



Annual Review 2022

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Cover Image: Ukrainian seafarers receive SIM cards so they can contact loved ones.
Photo by Becky Haldane

About Us

The Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB) is a registered charity formed by the UK Government out of the 'Seamen's Welfare Board' in 1948 following the end of the Second World War. Based in Southampton, the Board is the umbrella charity for the UK Merchant Navy & Fishing Fleets. Its Council of Management has an equal number of trustees representing ship owners, maritime trade unions and voluntary organisations.

We have 43 maritime charity constituent organisations who provide a plethora of services that support the welfare of seafarers, fishers and their dependants. Additionally, we have 15 Port Welfare Committees (PWCs) within the UK, and a Seafarers' Welfare Board (SWB) in Gibraltar. As appointed by the Maritime Coastguard Agency in 2021, the Board is the UK's National Seafarers' Welfare Board.

Who's Who

The Lord Prescott	Patron
Captain Andrew Cassels	Chair
Mark Dickinson	Vice Chair
Stuart Rivers	Chief Executive
Sharon Coveney	Deputy Chief Executive
Joel Holt	Communications & Media Manager
Celia Jackson	Grants & Impact Manager
Sarah Edward	Port Welfare Committee Manager
Susan Atkinson	Port Welfare Committee Manager (from June 2022)
Helen van Gass	Welfare & Training Manager
Aiden Harvey	Projects & Welfare Co-ordinator
Nicky Cantello	Executive Assistant (from October 2022)



VISION

To be the representative voice and driving force for the welfare of merchant navy and fishing communities in the UK

MISSION

Improving the lives of seafarers and fishers by raising welfare standards in collaboration with our stakeholders

LEADERSHIP

CORE VALUE

We will lead with integrity and professionalism, representing constituent organisations at the highest levels of government and industry.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

To lead with authority in identifying and pursuing the most important welfare issues, ensuring that we fulfil the obligations of the National Seafarers' Welfare Board and MNWB's strategic objectives.

OBJECTIVES

- Define the role of the NSWB and how it interacts with PWCs, DfT, MCA and MLC Member States.
- Drive the agenda for the establishment of port levies across all UK ports.
- Produce 'State of the Nation' report from sector forums.

COMMUNICATION

CORE VALUE

We will support our key relationships through authentic communications, treating people with respect and dignity at all times.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

To research, inform, advise and champion matters that are important to the maritime charity sector, engaging with government, unions, shipowners, ports, charities and the general public to raise awareness of the welfare needs of seafarers, fishers and their dependants.

OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen relationships within government through active, regular and transparent engagement.
- Expand the range and reach of charities and agencies available through Seafarer Support.
- Increase the profile of MNWB and its members through print and broadcast media.
- Grow social media presence across all platforms to increase position as an influencer.

INNOVATION

CORE VALUE

We will pursue innovative solutions that create economic and social value, adopting an evidence-based approach to everything we do.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

To enable our constituent organisation members to thrive by providing innovative, effective and efficient solutions that improve the lives of their beneficiaries. To drive developments in funding, training & education, projects and services to meet dynamic needs.

OBJECTIVES

- Adopt an evidence-based approach to MNWB projects and services.
- Ensure all MNWB projects add value to constituent organisations and deliver economies of scale.
- Develop training platform to host MNWB training courses.
- Develop NSWB support package for MLC member states.

COLLABORATION

CORE VALUE

We will celebrate the full spectrum of diversity within and outside of our organisation, building strong, collaborative networks that create new opportunities and possibilities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

To drive collaboration across the maritime welfare sector through a targeted approach to funding, service provision and partnership building. Our collegiate approach aims to position UK maritime welfare charities as excellent service providers.

OBJECTIVES

- Grow MNWB's membership by defining clear criteria, benefits and agreements.
- Develop a self-assessment tool for ports that establishes welfare standards across the UK and identifies gaps in provision.
- Establish MNWB as the go-to place for welfare guides, sector statistics and reports.
- Establish a forum for National Seafarers' Welfare Boards to share experiences and information.



Improving the lives of seafarers

Captain Andrew Cassels reflects on a highly-successful year for the Board

As Chair of the Board, it is my privilege to introduce this 2022 Annual Review at the end of a very busy and successful year at the Merchant Navy Welfare Board.

In 2022, a new strategy (see page 3) was developed which reaffirms our Vision, Mission and Core Values - and defines new strategic priorities for the next three years. This strategy was completed in the latter part of the year and we will be seeking feedback and support from our key stakeholders, constituent members and funders. This will allow us to define what success looks like for each stakeholder group, put in place an operational plan and measure staff performance against the strategic objectives.

You will recall that the autumn of 2021 was spent looking to replace the retiring Chief Executive, Peter Tomlin. Stuart Rivers started as our new CEO in January and I am pleased to report that he has easily met our expectations; MNWB is being led effectively and is delivering well across its varied portfolio of activities.

Stuart leads a stable, hard-working and effective team of staff which, this year, has been enhanced by a Communications & Media Manager, Joel Holt, and a Grants & Impact Manager who, I am pleased to say, is our very own Celia Jackson. Joel has raised the Board's media presence to ensure that the good works of the charity and its 43 constituent organisations is published far and wide, raising our profile within and beyond the maritime charities sector. Celia has developed and managed our grant assessment and impact management processes that support both our own grants programme but also, importantly, the monies that the Department for Transport has made available to the Board to support a broad range of seafarer health, wellbeing and welfare projects across the maritime sector, and to improve diversity and skills in the sector.

Since the Board assumed the mantle of the UK's National Seafarers' Welfare Board (NSWB) in May 2021, we have spent much of 2022 developing our activities in its support and development. The NSWB is a natural fit for the Board complementing our network of Port Welfare Committees which allows us to better understand the issues that affect seafarers in and around our major UK ports. We also have a constituent organisation membership which captures the UK Merchant Navy charity sector, ensuring a route through from the frontline charities who deliver welfare first-hand to the Department for Transport and the UK Government. Having established the role, we now have the task of maximising its effectiveness for the benefit of those constituent organisations and, ultimately, those seafarers, whether serving or retired, and their families that are in need. This will be a focus for 2023.

As you read this Annual Review, you will understand the scope, breadth and depth of the Board's work which either directly or indirectly supports the provision of welfare to serving and retired seafarers and their families but also for seafarers who visit the UK. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, and our constituent organisation membership, I would like to thank Stuart and the staff for their hard, diligent and compassionate work they have provided throughout 2022.

Captain Andrew Cassels
Chair



Planning for the future

Chief Executive Officer Stuart Rivers reflects on the highs and lows of his first year at the helm

Just as we began to live with Covid by the start of 2022, it wasn't long before we were struck by another crisis.

On February 24th, Russia invaded Ukraine, and tensions in the region escalated into war. As you would expect, this had a considerable impact on the shipping industry and seafarers. Many ships were stranded in the Black Sea ports of Southern Ukraine and seafarers – regardless of nationality – found themselves in the middle of a developing crisis.

During the early months of conflict, representatives from the UN, EU, UK Government, shipowner bodies, unions and charities met regularly, working together to share information and assist in the repatriation of seafarers. MNWB joined this group to contribute what it knew from its constituent organisations and find out what coordinated efforts were being made to help seafarers of all nationalities.

With economies reopening after the pandemic and the pressures caused by the war in Ukraine, it soon became clear that the increased demand for energy saw the UK impacted by a global energy crisis. Against the backdrop of these crises, MNWB continued to provide ongoing support to its constituents through its regular activities and new projects.

Supported by Trinity House, we established a fund to provide Ukrainian seafarers with SIM cards so that they could contact loved ones affected by the Russian invasion. This project was soon oversubscribed so the Board contacted Vodafone's *charities.connected* scheme, who made an initial gift in kind of 8,000 SIM cards followed by a further gift of 5,000. This enabled the front-line welfare charities to distribute the cards to any Ukrainian seafarers visiting UK ports.

Having been appointed as the National Seafarers' Welfare Board in 2021, this year we welcomed financial support from the Department for Transport in the form of a grant. The funding was made available to maritime charities and organisations, specifically around seafarers' welfare and skills. Twelve UK charities

and organisations have been funded through the Department for Transport grant programme in 2022, with some receiving more than one grant. The funding was transformational and by the end of the year a total of £1,051,354 was awarded to support 18 UK projects across two workstreams:

Skills & Diversity: Plugging skill gaps, broadening the pool of talent, providing an equal opportunity for all and fostering creativity. £552,969 awarded in 2022.

People: Research into, and support for UK programmes to alleviate seafarer and fishers' mental health and wellbeing. £498,385 awarded in 2022.

As you can imagine, with the various crises and the responsibility for disbursing over £1m in grants, it was quite a busy first year for me at MNWB. It is testament to the dedication of the staff team who have worked tirelessly in support of our constituents and, ultimately, seafarers, fishers and their families, and I am both proud and grateful.

I thank our Chair Capt. Andrew Cassels, Vice Chair Mark Dickinson and our trustees. It has been a steep learning curve with many challenges but, with their support and guidance, 2022 has been a very successful year for MNWB.

Finally, I extend my thanks to MNWB's 43 constituent organisations for the vital work they do to support the welfare of serving and retired seafarers and fishers. It is through their continued efforts that the UK's maritime welfare sector can be held up as an example to other nation states.

As we look back at what we have achieved and look forward to the challenges and opportunities that are ahead of us, I can say with certainty that it is an exciting time for MNWB - and I feel privileged to be part of its journey.

Stuart Rivers
Chief Executive Officer

Impacting Welfare

Grants & Impact Manager Celia Jackson looks back on a record year for grant giving

Celia Jackson - Grants & Impact Manager



MNWB's main priority is to provide support services to its constituent organisations, PWCs and working groups, and its secondary priority is to provide capital grants. The amount made available for grants each year is based on the overall return from the investment portfolio after deducting revenue costs and services to constituents. Under the Small Grants Programme, the Chair and Chief Executive are authorised to allocate individual grants of up to £5,000 throughout the year, up to a total annual limit of £50,000.

In 2022, the sum of £160,795 was awarded in capital grants and £103,100 to jointly-funded projects.

£263,895 TOTAL AWARDED

Some 11 grants were provided to 10 organisations to support capital projects for serving and retired seafarers and fishers. MNWB also partnered with other maritime funders in 2022 to provide projects such as SIM cards for Ukrainian seafarers, Vehicle Replacement Programme, MiFi Project and Port Visitor.

421,875 SERVING SEAFARERS

The greatest reach in 2022 was to serving seafarers, who benefitted from grants to individual organisations as well as partnership projects funded by MNWB and other funding partners.

11,000 FISHERS

Fishers continue to benefit from the MNWB grants programme, with The Fishermen's Mission and Stella Maris having the greatest focus in this area.

613 RETIRED SEAFARERS

Grants to accommodation providers have had a significant impact in 2022, with support given to Care Ashore, Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest (QVSR), The Merchant Navy Association and Nautilus Welfare Fund.

For more details on grants awarded in 2022, please go to Grant Funding - Merchant Navy Welfare Board (mnwb.org/grant-funding)



QVSR CEO Alexander Campbell OBE opens the newly-refurbished garden

QVSR Garden Refurbishment Project

Case Study by Debbie Whitehead, QVSR Operations Manager

In May, QVSR was delighted to receive a grant from MNWB towards our "Garden Rescue" project. As a result of the pandemic and with the lack of open spaces locally, the need to have a comfortable and relaxing outdoor area had become very evident, somewhere residents could simply take time to enjoy nature, recuperate from ill health, or meet with others to alleviate any feelings of isolation.

Thanks to the support from MNWB our garden is now a more eco-friendly environment, with borders full of colourful planting. A mixture of climbers, shrubs and dwarf fruit trees provide year-round interest as well as food and shelter to encourage wildlife and new gravel pathways replace the old and unstable decking, much improving the accessibility around the newly-laid lawn.

One of our residents commented on the refurbished garden:

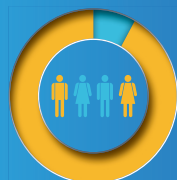
"My health is not good, I have COPD so I can't get out as much as I used to. The garden is easier to get around now and there are more flowers, it is a much better place to sit with friends."

MAKING AN IMPACT 2022



TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED
£1,051,354

SKILLS & DIVERSITY £552,969
PEOPLE - MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING £498,385



NUMBER OF UK BENEFICIARIES
220,020+

SKILLS & DIVERSITY 17,536+
PEOPLE - MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING 202,484+

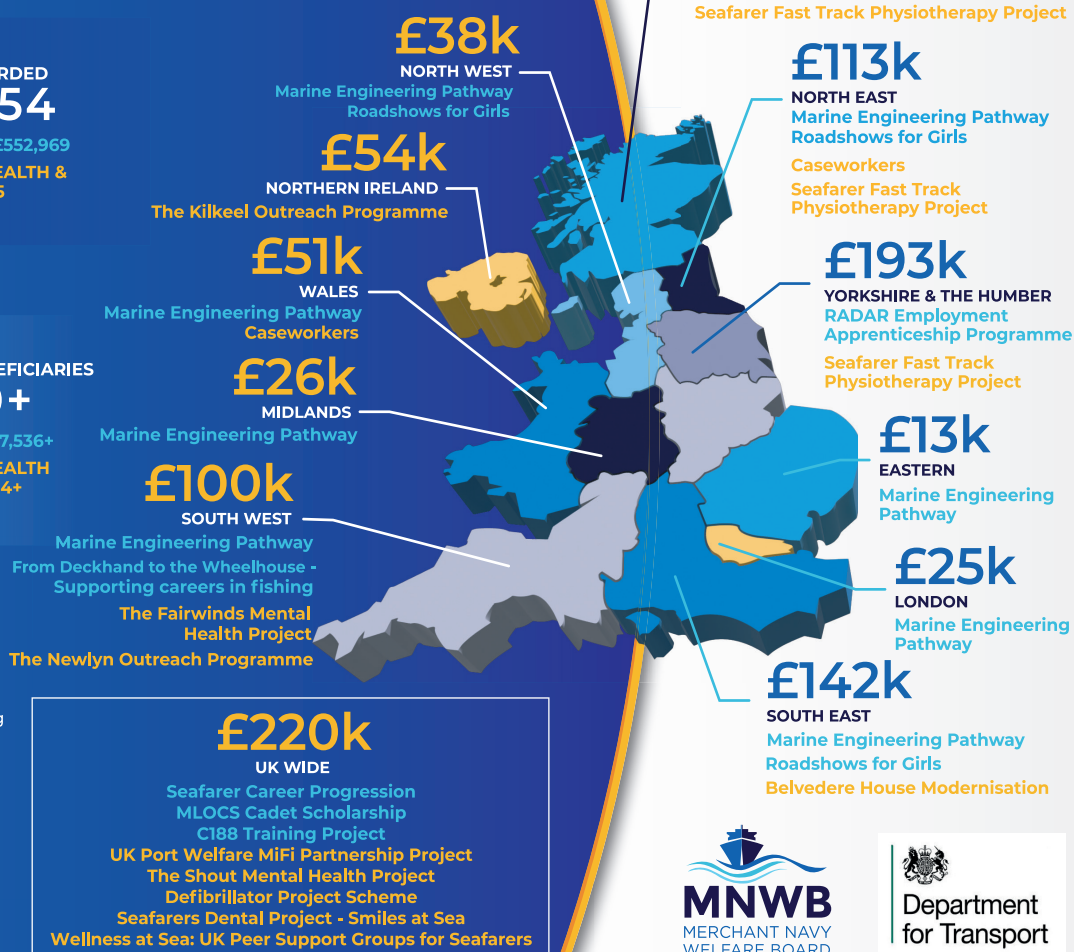
OUR SUPPORT FOR SEAFARERS IN 2022

12 UK charities and organisations were funded through the DfT grant programme. A total of 18 projects were supported across two streams - **Skills & Diversity** and **People**.

Skills & Diversity: Plugging skill gaps, broadening the pool of talent, providing an equal opportunity for all and fostering creativity.

People: Research into, and support for UK programmes to alleviate seafarer and fishers' mental health and wellbeing.

- Skills and diversity
- People - Mental health and wellbeing



MNWB Grant to Aberdeen Seafarers' Centre

Case study by Steve Murray, Port Chaplain - Aberdeen

Preparation of premises for the new seafarers' centre

The grant from MNWB to Aberdeen Seafarers' Centre in 2022 was used to refurbish and fit out a new seafarers' centre in Aberdeen. In late 2020 we had to move out of the premises that we had been using, due to the owners selling the property. This coincided with a period when seafarer centres were either closed or had restricted access and seafarers were not getting shore leave due to Covid-19. As these restrictions eased in late 2021, the need for a centre again, in Aberdeen, became apparent. The re-opening of a new seafarers' centre will benefit all seafarers working from and visiting the port of Aberdeen.

One seafarer visiting Aberdeen Seafarers' Centre said:

"I have been coming to work in Aberdeen for many years. We are usually on long contracts away from our families for many months. You are part of our family, coming to the centre is like having a home from home. More power to you and your company, thank you so much."

Department for Transport funding awarded in 2022

In 2022 MNWB was awarded £2.1 million by the Department for Transport to be made available to maritime charities and organisations to support the maritime sector, specifically around seafarers' welfare and skills. 12 UK charities and organisations have been funded through the DfT grant programme in 2022, some have received more than one grant. A total of £1,051,354 was awarded to support 18 UK projects across two workstreams;

Skills & Diversity: Plugging skill gaps, broadening the pool of talent, providing an equal opportunity for all and fostering creativity. £552,969 awarded in 2022.

People: Research into, and support for UK programmes to alleviate seafarer and fishers' mental health and wellbeing. £498,385 awarded in 2022. See infographic above.

Connecting the sector

Susan Atkinson and Sarah Edward travelled the country to host vitally-important port welfare meetings that united the sector

Sarah Edward - Port Welfare Committee Manager



Susan Atkinson - Port Welfare Committee Manager



MNWB manages 15 Port Welfare Committees in the UK and a Seafarers' Welfare Board in Gibraltar. With a combined membership of 360 and each one meeting three times a year, the committees continue to serve as an important platform for regional maritime partnerships to monitor and improve the quality of welfare services for seafarers.

Bristol

In 2022 the committee welcomed new members from the MCA, Bristol Port Company and Bristol Port Police. The focus of the meetings for 2022 was on the wellbeing of Ukrainian and Russian seafarers, vaccination of seafarers and the difficulties they had obtaining certification, plus restricted shore leave for many seafarers.

Gibraltar Seafarers' Welfare Board (GSWB)

For many years, Gibraltar has not had a full-time port chaplain, but this changed in 2022 when the Mediterranean Mission to Seafarers recruited two part-time chaplains to ensure the post was always covered. This means there is now a presence in the port daily and this is leading to an increased awareness of the work of the Mission and of seafarers.



Central & West Scotland

The committee welcomed new members from the City of Glasgow College, Forth Ports, Northern Lighthouse Board, MNA Glasgow and the MCA. Focus of the meetings included the welfare of Ukrainian and Russian seafarers as well as vaccination certification issues for seafarers and then the ongoing welfare of the crews of MS Ambition and MS Victoria, the cruise ships docked at Glasgow and Edinburgh to house Ukrainian refugees. PWC members organised a football match, pictured above, for the crew members of MS Ambition versus cadets from Glasgow College. The afternoon was a great success and highlighted the collaborative work of the PWC.

East Anglia

The focus of the meetings was on the welfare of Ukrainian and Russian seafarers arriving in the region and the SIM card project launched by MNWB was greatly received by the region's ship visitors. They reported how welcome these had been for Ukrainian seafarers who were desperate to contact family and friends back home.

Haven

We welcomed new members from Border Force, Cory Brothers, Good Logistics, MSC, Harwich Town Council and Suffolk Coast Health Authority. Meetings were concerned with the welfare of Ukrainian and Russian seafarers as well as the difficulties seafarers were experiencing obtaining Covid vaccination certification.

Humber

2022 was the year that Humber Seafarers' Service handed over responsibility for Immingham Seafarer Centre to QVSR. Humber PWC members were excited about the changes and improvements to services that QVSR were planning - and are looking forward to seeing these come to fruition in 2023. Now, in its second year, the newly-revised Humber port levy, collected by ABP, continued to collect 150% more funds per month than its previous incarnation.

London & South East

The committee welcomed new members from the Marine Policing Unit and Good Logistics. The PWC signed off their PWC Vision Strategy "To collectively create a safe and inspiring working environment that meets the welfare needs of the seafarers visiting our ports."

Milford Haven

A successful request was made via the PWC to the Vehicle Replacement Programme funders for a vehicle for the MtS Port Welfare Officer, who was doing a lot of mileage in his own vehicle to deliver much-needed shopping to vessels in Milford Haven, transporting seafarers and stocking up the centre in Port Talbot with essentials.

North & East Scotland

There were new members from Grampian Sea Shed (an enterprise supporting retired seafarers in Aberdeen), Port of Cromarty Firth, RMT Union and The Fishermen's Mission. Focus of the meetings was on fishers' welfare, Ukrainian and Russian seafarers as well as the difficulties in re-opening the seafarers' centre in Orkney, which had closed in 2020 due to Covid-19.

Northern Ireland

In 2022 the committee welcomed new members from Mission to Seafarers, ITF and Border Force. Changes in visa regulations for migrant fishers and the welfare of local fishers were main points of discussion at meetings. At the summer meeting, the committee had a presentation by Belfast Harbour Police on the work they carry out at the harbour.

North West

The North West PWC is one of our largest committees and has a very diverse membership with all sectors of maritime represented and this makes for interesting meetings. The first meeting of 2022 was just a few days after the invasion of Ukraine so it was the first PWC to discuss the implications of the war on seafarers.

Southern

We welcomed several new members and organisations to the PWC in 2022 including CMA CGM, Poole Harbour Commissioners and a new Mission to Seafarers chaplain who brings a fresh perspective and new ideas. The lack of a seafarer centre in Southampton, the UK's second busiest port, has been a focus of attention and something we will continue to address in 2023.

South Wales

Membership of the South Wales PWC increased in 2022 with several new members and two new organisations joining the ranks. Members were delighted to welcome the newly-recruited Nautilus Welfare Fund caseworker and a marine surveyor from Idwal Marine.

South West

Members reported on the excellent welfare work being carried out in the region and the improvements to facilities at Plymouth and Teignmouth. At the beginning of the year Mission to Seafarers hosted an art competition with local schools to highlight the work of the PWC.

Tees

The Tees PWC works a little differently to our other PWCs. They have their own strategy, one of integration with the welfare providers working closely with the port users. They developed their own emergency welfare plan following an incident some years ago. This plan underwent revision in 2022 with help from PWC members. This plan means any issues arising, which concern seafarers on the Tees, are dealt with swiftly with all partner agencies working together to provide a positive outcome.

Tyne

Tyne PWC members were delighted to attend the first meeting of 2022 in the new community room at Sunderland Aged Merchant Seaman's Homes, which was funded by a grant from the Board and had received unanimous support from PWC members. Access to shore leave continued to be a concern despite all Covid restrictions having been lifted for some months.



CONFERENCE

PWC chairs, port chaplains, centre managers and ship welfare visitors were among 80 people who attended our Port Welfare Conference at Chilworth Manor Hotel, Southampton in May. For the first time in the Board's history the Maritime Minister, Robert Courts MP, attended the dinner and presented the MiFi photography prize to Julian Wong of Stella Maris. Delegates heard from the heads of the welfare societies, ITF Seafarers' Trust and ICMA to name but a few, as well as gaining a better understanding of the role of MNWB as the National Seafarers' Welfare Board. Lots of opportunities to network were built into the agenda and feedback from delegates was excellent, many saying 'it was the best MNWB conference yet'.



Boosting seafarers' welfare

Projects & Welfare Co-ordinator Aiden Harvey has delivered projects that have improved seafarers' welfare

MNWB creates, operates and administers numerous projects to benefit seafarers' welfare. In doing so, it helps its constituent organisations provide important welfare services.



Ukrainian seafarers receive Vodafone SIM cards to contact family and friends

SIM cards for Ukraine

During the crisis between Ukraine and Russia, we gave out almost 11,500 SIM cards to representatives from eight different welfare societies across the UK. The port chaplains and ship visitors distributed these to Ukrainian seafarers visiting UK ports throughout the year to allow them to contact their beloved friends and family. This was delivered through the *charities.connected* scheme with Vodafone. They provided us with Pay as You Go SIM cards that contained 20GB a month of data with unlimited texts and UK calls. The retail value of each card was £20 a month, with a six-month validity, so each was worth £120 – with the total amount equating to over £1m. At the time, Chief Executive Stuart Rivers said: “Being able to offer reassurance and glimpses of happiness at this time can make a difference, as the demand for these SIMs remains high since we handed out the first batch earlier this year. Our thanks goes to Vodafone for facilitating this much-needed project.” Additionally, we launched an emergency communication fund of £10,000, which included a generous contribution of £5,000 from Trinity House, for charities within the maritime sector that provide welfare support to seafarers and fishers. Each charity could apply for a maximum of £250 – and this was well received.



Seafarers make the most of a MiFi unit whilst on board

MiFi Project

The devices are spread throughout the UK by the following welfare societies:

- Aberdeen Seafarers' Centre
- The Fishermen's Mission
- Liverpool Seafarers' Centre
- The Mission to Seafarers
- Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest (QVSR)
- Sailors' Society
- Stella Maris

The top-of-the-range mobile hot spots each have unlimited data plans and can support up to 20 users at a time. This allows them to contact home, stream films or simply catch up with what is going on in the world.

While free Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly widespread in towns and cities, few ports – and even fewer vessels – provide seafarers with free access to the internet; which is what makes this project so crucial. The project is co-funded by MNWB, Department for Transport and The Seafarers' Charity – with each of them contributing £4,500 to fund the project through to July 2023. The project helps hundreds of seafarers each year.

Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP)

Funded by MNWB, ITF Seafarers' Trust, The Seafarers' Charity and Trinity House, the programme recognises the importance of seafarers' centres and port chaplains having access to safe and reliable vehicles to deliver much-needed port welfare services. The project enables welfare personnel to undertake ship and home visits as well as transporting seafarers in and around the ports. The programme helps replace minibuses, MPVs and cars that remain essential to the provision of welfare services to our seafarers.

Figures for 2022

- 9 vehicles purchased
- £126,954 donated in grants

As the Board project manages the fund, we contributed £39,000, with £31,000 coming from ITF Seafarers' Trust, The Seafarers' Charity and Trinity House, respectively.

SINCE THE VRP PROGRAMME FORMED IN 2008:

170

VEHICLES PURCHASED

£2.3M

GIVEN OUT IN GRANTS



Recognition of care workers

MNWB and Trinity House joined forces on behalf of the maritime charity sector to thank and congratulate hundreds of staff and volunteers for providing 'exceptional' support to UK Merchant Navy seafarers during Covid-19.

In recognition of this selfless support, the staff and volunteers, who work in maritime charity care homes, sheltered accommodation and hostels, were each given a £20 Amazon voucher, with 360 awarded to individuals. The organisations recognised were Broughton House, Care Ashore, Erskine, Mariners' Park Care Home (Nautilus Welfare Fund), Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society, Scottish Veterans Residences, Trinity House Hull, Trinity Homes (Trinity House) and Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest.

"MNWB recognises the stark impact Covid-19 has had on many diverse sectors of the workforce, particularly our constituent accommodation-based services. The pandemic impacted the wellbeing of many, so it is important to highlight the exceptional support that has been provided to MN seafarers by staff and volunteers up and down the country," MNWB Deputy Chief Executive Sharon Coveney commented at the time.



Staff at Care Ashore are presented with a certificate of appreciation of their service to seafarers during Covid-19

Helen van Gass - Training & Welfare Manager



Reaching new heights

Helen van Gass has been leading the way in providing scores of training courses and offering ongoing support for seafarers in need

Training

We continue to pave the way for offering a plethora of courses for the welfare maritime charity sector – and this year marked the start of the new normal.

While the majority of training courses were online, we were able to offer many courses in person which enabled great face-to-face communication. The courses have proved extremely popular with MNWB constituent organisations, several of which have been granted administrator access to the platform so that they can manage their own training schedule.

Training courses MNWB provides include:

Advanced Safeguarding which was presented by Shelter in Hull and Southampton.

This course is designed to give delegates an overview of safeguarding responsibilities and to develop the knowledge required to understand their role in safeguarding children, young people and adults within UK legislation.

SAFETalk which was presented by Mission to Seafarers in South Tees, Glasgow and Southampton.

This course helps you know what to do if someone is suicidal by following the memorable TALK steps – Tell, Ask, Listen and Keep-safe.

The Ship Welfare Visitors Course returned to pre Covid numbers with 382 users registered from 18 countries around the world.

iHasco online training, which we signed up to during lockdown, continued to be popular with our constituent members. In total, 1,226 certificates were issued to 156 candidates from 27 different organisations. Courses vary from mental health awareness and business compliance to conflict resolution and ladder safety.



Helen van Gass organises training courses across the sector

Caseworking

Our Seafarer Support helpline is a free confidential telephone and online referral service helping to support serving and former UK seafarers in times of need. It had 10,313 unique visitors and 20,258 likes on Facebook this year.

The platform acts as a unique 'central source of information' for the entire UK maritime charity sector. Using artificial intelligence search facilities, it signposts users to the most up-to-date information on 150 maritime charities that offer support to UK seafarers and their dependants. The system has a live 'chatbot' facility to enable users to communicate directly with the welfare team in real time.

The Board is contacted directly by seafarers and their families in need of support or by external agencies that work on their behalf. Contact is made through either the Seafarer Support service or directly to the Board. The Board acts as the referral service for those Merchant Navy/Fishing Fleet personnel seeking welfare support and/or financial assistance from other maritime charities.

Caseworking Regions

£3,420 was paid to SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, for caseworking on our behalf.

£5,580 was paid to SSAFA by the Board for caseworking and reviews of the clients receiving gratuities from Shipwrecked Mariners' Society.

In 2022, the welfare team answered 381 calls for help, 85 webchats and 69 emails. We dealt with 330 requests on the SSAFA Case Management System.

We requested assistance from caseworkers for 114 clients. We obtained the records of 60 seafarers who served before 1972 from The National Archives and we made 245 referrals to outside agencies.

On the website (**seafarersupport.org**), you can find information about accommodation, training, support, health and finances.

What our clients needed

- 20 White goods
- 16 Daily living expenses /annuities
- 14 Brown goods (mostly beds and flooring)
- 9 Mobility scooters or other
- 7 Funerals
- 5 Debt relief and bankruptcy charges
- 5 Stairlifts

NEED A LIFELINE? WE CAN HELP!



Sometimes we need a little help navigating life's problems.

Seafarer Support is a free confidential telephone and online referral service helping to support serving and former UK seafarers and their families in times of need.

For information about financial support, accommodation, training, health and advice, visit the website or call us today.

seafarersupport.org
0800 121 4765





Transforming our media profile

New records have been reached in the communications department after an impressive year

MNWB's newly-developed media and communications presence achieved great results for the charity and its members during 2022.

The transformation over the past 12 months included the launch of a new website, re-branding for the first time in the Board's history, gaining comprehensive media coverage, reaching new heights on social media and lobbying government on campaigns that matter to seafarers. This culminated in the Board significantly raising its profile.



Lobbying

Two big media campaigns saw MNWB lobby government for change. In January, MNWB wrote to the Vaccines and Public Health Minister Maggie Throup MP calling for the Covid certification process for seafarers to be reviewed to ensure seafarers could work freely. And later that year, MNWB turned its attention to the fishing sector and wrote to then Home Secretary Priti Patel MP calling for transit visas to be repurposed following growing fears of exploitation on migrant workers.

Press engagement

330 Pieces of media coverage

60 Press releases sent

410% Increase on 2021 coverage

60 Broadcast mentions



MNWB CEO Stuart Rivers being interviewed by BBC South Today on the P&O Ferries crisis

Standout stories

- Appeal is seeking for nation's seafarers - **Plymouth Herald**
- Seafarer grant pot hits £2m - **Daily Echo**
- Covid certification process for seafarers needs urgent review - **Ship Management International**
- Shipping charities pull together to help sacked P&O workers - **TradeWinds**
- Support network for struggling seafarers - **Wave 105.2FM**
- Recognising maritime heroes - **BBC Radio Humberside**



Political engagement

MNWB joined the Maritime and Ports All-Party Parliamentary Group to grow its political engagement and ensure seafarers' welfare is prioritised by government officials. Additionally, MNWB developed a good rapport with the then Maritime Minister Robert Courts MP, pictured above, who delivered a presentation at the Board's annual conference. This was the first time a Maritime Minister attended a MNWB conference.



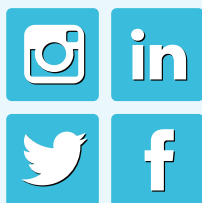
NEW WEBSITE visit mnwb.org

In October, we launched our new website. Since its launch we have had 14,000 page views from 4,500 users



Rebranding project

MNWB launched a new, contemporary logo that reflects its vision to be the representative voice and driving force for the welfare of Merchant Navy seafarers and fishers who visit UK ports.



Social media

Our presence on social media goes from strength-to-strength. As well as raising our profile on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, the Board focused its attention on growing its LinkedIn profile.

This resulted in amassing 1,374 followers.

NUMBER BREAKDOWN

172,000

Twitter Impressions

10,000

Social Media followers

4,216

Facebook Likes



@MNWBUK



@Merchant Navy Welfare Board



@TheMNWB



@mnwb_uk

Embracing positive change

New projects bring positive change for welfare



MNWB Volunteer Ambassadors' Programme

We were delighted that four maritime experts in Neil Atkinson, Alèxe Finlay, Martin Phipps and Jerry Drewitt, pictured right in order, agreed to become MNWB Ambassadors. Their broad maritime knowledge and expertise is helping us to build stronger relationships and shine a light on MNWB's role as the leading national maritime charity and National Seafarers' Welfare Board.



Throughout the year, our ambassadors have visited several of the Board's constituent organisations including Erskine, Nautilus Welfare Fund, Royal Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution, Royal Merchant Navy Education Foundation, Whitby Merchant Seamen's Hospital Houses and Broughton House.

These visits have enabled our ambassadors to showcase and promote the Board's work while listening to the views of our constituents. All of this would not have been possible without the support of our volunteer consultant (and previous MNWB PWC Manager) Susan Newcombe, whose specialist volunteer knowledge has helped ensure the success and value of MNWB's first major in-house volunteering initiative.

Equity, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EEDI)

Following a proposal by MNWB to address the need for a sector-wide commitment to EEDI in the Maritime Welfare Charity (MWC) sector, representatives from the Maritime Charities Group (MCG), Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB), Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest (QVSR), Seafarers' Hospital Society, The Fishermen's Mission, The Seafarers' Charity and Trinity House formed an EEDI working group. Collectively, the group aims to bring everyone on board in a spirit of true collaboration, engaging the MWC's who are tired of the status quo and eager for positive change within their organisation. In September this year, our working group delivered an EEDI session at the MCG Conference which was positively received – it was reassuring to know that some participants felt it was the best session of the conference.

Seafarer Safety Net for all UK seafarers

In May, the Board joined forces with The Seafarers' Charity to launch the Seafarer Safety Net at our Port Welfare Conference in Southampton.

We are incredibly proud of this much-needed service as it has been designed specifically to help UK merchant seafarers manage their money, which is especially vital during the cost-of-living crisis. The tools and resources available on this unique platform help to enhance the financial resilience of the seafarer communities by providing useful sources of help, advice and information relating to money management. The launch of the website was followed by a free webinar on money management, delivered by The Money Charity.



Sharon Coveney launches the Safety Net at the PWC Conference

To find out more visit seafarerssafetynet.org



Work in Fishing Convention (ILO C188) Guide

In June of this year, MNWB produced this easy-to-use guide in consultation with The Fishermen's Mission, Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), Nautilus

International and the Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG).

It was designed to inform fishers of the key elements of the legislation in a way that is easy to understand.

Next year, the Board will be offering face-to-face training courses to underpin the knowledge gained by reading the booklet.

Additionally, to maximise the booklet's reach, we intend to produce electronic translated versions of the guide into languages most spoken by fishers working in UK territorial waters.

Rewarding maritime heroes

Recognising and rewarding those maritime professionals who have gone the extra mile



There were worthy recipients of the Merchant Navy Medal and the MNWB Annual Award for Services to Seafarers.



Mick Howarth is presented the award by MNWB Deputy CEO Sharon Coveney

Awards

MNWB is proud to support two awards, the Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service and the MNWB Annual Award for Services to Seafarers' Welfare.

The Merchant Navy Medal provides an opportunity for the industry to recognise in a worthy and public manner, meritorious service by British registered Merchant Seafarers.

The Medal is awarded annually, without bias towards age or rank, to those eligible seafarers who are judged to have made a worthwhile contribution to merchant shipping, its operations, development, personnel, welfare or safety, or who have performed an act of courage.

There were 14 medals awarded in 2022 and our Chair Captain Andrew Cassels was among the recipient list. He received the award, from Maritime Minister Baroness Vere of Norbiton, for services to MNWB, both pictured right.

At the time, Captain Cassels said:

"This award very much feels like the pinnacle of my career."



Photo by Mark Dalton



Debbie Lake, centre, receives the Annual Award at a ceremony in the Falkland Islands

Annual Award

Since 1988, the MNWB has awarded an Annual Award for Services to Seafarers' Welfare to individuals who have provided an exceptional level of welfare service to seafarers and fishers, either in a voluntary or professional capacity.

The standard and qualifications of nominees are always high and it is often hard to make a selection. The worthy recipients this year were Debbie Lake and Mick Howarth.

Debbie, who is a full-time volunteer at the Lighthouse Seafarers Mission in the Falkland Islands, went above and beyond to help seafarers in the most trying circumstances – being at the forefront of a Covid vaccination programme by the Falkland Islands Government, which administered over 1,000 doses.

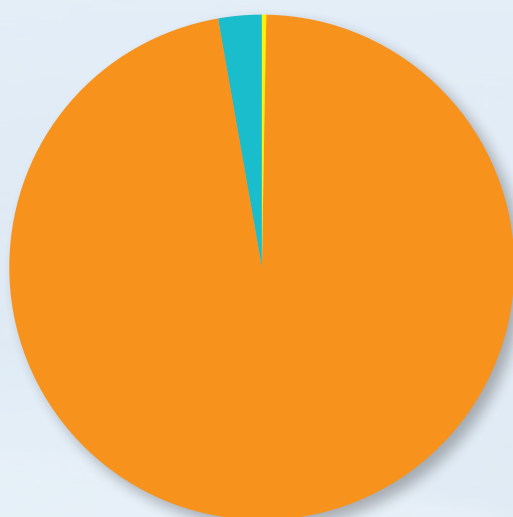
The other recipient, recently-retired Mick Howarth, was the Welfare Manager for the Nautilus Welfare Fund (NWF). During his 10-year tenure, Mick drove many improvements at Mariners' Park including care services and accommodation. He also oversaw the construction of 52 new and modern accommodation units and the refurbishment of the Mariners' Park Care Home with four additional beds. Find out more about our award here: mnwb.org/seafarers-welfare-award

Financial Summary

2022 was a landmark year for MNWB and the wider maritime sector in terms of income, with a total of £4,115,906 received. This unprecedented level of income was due to a grant of £2.1m from the Department for Transport to support seafarers' welfare, skills and diversity, and a Gift in Kind from Vodafone UK's *charities.connected* scheme. The Gift in Kind of £1,560,000 has been recognised as income due to its significant value.

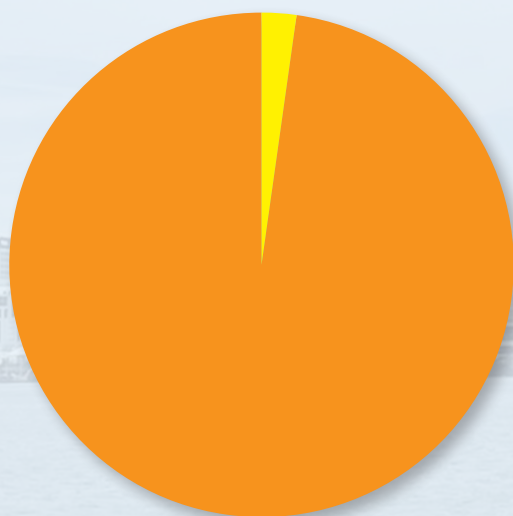
Our expenditure was also unprecedented, totalling £3,645,117. Our funds were spent on grants to support the work of constituent members and the wider maritime sector, support services, and promotion of welfare activities within the maritime sector.

Data for financial year ending 31 December 2022



Total income: £4,115,906 (2021: £416.72k)

- Donations, legacies and grants: £3.86m
- Investments: £247.89k
- Other income: £7.05k



Total expenditure: 3,645,117 (2021: £1.15m)

- Raising funds: £41.57k
- Charitable activities: £3.60m

Constituent members and Working Groups

The MNWB has 43 constituent organisations which provide welfare services to seafarers, fishers and their dependants.



Merchant Navy Fund

The Merchant Navy Fund was set up by MNWB and The Seafarers' Charity. Since 2012, the Merchant Navy Fund has received donations, legacies and corporate support, with over £700,000 awarded in grants to support UK serving or retired Merchant Navy seafarers and their families. This year saw just under £70,000 in grants awarded to seafarers in need.

Maritime Charities Group (MCG)

Founded in 2003, the MCG fosters collaboration across the maritime charity sector. It does this by sharing information, commissioning research, supporting the education and welfare of seafarers and their families and by the promotion of best practice within the maritime charity sector.

Working Groups

MNWB co-ordinates a number of regular working groups including the Serving Seafarers Working Group, and the Older Seafarers & Families Working Group, who meet twice a year. In addition, should a specific concern or matter arise, further working groups are formed to discuss actions required, such as when the Covid pandemic arose, and the war in Ukraine began (Seafarers' Welfare Crisis Working group).



Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society is presented with a certificate of appreciation for their service to seafarers during Covid-19



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