

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2016.

For immediate release

## **Southend's RNLI Lifeboat Crew Launched To Two Sailors Drifting In Force Six Winds**

**Southend on sea's RNLI lifeboat crew launched the Atlantic 85 lifeboat from the pierhead boathouse at 20.45hrs to reports of an 18ft sailing boat with two persons aboard, in difficulty and drifting in the blustery force six to seven East North Easterly winds off of The Maplin Sands.**

The volunteer lifeboat crew made best speed, given the conditions, to the location which was just below The Blacktail Spit marker buoy, arriving on scene to find the vessel being grounded by the high winds and rough seas.

A lifeboat crew member was safely put aboard the sailing vessel and checked the condition of the two sailors, who were both ok, before assisting with lowering the sails, therefore making the vessel more stable.

The coastguard search and rescue helicopter based at Lydd in Kent had also been tasked, along with the larger RNLI all weather lifeboat from Sheerness as backup and they were both shortly on scene.

Due to the continuing bad weather and the tidal conditions it was deemed safer to winch the two sailors and the lifeboat crewman to the safety of the helicopter rather than attempt to transfer them to the lifeboat, leaving the sailing boat at anchor to be recovered later.

The helicopter landed at the nearby Southend Airport, where the sailors were met by Southend Coastguard.

Southend and Sheerness lifeboats were stood down around 23.00hrs and headed back to station, with crews leaving the boathouses for home at around 01.00hrs.

### **RNLI media contacts:**

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- For enquiries outside normal business hours, contact the RNLI duty press officer on 01202 336789

### **RNLI online:**

For more information on the RNLI, please visit [www.rnli.org.uk](http://www.rnli.org.uk). News releases and other media resources, including [RSS feeds](#), downloadable photos and video, are available at the RNLI [Press Centre](#).

For more information and photos on Southend on sea lifeboat station go to [www.southendlifeboat.org](http://www.southendlifeboat.org)

**Key facts about the RNLI:** The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea. Its volunteers provide a 24-hour search and rescue service around the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland coasts. The RNLI operates 237 lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland with 4,700 lifeboat crew and has more than 1,300 lifeguards on over 220 beaches around the UK and Channel Islands. The RNLI is independent of

Coastguard and government and depends on voluntary donations and legacies to maintain its rescue service. Since the RNLI was founded in 1824 its lifeboat crews and lifeguards have saved over 140,000 lives.

Visit the RNLI's official [YouTube channel](#) for more films and follow our rescue stories on [Twitter](#).

A charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736).  
Charity number CHY 2678 in the Republic of Ireland.