

# FACTSHEET

## INTRODUCTION

THE LIFEBOAT FUND EXISTS TO SUPPORT THE VITAL WORK OF THE RNLI, SAVING LIVES AND RESCUING PEOPLE AT SEA, ON OUR RIVERS AND FROM FLOODS.

IT DOES THIS BY RAISING MONEY FROM SERVING AND RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, BRITISH TELECOM AND THE ROYAL MAIL. WE ARE PROUD TO BE THE RNLI'S LONGEST-SERVING, AND ONE OF ITS BIGGEST, CONTRIBUTORS.

THE RNLI IS AN INDEPENDENT CHARITY AND DOES NOT SEEK OR RECEIVE FUNDING FROM UK GOVERNMENT. ITS VOLUNTEER LIFEBOAT CREWS AND LIFEGUARDS RELY ON DONATIONS TO CONTINUE THEIR VITAL ROLE OF SAVING LIVES AT SEA.

EACH YEAR THE LIFEBOAT FUND AND THE RNLI AGREE UPON THE PRIORITIES TO BE SUPPORTED THROUGH THE FUND'S APPEAL.

## SUPPORTING LIFESAVING AT SEA

The RNLI rescues 23 people on average every day. Its volunteer lifeboat crews are ready to respond to shouts in all weathers and at all times of the day and night. These men and women come from all walks of life but share a commitment to saving lives at sea. They are often called away from work, home comforts and deep sleep to brave conditions that test their skill, strength and courage. Their lifesaving work is essential, often difficult and can be life-threatening.

The RNLI relies on voluntary contributions and legacies, and needs to raise over £140M every year to meet running costs. It is only thanks to supporters such as The Lifeboat Fund that it is able to maintain over 340 lifeboats in its active fleet, based at 235 lifeboat stations around the coasts of the UK and Republic of Ireland. The charity's lifeboats launched 8,304 times in 2013, rescuing 8,384 people and saving 325 lives. In total, the RNLI has saved over 140,000 lives since it was formed in 1824.

### The story of The Lifeboat Fund

The Lifeboat Fund was founded nearly 150 years ago by a group of civil servants wishing to donate a single lifeboat to the RNLI. They issued an appeal to government offices in 1866 asking for a total of £300 and, such was their determination, raised it within a year. The aptly named lifeboat Civil Service was put on service and a new charity, The Lifeboat Fund, was born.

Since then, The Lifeboat Fund has provided the RNLI with 52 new lifeboats. These craft have helped volunteer RNLI crews save over 4,700 lives and assisted thousands more.

The Fund also helps to buy essential crew kit and training needed before volunteers can go on a shout. We have paid for general running and upkeep of RNLI stations. That included significant help to refurbish Lifeboat Pier on the River Thames which houses the RNLI's busiest station.

### TODAY, THE LIFEBOAT FUND'S GOAL AND MISSION REMAIN THE SAME:

**WE RAISE MONEY FOR THE RNLI – TO SAVE LIVES AND PROTECT THE VOLUNTEER CREWS.**



Photo: RNLI/Clifford Hicks

If you would like to know more about this charity and how you can support it please contact [thelifeboatfund@RNLI.org.uk](mailto:thelifeboatfund@RNLI.org.uk).

The Communications and Public Service Lifeboat Fund registered charity numbers 248421 (England & Wales) and SC041904 (Scotland). Patron: HRH The Duke of Kent

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## 'THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE!'

The RNLi saved me and my two friends in 2001. Afterwards, when we were being treated in hospital for hypothermia, we learnt that our body temperatures were so low we may only have survived a further 5-10 minutes in the water.

The RNLi saved our lives with only minutes to spare.

'I cannot stress enough the importance of supporting the RNLi so that its incredible volunteers can be ready for action. You never know when you or a loved one might need their help and I encourage everyone to dig deep when contributing to this vital fund.'

**Martin Toner, Civil Service Welfare Officer, Belfast**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, SIR PETER HOUSDEN



As Chair of this lifesaving charity, I am delighted that you are helping us to fundraise for The Lifeboat Fund in 2014. Your support and assistance will help us protect some of the bravest volunteers in the business.

The Lifeboat Fund's 2014 Appeal seeks to donate £280,800 to the RNLi, sufficient to train one crew member at every UK Lifeboat Station.

The training these volunteers require is rigorous. It turns a recruit from someone who wants to save lives into a person equipped to do so well and safely.

However you choose to get involved with The Lifeboat Fund, you will be joining a long tradition of Civil Servants and others who are committed to raising money to save lives at sea.

My thanks and best wishes,

**Sir Peter Housden KCB,  
Permanent Secretary of the Scottish Government.**



Photo: RNLi/Craig Denford



Photo: RNLi/Les Stubbs



Photo: RNLi/Nigel Millard