



YMCA HASTINGS & MUSTANG SAILING

Dear Doug and Rupert

Thank you so much for your recent donation of £800 towards our Youth Sailing Project which is already bringing new skills to teenagers from south east England.

We are sorry that we have not written sooner but we wanted to wait until we had specific feedback about the young people who came sailing with us. Yesterday we had a very positive meeting with the CEO of YMCA Hastings and discussed with him how they got on and the plan for moving them forward.

We were expecting 10 students from YMCA Hastings, including Kimberley Miller and Levi Carr whom you know about, but sadly on the day only 4 lads arrived – the YMCA staff were very frustrated by this and we have since discussed how to ensure this is not repeated. However, the 4 students who did come fully participated in a great day's sailing in beautiful conditions, and the decreased numbers meant that they had even greater opportunities to learn. Please have a look at the attached video which shows the students developing new skills in the Solent .

Levi commented, “The day was really good, I learnt a lot of things and it was a great experience I was taught how to set a sail and control the boat.”

Other comments include,

“I really enjoyed the day. For example I learnt how to tack, helm and set the sails. Also learned how to navigate and use the compass.”

“ The staff were really good and taught us hands on stuff and let us do everything for ourselves. Also very down to earth and had good banter.”

When asked if he would like to sail again, one student said, “Yes because the day was totally amazing and I really enjoyed the whole experience.”

At the end of the day, the students were asked if they would like to do some classroom [theory] courses so that they could sail again and they all said they would – this is brilliant because these young people have found school and traditional learning environments too much to handle, so their willingness to return to a classroom setting is a major step forward.

Yesterday we discussed with the YMCA the plan for these 4 students to progress with their sailing and seamanship skills development, and hence their team working and interpersonal skills, during the next 10 weeks or so. These plans include 2 x Day Theory Courses (probably VHF Radio and Sea Survival), 4 further days sailing so they can achieve their RYA Competent Crew qualification and the online Essential Navigation course for them to do with support from their Key Workers.

YMCA staff and us here at Mustang are all very excited about how things are moving forward with these young men and the impact that being useful members of a sailing yacht crew can bring to them. Your contribution to this process is invaluable – we, and they, are very grateful for it.

We would love to tell you more about the day and the plans ahead, so perhaps we could arrange a time when we could meet. The YMCA have many students who would love the opportunity to develop new skills in this way, so it would be wonderful if we could continue to partner with you in the future.

With grateful thanks,

Joanne

Joanne Dunham