

NETWORK

Stories from the UK's fishing communities

Spring 2026



All for Dan

Working at the heart of our fishing communities and understanding those we serve is crucial. Louise Liddell, Fishermen's Mission Area Manager for South West Scotland, tells us of the importance of ongoing relationships with those living a unique way of life only found around our coastline:

"For centuries fishing has been a way of life here. Boats head out to sea from tiny craggy coves and larger ports like Troon and Stranraer. Recently, I was in Borgue visiting Martin and Michelle. Sadly, Michelle's son, Dan McNeill, was lost at sea in 2010 when he was only 16 years old. Dan was meant to have gone on holiday with his parents but instead joined his brother Joseph on their trawler, Homeland. Dan loved nothing more than being at sea. Tragically, a passenger ferry was at fault in a collision with the Homeland off the coast of Eyemouth. Both Joseph and Dan were plunged into the icy North Sea as the Homeland went down. Despite rescue efforts from two nearby trawlers, only Joseph was rescued, with Dan being swept out to sea.



Louise joins the Repair Shop team

"Our work here is all about relationships. Martin and Michelle have remained in contact, becoming keen supporters of our work. Michelle has even bravely completed a skydive to raise funds. They were astonished to learn their fundraising efforts had raised over £10,000. For Martin and Michelle, supporting the caring work of the Fishermen's Mission that means so much to them, helps keep the memory of Dan alive."

Louise has also become a TV star when the team from the BBC programme 'Repair Shop on the Road' contacted her. Louise explains:

"The fishing memorial at Kirkcudbright had weathered many storms in its time and needed some attention. The Repair Shop team restored the memorial to look almost brand new. It was a race against the clock as our National Fishing Remembrance Day service was looming, but the work was completed just in time!"



Please donate today to ensure fishing communities around our coastline are listened to, understood, and deeply cared for. We can only do this with your help!



Michelle and Martin

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Louise Liddell at the Kirkcudbright memorial after the Repair Shop team worked their magic!



The Fishermen's Mission and local health care providers - bringing life-changing services to fishermen at the quayside.



I'm a New Man



Mick Scott, a fisherman from Newhaven, is not the man he used to be. Whilst he remains a bit of a character and a typical fisherman, there is something markedly different about him. And as Mick tells anyone who wants to listen, and many who do not, the Fishermen's Mission is partly to blame! We'll let Mick explain himself:

"It's true, there has been a dramatic change in me! Clothes that I had to squeeze into are now too large to wear. Even my oilskins are baggy! I've entirely changed my relationship with food and exercise - taking care of my health and looking after myself better."

Mick has lost over two stones, dropped down four clothes sizes, and is regularly exercising. He tells us how this transformation came about:

"I was urged by Danny Huff, my local Fishermen's Mission Port Officer, to attend a SeaFit event at Newhaven quayside. I really wasn't interested but Danny was gently persuasive and very persistent - he's like a dog with a bone! The SeaFit health advisors checked me over and very clearly suggested that I needed to make some lifestyle changes. I took their advice on board and now I'm a new man!"

Danny Huff, Fishermen's Mission Port Officer for Shoreham adds:

"We will always support anyone wanting to make healthier lifestyle changes. The impact SeaFit makes by being on the quayside to give help and advice at a time and place appropriate for fishermen like Mick is crucial."

SeaFit is a partnership between the Fishermen's Mission and the Seafarers Hospital Society. Since its beginning in 2019, over 271 quayside events have changed fishermen's wellbeing for good - but as Mick tells us, that can only happen with your support.



"I'M NOT SURE I'D BE HERE TODAY WITHOUT THE INPUT SEAFIT AND DANNY FROM THE FISHERMEN'S MISSION HAS MADE IN MY LIFE. PLEASE DONATE TODAY TO ENSURE MORE FISHERMEN LIKE ME CAN GET THE HEALTH ADVICE THEY SO DESPERATELY NEED."

Never Forgotten

Just days before Christmas 2025, a fishing boat from Arbroath was washed ashore at Inverbervie on the Scottish east coast. There was nobody on board – yet the engine was still running. Despite an extensive search by RNLi lifeboat and HM Coastguard helicopters, the sole crew member, a young fisherman, remains missing.

Only days later, in early January 2026, the FV Fortitude is fishing 14 miles off Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Northumberland. Conditions are atrocious. As heavy seas pound the boat, two crew members go overboard. The Humber Coastguard receives a Mayday call, and a rescue operation is launched. Nearby, two fishing vessels also pick up the Mayday call and battle force 9 gales to race to the scene. Here, they recover two casualties, one of whom is known to have died.

Loss of life at sea takes its toll on local fishing communities. At the Fishermen's Mission we are always quick to be alongside those involved following incidents, accidents and tragedies at sea. We feel keenly the loss of family members and friends. We see the pain etched into the face of every crew member. And though they may appear to be stoically carrying on with life, we know that things are never quite the same again, never as they once were. There is an irreplaceable missing piece and that hurts.

THAT IS WHY WE REMEMBER. THAT IS WHY WE NEVER FORGET. THAT IS WHY THE LOST AND THOSE WHO LOVE THEM ARE ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS.



NATIONAL FISHING REMEMBRANCE DAY

10th May 2026

This year's National Fishing Remembrance Day will be on Sunday 10th May. Once again, this will be a day for us to come together - at quayside services, in churches, or in our homes - to say a prayer and remember those fishermen who did not come home.

For more information on National Fishing Remembrance Day events please visit our website: www.fishermensmission.org.uk/FishingRemembranceDay/

National Fishing Remembrance Day is organised in partnership with the Fishermen's Mission, The Seafarers' Charity, Stella Maris, Seafish, and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.



Photo: Chris Boulton. chrisboulton.co.uk

LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA TAKES ITS TOLL ON LOCAL FISHING COMMUNITIES. AT THE FISHERMEN'S MISSION WE ARE ALWAYS QUICK TO BE ALONGSIDE THOSE INVOLVED FOLLOWING INCIDENTS, ACCIDENTS AND TRAGEDIES AT SEA.



Photo: Chris Boulton. chrisboulton.co.uk



Peter Dade on a regular visit to North Shields

Jamie Comes Home

“IF I COULD HUG YOU RIGHT NOW, I WOULD!”

The words of Jamie, a fisherman from North East England who is putting his troubled past behind him to rebuild his life. Peter Dade, Fishermen’s Mission Area Manager in North Shields tells us Jamie’s story...

“We knew Jamie well as he had fished locally for years. Recently life had become tough for him. A difficult domestic situation resulted in Jamie becoming homeless. He was sofa surfing, relying on friends and acquaintances for a spare floor to sleep on. Without a permanent home, Jamie struggled to get out fishing and had hit rock bottom.

“Thankfully, he remembered the positive impact the Fishermen’s Mission had made on his life previously and turned to us for support. We used our network of local connections to explore housing possibilities. Winter was fast approaching and the very real concern of Jamie sleeping on the streets was looming. With much relief, accommodation was found. Jamie finally had a roof over his head.”

Peter applied for grant support from several of our maritime charity partners, meaning Jamie could buy some furniture to make his house a home. As Jamie tells us, this crucial support had a major impact:

“Getting housed and then setting up home meant everything. I’m now back at sea fishing again and have real hope for the future. The Fishermen’s Mission has given me a firm footing to rebuild not only my career but my life. I can’t thank Peter enough, which is why I told him, ‘If I could hug you right now, I would!’”

Peter Dade is the longest serving staff member in the Fishermen’s Mission. In his 33+ years visiting boats, homes and harbours he can’t recall a fisherman hugging him, but he knows the difference our service makes to fishermen’s lives:

“Jamie is just one of many hundreds of fishermen I have known whose lives have been changed for good by the Fishermen’s Mission. Please donate today as there are many more like Jamie out there.”



North Shields Fish Quay

“GETTING HOUSED AND THEN SETTING UP HOME MEANT EVERYTHING. I’M NOW BACK AT SEA FISHING AGAIN AND HAVE REAL HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. THE FISHERMEN’S MISSION HAS GIVEN ME A FIRM FOOTING TO REBUILD NOT ONLY MY CAREER BUT MY LIFE.”



Peter Dade in his early days as a Fishermen’s Mission Superintendent



CREDIT: Perran Treneman – Fishing Animateurs

Protect Your Family's Future and Support Our Fishermen

Writing a will is one of life's essentials. It means family and friends receive the gifts of money, property or personal effects in the way that you intended. It's also important to ensure that if you have made a will, it is current – reflecting life's changes such as marriage, birth of children/grandchildren, and retirement. Your will is also a perfect opportunity to include gifts to charities that are close to your heart, showing your support for them beyond your own lifetime.

You may feel that writing a will is an expensive, time-consuming or complicated process. The good news is that in partnership with the National Free Wills Network, the Fishermen's Mission is proud to offer you the opportunity to have a straightforward will (or pair of mirror wills) written free of charge by a qualified solicitor.

Having a will brings peace of mind, with the satisfaction of knowing that your wishes will be respected, easing the burden on loved ones at a difficult time.

There is no obligation to include a gift to the Fishermen's Mission. However, if you choose

to do so, you will have the satisfaction of being able to make a difference to the lives of fishermen and their families – like those you have read about in this edition of the Network - long into the future.

For more information about this scheme, or leaving a gift in your will, please contact our Legacy Manager, Andy Perry, in confidence, or visit our website:

Website: www.fishermensmission.org.uk/wills
 Email: andyperry@fishermensmission.org.uk
 Tel: 01489 566922

Have You Got What It Takes?

Every day, fishermen head out to take on the ultimate challenge of bringing home a catch. There is a battle against monstrous waves and the harshest weather possible. They certainly have got what it takes... so what about you?

Are you ready to take on an ultimate challenge of your own?

Can you run a marathon for us – proving you've got what it takes whilst raising much-needed funds for the Fishermen's Mission? We promise to give you all the support you need and we currently have limited spaces available at two iconic marathons:



Loch Ness Marathon - Sunday 27th September 2026

With a minimum fundraising commitment of £500 raised.

London Marathon - Sunday 25th April 2027

With a minimum fundraising commitment of £2,000 raised.



A journey of 26.2 miles starts by putting one foot in front of the other.

To run for the Fishermen's Mission, that journey begins by emailing us at: fundraising@fishermensmission.org.uk

The Big Dip is coming later in 2026 and this time it's even bigger and dippier! This autumn, we'll be asking you to plan your cold-water dips and set up fundraiser pages to help us go ultimate Big Dip!

You can do your Big Dip challenge in whatever way suits you, either as an individual or a team. We need as many Big Dippers as possible so get ready to get involved!

And this year we want to see even more schools Big Dipping. So, if you know of a local school whose children would relish seeing their teachers get wet for a great cause, point them in our direction!



Visit www.fishermensmission.org.uk/BigDip or scan the QR code for more details.



Some went out on the sea in ships;
they were merchants on the mighty waters.
They saw the works of the LORD,
his wonderful deeds in the deep.
Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love
and his wonderful deeds for mankind.

Psalm 107 v 23-24, 31 (NIV)

Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. Patron: Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal.

Photo courtesy of Kevin Ritch, Shetland

Some of the ways you can help us

Make a donation

■ We receive no government funding or lottery support so every single donation makes a real difference to us. You can make a donation by calling **FREEPHONE 0800 6341020** or donate online at: **www.fishermensmission.org.uk** or post a cheque to our address shown below.

You can set up a regular gift online or use the enclosed gift form.

Become a volunteer

■ We are always grateful for the help given to us by our dedicated volunteers. If you can spare a few hours each month please call us for a chat on: **FREEPHONE 0800 6341020** or email: **enquiries@fishermensmission.org.uk**

Pray for the ministry of the Fishermen's Mission

■ You can download our Prayer Calendar at www.fishermensmission.org.uk/prayercalendar/

Remember us in your will

■ Everyone wants to ensure that friends and family are well-provided for when you are writing or updating your will. By including even a small gift to the Fishermen's Mission you can make a life-changing difference for fishermen and their families.

If you would like our 'Guide to Gifts in Wills' booklet, call: **FREEPHONE 0800 6341020** or email: **andyperry@fishermensmission.org.uk**

How to contact us:

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