

28th March 2010

Fowey 003 2010

## Great response to lifejacket clinic in Fowey.

**On Saturday 27th March Fowey Gallants sailing club opened its doors at 9.00am to host a free lifejacket clinic. Over the course of the day 86 lifejackets were checked with a staggering 20% found to have defects which would have resulted in them not inflating.**

Members of the public who brought in lifejackets were initially shown how their jacket works by Iain Cooke from Ocean Safety. They were then inflated manually and owners shown the key parts to check on a regular basis to ensure that if the lifejacket was required for use it would work as required. The lifejackets then had any defective parts replaced, were deflated and repacked by staff from Ocean Safety in Plymouth who are qualified service engineers and had given their time for free. The emphasis of the day was to show people how to maintain their own lifejackets as required.

Of the 86 lifejackets checked, over 15 of them would not have inflated as required. This was due to various defects such as loose or previously discharged cylinders and holes in the inflation chambers. We also saw one Seago lifejacket which was from batches recalled by Seago in August of 2008.

The idea for the lifejacket clinic came from Marcus Lewis, a renowned local boat builder and avid sailor himself. Marcus is also a longstanding member of the local lifeboat crew in Fowey having attended his first shout in 1987, which was to search for someone who had fallen out of a dinghy late at night with no lifejacket on.

Marcus said 'The main thing that impressed me was the amount of knowledge that was passed on to people on a one to one basis, and that everybody went away knowing at least ten times more than they did when they walked in. I don't know of any other scenario where that quality and volume of information could be passed on to that many people in such a short time. It was also great to see so many new faces who did not come last year, thus increasing the number of people locally who now know more about their lifejackets and are hopefully taking care of them!'

'After the success of the lifejacket clinic on Saturday and last year, we hope to hold another one next year at the start of the season, as I know we have only seen a fraction of the lifejackets currently in use in the local area. I would like to thank everyone involved in making this happen including the RNLI, Ocean Safety, Fowey Harbour Commissioners, Fowey Gallants Sailing Club, The Port of Fowey Race Organising Committee and Upper Deck Marine'.

Shortly after the Lifejacket Clinic had finished, the volunteer crew of Fowey's inshore lifeboat '*Olive Two*' were launched to help a jet-skier who was in trouble just off Polruan Castle. The jet-ski had suffered a mechanical failure and was unable to

return to shore. The crew onboard the inshore Lifeboat attached a towline and brought the jet-skier safely back into Fowey.

### **Notes to Editors**

- On average it costs £5,800 to launch an all weather lifeboat, such as the *Maurice and Joyce Hardy* and £2,200 to launch an inshore lifeboat like the *Olive Two*.
- For more information on the Fowey RNLI lifeboats, the Trent class *Maurice and Joyce Hardy* and the D class *Olive Two*, please visit the station website at [www.foweylifeboat.co.uk](http://www.foweylifeboat.co.uk)

### **RNLI Media contacts**

For more information please telephone Sam Ellis, RNLI Volunteer Lifeboat Press Officer on 07970 092116 or [samkellis@live.co.uk](mailto:samkellis@live.co.uk) or Tamsin Thomas Media Relations Manager for the south on 07786 668847 or [tthomas@rnli.org.uk](mailto:tthomas@rnli.org.uk) or contact RNLI Public Relations on 01202 336789

### **RNLI online**

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### **Key facts about the RNLI**

The RNLI charity saves lives at sea. Its volunteers provide a 24-hour search and rescue service around the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland coasts. The RNLI operates over 230 lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland and has more than 100 lifeguard units on beaches around the UK. The RNLI is independent of Coastguard and government and depends on voluntary donations and legacies to maintain its rescue service. Since the RNLI was founded in 1824 its lifeboat crews and lifeguards have saved over 137,000 lives. The RNLI is a charity registered in England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland.

