

Welfare Watch



Welcome back to our newsletter!

Welcome to the seventh edition of *Welfare Watch*!

Each month, I'm proud to bring you the latest updates from the Merchant Navy Welfare Board — celebrating achievements, recognising milestones, and shining a light on the invaluable work of our members across the industry.

September was a particularly exciting month, marked by London International Shipping Week (LISW25), where we had the honour of being one of four official charity partners. As part of our involvement, we organised a powerful panel discussion alongside the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF), Project Connect, and the Sir Thomas Lipton Foundation.

The session featured valuable insights from host Captain Sir Ian McNaught, guest speaker Lola Fadina, and headline speaker Captain Kuba Szymanski. We've shared highlights from the discussion in an article on our [website](#), along with a [video](#) capturing key moments from the event. It was fantastic to see so many familiar — and new — faces at LISW25, and we look forward to continued collaboration to ensure seafarer welfare remains a top priority.

We also marked World Maritime Day, a time to reflect on the crucial role the sea and the maritime industry play in our daily lives. To commemorate the occasion, we were honoured to take part in a webinar to reiterate the importance of seafarers.

Our next flagship event is the Seafarers' Welfare Conference, which will take place on Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th November at the Utilita Bowl in Southampton. We are looking forward to welcoming our members and supporters across the welfare sector.

In the lead-up to the conference, nominations remain open for our Annual Awards — an opportunity to recognise those who go above and beyond in championing seafarer welfare. If you know someone deserving, please do submit a nomination.

And our Business Sustainability Lead Johnny Dowling, who joined us in August, is here to help — whether you're looking for guidance, resources, or simply someone to talk to about how we can best support your organisation's welfare work. Please do get in touch with Johnny.

Finally, in our member section this month, our focus is on Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society (RASS), who have undergone a rebranding process and launched a new website following a grant from MNWB.

As autumn settles in, I wish you all the very best for what promises to be another hectic month.

Stuart Rivers
MNWB Chief Executive

Delivering for welfare at LISW25



It was an action-packed few days as thousands of industry leaders descended on the capital for London International Shipping Week (LISW25) last month.

While it was the 12th event of its kind, it was the most significant for MNWB as an official charity partner alongside International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF), Project Connect and the Sir Thomas Lipton Foundation.

Together, with the charity partners, we held a powerful discussion *Serving a Purpose – the vital role of maritime charities for the shipping industry*, which was attended by over 70 guests at Norton Rose Fulbright.

Each charity was represented on the panel where they discussed the vital role they play in the sector and how they are tackling challenges and issues. The event was hosted by MNWB President Captain Sir Ian McNaught, and there were speeches from Lola Fadina, Director for Maritime at Department for Transport, Captain Kuba

Szymanski, Secretary General at Inter Manager, and Andrew Williams, Partner at Norton Rose Fulbright.

Aside from the event, the MNWB team was in full swing across the week attending over 30 events, including the golf day, headline conference and the flagship gala dinner, meeting both familiar and new faces across the world who were interested in our commitment to seafarer welfare.

This culminated in over £6,000 being raised, which will be shared equally between each charity.

If you want to find out more about the what was discussed at the event, click the link to an article about the event [here](#) or you can watch a highlight video on the event which can be found below.

Watch video here

Johnny's here to help



In August, we appointed Johnny Dowling as our Business Sustainability Lead, a role created to support the long-term financial sustainability of the Board and our member organisations.

The role of the Business Sustainability Lead is to support MNWB's activities by identifying which projects and services would be attractive to potential funders. Securing new funding for our activities would reduce our operating costs and allow us to increase our annual grants budget which would directly benefit our members.

Additionally, Johnny is available to provide advice and hands-on support to members to help them develop, maintain, and grow their own income streams, and serve as the primary contact for members seeking fundraising assistance, offering tailored resources and guidance.

We encourage all members to reach out with ideas, questions, or support needs.

Together, we can strengthen the future of maritime welfare.

[Contact Johnny](#)

MNWB Annual Awards nominations reopen



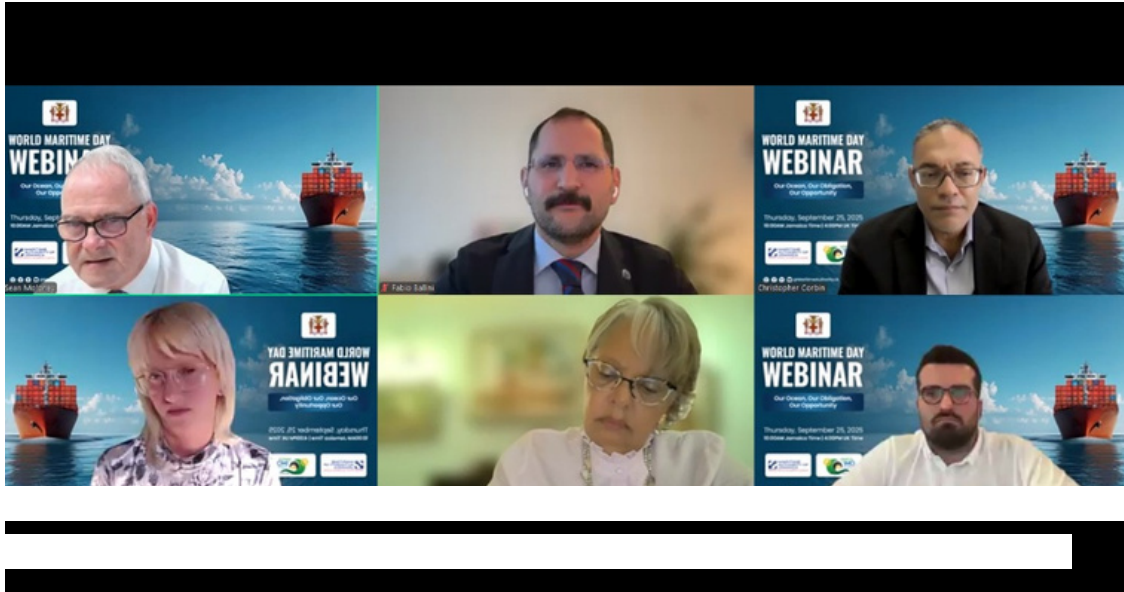
Nominations for MNWB's Annual Awards for Services to Seafarers' Welfare remain open until November 30th.

This extension gives more individuals the chance to be recognised for their exceptional service to seafarers and fishers across the sector. The awards will be presented at a standalone event at the start of 2026.

If there is anyone that you wish to nominate for the awards, please follow the link below.

[**Submit your nomination**](#)

World Maritime Day Webinar



To mark World Maritime Day, our Deputy CEO Sharon Coveney took part in “Our Ocean, Our Obligation, Our Opportunity” webinar hosted by the Maritime Authority of Jamaica, in partnership with Ship Management International.

The webinar focused on how to both safeguard seafarers and the environment on an important day for people across the world to recognise the importance of which the sea and maritime industry have on our day-to-day lives.

Great discussions were held on how shipping’s future depends not only on technology, compliance and decarbonisation, but also on the welfare of seafarers – the human link in global trade.

Member Feature

In each newsletter, we will be promoting our members in this section. If you want to share anything you have been up to, please don't hesitate to reach out and we can feature you.



As part of their “*Survive to Strive*” strategy, RASS received a grant from MNWB, which enabled them to redesign and update their website.

The refreshed website and brand reflect the organisation's kind, confident, and community-focused values — positioning Belvedere House as a welcoming and supportive home for former seafarers and their dependents. This investment not only enhances visibility and accessibility but also strengthens RASS' ability to connect with those in need of compassionate, high-quality care.

Captain David Dominy, Chief Executive at RASS, said:

“Thanks to the generous support of MNWB, we've been able to give our website a complete refresh. With their grant, the site now mirrors our updated branding and the recent modernisation of our care home.

“Most importantly, it's now much easier for seafarers and their families to find the information they need and to connect with us. Our goal is simple: to make sure every ageing seafarer, whatever their circumstance, can access the care and support they truly deserve.”

[Visit the website](#)

Seafarer Support is here to help



Are you a serving or
retired UK Seafarer?


0800 121 4765

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

If you need advice or help with:

- ➔ Accommodation
- ➔ Training
- ➔ Support
- ➔ Health & Finance

[Find out more](#)

Staff Spotlight



It has been announced that Joel Holt's job title has changed to Head of Marketing and Communications.

This change is to better reflect the role that Joel is now providing, particularly with respect to digital media, stakeholder engagement and general marketing for MNWB.

If your organisation needs any digital marketing or media support, please do reach out to Joel or Nick Curtis, who joined the the Board in August.

[Get in touch](#)

Date for your diary!



SEAFARERS' WELFARE CONFERENCE

2025

 25TH - 26TH NOVEMBER **(FOR MNWB MEMBERS ONLY)**

 START AT 12PM 25TH NOVEMBER

 UTILITA BOWL SOUTHAMPTON



MNWB
MERCHANT NAVY WELFARE BOARD

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