

The Seahorse Trust

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NATURE

Spring/summer 2025

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to our latest newsletter which we hope you will enjoy. As we always say, things are so busy here at The Seahorse Trust, from conferences, to diving, talking to eBay, talking with the government about seahorse protection, answering hundreds of emails a day, and taking part in radio and TV programs to spread the word about seahorses and their conservation.

Even with a small team we seem to make a difference, but it is you, our amazing supporters that allow us to do this. – THANK YOU.

This stunning sculpture by Gideon Petersen celebrates everything that is beautiful about seahorses.

Made of steel and standing 5 metres high, it has fast become an iconic feature on Pembrokeshire coastline near Fishguard.

It represents one of two of our native seahorses, the Spiny, and Gideon has captured the grace and serenity of the animal.

Check out Gideons Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/gideon.petersen.1>



We need your help so please. To manage to do all the conservation, research and advocacy work that we do costs a lot of money and we are totally reliant on donations and grants. If you could make a small donation by using this QR code it will help us to carry on our fight for the natural world and to make sure we have seahorses in the future. **Thank you**



Seahorse summit

Earlier this year we attended a Seahorse Summit put on by Plymouth Sound National Marine Park, led by CEO Elaine Hayes and her amazing team. The summit was held at the Marine Biological Association in Plymouth with its stunning view over the sound. It was a fantastic day and attended by all the main parties leading Seahorse conservation here in the UK. Aside from ourselves, we had Portsmouth University, The Sealife Trust, Project Seahorse and so many others.

Amongst the topics we discussed were, captive breeding native seahorses to release into the wild, seahorse cities, how we can protect their habitats and what is the best way forward to protect these amazing 'little horses of the sea.' Thanks Elaine, JJ and the team, a great productive day.



<https://plymouthsoundnationalmarinepark.com/>

Seahorse Cities

Imagine building a city underwater for seahorses to live in. Well, that's exactly what we plan to do.

Kelsey has had her PhD at Portsmouth University funded by [Fat Face clothing](#), and she will study installing seahorse cities into a number of areas along the south coast.

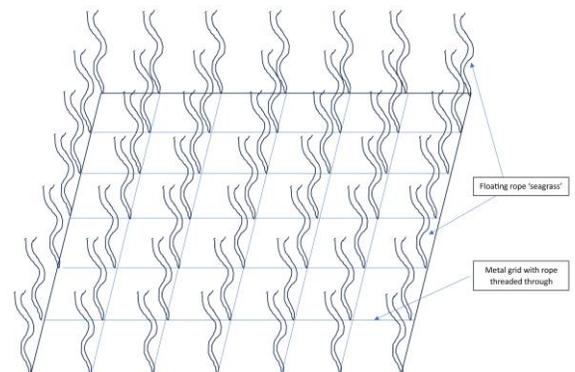
These cities are designed to stabilize the seabed and create vibrant communities for seagrass to establish.

Thanks to Bianca and her team at [Final Straw Foundation](#) for enabling this to happen.

Also major thanks to Fat Face for funding Kelsey and her PhD.

Fat Face Foundation <https://fatfacefoundation.org.uk/>

Final Straw Foundation <https://finalstrawfoundation.org/>



Crown Estates film

Our partnership approach has allowed us to do so much over the years and [Crown Estates](#) have been an important partner at Studland Bay. They kindly donated funding towards the installation of the ecomoorings on the site and are working with us to promote good practice in conservation. They have made a fantastic film about the work at Studland Beach. Click on the logo or below to see it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SdNfJYHvZg>



Torbay Seahorse Survey Site



In 2024, we started at a new site in Torbay (the second one) and were stunned by the diversity of life there. We found lobster, cuttlefish, conger eel and both British species of seahorse. What made it such an exciting site, is that we were told there was no seagrass in the area, and it was barren and yet the seagrass meadow was huge and diverse. On one boat trip we had Dr Ken Collins with us from [Southampton University](#) who did a scan of the site, and the seagrass goes out a long way into the bay.

This was year one of a 10-year survey of this new site and we have been quietly looking at the first site in Torbay for a number of years and also found seahorses there.

Our volunteers Kim, Paul and Will were brilliant at finding a wide variety of species and thanks to them for their hard work.

I would also like to thank the [BSAC Jubilee Trust](#) for their kind donation for our first year's diving at the new site. Click on the logo to visit their website.



Washed up seahorses

The winter of 2024/2025 was one of the warmest on record, which is great in some ways but sadly not for seahorses caught out by it. Because it was so warm, the seahorses started their migration back into shallow waters earlier than normal and then disaster struck. We suddenly had very strong storms which the seahorses could not cope with, and in just 3 weeks we had 7 seahorses washed up onto the beach at Studland Bay. Sadly, most perished but one or two were found in time and returned to the sea.

We saw this happen at a couple of our study sites and sadly it has been happening more frequently over the last few years as global warming makes a difference to our oceans.



Above are just three of the seahorses washed up, the 2 ends ones sadly did not make it but the Short Snouted Seahorse in the centre did, and was returned to the sea, we hope it survived its ordeal.

Even when they sadly die, we can learn so much about them and through our partnership approach we are understanding about the age of seahorses, how populations are connected and where they live.

If you find a seahorse that is dead, then please let us know and if we can have the body then this will help our overall knowledge of the species. If it is still alive and moving, please take a very quick picture, preferably against something that is measurable and then get it back into the sea as rapidly as possible.

If you find a seahorse, please email us at theseahorsetrust@gmail.com and send us the information so we can learn so much more. Thank you.



In our ongoing battle to stop the trade in dead seahorses for the curio and medicine trades we have teamed up with [eBay](https://www.ebay.com) and had some incredible results.

By linking with one agent in particular, things have certainly changed. We don't want to name the agent for her safety, but she has taken a very positive, proactive stance in the war on selling dead protected species (not just seahorses) and it has been remarkable.

There are many illegal sellers around the world trading in endangered species and some of them use the money made from this to go into drugs, gun running, modern slavery, prostitution and so many horrendous practices and this is one of the reasons why we protect the identity of the teams working to stop this trade.

Our team, again we cannot name them for safety sakes, have been working very closely with the agent from eBay and whenever one of our volunteers or a member of the public report a seahorse for sale on eBay, then our team work with the agent to identify if it actually is a real seahorse, and if it is, have it removed as quickly as possible.

By using a combination of humans and artificial intelligence we have managed to take down thousands of seahorses for sale on the site, some from well-meaning but unaware people others from criminals..

We work with lots of online platforms and have had a great working relationship with Facebook, sadly with a change of staff this is no longer the case, and we cannot even get a reply from them.

Come on Facebook, you did amazingly, thanks to the intervention of our Parton Lord Swire, so please answer our emails so we can make sure there is nowhere online for the sale of endangered and protected species.

Visit our web page at [STOP THE CURIO TRADE](#)

In memory of Mrs Judith Cochrane

We would like to thank the family of Mrs Judith Cochrane who sadly passed away this year. Her family kindly suggested that instead of flowers, family and friends made donations to The Seahorse Trust, which they kindly did. This raised £196 for our conservation and research work. We would like to thank Miss E. Cochrane and the family and friends for their kindness and Mrs Judith Cochranes memory will continue through our work. Thank you.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- One of the great wins this year that we had a small part in, was having planning permission for a desalination plant in St Austell Bay in Cornwall to not be passed. The desalination plant would have done untold damage to the seagrass, seahorses and fish species and the environment in the area. Thank you to all the groups who worked hard to stop this and to everyone here at the trust for their input.
- Richard Brock has been an amazing friend to The Seahorse Trust and to trust founder Neil for a long time. Sadly, Richard passed away this year, but he has left behind an incredible legacy through [Brock Initiatives](#) and at the BBC Natural History unit in Bristol where he led the field in cutting edge programs like Life on Earth and so many other spectacular natural history programs. Thank you, Richard, for all you did, you truly will be missed.
- Beavers must be strange animals, to put in a seahorse newsletter, however the great news is, common sense has finally prevailed, and Beavers can now be released under license back into the wild. These amazing eco engineers are restoring our natural world and they do it for free, without the need of large manmade, ugly, multi-billion-pound infrastructure projects.
- As part of International Day of Women and Girls in Science, our youngest licensed seahorse surveyor, Chloe was interviewed live for BBC radio Solent's Breakfast show with Steve Harris! Chloe at 16 is also one of the Young Coastal Champions for the Dorset Coast Forum. You can hear the radio interview (7min 50) here but need to have iPlayer to log in:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0kl928l...>



Or watch her Young Coastal Champion video here:

<https://www.dorsetcoast.com/young-coastal-champions/>



Blue Wilson walks the coastline.

50-year-old Blue, lives and works in Selby, North Yorkshire and is walking solo around the entire UK coastline in aid of two marine conservation charities, our friends at [Surfers against Sewage](#) and [Sea Changers](#). So far, she has walked 3,080.47 miles in 176 days and reached as far southwest as Starcross on the Devon coast and as far northwest as Nedd in Lairg, western Sutherland in the Scottish Highlands in a continual line.

On her way she popped into chat to the [Seahorse Trust](#) co-founders Neil and Maxine about her walk. They chatted and walked with her for a while and then she was off to continue her journey.

[Salcombe Brewery](#) kindly made a donation in September from the sale of their Seahorse ale. This year they raised an amazing £2,311.55 for our conservation work. Click on the images below to go to their website and check out the Seahorse Ale and find out more.



[The Sealife Trust](#) and [The Seahorse Trust](#) work very closely together on seahorse surveys and other research projects and in January of this year they kindly made a donation towards our work. Some of the funds will be spent on boat dives in Weymouth Harbour to understand more about seahorse movements throughout the year. We have a long-standing working relationship and are working on many other projects together, including in partnership with Bangor University, trying to understand the age of seahorses from tiny bones in their head.

Eco course

To be able to train our volunteers and others around the world we run a Seahorse Survey course and a Seahorse Ecology Course. Beccy our amazing Director of



Education kindly runs these courses for us and please email us on theseahorsetrust@gmail.com to find out more.

[Blue Reef Aquariums, Newquay](#) and [Portsmouth](#) and their partner aquariums at [Hastings](#), [Tynemouth](#) and [Bristol](#) have donation boxes near all of the seahorse exhibitions and they have kindly collected donations for us. It is very time-consuming to count pennies and other coins by hand, but it is worth it, as it helps to fund our research and conservation work. I would especially like to thank Maxine, co-founder of [The Seahorse Trust](#) who spends hours counting the coins. I would also like to thank Steve and his amazing teams in all of the aquariums for their generosity in promoting The Seahorse Trust.



Boatfolk and the Southampton Boat Show



We attended the Southampton Boat show in September 2024 as guests of [Boatfolk \(Marina and boat services\)](#) who we have worked closely with us on making Studland Bay a Marine Conservation Zone, installing almost 100 ecomoorings and with others cofounding the [Studland Bay Marine Partnership](#).

It was fantastic to see Boatfolk winning more environmental awards at the show as they have done for several years now and well deserved, as they have a great environmental approach to the ocean.



Adoption and membership scheme online

Don't forget we run an adoption and membership scheme to help raise funds for our seahorse research, education, and conservation work. It is simple to do and can be set up online in minutes. Once you have set it up, we then send out your information pack and send you newsletters electronically a couple of times a year.

Sadly, due to costs we can no longer send out the newsletter by post.

<https://www.theseahorsetrust.org/adopt-a-seahorse-4/>





Fancy a making a donation? Why not give up a coffee a day and donate that money to The Seahorses trust through our Ko-fi app. Click on the logo to the left and you can donate the equivalent of a coffee to our work.

Seahorses Environmental Communications

For all press and media enquiries please contact Matt at [Seahorse Environmental Communications](#) on info@seahorseenvironmental.co.uk Matt, Isabella and the team have been amazing over the years in their incredible support for our work. A massive thank you to them all.



QR Code

Thanks to Ellen at Seahorse Communications, we now have a QR code if you want to donate to our work.

Just point your camera at the QR code to the right and click the web link and it takes you to our PayPal site, where you can donate. You don't have to have a PayPal account as you can make the donation by debit or credit card.

As a very busy charity making a massive difference to the marine environment, we are reliant on the generosity of others to be able to keep all our projects going.

If you love what we do and love seahorses like we do, please donate.

THANK YOU.



Your privacy

If you have received this newsletter and do not want to be on our e-mail list anymore, we are sorry to see you go. Please let us know at theseahorsetrust@gmail.com and we will remove your details ASAP.

Please note, we do not sell, share or give your details to anyone else and they are held here at [The Seahorse Trust](#) solely so we can keep you updated with the latest news and events by the Trust.

Please check out our Privacy Statement on our website at <https://www.theseahorsetrust.org/>

We could not have done this without the support of these amazing supporters (and so many others) and importantly- you. THANK YOU

These amazing organisations below and so many others support us in so many different ways.

Please click on their logos to find out more about them.

