

## **Ilfracombe Coastal Celebration – A Simple Event Framework**

### **What's It All About?**

This is a fun and flexible idea for a week-long celebration of Ilfracombe's amazing harbour, coastline, and maritime life. It's not a single big event – it's a shared theme that local businesses, groups, and organisations can use to run their own activities. Think of it as a friendly umbrella that brings everything together and helps promote what's already happening, plus spark new ideas.

### **The Big Idea**

- Celebrate the sea, the coast, and our harbour.
- Inspired by Looe and Polperro's 'On the Water Week'.
- Showcase all the brilliant things to do on, in, and around the water.

### **Why Do It?**

- Bring more visitors to town and boost local trade.
- Help people discover and enjoy our coastal environment.
- Get the community involved and proud.
- Support eco-friendly and educational projects.
- Keep it simple and easy to join in.

### **Participation areas**

- Business and Tourism – increase footfall and bookings out of season
- Community – tasters of locally available activities (e.g. watersports clubs), careers at sea
- Religion, Culture and Creativity – opportunities to get involved
- Environment – environmental activities, awareness

### **What Could Happen?**

- Boat trips, fishing, kayaking, paddleboarding, diving
- Taster sessions - gig rowing, Y-sail, kayak club, RYA training school
- RNLI demos, lifejacket checks, water safety sessions.
- Seafood tastings & themed menus, live music in bars.
- Themed window displays.
- Beach cleans, nature walks, biosphere interactive activities.
- Talks and stories about pirates, lifeboats, and sea adventures.
- Art workshops, music, outdoor cinema, lantern parade.
- Bike night, blessings and memorials by the sea.

### **Who Could Join In?**

- Local clubs: Sea Cadets, Gig Club, Yacht Club, Canoe Club, Dive Club.
- Groups like RNLI, Rotary, HMCG, Royal Marines.
- Schools, youth groups, and anyone interested in the sea.
- Great chance for taster sessions, volunteering, and careers info.

### **When's Best?**

- One week, covering two weekends.
- June or September are options – before or after the busy summer holidays.
- Could link with existing events like the Lundy Yacht Race, Shanty Festival, Gig Regatta, or RNLI Blessing of the Boats. In June the Waverley could be involved.

### **How Will It Work?**

- Keep it light-touch and easy to organise.
- Each group runs their own thing – we just help tie it all together under a common brand.
- Use social media, posters, and local press to spread the word.
- Maybe a simple event guide and some branded goodies (sponsorship / advertising required).
- Make sure it's safe, accessible, and eco-friendly.

### **Who Are We Engaging With?**

- Harbourmaster, Town Council, ND Council.
- RNLI, watersports providers, charities
- Businesses especially boat operators but involving all others too
- Schools, youth groups, environmental organisations.
- Local businesses, accommodation providers, cultural groups.