

# World Oceans Week 2009



*Going rockpooling at  
Port William World Oceans Day Celebration*

## **1. Introduction**

World Oceans' Day was first proposed in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, and is now officially celebrated world-wide on June 8<sup>th</sup> each year. It has been celebrated annually in Dumfries and Galloway for many years, and a Celebration event was held at Rockcliffe from around 1999 until 2007 when it was relocated from Rockcliffe to Port William to involve a wider section of the Dumfries and Galloway population, in response to a request from the Port William community. The event has grown each year, and following the successful World Oceans Day Celebration event at Port William in 2008 and excellent positive feedback from both participants and visitors, plus a desire for both Rockcliffe and Port William to each host World Oceans Day Celebration events, it was decided to expand World Oceans Day into World Oceans Week (WOW) 2009 during 6<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2009, which would comprise 2 celebrations, one at Rockcliffe on June 7<sup>th</sup> and one at Port William on June 14<sup>th</sup>, and a week of marine themed activities in the week in between.

## **2. The aim of World Oceans Week 2009**

Whilst World Oceans Day is an international initiative, WOW 2009 aimed to raise public awareness of Dumfries and Galloway's unique and spectacular marine environment, its high conservation designations and the issues facing its marine communities, industries and biodiversity. The chronic problem of beach litter on Scotland's beaches was also highlighted by incorporating beach cleans at both Rockcliffe and Port William as part of the WOW activities.

WOW 2009 was aimed at as broad a spectrum of the public as possible through an extensive variety of activities including celebrations, walks, talks, activities, wildlife-spotting boat trips and displays, and brought together a wide range of local expert knowledge, such as Dumfries and Galloway and National Trust for Scotland Rangers, local fisheries groups and Geo-D (Dumfries and Galloway Geology organisation), with national organisations including the RSPB, Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network and the British Trust for Ornithology, to enable families and

individuals, locals and visitors alike, to learn about, and become more involved with, the many aspects of the marine environment.

WOW 2009 also aimed to use and promote as many Dumfries and Galloway organisations, services and facilities as possible to additionally help the local economies of through World Oceans Week.

### **3. Advertising**

Advertising of WOW 2009 was through a wide range of media

- *Internet sites*  
WOW was advertised on a large number of web sites included VisitScotland web site, several local What's On web sites, Port William web site, BBC Breathing Spaces web site, SFP web site and the BBC News web site all of which targeted local, national and international visitors
- *Local press*  
Adverts and press releases were published in the Galloway Gazette, Dumfries and Galloway Standard, Stranraer & Wigtown Free Press, Galloway News, and Raring2Go magazine
- *Posters and fliers*  
These were distributed extensively throughout Dumfries and Galloway in Tourist Information Centres, shops, businesses, camp sites and local tourist venues.
- *Schools*  
All the schools in Dumfries and Galloway received posters and brochures through the Eco Schools project.
- *Libraries*  
Posters and brochures were circulated throughout all D&G libraries.
- *Participants*  
All participants received posters and brochures for distribution
- *Local TV and radio*  
WOW was advertised through local radio and TV 'What's On' slots, and on the BBC News web site
- *Ayrshire libraries*  
Posters and fliers were sent to libraries in Girvan where we have identified a large number of WOW visitors come from.
- *SFP literature*  
WOW was advertised and promoted through Solway Firth Partnership's 'Tidelines' newsletter (circulated extensively throughout Dumfries and Galloway and Cumbria) and their 'Beachcomber' members' newsletter.

#### **4. World Oceans Week 2009 Events**

WOW 2009 comprised 15 events, mainly across the Stewartry and Wigtownshire regions.

##### ***Full day Celebration Events***

7<sup>th</sup> June        Rockcliffe  
14<sup>th</sup> June        Port William

##### ***Beach cleans***

6<sup>th</sup> June        Rockcliffe  
13<sup>th</sup> June        Port William

##### ***Weekend events***

12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June        Sharkatag at Luce Bay

##### ***Week long events***

6<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June        Solway Sea Shells, Mill on the Fleet Visitor Centre  
6<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June        Solway Marine Life, Stewartry Museum Kirkcudbright

##### ***Day events***

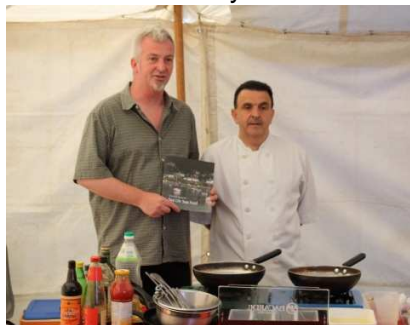
6<sup>th</sup> June                Mull of Galloway Marine Day (RSPB Visitor Centre)  
7<sup>th</sup> June                Sun sea and geology guided walk to Castlehill Point  
8<sup>th</sup> June                Mull of Galloway boat trips  
10<sup>th</sup> June               Mersehead Meander (RSPB Visitor Centre)  
10<sup>th</sup> June               Explore the Seashore guided walk at Mossyard  
11<sup>th</sup> June               Stairhaven-Auchenmalg guided Clifftop Walk  
12<sup>th</sup> June               Seashore Safari guided walk at Rockcliffe  
14<sup>th</sup> June               Dynamic Earth geology guided walk to Back Bay

##### ***Additional events***

Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association in Wigtownshire arranged an Art and Photography competition for all age ranges for World Oceans Week.

Solway Firth Partnership arranged Marine Conservation Society's SeaSearch training dives for the weekend of 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June. This was only open to local divers, due to the logistics of organising the event.

The booklet *Sea Life Sea Food*, produced by Solway Heritage in collaboration with Solway Firth Partnership, was officially launched at the beginning of the Douglas Lisi Sea Food Cookery demonstration at Port William World Oceans Day Celebration



*Nic Coombey of Solway Heritage and local chef Douglas Lisi launch the Sea Life Sea Food booklet at Port William World Oceans Day Celebration.*

#### 4.1 Rockcliffe World Oceans Day Celebration



*World Oceans Day Celebration marquees on the beach at Rockcliffe*

##### *Exhibitions and activities by*

- E.ON Energy and Renewables
- National Trust for Scotland
- Dumfries and Galloway Ranger Service
- Geo-D (Dumfries and Galloway geology group)
- RSPB
- Nith District Salmon Fisheries Trust
- Rockcliffe Marine and Coastguard Agency
- Jim and Pauline Logan – local marine biology experts
- Solway Firth Partnership
- Marine Conservation Society
- GreenBlue



*Enjoying the crafts at Solway Firth Partnership's stand*

### *Guided walks*

Strandline Safaris

Sun, sea and geology guided walk

Refreshments by Colvend Café

Ice creams by Cream O' Galloway ice cream

Prize draw for submitting feedback forms (electronically or paper)

## **4.2 Port William World Oceans Day Celebration**



*Pauline Logan shows some of the sea shells to be found on the Solway to visitors at Port William World Oceans Day Celebration (photo Jim Logan)*

### *Demonstration Marquee*

#### *Exhibitions and activities by*

- British Trust for Ornithology
- Dumfries and Galloway Rangers – Guided Rock pool Rambles
- Galloway Fisheries Trust
- Galloway Static Gear Fisherman's Association
- Geo-D Dumfries and Galloway local geology society
- The Green Blue
- David Hirst - Port William resident with 'Larry the Lobster' aquarium
- Jim and Pauline Logan - local marine biologists
- Marine Conservation Society
- National Scenic Areas Communities Rangers
- Newton Stewart Sub Aqua Club
- Port William Inshore Lifeboat
- RSPB
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network
- Solway Firth Partnership

### *Exhibition Marquee*

- Local sea food cookery demonstration by Douglas Lisi
- Geology talk and display by Geo-D
- Sea shell talk and display by Jim Logan
- Shark-a-tag talk and display by SSACN

### *Activities during the day*

- Guided geology walk to Back Bay by Geo-D
- Guided rockpool rambles by Dumfries and Galloway Rangers
- Art and photography competition supported by DGAA Arts and Communities Wigtownshire
- Casting from the sea shore demonstration by SSACN
- Prize draw for submitting feedback forms (electronically or paper)

Refreshments provided by Port William Resident's Association

Ice creams provided by Cream O' Galloway (all profits to Port William Inshore Lifeboat)

## **5. Visitor numbers**

Accurate quantitation of visitor numbers at the Celebration events is difficult due to the multiple entry points at the Celebrations. However the figures can be roughly estimated as 200-300 visitors to the Rockcliffe World Oceans Day Celebration and 300-400 at the Port William Celebration.

Figures for some of the other events include 175 anglers at the Sharkatag, 12 visitors for the Seashore Safari at Rockcliffe plus an extra day's event for a local school and 12 visitors at the Mershead Meander.

## **6. Economic benefit to the community**

The organisers of World Oceans Week were mindful of the potential economic benefit to the local community, aiming to promote and support local businesses where possible.

- Marquees and generators were hired from local organisations.
- Craft materials, stationery and other consumables used for organising WOW 2009 were sourced locally where available.
- Design and printing of leaflets and materials was done professionally by Dumfries and Galloway businesses (Dumfries and Stranraer)
- Advertising space was bought in 4 local newspapers and a local magazine
- Exhibitions of sea shells were held at local museums and Visitor Centres - the Stewartry Museum in Kirkcudbright and the Mill on the Fleet Visitor Centre at Gatehouse on Fleet. Both events were advertised extensively along with all the other WOW activities.
- Local café Colvend Café provided refreshments at the Rockcliffe celebration.
- Local Cream O' Galloway ice cream was sold at both the Rockcliffe and the Port William events, with Port William proceeds going to the Port William Inshore Lifeboat.
- At Port William the local community provided refreshments with profits going to local charities Heartstart Newton Stewart & the Machars, Port William Community Shop and Port William Youth Group.
- The local shops in Port William benefitted from increased sales both on the day and from local campers the night before the Port William Celebration.

- Local restaurants, shops, camp sites and accommodation providers all benefitted considerably from increased sales through attendance at activities and the Celebration events.
- The Sharkatag event in Luce Bay appears to have been of great local economic value, with businesses from the Isle of Whithorn to Drummore reporting a huge increase in trade. The Sharkatag event estimates that it contributed over £40 000 to the local economy, in addition to providing invaluable scientific information for the conservation of key sea-angling species such as tope and dogfish in the Wigtownshire area.
- The SeaSearch training scheme will provide divers with the skills and knowledge to record underwater marine life in Luce Bay which has never been recorded before. This information will be pivotal in helping to best manage Luce Bay and Sands Special Area of Conservation, with maximum benefit to local marine ecology, industries and occupations, and communities.
- Many visitors to the WOW events were on holiday or visiting the region, and by attending one (or more!) of the WOW 2009 events learned more about Dumfries and Galloway's coastline, visitor attractions, activities and facilities than they might otherwise have done so. This could also result in a considerable long-term economic benefit to the region with WOW showcasing and promoting the region's unspoilt marine and coastal environment to a wide audience.
- Over a quarter of a tonne of rubbish was collected at both beach cleans, making beaches clean and safe for locals, visitors and wildlife alike, ensuring that they can all fully enjoy the beautiful coastline.
- Douglas Lisi, award winning chef from l'Apperitif Restaurant in Stranraer, promoted the use of locally caught fish and seafood in a very well attended cookery demonstration at Port William Celebration.



*Newton Stewart British Sub Aqua Club set out for their SeaSearch training dives*

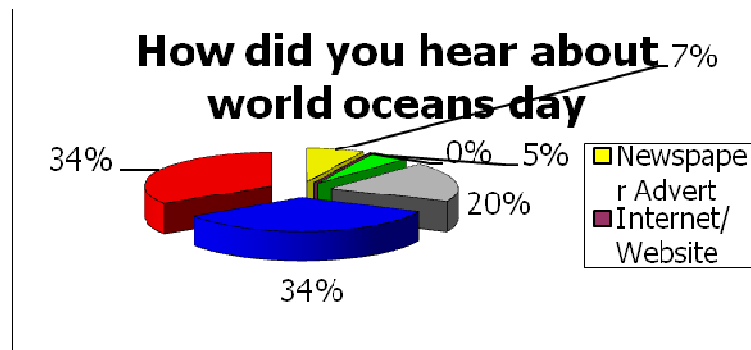
## 7. Visitor feedback

Visitor feedback was obtained through the electronic Standpoint system and also through paper forms at both Rockcliffe and Port William World Ocean Day Celebration events. The feedback for both events was pooled and an overview of the general response is detailed below. The level of feedback was lower than the previous year probably due to the Feedback stand being unmanned and represents a small sample of the total visitor numbers.

### 7.1 How did you hear about World Oceans Day?

The majority of respondents heard about WOW 2009 through posters, fliers and word of mouth. Additional comments included

- Through Colvend school
- I live nearby and could see preparations
- posters by roadside
- Raring2Go leaflet from school
- saw marquees on beach
- wife involved with wind farm



### 7.2 Where do you come from?

The majority of attendees at both events came from across Dumfries and Galloway, from Lochmaben to Stranraer. Additionally there were a large number of visitors from outside the area, such as Manchester, Newcastle, Norfolk, Cumbria and America. Several visitors from far afield reported having been to World Oceans Celebrations in previous years.

### 7.3 Age range of visitors

As in previous years it appears that the majority of visitors are children and their parents

Age range	% of attendees
12 or under	60.00%
13 - 18	25.00%
19 - 25	2.50%
26 - 49	50.00%
50 - 64	25.00%
65 or over	12.50%

#### **7.4 Feedback comments**

##### ***What did you enjoy about World Oceans Day Celebrations?***

- Activities, also people on stalls knew subjects, it was all interesting
- child friendly activity
- crafts, info about the sea, lifeboat, seeing friends
- D&G rangers
- finding about shells
- info from various groups
- info on the windfarm
- information being made available
- interesting displays
- interesting in seeing the fishing methods
- it is fantastic
- it was on a beach
- learning about sea life
- making bags
- painting shells
- fishing
- RSPB, Geology, salmon board and SNH displays
- seeing different fish
- seeing the children learn about their environment
- star fish and lobster
- the arty stuff
- the lobster
- the marine exhibition
- the variety of stalls and activities
- the guided walks

##### ***What can we do better?***

- permanent signboards at strategic coastal locations
- bigger fish
- bit more space between stalls to see demonstrations and pictures better
- more stuff
- more food
- more sealife
- more stuff to do and eat
- more things to see
- more variety of fish
- more widespread publicity
- spread out a little more
- wheel chair access
- We had a lovely time. My little boy who is 1 was really interested and enjoyed the mix of activities. An excellent event
- Fantastic, informative afternoon

## 8. Participant feedback

Organisations and individuals participating in WOW 2009 were asked for their comments and any positive outcomes of being involved in WOW 2009.

- Solway Firth Partnership noted a 200% increase in hits on their web site before and during WOW 2009
- The local British Trust for Ornithology group took 5 membership applications during the Port William Celebration
- The RSPB Mersehead Meander event was very well attended and recruited another member and they are planning next year's WOW event already!
- One of the many positive comments included: *I enjoyed the day at Port William and have heard great reports from a few locals and holiday makers, well done again to all who put this great venue together.*
- Everyone appeared to appreciate the opportunity to network with a range of groups that they may not normally come into contact with (eg fisheries and conservation groups)

## 9. Conclusion

WOW 2009 was a successful, original and exciting initiative aimed at promoting the marine environment of Dumfries and Galloway through a wide variety of activities and exhibitions. The programme of events was wide-ranging, and designed to appeal to as wide a group of families and individuals as possible. WOW 2009 was also designed to show-case Dumfries and Galloway to visitors and tourists who may not otherwise have experienced the natural history, adventures and activities available in this beautiful and largely unspoilt region of the British Isles.

The success of WOW 2009 can be measured in part by the large numbers of visitors attending the Celebration events, the positive feedback from both participants and exhibitors, the reported increases in businesses locally, the large amount of litter collected from the beaches, and an increased awareness of local marine biodiversity, environment, activities and issues. Additionally, many visitors to the Celebrations were people who had attended the events in previous years. The 'ripple effect' of introducing new visitors to the area, and the knock-on effect of increased local trade on a wider range of local businesses is harder to quantify but we are confident that WOW 2009 has had a significant positive impact on the local economy and businesses.

The organisation of WOW 2009 presented many challenges and issues to the organisers, due to the breadth, scope and numbers of events involved and the limited man power and financial resources available. The World Oceans Day Celebration at Port William also co-incided with the Relay for Life 24 hour fundraising event for Cancer Research UK, and it was felt this had a significant impact on visitor numbers. Whilst the two Celebration events, held at the weekend, were successful and well attended, the mid-week events were less well attended and it was felt that this was probably due to WOW 2009 being held outside the peak schools/visitors holiday period. Part of the WOW 2009 programme included wildlife watching boat trips from the Mull of Galloway; however there was a very disappointing take-up of places in the boat, resulting in a loss of income for the boat owner and, combined with the effort involved in arranging the trips by the Partnership has resulted in a review of the events offered in future World Oceans Week events. The Partnership feels, though, that there is a market for wildlife watching boat trips as feedback from one of the passengers stated that 'We had an excellent time.....we were out for nearly 1½ hours so we felt that it was definitely good value for money.....From talking with others at the time and later during the week it seemed that there was quite a bit of interest

in [Dumfries and Galloway] boat trips for either sightseeing generally and wildlife watching in particular’.

However, there was a general feeling of support from participants for World Oceans Week to continue, although in a modified and less intensive format. There had also been a large amount of interest in World Oceans Week from local schools, many of which expressed an interest in having events organised more local to them.

Therefore, the programme for World Oceans Week 2010 is provisionally

- 6th June - Celebration event at Rockcliffe
- 7th – 11th June - Local Ranger-led beach events across the whole of Dumfries and Galloway targeted at Dumfries and Galloway schools
- 8th June - World Oceans Day
- 13th June - Celebration event at Port William

It was confirmed that the 2010 Relay for Life would be held in Dumfries on the 5th/6th June so would have minimal impact on WOW 2010 Celebrations.

#### **10 . Organisation of World Oceans Week**

WOW 2009 was organised principally by Solway Firth Partnership, with assistance from National Trust for Scotland Ranger Service, Dumfries and Galloway Ranger Service, David Hirst of Port William Residents’ Association, and the communities of Rockcliffe and Port William.

WOW 2009 was generously funded by Scottish Natural Heritage, E.ON Climate and Renewables, and Dumfries and Galloway Council through Stewartry Area Committee and Wigtown Area Committee.

WOW 2009 was kindly supported by Colvend Cafe (refreshments at Rockcliffe), DGAA Wigtownshire (organisation of WOW Port William Art and Photography competition), Cream O’Galloway ice cream, BBC Breathing Places programme (prize draw prizes and promotional material), Jessops Photographic (sponsorship of art and photography competition), West Skelston Hire (generator hire), Forestry Commission (generator hire) and the large number of volunteers who generously gave their time to support and organise the many events and Celebrations of WOW 2009.

