



A grateful Charitable Trust writes in with an article praising the Community Payback work provided: mentions the volume of work, the attitude of the offenders, and the commitment of staff.

“The Willing Work Force that Gets The Job Done

To build a Heritage Maritime Centre at the Small Gains Marina on CANVEY ISLAND, has been a labour of slow progress. We have been supported by a local company who has supplied the materials, but manpower has been a real trial.

Then it happened: At last, we as a Charitable Trust were accepted by Southend Probation to receive their help in the shape of a full team of young men doing Community Service (eight men and a supervisor).

As a somewhat grumpy old person, who had founded the Trust, I waited with some trepidation for their first visit, which was three weeks ago. They arrived in a white transit van which had a section in the back for tools and equipment; the supervisor shook my hand warmly then asked for the list of jobs I needed them to undertake.

That first week I wasn't prepared but gradually I got into the swing of things. They achieved so much and so quickly, they painted our Clubhouse, they painted the crews quarters on our WW11 boat, they did small carpentry jobs, they put our flower beds into position, they put the flagpole into position, they even helped me put the gearbox on the starboard engine into position....in fact within three weeks they have advanced the Centre in great leaps. Please may it continue.

It all seems terribly well run. The young men seem as genuinely happy to meet me as I am to meet them, there is a certain logic with them spending time with someone who is much older than them, someone who wants to talk and wants to listen. The management too come to see me to check on progress which I find helpful.”

The boat is about to be used in London as part of the D-Day Landings commemoration ceremonies.