

## **Water Safety** –

Please share the following Safety advice taken from The Royal Life Saving Society website (<https://www.rlss.org.uk/open-water-safety>).

Open water swimming takes place in outdoor bodies of water such as, lakes, rivers, canals, reservoirs and quarries. Flat or still water is defined as water that has minimal movement, except for locally induced wind currents. Examples include lakes, lochs, ponds, quarry pool and reservoirs. Flat water found in lakes and lochs is the safest open water natural environment. However, water is by its very nature hazardous and care must always be taken when being near water margins.

Lakes and Lochs can vary considerably in size, but they are commonly large expanses of deep, cold water, formed when natural basins fill with water flowing from rivers and streams or from the water table

The conditions at open water sites change constantly:

- Always look for warning and guidance signs
- Swim parallel with the shore, not away from it
- Avoid drifting in the currents
- Do not enter fast flowing water
- Be aware of underwater hazards
- Get out of the water as soon as you start to feel cold
- Never enter the water after consuming alcohol
- Only enter the water in areas with adequate supervision and rescue cover
- Always wear a buoyancy aid or lifejacket for activities on the water or at the water's edge (such as when boating or fishing)
- Always take someone with you when you go into or near water. If something goes wrong they will be able to get help
- If someone is in difficulty in the water shout reassurance to them and shout for help and call the emergency services (call 999 or 112)
- Without endangering yourself see if you can reach out to them with a stick, pole or item of clothing – lie down to ensure you stay secure. Alternatively throw something buoyant to them such as a ring buoy or anything that will float



## The Home and Dry Campaign

The Police and Crime Commissioner and a range of other agencies, are uniting to drive a campaign to ensure people get home and dry.

In the last year 430 people drowned across England. Student Tom Jones tragically lost his life in Worcester during Fresher's Week 2018 and Shane Walsh, a 29 year old father of two, tragically lost his life in Shrewsbury in 2017.

The Commissioner is working with Shane's widow Kirsty Walsh and Tom's parents, Ian and Vicki to raise awareness and prevent unnecessary water deaths. Other organisations involved in the multi-agency drive include West Mercia Police, West Mercia Search and Rescue, RNLI, RLSS UK, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Shropshire Fire Service, the Canal and River Trust, the Samaritans, the Street Pastors and Worcester University.

The Home and Dry Network has worked collectively and extensively to tackle the very roots of the issue-improved education around water safety, physical prevention, work around the night time economy and mental health awareness.

Commissioner John Campion said "The awful loss of life, has shook our communities. We are taking a strong united approach, which draws upon the expertise of a number of agencies and builds upon the existing good work.

I look forward to driving this campaign forward. Together we want to reduce the number of deaths, ensure emergency and voluntary resources aren't drawn to incidents that could have been prevented, and ultimately keep our communities safe."

The Home and Dry Campaign was first launched in 2017 by West Mercia Search and Rescue, a volunteer led organisation who receive grant funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner. The campaign, backed by Water Safety Ambassador Kirsty Walsh, has continued to grow through the Home and Dry Network. It includes a free online water safety course, and an offline version for schools and colleges.

[Take part in the course here.](#)



## School Web Copy - DPW

**FREE downloadable resources from the Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK) – keeping families safe around water this year**

**We're supporting Drowning Prevention Week 12-19 June 2020**

In a bid to ensure pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe, we're encouraging parents and guardians to take advantage of the FREE downloadable water safety resources, produced for RLSS UK's annual Drowning Prevention Week campaign.

The impact of COVID-19 has already seen emergency services additionally stretched; with beach lifeguard patrols restrained water safety skills, and a common sense approach to being around water, have never been more necessary.

Drowning still remains an issue across the UK and Ireland: it can happen to anyone of any age, with around 700 people sadly losing their life in avoidable drowning incidents, each year.

RLSS UK, the Charity who aims to help everybody enjoy the water, safely, fears that a mix of the warm weather, coupled with more people travelling and the reduced supervision around water, could lead to summer tragedies. The Charity are being proactive, urging families to access their water safety resources and turn the lockdown restrictions to their advantage.

RLSS UK's resources will empower family members to be their own lifeguards; helping you to recognise risks, what to do to minimise the chance of an accident, and how to respond confidently and effectively, in an emergency situation.

**Drowning Prevention Week** was launched by RLSS UK seven years ago; it is a week of national awareness-raising campaigning that encourages parents, schools, leisure centres, community groups and businesses, to use the FREE resources and teach their local communities how to enjoy the water, safely.

To access RLSS UK's resources and start enjoying your water safety journey, visit the RLSS UK's website

<https://www.rlss.org.uk/share-drowning-prevention-week>