



About Pioneer

The Pioneer was built in 1864 by Peter Harris at the maritime village of Rowhedge, on the river Colne near Colchester.

Pioneer was one of a fleet of 130 similar sized deep sea Essex fishing smacks registered at Colchester in the late 1800's. They became known as 'skillingers' for their work dredging for deep sea oysters off the Dutch Coast on the Terschelling Bank.

Pioneer and her contemporaries would have worked all of the waters of Northern Europe, from as far North as Denmark all the way around the English Channel to the Firth of Clyde. Their main trade being the dredging of oysters and scallops, they would have also been involved in many other ventures as well.

'The skillingers' would lay up during the summer months, following the hard winters dredging in the North Sea, their crews often taking work on the huge racing yachts of the time and sailing as far a field as America and the Mediterranean, along way from Colneside.

Pioneer was cutter rigged until 1889, when she was cut in half and lengthened by 11ft in Brightlingsea, amidships a wet well was added, this was a flooded compartment holding 12 tonnes of water, where oysters and scallops could be stored alive and enable Pioneer to travel further and to stay at sea for longer. At this point a mizzen mast was also added and she became ketch rigged.

By 1998 few remembered the Pioneer, all that was left of a once large fleet of 'Skillingers' were a few rotting hulks in the Essex saltings. A decision was made to raise Pioneer from her muddy grave, and restoration began, something which would have truly astonished her original owners and crews, whose trade had become known as 'the hardest and cruelest Essex man ever worked'.

The Pioneer
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www.pioneersailingtrust.org.uk



Supported by the
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North SEAfaring



PIONEER CK18



'Pioneer' v. One who ventures into the unknown. One who opens up new areas of thought, or development
Adj. Leading the way



Come sailing on Pioneer

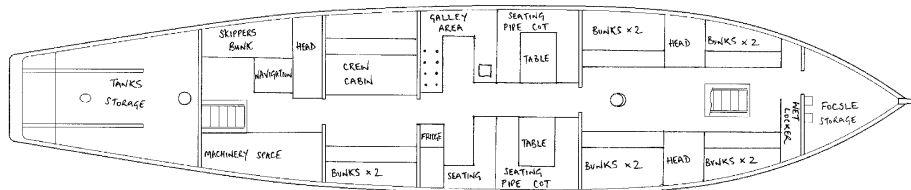
Time aboard a sailing ship provides an excellent opportunity to learn about working as a team, leadership and communication. With her extensive rig and open decks, Pioneer is well suited to her life as a sail training vessel. Pioneer has now embarked on a new career as a tool to help with learning, be it developing team and leadership skills or simply to provide young people with a challenge that is out of the ordinary. Alternatively groups may wish to use Pioneer as a platform for learning about the unique geography and environment of the coastal regions of Essex.

The Pioneer Sailing Trust is keen to work with a wide variety of groups who will benefit from a unique experience aboard. If you are involved with a group of young people who would benefit from a challenge at sea, then please call 01621 776062 to discuss your requirements.

Crew and Safety

Safety at sea is crucial. Therefore Pioneer has a professional crew who are qualified and very experienced at taking groups of people to sea on board sailing craft. Pioneer herself operates under the authorisation of the Maritime Coastguard Agency and she is coded to Category 2 enabling her to operate within 60 miles of a safe haven.

Youth Group leaders can be assisted in the preparation of risk assessment documentation if this is required.



Activity

Pioneer is fully equipped to take groups of all ages to sea. Groups of up to 12 individuals plus a professional crew of 3 can sail as far a field as time and tide will allow. Voyages normally last between 1 and 5 days, or longer if you prefer.

We have established a bursary fund which can be used to help reduce the cost for particular groups.

Pioneer is uniquely placed as a tool to assist with learning about the river Colne and the towns and villages it connects. Therefore, with support from North Seafaring and the Heritage Lottery Fund, a range of learning materials is available to help teachers present the industrial and social history of the area in an innovative and stimulating way. The materials can be used in the classroom or as part of a trip or visit on-board Pioneer.

Alternatively, should you wish to use Pioneer to support other subjects including physics, biology or for study of the environment, then our team will be happy to work with you to develop a programme.

We can also support the achievement of a range of Royal Yachting Association (RYA) courses accredited by the Royal Yachting Association (RYA).

Pioneer is also well placed to assist with the delivery of vocational learning programmes. We can link activity on-board to specific learning requirements, or even help with the delivery of 'Key Skills'. Individuals will be required to be involved with all aspects of the running of the ship and therefore demand good 'Communication' skills and the ability for 'Working with Others' as well as the full range of unit requirements.

