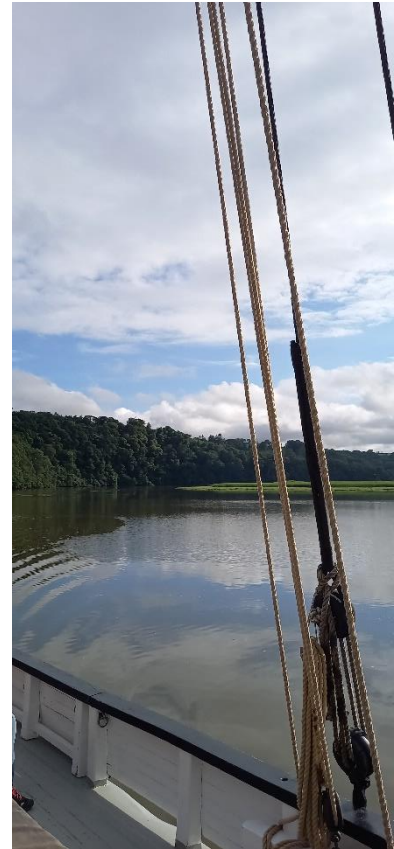


## Sailing on the Lynher Barge in the Summer of 2021

Over the last three or so years, National Historic Ships have been running the Shipshape Heritage Trainee Partnership (SHTP). The project introduces young people from different backgrounds to the maritime heritage industry ensuring traditional skills are kept alive and opening up an entire sector of work. SHTP is already close to my heart. From 2018 to 2019 I was a trainee with the project, clambering around ships, using traditional skills, learning about different types of vessels both on and out of the water.

Cut to spring of 2021, I was desperate to go sailing again. I'm very fortunate in that I live in Devon and whilst I enjoyed exploring the moors and countryside, I was tired of the lockdown restrictions and of not seeing the sea. I daydreamed of ropes and sails and the wonderful lurch of a sailing ship...

You can imagine my excitement when I heard that a friend from the SHTP project was working in Cornwall on the *Lynher*, a Tamar barge. She invited me to Cremyll and I met with Barbara and Dom Bridgman - the owners of the barge.



Originally built in 1896, *Lynher* is the last operating Tamar barge in existence. It's an absolute pleasure watching such a beautiful boat sailing up and down the waters it was designed for. I visited *Lynher* as a SHTP trainee myself a couple of years ago and in such a short amount of time, quite a bit has changed. The galley now runs off electricity from a generator rather than gas and Dom and Barbara hope to move to solar and tidal energy in the future. The toilets are composting and there are beds that fold down with squishy pillows and sleeping bags where there used to be hammocks.





What I love about the whole *Lynher* ethos is its focus on local community. Groups and organisations from the Plymouth and Tamar areas are encouraged to go sailing on the *Lynher* and their fleet of smaller boats to learn about the tides, sailing and the history of the boat. This community work is so important and it's a great thing to be part of.

The *Lynher* is also a fantastic flagship for maritime heritage - it's a well-known and beloved sight to locals, there's an emphasis on reducing emissions where possible and it's keeping the history of the Tamar barge alive. These things are essential to preserving skills and reminding us of what the world once looked like, and what it can look like in the future.

I currently work for a sail cargo company called EcoClipper. For now, most of the work is online aiming to raise funds to build a fleet of clipper ships to transport cargo and passengers on four global shipping routes. Having the odd sailing trip here and there has been an excellent balance over the summer. Being reacquainted with Dom, Barbara and *Lynher* and maintaining contact with fellow SHTP trainees has been a wonderful reminder of why networks and communities are vital to one's work and happiness.

