



I am Peter Hart, a former National windsurfing champion, who runs advanced training courses around the world.

I was first invited to Donegal in 1989 by the famous local 'High Tide Windsurfing Club' - so called because high tide was when they could use the stunning lagoon that is Ballyness.

I was so struck by the beauty and perfection of the place that I came back the next year ... and then *every* year after than up until the present day. Such is the popularity of the venue that I now run three separate courses in September and October attracting over 60 windsurfers (and partners) to the area.

The fact that so many return is partly due to the amazingly warm welcome we receive from the Loch Altan Hotel and the local people; and partly due to the incredible windsurfing conditions that this part of Donegal has to offer.

Quite simply the area around Ballyness is the best training ground I have ever encountered anywhere in the world. On one side we have the waves of Magheroarty for aspiring experts – and then if we want to practise some skills in a less frantic environment, we just walk our equipment to the other side and launch into the lagoon.

The feedback from my clients is that they love every aspect of Donegal but their most abiding memory is sailing in Ballenness, because not only does the flat water, clear wind and feeling of security really help their windsurfing but the backdrop and natural beauty of the spot is other worldly.

The idea of this area being turned into an oyster farm is horrific. When I told my clients that Ballyness might longer be available as windsurfing venue, they all said they would no longer come on the Donegal course.

I can only hope that the planners see sense and that any short term profit will be set against the need to preserve one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline in the world.