



# TENACITY OF BOLTON

10 Years On – Impact Report



**Tall Ships**  
YOUTH TRUST

## **In 2014, Bolton School generously gifted Tall Ships Youth Trust with a 55ft ketch – ‘Tenacity of Bolton’.**

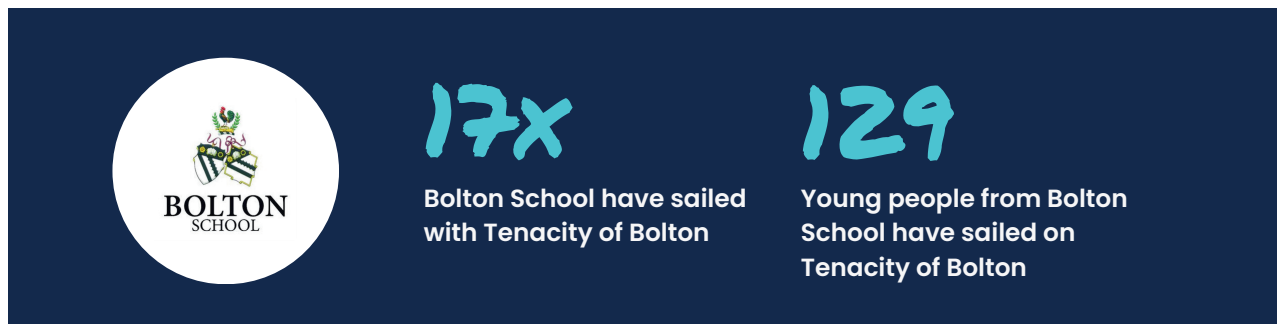
The vessel was built over a nine-year period by the boys and staff at Bolton School Boys’ Division, along with help from parents, volunteers, and the local community, as a way of marking the new Millennium. It was completed in May 2007.

TSYT were very grateful to receive the vessel, particularly given its history. For TSYT, it offered an ideal environment for sail training and youth development and provided us with a fantastic opportunity to grow our fleet and expand our reach.

Tenacity of Bolton has been operated by TSYT ever since, with significant investment from the Trust to keep her in seaworthy condition and fit to provide quality youth development opportunities for the young people we serve.

## **Life-Enhancing Impact**

- Under the operation of TSYT, Tenacity of Bolton has been on 127 voyages and supported more than 770 young people, more than half of whom were from disadvantaged backgrounds.



- To date, Bolton School has sailed 17 times with TSYT on Tenacity of Bolton, with 129 young people from the school joining a voyage. A further voyage is planned for July 2024, taking the total to 18 voyages and 137 young people.
- The vessel takes groups of up to 8 young people at a time, supported by a group leader and up to three members of the TSYT crew, (Skipper, Mate and Youth Mentor).
- The smaller setting and group size mean that she has often been the ideal choice for groups of young people with disabilities or special educational needs, as well as young people completing their Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.

- For several years, we operated Tenacity of Bolton out of the Northwest with Whitehaven as her main base. This made our voyages more accessible to young people from this region, and opened sailing opportunities around Scotland, the Isle of Man, Ireland, and North Wales.

- TSYT has also regularly entered Tenacity in the ASTO Small Ships Race, which is a youth event open to any sail training vessels under 24m, of which at least half the crew is under 25. The race follows the same racing rules as the Tall Ships Races. This event provides the young people taking part with a different voyage experience, which requires a great deal of teamwork communication, grit and determination achieved through the challenge and excitement that a day of healthy competition out on the water can deliver.



## Young People Feedback

Below is an extract from a voyager blog, written by a group of young people who joined Tenacity in 2023, for the residential section of their DofE Gold award, to help illustrate what a typical voyage is like young people.

**Day One:** We arrived in Portsmouth through various types of travel, naïve to the journey we had ahead. As we first boarded our vessel, we all felt the mix of excitement and anticipation. When we ventured down to see our cabins, we were all a little shocked at the size of everything, but eventually accepted it.

Once we were all settled, we explored the entire boat from the engine room to the heads. After that, we all convened in our dining room to debrief and plan our meals for the rest of the week.

Later, we all split into three groups: engineers, deck crew and boat handlers. We all had to take everything in as we would need to teach each other later in our journey.

**Day Three:** The day started with Ben on breakfast duty. We had toast, cereal, and a variety of spreads. We then cleaned up and prepared the ketch for lift off from the pontoon.

We had to teach each other the different roles we'd had learnt yesterday, as we were rotating jobs. Once everyone knew what they had to do and how to do it, we set off from the pontoon. There was a light breeze of around 20 knots, which allowed us to release our Main, Mizzen and Jib sails and take the high winds under our command and sail the high seas of the Solent. With the wind on our side, nothing could stop us.

We finally made it to Beaulieu River, so we pulled in our sails and transformed from a majestic sailing ship to a speedy motorboat, zipping through the river. We arrived in Bucklers Hard at around lunch, where we had our secondary scrum of sausage rolls and pasties.

**Day Four:** Today we were stormbound and so, we woke up slightly later at around 08:30. Rocco cooked bacon rolls, before Finn learned how to clean the heads. We then took turns going in the dingy, proving our capabilities as competent crew members.

The crew returned in pouring rain, and so everybody decided to shower and dry their clothes. Supper was then prepared by Fin, Arthur, and Kalen.

Ultimately, the day was a success despite the weather.

**Day Six:** Today, the weather wasn't looking in our favour, but we felt that the wind speed would be low enough to handle. We made a pre-planned route on the charts and calculated what we thought would be our estimated time and bearings for the duration of the trip.



## Future Plans

Our long-term plan is to continue to increase voyaging capacity and the quality and depth of our voyage experiences for young people, via the use and purchase of additional vessels.

In 2023, we turned away 120 young people due to a lack of capacity and this number is forecast to even higher at circa 200 young people in 2024. Our 2025 Programme is already 60% full. We are now in a position where we can grow, to keep up with the needs of our young people and the demand for our services.

After 10 years in operation, we have concluded that Tenacity of Bolton is no longer meeting the needs of the organisation or the young people we serve. Unfortunately, the level of investment it requires to maintain its seaworthiness no longer makes sound financial sense, and so we have plans to retire her from the fleet at the end of 2024.

This will enable us free up resource and work through our options for expanding our fleet. We have undertaken an extensive survey of the fleet and have a 20-year maintenance and investment plan in place. We are also investigating the possibility of purchasing and refitting a Challenger size vessel, to be introduced to the fleet in 2025.

Our plan in the interim is to rent, borrow or lease a smaller sized vessel, which would be utilised mainly for DofE voyages and crew training, and would replace the capacity lost when Tenacity is retired from the fleet.