



Olena Kushakovska and Clare Gibson from the Suffolk Community Foundation, Georgina May from Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines and Andy Beharrell and John Wilkinson from the Woolverstone Project

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## Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines award £2,000 to the Woolverstone Project through Suffolk Community Foundation

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has awarded a £2,000 grant to the Woolverstone Project, as part of funding through the Suffolk Community Foundation.

The project provides a range of accessible sailing opportunities and tuition for those with disabilities throughout the year at Alton Water and during the summer months at Woolverstone on the River Orwell.

This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Woolverstone Project, after being

founded in 1993 by the Royal Harwich Yacht Club during its 150th Anniversary. The heart of the project lies in its dedicated volunteers who assist sailors in and out of boats, accompany them on the water, and provide refreshments during their sessions.

At Alton Water, each of their 23 boats are specially adapted for accessibility, ensuring that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in this enriching experience, whilst gaining confidence and learning new skills.

The project's base at Woolverstone boasts two specially designed vessels – a Sonar and a Wheelyboat. Thanks to the Wheelyboats' innovative design, it allows wheelchairs to roll on board effortlessly, eliminating the need for hoisting and ensuring that sailing is accessible to everyone.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines established the £17,000 'Fred. Olsen Community Fund' in collaboration with Suffolk Community Foundation last year, thanks to a generous donation from their parent company, Bonheur. This fund was created to support initiatives close to the company's heart, including maritime organisations, art groups, and projects helping local communities.

**Georgina May, Public Relations Executive and representative of the Chairty Committee at Fred. Olsen Cruises Lines, said:**

“Supporting local communities is close to our heart, and as a business with 175 years of maritime heritage, we're incredibly proud to be supporting the inclusivity and accessibility that the Woolverstone Project offers.

“Being able to visit the site at Alton Water and seeing first-hand the passion and dedication from each of the volunteers, alongside the pleasure from the sailors, was a truly inspiring experience.”

**John Wilkinson, Trustee at The Woolverstone Project, said:**

“I'm thrilled about Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' donation, this support directly benefits our mission to make sailing accessible for individuals with disabilities. Each donation we receive contribute greatly towards empowering each person who attends the project.

”We're also celebrating our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, a milestone we're incredibly proud of and would like to thank everyone who has volunteered

and dedicated their time over these wonderful thirty years.”

**For more information on The Woolverstone Project, visit:**

[www.woolverstoneproject.org.uk/](http://www.woolverstoneproject.org.uk/) **and for more information on the Suffolk Community Foundation, visit:** [www.suffolkcf.org.uk](http://www.suffolkcf.org.uk)

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