

Issue 52 Spring / Summer 2020

# tidelines

newsletter of the Solway Firth Partnership



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SFP Team, left to right: Clair, Georgie, Morag and Nic but missing Paul, our very important Finance / Admin Officer

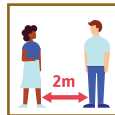
# A Note from Solway Firth Partnership

During this period of lockdown in our homes we thought you might still like to see the spring / summer issue of Tidelines as a pdf, even if we cannot provide printed copies.

**But don't forget the government advice on Coronavirus (COVID-19)**



Stay at home and only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)



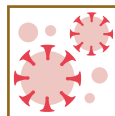
If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times



Wash your hands as soon as you get home



Do not meet others, even friends or family



You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms

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## Cover picture

The common name of the chamomile shark moth caterpillar, *Cucullia chamomillae*, refers to the fin-like raised hair tufts at the back of its head and the food plant of the larvae. The caterpillar is one of the most striking and easily identified moth caterpillars in the British Isles and it can be found feeding on the flowers of sea mayweed on our coasts.

**Photo Credits:** Front Cover: Chamomile shark moth: Nic Coombey, SFP; Page 2: SFP Staff, Kim Ayres; Page 3: Clockwise from top left - Altar stone, Nic Coombey SFP; Annan Skiffs, Alastair Vera; Surveying Rhins, AOC Archaeology; Surveying the Fauna, SCAPE Trust; Page 4: Altar stone, Nic Coombey, SFP; Page 5: Bloody Slouch / Craiglebock Rock, Nic Coombey, SFP; Page 6: Beach clean, Durness and Plastic@Bay, all SFP; Page 7: Site on Isle of Man, all SFP / SE Coast of Ireland, Michael Leybourne; Page 8: From the top of page – Main top image of Skiffs on bank, Fiona Stoddart; Pride of Solway, off Dumbarton Rocks, Alan Thompson; Skiff, Fiona Stoddart; October sunset, Alan Thompson; Stranraer, Alan Thompson; Main bottom image of Annan skiffs, Alastair Vera; Page 9: Clockwise from top left – Carrying Pride of the Solway, Alastair Vera; Over 60s ladies in Stranraer, Alan Thompson; Launching Pride of the Solway, Alastair Vera; Page 10-11: Solway Landscapes, All SMILE Project, SFP; Page 12: Kirkcudbright Marina, Euan McGillivray; Flooding at Kingholm Quay, Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC); Page 13: Wave overtopping, Rose Fairley; Saltmarsh erosion, SFP; Page 14-15: All images of the Fauna, the SCAPE Trust; Page 16: Main image of Rhins; DGC; Surveying, both AOC Archaeology; Page 17: Plan, scan and aerial image of Doon Castle Broch, AOC Archaeology; other image DGC; Page 18: Southernness Lighthouse, Ian Findlay; Staircase at Mull of Galloway Lighthouse, Sarah Kerr; Page 19: St Bees Head, Sarah Kerr.



# ABC of Words and Places

## Understanding names on Scotland's southern coast

**S**olway Firth Partnership (SFP) has produced an alphabetical guide as an introduction to coastal place names on the long and varied coast of Dumfries and Galloway. The web-book is part of the Solway Coastwise Project managed by SPF and is the culmination of an innovative three-year project to share the meaning of place names and the stories behind them.

The guide is available on the SPF website:  
[www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)

## A - ALTAR STONE BOUNDARY MARKER NY216639

**O**n the stony reef known as Whan Scar is an enigmatic boulder which often lies hidden below shifting sands. The extremely dynamic environment below the surface of the sea means huge quantities of sand and mud can be moved in a single tidal cycle to cover the stone for many years and then suddenly reveal the stone as the channels change position.

This large stone marks the parish and burgh boundary of Annan as well as defining the limit of fishing rights. Although it is a name that is noted from medieval times there is no evidence that the stone is the remains of an ancient altar. The name Altar Stone, or Otterstain, is more likely to have derived from it being the furthest boundary marker or Outer Stone.

Every July the traditional event of Annan Riding of the Marches celebrates the creation of the Royal Burgh by riding horses along the boundaries of the town. When the tides allow, the horses ride out to the Altar Stone. If the stone is covered by sand the correct location is established by using landmarks.





## B - BLOODY SLOUCH RED GULLY NW973716

Some locations are named after notable colours that make places distinct from the predominantly grey rocks on the coast. Bloody Slouch and Ship Slouch (usually pronounced slock), are rocky inlets west of Corsewall Lighthouse shown on old Ordnance Survey maps that suggest gory stories of shipwrecks. However, when Ordnance Survey surveyors quizzed locals in the 1840s about the meaning they noted “the name is said to arise from the circumstance the farmers bleeding their cattle [in] this place”. When the place is visited it becomes obvious that the name “Bloody” is a descriptive word inspired by the red coloured rocks exposed on the shore.

Slock and Slunk are words derived from the Gaelic *sloc* meaning pit or cavity and used to describe a gully scooped out by the hand of nature. A sea gully is formed by erosion of softer rocks through a combination of water force and abrasion from stones. Slowly the cavity is enlarged along lines of weakness sometimes breaking out onto the clifftop and forming blow holes. As the roof of the cave continues to collapse a slit appears and eventually a steep-sided narrow gully is created.

## C - CRAIGLEBOCK ROCK ROCK OF THE FLOUNDER ROCK NX990638

The flounder is a common flatfish found on the seabed where they lie concealed in the sand in order to prey on passing worms and small crustaceans. It often ventures inshore, where it can get trapped in pools left by the receding tide. The flounder in Scotland has never reached the top of the fine-dining flatfish hierarchy, like sole or plaice, but they can still make good eating. They are known as a Fleuk or Fluke in Scots or *leabag* in Gaelic. It is believed that the rocks named Craiglebock on the west shore of the Nith Estuary is derived from the Gaelic *creag leabag* meaning rock of the flounder. When the Gaelic meaning of the place name had been forgotten an additional Rock was added to the end of the name for good measure.

The place name probably identifies a good fishing spot and other examples include Lythe Mead where Lythe is Scots for young pollack or coalfish, Blockan Hole where blockan is Scots for pollack or coalfish, Partan Craig where partan is both Gaelic and Scots for edible crab and Lochanscaddan derived from *sgadan*, the Gaelic for herring.





Beach Clean, Dumfries

# The Solway Coast is Clear Learning Journey

**S**olway Firth Partnership has an ambition to have over 200 miles of cleaner coastline in Dumfries and Galloway. In a drive to find innovative solutions to the problem of plastics on our amazing shoreline we planned to learn from successful initiatives running in other places. Our first step was to undertake three fact-finding visits to share experiences and find practical solutions that can be replicated in the Solway.

## Plastic@Bay

Our first journey was to a community interest company at Dumfries in the far north west of Scotland. Here Julien, Joan and Scott showed us how Plastic@Bay is reducing the impact of plastic pollution on the environment. As well as removing marine debris from local beaches they stressed the importance of research to provide evidence that can be used to demonstrate the need to change how we deal with plastics.

Plastic@Bay have developed a workshop where they test innovative ways to recycle and reuse marine plastic. Our visit followed the process from collecting marine debris from the beach at Balnakeil Bay, taking it back to the workshop to sort, clean and shred before using different methods to reuse the plastic to make a tide clock face and letters spelling SOLWAY. The workshop provides a local resource that demonstrates how technology will make something useful from pollution with the slogan: *IF YOU VALUE WASTE, IT'S NOT WASTE ANYMORE!*



Plastic@Bay workshop



## Clean Coasts Programme, Ireland

Our second journey was to Dublin to visit the Clean Coasts Programme that works with communities to help protect and care for Ireland's waterways, coastline, seas, ocean and marine life. The initiative started 15 years ago with 20 beach cleaning groups and support from European funding. After 10 years this had grown to 465 and attracted corporate sponsorship and support from the Irish Government. There are now 1,200 groups on their database. There are between 5 and 120 members in each group with some being more active than others. Groups register an interest in a particular beach and are responsible for organising access and permissions. Clean Coasts provide advice on health and safety, insurance for participants and branded beach cleaning equipment. The Local Authority removes debris collected from beaches by registered Clean Coasts groups.

The focus of Clean Coasts is on beach cleans but they successfully incorporate an educational aspect to all of their work, events and publicity. A recent initiative launched on 14th February challenged people to end their reliance on disposable plastics with the strap line: *DON'T LET YOUR TOXIC RELATIONSHIP WITH SINGLE USE PLASTIC SUFFOCATE YOU. #BreakUpWithPlastic*

South east coast of Ireland



SFP Team at the Energy from Waste Plant, Isle of Man



Learning about the process in the Energy from Waste Plant, Isle of Man

## Beach Buddies

Our final visit was to the Isle of Man to discover how their Government was supporting initiatives like Beach Buddies that contribute to their prestigious UNESCO Biosphere accreditation. Beach Buddies was the inspiration of Bill Dale who realised that "it's not enough to just stand and stare". The first Beach Buddies team event took place in early 2012 when 34 people turned up. The story was published in newspapers and on the radio and the following week at a different location more than 40 volunteers joined in. From that initial beach clean the Beach Buddies has grown to involve more than 11,000 volunteers every year, 12% of the island's population, and creating the cleanest beaches in Europe. The debris gathered by volunteers is sorted with 50% of the material diverted to recycling through Local Authority recycling centres and the rest going to the island's Energy from Waste Plant. We visited the plant to see how it processed much of the waste produced and hear about how it solved many of the constraints caused by the island's remoteness.

Beach Buddies has not only successfully cleaned the beaches on the Isle of Man but has managed to promote the positive story including an article in the National Geographic magazine.

## Lessons Learnt

Our visits have shown that much can be achieved through coordinated volunteer action and partnership working with Local Authorities and National Governments. A targeted approach to remove plastics from beaches will achieve our aim of 200 miles of cleaner coast in Dumfries and Galloway but there are still challenges to find ways to reduce the source of plastic pollution and find ways to incorporate waste into the circular economy.

Recycling in the Isle of Man





# Scottish Coastal Rowing



Pride of Solway off Dumbarton Castle



The Pride of Annan



October Sunset



Skiffie World Championships, Stranraer

The Scottish Coastal Rowing Association (SCRA) was formed in May 2010 and now has more than 70 member clubs scattered around the coast of Scotland. These clubs are reintroducing their communities to the pleasures of social rowing, expeditions and even racing in craft called St Ayles skiffs. With the support of the Scottish Fisheries Museum at Anstruther these were designed by Iain Oughtred and are supplied to communities in kit form by Alec Jordan of Jordan Boats.

The concept of a community built kit is brilliant and allows people to come together to build a sea going boat at a very affordable

price, thus giving them access to explore their local waters. The movement has swept around Scotland and already skiffs can be found in a dozen countries around the world.

Annan Harbour Action Group built *Pride of Annan* in 2014 and *Pride of the Solway* in 2016 and generally try to get out every Sunday all year round. Of course this has to be fitted around the Solway tides. One of their annual highlights is the Bell Raid, a re-enactment of a 1626 invasion of Cumbria to steal the bells from St Michaels at Bowness-on-Solway. This has led to a build project in that parish and they plan to launch their skiff, the *Bowness Belle*, some time this summer.



Pride of Annan with crew and Alan Thompson as cox

On the slipway at Annan Harbour



Over 60s ladies at the Skiffie World Championships, Stranraer



Another nears completion at the Isle of Whithorn for the Wigtown Bay Coastal Rowing Club and there is a privately owned skiff called *Hippo* at *Garlieston*.

All these skiffs were to have collaborated to lead a circumnavigation of Scotland marking the tenth anniversary of SCRA in an event called Rowaround Scotland by tackling the Gretna to Stranraer first leg. Since it was to be followed by all sorts of film crews this would really have put the Solway coast on the map but unfortunately the event has fallen foul of COVID-19 restrictions. When these are lifted why not get in touch and come and give it a try.

Pride of the Solway at Annan Harbour



Some quotes from the over 50s and over 60s Annan ladies' crews who, much to their astonishment, competed at the Skiffie World Championships in Stranraer last summer.

'The best thing is meeting some great people and rowing with them in a team is good fun. The actual rowing is quite physical and helps me to stay stronger. Rowing has given me a different way of knowing the Solway estuary and sometimes the light and the water and the views are quite breath-taking. I have to also mention getting the chance to row in the Skiffie Worlds 2019 - that was a bit of surprise, I never thought at the age of 56 I would get to compete in a world championship! So much fun.' **Fiona Stoddart**

'Rowing is an ideal combination of physical exercise, fresh air, team effort and good companionship: you cannot fail to feel better for it! I hope never to forget the absolute delight of rowing out into the Solway the very first time and being surrounded by such wonderful scenery: we are so lucky to have that experience. And it was just as good on repeat!' **Amanda Rogers**

'The first time I tried rowing was in the 'Pride of Annan' on Castle Loch at Lochmaben. I was in the bow doing quite well, following the stroke, listening to the cox when a swan came into land on the water on the port side; I was transfixed. I completely lost timing and 'caught a crab' ending up like a sheep on its back with my legs in the air. Thankfully nobody had a camera so my embarrassment was not recorded for posterity.' **Christine Matthews**

'I started rowing nearly 3 years ago when I retired and for me it is all about the exercise and positive mental health benefits, being part of a team and meeting new people and the amazing rowing out on the Solway. I love it, I am addicted.' **Aileen Chalmers**

'Coastal rowing is a fantastic sport. No matter your age or fitness levels you can take part and get out into the fresh air and see some great scenery and wildlife.' **Mary Graham**

'Friends look at me in astonishment when I mention that I love coastal rowing! What's not to like; fresh air, a great work out, a catch up on the week's chat and a fantastic feeling of well-being. Have a think about it, it is has got to be worth a try!' **Claire Thomson**

# The SMILE project is now in its final year!



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN MARITIME  
AND FISHERIES FUND



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

There has been so much achieved over the last 6 months since the last Tidelines article and also lots to work on in the upcoming final year of the project.

Since the New Year our SMILE Project Officer has conducted presentations and engagement events around the Solway, including 4 presentations at libraries in Allerdale (Workington, Maryport, Seaton, Silloth). These presentations sought to gain valuable insights from the communities on the English side of the Solway and included lively discussions with passionate people who were able to provide a variety of local information as well as their opinions on the future of the Solway. One of the common themes throughout SMILE's engagement activities has been the passion which local people have for the Solway Firth. This passion comes in many forms such as beach cleans, preserving history and local character, sustainable use of the coast, or concern over the Solway's health and wellbeing moving forward. All of those who have attended a SMILE event have a great deal of local 'ownership' and emotional investment in the sustainable future of this resource. This has helped shape the character of local areas around the Solway along with their ongoing love and respect for the Firth and the ecosystem services it provides.

The Solway Review, which SMILE is creating through updating the 1996 Solway Review, has 4 major sections each of which has a variety of subsections. This will be a structural equivalent to the sections seen in Scotland's Marine Atlas and the Clyde Region Marine Assessment; Clean and Safe, Healthy and Biologically Diverse, Physical, and Productive.



The 'Productive' section of the review will feature an up-to-date socio-economic analysis of both the Scottish and the English sides of the Solway, populated from associated projects; the SEASS and SEAES projects. Representing the Socio-Economic Analysis of the Scottish Solway and Socio-Economic Analysis of the English Solway respectively, these reports have been undertaken by a consultant who has gathered data and liaised with sectoral representatives to produce two up-to-date socio-economic analyses of the Solway Firth. These reports include socio-economic trends

from recent years in the industries that rely on the Solway and the context of this data where possible. The report follows the format of 'Scotland's Marine Atlas - Information for the National Marine Plan' but only includes activities and industries relevant to the Solway Firth. For example, oil and gas production is omitted due to lack of activity within the Firth. These reports, finalised at the end of March 2020, are now available on Solway Firth Partnership's website <https://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/planning/seass-and-seaes/>






The SMILE Project was looking forward to the year ahead in 2020 as it's the Scottish 'Year of Coasts and Waters'. However, many projects and initiatives around the Solway coast and wider coasts of the UK are now unable to go ahead due to COVID-19. We will look forward to the events taking place at some time in the future and enjoy them even more after lockdown!

We still have our engagement questions open for your input but these will close later this year so now is the time to add your thoughts and opinions!

**What Sector is most important to you?**

**What three words would you use for your vision for the Solway?**

Keep an eye on our SMILE social media accounts for updates the SMILE project in 2020!

  @solwaysmile  @smilesolway

Alternatively, please feel free to contact our Project Officer at any time; [smile@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk](mailto:smile@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk)



**2020  
COASTS  
& WATERS**



Kirkcudbright Marina

# Dumfries & Galloway Shoreline Management Plan

The Dumfries and Galloway coastline stretches from the Mouth of Sark at Gretna to Galloway Burns near Cairnryan. It is approximately 340km (210 miles) in length.

Dumfries and Galloway Council undertook the first Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for the Solway Coast in 2005. An SMP is a large-scale

assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes and aims to provide guidance to operating authorities and regulatory bodies regarding future sustainable coastal flood and erosion risk management. It also aims to provide guidance to anyone with interests in the coast, by setting out an understanding of coastal issues, and identifies where

future work may be required to mitigate against flooding or erosion.

Climate change is expected to cause a rise in sea levels and an increase in the frequency of more extreme weather events. There is evidence that climate change is already affecting Scotland, with predictions of 1.0m+ rise in sea levels for the Solway over the next 80 years.



Flooding at Kingholm Quay



Wave over-topping on the coast

As part of the update, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment are being undertaken, to assess the sustainability of the Plan and to avoid, reduce or minimise any impacts on the wider environment.

## Engagement

There will be a series of engagement events across the region throughout the study, and the Project Team will be looking to involve all those with an interest in the coastline, including recreational users, landowners and community groups.

All dates and venues will be published on the project website at <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/smp> as the update of the Plan progresses.

Anyone is welcome to attend the events, to find out more about the Shoreline Management Plan, and to provide feedback and discuss the developing proposals with the Project Team.

Please note COVID-19 will have an impact on the project timescales as some of the stages necessary to progress the plan will not be possible due to current restrictions. We will of course update the webpage and notify stakeholders as and when we can usefully do so.

If you require any further information please email [smps@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:smps@dumgal.gov.uk) or telephone 030 33 33 3000.

## Updating the Plan

RPS Consulting were appointed by the Council and began work in August 2019 to update the original plan, taking advantage of recent advances in scientific information and available mapping, with completion of the new Plan expected in Summer 2021.

### The main objectives of the Plan are:

- To outline risks from flooding and erosion;
- To identify the consequences of putting the preferred policies into practice and the procedures for monitoring how effective these policies are;
- To inform others on future land use, planning and development of the shoreline;
- To discourage inappropriate development in areas where coastal flood and erosion risks are high; and
- To ensure compliance with international and national nature conservation legislation and strive to achieve the biodiversity objectives.

The original plan saw the Solway divided into six Coastal Process Units, where the coastal processes were broadly similar and beach sediment movements are largely self-contained.

The revised plan will continue to use these Process Units and will set one of four policies for each of the Units.

### The policies are:

- Advance the Line - identifies where it is proposed to reclaim land for development;
- Hold the Line - looks to improve or maintain the standard of existing defence as current levels;
- Managed Realignment - identifies a new line of defence further inwards than currently exists, retreating inland; and
- No Active Intervention - allows natural processes of erosion and accretion to continue with no intervention.



Saltmarsh on the Solway Coast



# A Story Full of Holes

Why would a boat be drilled full of holes? Only to carefully plug them all up again?

These and many more questions came to mind when Solway Firth Partnership visited an old wooden trawler lying on the banks of Kirkcudbright Bay with archaeologists from the SCAPE Trust.

The natural shelter created by Kirkcudbright Bay provides safe anchorage and landing places in virtually all weather conditions. Mariners past and present have appreciated the qualities of Kirkcudbright Bay and it has a long history as a port and more recently as a focus for commercial fishery. When vessels reached the end of their working life, they were often abandoned on the banks of the river out of the way of the busy harbour but could we discover any more about the trawler?

Local historian, David Collin, helped by providing some background to the boat's history. He recalled its name, the Fauna, and believed it was originally a Belgian boat which visited the Solway coast from Fleetwood in the 1970s. While moored at Kirkcudbright the Fauna was caught between a larger boat and the quayside, damaging the hull. After being laid up, the engine was eventually salvaged before the Fauna was towed across the river to Gibbhill where it was finally discarded.



Photographing the Fauna

Fortunately, the Kirkcudbright Bay Views Project supported by the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme has enabled volunteer involvement in the investigation and recording of the boat. The Galloway Glens Scheme is coordinating a suite of projects being undertaken up and down the Ken/Dee Valley, connecting people to their heritage, driving economic activity and supporting sustainable communities. The Scheme is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and is supported by a range of partners including Dumfries & Galloway Council and the Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere.

The SCAPE Trust are particularly interested in remains threatened by coastal erosion and called on the expertise of Steve from the Nautical Archaeology Society to explain the hull full of holes. He confirmed that it had been built with perforations to allow water to flow freely in and out of the hull below the waterline and flood the central part of the boat. Watertight compartments at either end of the boat kept it buoyant. Known as a wet well trawler it allowed fishermen to keep the catch alive, ensuring it arrived at port as fresh as possible. At some time later each small hole had been individually plugged with wooden pegs to turn the boat into a conventional fishing vessel.

As part of the Kirkcudbright Bay Views Project Solway Firth Partnership organised a long weekend programme of discovery in Kirkcudbright Bay. This consisted of a guided walk of the Senwick Shore to set the context of the weekend followed by a morning session on how to record maritime

archaeology before undertaking some practical survey work.

Under Steve's expert eye, the volunteer team gleaned details of the Fauna's construction and use from the disintegrating hull. These suggest that before the Fauna came to this sad end, it had a long life of use, modification, adaptation and upgrade. It appears to have been built as a sailing boat for the shellfish industry in Belgium, probably dredging young oysters from an estuary to be relocated into oyster beds and grown on before harvesting. After the First World War the Fauna was fitted with an engine and was probably adapted to become a traditional trawler by plugging all the holes. In the Second World War Belgian boats were evacuated to Britain, and the Fauna probably came over at this time. This part of the boat's history is unclear but the Fauna eventually

ended up as a trawler based in Fleetwood when at least one more larger engine replaced the first. While employed as a trawler in the Solway the boat was written off and abandoned in Kirkcudbright where the engine was removed and the hull towed out of harm's way.

Much of the supposed history above is informed by examination of the surviving evidence of the vessel on site. Further outstanding questions remain, some of which could be resolved by archival research, or from further information being provided by people who remember the Fauna when it was a trawler working out of Fleetwood.

A full report on the Fauna is available on SFP website: <https://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/community/kirkcudbright-bay-views/>



Surveying the Fauna



Drone footage of the Fauna



# The Rhins Revealed



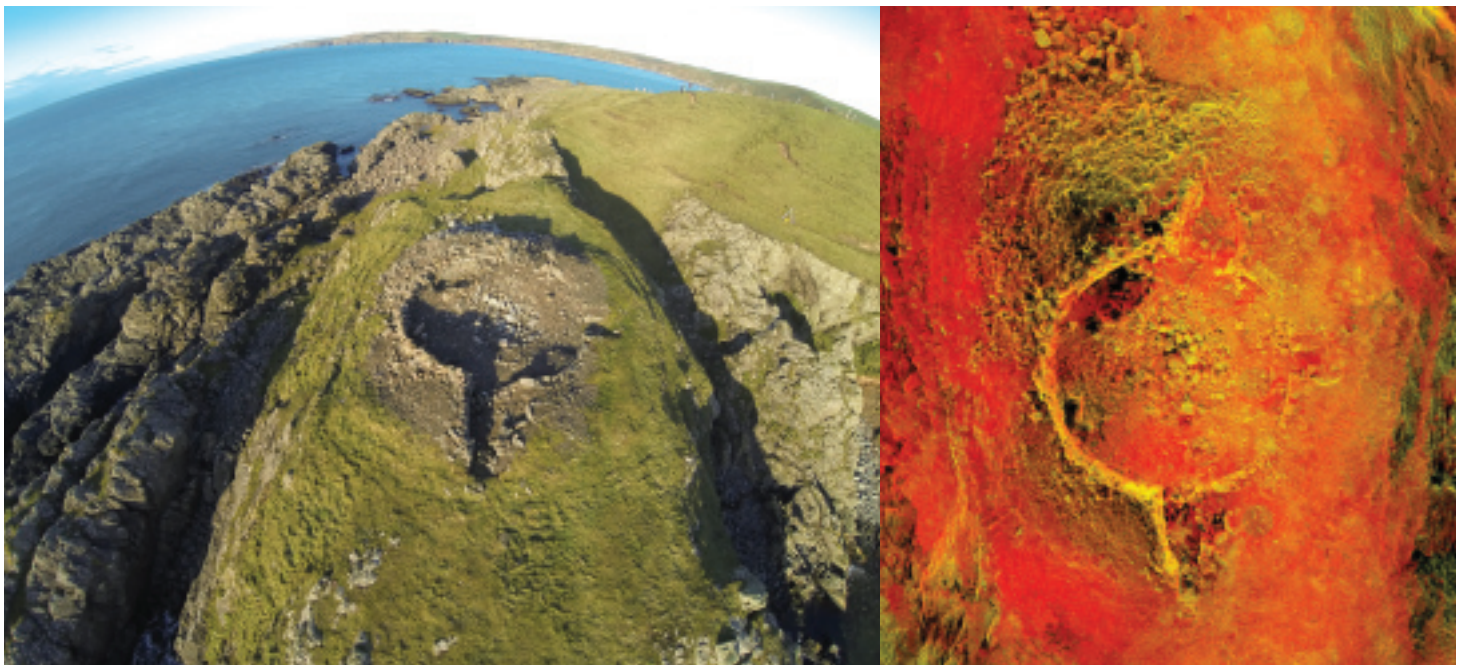
**T**he Rhins Revealed is an exciting new community archaeology initiative that is part of the 83-mile walking route being created around the Rhins of Galloway. It sets out to record, investigate and conserve some of the most important archaeological sites found on the Rhins, and is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Coastal Communities Fund and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

The Rhins Revealed commenced in autumn 2019 and will provide opportunities for the public to be involved in research, site monitoring and learning new skills along the route of the Rhins of Galloway Coast Path. AOC Archaeology Group have been appointed to deliver the 2-year programme which aims to inspire the community, young people and visitors about the archaeology of the Rhins through talks, workshops, site visits and the engagement of volunteers in the assessment, improvement and monitoring of heritage 'Sites at Risk'.

The Rhins of Galloway has a rich cultural past and a wide range of important heritage sites. These sites include prehistoric forts, medieval churches and castles, historic farmsteads, harbours and lighthouses and Second World War military installations. Many of these sites are on or close to the route of the coastal path but few people are aware of them.

Graeme Cavers, Director at AOC Archaeology said, "We want to encourage local people to take a leading role in caring for the heritage sites on the Rhins, particularly sites that are at





Images show the survey plan (below), drawn from the measurements noted on site, and the laser scan (above right) gives a more 3D view of the building remains. The Broch's amazing position perched on the coastal cliffs is captured in the aerial image (above).

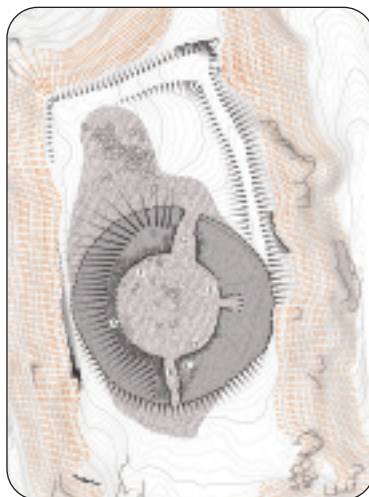
risk from erosion. There are opportunities to learn skills in archaeological recording working alongside professional archaeologists on one of our field workshops, and to contribute to the study of Galloway's past."

The first site that AOC Archaeology are investigating is Doon Castle Broch, Ardwell Bay, which is nationally important and a designated Scheduled Monument.

Following some introductory talks about the archaeology of the area in late November, a group of intrepid volunteers made their way to the remains of the Broch, located on the top of the sea cliffs, to help survey the historic site.

The archaeologists had already undertaken a laser scan and the volunteers then carried out some further surveys needed to provide a full, detailed record of the site. Photos show some volunteers hard at work doing a 'Plane Table' survey to accurately measure and plot the remains of the structure. Others were trained in using the 'Total Station', a multipurpose electronic/optical instrument that measures horizontal and vertical angles as well as slope distances.

The survey data revealed that although collapsed and damaged the structure is in relatively good condition. AOC



Archaeology have prepared a proposal for conservation and consolidation of this significant prehistoric site and consent is being sought from Historic Environment Scotland to do some limited conservation and consolidation work to stabilise the structure.

Brochs are normally associated with northern Scotland and are not common south of the Clyde. Doon Castle Broch is one of three known brochs in Dumfries and Galloway, however it is not characteristic of other 'typical' brochs. The Rhins Revealed project will enable us to investigate the purpose, location, and date of this intriguing building and how it fits/compares with other similar structures.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is working in partnership with landowners, local communities and other organisations to create the Rhins of Galloway Coast Path. The route

builds on the existing Mull of Galloway Trail, which runs down the east coast of the peninsula, to create a complete loop around the Rhins. It will link to the wider network of long-distance routes, including the Southern Upland Way and the Ayrshire Coastal Path, and take around 5 days to walk. It is hoped that once complete the new coast path will be recognised as one of Scotland's Great Trails.

As well as providing opportunities for people to actively explore, access and enjoy the spectacular coastline and seascapes of the Rhins the project is developing a range of activities for visitors and residents to investigate and learn about the rich cultural and natural heritage of the peninsula.

Currently on hold due to the COVID-19 restrictions, project partners are discussing how to proceed in line with Government guidance on social distancing once restrictions are eased. To find out more about The Rhins Revealed and the Rhins of Galloway Coast Path please contact [Anna.Johnson@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:Anna.Johnson@dumgal.gov.uk) or check out the facebook page [www.facebook.com/Rhinsofgallowaycoastpath](http://www.facebook.com/Rhinsofgallowaycoastpath) Website coming soon.



# A Tour of the Solway Lighthouses

Southernness Lighthouse

Sarah Kerr, author of *The British Lighthouse Trail: A Regional Guide*, takes a look at some of the Solway Firth's most important and interesting lighthouses.

The coastline bordering the Solway Firth offers an array of structures designed to aid the safe navigation of seafarers. At its extremities can be found the Mull of Galloway lighthouse, the most southerly of the Northern Lighthouse Board's Scottish lights, and St Bees Head lighthouse, Trinity House's most northerly lighthouse on the west coast.

My first time at the Mull of Galloway was back in June 2012 and it marked the last of the Scottish lighthouses I visited during a month-long tour of mainland Britain's coastline. It is one of a handful of Scottish lighthouses that are open to the public and, as well as climbing to the top of the 26-metre tower to gain some stunning panoramic views, you can find out more about the lighthouse and the area in the exhibition. The light here was first exhibited in 1830 and the tower designed by Robert Stevenson. Much has changed in its 190-year history: there are no longer lighthouse keepers and their families, and the original lighting apparatus has undergone significant modernisation over the years – most recently with the introduction of two large LED lights. A short distance away from the lighthouse is the old foghorn, which was refurbished along with its engines, and sounded again in 2018 for the first time in over 30 years.

Heading east along the Solway, two very different island lighthouses can be found albeit not easily. Little Ross lighthouse, infamous for the murder of one of its lighthouse keepers by another, can be seen on a clear day from the single-track road to the south west of Townhead. The tower was designed by Alan Stevenson and first lit in 1843. The modern tower on Hestan Island was introduced in 1996, replacing a slightly more traditional lighthouse. Reaching Hestan Island without a boat requires a good knowledge of the local tide times and footwear you don't mind getting wet.

The last lighthouse on the west coast of Scotland was in fact one of the first to be built. Constructed in 1749, Southernness lighthouse is a well-preserved example of early attempts to light the coast. A popular spot, possibly due to its close proximity to the Holiday Park, the tower guided ships along the Solway Firth

and safely to the entrance of the Nith until the light was extinguished in 1936.

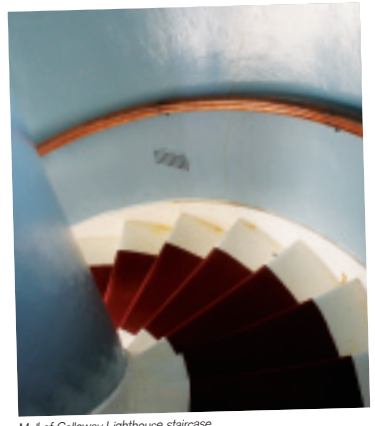
The first lighthouses you reach once you cross the border into England can be found in Silloth and Maryport. Although significantly different to the large stone towers already mentioned, they both have a certain charm and unique appearance. The East Cote lighthouse in Silloth consists of a recognisable lighthouse lantern on a framework tower. While the current structure only dates back to 1997, the spot has been lit by a lighthouse of this same style since 1841. Further south at Maryport, the 1846 lighthouse is another unique design, faintly resembling a rather fancy lamppost. It has been suggested that this is one of the earliest examples of a cast iron lighthouse. It has now been superseded by the metal tower on the south pier.

Further south, Whitehaven offers a plethora of lighthouses in its harbour dating from the mid eighteenth and nineteenth century. The lighthouses offer a fantastic visual representation of how the harbour has changed and been extended over time.

If you are looking for an enjoyable coastal walk, then I can highly recommend a visit to St Bees and following the route along the cliff top to St Bees Head. Though a relatively short tower at just 17 metres, it still manages to hold the title of Trinity House's highest lighthouse, elevated an impressive 102 metres above mean high water. The tower was built in 1822 replacing its predecessor – the last coal-fired lighthouse in Britain – which lasted around 100 years before being destroyed by fire.

Spending a few days visiting lighthouses along the Solway coast is the perfect way to enjoy this special part of the UK and discover how lighting the coast has changed over the past three centuries.

*The British Lighthouse Trail: A Regional Guide* by Sarah Kerr, published by Whittles Publishing, is now available to purchase, priced at £18.99 RRP. [www.whittlespublishing.com](http://www.whittlespublishing.com)



Mull of Galloway Lighthouse staircase



# The British Lighthouse Trail

## A Regional Guide

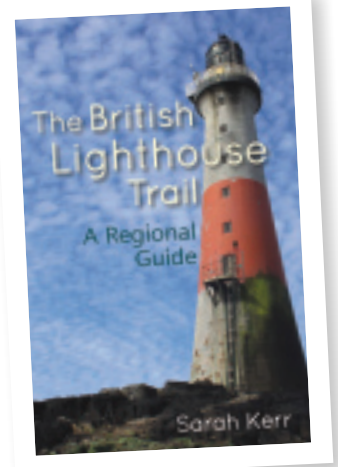
Lots of people in the UK enjoy keeping their feet on dry land, enjoying coastal walks around our rugged and beautiful coast. However, approaching our UK coast from the sea provides a new perspective where this rugged beauty turns to treacherous rocky shallows or confusing masses of land emerging into the sea where navigation is challenging. In addition to our coastline the UK cannot claim to having the clearest, sunniest or brightest weather. It is unsurprising, therefore, that our coastline is littered with the safety structures of lighthouses. Lighthouses have long served the purpose of being navigational aids to guide ships, traditionally employing a lighthouse keeper to be responsible for ensuring the lighthouse emitted a light which notified vessels of impending land and rocks and offering a navigational landmark. With an increase in technology such as automatic lamps replacing lighthouse keepers and the use of GPS for navigation, operational towers are far less common than they once were, being increasingly used for alternative enterprises.

Lighthouses are the focus of the new book 'The British Lighthouse Trail. A Regional Guide' by Sarah Kerr, who shines a new light on these important structures which have kept vessels safe. A must have for those who love to explore the

exciting coast, this guide lists the lighthouses of the UK, Isle of Man, and Channel Islands, including those which have been relocated. The book includes lighthouses which are remains, if they are large enough for a person to still fit inside, as part of the official definition for a lighthouse is that it permits at least one person to enter inside at least part of it. The book is complete with access advice and a host of other information about these structures such as date established and a description of the tower. With over 600 listed lighthouses there is one for everyone with a huge range of shapes and sizes of lighthouse to explore.

Can you name the 10 lighthouses along the Dumfries and Galloway coast? How about the 7 which can be found on the English coast of the Solway?

Grab your copy of *'The British Lighthouse Trail. A Regional Guide'*, more details on page 18, to find out about these lighthouses and many more.



Sandstone cliffs at St Bees Head





For further information, to submit an article or to join the SFP mailing list please contact:  
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