

DART TALES

RNLI Lifeboats

NEWS FROM THE RNLI LIFEBOAT TEAM IN DARTMOUTH

GREAT NEWS FOR THE RNLI DART VOLUNTEERS.

The two year trial to assess the suitability of placing an RNLI B class inshore lifeboat in Dartmouth has been completed. The trial commenced with Salcombe's ex Atlantic 75 lifeboat on 9 September 2018, to work alongside the D class lifeboat. In particular, the Operational Director of the RNLI wished to be very clear about the frequency and type of tasking requests that are placed on the D class lifeboat that are near the limit of the guidelines for its use and capability, including crew safety factors.

On 7 July Mark Strudwick, Lifeboat Operations Manager for the RNLI Dart lifeboat Station, was told that the Trustees of the institution had approved the Operations Committee's recommendation for the permanent allocation of a B class lifeboat to the Dart Lifeboat Station. It was proven that the desired effect on lifesaving capability had been met, which resulted in an earlier than expected approval.

During the trial the Atlantic 75 was launched at the request of the Coastguard 50 times, saved two lives and assisted 97 people. She was also launched 114 times on exercise, which highlighted the exceptional commitment of

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the Dart volunteers. During the same period the D class lifeboat was launched 30 times, saved one life and aided 44 people.

Atlantic 75 lifeboats are being phased out and being replaced by the larger, faster and even more capable Atlantic 85. The date of the arrival of an Atlantic 85, commencing with one from the Relief fleet, depends on when training the crew how to convert

from working on a 75 to an 85 can commence. Training restrictions are currently in place due to the Coronavirus. It is expected that the Atlantic 85 will operate from a modification to the Aquadoc which the Atlantic 75 is currently working from.



Both lifeboats were called out to search for and rescue a missing paddleboarder.

Photo by David Bown.

RECENT CALL OUTS BY THE DART LIFEBOATS.

At the time of writing the last two call outs have been to serious casualties who fell on their boats. A Dutch holiday maker fell and suffered a severe injury to her head whilst on her boat moored up the Dart. It required the crews from both inshore lifeboats to transfer her from the yacht to the larger Atlantic 75 lifeboat. On the previous day another holiday maker was thrown against the railings of his boat as they crossed Start Bay and hit rough waves. He suffered a serious shoulder injury and was in severe pain. A paramedic on the RNLI crew took Entonox for the pain and the lifeboat



Help with casualty care arriving.

Photo by Andy Kyle.

crew, working with the Dartmouth coastguard volunteers, transferred him to the Dartmouth Yacht Club to await an ambulance to take him to Torbay hospital.

Nine people were rescued in two days after capsizes on the River Dart.

On Saturday 4 July a couple in their fifties were unable to climb back into their open Canadian canoe when it capsized off Blackness Point, upstream from Dittisham. Two RIBs from Dart Harbour were already on the river and reached them first. They took them onboard and ferried them and the canoe to the Dittisham pontoon. The crew of the D class lifeboat checked their vital signs there and helped to keep them warm and out of the strong wind until the Dartmouth Coastguard volunteers arrived. They supplied them with warm towels and transferred them back by road to Totnes.

The following day an 18ft. day-sailer raised its sails and almost at once capsized. All seven on



The sunken yacht was lifted to the surface.

board were thrown into the water. Four swam to the muddy shore opposite Sharpham Quay and the other three pulled themselves into the small inflatable tender which was still attached to the practically submerged stern of the yacht. The wind was gusting to 35knots from the west as the two Dart lifeboats responded to the call. The RNLI Atlantic 75 lifeboat, B795, took the three sheltering in the tender onboard and the D class inflatable lifeboat was able to reach the very muddy bank and to take the remaining four back to the B class lifeboat. The larger lifeboat, with ten on board, made its way upstream to Sharpham Quay. A RIB from Dart harbour slowly pulled the yacht, with only four inches of

its stern showing above the water, to the quay. There they were joined by the Dart Harbour barge, Hercules, with a crane and pump on board. Strops were guided under the yacht and she was gently lifted from the water.

SURVIVAL SKILLS FOR KIDS IN THE SEA.

Connect to the www.rnli.org.uk website and look under the 'safety' tab. There are videos of what to do if you or your children get into trouble in the water, as well as links to all the RNLI lifeguarded beaches in the country with dates and times. You can also use it to link to the RNLI online shop and support the charity that way. The expenses of running the lifeboat service do not stop. The RNLI visitor centre remains closed for the present. The station website at www.dartlifeboat.org.uk and Facebook page give up to date details of all aspects of life at the station including greater information on launches and will give information on the progress of the Atlantic 85 when she arrives. To receive news updates please use the Contact us tab on our website to opt in to receive them.

News, details of launches, photographs and videos can be found on the Dart station website. www.dartlifeboat.org.uk or the station Facebook page www.facebook.com/dartnllifeboat



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