

## LUNDY GENERAL MANAGER'S ANNUAL REPORT

Last year I commented that despite the effect of the mainland recession, the weather would dictate the fortunes of Lundy – and that has proved to be the case. Whilst we didn't enjoy the 'barbecue' weather that the meteorological office predicted, I am pleased to report that the weather was more in our favour with 14 cancelled sailings and improved visitor numbers of approx. 20,000 following the disappointing 2008 season.

2009 brought 11,300 day trippers and 5,168 staying visitors to Lundy by MS *Oldenburg* and helicopter; along with approximately 3,000 other visitors arriving on Balmoral, Wavereley, private boat and light aircraft. So it's clear that Lundy remains a popular destination so long as you can get there!

Property bookings were healthy with an annual occupancy rate of 84.5% which is on a par with our record year in 2008. Visitors staying in properties showed annual growth of 3.1% year-on-year and 2010 already has healthy forward bookings with an incredible 70% of properties already booked. 2011 bookings are already showing a positive trend with 10% confirmed bookings.

The winter helicopter service remains popular and I am pleased to report that this year will see enhanced facilities at Hartland for stayers. We have wanted to do this for several years but plans have stalled due to a lack of funding. However, the order for the improvement has now been placed and we should see work commence this summer at last.

Staff numbers on the Island remain at 27 full-time, assisted by summer volunteers. Staff changes on the Island were minimal with Scott Staples joining us as junior chef, and in October we said goodbye to Island carpenter Stuart Leavy and housekeeper Zoe Bignell who have been replaced by Dave and Penny Chidgey after some 500 hopeful couples applied for the position.

Sadly Myrtle Ternstrom has had to resign her librarian's post, but we welcome Peter Rothwell's quick 'promotion' to manage the island property libraries.

*Oldenburg* had a good season in the very capable hands of our regular crew. Sadly, due to the lack of a suitable dry dock facility in Appledore, we had to take her to Sharpness this winter for her annual survey and hull maintenance. However, this presented us with the opportunity to visit Gloucester en route, and we enjoyed a memorable, well supported open weekend in Gloucester's historic docks.

On the Island, the road stabilisation works came to a conclusion in June and we would like to thank everyone who contributed to and was involved with the project, and in particular Dr John Grimes for his immense contribution and support. The garden walls in Millcombe and the isolation hospital have had further work to repair the walls and collapsed culvert. 2010 should see more work on the internal walls of Millcombe House, to further consolidate them.

Maintenance never stops on Lundy and after the main power supply to the Old Light showed signs of failure, it had to be replaced. This turned into a major task. The Jetty celebrated its 10th anniversary with a mechanical service and has had 'sacrificial anodes' fitted to its base to slow down deterioration. Old Light Cottage and Pig's Paradise South have had replacement roofs. Three new boreholes were sunk to help with our water supply and the team also completed the fitting of stainless steel hot water cylinders to all letting properties, giving constant pressure to showers in every property. Following enhanced fire regulations for letting properties, emergency lighting has had to be introduced.

The Farm had a successful lambing season, and introduced 'Wet and Windy' - our two Gloucester Old spot pigs, which have added to the island's recycling initiative while become a firm favourite with staff and visitors alike. We have also had a new colt in 'Harry' and I am pleased to announce that 'Lundy Redwing' was born in February 2010.

The Island game larder is now well stocked under appropriate regulations, following the annual controlled cull of the feral stock of Sika deer, Soay sheep and goats. Rabbit numbers continue to increase and we are planning to continue with our programme of control.

2009 brought many events throughout the year with the highlight being the royal visit of the Earl and Countess of Wessex in May; the couple spent a memorable day on the island, meeting staff and visitors alike. They enjoyed talks from Nicola and Reg and a Marisco lunch of Lundy game stew.

As well as the first underwater photography competition, the Clovelly to Lundy Row and the Lundy to Woolacombe swim challenge, the Island hosted the annual Lundy Fly-In, during August which had a record turn out of 74 small aircraft, which visited the island on what turned out to be a beautiful summer's day.

In September, the Island celebrated 40 years of ownership by the National Trust and management by the Landmark Trust with a service held in the church by the new priest in charge, the Rev. Shirley Henderson. An appeal was launched to co-incide with the anniversary to raise funds for island initiatives and I am pleased to say that £53,000 has been raised to date. I would like to thank everyone who so generously contributed. The refurbishment of the beach building is high on our agenda from the proceeds.

The Bishop of Exeter paid a visit in December to look round the island and also to consider the future of the church. A group of interested stakeholders has been formed with the LFS represented to ensure your voice is heard regarding the church's future.

On the mainland, both shore offices had busy years and The Lundy Exhibition trailer was seen at all the key local events and shows, including among many others The Royal Cornwall and The North Devon.

2010 will undoubtedly bring fresh challenges, and we will be focusing further on conservation and maintenance. Our key priorities include the beach building, extending the Hartland heliport, enhancing the Island accommodation for volunteers and visiting contractors, improving the standard of the electrics in all properties and making good the scarring left by the infrastructure works to the Old Light.

There are several initiatives on the mainland which may affect Lundy which we are monitoring carefully. For example, the proposed 'Atlantic Array' which is a large wind farm, approved in principle to be built some nine miles north east of Lundy. This is a complex issue, but it could have benefits for the island. The proposed Severn Link service from Swansea to Ilfracombe could also bring benefits to Lundy. The proposal to replace RAF Chivenor's search and rescue service with a private company could have significant implications for Lundy as this will provide daylight cover only. I am assured that there will be an alternative service provided from RAF Culdrose but only time will tell how effective this will prove to be.

2010 is going to be a busy year for Lundy and I am looking forward to that with anticipation. It is a great personal privilege to be custodian of such a special place and to have the opportunity to

work alongside and meet extraordinary people who show such dedication to a small piece of granite.

I would like to finish by thanking everyone for their continued support over the last year and to wish the Field Society a successful 2010.

DEREK GREEN

March 2010

## LUNDY WARDEN'S REPORT

Mike McKinnon arrived as a seasonal volunteer, a role that has become an annual position providing essential assistance to the conservation team. Interviews for the 2010 volunteer post have been held and the post will shortly be offered to the successful candidate.

The ongoing Lundy interpretation project has resulted in the production of further leaflets this year, which include 'Lundy Codes' and 'Lundy Walks'. These add to the 'suite' of interpretive leaflets which are helping to consolidate the 'Lundy Style', and to provide a better experience for our visitors by increasing their awareness. Many thanks must go to Bettina Newman from BMLD Graphic Design for her expertise in all of this work.

Bettina and Mike Langman also designed Lundy's Beach building and updated the existing interpretation that was produced in 1999. The Landmark Trust launched an appeal to raise funds for this project, which is on target to open the newly refurbished beach building this season. New display panels will run along the north and south walls with wooden panels beneath which will be etched with scenes of Lundy's wildlife. On the east wall there will be a marine mural which has been created by a local artist, Mick Loates.

Any LFS members planning a visit to Lundy after mid-May are encouraged to take a look and provide the wardens with constructive feedback.

Other projects have included the 2011 Calendar, which is in the shop and selling well already, and the 'Lundy Guide' has been updated to the new style.

In June 2009 Lundy hosted its first underwater photography competition, the 'Lundy Splash-IN'. The event planning actually began in January with lots of behind-the-scenes work going on to make sure that the day ran smoothly. On the day the weather was a little unpredictable with strong winds, but local charter boats and both Appledore and Ilfracombe Sub Aqua Clubs braved the seas and made it across to the Island. There were thirteen entries into the competition, which was a little lower than hoped for, but encouraging for a first time event.

The winning entries were by Mark Lavington with his picture of a Jewel Anemone in the 'Mega to Macro' category; Mike Deaton with his picture of a Seal in the 'Marine Nature Reserve Ambience' category and James Wright with his picture of a Compass Jellyfish in the 'Marine Abstract' category. This latter picture was also chosen as the overall winner.

Generous sponsorship for the event was received, with over £2000 worth of prizes donated. Preparations for the 2010 event are well advanced and £2000 has already been pledged. More details are available on the Lundy website.