



RESEARCH STUDY

# UK PORT WELFARE PROVISION

MAY 2023

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**CHARITIES EXPECT TO  
SPEND £4,807,937 ON  
PORT WELFARE IN 2023**

**61% OF MAJOR  
AND MINOR PORTS  
DO NOT HAVE A  
SEAFARERS' CENTRE**

**MAJOR AND MINOR PORTS  
RECEIVED 85,238  
SHIP ARRIVALS IN 2021**

**ONLY 35% OF THE WORKFORCE  
IS PAID, THE REST IS MADE UP  
OF VOLUNTEERS**

**CHARITIES HAVE SPENT  
£2.4M ON PORT WELFARE  
VEHICLES SINCE 2008**

**ONLY 8% OF MAJOR  
AND MINOR PORTS  
HAVE IMPLEMENTED  
A VOLUNTARY LEVY  
SCHEME**

**SEAFARERS' CENTRES COST AN  
AVERAGE OF £169.61 PER DAY  
TO OPERATE**

**ONLY 3% OF  
RESPONDENTS  
PROVIDE PORT WIDE  
WIFI TO SEAFARERS**

**WELFARE CHARITIES PROVIDE  
SHIP VISITING IN 85% OF  
MAJOR AND MINOR PORTS**

**VOLUNTEERS  
CONTRIBUTE AN  
AVERAGE OF 9,160  
HOURS EACH MONTH**



A man with dark hair and a goatee, wearing a bright orange life jacket, is looking towards the camera. He is on a boat, with a white curved structure visible behind him. The background shows a blurred view of the sea and sky.

*“With charities under increasing pressure to raise more funds to support the growing cost of provision, this research will inform the industry about long term sustainability of seafarers’ welfare in the future.”*

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# 1 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

**MNWB thanks the British Port Association, UK Port Authorities and the following maritime welfare charities for contributing to this report:**

## **ABERDEEN SEAFARERS' CENTRE**

The centre was established as a charity in 2008 to enhance and enrich the wellbeing of seafarers living in and visiting the Aberdeen area. They provide a frontline service to the thousands of seafarers passing through the Port of Aberdeen each year. The centre also offers advice and help to retired and ex-seafarers, and their families, accessing grants and welfare services, signposting them to other services (local and national) where appropriate.

## **LIVERPOOL SEAFARERS' CENTRE**

Liverpool Seafarers' Centre (LSC) is a front-line service offering support to 50,000 seafarers passing through the Port of Liverpool each year. LSC's mission remains firmly focused on providing a lifeline to seafarers, both active and retired, offering a

safe and secure place to rest and to receive practical and emotional support. Two centres are operated, one in Liverpool and a second in Eastham.

## **MARITIME CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES**

Maritime Christian Ministries (MCM) provides chaplaincy services for seafarers including pastoral care and moral support, in the Ports of Liverpool, Garston and Eastham.

## **QVSR SEAFARERS' CENTRES**

Established in 1843, the Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest (QVSR) has a long history of providing accommodation and welfare support for retired seafarers, veterans of the armed forces and other homeless men with low support needs. QVSR Seafarers' Centres provide a warm welcome and support to seafarers in the Ports of Tilbury, DP World London Gateway, Felixstowe, Bristol & Immingham.

## SAILORS' SOCIETY

Founded more than 200 years ago in 1818 as the first seafarers' mission, Sailors' Society is an international Christian maritime charity. The organisation works globally to provide welfare services and training for cadets and seafarers.

## SEAMEN'S CHRISTIAN FRIEND SOCIETY

The Seamen's Christian Friend Society is a worldwide non-denominational Christian organisation in 23 ports around the world. It absorbed what was called the Merchant Navy Christian Fellowship in 1985 and now sends its representatives, called port missionaries, to attend to the spiritual and material needs of seafarers.

## STELLA MARIS

Provides a global network of Roman Catholic seafarer ministries who support seafarers, fishers and their families. Founded in Glasgow in 1920, Stella Maris is present in around 350 ports around the world. They provide ship visits, formal worship services, recreation, currency exchange, communication services like calling cards and Internet, transportation and lodging assistance.

## THE FISHERMEN'S MISSION

Officially known as The Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, The Fishermen's Mission is a British charitable organisation founded to help those working in the UK's fishing industry. The charity, which is run on Christian principles, supports and welcomes persons of all faiths and none. It was founded at the end of the 19th century to provide assistance and support to the impoverished fishing communities around the coasts of Britain.

## THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS

The Mission to Seafarers is a Christian welfare charity whose mission is to care for the shipping industry's most important asset: its people. Working in 200 ports across 50 countries, the ministry operates through a global Mission 'family' network of chaplains, staff and volunteers and provides practical, emotional and spiritual support through ship visits, seafarers' centres and a range of welfare and emergency support services.







# 2 ABOUT US

**For 75 years the Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB) has been at the forefront of working with maritime charities and organisations to ensure welfare services are available to all UK merchant seafarers and their dependants.**

Appointed the UK's first National Seafarers' Welfare Board (NSWB) by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2021, MNWB works in close collaboration with the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) and maritime welfare organisations to ensure that "no seafarer or fisher is left without welfare support". In practice, we have been fulfilling this role since we were founded in 1948 but now have an even greater focus on improving the welfare of seafarers and fishers as required by MLC 2006 and the C188 Work in Fishing Convention.

## **NATIONAL SEAFARERS' WELFARE BOARD OBJECTIVES**

- **Ensure an integrated approach to the provision of welfare to seafarers and the most effective use of MCA and MNWB resources and expertise in order to comply with seafarer welfare provisions of MLC 2006 and C188 Work in Fishing Convention.**
- **Help promote collaboration at national, regional and local levels to ensure that effective procedures are in place and implemented with regard to promoting seafarers' welfare within the UK.**
- **Keep under review the adequacy of existing welfare facilities in appropriate ports, monitor the need for the provision of additional facilities and withdrawal of the use of under-utilised facilities.**
- **Promote awareness of each organisation's role in the provision of welfare to seafarers and fishers to improve collaboration and communication where necessary.**
- **Help to ensure that no seafarer or fisher is left without welfare support in the context of the responsibilities of the UK Government as set out in ILO MLC 2006 and C188.**
- **Promote co-operation with other Member States of the ILO to promote the welfare of seafarers and fishers at sea and in port.**



MNWB oversees a network of 15 Port Welfare Committees (PWCs) in the UK and the Seafarers' Welfare Board in Gibraltar that focus on improving welfare provision in the ports they represent. The PWCs include members from the MCA, Port Health, Unions, Shipowners, Port Owners and Welfare Charities, making them an effective body for positive change in ports.

A leading national maritime charity supporting the maritime welfare sector, MNWB has a membership of 43 major seafarers' and fishing charities and is increasingly recognised as the representative voice of the UK's Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets.

## **OUR VISION**

To be the representative voice and driving force for the welfare of the Merchant Navy and fishing communities in the UK.

## **OUR MISSION**

Improving the lives of seafarers by driving growth and raising welfare standards in collaboration with our stakeholders.

## **OUR VALUES**

Leadership | Communication | Innovation | Collaboration





# 3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

**The UK maritime industry currently benefits from the provision of well-established and highly regarded welfare facilities and services to support merchant seafarers and fishers. Provided primarily by faith-based charities, regional welfare provision may vary as many facilities and services continue to be financed primarily through annual or short-term funding.**

The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC 2006) recommends that member governments, including the UK, provide and fund port welfare facilities through grants, port levies or voluntary contributions. The legislation does not, however, stipulate long-term funding to support and sustain seafarers' welfare services.

MNWB confirmed that annual or short-term funding means long-term planning and sustainability continue to be a major challenge to the UK's maritime charities sector. Consequently, MNWB, in its capacity as the NSWB, was invited to lead a joint national project to investigate the sustainability of funding to ensure maritime welfare provision across the UK. Given the

economic environment and the evolving nature of maritime welfare services, MNWB proposed a flexible/phased approach to the study, starting with the appointment of an independent consultant to undertake preliminary research to map and cost current UK welfare provision (phase I).

Building on the consultant's initial report, MNWB staff then undertook further research, as necessary, to update and ensure a comprehensive overview of current UK maritime welfare provision (phase II), using the final report findings and recommendations to underpin a new national strategy that will ensure the sustainability of funding and provision across the UK (phase III).



### 3.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

To confirm “the extent and annual costs of providing port welfare facilities and services for seafarers and fishers across the UK,” it was agreed to adopt a quantitative approach to research using online questionnaires. This will inform all maritime sector stakeholders with a view to developing a national strategy for the sustainability of funding and provision across the UK.

Overall, the methodology employed ensured that the data collected was as comprehensive and accurate as possible, enabling a full understanding of the extent and cost of seafarers’ and fishers’ welfare provision throughout the UK. Data gathering was split in to two distinct parts. The first concerned contacting all UK ports to determine, amongst other things, whether a port levy was in place and WiFi available for seafarers to access. The second part of data collection focused on collecting data from welfare providers to establish the extent and annual cost of welfare provision for seafarers and fishers in UK ports.

### 3.3 HEADLINE FINDINGS

Port-based welfare facilities and services have been provided by maritime welfare charities for over 200 years without cost to the shipping industry. This is in part due to the reluctance or inability of shipping companies to invest in the building of welfare infrastructure in the thousands of major trade ports around the world.

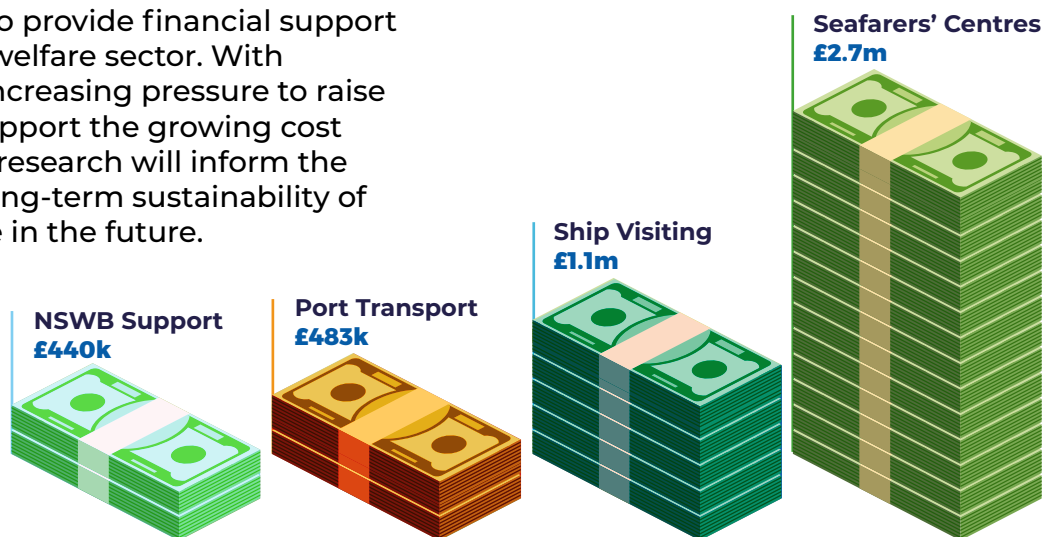
Whilst many shipping companies do support those charities that look after their crews, there is not a standard mechanism for the industry to provide financial support to the maritime welfare sector. With charities under increasing pressure to raise more funds to support the growing cost of provision, this research will inform the industry about long-term sustainability of seafarers’ welfare in the future.

The annual cost of direct welfare provision across the UK is **£4,367,897**. This does not include the cost of ancillary services, such as mobile broadband (MiFi), training and development, or support for the welfare network. This figure is based on the combined totals of ship welfare visiting costs of **£1,160,967**, port transport costs **£482,983** and centre operating costs **£2,723,947**.

**Based on research findings, the total annual cost of port welfare provision across the UK is**

**£4,807,937**

UK port welfare provision is regularly reviewed and supported by a network of PWCs, which are managed by the NSWB. In addition to the direct cost of provision, the associated support for the UK wide welfare network includes PWCs, training and development of front-line staff and volunteers, welfare caseworking and ancillary projects (MiFi, whistleblowing support, etc.). The cost of these supporting services is **£440,040**, bringing the total cost of UK welfare provision to **£4,807,937**.



**Chart 1:**  
UK Port Welfare Costs



# 4 WELFARE DRIVERS

## 4.1 MLC 2006

**The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC 2006) <sup>1</sup> places great emphasis on the importance of seafarers taking shore leave and being able to access shore-based welfare services and facilities for their health and wellbeing.**

With shorter turnarounds and smaller crews, it is not always possible for seafarers to get ashore. A good example of this are the ferries operating from the Port of Dover. The turnarounds are that short it is virtually impossible for seafarers to take shore leave. Shore based welfare can be provided in several ways which includes the provision of seafarers' centres, ship welfare visiting – conducted by port chaplains and volunteer assistants, transport to a centre and/or the town.

Welfare boards should also ensure that information is available to seafarers regarding the availability of welfare services and facilities in ports. To support the network of PWCs, and comply with the MLC 2006 guideline, the MNWB produces Port Information Leaflets for selected UK ports and Gibraltar. Currently, 46 leaflets are available to seafarers visiting UK ports.

MLC 2006 states that *“Each Member shall ensure that shore-based welfare facilities, where they exist, are easily accessible. The Member shall also promote the development of welfare facilities, in designated ports to provide seafarers on ships that are in its ports with access to adequate welfare facilities and services”*.

Guideline B4.4.4 recommends that financial support for port welfare facilities should be made available through one of the following:

- a) **grants from public funds.**
- b) **levies or other special dues from shipping sources.**
- c) **voluntary contributions from shipowners, seafarers or other organisations.**
- d) **voluntary contributions from other sources.**



Securing sustainable funding for UK port welfare provision is a priority for MNWB to ensure the continued provision of the services and facilities. The importance of port levies has been highlighted as it is considered not only as a means of funding maritime welfare services, but also because they provide a clear, high-profile commitment to the work, and credibility, of the welfare societies by the UK Government and port authorities.

The major societies have a wealth of experience in knowing what seafarers and fishers need to improve their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. Social connectivity has been a priority for MNWB and its constituent members for centuries, initially facilitating postal services, then landline telephones within seafarers' centres. In recent decades, the maritime welfare charities have provided phone cards, Internet connectivity (fixed WiFi and MiFi) and SIM cards to ensure that seafarers can always be in touch with family members when visiting UK ports.

During the 110th session of the International Labour Conference, held from 27 May to 11 June 2022, the plenary session approved additional amendments to the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC 2006)<sup>2</sup>. These should enter into force by December 2024.

1 <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/maritime-labour-convention/lang--en/index.htm>

2 [https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_845144/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_845144/lang--en/index.htm)

## THE MLC 2006 AMENDMENTS AIM TO ENSURE THAT:

- **Free drinking water of good quality is available for seafarers.**
- **Seafarers have appropriately sized personal protective equipment, in particular, to suit the increasing number of female seafarers.**
- **States shall further facilitate the prompt repatriation of abandoned seafarers.**
- **States shall provide medical care to seafarers in need of immediate assistance and, when required, facilitate the speedy repatriation of the deceased.**
- **Shipowners provide seafarers with appropriate social connectivity, and States provide internet access in their ports.**
- **All deaths of seafarers are recorded and reported annually to the ILO and the relevant data is published.**
- **Seafarers are informed of their rights regarding the obligation of recruitment and placement services to compensate seafarers for any monetary loss.**



## 4.2 MARITIME 2050

Maritime 2050 is a long-term strategy published by the UK government in January 2019 that sets out a vision of the future of the UK's maritime industry to the year 2050. The strategy outlines the challenges facing the industry, such as changing trade patterns, technological advancements, and climate change, and proposes strategies to address these challenges and seize new opportunities. The aim of Maritime 2050 is to ensure that the UK's maritime industry remains globally competitive, safe, sustainable and innovative, and to maximize the economic and social benefits it can bring to the country.

In support of the UK Government's ambition to be recognised globally as a leader in maritime welfare, the National Seafarers' Welfare Board has reviewed the Maritime 2050 ambitions to identify key inflection points for support by the maritime welfare charities.

It has identified a number of key areas where the maritime welfare charities already add value to the Maritime 2050 strategy and its recommendations.

As the first line of support for seafarers, maritime welfare charities can support the Government's desired outcomes. Specifically, they are advocates for seafarer welfare and act as the eyes and ears of the UK Government and MCA in UK ports.

Through the National Seafarers' Welfare Board and its associated PWCs, MNWB brings together cross-sector groups to keep under review the adequacy of existing welfare facilities in ports, monitor the need for the provision of additional facilities and withdrawal of the use of under-utilised facilities.

### MARITIME WELFARE CHARITIES SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING MARITIME 2050 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Raise awareness of the maritime sector in schools by having a single industry body overseeing a more coordinated cross-sector in-school awareness and ambassador programme.**
- **Task a single industry body for bringing greater coherence and coordination to the promotion of maritime careers sector wide.**
- **Develop a social framework that lays out UK expectations for the welfare of the UK maritime workforce.**
- **Government and industry to produce mental healthcare guidelines and develop mental resilience testing for seafarers.**
- **The UK will lead on exploring opportunities to encourage greater cooperation between the ILO and IMO on seafarer welfare issues.**
- **Lead the way in addressing modern day slavery concerns within the industry with the aim of eradicating it.**



***Seafarers suffer a high incidence of mental health conditions, primarily due to the pressures, nature and isolation of working at sea.***

Maritime 2050, paragraph 41







# 5 KEY FINDINGS

## 5.1 SEAFARERS' CENTRES

There are currently **9** major faith-based societies and/or independent maritime charities operating out of **1** or more of the **44** port-based centres across the UK including:

- Aberdeen Seafarers' Centre
- The Fishermen's Mission
- Liverpool Seafarers' Centre
- Maritime Christian Ministries
- The Mission to Seafarers
- Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest
- Sailors' Society
- Seamen's Christian Friend Society
- Stella Maris

It is important to note that several of these societies have an operational presence in many of the seafarers' centres and several ports have access to a single centre for their region. The network of 44 seafarers' centres provides a safe haven for crew who come ashore in the UK.

Distribution of the centres can be found in Section 6: Management of Resources and Appendix I.

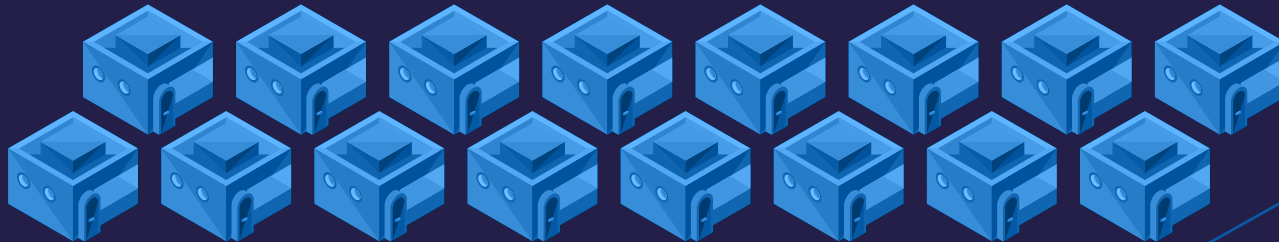
Seafarers' centres form the largest investment in seafarers' welfare annually, with a total cost of **£2,723,947**.

Of the 44 centres, **16** (36%) are manned, **25** (57%) are unmanned of which **3** (7%) are hybrid providing 24/7 access to seafarers.

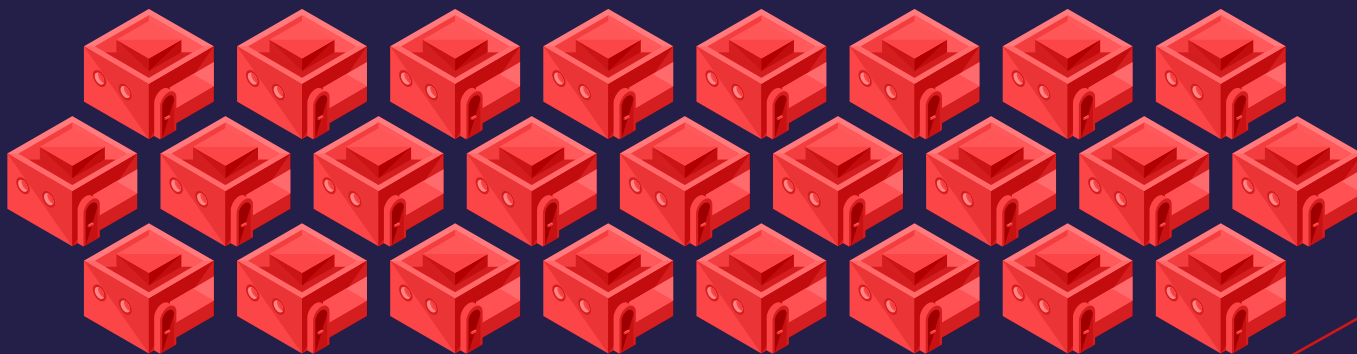




3x HYBRID = 7%



16x MANNED = 36%



25x UNMANNED = 57%

Chart 2: Seafarers' Centre Types

### NORTH TEES SEAFARERS' CENTRE



WiFi - SIMs - Foreign Currency Exchange - Shoe (Chocolate, Lager) Snacks/Clothes/Souvenirs/Toiletries - Amazon/Argos orders  
Pool/Tables - Darts - Bill - Karaoke - Take-Away food can be ordered after 4pm - Tea/Coffee (free) - Woolly hats (free) - Library (free)  
Multi-bath room - Port Transport



**OPENING HOURS**  
Scan to see if we are open or to make a booking.



Warning - Opening hours may be adjusted at short notice.

**PORT TRANSPORT**  
Port Transport may be provided free of charge by contacting the Seafarers' Welfare Organisations (subject to availability). Seafarers berthed at Oil Terminals should contact the Terminal/Duty Operator.

### SIM CARDS & TOP-UPS

SIM cards and Top-ups can be purchased at the Seafarers' Centre or from authorised Ship Welfare Visitors from any of the seafarers' welfare societies represented in the port.



**HARBOUR OFFICE & SECURITY**  
Harbour Office (24hr service) 01642 277 206  
Harbour Police 01642 277 216

**LOCAL PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY**  
River Tees Port Health 01287 612 406  
port.health@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

**MARITIME AND COASTGUARD AGENCY UK**  
HullMO@mcga.gov.uk 020 3817 2018

**SEAFARERS' TELEPHONE HELPLINE**  
SeafarerHelp...the lifeline for seafarers (ISWAN)  
www.seafarerhelp.org (all seafarers) 0207 7323 2737

**HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL** **MNWB** **PD TEESPORT**

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### PORT INFORMATION LEAFLET

## NORTH TEES

Welcomes All Seafarers



**NORTH TEES & HARTLEPOOL SEAFARERS' CENTRE**  
Seal Sands Road, Stockton, TS2 1UA  
(Location via "what3words" Agents/Activity 444)  
Tel: 01642 546 424 / 07507 493 749  
Email: ntees@rmtsmall.org  
Centre Manager - Aidan Webster  
www.facebook.com/Mission-to-Seafarers-North-Tees-Teesport  
www.missiontoseafarers.org

**SEAFARERS' WELFARE ORGANISATIONS**

	Stella Maris Port Chaplain www.stellamaris.org.uk	07733 904 504
	Fishermen's Mission www.fishermensmission.org.uk	07917 754 259
	ITF Inspector ITF HQ www.itfseafarers.org	07539 171 323 wilson_iam@itf.org.uk seafsupport@itf.org.uk
	Nautilus International www.nautilusint.org	020 8989 6677
	RMT www.rmt.org.uk	0800 376 3706

**MNWB**

Scan here to download a digital copy of this leaflet.



## MANNED CENTRES

Manned centres have varying hours of opening depending on availability of staff and volunteers, the schedule of port calls and the expected footfall of seafarers.

All manned centres offer WiFi, SIM cards, currency exchange, Port Information Leaflets, refreshments, clothing, books & DVDs, games, essential toiletries and souvenirs. Pastoral support is available at all manned centres.



Tilbury Seafarers' Centre

## UNMANNED CENTRES

Unmanned centres are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They offer a seating area to relax and provide WiFi, books, Port Information Leaflets, tea and coffee making facilities, knitted hats/gloves. Pastoral support is available upon request.

## HYBRID CENTRES

Hybrid centres offer the same facilities as a manned seafarer centre with access to part of the centre out of hours. Pastoral support is available during opening hours and upon request out of hours.

**Port:** Immingham (United Kingdom)

**Bus:** Free minibus pick-ups to/from visiting ships and to/from Seafarers' Centre.

**Cafe / Bar:** Hot and cold food served Monday - Friday, 11:30 until 2pm. Bar open during Centre opening hours. TV, WiFi and Laptops for seafarers' use.

**Shop:** Wide selection of cold drinks, crisps, confectionery, toiletries and souvenirs. Tea, Coffee and Snacks available.

**Games Room:** TV, Pool Table, Table Tennis and Table Football for use by seafarers.

**WiFi:** Through the good offices of The Seafarers' Charity who have given us a one off grant, we are now able to provide free WiFi to all visiting seafarers.

**Chapel:** Quiet space for reflection and worship.

**Money Exchange:** We accept sterling, euros and dollars. We can change euros and dollars to sterling should seafarers wish to purchase items from local towns.

**Phone and Data Sims:** Top-up vouchers also available.

**Donations:** CDs, Books, DVDs and clothing available for seafarers to take.

**Function Room:** Room available for hire for meetings, presentations etc. Use of projector, coffee, tea and buffet available upon request. Quiet, comfortable area with settees for seafarers to relax.

**Meeting Room:** Available for hire. Coffee, tea and buffet available upon request. Also used as a quiet and private room by seafarers.

**Address:** Lockside Road, Immingham Dock, Immingham, North East Lincolnshire, DN40 2NN.

Port Visitor – Centre Information

In reviewing Major ports that do not currently have a seafarers' centre, a solution used in other locations is provided by unmanned portacabins. These can be equipped with seating, WiFi, TV and tea & coffee making facilities to provide an effective and affordable solution without the need for permanent staff.



### 20' x 10' Open Plan Office

Brand new 20' x 10' portable office. Plastic coated steel exterior. Plastic coated, profiled steel roof. Vinyl faced plasterboard, interior walls and ceiling, heavy duty vinyl floor, steel personnel door. Four double glazed windows. Heating, lighting, power, sockets and RCD protected consumer unit.

Unmanned Seafarers' Centre

**Price: £10,295**



## 5.2 WELFARE MANPOWER

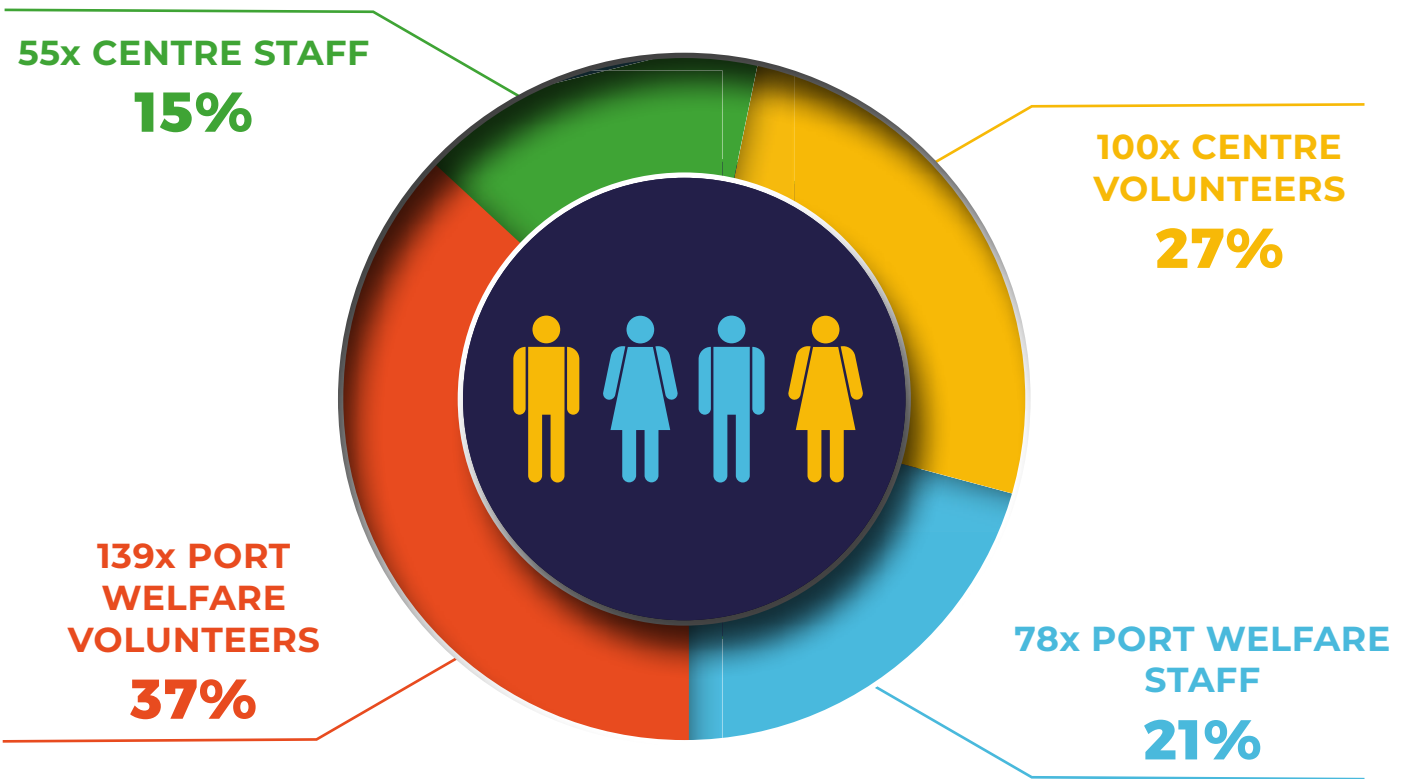
The societies currently employ 133 paid staff of which 59% (78) are port chaplains/mission officers and 41% (55) are centre staff.

The total port chaplain/mission officer and welfare volunteer cost is **£1,160,967** which is **27%** of the total annual cost of UK port welfare provision.

The societies are supported by a total of **239 volunteers** of which **58%** (139) are welfare volunteers and **42%** (100) are centre based volunteers. Volunteer recruitment is currently undertaken by each individual organisation, however

a national approach to recruiting and supporting volunteers could be beneficial.

It is important to note that based on the national volunteering formula it is estimated that 239 volunteers contribute on average an extra **109,920 hours** annually which when multiplied by the NMW (£10.42 per hour) generates **£1,145,366 of value**, annually to the economy and the maritime welfare sector.



***It is estimated that 239 volunteers contribute an average of 109,920 hours annually, adding £1,145,366 of value to the UK economy***

### 5.3 PORT TRANSPORT

MNWB's flagship Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP) has been in operation since 2008. Its main aim is to improve the quality, reliability and availability of safe transport in UK ports for seafarers.

The programme provides partial funding of new vehicles for the transportation of seafarers and fishers with the balance of funding being provided by front line charities.

There are currently 77 port welfare vehicles operating through the UK with annual running costs of **£340,697** which is **9%** of the cost of port welfare provision. Notwithstanding, this figure rises considerably when the capital cost of the vehicle is included. 68 of these vehicles are included in MNWB's flagship Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP), which has forecast an average annual investment cost of **£142,286** over the next 6 years (not allowing for inflation). This brings the total current cost of port welfare vehicles to **£482,983**.

- **The VRP started in 2008 and has assisted in the purchase of 170 vehicles (47 cars, 79 MPVs and 44 Minibuses) during its operation.**
- **In the past 14 years, £2.4M has been provided to maritime welfare charities in vehicle grants.**
- **The programme currently has 68 vehicles, made up of 16 Minibuses, 30 MPVs and 22 cars.**
- **There are 14 different charities participating in the programme covering the UK, Gibraltar and Falkland Islands.**

### 2023 FLEET



**22 CARS**



**30 MPVs**



**16 MINIBUSES**

Recognising the VRP's importance to many constituent members, and taking into consideration the ever changing funding and maritime landscape, MNWB will be undertaking a comprehensive review of the VRP, which will investigate:

- **Project sustainability**
- **Adoption of electric vehicles**
- **Vehicle leasing**
- **Clearer terms & conditions for participants**

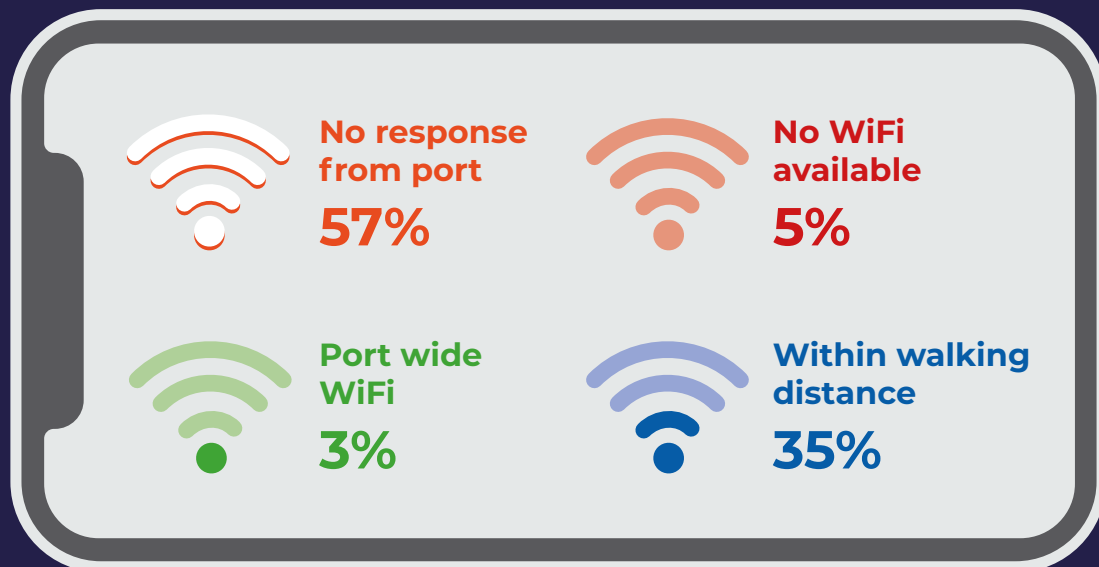
If an EV strategy is adopted for port welfare transport, it is likely that the cost model will change considerably, with capital costs exceeding operating costs. Consideration needs to be given to charging in ports, as well as the restrictions in oil & gas ports. With changing legislation affecting new vehicles from 2030, such a move will need to be factored into future budgets.





## 5.4 SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

The results of the port evaluation show that 43% (80) of the 186 ports contacted responded to the survey, 3% (6) of respondents confirmed port-wide WiFi was available for seafarers to access and 81% (65) confirmed that WiFi was available within a short walking distance of the port.



WiFi is available at all manned and hybrid centres, with some unmanned centres also offering connectivity. In addition, mobile broadband units (MiFi) are provided to 39 ship welfare visitors so that social connectivity is available to seafarers while onboard their vessels in 21 ports. In reality, these units are used in multiple ports depending on demand. This provides crucial social connectivity to those seafarers that are unable to disembark or access shore leave during port visits. The MiFi project is funded until July 2023 by MNWB, The Seafarers' Charity and the Department for Transport.

With the amendments to MLC 2006 coming into force in 2024, and responsibility to provide internet access in ports sitting with the state, MiFi provision is likely to be part of the solution for some ports. The monthly data allowance of all the connections is unlimited, allowing crew to stream and download without limitations. For those ports that have no accessible WiFi provision, MiFi is the only option.

Face-to-face contact is unique and irreplaceable, and the commitment of the welfare providers to take MiFi units

on board so the crew can contact their families helps to alleviate loneliness, isolation and mental health problems in seafarers and fishers.



## 5.5 PORT LEVIES

The principles of port welfare services and port levies are enshrined in ILO's Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC, 2006) Standard A4.4 - Access to shore-based welfare facilities, which states: *'Each Member shall require, where welfare facilities exist on its territory, that they are available for the use of all seafarers, irrespective of nationality, race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion or social origin and irrespective of the flag State of the ship on which they are employed or engaged or work.'*

The Maritime Labour Convention stresses that port levies are to be used, in accordance with national conditions and practice, to financially support port welfare services and, 'where levies are imposed, should be used only for the purposes for which they are raised'.

fundraising and donations to deliver seafarers' welfare services. Furthermore, the services provided by the voluntary organisations are not available from any other sources and directly benefit seafarers, port authorities, shipowners and agents.

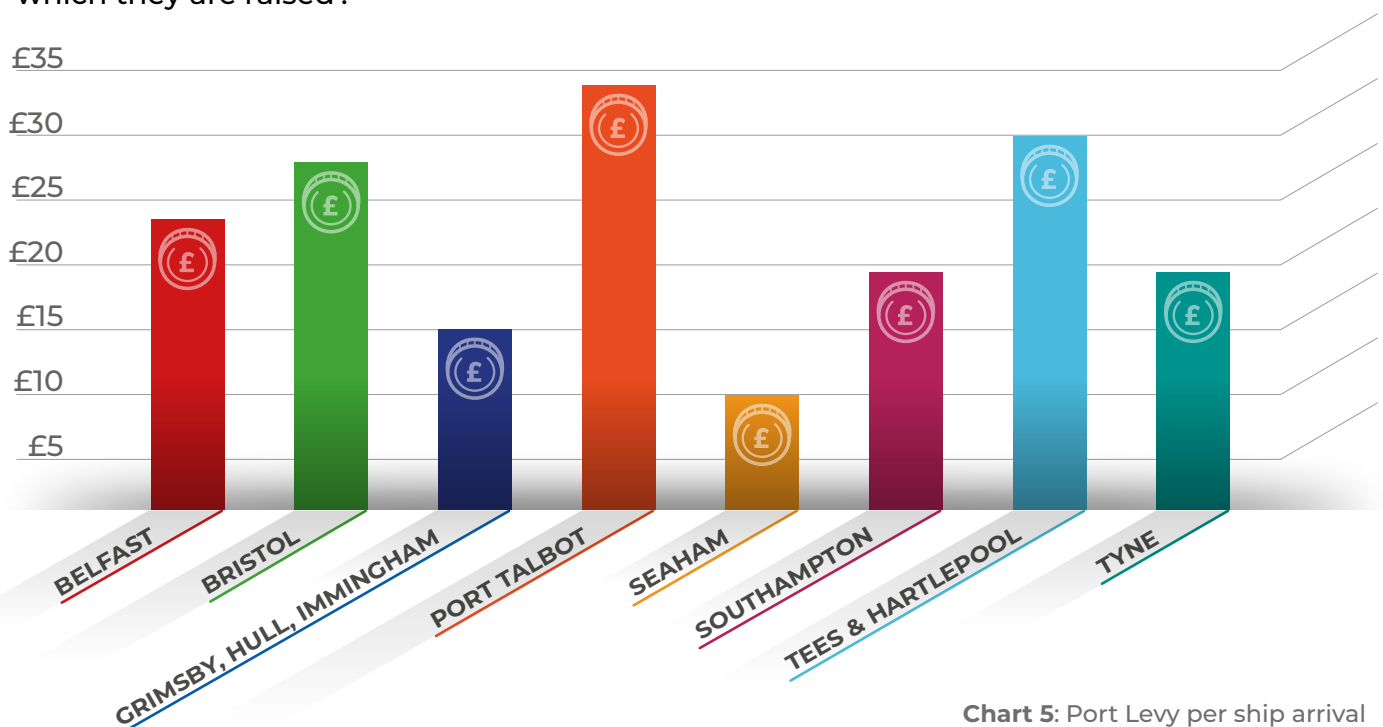


Chart 5: Port Levy per ship arrival

In 2014, following a request by maritime welfare charities, MNWB established a collaborative Port Levy Project to encourage and support the creation of port levy schemes in UK ports to help finance the provision of seafarers' welfare provision. The project identified where levies and donations already exist and attempted to promote voluntary levies in additional ports. Currently there are 10 voluntary levy schemes in operation.

Port levies are an extremely important funding stream because port welfare is delivered by charities, defined by MLC 2006 as 'voluntary organisations'. These organisations are mostly dependent on

Most large and medium size ports have some welfare provision in the form of ship visiting, transport and/or centres. In the small number of ports where levies do exist, there are different tariff systems in place – some applied per ship arrival, and some based on tonnage. In all cases, the level of the levy differs considerably, with the maximum levy set at around **£50 per visit**. In all instances, the levy is capped at a maximum number of port calls (usually 10 or 12 per annum).

The fixed voluntary levy schemes range from **£10** to **£35** per vessel. In addition, 2 ports charge a tonnage-based levy and 3 ports provide regular donations to centres.



To put welfare provision into perspective, the cost of bringing a large ship into port can often exceed £100,000 and even a skip for the waste will be over £100. This means that a welfare levy is very modest and insignificant to the overall costs. It therefore offers great value for money. Yet, when compared to typical rate cards for labour in ports, the service of welfare charities, and

therefore the welfare of seafarers, is hugely undervalued by the industry.

The tables below show the rate card for ABP Southampton. By comparison, ship welfare visits cost considerably less than the £62.24 rate for general port operatives, yet in the majority of UK ports charities do not attract any funding.

#### Per Operative per hour or part thereof

DAYS	OPERATING HOURS	CHARGE PER HOUR
Monday – Friday	08:00 – 17:00	<b>£62.24</b>
Monday – Friday	07:00 – 08:00	<b>£74.20</b>
Monday – Friday	17:00 – 21:00	<b>£74.20</b>
Saturday / Sunday (Minimum 8 hours)	07:00 – 21:00	<b>£98.14</b>
Saturday / Sunday (Minimum 8 hours)	All Other Hours	<b>£114.43</b>

#### Per Engineer per hour or part thereof

POSITION	CHARGE PER HOUR
Engineering Manager	<b>£203.96</b>
Senior Project Engineer / Maintenance Manager / Senior Electrical Engineer	<b>£149.35</b>
Project Engineer	<b>£94.74</b>
Electrical Engineer / Team Leader	<b>£94.74</b>
Technician	<b>£88.16</b>
Clerk of Works / Contract Technician	<b>£88.16</b>



In some ports, rather than adopting a welfare levy, donations are awarded to the seafarers' centre to use on a discretionary basis. Commonly this is used to run the centre and therefore revenue costs associated with ship visiting and transport receive no funding. In other ports, whether in receipt of levy income or donations, a committee decides how to apportion the

funds based on work undertaken and current need.

It is important to note that, although welcomed by maritime welfare charities, donations are not a stable source of income and can be withdrawn at any time. It is also the case that existing levies do not cover the entire cost of welfare services provided.

## PORT DONATIONS

<b>London Gateway</b>	<b>Port of London Authority donates £30k per annum to Tilbury Seafarers' Centre.</b>
<b>Tilbury</b>	<b>Port of Tilbury donates approx. £1k per month to Tilbury Seafarers' Centre.</b>
<b>Felixstowe</b>	<b>Felixstowe Port donates an undisclosed amount annually towards the Seafarers' Centre for building costs and vehicle running costs.</b>

## PORT LEVY FORMULA

In terms of levy apportionment, MNWB applies a proven formula in some ports and manages the distribution of funds collected. This system works effectively and is agreed with the welfare charities as a 'fair' system of distribution. Such a system could be replicated in all locations if ports were willing to adopt a welfare levy scheme similar that at ABP Humber. In this instance, funds collected in the 9 months to September 2022 totalled £136,000 and were distributed by MNWB according to the formula below.

The formula works by reserving 20% for capital projects, aimed at improving existing seafarers' welfare services, and 80% for operational costs. The remaining 80% (or 100% if there are no requests for capital grants) will be allocated via the recommended formula detailed below, which rewards organisations that have delivered port welfare services over a period of time.

Points are awarded based on deployed resources and taken as a weekly average.

POSITION	MAXIMUM POINTS
Full Time Paid Employees (based on 5 days per week)	20
Part Time Paid Employees (4 points per day worked per week)	16
Volunteers*	1

\*In exceptional circumstances, where the contribution of an individual unpaid volunteer is exceeding normal expectations over a prolonged period, the PWC can allocate up to a maximum of 12 points.



The following example demonstrates how the formula works and is based on a welfare levy that generates £100,000 a year. The funds collected would be distributed by MNWB to maritime welfare charities as shown below.

## EXAMPLE

Following 20% set aside for capital projects, an annual amount of £100,000 would be distributed to welfare charities to fund their operations in this port.

### ORGANISATION 1 (OPERATING A CENTRE)

1 x Full Time Centre Manager - 20 points

1 x Part Time Chaplain (3 x days) - 12 points

15 x Volunteers - 15 points

**Total Points = 47**

**Total Funding = £43,518**

### ORGANISATION 2 (NO CENTRE)

1 x Full Time Chaplain - 20 points

1 x Volunteer - 12 points

**Total Points = 32**

**Total Funding = £29,630**

### ORGANISATION 3 (OPERATES SMALL CENTRE)

1 x Full Time Chaplain - 20 points

9 x Volunteers - 9 points

**Total Points = 29**

**Total Funding = £26,852**

**TOTAL £100,000 / 108PTS  
= £925.92 PER POINT**





## 6 MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

***As National Seafarers' Welfare Board, MNWB has a responsibility to 'keep under review the adequacy of existing welfare facilities in appropriate ports, monitor the need for the provision of additional facilities and withdrawal of the use of under-utilised facilities.'***

MNWB discharges this responsibility through its PWCs, which regularly review the adequacy of welfare provision and make recommendations for changes to the levels of resourcing. It is the case, however, that expansion of the welfare services to more UK ports is not attainable within the limitations of current budgets. Indeed, since undertaking the research, we have already seen one maritime welfare charity reduce its footprint in the UK. This reinforces the need for continual review so that resources are deployed where the need is greatest.

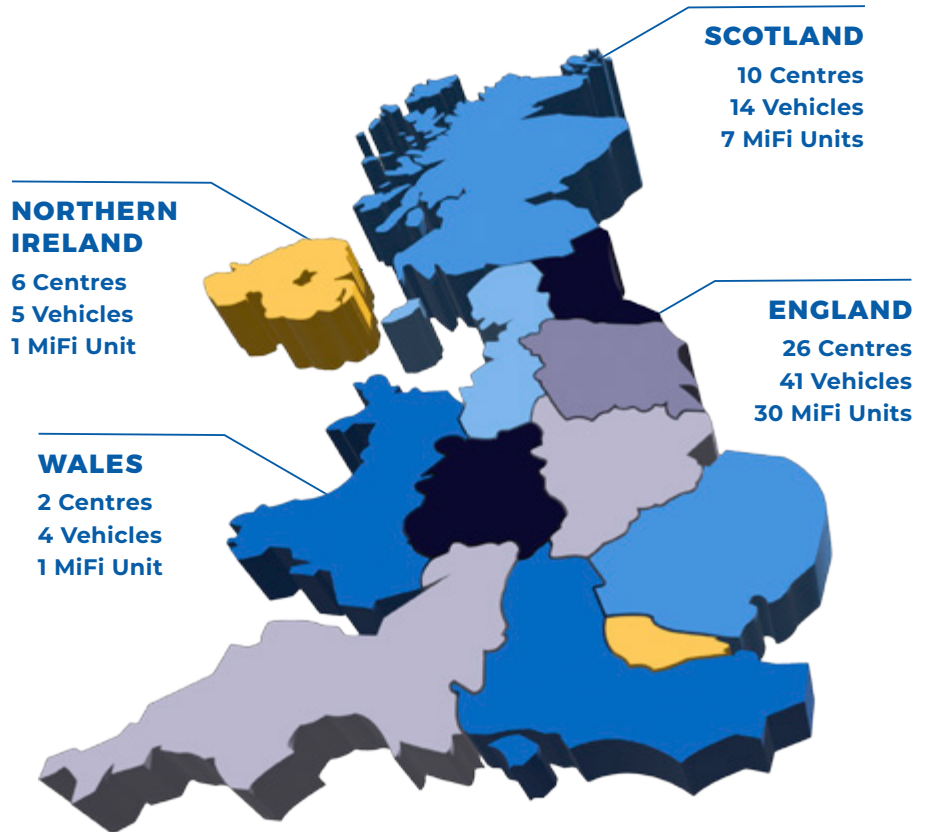
For a needs-based approach to be effective, welfare charities need to consider their response to PWC reviews and ensure that they deploy the resources at their disposal accordingly. While MNWB can make recommendations, however, it has no authority under the current system to ensure that this happens. It can use the leverage of funding being targeted towards ports where needs are not being met, but funding resources are also limited.



## PORT ACCREDITATION

Over the next two years, MNWB intends to work with its PWCs to improve the monitoring of port welfare. This will include a self-assessment for ports to complete, which will be regularly reviewed by PWCs.

MNWB's Port Visitor platform already has the facility for PWCs to review port welfare standards as well as assign accreditation levels to ports based on available welfare services in any port. This function could be further developed to align with the self-assessment model adopted in the future.



### What are Port Accreditations?

#### Bronze

Bronze ports provide Port Visitor with seafarers' welfare information and have a designated Seafarers' Port Welfare Liaison.

#### Silver

Silver ports provide seafarers' welfare information, a designated Seafarers' Port Welfare Liaison, operate a Welfare Board or Committee, provide ship welfare visits and port transportation.

#### Gold

Gold ports provide seafarers' welfare information, a designated Seafarers' Port Welfare Liaison, operate a Welfare Board or Committee, provide ship welfare visits, port transportation and access to a seafarer's centre or local equivalent.

Accrediting ports will aid in the appropriate deployment of resources and should raise welfare standards over time. It would also encourage the welfare charities to more effectively adapt to changing needs in UK ports and respond to prevailing demand.

Direct input from seafarers will also be important in the future as the UK responds to the changing needs and demographics of those working at sea. This is why the Port Visitor platform already allows seafarers to rate welfare and provide feedback on a port-by-port basis. Feedback will be available for PWCs to download and review at the regular meetings as a standing agenda item.

The National Seafarers' Welfare Board will be able to review ratings and feedback from all UK ports and make recommendations to Government, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and port authorities. Again, this will help to drive up welfare standards and ensure that the UK continues to be an exemplar for seafarers' welfare at the ILO and among MLC member states.

### Your overall rating of welfare in this port



Tell us about your experience in this port

Submit Feedback



# 7 CONCLUSIONS

During 2023, MNWB will refine the data collection methodology to ensure that updates to the research can be provided annually. It is MNWB's intention that the data collected will shape the future of UK maritime welfare, so that it can continue to be an exemplar to other member states.

## 7.1 SEAFARERS' CENTRES

The existing network of seafarers' centres adequately meets the needs of those seafarers that use the facilities, although it is acknowledged that some of the facilities could benefit from updating. The centres in Immingham and Felixstowe will be refurbished during the next 12 months. Bristol and Tilbury already offer a good standard but will be further improved this year.

With not all Major ports providing access to either a centre or a safe space for seafarers to use and access to WiFi, there is some work to do in prioritising those ports with a high seafarer footfall. Centres form the largest component of the total cost at **£2,723,947** per year, an average of **£61,907** per centre. As port welfare is typically

provided all year round, the average cost per day is just **£169.61**, although the cost of individual centres will vary depending on whether they are manned or unmanned. This is remarkably good value considering that over **92,072<sup>4</sup>** port calls were made to all UK ports by cargo ships during 2021. There were also **181,000<sup>5</sup>** cruise passengers and **5.4m** international short sea passengers arriving in UK ports in the same period.

For all Major ports to provide access to a safe space for seafarers, it is likely that unmanned centres will provide the most cost-effective solution. This assumes that the port operator can offer space within the port estate to either provide a building or accommodate a Portacabin and provide access to utilities.



## 7.2 WELFARE MANPOWER

While 133 paid staff are employed by the maritime welfare charities, the average annual salary is calculated at **£8,729**, which reflects the part time elements of the workforce.

Also of note is that in addition to the spend on paid staff of **£1,160,967**, a further **£1,145,366** of value is contributed by volunteers. In real terms, this brings the total investment in welfare manpower to **£2,417,352**.

Considering that welfare charities are operating in **111 ports** and service over **400 fishing harbours**, this too provides excellent value for money for the maritime sector. In terms of value to the shipping industry, the **average annual cost of ship visiting per trade port is £10,459**. Calculating the value to the fishing industry is less straightforward; welfare workers typically serve all ports in the region in which they are located and the number of ports per regions varies considerably.



## 7.3 PORT TRANSPORT

Port transport is regarded by the sector as a core welfare service. It ensures that seafarers can move around the port safely, facilitates access to medical and dental services, and provides respite from the ship and port environment, which has a positive impact on mental health. The operational cost of the existing fleet of **68** vehicles is **£340,697 per year**. The capital cost of the vehicles is currently part funded by the Vehicle Replacement Programme, and the forecast spend over the next 6 years is **£142,286 per year**. What is not included in the figures is the capital contribution made by the

maritime welfare charities, which is likely to add a further **£120,000 to £150,000 per year** to the total cost. Due to the withdrawal of two funders, a number of vehicles due to be replaced in 2023 have been deferred to 2024.

Transport is currently only provided in ports where there is ship visiting activity or a centre. To scale this operation so that all Major and Minor ports are serviced, it is estimated that the increased investment would be in the region of **£150,000 per year for capital costs** and **£230,000 per year for manpower**.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/port-and-domestic-waterborne-freight-statistics-port#all-port-traffic-totals-major-and-minor>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sea-passenger-statistics-all-routes-2021/sea-passenger-statistics-all-routes-2021>

## 7.4 SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

Seafarers say that they feel so much happier when they have spoken to their families at home. This is a consistent theme of the Seafarers Happiness Index, a quarterly survey conducted by The Mission to Seafarers in association with Standard Club and IDWAL.

That only **3% of [80] respondents** confirmed that port wide WiFi was available is concerning, particularly with the amendments to MLC 2006 coming into force for member states from the end of 2024. This may, however, reflect that ports are not aware that WiFi is available in seafarers'

*“Time and time again respondents stress the difference that having good, cost-effective Wi-Fi access makes and the positive impact it has on their mental health. Those that have the access they crave, and who are able to use it as they desire, are so much happier than those that don’t. It is the same message that we hear from every Seafarers Happiness Index reporting period, connectivity matters and is absolutely vital to seafarers.”*

Seafarers Happiness Index, Q3 2022.



centres and that MiFi is available in some ports. No ports reported that internet connectivity is available at anchorage.

MNWB currently has **39 MiFi units** deployed in UK ports that provide fast mobile broadband onboard ships that are alongside. While these units provide an affordable short-term solution, they are no substitute for port wide WiFi as

they are limited to one ship at any one time.

If all Major and Minor ports had at least an unmanned Portacabin centre, then fixed WiFi could be installed to serve the needs of seafarers that are able to come ashore. This would not address the problem of connectivity for those seafarers unable to disembark or, indeed, those at anchorage.

## 7.5 PORT LEVIES

In the **10 ports** that do operate welfare levies, welfare services are generally of a high standard and provide good availability. This is even though they do not cover the entire cost of welfare provision. Considering that the current costs only include the basic services of centres, manpower, transport and WiFi/MiFi, welfare charities still need to raise significant funds from the general public and maritime funders to maintain their operations.

Detailed analysis of welfare activity may clarify the impact that maritime welfare charities have on the sector. For example, correlating the number of ship visits undertaken with the cost of manpower would provide an average cost per ship visit, which would then be comparable to manpower costs for other services delivered in port. MNWB will consider undertaking such analysis in the future.



It is difficult to correlate the levy income data against the overall cost of welfare provision. In the case of Liverpool Seafarers' Centre, however, data for year ending March 2021 shows that a total of **£34,877** was raised by the tonnage-based levy against total welfare costs of **£300,266**. Clearly, albeit a welcome boost to income, at less than **12% contribution** this levy will not lead to sustainability for Liverpool.



***“Detailed analysis of welfare activity may clarify the impact that maritime welfare charities have on the sector.”***





# 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

**As well as identifying gaps in existing services and facilities, the research has highlighted recommendations to underpin a new national maritime welfare strategy as a basis for welfare development in the future. Such an initiative would secure the UK's position as a world class nation for maritime welfare. It is also noted that recommendations would need to be individually costed and would be in addition to the current estimate of £4,807,937.**

## 8.1 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Develop Port Information Leaflets for all designated Major ports. Currently port information is available for 46 ports out of a total of 111. Leaflets are currently available for 32 of the 53 Major ports.
- b) Populate Port Visitor with welfare information for all UK ports (Major, Minor and Uncategorised).
- c) Introduce a port accreditation system for all Major and Minor ports, to be managed through PWCs.
- d) Ensure welfare provision at all designated ports is regularly reviewed by the PWC in its region.
- e) Ensure welfare information is available in all Major and Minor ports, in particular those ports that do not have a welfare presence (seafarers' centre or ship visitor). This should be provided in the form of a notice board with a QR code link to information on Port Visitor and should be the minimum standard for ports with no provision.
- f) Future funding, whether from grants or port levies, should be conditional on welfare providers working collaboratively to deliver the most effective welfare solution, as set out in the MoU with MCA. This states, 'Keep under review the adequacy of existing welfare facilities in appropriate ports, monitor the need for the provision of additional facilities and withdrawal of the use of under-utilised facilities'.



## 8.2 SEAFARERS' CENTRES

- a) Upgrade existing manned centres to hybrid centres (24-hour access).
- b) Establish a minimum standard for major ports to provide an unmanned 24-hour centre, providing seating area, access to WiFi, and self-service refreshments. Currently, only 24 out of 53 Major ports have a seafarers' centre.
- c) Ensure that future port or terminal developments include an area for seafarers' welfare.

## 8.3 WELFARE MANPOWER

- a) Review port traffic data for all Major and Minor ports and establish a viable threshold for deployment of permanent ship visiting resources.
- b) Survey ship visitors and centre staff to identify what additional support can be provided.
- c) Improve support for volunteers to encourage higher levels of volunteering.
- d) Develop a system for logging ship visits in all ports to compare with annual ship arrivals and include in annual reporting to Government.
- e) Establish a programme to support the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

## 8.4 PORT TRANSPORT

- a) To include all 77 vehicles currently deployed for seafarer transport in the Vehicle Replacement Programme.
- b) To review port traffic data (and average number of seafarers) for all Major and Minor ports to establish a viable threshold for deployment of a permanent port transport service.
- c) To develop a strategy for the introduction of Electric Vehicles in all ports through the Vehicle Replacement Programme.

## 8.5 SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

- a) Ensure maritime welfare charities understand and prioritise the need for social connectivity during ship visits.
- b) Identify gaps in internet provision, as required by the MLC 2006 amendments, and support the need through centre-based WiFi or MiFi access at all berths and anchorages as required.

## 8.6 PORT LEVIES

- a) Promote the business benefits of port levies to ports and shipowners through their respective industry bodies.
- b) Agree a target of December 2024 for legislation to be passed to both Houses and ready for Royal Assent.



## APPENDIX I - SEAFARERS' CENTRES

Organisation	Location of SFC	Manned	Unmanned	Hybrid
<b>Aberdeen Seafarers' Centre</b>	Aberdeen		1	
<b>Great Yarmouth</b>	Great Yarmouth	1		
<b>Liverpool Seafarers' Centre</b>	Liverpool Eastham	1	1	
<b>The Mission to Seafarers</b>	Belfast Falmouth Fowey Grangemouth Groveport Londonderry Foyle Newport North Tees Port Talbot South Shields South Tees Warrenpoint	1 1     1 1   1 1	   1 1 1   1	1
<b>Queen Victoria Seaman's Rest</b>	Tilbury London Gateway Bristol Immingham Felixstowe Ipswich Sharpness	  1 1 1   	 1   1 1	1
<b>Sailors' Society</b>	Invergordon Montrose Southampton Ullapool Lerwick	1   1 1	 1 1	
<b>Seaham Seafarers' Centre</b>	Seaham Harbour		1	
<b>Stella Maris</b>	Hull Sunderland Teignmouth Sheerness Fawley Kings Lynn Plymouth	1      	  1 1 1 1 1	1
<b>The Fishermen's Mission</b>	Mallaig Troon Kilkeel Ardglass Portavogie Fraserburgh Peterhead North Shields	1       	1  1 1 1 1 1 1	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>16 (36%)</b>	<b>25 (56%)</b>	<b>3 (6%)</b>



## APPENDIX II - MiFi DISTRIBUTION

Society Name	Location	Region
The Fishermen's Mission	Leeds	England
The Fishermen's Mission	Various	England
Liverpool Seafarers' Centre	Liverpool	England
Liverpool Seafarers' Centre	Liverpool	England
Liverpool Seafarers' Centre	Liverpool	England
Liverpool Seafarers' Centre	Liverpool	England
Liverpool Seafarers' Centre	Liverpool	England
Liverpool Seafarers' Centre	Liverpool	England
The Mission to Seafarers	Fowey	England
The Mission to Seafarers	Fowey	England
The Mission to Seafarers	Felixstowe	England
The Mission to Seafarers	Southampton	England
The Mission to Seafarers	Southampton	England
The Mission to Seafarers	Humber	England
The Mission to Seafarers	Portbury	England
Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest	Tilbury / London Gateway	England
Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest	Tilbury / London Gateway	England
Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest	Tilbury / London Gateway	England
Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest	Tilbury / London Gateway	England
Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest	Tilbury / London Gateway	England
Sailors' Society	Southampton	England
Sailors' Society	Southampton	England
Sailors' Society	Bristol	England
Stella Maris	Bristol	England
Stella Maris	Immingham	England
Stella Maris	Felixstowe	England
Stella Maris	Southampton	England
Stella Maris	Southampton	England
Stella Maris	Tees	England
Stella Maris	Hull	England
The Fishermen's Mission	Kilkeel	Northern Ireland
Aberdeen Seafarers' Centre	Aberdeen	Scotland
The Fishermen's Mission	Troon	Scotland
The Mission to Seafarers	Various	Scotland
Sailors' Society	Dundee / Montrose / Perth	Scotland
Sailors' Society	Invergordon	Scotland
Stella Maris	Aberdeen	Scotland
Stella Maris	Glasgow	Scotland
The Mission to Seafarers	South Wales	Wales



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