

Sailing Adventure Therapy in Early Intervention in Psychosis

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Overview

- My journey to sailing adventure therapy
- Early Psychosis, Adventure therapy and Sailing
- Preliminary findings
- Challenges
- V2R 2023

My journey towards sailing adventure therapy

- **Sailing** : pleasure, privilege and meaning
- Mindfulness and the endless ocean

- **Research** : Psychosis as a normal human experience, helpful or not. Psychosis continuum

- Working as a **Clinical Psychologist**
 - The value and the limitations of therapy
 - Boundaries and relationships
 - Living with stress – casting off the lines

- **Early Intervention in Psychosis**
 - Trauma deprivation and neglect in development
 - Adversity in adulthood
 - Embedded problems
 - Embodied problems

Drop out in EIP

- Variable rates : 10-50% across studies and definitions
- CBT for Psychosis : high drop out in younger, male, agitated, substance issues, more 'complex'
- Engagement is difficult !

Adventure therapy

- Green or Blue spaces,
- Doing things together outside and talking about stuff
- Offers an alternative primary focus for therapist and YP
- Provides ground and context for therapeutic engagement, YP has initiative
- Nature and wilderness can feel safe, benign, and nourishing
- Opportunities to experience (and share) adversity and physical challenge
- More equal and authentic relationship
- Getting thoroughly away from things provides the opportunity for cognitive flexibility

Sailing adventure therapy

- Radical environment shift
- You can't 'get off'
- We're all in the same boat
- Shared purpose and part of the crew
- The ocean !
- Having a Skipper





24 August 2019 at 5:54pm

Young people with mental health issues sail nearly 600 miles across Wales

CIARA COHEN-ENNIS

REPORTER



Credit: ITV Cymru Wales

Key characteristics of Sailing Adventure Therapy in EIP

Meta-theme	Key Characteristics
1. Purpose, structure and the grounds for engagement	Imposition of purpose, structure and routine. Common purpose (necessity for ship to get from A-B)
	Opportunity for engagement learning and skill development. Facilitation by crew, Positive feedback Trust and responsibility fostered by crew members
	Removal of negative environment influences. Drugs, social media, threats, over-protection
	Novel Ocean Environment Natural world and changing conditions (weather, sunsets, stars, landscapes, seascapes) Encounters with Wildlife (dolphins, sea birds)
	Physicality, embodiment Tasks and interaction with constantly moving environment, the elements, Bodily responses, discomfort, Appetite

Key characteristics of Sailing Adventure Therapy in EIP

2. Challenge and Adversity

Extreme physical and environmental challenge

Rough sea states (healthy risk)

Sea sickness

Inescapable nature of experience

Confined living conditions

Sleep difficulty

Challenge of engagement

High demands

Complex and physical tasks

Social challenge

Lack of personal space

Group interactions and dynamics

Key characteristics of Sailing Adventure Therapy in EIP

3. Interpersonal

Social engagement

Inescapable social contact

Opportunity for discussion

Experiences of praise and giving praise

Music / games

Numerous shared experiences (adverse, exciting, enjoyable, novel)

All in it together (mental health professionals and young people)

4. The sailing environment

Space / natural environment

Natural world and changing conditions (weather, sunsets, stars, landscapes)

Wildlife (dolphins, sea birds)

Space away from daily life

Physicality of tasks and interaction with constantly moving environment

Physicality of elements

Physicality of bodily responses,

Appetite

Key characteristics of Sailing Adventure Therapy in EIP

5. Outlook

Cumulative aspects of the voyage

Leading to a shift in sense of self and world based upon cumulative experience and interaction of previous themes



Tees, Esk and Wear

Leeds

South West Yorkshire

Participating Services	Voyage	Approximate miles
Cardiff	Poole to London	260
South West Yorkshire	London to Ipswich (via Dover !)	190
Glasgow	Cancelled !	
Tees Esk and Wear	Peterhead to Hartlepool	210
Leeds	Hartlepool to Ipswich	368
Norfolk and Suffolk/ Leicester	Ipswich to London, via Dover	190
Somerset	London to Poole	260
Brighton	Poole to Poole	135
North Wales	Gosport to Portsmouth !	65







eternal media

Created by and for your community

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtpaZeh_bdE&t=2s

In 2021, nine Early Intervention in Psychosis services from across the UK took part in a 'Voyage to Recovery' around the coasts of the UK, collectively sailing 1700 miles over 8 weeks. This film tells the story of the North Wales group.



EIP V2R 2023, April 16th – July 8th, 2023

- Collaborative project, 10-12 EIP services
- Local funding – each service makes their own arrangements
- High profile – media and social media
- Anti-stigma message
- Conservation theme

To participate in V2R 2023

Each leg = 10 young people + 5 leaders (MH workers)

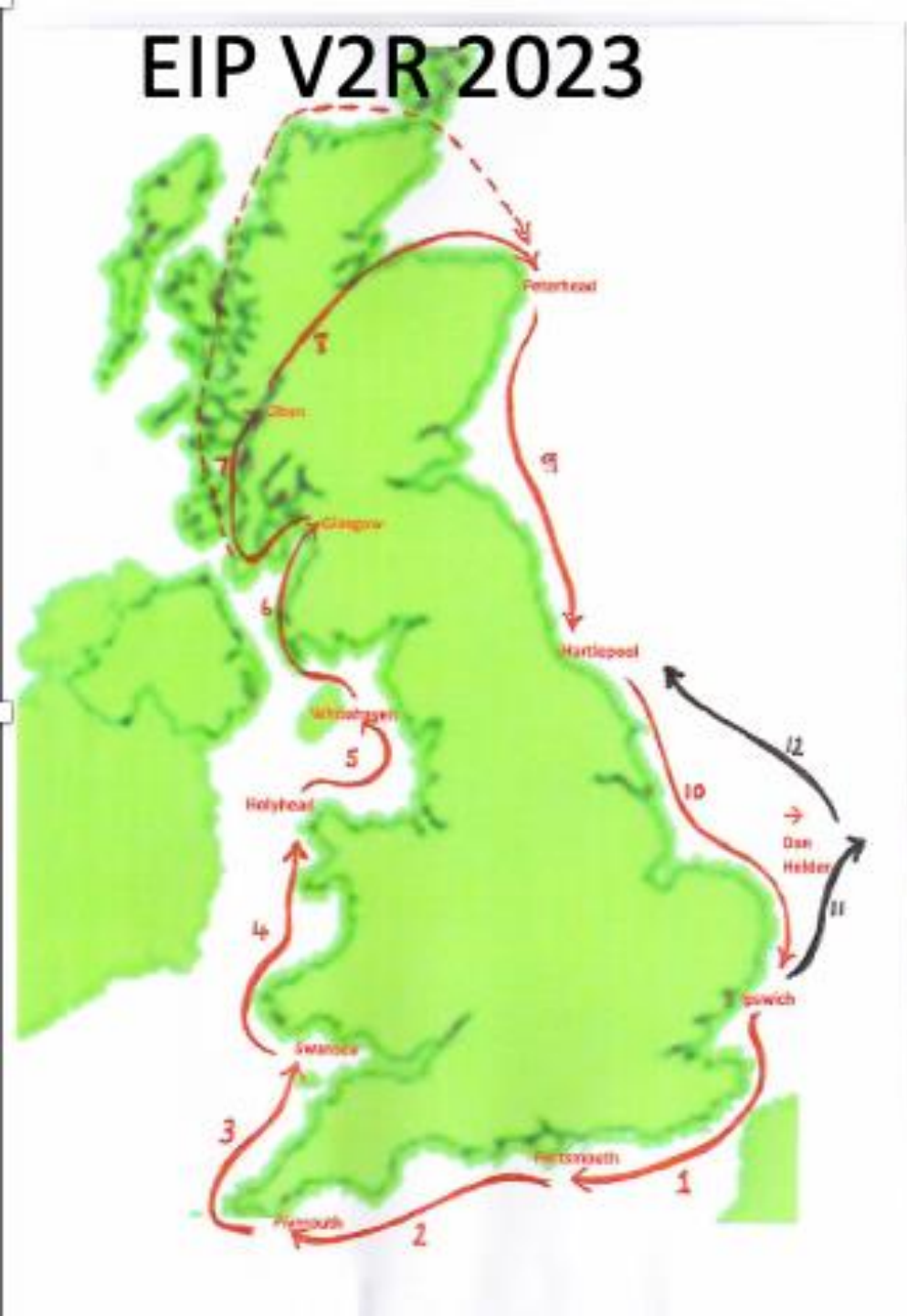
- Legs can be shared between services

£7500 sailing costs + transport + food for the week (£400)

- The wider group can help with fund raising

- Contact Mike : mike.jackson@bangor.ac.uk
- [Cirdan Trust : leonie@cirdantrust.org](mailto:leonie@cirdantrust.org)

EIP V2R 2023



Leg	Date	Starting Port	Finishing Port	
1	16 to 21 April	Ipswich	Portsmouth	Norfolk & Suffolk
2	23 to 28 April	Portsmouth	Plymouth	Somerset
3	30 April to 5 May	Plymouth	Swansea	Cardiff
4	7 to 12 May	Swansea	Holyhead	
5	14 to 19 May	Holyhead	Whitehaven	
6	21 to 26 May	Whitehaven	Glasgow	
7	28 May to 2 June	Glasgow	Oban	
8	4 to 10 June	Oban	Peterhead	Glasgow Esteem
9	11 to 16 June	Peterhead	Hartlepool	Northumberland
10	18 to 23 June	Hartlepool	Ipswich	Leeds

Developing Sailing adventure therapy in EIP : Challenges and opportunities

Preparation beforehand

- Informed Consent
- Building resilience and acceptance
- Graded challenges
- Team building

Therapeutic structure of voyage

- ACT based, light touch

Integration of the experience into life going forward

- Therapeutic support
- Flexibility and openness to change
- Continuity of crew
- Further sailing opportunities

Governance, Risk, Permissions

- Cirdan Sailing Trust (<https://cirdantrust.org/>)
- Fully trained and insured to cover boat related risks
- EIP service are responsible when on the land
- Individual risk assessments and plans shared

Opening the door to new adventures: *“its an eye opener I never new there was adventures like this!”*

Walk to Recovery PIER Team: Dr Cat Bayley; Dr Sophie Collin; Dr Nandini Chakraborty; Tim Port, Eleanor Smith

Photo credits: Benjamin Lee, Nandini Chakraborty, Black Dog Photography



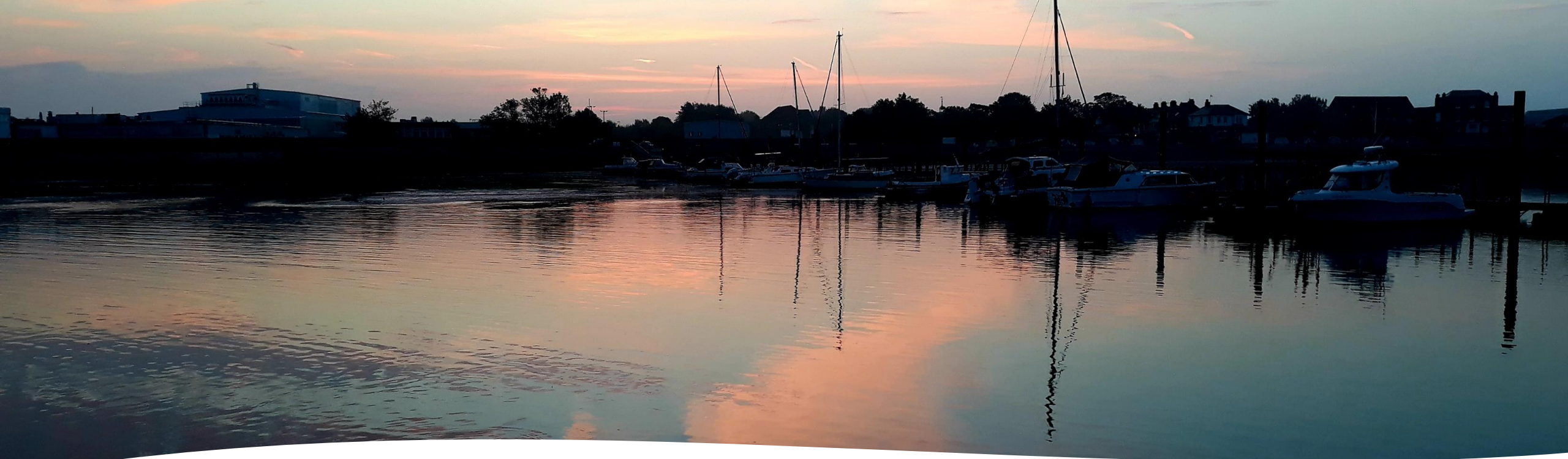
Sailing trip 2021



2 staff, 4 service users

Joining Norfolk to fill a boat with 5
staff 9 service users

“once in a life time opportunity”



Learning from the sailing trip

- Taking people out into adventure setting is transformative, it helps people “come alive” (service users and staff)
- Activities like this between staff and service users flatten the hierarchy, they help us be alongside one another and in turn this depends therapeutic relationships
- It is possible to fundraise through grant applications
- The more collaboration the better
- This type of trip needs time- dedicated staff and planning
- We did this despite the trust still having strict rules on other group activity re COVID- Sometimes you need to just start things and answer questions later!

Adventure therapy – How do we make this work for Leicester?

How do we make adventures sustainable in the team?

Can we find local collaborators?

How can we get service users more involved in the process?

Can we find out more about the impact of adventure therapy for service users?

How do we help embed experience to further recovery and help the benefits last?

Walk to recovery with Black dog Adventures

3 nights away in a Youth Hostel in Derbyshire

2 long days walking the Monsal trail, Monks Dale and more

1 Team together responsible for all cooking, cleaning, entertainment and looking out for one another



A non profit enterprise serving dedicated to getting people cycling and walking and improving their wellbeing through adventurous activities and with a connection to nature. Taking the time to enjoy their natural surroundings and experience them in a different light.

Evaluation:

We hoped to complete a local adventure with further evaluation and outcome collection to help us learn more about what works and what to do more or less of. We will use questionnaires and focus groups at 4 time points to explore effects on:

Confidence; Quality of Life/ Recovery (QPR)

Level of exercise/ physical activity (Physical activity scale)

Sense of self as someone with psychosis; Personal goals; Sense of connection to others

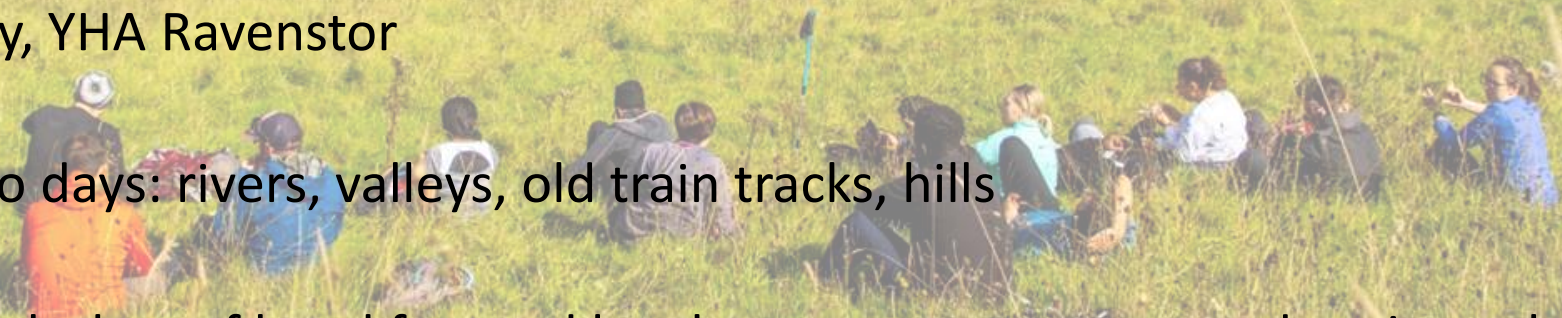


Team building and planning

- Planning trips alongside service users to plan menu and activities
- Adventure golf meet up beforehand
- Harder to keep contact with people and keep people keen- lots of texting and emailing back and forth!

The adventure

- 5 staff: 1 peer support worker, 1 mental health nurse, 1 psychiatrist, 2 psychologists; 4 female, 1 male; 4 White British, 1, British Indian; average age approx. 40
- 9 Service users (sadly one last minute drop out): 7 male, 2 female; mean age, 26; 4 White British, 1 Greek Cypriot, 1 Black African, 1 Black British/American, 1 British Indian.
- 4 Black Dogs adventure leaders: 2 male, 2 female
- Thursday- Sunday, YHA Ravenstor
- 18 miles over two days: rivers, valleys, old train tracks, hills
- 3 two course meals, lots of breakfast and lunch prep, many a game and a trip to the pub!



Follow up plans

A photograph of a forest path. The path is made of gravel and is covered with fallen leaves. The path leads into a dense forest of tall trees with green foliage. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating dappled light on the path and the surrounding vegetation. The path is flanked by lush green bushes and ferns.

- Individualised letters and certificates recognising personal progress
- Offer of monthly walks with Black Dogs
- Meeting in December for a walk/ climbing trip (TBC) and follow up outcome measure gathering
- Meeting in March for final follow up

Goals for the trip

1 or 2 personal goals for the trip

Theme	Theme frequency
Fun	2
Nature	3
Respite	1
Fitness	2
Social	7



Rated statements devised by staff team:

I feel connected to others, I feel positive about myself as someone with psychosis, I feel confident in myself

people have had similar experiences to you so they can sort of relate which is what I liked about it so you don't sort of feel like... alone

Exhausting but I enjoyed it The change as well, change of scenery from normal life

It was quite good to like cook together as well. It was quite a fun experience, just cooking

you can help each other out - you can chat to other people which makes it even better

I think it can show you that you can walk quite far if you like put your mind to it

doing things that scare you- even though you might feel a bit threatened and scared - its good to do it cause you know that after you've done it the first time you could do it again

Now that I've taken the trip I feel like I can conquer more when I go to the gym like stay there a little longer, push myself a little harder, so it definitely gave me some motivation

I think I'll do even more walking now. I like walking but I think I'll do more of it now and go places as well.

I think it's also improved my confidence to talk to other people and engage with other people



Next Steps:

“I didn’t want to come home”...

“Could it maybe the trip have been one day longer...”

2023 Sailing Trip!

Monthly hikes for PIER

team with Black dog Adventures

Linking in with Black Dogs other

adventure activities: Paddle boarding, climbing etc.

Complete and write up evaluation of the walk

Service users joining with fundraising challenges

More preparation for return home after adventures

Early Intervention in Psychosis

Voyage To Recovery

September 6th – 11th 2021



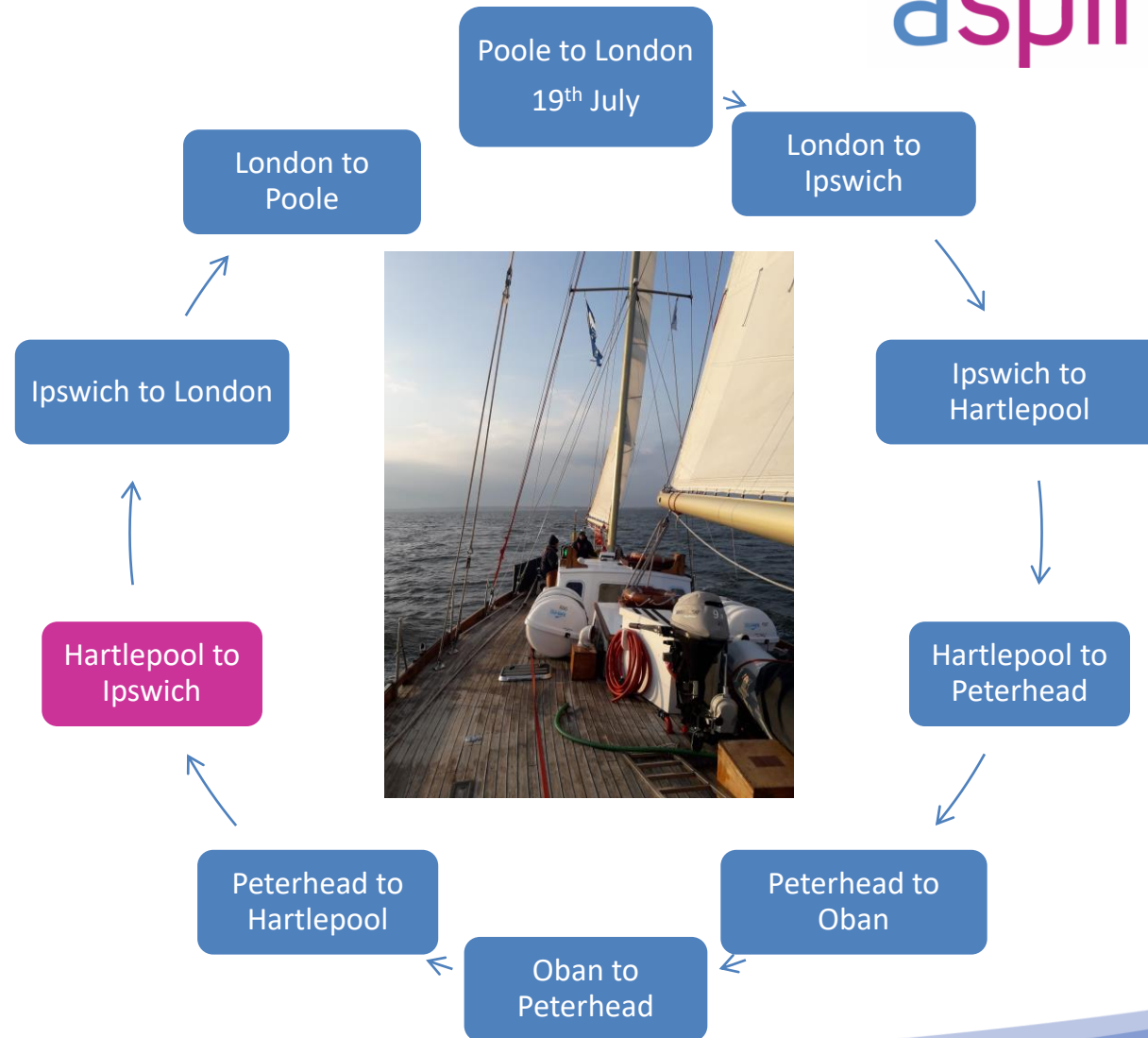
The bigger picture

- The Voyage To Recovery is a National project, involving 10 Early intervention in Psychosis (EIP) teams from across the UK
- The aim is to sail from the South coast all the way around Scotland and back again via the East Coast of the UK in relay
- Over the duration of the voyage up to 100 clients will participate, covering around 1500 nautical miles at sea.
- This project is in partnership with the Cirdan Sailing Trust
- Aspire's leg will be from Hartlepool to Ipswich

We will be setting off from Leeds to Hartlepool on Monday morning, 6th of September; boarding Faramir and setting sail for midday



We will arrive in Ipswich around midday, Saturday 11th September and then make our way back to Leeds.



Why?

- People who experience adverse life events, are at greater risk of mental, physical and spiritual difficulties that can cause increased challenges in all aspects of life. Treatments with medication and talking therapy are effective, but there are also other routes to recovery...
- Adventure Therapy (AT) is part of a broad clinical and research field rooted in the tradition of experiential education. Activities are carried out in nature, usually in groups and range from experiences of contemplation to higher-pressure challenges.
- Participants become immersed in the process, taking ownership over their recovery and gaining new insights into who they are as an individual.
- There is a growing evidence base that AT is effective for young people in particular, as well as those that have experienced psychosis.



Outdoor Adventure Intervention Recipe

Select: 8-12 people who are ready for an adventure

Stir: a sense of anticipation

Add: a few skilled practitioners

Remove: social and emotional dependencies (friends, family, tobacco, alcohol, flushing toilet, phone)

Place: in a wild environment

Mix: until a team starts to form

Fill: with unusual and exciting experiences

Stir in: responsibility for self and others

Watch: to see that all are fully immersed

Add: the opportunity to learn and master skills

Sprinkle: moments of awe and beauty

Simmer: carefully for many days and nights

Prepare: for going home

Invite: participants to reflect on their experiences

Take: lessons learned and hopes revealed

Serve: when ready¹.

Benefits of Adventure Therapy...



Faramir – life on board

Cirdan Sailing Trust (<http://cirdantrust.org/>) will be providing 'Faramir' and a 3-person crew. Pippa the Skipper will be in charge for the Voyage as part of a 3-person crew. They will be training us on how to sail and navigate Faramir in order to get the most from our time aboard.

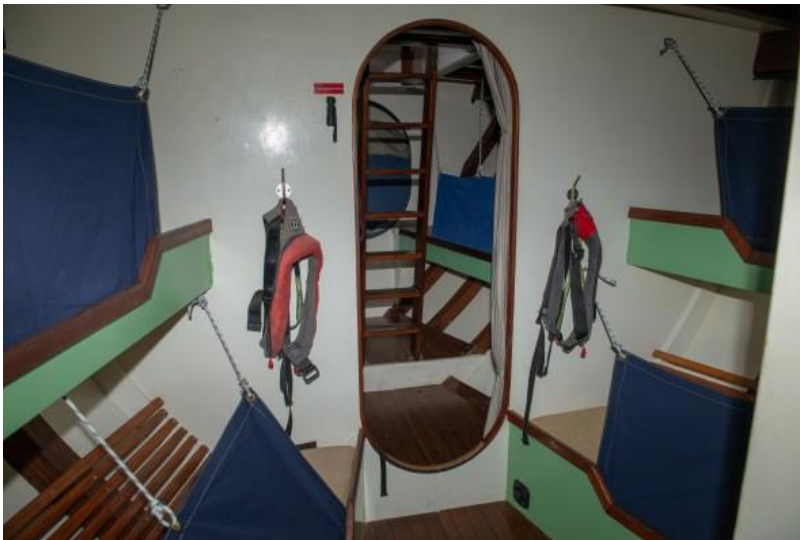


<https://vimeo.com/buffoonmedia/download/383264444/73ad207b36>
the password is boat



Faramir – life on board

- One toilet and no shower
- Single bunks in a communal area
- We will be assigned watches for when we are required to be on deck
- Everyone is responsible for cleaning and cooking



Faramir – life on board

- Electricity will be very limited so mobile phones and electronic gadgets should be stowed away. It is also more beneficial to 'disconnect' for a while.
- **Always** wear a life jacket on Deck.
- We will be mostly at Sea, with very little time on land for 6 days and 5 nights
- No illicit drugs or alcohol
- Smoking is allowed at certain times at a certain place on the boat

- **You will need to bring...**
- Bag to put your stuff in, a duffel bag or strong bin bag/rubble sack will do
- Spare clothing to keep dry, including extra socks and underwear
- Sleeping bag and pillow
- Medication – you will be in charge of this

COVID

- EVERYONE will need to provide a negative COVID test (Lateral Flow Test will suffice) on the day prior and the morning of the first sailing day
- Aspire staff have been vaccinated and can support you to get a vaccine if you want
- Faramir will be cleaned thoroughly between voyages
- There is a contingency plan in-case the very unlikely event occurs that someone develops symptoms on board

Expectations

- £25 deposit to secure your place
- Contributing to planning meetings and 'build-up' activities
- Fundraising for food (£500 ish)
- Media coverage, interviews, photos etc, let us know how much you are willing to participate in.
- Tell us when you're not happy with something or feel unsafe
- Making a commitment to go through with it. We acknowledge that last minute nerves or personal issues may arise but please speak to your link-worker or care coordinator and ask for help

Monday 6th Sept – Leeds to Hartlepool



- Everyone sent proof of a negative LFT from Saturday and Monday morning.
- All went smoothly getting on the coach, everyone on time, food loaded and 9 clients present. (1 client withdrew the night before)
- Not much chatter on the way to Marina, a few nerves mixed with tiredness
- Seeing Faramir for the first time was a mixture of excitement and anticipation
- Bunk selection proved to be vital!

Monday 6th Sept – Hartlepool to Runswick Bay

- All board!, Safety briefings, introduction to the crew (Pippa, Davide and Jake) and Faramir, including the dreaded toilets.
- Under engine out of Hartlepool lock and set sail with the tide around 17:30 en-route to Runswick Bay.
- First meal aboard, Fajitas at sunset on deck.
- Bunks are a bit of tight squeeze

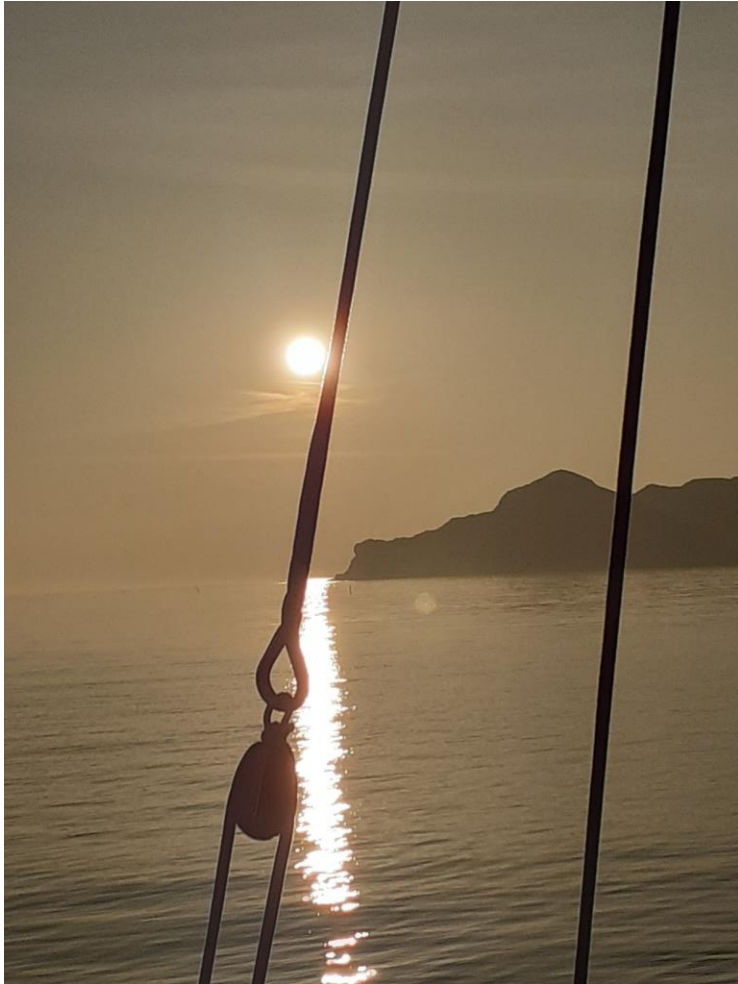


Tuesday 7th Sept – Runswick to Scarborough



- Not much sleep after a late finish of night sailing (beware lobster pots) and setting anchor around 11PM
- Being rocked in your bunk by the movement of the ocean not as soothing as it sounds.
- Beautiful sunrise illuminating Runswick Bay.
- Trying to get changed and have a wash in such a small space is a challenge, definitely no social distancing
- All in good spirits and assigned to watches for the duration

Tuesday 7th Sept – Runswick to Scarborough



Sunrise!

Tuesday 7th Sept – Runswick to Scarborough



- Getting to grips with Faramir, changing sails, tacking and staying safe
- Visit from a random pigeon “Raul”
- Everyone getting a chance at different aspects of sailing and gelling as a team
- Calm Sea and beautiful weather



Tuesday 7th Sept – Runswick to Scarborough



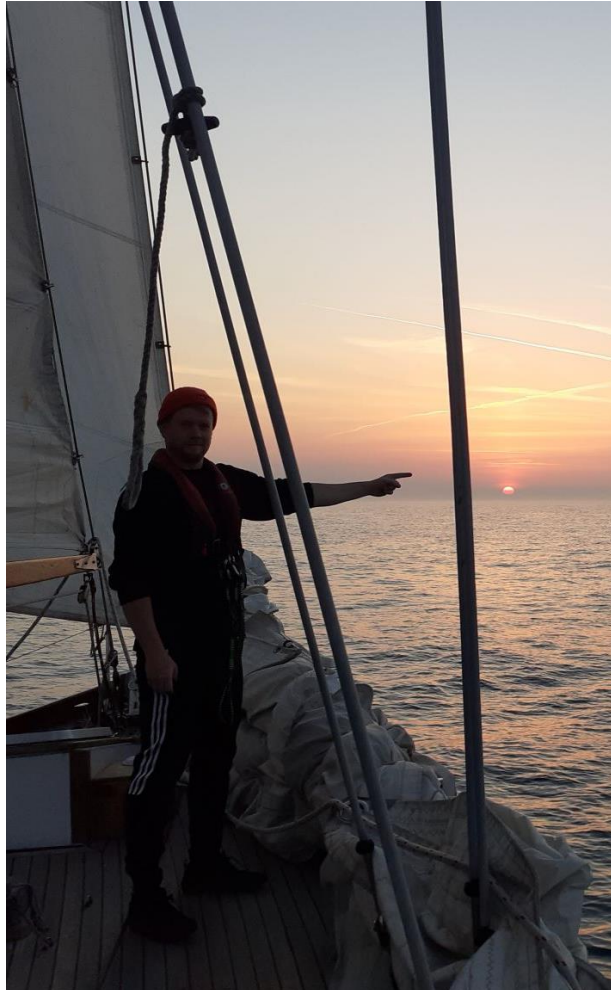
➤ Coming into Scarborough Marina at sunset

Wednesday 8th Sept – Scarborough and onwards



- A night in Scarborough Marina afforded us the chance to get a shower (once and only) and taste the sweet immovability of dry land
- 04:45 on deck to set sail with the tide
- Meals are a bit of tight squeeze in both preparation and eating.
- 3 groups of 4 take it in turns to cook, clean and be on watch
- Learning to sail as a team 'on the go' is very challenging.
- Comfort zones are long gone and 'learning the ropes' is a lot to remember, with mistakes possibly leading to injury and/or damage to the boat.
- Everyone is getting on well though and supporting each other

Thursday 9th Sept – Scarborough and onwards



Due to low winds and many miles to travel, we fell into the watch system (6hrs off, 3 hrs on) and sailed for about **62 hours non stop**, including 2 full nights.

Water and sleep were running low

Near miss with an oil tanker at night

Shooting stars and phosphorescent waves were a highlight





Community links

inspiring hope
inspiring change









Community links

inspiring hope
inspiring change



Community links

inspiring hope
inspiring change



Community links

inspiring hope
inspiring change

Saturday 11th Sept – Ipswich and then home



Reflections



“Because this was such a unique experience, it destroyed the loops I was in... it really worked for me... I am now 2 years ahead of the process (of recovery)”

“before I went on the boat, I was at the most stress capacity. I’ve now made a huge gap now between what I can finish and what I am doing... “

Reflections



“I’ve grown in confidence so much”

“ I now know that I can achieve more than I thought... I’ve applied for a new job since returning because I feel more capable”

Reflections

“Saw a part of myself that I like, that I hadn’t seen for 2 years”

“made new friends”

“lot more enthusiastic to do stuff... new chapter”

“able to set myself targets because I know I am capable”

“It was an amazing experience”

References and literature

https://learning.berrystreet.org.au/sites/default/files/2018-11/Outdoor-Adventure-Interventions-Literature-Review_1.pdf

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350326736_Off_the_beaten_path_Adventure_Therapy_as_an_adjunct_to_early_intervention_for_psychosis

A link to Cirdan's YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC66RiMPVa9M74_FArkau2qw

A previous Round UK project completed in 2012 on board our smaller vessel Duet, showing what the individuals involved can gain from being a part of such an epic endeavour https://youtu.be/GY_0hONnS6Y

A short sail past Faramir, the vessel you would be sailing on board, as she was cruising down Lock Ness under sail!

<https://youtu.be/6h7W2slH2xk>

