

S.O.S. Events 2011 with the Dart Lifeboat team

On the last Friday in January, throughout the country, the RNLI has a fundraising event called SOS Day, to bring in much needed funds for the charity. The Dart Lifeboat team was no exception, and through amazing team effort events in the town and at the lifeboat station raised nearly £3000. Of that total almost £1000 was raised by the crew at the Rowathon.

On Saturday 29 January the lifeboat station was open to the public with a variety of stalls, food sales and events taking place. A BBQ was set up outside the station and Dai Richards cooked a vast number of tasty bacon and sausage rolls and hamburgers for the hungry visitors. As it was a bitterly cold day the hot food was extremely popular and very welcome.

Inside the boathouse there were guessing games for children, boat jumble and second hand books stalls, as well as Sea Safety and lifejacket advice. RNLI souvenirs were for sale, along with tasty curries and cakes to buy and sample.

A popular stall was run by keen gardener Liz Yunnice, wife of Sea Safety officer John Yunnice. She had approached Gardentime before Christmas for plant donations and they had generously given four large bags of bulbs. Liz had painstakingly planted these up in a variety of bowls and containers. The bulbs were kept in their allotment poly tunnel until the time of the sale and all looked in tiptop condition on her stall.

Mike Holliday from the Dart Fundraising team organised a Quiz evening at the Dartmouth Arms and two teams from the lifeboat crew took part with singular lack of success! Events relating to food and drink always are successful and there was a coffee morning at Brown's Hotel as well as succulent steaks served at the Ship in Dock. Another member of the fundraising team, Serg Iain Simons, organised an inter-emergency services skittles at

Dartmouth Yacht Club. There were local teams from BRNC, the Fire Brigade, Coastguards, RNLI, RNLI friends and the Police. The BRNC team handed on the trophy for safe keeping to the Police who were worthy winners on this occasion.



On SOS day itself RNLI volunteers packed the bags of shoppers at Sainsbury's check-out tills whilst the local RNLI Education team visited two of the local Primary Schools. Traditionally the Primary Schools have supported SOS day by dressing up (down?) and contributed a good sum to the event by doing so. This year, for the first time, the senior students at the Dartmouth Academy joined in and between them the Dartmouth Academy, St John the Baptist Primary school, Stoke Fleming Primary school and Blackawton Primary school contributed the magnificent sum of £474. John Fenton, Education volunteer, was joined by Bob Thomas, Boathouse Manager, and presented the work of the RNLI at seven different assemblies in the various schools through



Photo by John Fenton

the week. Three lifeboat crewmen also took time out to join in question and answer sessions at the primary schools.

By far the most exciting and exhausting SOS fundraising event locally was the Rowathon organised by lifeboat crewman Yorkie Lomas. It took place in the lifeboat station over a 24 hour period. Seventeen crew members took part in hourly slots, some rowing more than once, plus seven members of the Ops team and two crew supporters, making a grand total of twenty six rowers. The total distance rowed was 179 miles 189 yards or 288418 metres.

Sponsors were invited to guess the distance rowed and Ian Thomas, son of Boathouse Manager Bob Thomas, guessed 178 miles 1500 yds which was only 449 yds short of the actual distance clocked up. Amazingly, only 8 yds behind Ian's guess came Carol Rampling in second place. The first prize, generously donated by the Dart Marina, was for one night's dinner, bed and breakfast for two plus full use of the leisure complex and spa. ●



Janet Hall. Assistant Volunteer Lifeboat Press Officer

Launches since October 2010

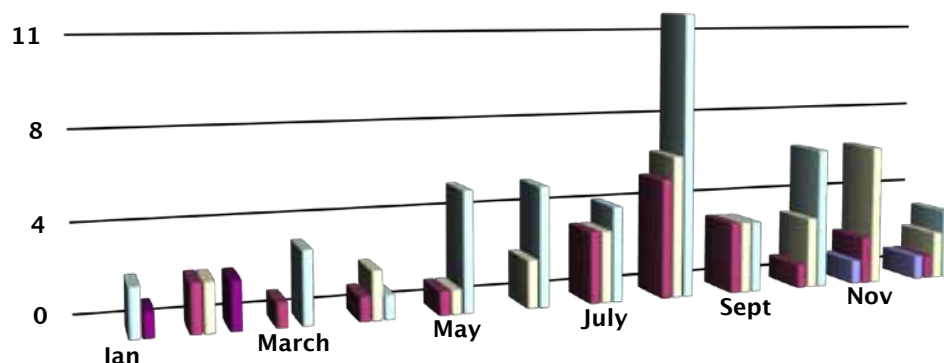
No.	Date	Assisted	Location / Search area.	Description
94	24/10/10 Sunday 16:01 hrs		Start Bay	A single person in a RIB was reported as being overdue on passage from Blackpool Sands. As the ILB passed the Dancing Beggars they were informed that the missing person had been located near to Brixham Harbour and was safe and well and the lifeboat was stood down
95	06/12/10 Monday 01:11 hrs		River Dart	The Coastguard requested that the Inshore lifeboat join the search for a missing lady in Totnes. Her car had been found near Baltic Wharf. The lifeboat was stood down as they were passing Duncannon on their way to the scene as a body had been found.
97	25/12/10 Saturday 12:07		Waterfall Cove Start Bay	Dart RNLI lifeboat had their second Christmas Day launch in the station's brief four year history. An eight year old spaniel chased seagulls over rocks to an isolated cove and could not return without rescue from the sea. The volunteer crew was requested to launch at 12:07 hoping that they might be the first lifeboat in the country to be called out on Christmas Day. In fact the crew at Tower Lifeboat station on the Thames had been called out three minutes earlier. The Dart team did however score two firsts with this rescue. It was the first in which Owen Mallier, the latest Deputy Launching Authority to join the team, was in sole charge and the first rescue ever for Ewen Menzies, who is the latest volunteer crewman to join the eighteen others at the Dart station.
98	01/01/11 Saturday 14:17		Start Bay	A blue and white object was seen to enter the water one mile out from Slapton Sands. It could have been a kite surfer and the alarm was raised. The Inshore lifeboat was directed to the object by the Coastguard team on Slapton Sands. The object was found to be seven helium filled New Year balloons and they were taken to the coastguard team ashore.
99	10/02/11 Thursday 08:34	Assisted 2	Dart Estuary	Requested by HMCG to assist a broken down 26' Motor cruiser <i>Plan Bee</i> with two persons on board near the Mewstone. The vessel was on route from Torquay to the Dart for a lift out. On arrival the casualty was again under it's own power and had reached the Checkstone buoy, although the engine had cut out several times. Dart lifeboat escorted the vessel up river. At the Anchor Stone the engine cut out again and could not be restarted. The vessel was taken in tow by Dart Lifeboat and secured at Dartside Quay. The problem was due to water in the fuel.
100	10/02/11 Sunday 11:27	Assisted 2	Dart Estuary	The twenty foot angling boat <i>Highlander</i> with two on board had broken down with a fuel fault seven miles offshore from Dartmouth. The vessel <i>Bares Watching</i> towed the Highlander back to the entrance of the Dart. The inshore lifeboat took over the tow and returned the <i>Highlander</i> to her mooring in the Noss Marina.

A fuller account of these launches, as well as those not mentioned above, can be found on the new Dart RNLI station web site.

A century of launches

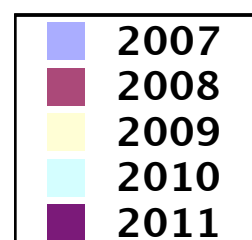
Having reached our 100th launch it is interesting to examine some of the statistics that have emerged. During that time the lifeboat was on service on the water for 121 hours and the volunteer crew put in 434 hours afloat. We were surprised to find that 44% of our services were carried out in darkness.

The crew have saved three lives but during the same period four have died in the Dart, two by suicide. Thirty five craft and fifty five persons have been brought ashore as well as the figure of thirteen landed, which refers to those more seriously injured. The intensive first aid training has been put to good use by the crew; Already they have treated a casualty with a crush injury due to a fallen rock, a neck injury due to a beach fall, a severely



The first 100 launches by the Dart inshore lifeboat which shows the numbers increasing year on year

sprained ankle and a knee dislocation. They also resuscitated one of our own shore crew whose heart had stopped due to a severe heart attack – but that does not appear in the statistics! ●



Birth Announcement

The new Dart RNLI web site has been eighteen months in gestation but has finally been delivered.

New Home address: www.dartlifeboat.org.uk

Visiting hours: There is 24 hour visiting but please do not call if you have a virus infection.

Family history: There are photos and brief notes about crew members and others on the Dart lifeboat team in the About us section.

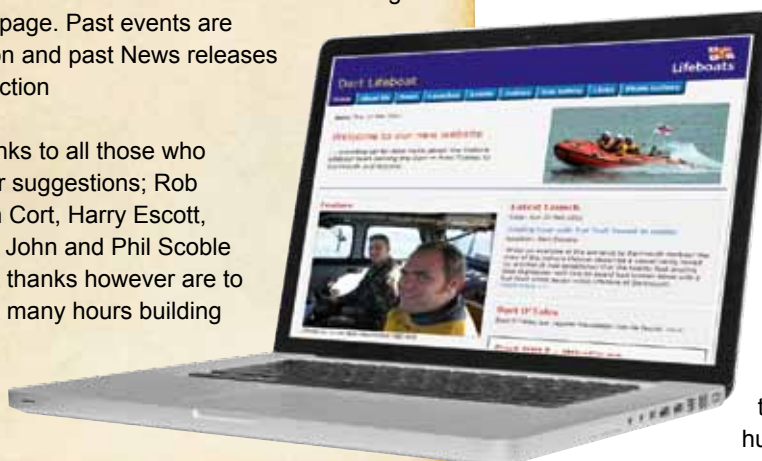
Communications: You can now link to the station by email with your comments or requests for information, as well as finding all our contact details in the About us section. The latest issue of Dart D'Tales and links to past issues can be obtained by using the link on the Home page.

Health Visitor: John Yunnie is our Sea Safety Officer. Details of how to ask for a Sea check can be found in the Sea Safety section. Next Clinic appointment: Sat. April 16. Free Life Jacket check.

Developmental milestones: Latest news and links to forthcoming events appear on the Home page. Past events are archived in the Events section and past News releases can be found in the News section

The Delivery team: My thanks to all those who assisted in the birth with their suggestions; Rob Clements, Jeff Cooper, Brian Cort, Harry Escott, Janet Hall, Pip Hallett, Kevin John and Phil Scoble amongst others. My greatest thanks however are to Ralph Seeley who has spent many hours building and refining the site.

Continuing Care: Web Designer Ralph Seeley.
Web Master John Fenton



Ralph Seeley

Photo by John Fenton

As you might expect a lot of attention has been given to the Launches section and it has been completely redesigned. They are now archived by year, month and date and can easily be accessed individually. Each Launch has a brief description against it and a symbol to show if there is an associated map of its location, a photograph or helmet cam footage.

Details of the latest launch also appear automatically on the Home page and that page now highlights and links to all the current News and Events. Occasional emails are sent to our supporters, Friends of the Dart Lifeboat and national RNLI members giving advance notice of forthcoming

events. There is now a link to an up to the minute weather forecast with wind and tidal information.

The Juniors page is an innovation and has news of local organisations, schools and individuals who have had a link with the Dart lifeboat team. There is also a direct link to the RNLI Shorthing web pages.

Designing and producing the new site has involved a huge amount of work. I hope you enjoy it and find it useful. I look forward to hearing your feedback. John Fenton. ●



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Christmas Day Shouts



Cartoon by James Fenton

Ralph Seeley: web designer

Ralph was a Maths graduate from Kings College London. His interest in computers began two years into his first job with the defence industry when he found that some of the calculations he needed to solve were taking two days to complete using the then current method of slide rules and tables. His use of computers was initially work orientated, but he found the diversion into web design intellectually stimulating.

He lived and worked as a Consultant in Cambridge for twenty years and used to charter boats to go on holiday with his family. He and his wife had always promised themselves a boat when they had a home by the water at Tuckenhay and he only bought his first boat, an Ovni 39 foot sloop, when he reached Devon three years ago.

Ralph designed a web site for his own Consultancy business and is now involved in designing sites for the Dart RNLI and the Dartmouth Yacht Club. ●

Coast Review June 2011

When the Royal Charter was granted to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution the first of the powers given were....

"To develop, provide and equip lifeboat services and other facilities and services for promoting safety and saving life"

To date there are 235 RNLI lifeboat stations around the coast of the UK and Eire altogether costing £378,000 a day to run and equip. This is a huge sum which needs to be spent wisely and to be regularly monitored. As part of this process the RNLI Operations Committee, chaired by one of the Trustees of the Institution and including Michael Vlasto, RNLI Operations Director, visits each station in turn to examine its efficiency. This process is called the "Coast Review".

On a date to be arranged the Coast Review team will be visiting Dart Lifeboat Station this June.

The committee will look closely at the waterborne activity on the Dart and the change if any since our first review in 2006 when the decision was made to reopen the Dart lifeboat station. The relevant statistics will be presented to the committee, together with a written report on our endeavours to date. Evidence will be gathered on the day from the crew and the lifeboat team, as it is the experience and views of those who man the station which are so important.

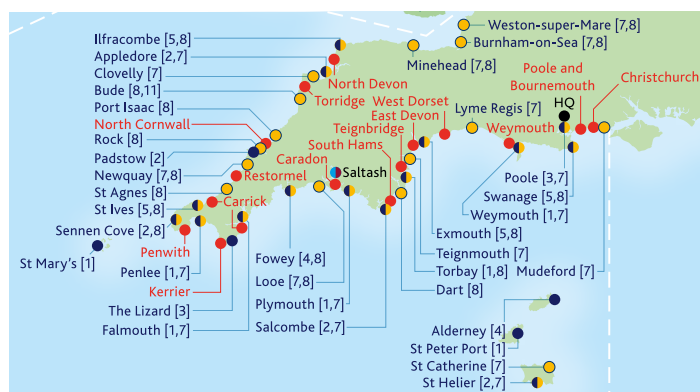
The review needs to ask, "Is this the right lifeboat in the right place? Should we continue with the present arrangements or do we need to make alterations".

This focus on having the best boats in the right place has earned the RNLI its world-class lifesaving reputation. ●



Michael Vlasto, RNLI Operations Director

Photo by Nathan Williams



RNLI Stations and lifeguarded beaches (red) in the South Div.



Palm FM support the RNLI

Palm FM have made the RNLI their Charity of the Year and specifically they are raising money for the training of three local volunteers from Dart, Teignmouth and Torbay. Darren Hopley is the crewman they are supporting from Dart and their aim is to raise enough to provide for his initial training. They are holding at least four Charity events over the year for this purpose. Palm will also be broadcasting our local stories on 105.5fm which will mean that we are in contact with a far wider audience than at present. ●



Darren Hopley, Dart Lifeboat crewman

Photo by Andy Carter

We're here to help you!



Our new RNLI "Spirit of the Dart" Lifeboat, operated and crewed by dedicated volunteers from Dartmouth and the surrounding villages, is launched by the Higher Ferry slip to be afloat just minutes after a "shout" for help.

Now that we have our very own RNLI Dart Lifeboat Team – why not show your support and approval by becoming a Friend of the Dart RNLI lifeboat?

Friends receive our Newsletter, Dart D'Tales, invitations to our events, notes on the "shouts" and rescues that we have attended and you can arrange to visit us to have a look at the Lifeboat Station, its operation and the Lifeboat itself. You can also ask for a copy of the exciting free RNLI DVD, Serious Fun, that features the DART LIFEBOAT STATION so that you can see our Lifeboat in action. It also contains chapters with advice on taking part in many different water sports.

We receive no financial help from government or other official agencies. All RNLI operations are funded solely by public support. As a River Dart user, or simply someone who wishes to support the local RNLI volunteers, please feel free to call on our services when you need to and we ask you to consider joining us using the form to the right. ●

The RNLI believes that lifejackets save lives and are useless unless worn

The annual free lifejacket check will take place in the Dart lifeboat station on Saturday 16 April, 10.00 - 15.00 hours.

Please bring you lifejackets along to be checked.

Last year's examination of life jackets was very popular. The same team from Ocean Safety will inflate and examine the jackets. Any faults that can be easily remedied can be repaired on the spot and spare parts can be supplied. More major faults can be dealt with at their base in Plymouth. Chris Robinson, from Shipmates the Chandlers, will be on hand to give advice and to sell lifejackets and buoyancy aids for all ages. There is no limit to the number of lifejackets you can bring and it is open to all.

A free sea check for your boat, by the Dart RNLI Sea Safety team, can be arranged with John Yunnie (Mobile 0776 800 7365) ●



Young visitors at Dartmouth Regatta, suitably dressed

Photo by John Fenton

Application Form

With an annual donation of just £5 (or more if you wish) you can become

A FRIEND OF THE DART RNLI LIFEBOAT

Just complete this form and send it with your donation as shown below, we will acknowledge your gift and keep you informed.

Gift Aid. If you pay tax to Inland Revenue, we could reclaim from them, at no cost to you, the tax you have already paid on your donation. This would increase your gift value by a very worthwhile 20% To give us your permission to do so, please ✓ this ☐.

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Date

This data will be securely stored by us, not be to released to anyone outside RNLI. Should you wish to examine your record, we will show it to you and your can instruct us to modify or delete it.

Thank you for your support, please send your application to:

The Membership Secretary

RNLI DART LIFEBOAT STATION

Coronation Park, DARTMOUTH, TQ6 9NL

Just ask for more copies

of this form if you need them for your friends !!

Friends of the RNLI Dart lifeboat

There are at present one hundred and thirty "Friends" and they have subscribed amounts varying between £5 and £500. Some are paid up members of the RNLI, but many are not and simply wish to support the activities of the local RNLI volunteers at the Dart station.

Up until now we have issued periodic invitations to become a "Friend" but have given no guidance as to when the annual subscription might be due. We have left it to individuals to subscribe as they wish. The "Friends" donations are ring fenced locally to cover any difference between the income from advertising in Dart D'Tales and the production and distribution of the newsletter, as well as the maintenance of the local RNLI station website. At the present time the advertising revenue does not cover these costs.

The Dart lifeboat team believe strongly that the local newsletter and web site perform an excellent job in keeping our RNLI members, Friends and supporters, as well as the general public locally and further afield, up to date with the activities and achievements of the volunteers at the station. It is well worth the work involved in voluntarily producing them.

It has been decided to start the official "Friends" membership year on April 1st 2011 and all who wish to contribute are invited to subscribe, on an annual basis, from that date.

The cheapest and quickest means of notifying RNLI members, "Friends" and supporters about our local activities is through occasional group emails. They are blind copied so that no one on the list knows that an email has been sent to you and your email remains private. If you have an email and do not already receive these emails (the last had the subject line; Dart RNLI March update) please send you email address to the lifeboat station at dart@rnli.org.uk. You will not be inundated! ●

Bob Hattersley.
Membership Secretary
of the Dart Lifeboat
Fundraising Team.



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Restoring the ex-RNLI Lizard Lifeboat

Peter Lucas - ran a rigging business at 26 Foss Street for 20 years - now runs boat storage and a small yard at Old Mill Creek on the Dart.



It was 175 years since the founding of the RNLI when I visited a fleet of ex lifeboats gathered together in Salcombe, en route to Poole for the celebrations. Among them was the 1960 ex-Lizard 52' Barnett class official number 952 "The Duke of Cornwall" (civil service number 33). The crews had a get together at the Victoria Inn and by the end of the evening I was well on the way to owning a lifeboat. After the Poole celebrations the then owners of the DOC dropped her off at Old Mill Creek, put their possessions in a van and disappeared back to Wales, much the richer with my cheque in their pocket. I was left standing on the deck of a hastily evacuated boat that I had just bought. The truth then started to hit home; the old girl was 40 years old and had been owned by two owners since coming out of service in 1986. The original owner had removed the main winch, done all sorts of odd modifications to the electrics, fitted reflex diesel heaters fore and aft with their 6ft stainless steel chimneys sprouting from the deck and as a final insult had removed the RNLI Sestrel binnacle and compass and made them into a table lamp!

There was rudimentary accommodation down below, very crudely constructed made from saw 3" x 2", odd bits of ply and chipboard and steel screws! This came out fairly rapidly and we set about the huge job of cleaning and painting the interior. In the forecabin we cut apertures into the side buoyancy compartments which made very comfortable pilot berths over 8' long. Also constructed was a double berth right up in the bows and a head was fitted aft.

The space aft when she was in service had housed the navigation area and radar. It had lockers for supplies and for survivors and crew to sit on, but little else. The problem was that it had limited headroom. We decided to construct a well in the middle of the area and build the new bunks and galley off the old deck height, but have standing headroom elsewhere in the cabin. The next winter a new teak interior was fitted with contrasting Douglas fir cabin sole and worktops.

Over the next few years we added various electronic devices; radar, GPS autopilot, along with a generator. As this class of lifeboats have their propellers in tunnels to protect them they are very good at going in straight lines, but not so good to manoeuvre



The Duke of Cornwall on the Thames near Henley. June 2010



Peter Lucas in the wheelhouse of the Duke of Cornwall



The Dart lifeboat crew in their Source To The Sea Challenge. August 2010

at low speed in restricted marinas. We bit the bullet and fitted a bow thruster which has proven invaluable and has probably saved on insurance claims! The twin 72hp Gardner 6LW engines have always run smoothly but the engine room would have shocked the

ex-RNLI mechanic. The paintwork on the rest of the boat had been badly neglected. When ashore at Darthaven the mahogany hull was burnt off and the original waterlines found and we have since painted her back in her original colours.

Various missing parts were obtained with some difficulty and to replace the missing winch and binnacle the only option was to buy another lifeboat. I found the John Gelatly Hyndman up at Littleport in Cambridgeshire and bought it. I hired a tug, towed the boat to Ely and loaded it aboard a boat transporter that took it to Plymouth where we went and towed her back with the Duke of Cornwall to Old Mill Creek. The missing parts went aboard the DOC and the John Gelatly was sold on to another owner who has since restored it and over winter's at Old Mill.

The beauty of restoring an ex-RNLI boat is that they were initially built with the best possible materials available at the time and lovingly maintained throughout their working lives. When sold out of service they are therefore as good as new. They make a good restoration project as, even if they have had hard times since disposal, they can usually be brought back to their former glory. It has been 10 years since I stood on Old Mill Quay wondering what I had done, but have enjoyed restoring the boat and the many cruises and friendships made with her. ●



MERRY
CHRISTMAS
DART

Christmas cards with a difference

We are planning to produce Christmas cards featuring the Dart lifeboat crew for sale from midsummer this year. There will be two of James Fenton's cartoons which have appeared in Dart D'Tales, as well as

a montage of the crew in their dry suits created by Nigel Millard.

Look out for them on the Dart RNLI souvenir stall this summer. ●

Local Dart RNLI contacts.

Lifeboat Operations Manager.

Rob Clements. Mobile 07917 514 948

Chairman Management Team.

Robin Shiffner. Tel 01803 835853

Chairman Fundraising Team.

Harry Escott. Tel 01803 834296

Secretary Fundraising Team.

Clare Thorp. Tel 01803 832123

Box Secretary.

Gordon Pepperell. Mob 07791 448391

Treasurer Fundraising Team.

Colin Myers. Tel 01803 832674

Local Membership Secretary.

Bob Hattersley. Tel 01803 832182

Souvenir Secretary.

Mrs. Jo Escott. Tel 01803 834296

Event Liaison.

Anna Perry. Tel 01803 832393

Boathouse Manager.

Bob Thomas. Mobile 07980 099 932

Administrator and Press Officer.

Editor Dart D Tales and web site.

John Fenton Tel. 01803 770761

Assistant Press Officer.

Janet Hall. Tel 01803 835718

Sea Safety Officer.

John Yunnie Mobile 07768 007 365

Dart Lifeboat Station.

Coronation Park, North Embankment,
DARTMOUTH, TQ6 9NL

Tel. 01803 839224

Please do not ring this number if you think
a launch is in progress.

**Do you have an idea for a feature
article? Got something to say? Please
send your views to John Fenton**

Future Events

Saturday 16 April
Lifejacket Clinic
Lifeboat Station
10.00-15.00

Monday 2 May
RNLI Mayday Mayday Mayday
Coronation Park
BRNC volunteer band.
Games for children
LBS open with stalls
11.00-16.00

Sunday 15 May
Canoe racing
Bow Creek, Tuckenhay
RNLI crew taking part
Family day out.

Sunday 19 June
Palm FM Radio hosting
Torbay Half-Marathon
Two presenters running for
RNLI SW

Saturday 25 June
Community day 2pm – 6pm
Games & Hog Roast
The Priory field, Cornworthy
RNLI souvenirs & raffle

Sat/Sun 23/24 July
Kingswear Regatta
RNLI crew taking part
RNLI souvenirs stall
(Saturday only)

Friday 29 July
RNLI Flag Day
Dartmouth
0900-1400
volunteers needed

Thursday 4 August
RNLI Fete
Royal Avenue Gardens, Dartmouth
Stalls and tea
(volunteers needed)

For further details on all the above
contact Harry Escott
Tel 01803 834296

Details of our last one hundred launches, recent and forthcoming events, as well as information on the new IB1 D class lifeboat, can be found on the local RNLI web site. Notices are also posted on the Notice Boards in front of the toilets on North Embankment and on the Lifeboat Station.