this initiative soon). If you

have a fishing memorial near you, we would be delighted to add it to our list. Please email Julia.gosling@theseafarerscharity.org with the location and the name of memorial. If possible please include a photo of the memorial.

October 2022

Deborah Layde, Chief Executive of The Seafarers' Charity, was announced as Chair of the Women in Maritime Network, taking over the role from Sue Terpilowski, who was the Founding Chair of the Network. This role provides an excellent opportunity to lead and shape advocacy to support women working at sea.

6th October saw the Annual National Service for Seafarers return to St Paul's cathedral after a two-year hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is always a great opportunity to commemorate and celebrate all seafarers from across the maritime profession, alongside representatives of all sectors of the seafaring community including the Royal Navy, Merchant Navy, fishing industry, nautical colleges, maritime youth groups and veterans' associations.

Fishing is a dangerous profession and The Seafarers' Charity is committed to improving fishing safety. We have funded an information [film](#) to help fishers meet new MCA inspection standards. In partnership with the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO) and supported by the Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG) the film is aimed at helping all owners to prepare for their MCA inspection following changes to the regulations for fishing vessels under 15 metres. It is available to view on The Seafarers' Charity's YouTube channel.

The Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF) survey of needs in August identified an ongoing need for hardship grants for seafarers and their families in Ukraine, The Seafarers' Charity trustees have agreed another SIRF grant award of £58,700 to the Mortrans Welfare Fund (part of the Marine Transport Workers Trade Union in Ukraine) for hardship grants.

The [London Marathon](#) took place on 2nd October with 20 runners running to raise funds for The Seafarers' Charity. Places are now available for the 2023 London Marathon. The Seafarers' Charity has a cheering point along the route on HQS Wellington to host your supporters and a post-run reception to say thank you. More information: <https://www.theseafarerscharity.org/events/london-marathon-2023>

September 2022

Following the sad death of Queen Elizabeth II, Paul Butterworth, Chair of The Seafarers' Charity's General Council, and Fredrick Onono, a member of staff and former RN, had the privilege of attending the state funeral of our late Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, representing our cause, our KGFS heritage and our long-standing relationship with the Royal Family. We were all very proud to watch Freddie on TV as he lowered our standard in respect as the Queen's coffin was driven past the Cenotaph.



Robert Greenwood, trustee of The Seafarers' Charity and Chair of the Impact Committee was awarded the prestigious Merchant Navy Medal for his services improving fishing safety.

Merchant Navy Day took place on Saturday 3rd September. Once again our [Fly The Red Ensign](#) campaign raised awareness and honoured, the contribution made by all merchant seafarers. More information: <https://www.theseafarerscharity.org/merchant-navy-fund/merchant-navy-day>

August 2022

The Seafarers' Charity became the very first maritime welfare charity to be accepted on Maritime UK's [Diversity in Maritime Charter](#) programme. Signing the Diversity in Maritime Charter commits The Seafarers' Charity to take a proactive responsibility for closing the diversity and inclusion gaps within our workforce. The announcement follows the revision of our Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) action plan for 2020-25. The action plan reaffirms our commitment to increasing awareness of EEDI throughout the sector. Since 2019, we have been offering a £5K grant to support maritime welfare charities to fund external governance and diversity reviews.

The Seafarers' Charity has been part of a Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF) Research Working Group which has carried out a [survey](#) to identify the most pressing needs for seafarers and families impacted by the war in Ukraine. Following 100 responses, hardship grants, communication support, accommodation and mental health support have been identified as priorities. The results of the survey will be shared with the SIRF Stakeholder Group, chaired by Deborah Layde, to determine next steps.

July 2022

Maritime Safety Week (4 – 8 July) saw The Seafarers' Charity launch a new 'Safety Drill Time' competition. The competition encouraged everyone working at sea to get involved by practising and improving their crew muster drill. Crews and skippers

entered the competition by posting a photo or video of their best time for their Muster Drill on social media accounts with the hashtag #SafetyDrillTime.

The competition was designed to encourage crew to practice their safety drill and improve their time – thereby potentially saving vital seconds in a real emergency at sea. The charity also benefited from reaching some new audiences on social media. And winners received a commemorative plaque and safety clothing donated by Guy Cotton Clothing and XtraTuf. We had some fantastic entries from fishing trawlers, tankers and even Border Force cutters. Have a look at the brilliant [photos and videos here](#).

The Seafarers' Charity is creating a list of **fishing memorials** around the UK with a view to launching a new event in 2023 (more details on this initiative soon). If you have a fishing memorial near you, we would be delighted to add it to our list. Please email Julia.gosling@theseafarerscharity.org with the location and the name of memorial. If possible please include a photo of the memorial.

Exploitation and Labour Abuse in UK Fishing: Following the University of Nottingham's Rights Lab publication of their [report on exploitation](#) of migrant workers in the UK fishing fleet, The Seafarers' Charity has been continuing the work we initiated in March 2021 with the University of Nottingham and ITF on [Fairness in Fishing](#). We have been busy engaging with various stakeholders in the search for solutions to some of the issues raised. On 5th July Tina Barnes, Head of Impact, presented proposed solutions within our new report on Achieving Fairness in Fishing to a meeting of industry and retailers convened by Seafish. A meeting has also been held with industry representatives and a working group has been established to enable the charity and ITF to work with industry to improve the current welfare conditions for migrant workers in some parts of the UK fishing industry. This work is receiving significant attention from the industry. Subsequent media coverage included a second [article in The Guardian](#) and The Seafarers' Charity Trustee, Nus Ghani, MP published this influential and powerful article in Politics Home - <https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/nusrat-ghnai-exploitation-uk-fishing-industry-foreign-fishermen-protections>

June 2022

Our **new CEO** was announced as Deborah Layde following the departure of Catherine Spencer. As you already know, Deborah has worked at The Seafarers' Charity for almost ten years and already has a great track record of making lives better for seafarers. Deborah's connections and passion for the maritime sector are strong and familial, her father was a Royal Naval Captain; her mother's cousins included both fishers and RNLi volunteers with much of her early life spent in the major fishing port Newlyn, Cornwall.

The Seafarers' Charity publicised a range of support available to the hundreds of workers affected by P&O redundancies, including the UK Maritime Anchor Fund which in addition to hardship grants, can also offer mental health support from Together All and relationship counselling from [Relate](#). This is a recognition of how financial problems can have a wide ranging impact. Here's the [press release](#).

May 2022

Safety Net: The Seafarers' Charity and Merchant Navy Welfare Board have been working in partnership to develop new resources to support UK merchant seafarers through the cost of living crisis. The new [Safety Net for Seafarers](#) website is full of free money management tools and resources specifically to help UK merchant seafarers to manage their money during the current cost of living crisis and in the future. The Safety Net is a vital one-stop-shop providing bespoke information and support for all UK seafarers and their families on personal savings, money management, credit choices, debt advice, and relationship and mental health support. The Safety Net for Seafarers is an extension of The Seafarers Charity development of a [Safety Net for Fishing Families](#). Both initiatives are aimed at supporting money management practices and helping beneficiaries to build longer-term financial resilience once the immediate financial hardship has been addressed.

Financial Champions Webinar: On June 22 from 10.30am to 12pm The Seafarers' Charity and MNWB will join forces with The Money Charity to deliver a [free webinar on money management](#). The webinar will include information about the value of establishing long-term savings and budgeting plans, and guidance on how to signpost toward free tools that aid financial planning and money management. The webinar is aimed at key individuals with a personal or professional connection to the merchant navy such as caseworkers, support workers, volunteers and others who support UK merchant seafarers. They will receive information and training to enable them to become financial 'buddies' or 'champions', capable of sharing accurate, up-to-date information regarding saving options, budgeting, credit choices, taxation and sources of free support to help with financial problems.

Fairness in Fishing: The Seafarers' Charity have [responded](#) to a new research report from the University of Nottingham which presents evidence of physical violence and mistreatment of migrant workers in the UK fishing industry with a call to Government and industry to stamp out poor practice and ensure there is [Fairness in Fishing](#). The charity will be taking forward more work to support the welfare of migrant workers under our Social Justice outcome. The charity is keen to engage with others interested in supporting migrant workers and tackling labour abuses and exploitative practices in UK fishing.

April 2022

Catherine Spencer, CEO will be leaving The Seafarers' Charity on 6th July to join [Cochrane](#). The recruitment process has begun for her successor.

SIRF Ukraine Fund has awarded a grant of £84,700 to Stella Maris. This is to provide temporary accommodation in Gdynia, Poland for seafarers' families fleeing from Ukraine. An additional grant has been made to ISWAN, bring the total available from the ISWAN Crisis Fund to £100K. We have now awarded 5 grants from the SIRF Ukraine fund, bringing the total to £244,700.

Ports: In a collaboration with the International Association of Ports and Harbours the SIRF fund is being used as a model to raise and awards funds for [port workers](#) impacted by the Ukraine crisis. All money raised will be awarded to MORTTRANS, the welfare fund of [Marine Transport Workers Trade Union of Ukraine](#) who also support and represent port workers, in addition to seafarers.

The [Fishing First Safety Management](#) pilot project has concluded in the Southwest of England. This pilot project has developed a national auditing infrastructure which is now supporting vessel owners to effectively manage and evidence the safety of their fishing vessel. 50 fishing vessels signed up to take part in the project and received an audit. During the project the Nautical Institute developed a new Lead Auditor training course which has resulted in 19 newly qualified Auditors in fishing safety to support vessel owners with their onboard safety management practices. We are currently developing plans to fund and roll out the Fishing First Safety Management service to the whole of the UK during the latter part of 2022.

March 2022

Women working at sea: The Seafarers' Charity is funding the [Seafarers International Research Centre](#) at Cardiff University to carry out research into the port welfare needs of women working on cargo ships. The research is expected to be concluded towards the end of 2022. Female seafarers who would like to know more, or have their views included within the research can find out more: <https://www.theseafarerscharity.org/new-research-survey-for-women-working-on-cargo-ships>

April Update: Our funding of this research has been nominated for a [Diversity & Inclusion award](#) at Safety4Sea's virtual Crew Welfare Week in June.

Ukraine Crisis: The Seafarers' International Relief Fund ([SIRF](#)) has reopened both for donations from the shipping industry and to award grants to charities and NGOs supporting

seafarers of any nationality who are impacted by the situation in Ukraine. Three grants, totalling £110K have been awarded, including £50K to ISWAN who are managing a hardship relief fund. Other grant awards have been made to Mortrans, the welfare fund of Marine Transport Workers Trade Union in Ukraine for hardship grants and Aberdeen Seafarers Centre who are supporting Ukrainian seafarers with accommodation in Aberdeen during the periods they are not onboard ship but unable to return to their home in Ukraine.

The [ISWAN Ukraine Crisis Fund](#) is open to organisations supporting seafarers. Organisations can apply to the fund on behalf of individual seafarers impacted by the Ukraine crisis for a grant of up to \$500 or up to \$1K if a seafarer is deceased as a result of the crisis.

P&O Redundancies: In response to the mass redundancies of c.800 employees at P&O Ferries the UK Maritime Anchor Fund has been reopened and can be accessed via the Seafarers Advice and Information Line ([SAIL](#)). Support provided includes hardship grants, financial advice, online mental health support as well as free relationship counselling from [Relate](#) which is funded by The Seafarers Charity. This is in recognition of the strain that can be put on relationships at a time of sudden and unexpected change.

February 2022

UK Women in Fisheries is a new network for all women who work in the UK's fishing industry. Funded by The Seafarers' Charity and launched on February 6th, 100 women signed up on the first day. The UK Women in Fisheries network will provide visibility, representation, and recognition for women across the sector. It will highlight, support, and promote the varied roles that women play in the UK commercial sea fishing sector - fish catching; fish supply chain; fishing businesses; fishing families; fishing organisations; government, regulation, and enforcement; in knowledge production or research, wherever they may be. <https://www.women-fisheries.com/>

CHIRP Maritime and The Seafarers' Charity have put together a short new film to highlight our grant funding support for this confidential accident and incident reporting programme. While Masters and Skippers are required to report accidents to the Marine Accident Incident Branch, anyone working at sea can [report](#) both actual accidents and near misses to CHIRP. Thereby providing a voice to those mariners who feel that they cannot otherwise speak out or feel that their concerns have not been heard. The information and insights gained from reports are published in [Maritime Feedback](#) to help raise awareness of safety issues and contribute to improved safety outcomes for everyone who works at sea. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8B-gJqa82qs>

An **Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion** Working Group has been established to support the development of maritime welfare charities ED&I practices and engage senior leadership to commit to improving ED&I within their organisation. The Working Group consists of representatives from Merchant Navy Welfare Board, The Seafarers' Charity and Trinity House.

Stella Maris received our first grant of the year when they were awarded an emergency grant of £68,600 to provide urgent food to seafarers, fishers and their families in the cities of Cebu and Liloan and their environs, and on the Island of Bohol – the regions most affected by Super Typhoon Rai, Philippines. Our second grant award of the year was £5K awarded to The Fishermen's Mission to support fishers on the North East coast of England who are experiencing hardship as a consequence of the impact on their livelihoods of the unexplained deaths of shellfish and reduction in catch since October 2021. The Fishermen's Mission, Shipwrecked Mariners Society, Seafarers Hospital Society and Sailors' Children

Society have reinstated their rapid response protocols developed in response to Covid-19 to ensure applications for hardship support are handled swiftly.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/feb/10/my-heart-is-broken-death-of-marine-life-is-devastating-englands-fishing-industry>

January 2022

Fishing First Safety Management project has begun in the Southwest. The Seafarers' Charity received funding from Marine Management Organisation and Trinity House to deliver the project in partnership with the Safety Folder. The project aims to develop a national auditing infrastructure to support risk assessments of fishing vessels.

FEBRUARY UPDATE: 50 fishing vessels have signed up to take part in the project. The Nautical Institute have developed a Lead Auditor training course which will run in February and March after which there will be 20 newly qualified Auditors in fishing safety to support vessel owners with their onboard safety management practices.

<https://www.theseafarerscharity.org/what-we-do/our-influence/safety-management-onboard-fishing-vessels>

MCA Reporting Form: At a meeting in July 2021 with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, The Seafarers' Charity proposed the adoption of a common reporting form for concerned organisations/individuals to capture and share data with the MCA in respect of breaches of ILO 188 Working in Fishing Convention. The MCA are not normally made aware of welfare issues unless they breach ILO 188 legislation (most welfare cases don't, in cases of mistreatment etc.) but it was agreed that it would be useful for the MCA to be made aware of the smaller cases too so there is a complete picture to spot trends/re-offenders and relevant information can be shared between other governmental departments (in cases of minimum wage, trafficking and forced labour situations) and local police departments where necessary. At the start of 2022 the MCA has brought this new form into use, and welcome reports of ILO188 welfare concerns.

FEBRUARY UPDATE: MCA have confirmed that reports will be treated confidentially and names of those reporting concerns will not be shared.

The reporting form can be accessed here - <https://forms.office.com/r/4XL9mRApfy>

Disaster Relief: On 23 December, The Seafarers' Charity awarded a £12,800 emergency grant to the International Seafarers' Welfare & Assistance Network to provide financial support to seafarers and their families in the Philippines suffering from the devastation caused by the Super Typhoon Rai (Odette). This emergency grant was assessed and awarded within 24 hours of the application being received.

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6879772393330487296/>

Trustee News: Natalie Shaw, a Trustee of The Seafarers' Charity of Director Employment Affairs at the International Chamber of Shipping was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours.

<https://www.theseafarerscharity.org/news/congratulations-to-our-trustee-natalie-shaw>