



Macduff Marine Aquarium Our Ethics

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Mission Statement

Macduff Marine Aquarium aims to promote awareness, enjoyment and stewardship of the Moray Firth marine environment in an entertaining and educational way.

Our Values...

- To maintain high standards with respect to the wellbeing and health of all livestock.
- To ensure the educational integrity of our exhibits.
- To be customer focused at all times and deliver a high quality service.
- To maintain a good reputation and strong links with the community.
- To work together as a team and show customers we enjoy what we do.
- To promote sustainability through our actions, operations and our public programming.

Our **Ethical Policy** aims are to implement procedures and activities to:

- Operate in a manner based on best environmental and ethical practice in our everyday work.
- Commit to continuous environmental and ethical improvement and review in every aspect of our operations.
- Implement all feasible options for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste.
- Convey to our visitors the importance of environmental protection.

What We Do, How we Do It.

Here at Macduff Marine Aquarium we operate within the strict guidelines set out in the UK Secretary of State's Modern Zoo Practice and the regulations of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981. We have an ethics committee that meets once a year. The committee is made up of aquarium staff as well as representatives from other organisations and examines the aquarium's policies and practices from an ethical viewpoint, covering all operations from animal welfare to research projects and energy use. The committee chair is independent of the aquarium's management staff and Aberdeenshire Council.

Husbandry and care of animals.

All our animals are cared for with the upmost respect for their requirements within a captive environment. We have policies in place for breeding and sourcing animals that require us to obtain animals using only sustainable methods and places. Our veterinary health plan outlines strict procedures re. animal health and care of injury / disease.

Breeding programmes

These currently involve elasmobranchs - thornback rays (*Raja clavata*), small-spotted catsharks (*Scyliorhinus canicula*), and bull huss (*Scyliorhinus stellaris*).

The programmes are much the same due to the similarity in reproduction in these species and involved collection, recording, cleaning, and monitoring of eggs until they hatch. Once hatched, neonates are kept in quarantine to maximise survival rate until they are of a size appropriate to be moved to display.

The ultimate objective is to swap juveniles with other aquaria to expand gene pools and promote and conserve the species by eventually releasing animals.

Ethically sourced products

All our fish food is sourced from sustainable sources wherever possible. Wherever possible whole fish is MSC certified.

Aquarium supplies

Copy paper – PEFC Certified from sustainably managed forests and controlled resources.

Hand dryers in main toilets to help reduce paper hand towel waste

Recycling

Glass bottles used in aquarium - collected by staff for recycling.

Paper, plastic, cardboard & aluminium cans - collected for recycling by Aberdeenshire Council

Mixed use recycling bins for paper, plastic, cardboard & aluminium cans available for customer use in the reception area.

Office, admissions desk and staff room have mixed use recycling bin

Waste office paper is reused as scrap paper where possible.

Staff collect soft plastic packaging and take it for recycling at community collection points.

Food/Fish waste is collected by Keenan's Recycling for composting/disposal

Lighting

In 2017 all the aquarium lighting was replaced to LED

Electric Car Charging Point

There are two electric car charging points in the aquarium car park as part of the Charge Place Scotland scheme.

World Aquariums Against Marine Litter

Member of the organisation World Aquariums against Marine Litter which aims for global awareness on the issues of marine litter. Aquariums are ideal partners to showcase this growing problem and to engage thousands of people, by presenting practical solutions.

Education

Mission Statement:

Macduff Marine Aquarium aims to promote awareness, enjoyment and stewardship of the Moray Firth and wider marine environment, in an entertaining and educational way.

Macduff Marine Aquarium has been developing and delivering educational programming since the facility opened in 1997.

The aquarium's exhibits and interpretation, along with the local coastline are the platform used to deliver educational experiences. Various formats are used to address a wide range of users. Learning opportunities are delivered: -

- Informally for the visiting public through written interpretation materials, living and artefact-based displays, interactive activities, talks, presentations and events.
- Formally, through national frameworks such as the Curriculum for Excellence and the specific learning outcomes of colleges, universities and other organisations.
- Incidentally, through press releases to the media, engaging with local, national and international platforms and through the internet and social media.

The Macduff Marine Aquarium Learning Strategy is defined within the following principles:

Guiding Principles:

1. To ensure that the marine life of the Moray Firth forms the basis of our educational offer and that the exhibits accurately represent the native species found in the habitats being represented. This includes having pristine displays with healthy animals, a balanced and varied programme of activities and events, and well trained and motivated staff.
2. To promote positive attitudes and actions towards conservation of the marine environment in everything we do.
3. To create opportunities for visitors to have fun and memorable experiences of, and encourage emotional attachments to, their natural heritage and the wider marine environment.
4. To have staff who are passionate and enthusiastic about the marine environment and who can convey these feelings as part of the visitor experience.
5. To be inclusive and have interpretation, programming and facilities that are accessible to all; using alternative languages, interpretation styles, media and any other reasonable adaptations.
6. To seek out opportunities to work in partnership with other educational, conservation based and likeminded organisations.

Formal Learning

All the aquarium's formal learning programming includes environmental messages and tips on how pupils can limit their impact on the marine environment. These are age appropriate, for example the messages for Early Years are related to not littering and correctly sorting recycling, whereas the messages for higher levels explain the impact of microplastics on marine wildlife and consumer buying powers.

There are also specific programmes that focus exclusively on the environmental issues that affect the seas, such as: Conserving the Marine Environment, There's Plastic in my Sea, On a Plastic Tide and An Ocean of Change. All these programmes are tailored to give pupils a wealth of information specifically related to the environmental theme and practical solutions they can implement in their daily lives.

With the kind continued support from TAQA the school plastics workshops (mentioned above) were developed into a series family workshops available to the public on select weekend events.

There are also learning resources available for download on our website. These include a plastic in the marine environment poster and activities.

Special Events

The aquarium uses an environmental theme to plan special events to help raise awareness and promote positive action. For example, Climate Week North-East climate trail, and speaker as part of in addition to a beach clean for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day.

Informal Learning

As per our learning policy we strive to include messages relating to marine conservation and stewardship into every talk and feed show along with practical tips for reducing personal environmental impact.

Promoting Sustainable Practices

The aquarium also aims to provide direct opportunities for visitors to make changes to their behaviours while visiting, such as offering crisp packet recycling and a selection of non-single use plastic items in the shop. We also draw attention to and distribute the Marine Stewardship Council Good Fish Guide in our aquarium activity trail and often ask visitors to make written environmental pledges. We run community beach clean events during the summer months and, in partnership with East Grampian Coastal Partnership, offer a community beach clean box for ad-hoc litter picking on our shores.

Social Media

The aquarium uses its social media feeds to share environmental messages frequently, sharing recycling tips, ways to reduce plastic and aquarium stories such as how lobsters will shed their microplastic load when they moult.

Other developments

Interactive plastic and the marine environment display. (Completed 2021)

Gift Shop

Our aim is to offer an attractive, well stocked shop available for both aquarium and non-aquarium visitors. We pride ourselves in offering our customers a range of aquatic themed goods integrated with quality gifts at affordable prices, with something for everyone. We communicate with our suppliers our desire for less single use plastic in packaging and are continuously adapting our range to introduce more environmentally friendly gifts produced and packaged in a sustainable way. We have stopped selling plastic drinks bottles and drinks with plastic straws. From 2019 any new Macduff Marine Aquarium branded products are in keeping with our desire to educate and encourage others to reduce the use of single plastic, consider better options for the recycling of single use plastic and choose more ethical gifts.

Macduff Marine Aquarium Branded Goods

Plush Thornback Ray softie, filled with recycled PET polyester stuffing. Hang tags and labels made from recycled card and Soy ink

Pens made from 80% wheat, and others made from recycled plastic

Reusable Travel Mugs

Yo-yos made from 80% wheat

Our Gift Shop Suppliers and their Policies

Nature Planet – Aim to completely remove plastic packaging from all product lines. “We always focus on sustainability and environmental impact when we design and develop our products of the highest quality, Reuse, reduce and recycle is our mantra”

Hang Tags made from recycled paper, text written with Soy ink

Hang tags attached to products with organic, biodegradable cotton string

Shopping bags made from recycled plastic bottles

Bamboo product line

Organic Collection

Animal plush range made of reused plastic bottles. 100% recycled stuffing in plush ranges.

Wild Republic – Mission to evaluate every part of their operation and make changes accordingly to ensure they are doing their part to make a positive impact on their world around us. The first company to launch the first 100% recycled stuffed animal delivered in biodegradable packaging.

“As a company committed to nature and conservation, Wild Republic proactively strives to be as environmentally friendly and ethically responsible as possible. Our devotion to high quality and the strictest safety requirements has earned us a reputation for having exemplary products that exceed industry standards. We have begun converting our production processes to include reusable packaging, phthalate-free non-toxic materials, and sustainable resources.”

80% recycled cardboard in all packaging

Use Soy ink

Plush range of toys filled with 100% recycled water bottles with no glass eyes.

Only 50% of the Plush Line contains beads

Whenever beads are being used it is re-grind beads made of recycled materials

Working on a biodegradable alternative to plastic inner packs

Have transitioned the majority of toys to eliminate single use plastic

Ravendsen - are committed to reducing their environmental impact both within their UK operations and the products that they manufacture overseas. They have held ISO-14001 since 2011 and continue to improve our systems and processes as part of this.

All plush manufactured from July 2019 use recycled PET polyester stuffing.

Removed all plastic beads from plush ranges for future production.

Plastic display packaging - Where practical have removed any unnecessary plastic packaging.

Switched from the traditional plastic bag on a header card for our sets to a reusable bucket, thus removing single use plastic whilst giving a storage solution for the set.

Many of their new boxed items now come with an open fronted box disposing of the unnecessary plastic film.

2020 launched "World of Eco Companions" – a range of 100% post-consumer recycled polyester plush toys

Transit packaging - For plush ranges, looking to remove the inner poly bags or replace with a biodegradable polybag. Redesigned inner transit packaging for a number of items and are committed to eliminating the plastic bubble wrap or bags. To protect the individual item, in most cases wrapping each item in tissue paper and moving to a sturdier "wine box" style inner box.

Hang Tags - removing the coatings from hang tags which will make them more easily recyclable. Investigating a kraft board tag with one colour print for future use. Looking for a viable alternative to the plastic kimble which will take into account the need to maintain productivity in the manufacturing process and ensure that tags do not fall off in the retail environment.

Will continue to work with overseas partners on solutions to minimise the use of single use plastics.

Operations - Switched to a paper tape in place of plastic tape for all cartons that are repacked. Minimising the use of plastic banding with the aim to eliminate this altogether.

Keycraft – Aim is to follow and to promote good sustainability practice, to reduce the environmental impacts of their activities and to help their customers to do the same.

Purchase of materials and packaging: -

Source recycled plastics from which to produce products

Source FSC approved wood from which to produce products

Source recycled packing from which to package and distribute products

British Fossils – Statement

At British Fossils we are working hard to be a sustainable company that respects the environment and our customers.

From late 2018 we reduced our packing plastics by 75% by switching to bio-degradable packaging.

We re-use all the packaging we receive from our suppliers wherever we can that's why you may still see bubble wrap in your order sometimes.

We use paper to wrap and are actively trying to source more paper-based alternatives to plastic.

As of June 2019, ALL our cardboard is either re-used or recycled and we send our polystyrene to be recycled by a specialised company.

We are challenging ourselves to reduce our use of plastic packaging to an absolute minimum, but not to compromise the safety of our products in transit.

We are also working hard with our suppliers to reduce the use of plastic in our products and their packaging.

Ark Toys

Plush toys no longer in individual bags

Packaging boxes all made from recycled paper

Range of recyclable plush toys and a range of plush toys with recycled components

Document Control

Updated 17/02/2023 Our Values updated; MMA own branded goods updated