

Soul Water Sauna hits right note on Porty Beach

Swimmers are lapping up a Finnish-style sauna after plunging into the icy waters on Portobello beach.

Soul Water Sauna, located on the Promenade at Bedford Street, is promoting the health benefits of hot and cold therapy for those brave enough to don bathing costumes, and also welcomes community bookings from individuals.

Owner Kirsty Carver said she has been overwhelmed by the interest in her steam room on wheels – a custom built wood-fired sauna constructed from storm damage rescued wood including larch, silver birch and hazel.



New addition to Portobello Prom – Soul Water Sauna – pic by Laurence Winram

Groups of eight people can book for a private session lasting one hour (£100), while community bookings include up to seven individuals at £13 per person.

Increased interest in a healthier post-Christmas lifestyle is credited with some of the interest while Portobello's reputation as a natural home to "wild swimmers" is drawing in a large number of people who want to mix sea swimming with the hot coals heat benefits of a sauna.

Kirsty said: "The response since we opened before Christmas has been amazing and we have had all ages, from an 11-years girl and 12-year-old boy with their mother, to an 84-year-old man who came with his daughter.



Kirsty Carver, standing, with guests at Soul Water Sauna – pic by Laurence Winram

“Most bookings are from sea swimmers who want to enjoy the

dual benefit of a cold swim with the welcoming heat of our sauna. Users tend to mix up the session with two or three dips in the sea then returning to the sauna. With individual bookings, some people are a bit unsure if it's for them, but once the cabin door is closed there is an instant rapport and they soon start chatting and making new friends."

At the moment [Soul Water Sauna](#) is open on Friday and Saturday mornings from 8am-1pm and Friday evenings until 9pm but Kirsty is recruiting staff and opening hours will be extended.

She added: "It appears that a lot of people are done with the over eating and drinking of Christmas and are looking at healthier ways of spending time and connecting with friends and family that doesn't involve the pub.

"We are located at a really nice spot at the quiet end of the prom, which is beneficial for users as there is a bit more space without being too much in the public eye."

Advice for those looking to book a sauna session – come ready dressed with costume/trunks under clothing; bring two towels, one to sit on the other to dry; and take plenty of water.