

THE COMIC RELIEF CHALLENGE: 627 miles raising £500

By Tilly Parry



A team of the instructors took on a challenge to get from Bristol to John O' Groats in 24hours using only Watersports to get us there. In total we had 644 miles to go and our goal was to raise £500 all for Red Nose Day.

It all started at 6pm on Saturday 11th March, we used the Rowing and Kayaking Machines to start off the journey. At 9am on Sunday 12th March we started out on the water running Sailing, Rowing and Kayaking sessions all to record a distance towards our total. So many of the volunteers, instructors and students came to add their totals and help out. We got loads of Sunday walkers to join in or just donate, including a special visit from Carol Volderman.

We had some stars of the day who went all through Sunday on the water, William Lewin from Race Squad sailed back and forth to the SS Great Britain totalling over 30 miles and raising £167.00 by himself.

I just want to say thank you to Nicola Murdoch, CEO, and everyone that was involved during the whole 24 hours and also to all who donated. We raised over £420 (excluding William's sponsorship) with online donations and even more on the day for Red Nose Day. There is still more time to donate all the links for online donations are on our Facebook Page.

[New Admin Staff Member](#)



With all changes seen in 2017 at AllAboard, we welcome our third new staff member to the team – Harry Coulton. Harry will be working in the office as an administrator on Fridays and Saturdays. This is very exciting for AllAboard as the centre’s development is now requiring the centre to be open for 6 days a week.

Harry brings many skills and experience from his work with the Scouts, ethnic minority groups and diverse populations. We welcome Harry who you can meet on Fridays and Saturdays.

Kick start to the Season



Activity at AllAboard has been warming up as we welcome back groups and individuals to the centre.

Schools: Our Special Educational Needs (SEN) Schools, Warmley Park and Kingswestern, continue to come weekly to develop their skills in sailing and rowing. Students have made immense progress from being scared to go near water to going canoeing or sailing weekly with reduced support. These schools will take part in the ‘School Games’, so they are looking forward to continue their time at AllAboard. For more information on the School Games see page 6.

College: Our ‘Horizons Group’ from South Bristol Skills Academy returned this month for their 3 remaining sessions. This group comprises of teenagers with learning disabilities who are attending college to learn new skills and independence. Many students were fearful of going on the water at first though as the sessions went on their confidence and skills grew massively. Their time with us was built into their curriculum, causing students to think and plan what they would need to bring, how to get there, and evaluate what they did well, and what they want to do differently next time.

City of Bristol College, studying a ‘New Routes’ course embarked on a 6 week adventure at AllAboard where they developed skills in kayaking and team building in 6 man kayaks.



Tutor Robert Stewart explains that their time *“was a fantastic opportunity for our students. Many have never been on the water before and for some, it was quite a scary thought. Everyone got involved, despite a few fears, and it was a great chance to practice different techniques and skills in an exciting environment.”*



Student, Ruby Martin, said: *“I’ve really enjoyed this, especially the team building. Having six people on the boat at the same time is pretty challenging but it feels great when we work it out.”*

N.B. The photos and quotes were taken by Samantha Jackson, Communications Officer, City of Bristol College.

Riverside: We welcomed back Riverside for another year of multisport fun. Riverside is an adolescent CAMS unit which specialises in treating adolescent mental health and supporting their patients through their treatment and recovery. Riverside is a lovely group to work with and they come weekly to enjoy sailing or canoeing.

Here is what Riverside had to say about their experiences:

Many of our young people have reservations about attending activities, especially physical ones, as it may be something they’ve never tried before. They are often fearful of getting outside, trying new things and having fun, but quickly realise that All Aboard helps to distract them from negative thoughts and feelings and that doing something physical brings real benefits, as well as being really enjoyable. It builds their confidence as they meet new people and try new things. AllAboard gives our young people the chance to practice being in the moment and not thinking about the past or future, as they are totally engrossed in an enjoyable activity. It helps young people bond in a shared activity and grow as a community, supporting each other. Once they start attending regularly, young people really look forward to attending and thoroughly enjoy trying out the variety of water sports on offer. They often return to the unit, with a bit of a glow on their faces from being outside and with stories about who got wet that week!



Here is a testimony from one of our service users from Riverside:

I have benefitted a lot from the All Aboard group. Not only have I been able to gain new skills in

sailing, canoeing and kayaking, but I have been able to communicate and work better with my peers and other people, which is something that I definitely needed to improve.

Being at Riverside, we spend a lot of time thinking about extremely hard stuff that has gone on for us but All Aboard allowed me to be distracted from difficult thoughts and feelings that I have been experiencing.



AllAboard has built my confidence which has helped me so much in my recovery. It helped me realise also how physical activity can be fun as well as good for me, so has encouraged me to do more physical activity and I will definitely do water sports again!

All Aboard has been an amazing experience and as well as helping me build confidence and recover, it has also encouraged me to get out and be social and take part in new things. I am very thankful to All Aboard and know that many other young people will benefit from this amazing experience.

[RYA Instructor Development Day](#)

On the 11th March, AllAboard opened its doors to 30 instructors from the South West to join in an Instructor Development Day. This was day was by lead by the RYA to help instructors and assistant instructors continue their development and have the opportunity to liaise with other instructors and share different skills, knowledge and ideas. The day composed of sessions, where instructors learnt to skills and ideas from teaching better taster sessions to delivering better games. A great learning experience for our instructors.



[A Poem of our Tuesday and Wednesday Rowers Adventures down Avon Gorge](#)

Reflections from the Water

by Natalie Smith (not Wordsworth, more the jottings of a fool!)

Nine crew set off in the Bristol Blue

Shadowed by a safety boat sharing the view

A Spring-edged day with Pill in our sights
The wind benign, and sun a milky delight
With flag flapping gently and a parrot atop it!
Our gig moved to river, just a lock to stop it
Fenders out, and ropes caught to hold
A mossy stone mooring until we are told
'Row on!' towards, the now open gates
To bends in the river, whatever awaits
Bobbing branches and silted banks
Tired old piers with rotting planks
Ghosts of footfall where once people stepped
Our blades took us past, our timing we kept
Under the Bridge of Brunel's creation
A pause for gazing and photographs taken
Gliding by green trees and those just awaking
To the sound of the Portway and lorries braking
But away from the noise and high on a slope
The cream-coloured goats chew grass and mope
While a solitary heron with grey feather cover
Darts at a fish - its lunch to discover
Sea Mills arrival time sets our return
With rudder and oars the water we churn
En-route we use minutes to visit the Cut
Then back to the lock before the gates shut
Into the Basin, no longer at large
For silver rowers' 'debrief' at the Grain Barge!



With thanks to Jerry, Fran, Robin, Jenny, Sharon, Janet, Dave, Mervyn, Brian and Simon, and All-Aboard! staff.

School Games



The School Games, is a great event where 10 schools comes to All-Aboard to enjoy 6 weeks of sailing lesson, leading them to the School Game Regatta Day. This is where they will put their skills to the test and compete against each other for the title of 2017 School Games Winner.

The School Games is completely inclusive, and incorporates a rule that each school must have at least 3 students with additional needs in the team. This is a fantastic opportunity for all students to work together as a team and learn new skills in addition to having fun and enjoying the benefits sailing has to offer; whilst representing their schools competitively.

The 6 weeks of teaching sessions will begin in April leading up to the date of the School Games on 20th June. Updates to follow in the following months.

Lost Property

By Elizabeth Jackson

Please be aware that from 1st April the centre will keep all lost property items for **one month only** and after that items left will be disposed of.

Would all staff and volunteers please remind groups after each session to check they have taken all their belongings and let them know that lost property items will not be kept after one month. There will be a notice in the changing area to remind everyone. Thank you.

Upcoming Events



Start of the season for: **Sailability Saturday Sessions** – 1st April , 10am – 12pm

After-School Clubs – Week Beginning 24th April, 5pm – 7pm

Easter Holiday Club (8-16 years) - 10th- 20th , 18th -21st April, 10- 4pm.

UPCOMING COURSES/ SESSIONS: **Learn to Row Course** – 6 weeks starting 2nd April, 1pm-
3.30pm

Go Canoeing Trip – 9th April, 1 - 3.30pm

Canoe/Kayak River Trip – 14th April, 9.30 – 4.30pm

For more information or to book online visit <http://allaboardwatersports.co.uk/courses>

Review and Planning Meeting, 7th April, 4.00pm

Have your say on AllAboard's progression and delivery on Friday 7th April at 4.00pm. Our CEO, Nicola Murdoch, and some Trustees will be present, so it is a good opportunity for you to meet them if you have not had the chance already.

If you would like to come, please let the office know on **0117 968 8244**.

Open Day – Try a Sail, Canoe or Row – 17th April , 10am – 4pm



Fancied trying Watersports but never had the time or opportunity to do so? Well now is your chance to try sailing, rowing or canoeing on the 17th April for FREE at AllAboard (donations welcomed). Simply turn up on the day and make yourself known at reception. We look forward to seeing you!

Communication Training:

Communication Training continues with the following dates:

Makaton Training – 5th April – 4.00 – 5.00

Introduction /recap of the Communication Aids – 22nd April – 9.00 – 9.30
25th April, 3.30 – 4.00.

Communication Training (Detailed) (for instructors/volunteers) – 20th April 5.00 – 6.00

All instructors and volunteers must be trained in how to use the communication aids the centre is introducing. If you are unable to attend of these and have not been to a communication session then please let Blaire Hannan in the office know.