



Lifeboats

News release

9 May 2008

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The Mersey makes its mark as Exmouth's new lifeboat beats low tide

Exmouth RNLI's new Mersey class all weather lifeboat has proved its worth in a low water rescue (Thursday 8 May 2008). The lifeboat successfully negotiated the Swashway channel to assist a yachtsman who'd run aground. The stations former Trent class lifeboat would not have been able to launch at this state of the tide.

Tim Mock, RNLI Coxswain at Exmouth, saw the 22-foot yacht grounding in broken seas on the seaward side of the Pole Sands and launched the Mersey *Margaret Jean* and the inshore lifeboat *George Bearman* to assist the one person onboard the vessel. Within half an hour, the sailing boat had been towed off the sand on the rising tide.

As Kevin Riley, RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager at Exmouth, explains, the Mersey made all the difference:

'The Trent class lifeboat was tidally restricted and couldn't leave her moorings for around two hours each side of low tide. We wouldn't have been able to use her today. But the Mersey with its shallower draft was able to negotiate the channel successfully so both the lifeboats could work together to assist the yacht. It's proof that the Mersey is the ideal lifeboat for Exmouth, especially with the channel changing and silting up so quickly.'

Once the yacht had been taken off the sand, one of the volunteer lifeboat crew brought the yacht into Exmouth docks while both lifeboats were then called on to assist three kite surfers who'd got into difficulties off Exmouth main beach.

Notes to editors

- Attached is a photograph of the Exmouth RNLI Mersey class lifeboat *Margaret Jean* taken when she first arrived in Exmouth. Please credit RNLI.
- Exmouth RNLI fundraising dates for your diary:
*Saturday 7 June Budleigh Salterton Male Voice Choir and the Pontypridd Male Voice Choir in concert at All Saints Church, Exeter Road, at 7.30pm.
*Saturday 19 July Exmouth RNLI flag Day

- The RNLI is a registered charity that saves lives at sea.
- It provides, on call, the 24-hour service necessary to cover search and rescue requirements to 100 nautical miles out from the coasts of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.
- There are over 230 lifeboat stations.
- RNLI Lifeguards operate on many of the busiest beaches in the UK.
- The RNLI further saves lives through sea and beach education.
- The RNLI depends on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income.

Vision

To be recognised universally as the most effective, innovative and dependable lifeboat and lifeguard service.

Royal National Lifeboat Institution headquarters:

West Quay Road, Poole,
Dorset, BH15 1HZ
Tel 0845 122 6999
Fax 0845 126 1999

**A charity registered in
England, Scotland and the
Republic of Ireland**

- RNLI lifeguards will patrol Exmouth town beach from 17 May until 30 September, and Sandy Bay during the busy peak season between 5 July and 31 August. On both beaches the RNLI lifeguards will be on duty between 10 am and 6pm.

RNLI media contact

For further information please contact Kevin Riley, Exmouth RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager, on 07703022475.

RNLI online

For more information about the RNLI visit www.rnli.org.uk and for detailed media information including news from the south west, please go to www.rnli.org.uk/press

For more information about Exmouth RNLI please visit www.exmouth-lifeboat.org.uk