

All-female crew sail Round Britain on pioneering journey to raise awareness of plastics in our oceans

Starting in Plymouth, 7th August

The first continuous plastic sampling while circumnavigating the British Isles

A pioneering Round Britain sailing expedition starting and finishing in Plymouth this summer will see a diverse group of women sample the UK's waters for plastic pollution and run awareness-raising events along the beautiful British coastline.

The groundbreaking Round Britain sail will take 30 days and incorporate high-profile events in Plymouth, Cardiff, Belfast, Arran, Stornaway, Edinburgh and London. The female crew members include scientists, students, artists, filmmakers, business women, psychologists, ocean activists and sustainability professionals, as well as experienced sailors.

eXXpedition, the Community Interest Company behind Round Britain, specialises in all-women sailing trips with a focus on highlighting the devastating impact single-use plastic is having on our planet's oceans, ecosystems and on human health. eXXpedition have run previous expeditions all over the world, but this summer will be the first time they will have a crew sampling in UK waters. Previous research carried out by eXXpedition has highlighted the endemic nature of microplastics within our ocean environments globally and the increasing potential impact they have on human health.

"After years of studying ocean plastics all over the globe I am so excited to be bringing this project home to the UK," says eXXpedition co-founder and ocean advocate Emily Penn. "The more time I spend at sea, the more I realise that the solutions start on land. We may be seeing the more obvious impact of plastic and toxic pollution in the more remote parts of our planet, but what is clear is that the pollution is coming from land – the UK included. We need to expose these issues and raise consciousness of the work to be done to solve them here in the UK."

The eXXpedition crew will be sailing 72ft challenge yacht Sea Dragon (owned by Pangaea Exploration) from Sutton Harbour, Plymouth on the 8th August and will complete their sail in the same location on the 5th September.

Professor Richard Thompson, Head of the International Marine Litter Research Unit at the University and a globally renowned expert in the problem of marine litter, said: "The government's inquiry into microplastics last year brought the threats posed by marine litter to wider public attention. But there is still a great deal of work needed to understand the full scale of the problem, while identifying potential solutions that take both economic and environmental factors into account. We are currently involved in research and collaborations that seek to meet those goals, and this scientific voyage can certainly make a positive contribution to that work."

eXXpedition successfully raised £10,000 through crowdfunding for outreach activities at ports visited during the voyage. Further contributions to the project can be made via Paypal at <https://goo.gl/V8k93F>. All sailing costs are covered by crew contributions.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For more information, interview opportunities or to sign up for event updates for your area, please contact: Soraya Abdel-Hadi E: media@exxpedition.com T: 07796 214418

NOTES TO EDITOR:

To find out more about eXXpedition, please visit exxpedition.com where you will find more information about the founders, previous expeditions and upcoming Round Britain events.

For high resolution images, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/eXXRoundBritain> or email media@exxpedition.com. All images must be credited to 'eXXpedition' when used, including the images included in this release. Round Britain specific images and video content will be available, on request, from the beginning of the sail.

BROADCAST OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Telephone or Skype interviews** with eXXpedition co-founders Emily Penn and Dr Lucy Gilliam, eXXpedition Round Britain co-mission leaders and additional crew, including scientists
- **On-location interviews** – please inform us if you'd like one of these and we will organise a mutually convenient time slot with appropriate crew members for your audience
 - **Plymouth**, 8th August – 10:00-12:00, Sutton Harbour
 - **Cardiff**, 11th August – 10:00-13:00, Mermaid Quay
 - **Belfast**, 15th August – 11:00–15:00, Dock Café and Odyssey Pavilion
 - **Arran**, 17th August – 11:00-16:00, Lamlash Lifeboat Station
 - **Stornoway**, 21st August – 11:00 onwards
 - **Edinburgh**
 - 25th August – 12:30 onwards at Holyrood or 16:00-18:00 at Sea Dragon, by Britannia, Ocean Terminal
 - 26th August – 11:00-16:00 Ocean Terminal Shopping Centre or ASCUS Lab
 - **London**, TBC, please contact us for more details
- **Press events** – these events are invite only, please let us know if you are interested in attending
 - **Plymouth**, 7th August – eXXpedition Launch Event, University of Plymouth Marine Station
 - **Cardiff**, 10th August – Reception at Tŷ Hywel
 - **Belfast**, 15th August – Dock Café and Odyssey Pavillion
 - **London**, 30th August – Press Reception at Tower Pier