

PHOTO: THE REGATTA'S SAILING RACES  
BY: ABERSOCH REGATTA





# ABERSOCH WORDS BY BETHANY BIRCH REGATTA

## CELEBRATING HERITAGE, INCLUSIVITY, AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT

**THE ABERSOCH REGATTA WAS FIRST HELD IN 1881 AND HAS GROWN FAR BEYOND ITS FIRST ORIGINS AS A DAY OF SAILING AND WATER-BASED EVENTS. IT IS BELIEVED TO BE THE OLDEST VILLAGE-RUN REGATTA IN WALES AND THIS ICONIC EVENT HAS BEEN A STAPLE OF ABERSOCH'S MARITIME CALENDAR FOR WELL OVER A CENTURY. THE REGATTA HAS SINCE EVOLVED INTO A WEEK-LONG CELEBRATION OF FAMILY EVENTS, BOTH WATER AND LAND BASED, THAT ATTRACTS VISITORS FROM ALL OVER THE UK. DESPITE CHANGES OVER TIME, THE REGATTA REMAINS ROOTED IN ITS MISSION TO HONOUR ABERSOCH'S RICH MARITIME HERITAGE WHILE BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER AND RAISING FUNDS FOR LOCAL CAUSES.**

The 2024 event was the most successful Regatta to date, both in terms of fundraising and positive feedback from participants. This year's charitable fundraising efforts reached new heights thanks to generous sponsorship from long-term supporters like Ty Gwyn Hotel, White Stuff, The Roberts Group, Robinson's Brewery, VSN Steels and Beresford Adams.

The event's success was further bolstered by the annual raffle, featuring prizes donated by local businesses. Plans for 2025 are already in motion, with more sponsors on board and new events planned to make next year's Regatta even more exciting.

Regatta Day remains the centerpiece of the week's activities which always held on the second Saturday of August at the South Caernarfonshire Yacht Club (SCYC). It is the one day of the year where SCYC's bar and exceptional terrace view is open to allcomers both sailors and social. This year's event was especially notable as SCYC celebrated its centenary year and worked closely in partnership with the Regatta Committee.

The day's sailing programme began with the 'feeder race' for offshore yachts from Pwllheli Sailing Club to an SCYC finish line. Additional races followed throughout the day, featuring the classic Seabirds/ Half Raters, mixed dinghies, Dragons,



Squibs, and a large fleet of Class 2 offshore yachts. During the day, the crowds were entertained by sets from DJ Lionel and live performances, including Welsh male chorister and singer Cara Hammond (fresh from her Glastonbury appearance). The day then concluded with a well-attended prize-giving ceremony in glorious sunshine on a packed top deck.

Reflecting back to its roots, the event initially began as an isolated sailing competition but has since expanded into a week-long celebration. Alongside the races at SCYC, attendees participated in events like the Sandcastle Competition, the Best Dressed Beach Hut contest, the Raft



## ABERSOCH REGATTA



PHOTO: THE REGATTA'S SANDCASTLE COMPETITION PAYS A TRIBUTE TO OUR LOCAL RNLI  
BY: ABERSOCH REGATTA



PHOTO: THE REGATTA'S SUP RACE IN FULL SWING  
BY: ABERSOCH REGATTA

Race, Open Golf Day, and paddleboarding. These family-friendly activities welcome all, both the local and visitor community, seeking to create a fantastic atmosphere year-on-year, making them a great highlight to the calendar!

Despite some overcast weather, the Sandcastle Competition and Best Dressed Pirate Contest drew large crowds in particular, with 23 teams and over 150 participants building their creative sand masterpieces. The Little Pirates fancy dress contest, a newcomer to the Regatta programme, added another layer of fun for young families.

Paddleboarding (SUP) races were also popular, with both junior and senior categories well attended. The committee is exploring new additions for 2025, including a potential veterans' SUP race and a kayak competition, expanding opportunities for water sports enthusiasts.



PHOTO: THE BEST DRESSED PIRATE COMPETITION ON ABERSOCH MAIN BEACH.  
BY: ABERSOCH REGATTA

No Regatta Week would be complete without the Great Raft Race, a light-hearted and beloved event that closes the week. This year's race featured homemade rafts of all shapes and sizes, with the junior competition drawing much excitement from the crowd. So much so, that some adults entered late - reusing their children's rafts to join the fun! In a humorous twist, the Abersoch RNLI's raft entry sank and had to be rescued by their own lifeboat crew. 'The Boat Bar' offered the best vantage point for spectators and with proceeds from their sales kindly

donated to the Regatta's fundraising efforts.

Held at Abersoch Golf Club, the Open Golf Day saw its highest turnout to date, with nearly 100 entries across Men's, Ladies', and Junior categories. The discounted visitor green fees, reduced by over 50%, contributed to the welcoming appeal of the event. The Regatta Committee work closely with the Golf Club and are very grateful for its ongoing support, helping the Regatta in its primary aim of fundraising.

Intentionally maintaining the Welsh culture and language, the Committee are passionate about preserving the Regatta's bilingual identity, staying true to Abersoch and Pen Ll n's Welsh roots, while welcoming the area's visitor population. In terms of fundraising, this year's nominated beneficiaries were Hydro Abersoch, Welsh Adaptive, and Abersoch RNLI.

An important part of the Regatta's mission is to encourage local children to take part in water sports.





PHOTO: A THRIVING SCYC TERRACE ON REGATTA DAY  
BY: ABERSOCH REGATTA



PHOTO: THE REGATTA HELMSMEN - COMMODORE DR IAN WILLIAMS (LEFT) AND VICE COMMODORE JEREMY COLLINS (RIGHT)  
BY: ABERSOCH REGATTA

Hydro Abersoch, one of this year's beneficiaries, partnered with the Regatta to co-invest in the community by offering affordable sailing courses to local children - to such success that the places were fully subscribed within a week of release. Through subsidising these activities, the Regatta fosters and maintains its pride in Abersoch's maritime heritage for the village's future generations.

Welsh Adaptive was another major beneficiary this year, receiving funds to improve accessibility for surfing experiences for individuals of varying disabilities. In previous years, the programme's 'Disability Surf Days' were severely limited by the availability of external instructors. Thanks to funds raised by the Regatta, six local instructors have now qualified this year, making it far easier to organise these sessions, which provide incredible experiences for those with disabilities. This initiative reflects the Regatta's strong focus on inclusivity, ensuring that everyone can enjoy Abersoch's beautiful coastline.

While this year's Regatta didn't feature a dedicated surfing competition due to poor surf conditions, the Regatta Committee continued its support the 'Clwb Syrffio Llyn Surf Club' event for the Emyr Jones Trophy. Looking ahead to 2025, the Committee is planning

to introduce an Open Longboard Competition to further expand the Regatta's offerings.

During this year's event, the Regatta once again raised funds for a variety of local causes, all linked to the sea and reflecting the village's long standing maritime culture. One of the key beneficiaries is Abersoch RNLI, with Regatta funding helping to support its vital life-saving services along the coast. Abersoch Regatta has longstanding close links with Abersoch Lifeboat Station with a number of past and present Committee members and their families serving as crew and/or fundraisers. With the RNLI bicentenary this year, and with Abersoch having established its Lifeboat Station in the village since 1869, the Regatta continues to support the work of this institution.

The Regatta is, however, nothing without the dedicated service of its volunteers. Volunteering opportunities range from helping with the sandcastle competition to supporting event logistics and offer an excellent way to become part of the action and experience the strong sense of camaraderie that the Regatta fosters. Those interested in getting involved can find more information and volunteer forms on the Regatta's website!

The long history of the Abersoch Regatta is a testament to the dedication and hard work of countless individuals who have contributed to its success. The current organisers have a profound sense of gratitude for its volunteers, past and present, who have helped grow the event into the inclusive and celebrated week it is today. Their commitment has not only kept the Regatta alive but has ensured that it remains an integral part of the Abersoch community, inspiring new generations of participants.

Looking to the future, the committee is already preparing for an even more exciting Regatta in 2025, with new events and opportunities in the planning. As they focus on expanding the event, the committee remains dedicated to preserving the Regatta's core values of community and its principal aim of raising funds for local causes and charities. By continuing to welcome locals and visitors alike, and giving back to the community, the Abersoch Regatta is set to remain a highlight of the year for many more seasons.

Whether you're a seasoned sailor or simply looking for a fun, family-friendly day out, the Regatta offers something for everyone, all while supporting the community that makes Abersoch so special.