



2022 REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF HORIZONS CHILDREN'S SAILING CHARITY IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

For over 30 years Plymouth based charity Horizons, also known as Horizons Children's Sailing Charity, has been working with disadvantaged young people and young people with disabilities from the local community. Plymouth is an iconic maritime city and has recently celebrated the launch of the first National Marine Park in the UK. However, Plymouth is also a place where social deprivation affects the everyday lives of many young people. The work of Horizons is a direct response to the needs of these young people. We are highly inclusive, whilst remaining strongly focused on those in the most deprived areas of our community.

Horizons are a small, locally focussed charity with 3 FTE paid staff who are supported by a large team of volunteers. We provide accessible sailing activities for young people (aged 8-19) and people with disabilities (aged up to 25). By removing barriers to participation, we provide inclusive, safe and fun sessions where participants gain practical sailing skills, teamwork experience, confidence, problem solving skills and the awareness to keep themselves and others safe on the water. Through our activities participants improve their wellbeing whilst developing positive character attributes, and gaining transferable skills which boost the chances of success in their wider lives.

PARTICIPATION RATES

Here we present data from our session registers and participant database for 2019, and 2021. Whilst 2019 reflects a typical year and level of project delivery, 2021 was a year deeply impacted upon by Covid-19 restrictions and was not typical in many ways, not only for Horizons but for the young people who sail with us, and their families.

In 2019 Horizons delivered 224 sailing sessions to 1,264 different children/vulnerable young adults, of whom 244 had a registered disability. Many of the children attended more than one session, this equates to almost 3,000 individual child sessions being provided through our water-based activity programmes which are delivered between April-October.

In 2021 there were 119 sessions delivered to 476 different children/vulnerable young adults, of whom 91 had a registered disability. Many of the children attended more than one session, this equates to almost 1,300 individual child sessions being provided between April-October.

Our 2021 sessions were adapted to be compliant with Covid-19 related regulations and restrictions throughout the year. One side effect of this was an increase in the use of our single-hander and double-hander dinghies, as more experienced cadets sailed either alone or in household bubbles or pairs (i.e. with siblings) in line with social distancing requirements. In light of the challenges faced in 2021, the participation numbers reflect phenomenal dedication and effort from Horizons staff, our volunteers and the young sailors participating.

SOCIAL IMPACT

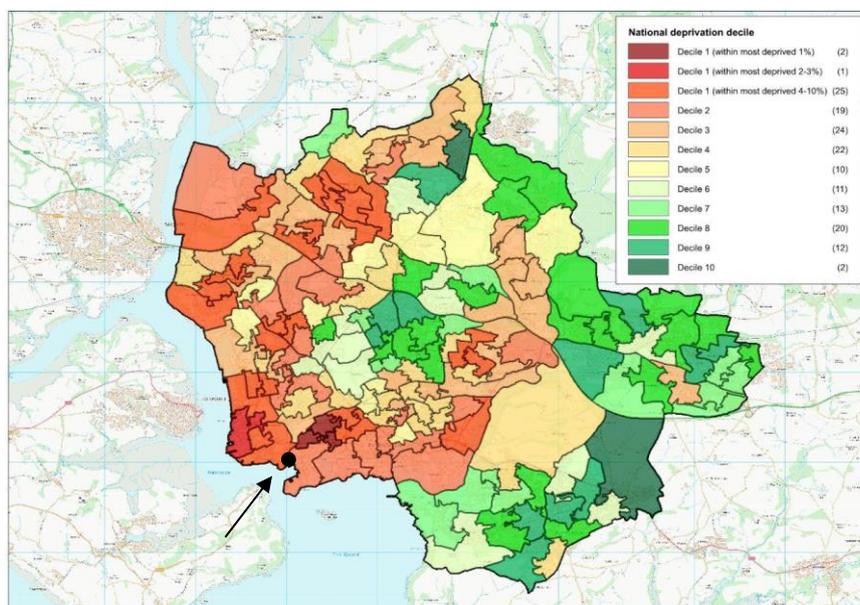
Based on previous research carried out in 2017 with research groups at the University of Plymouth, and ongoing informal feedback and discussions with our young sailors, their families, and our volunteers, we have found consistently high levels of satisfaction with Horizons from children, parents, carers and educators. Horizons removes barriers and facilitates access to the natural outdoor marine environment for children and families in a way that positively impacts the following:

- Educational engagement / attainment and future employability
- Self-esteem and self confidence
- Awareness of social and environmental risk and appropriate risk strategies
- Personal well-being and mental health
- Social communication skills
- Personal social resilience
- Knowledge of and respect for the natural environment
- Community cohesion and social difference

PLYMOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

Plymouth City Council has published a detailed analysis of its neighbourhoods, including statistics about areas where deprivation is prevalent.

The map below is taken from the Plymouth City Council Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Summary Analysis document 2019 (the most up to date version currently available) the map below shows the demographics of deprivation in Plymouth. The location of Horizons is marked with a black circle, showing that we are located in the heart of the deprived communities that we serve.



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A deprived area is conventionally understood to be a place in which people tend to be relatively poor and are more likely to face challenges such as ill health, lower educational attainment, unemployment, limited access to goods and services, and inferior housing.

There is a long-standing awareness of the deprivation that exists in Plymouth. These inequalities occur both geographically across the city, and within and across communities, with disadvantaged and marginalised populations most severely affected. The proportion of residents in Plymouth experiencing deprivation due to low income has increased in recent years.

The IMD also measures Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) these cover key indicators such as income, employment, education and crime. The number of Plymouth neighbourhoods classed as being in the most deprived 10% has increased from 12 in 2010 to 20 in 2019. Plymouth's most deprived LSOA, is the Stonehouse neighbourhood (part of St Peter and the Waterfront ward), which falls within the most deprived 1% nationally both in the IMD 2015 and IMD 2019 (data from page 9 of Plymouth City Council Index of Multiple Derivation (IMD) Summary Analysis document 2019)

The two most deprived neighbourhoods in Plymouth are Stonehouse and Devonport. Stonehouse is part of the St Peter and Waterfront ward. Since 2007 St Peter and Waterfront and Devonport wards have consistently been the 2 most deprived wards in the city (data from page 16 of Plymouth City Council Index of Multiple Derivation (IMD) Summary Analysis document 2019). Horizons is located in Devonport, and Stonehouse is the neighbouring area. 25% of the registered youth sailing club members at Horizons are residents in Devonport or Stonehouse, and we work with schools from these areas. The table below gives a snapshot of some markers of deprivation in these areas compared to city wide averages

Indicators of deprivation in Stonehouse and Devonport alongside the city of Plymouth average.

IMD and LSOA indicators	Stonehouse	Devonport	Plymouth City Average
Deprivation ranking	1 out of 39	2 out of 39	Where 1 is the most deprived and 39 is the least deprived of the city's neighbourhoods
% of population in receipt of Universal Credit	14.2%	13.9%	5.6%
Children living in low income families	39.6%	32.7%	20%
Anti-Social-Behaviour rates per 10,000 of the population	1,143.1 per 10,000	604.5 per 10,000	323.8 per 10,000
Children in need per 10,000 of the population aged 0-17 in 2018/2019	369.1 per 10,000	323.3 per 10,000	201.4 per 10,000

The statistics used in table 2 are from:

IMD Plymouth City Council Neighbourhood Profile 2019: Stonehouse

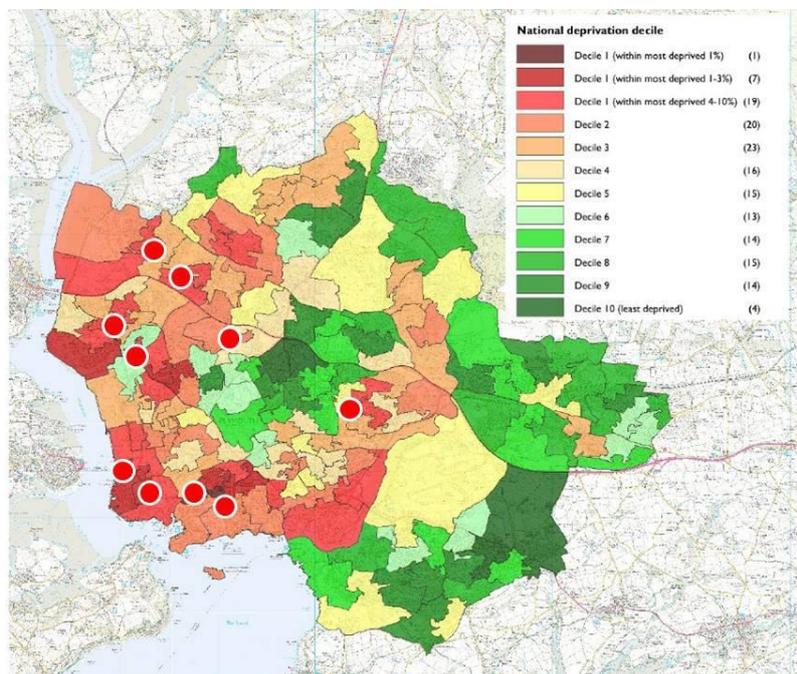
https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Stonehouse%20Profile_0.pdf

IMD Plymouth City Council Neighbourhood Profile 2019: Devonport

https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Devonport%20Profile_1.pdf

HORIZONS' SCHOOLS PROJECT

Each year we work with 10 Primary Schools in the city, targeting those located in the areas of most social deprivation. The map below shows the location of the schools we worked with in 2022 and that these are located in areas of high deprivation.



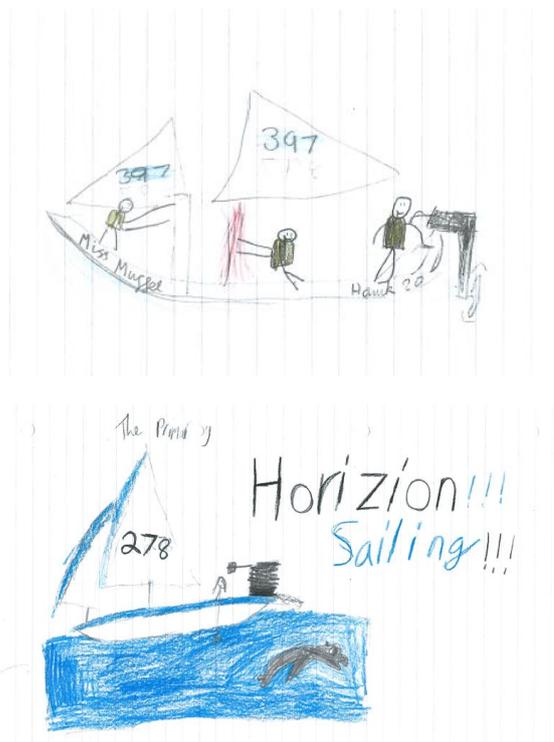
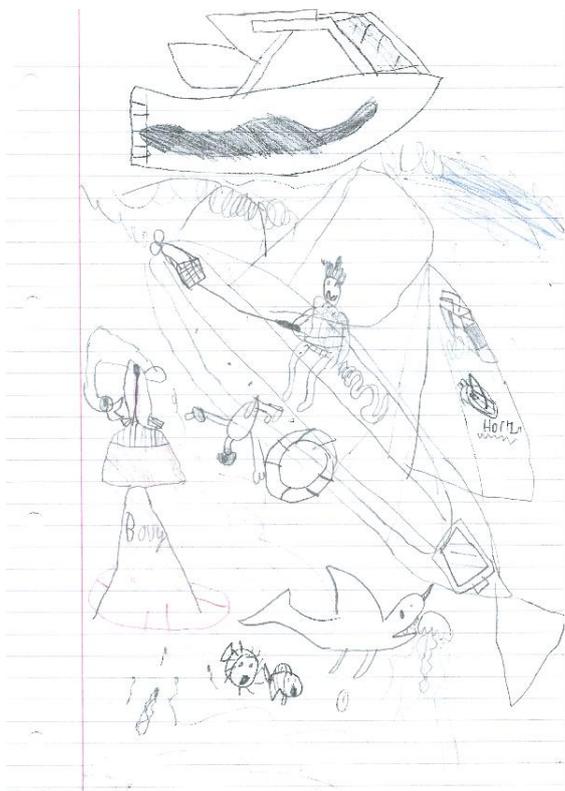
For each school we aim to deliver 10 sessions for up to 14 pupils and 2 staff members, a 'session' is a child on the water for a morning or an afternoon. The school can choose if they send different children to each session, or send the same group each time. Horizons provide minibus pick-up and drop-off to the school groups which is free of charge and reinforces the accessibility of our sessions for those who are most in need. Essential equipment is provided for students including buoyancy aids, and waterproof spray tops and trousers if required.

The school sessions delivered by Horizons are 'hands-on' learning experiences where children can steer the boat, conduct safety drills, enjoy the elements, look out for wildlife and learn more about historic Plymouth and its maritime environment. The school trips take into account weather and tidal constraints. They give children an opportunity to see their city from another perspective; learning about Plymouth, its history and its importance as a port for the Royal Navy.

The schools project delivers about 100 sessions between April and October. In 2019 we took 764 school pupils sailing of whom 54 had a disability and the gender split was very even between boys and girls participating. In 2021 our school project was still heavily impacted by Covid-19, despite this we took 203 school pupils sailing of whom 8 had a disability and 121 were girls and 82 boys.

Our school sessions are flexible and can be matched to curriculum requirements such as History and Geography, Maths (time & distance), and Science (weather, aerodynamics and geological applications). Sailing lends itself to being a practical extension of in class activities, and recent school groups have completed creative writing and arts projects drawing on the technical and practical knowledge that they gained during their sessions with Horizons.

The pictures below were sent in by year 4 school pupil participants, and demonstrate how much their imagination and creativity was sparked by their experience with Horizons:



Each year we collect feedback from the schools and the pupils. It is very clear that these sailing trips provide an opportunity most of the school children could not have otherwise. The pupils talked excitedly about how much they enjoyed the experience, learnt more about their natural local area, and overcame their fears. Here is some feedback provided by our school pupils:

"Thank you for such a fantastic week of sailing. I loved it! When I heard that we were going sailing I was scared but it was a great success, I loved it!"

"I never thought I would get the chance to sail... at first I was scared, and I came out confident and happy to do it again... I loved sitting on the side of the boat and getting splashed"

Whilst one class teacher described the reaction of the children as follows:

"It was great to see the smiles on the children's faces while sailing. Most of the children had only been on the Torpoint ferry at most, so this was a fantastic experience for them. They went home buzzing, telling their parents all about it"

Another teacher reflected on how the experience enabled the children to build relationships with their peers and make new friendships:

"New friendships were made as they spent time in a boat with children they do not usually talk to, and these [friendships] have carried on at school... All children loved it and couldn't wait for the next session the following day."

HORIZONS' SAILING CLUB

The school sessions are the main source of recruitment for our open sessions, the "Horizons' Sailing Club", which runs twice a week after school hours. These are 3 hour sessions and our registered youth members can sign up for sessions at the start of each week. In the past these were run on a 'turn up and sail' basis. However following Covid-19 and changes in regulations regarding adult : young people ratios our young members are now encouraged to sign up for sessions in advance so that we can ensure enough adult volunteers are present to support the session and comply with safety regulations.

Horizons run welcoming, fun and inclusive sailing sessions where disability is accommodated as far as possible (however there are some limits in term of physical disability and Horizons do not currently provide for wheelchair users in our after school sessions). Participants are asked to give a voluntary donation of £1 for each 3 hour session, we found this creates a feeling of "buy in" and responsibility, but as it is optional does not present a barrier to access.

Typically, a child will start off in a Hawk 20 keelboat with 3 other children, a qualified Skipper and an adult crew member. As they gain confidence they will advance to our smaller boats and generally aim to work towards individually sailing one of our small Laser Pico dinghies. This learning progression is usually a very empowering experience and the children gain a real sense of achievement. Horizons also have 2 to 3 safety boats on duty during all sessions.

Sailing requires a range of costly equipment and specialist clothing. Essential equipment including buoyancy aids, waterproof spay tops and safety equipment is provided by Horizons for use in sessions. During Covid 19 Horizons donated sets of kit to participants to keep as their own and take responsibility for, this also allowed us to comply with restrictions on shared equipment which were in place at the time.

In 2019 our Horizons after school sailing club delivered 50 sessions to 134 registered youth cadets of whom 85 were male, 53 female, and 27 had a registered disability. This equates to 844 sessions delivered as a footfall count. In 2021, during Covid-19 this was reduced to 44 sessions to 78 registered youth cadets of whom 51 were male, 27 female, and 16 had a registered disability. This equates to 415 sessions delivered as a footfall count. The 2022 season is now wrapping up with 65 registered youth cadets, and our end of season participant figures are on track to be close to pre-covid levels.

We are a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) accredited Training Centre and during the school holidays we run weekly RYA sailing courses for our young sailors. The courses cover the RYA dinghy sailing scheme, from absolute beginners all the way up to the more advanced techniques and Assistant Instructor awards. These courses support and extend the experience gained in the Thursday and Saturday sessions, and provide our young sailors with the opportunity to gain nationally recognised RYA qualifications.

Horizons also run a youth club style winter programme of land-based recreational and educational activities linked to the local marine industry. This keeps young people engaged with our project all year round, and boosts retention. As part of these sessions we arrange visits with a range of local companies and partners such as Princess Yachts, and the RNLI which builds the young people's awareness of local maritime opportunities and encourages ambition.

HORIZONS' INCLUSIVE SAILING

All of our sailing sessions are run in an inclusive and open manner. In total 20% of the individuals who sailed with us in 2019 and 2021 had a registered disability. In order to accommodate and include those with physical disability, we have a fully adapted and wheelchair accessible Mitchell 31 powerboat named "Friendship of Plymouth" affectionally known by Horizons as "Friendship". She can comfortably carry 4 wheelchair users and 6 ambulant people at a time.

Horizons work closely with local support groups and services including Dame Hannah's, Friends and Families of Special Children, and local care homes to take groups of wheelchair users out on Plymouth Sound. In addition to being wheelchair accessible Friendship has a hydraulic platform by the steering wheel, a dual control system and a range of steering attachments meaning that everyone can have a go at steering the boat as well. This is a really empowering and novel experience for most of our disabled sailors which they greatly enjoy.

Friendship is a great asset, having her means that we can provide chances for people to experience being out on the water for whom this would normally not be possible.

HORIZONS' STAFF

Horizons Plymouth provides a large programme of water-based activities to a vulnerable target group and we rely extensively on volunteers to achieve this. Because of the nature of this work we employ a core of professional staff to ensure the safety of operations on the water, as well as the associated safeguarding for all young participants.

Our staff are a small but dedicated and highly skilled team. We have 2 staff members responsible for all aspects of our water-based activities. The Horizons Chief Executive is an RYA Sailing Scheme Trainer, and RYA Powerboat Trainer who ensures that all sailing, boating and training programmes conform to RYA standards and Horizons' Procedures. Our senior instructor oversees the safe and efficient operations for all our activities and manages our activities diary. We have an office based staff member responsible for fundraising, some administrative tasks, and who is currently working to expand and strengthen our local partnerships moving forward.

HORIZONS' TRUSTEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Horizons currently have 63 registered and DBS checked adult volunteers, of whom 66% are male and 44% female. We also have 7 dedicated trustees from a variety of backgrounds including the Royal Navy, business and finance, academia, and the NHS. Several of our trustees are regularly involved as volunteers.

Our Horizons trustees and volunteers range from highly experienced life-long sailors who support our sessions as qualified skippers, to parent volunteers with no experience who assist as crew on a boat with a skipper present. The trustees and volunteers also support Horizons in a variety of ways off the water, for example driving the minibus to collect school groups, administrative and fundraising assistance and much more. With such a small staff team, the scale of our impact and activities simply could not be achieved without the amazing support that we get from our trustees and volunteers.

Over the course of a year our volunteers give a huge amount of time to Horizons. In 2022 between January and the start of August i.e. the mid point of our season) Horizons had benefited from approx. 1,527 hours of volunteer time. Using the Office of National Statistics "hourly rate" guideline figure for volunteer time of £14.81 per hour (2017 figure) that is £22,615 of donated, unpaid time. By the end of 2022, it is reasonable to expect these amounts to have doubled to approx. 3,054 volunteer hours and £45,230 of donated time.

Horizons has played a major role in the lives of some volunteers. One volunteer joined us at the age of 10 as a youth sailor and is now a qualified skipper and volunteer in his early 30's who states that Horizons has been his connection to the world and kept him out of trouble as a teenager navigating the world with Asperger's. Other volunteers are of retirement age and Horizons is their key connection to the community as they support our sessions on a daily basis and rely on it as a way to access the resources to sail and do what they love. The average time our volunteers have been with us is 5.8 years and our most long standing volunteer has been with Horizons for 23 years. This level of volunteer retention reflects the positive and mutually beneficial relationship between Horizons and our volunteers.

COVID-19

It has been widely recognised and accepted that the impacts of Covid-19 were felt more keenly by vulnerable sectors of society, especially those in lower socioeconomic groups. In April 2022 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) published a detailed report into loneliness at a national scale and broke the data down into local authority areas. "This work found that areas with a higher concentration of younger people (aged 16-24) and areas with higher rates of unemployment tended to have higher rates of loneliness during the study period (October 2020 to February 2021)". These descriptors apply to the communities that Horizons serve.

COVID-19 highlighted the importance of social connection and showed many people how difficult things can be when you feel isolated. ("Tackling Loneliness Annual Report February 2022 – The third year"). Feedback from Horizons participants and volunteers strongly identifies the feelings of loneliness and other challenges experienced during periods of lockdown, examples are:

"My son has additional needs and during lockdown it has affected his mental health. Going back to sailing with Horizons will give him the chance to socialise, feel part of a group, and give him the freedom and break from his mum. Getting back on the water helps him de-stress and helps with his anxiety, confidence and self-esteem."

"My son has had very little contact with anyone at all since lockdown and sailing having to stop. Being autistic and having ADHD, he finds making friendships very difficult and with the lockdown restrictions, he has become almost virtually isolated to the outside world with an exception of a walk once an evening to get some fresh air or he wouldn't leave the house at all. Sailing gave him a huge confidence boost as he used to attend with a friend. It enabled him to be more independent, less shy and make friends within the sailing group. Since lockdown, my son regularly talks about Horizons and often asks when he can return to sailing. He is so keen; he now has the confidence to attend without his friends or siblings to accompany him."

"Since lockdown she has lost all confidence in herself, not wanting to leave the house. She doesn't speak to anyone outside the house and she spends most of her time in her room. The only thing she is looking forward to is sailing again, as it brings her calmness. Also, the staff are brilliant at boosting her self esteem. My son has not done very well being isolated away from people. Being out at sea brings him so much joy and excitement. Horizons give children an experience they wouldn't normally be able to afford to do."

Horizons plays a crucial role in providing positive opportunities for local young people, and relieving pressure on their families. Horizons fosters positive community engagement and builds a sense of belonging and community around a shared interest. Our volunteers and staff provide young people with positive role models, and support them to achieve their goals through sailing, which builds their confidence and life skills more generally.

FINANCE - EXPENDITURE

Our annual expenditure is typically around £130,000, of which about 60% is staff costs. We also need to rent office space, moorings and boat storage – together with all the associated overheads of maintenance, insurance etc.

The marginal cost of running any of our activities is very small, hence almost all our expenditure (apart from any capital purchases) may be regarded as operating overheads. Since we deliver around 3,000 sessions per year this leads to a cost of about £40 per session - and this figure is used as a benchmark (a detailed breakdown of how we reached this figure can be provided on request). Therefore the cost of delivering the Schools Project is about £4,000 per school, or about £40,000 per year.

FINANCE – INCOME

Horizons has limited opportunities to generate income and we rely extensively on grants and donations to balance our budget. We hold a charitable investments account and we are able to generate some income from providing commercial services using our fleet of vessels and qualified staff and volunteers, but this has to be planned into our very busy charitable programme. We also have fund-raising events and activities – the largest of which is the Eddystone Charity Pursuit where we compete against other local boats for sponsorship and prize money. Our 2022 teams in the Eddystone Pursuit secured over £14,000 for Horizons and a number of our talented young sailors got their first taste of sailing in larger boats and beyond Plymouth Sound.

We ask for £500 from each of the Primary Schools that we work with, which leaves a funding gap of about £3,500 per school. We have been successful in the past raising tranches of £10,000 for this project – which funds about 3 schools, but in recent years we have met with meagre success in an increasingly competitive climate.

In contrast, we have had some success with capital grants and in 2019 were able to replace our ageing minibus and office portacabins, as well as acquiring some new boats to add to the fleet. Donors seem generally more willing to fund capital purchases, whereas our primary need is to maintain our existing programmes that are in demand, but are targeted at groups that cannot normally afford such activities.

We were fortunate in 2020 that our staff could access the furlough scheme, this reduced our losses and enabled Horizon to retain its dedicated and highly experienced core staff. Despite all these challenges, and annual fluctuations between surplus and deficit, we have maintained a safe, high quality experience for our service users and have built up great positive momentum in our 2022 season, slowly but surely building back up to our pre-covid levels of operation.

HORIZONS – THE FUTURE

Horizons celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2021. We know that Horizons has a strong, unbroken record of service to the local community, and creating positive change through sailing. We also know that our participants, their parents, and our volunteers give consistently positive feedback about our work, and the difference it makes to our young people. What is unknown is how the charitable funding environment may change in 2023, and if we will be fortunate enough to continue to secure adequate funding to sustain our operations.

As ever, Horizons is focused on providing learning opportunities through sailing for disadvantaged young people and those with disabilities from the local community. We are dedicated to maintaining our core activity delivery and meeting local need. In response to changing trends in the charitable funding environment we are working hard to develop collaborative partnerships with other local charities to strengthen and diversify our projects. We are ensuring that we capitalise on local sources of support such as the Plymouth Octopus Project, and that we tap into existing networks and forums. In 2023 it is our intention to review our feedback and monitoring processes to make sure that we are able to clearly capture and demonstrate the impact of our work to strengthen our future funding applications.

Despite our “future proofing” efforts, this remains a very uncertain moment in time. Following the devastation of Covid 19, the UK is experiencing significant political change, financial instability, and is in the throes of a cost of living crisis, with many of our poorest communities once again being the hardest hit. Alongside these events, the charitable funding sector has also undergone major change. Seeking charitable funds has become an increasingly crowded and competitive arena, with many funders now putting more restrictions on their funding criteria, or pausing applications whilst they review their priorities in the wake of Covid 19. Now more than ever, Horizons depends on the generous financial support of charitable funders to continue our great work, and secure the future of our projects.