



## **UPDATE FROM BRITISH DIVERS MARINE LIFE RESCUE - 25th April 2024.**

[British Divers Marine Life Rescue \(bdmlr.org.uk\)](http://bdmlr.org.uk)

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British Divers Marine Life Rescue is a national marine conservation charity, founded in 1988 to support marine mammals all around the UK coast line.

We have a national helpline that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year where members of the public and other organisations can call to report concerns related to marine mammals (01825 765546).

We have around 3000 Marine Mammal Medics around the UK that will respond to support incidents reported into the helpline.

Our medics are fully trained to respond and support Cetaceans (Whales, Dolphins, Porpoises) as well as Seals.

We have been active across the whole of Suffolk for decades. In the last season (Common and Grey seals) we have responded to around 130 call outs in Suffolk with just under 50% resulting in further action or seals being lifted off the beach for veterinarian assistance or rehabilitation.

It is perfectly normal for seals to be out of the sea and on the beach. They can spend up to a third of their time out of the water - they come onto the beach to rest, sleep, digest their food and at certain times of the year moult, have their pups and breed.

However sometimes seals come out of the water as they are struggling with health issues, for example underweight, dehydrated, physical wounds or injuries, lung worm or even entanglement.

Seals on the beach in populated areas like Aldeburgh increases contact with people and dogs which can bring issues.

Seals are protected by law and it's important they are given plenty of space and dogs are kept on leads if there are seals in the area.

While we have been responding to seal call outs in Aldeburgh for years we are seeing increased activity in the area in part due to the new seal colony on Orford Ness. We have been working with the National Trust for a number of years and helping with the seals on the Ness including helping with transport of unwell pups for rehabilitation.

A key part of our work is to help educate the local community and visitors on how to safely view the seals and who to call when there may be issues. Not every call will result in an animal being moved, much of what we do is monitor the animals, ensure they are safe and help educate the general public.

**ALDEBURGH ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 26 APRIL 2024 AT THE OLD GENERATOR STATION  
6PM**



The key points we want to update the Aldeburgh community on:

- Make everyone aware of British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) and who to call when they have concerns for a marine mammal anywhere around the UK. Save our number in your phone and please call if you have any concerns in Suffolk or wherever you are in the UK (01825 765546).
- We are currently working with the asset team in East Suffolk council to review options for some small permanent signs in the town. These would educate people on how to watch seals safely (e.g. giving them space and keeping dogs on leads) and who to call if they have any concerns. Three sites have been suggested but need to be agreed.
- We run training for anyone in the UK who wants to volunteer as a Marine Mammal Medic, more details can be found on our website, we are always looking for more volunteers. ([British Divers Marine Life Rescue \(bdmlr.org.uk\)](http://bdmlr.org.uk))
- We support many types of events, from talking in schools to presenting at interest groups (e.g. the WI, nature societies etc..) and would welcome to hear from anyone interested in such a talk in the local community. We also attend larger events and would welcome ideas or suggestions from anyone of relevant events we could attend to help us spread the word on the work we do, educate the community and help raise much needed funds.
- We are keen to talk to any other groups, businesses or anyone in the community that may be able to help us in any way. Whether that is working on common areas of interest such as helping the marine environment, opportunities to promote the work we do or help in directly sponsoring our work, especially specific fundraising to expand our Suffolk seal rescue unit capabilities.

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