

## **Ocean Youth Trust Adventure**

We offered a great opportunity along with partnership of Worcestershire Leaving Care Team and Ocean Youth Trust for 6 care Leavers to experience a life changing adventure. They had the chance to experience life at sea sailing on board a tall ship for 4 nights, sailing from Southampton, travelling to Yarmouth, Weymouth, and Chichester Harbour, seeing beautiful dolphins and the red moon along the way. The crew consisting of the 6 care leavers got involved with the night/day navigation and had an opportunity to take part in in different roles. The tall ship sailed 140 nautical miles. Of the eleven young people our 6 Care Leavers earned Royal Yachting Association Start Yachting certificates.

The adventure contributed towards building confidence, skills and friendships.

Young people's comments:

'My favorite part was oh, everything really, doing all the exercise and hoisting up the sails.'

'My best part has been going around seeing new places that I've never been to before'

'It has been a great time learning new experiences and meeting new people. I've gained some overall confidence. Thank you for a good trip. I didn't want it to end.'

I really enjoyed boating with OYT and I think that it was a very valuable experience for me.

## **London Marathon 2019**

Finally, after three years of waiting we have had an amazing care leaver complete the London Marathon, Chris completed the run in 4.55.47mins and looked very calm and collected at the finish. He has already requested the opportunity to run next year if we can secure another place. Here is Chris story as to why he ran for us and raised over his target of £750

Hi, my name is Chris and I am running the London marathon in April to support the Rees Foundation as this charity is very close to my heart. I was in care myself from the age of 12 and moved around to different Childrens homes for several years before I unfortunately went into prison where I stayed for most of my adult life. Being in care definitely contributed to my time in prison and a life of committing crime, this is why children who are in care now need guidance and stability when they reach 18 and this is what the Rees Foundation charity is all about to help those who need it the most. I have now changed my life at the age of 35 and if I can do it then anyone can. I hope to inspire young children that anything is possible with the right help and support and maybe if I had the help when I came out of care, I wouldn't have wasted my life being unhappy and being angry at the world.

## **Care Experienced Conference Liverpool, 2019**

On the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019, a momentous event took place. The first of its kind. Over 200 care experienced people of all ages, backgrounds and locations (UK, Ireland, Channel Islands, Spain and as far away as Australia), came together with non-care experienced professionals in the field, with one common aim. The aim was to work together to change the system and ultimately improve the care system. By listening to each other, creating a platform to be heard and an opportunity to signpost to relevant organisations, this grassroots, user-led event was a game changer. We can't wait to go back next year. Follow progress, BBC interviews, parliamentary discussion and news on [www.careexperiencedconference.com](http://www.careexperiencedconference.com).