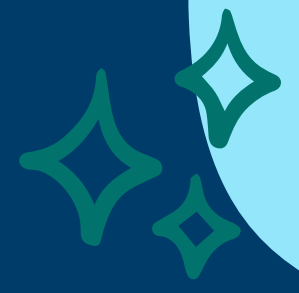


OCEAN
OBSERVATORY
BERWICKSHIRE

Berwickshire
MARINE
RESERVE
Scotland's first voluntary marine reserve



THE BERWICKSHIRE MARINE RESERVE (BMR)

WHAT IS A MARINE RESERVE?

Much like **nature reserves** on land, marine reserves are areas of the ocean that aim to protect important **species** and **habitats**. Many different groups of people depend on the sea. In marine reserves, everyone must use the sea in a way that is fair and safe for other **people, animals** and the **environment**.

Voluntary marine reserves are usually **people-powered**. Whole towns or communities (including children!) can have a say in how their local sea is taken care of. These voluntary marine reserves work alongside government-run **Marine Protected Areas** (MPAs) to look after marine life. Marine reserves and MPAs can be separate, or next to each other, or they can even overlap.

In **Berwickshire**, the marine reserve sits inside a patchwork of MPAs. The BMR protects an important area of sea between two historic fishing villages called **Eyemouth** and **St Abbs**. Special populations of **seals** and **seabirds**, unique rocky reefs and sea caves have extra protection in the Berwickshire region.



FUN FACTS!

- In some years, over **2000** seal pups are born in the BMR.
- Scientists think that almost **60,000** seabirds currently live in the BMR.



WHAT IS THE BMR?

The Berwickshire Marine Reserve (the BMR) is Scotland's one and only **voluntary marine reserve**, set up by the local community in **1984**. The community wanted to protect their local marine area for many generations to come.

You might assume that to protect marine wildlife, reserves would try to keep people out. But that's not the case in the BMR. The people involved in running the BMR know that **humans** are an important part of the marine environment and are **connected** to the sea in lots of ways.

They want both **locals** and **visitors** to enjoy this special place, whether that is through diving, snorkelling, boating, angling, swimming, or just playing on the beach. These activities are known as **recreational activities**, which basically means they are for fun! It is important to remember that recreational activities must happen in a way that doesn't harm marine life – it is a **balancing act**.

WHAT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES HAPPEN IN THE BMR?

DIVING AND SNORKELLING

Touching or chasing marine animals while in the water can hurt them or effect their normal behaviour.

BOATING

The noise and movement from fast boats can scare marine animals. Sometimes, boats can even collide with whales, dolphins or seals.

ANGLING

Fishing line can litter the beach and seafloor, which is very dangerous to animals as they might get tangled. Anglers should not catch juvenile (baby) fish. If they catch fish that are smaller than scientists recommend, they must return them to the sea so they can grow.

KAYAKING AND PADDLE BOARDING

Getting too close to marine animals can disturb them.

WALKS ON THE BEACH

Animals might accidentally eat litter if you leave it on the beach, or it gets washed into the sea. Getting too close to nesting seabirds or breeding seals could scare them, especially if you have a dog.

ROCK POOLING

If you tread on animals or move them from their home, they can get injured, lost or even die.



RESPONSIBLE USE OF THE BMR

What is a code of conduct?

A code of conduct is a set of rules and guidelines that is usually not enforced and relies on people's cooperation and good will. Visit <https://www.berwickshiremarinereserve.org.uk/codes-of-conduct> to learn more...



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