



Bourne to Sail – Youth Sailing Taster Sessions

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Project Overview

Bourne to Sail delivered a series of taster sessions aimed at introducing young people to sailing yachts and increasing participation in water-based activity. The project took place in the Sovereign Harbour, Eastbourne, and engaged young people from across the county.

Across the weekend four sessions were delivered, each lasting 3.5 hours, with a total of 20 participants taking part.

The Need

The need for the project was identified through informal community engagement by Bourne to Sail, including conversations with parents, local schools, social media and discussion in the local community. These interactions highlighted a gap in accessible opportunities for young people to experience sailing.

The Bourne to Sail project specifically targeted young people, for many, they had limited or no prior exposure to water sports.

Delivery

Location:	Bourne to Sail, Sovereign Harbour
Area:	Eastbourne, Sovereign
Duration:	1 weekend, am and pm sessions
Session:	4 x 3.5 hours of hands-on experience, including steering the vessel
Participants:	20 attendees
Activities:	Taster Sailing Sessions of a 38-foot yacht

The sessions were delivered by experienced sailors from Bourne to Sail, who maintain their qualifications through ongoing training. The taster sessions focused on teamwork, engagement and learning practical sailing skills.

These sessions were highly interactive, giving participants the opportunity to actively take part rather than passively observe.

Outcomes

Engagement

The sessions had a strong positive impact on participants:

- All young people were fully engaged and spent extended time away from screens.
- Teamwork and communications skills were developed and demonstrated when sailing the yacht.
- Confidence and practical skills increased when they were given control of the yacht to sail.

Generated Interest

A key outcome was the level of enthusiasm and expressed desire to continue sailing. Several participants are not looking to enrol on the Bourne to Sail's youth summer training programme.

Skills Developed

In the 3.5 hours out on the water participants learned basic skills, gained confidence on the water, and achieved things they initially believed they couldn't do – such as steering a large yacht.

Unexpected Outcomes

From the project the most notable unexpected outcome was the level of confidence gained in a 3.5-hour sailing session. Every participant successfully steered the yacht, which exceeded the participants own expectations as well as their own perceived limitations.

The experience 'opened their eyes' to sailing as an accessible and enjoyable activity, creating an interest which may not have developed if they hadn't had the opportunity.

Success

When the taster sessions were promoted, there was a high demand for participants keen to try. Bourne to Sail had a limited capacity for 20 participants across the 4 sessions.

The taster sessions demonstrated a clear progression for participants with further opportunities in the youth training programme offer by Bourne to Sail. With 2 participants signing up.

The taster sessions increased outdoor activity for participants, creating better habits and reduced screen time for participants.

Challenges

Luckily on the days of the sessions the weather was good and favourable for taking the yacht out. The well-manged and planned delivery meant that challenges did not occur. Due to the nature of being on water, we plan for various scenarios should the weather be bad.

Learning

The Bourne to Sail youth taster sessions project shows the value int providing accessible ‘taster’ opportunities, which provide hands-on experience. With 20 participants taking part and engaged, it shows the potential for outdoor and adventure-based activities to engage with young people.

Simple engagement methods (conversations with parents, social media) showed a key learning for identifying a need for these types of sessions as well as recruiting participants.

Future

Given the success of the project, there is a strong potential to expand the delivery, with follow-on programmes (Youth Training) can build on the initial engagement and show a pathway. Increased session numbers could help meet a growing demand and give more people the opportunity to try sailing.

Conclusion

The Bourne to Sail project introduced young people to yacht sailing. The 3.5 hours sessions allowed Bourne to Sail to deliver a highly engaging and confidence building experience. It not only helped increase physical activity but also inspired continued involvement, demonstrating the impact of well-designed, community-led opportunities.

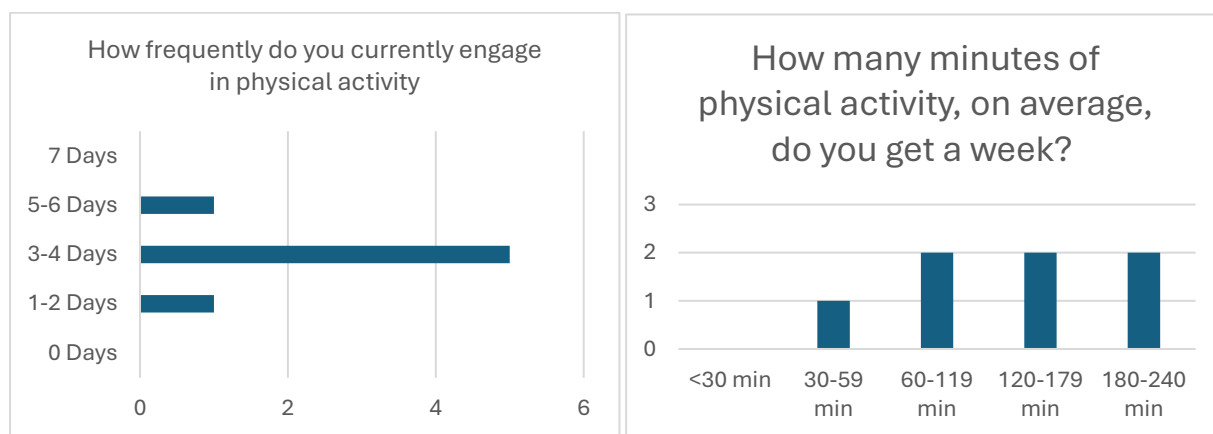
Pre-Project Questionnaires

Prior to the Bourne to Sail taster course 7 attendees completed the pre-project questionnaire.

The results showed that participants were already fairly active.

- Six of the Seven responses showed everyone to be exercising 3-6 day a week.
- Most participants reported achieving 60-240 minutes of physical activity per week.

One response indicated 5-6 days of activity but only 30-59 minutes per week. This may show a misrepresentation of the question asked, with the participant responding to session duration rather than weekly activity.



Participants reported a range of motivations for joining the project:

- Learning new skills (4 responses)
- Improving social interactions (2 responses)
- Improving fitness (1 response)

One response highlighted the individual needs and wellbeing of having the opportunity to try sailing:

‘I have autism and find school challenging and a hard place to be, I am looking forward to trying this to learn a new skill. Meet some kind people and have some fun.’

Post-project survey

A limited number of participants did not complete the post-project survey, which did not provide any measurable feedback for the evaluation. This may be due to the nature and duration of the Bourne to Sail project, as a single 3.5-hour experience rather than a project delivered over several weeks.

Due to the short-term nature of the session, it is unlikely that the project alone would have created an immediate or measurable increase in participants physical activity levels.

The Bourne to Sail taster sessions still provide important initial exposure to opportunities, that teenagers may not have thought about or possible. The taster sessions may have sparked interest in spending more time outdoors and being more physically active in the future.