

South Shields Sea Cadets boats set to come in . . . thanks to UK Docks
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SOUTH Shields Sea Cadets 315 Corps named 'TS Collingwood' are feeling buoyant as work nears completion on the first of two brand-new boats.

The builds have been made possible thanks to a £10,000 donation from Cadets' president, Harry Wilson, MBE, founder of UK Docks Marine Services in River Drive as well as material support directly from UK Docks.

However, the assembly of the boats has been a real challenge, with the boats needing to meet stringent standards in compliance with the requirements of the Royal Navy, Cadet Forces Training Afloat Regulations and Safety.



Cadet 1st Class Amber, Cadet Corporal Abbie and Cadet Amaani with Vice Chair Keith Trotter, NEMT Chair Alec Renwick, and John Eltringham MBE chair of TS Collingwood.

John Eltringham, chairman of TS Collingwood, admitted: "It has been a tough job and has taken over a year to get to the stage where we're ready to put the boat in the water. "But it has been worth it because not only has the work been carried out to the highest standards but also because the cadets have learned a lot from being involved; we've used it as a training exercise for them."



Cadet 1st Class Amber, Cadet Amaani, TS Collingwood Vice Chair Keith Trotter, NEMT Chair Alec Renwick, (In boat) Cadet Corporal Abbie, John Eltringham MBE TS Collingwood chair.

The boats are being built by the North East Maritime Trust, a charitable organisation housed at the other end of Wapping Street on Satellite Quay.

The Maritime Trust focuses on historic working boat restoration, repair and conservation, so the new builds presented an unusual challenge.

John said: "The hard work has been in the assembly, but the first boat is due to be completed around Easter, and because of the knowledge and experience gained, it should mean that the second is ready for some time in the Autumn."



Cadet Amber, Cadet Corporal Adie and Cadet Armaani and one of the new boats.

The new arrivals will be a boost to the TS Collingwood Cadets, who currently have more than 60 cadets supported by around 20 volunteer staff.

The Cadet's current boats, Trinity 500s, are over a decade old.

"They're good boats but they naturally attract wear and tear," said John. "They were produced in partnership with Trinity House as part of Trinity House's 500th anniversary celebrations in 2014

"The boats were provided to sea cadet units throughout the UK at a discounted rate and we were lucky to receive two from South Tyneside College on permanent loan.

"TS Collingwood has a particular excellence in junior and senior cadet rowing competition in local and especially our female teams at national level.

"These new boats will be very welcome as an additional training resource and will support us taking part in all regattas as well as South Shields Marine School Annual Charity Tyne Rowing Race.

"For this we provide crew training and safety cover.

"The vessels are crewed by four rowers and a cox, and the first boat will soon be ready to sit out on the water.

"The boating season will soon be upon us and we're looking forward to getting started."

The development of the boats has been overseen by project manager Matthew Cunningham.

Alec Renwick, chair of the North East Maritime Trust said: "We have been delighted to be involved in this important, unique boat-building project.

"Our members really enjoy working with the Sea Cadets and are looking forward to completing the work with them."

John Eltringham thanked UK Docks president Harry Wilson and the company for the backing which has made the labour of love possible for both the Maritime Trust and several of the cadets. He said: "People often don't realise that the Sea Cadets, as a registered charity are not fully-funded unlike the Army or Air force Cadets, so having someone supporting us like Harry is a big part of our success.

"It's also great to have his pride and passion in the cadets and we've relied on his wise counsel for many years.

- The first boat will be launched at an official blessing ceremony sometime after Easter.