

### **Local Explorers visit to the RNLI College – February 23<sup>rd</sup>**

We were delighted to find that travel by train to Poole was not disrupted by industrial action, landslips or over-running engineering work. Even the weather was kind, if a little chilly when we stood outside the building for explanations from our guides.

The RNLI College runs two tours, all run by volunteers. The morning Discovery Tour took us past the various training rooms, where lifeboat volunteers from across the UK and Ireland are trained to become able crew members. The college comprises a fine modern conference and training venue in a stunning waterside setting at Poole.

We saw people jumping from a height into a swimming pool, dressed in their all-weather, yellow protective gear – learning how to stay calm, reach casualties and whatever safety might be available. There was a specially equipped room, which simulated the real life scenario of being at the helm of a lifeboat heading out to sea to deal with an emergency – complete with speed controls and the visual effects of being in a storm.

The afternoon all-weather centre tour took us round two adjacent buildings. One is where every stage of the lifeboat building process is contained in-house and under one roof. They currently build six Shannon Class lifeboats a year. The other contains a series of bays where maintenance and even complete refits are undertaken for the entire range of lifeboats in the fleet.

Lunch was enjoyed in their Riggers Restaurant, which offered magnificent, panoramic views of Holes Bay in Poole Harbour. All aspects of the day were greatly enjoyed.

Nigel Swann - Coordinator