



TARRTHÁIL LIFESAVING

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF IRISH WATER SAFETY



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Think - Safety Awareness

An Irish man's Diary

Parents create awareness as son lost through drowning

ILS - Federation of Europe

PAWS update



SUMMER 2016 ISSUE 5

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Joan Finnegan

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Tarrtháil / Lifesaving - Irish Water Safety

A message from the Chairman



As acting Chairman of Irish Water Safety (IWS), I take particular delight in greeting all the members of IWS, whose number has increased significantly over the past few years. I wish to thank you and to acknowledge the tremendous voluntary work you undertake nationwide throughout the entire year.

I especially wish to highlight the excellent work of our Summer Weeks Organisers who are right now fully engaged in ensuring that the Summer Weeks will be delivered successfully throughout the country. Last summer the weather was not kind to our Instructors. However, there was just a marginal decrease in the number of children who availed of the swimming and lifesaving classes at Training Centres in aquatic environments nationwide.

In the recent past the Technical Committee, following up on excellent work by the Sports Commission, established the concept of Training Centres. A Lifesaving Training Center is a location where one or more of the following disciplines are taught by the Volunteers of Irish Water Safety: swimming, lifesaving, basic life support, pool lifeguard, beach lifeguard, inland open water or the sport of lifesaving. Our Water Safety Area Committees already have (or will) establish these LTCs. They will oversee the setting up and the running of the Centers. Where the LTC is in a swimming pool a sign is now available from HQ stating that the pool is an IWS Training Center.

Our Junior Lifeguard Award Programme has just been launched. This exciting, progressive development, the brainchild of the Lifeguard Commission, welcomes children from the age of 8 to participate in a 5 level Award Scheme. Alongside the water work there are Information Sheets, Activity Sheets, Record Sheets and certification at every level. The Handbook is comprehensive as well as being attractive and colourful.

The latest version of the Guidelines for the Establishment and running of a Community Rescue Boat Service has been published. The Community Rescue Boats Ireland (CRBI) is a nationwide group of independent voluntary rescuers, whose training and administration is coordinated by IWS. These Community Rescue Boat Stations on foot of an undertaking with the Coast Guard are categorised as a "Declared Resource" enabling them to be tasked to respond to emergencies by Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Centres. Selection as a declared resource is a matter for the Irish Coast Guard who determines the requirements for such resources nationwide. IWS are the designated body for administering the VAT refund scheme. Thanks to all those volunteers who have contributed, especially the members of the Rescue Commission.

I hope you benefit from our latest newsletter which contains many interesting articles.

Martin O'Sullivan
Acting Chairman, Irish Water Safety

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Go Raibh Maith Agat Breda



Breda Collins,
third Chairman of IWS

I wish to thank our former Chairman Breda Collins for all the hard work that she invested in Irish Water Safety throughout her tenure as Chair of IWS. Breda made history when she became our first "Chairman" as that is how our Statutory Instrument describes her role. She was the third Chairman of Irish Water Safety since we were established from the Water Safety Section of the Red Cross in 1971. She has been a very good chairman who has opened up our organisation and allowed it to grow and develop in the last four years. We have seen fruitful and positive things happen during her tenure, including a larger stronger organisation which is nationally recognised; two new Lifesaving Training centres; more vehicles, equipment and vessels; a history written of IWS after 70 years; historic and brilliant results in lifesaving sport; increase in our Primary Aquatics Water Safety programme; a steady decline in drowning and aquatic accidents and incidents; in terms of Governance a more compliant Statutory Body and a more sensible and realistic approach to fundraising for the organisation; improvements to our ICT structure and a national body with a stronger presence, identity and branding.

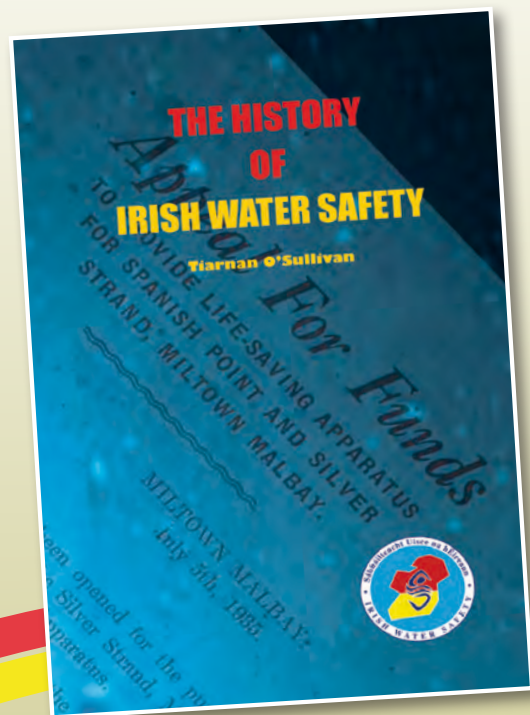
I wish her continued success in all her activities in IWS for the future.

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way"

John C. Maxwell

John FM Leech
Chief Executive

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and people that have
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Always think safety...

John FM Leech, Chief Executive

We have lost 51 people in the first half of 2016 to drowning. This figure is a worrying indicator of how the year may fare, when on average over the last decade, we have lost 133 people each year.

The Buncrana tragedy was very unusual and from what I can ascertain is the largest loss of life in a single vehicle drowning accident in our 100 year history. Killorglin is where the first three lives were lost during the 1916 rising when a car drove off the end of Ballykissane Pier in to the Laune River. For those of you who use slipways for launching and recovering boats then our advice is to check the state of the tide and be aware that at low water springs you are likely to be driving on weed and algae. Purchase a glass hammer which is available in a good motor factors for about €5 and always carry it in your jeep. Always wear a buoyancy aid, don't wear an automatically inflating lifejacket as it may hinder your departure from the jeep. Wind down your windows when approaching the slipway, then if the car ends up in the water you can escape safely. We recommend that you only use a 4 wheel drive and ensure your vehicle is capable of towing the weight of your boat and trailer, this is particularly important with larger vessels. Every year cars end up in the water off slipways when launching boats. There are over 900 slipways around our coastline and many more on our rivers and lakes. It is important to seek local knowledge before you launch off a slipway that you are not familiar with as they are all different. I have personally witnessed top of the range Mercedes and BMW car's slide down in to the water, very often the driver does not realise the gradient of the slipway and the length of it and forget that there is air in their tyres which gives buoyancy to the car. Trailers slide off the end of slipways not allowing the vehicle to recover the trailer. So be careful this year and ensure that you are well prepared for the season ahead.

The Local Authorities have recruited their lifeguards for the Bathing season. But for anybody interested in this lucrative seasonal job then ensure that you have a National IWS Beach or River Lifeguard Award or its international equivalent. Extra points are awarded to candidates who have completed an Occupational First

Aid course, a VHF Short Range Certificate, a Cardiac First Responder course, an Irish Sailing Association (ISA) Powerboat Level 1, 2 or equivalent and IWS Surf Rescue Boat Crew or equivalent. Points are also awarded for their understanding of the role/work environment/health and safety as well as their Communication/interpersonal skills/ Initiative/Judgement and Motivation. The role of a Beach Lifeguard can be very demanding, last July alone IWS trained lifeguards recued 173 people and yet on some days when the weather is inclement strong powers of alertness and motivation are required when there are few users on our beaches. It is not a job for the faint hearted and a high level of both mental and physical fitness is required to ensure that you can complete your duties satisfactorily. For those interested in applying click on the lifeguards tab on iws.ie or then search the job vacancies on your nearest local authority website. Till next month stay safe on and near the water by wearing a correctly fitting lifejacket.



New initiative for IWS Cavan

On Tuesday 24th of November 2015, the Chairperson of Cavan Water Safety, Mary Duffy presented 27 Irish Water Safety certificates to inmates of Loughan House, Open Prison, Blacklion. This was a first time initiative at the request of the Governor Eddie Mullins which Cavan Water Safety was delighted to accommodate. The classes were held during the month of July at Lough McNea lake, this course was run under the direction of Irish Water Safety, Tutor/Examiner/Instructor Helen O'Hara, Examiner/Instructor Sarah White and Instructor Suin Kelly. At the presentation

evening, Assistant Governor Geraldine Mc Carrick, thanked Cavan Water Safety, stating that all those who participated thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The collaboration between Loughan house and Cavan Water Safety will become an annual event, bringing the total number of Water Safety Summer Classes held in County Cavan to 14 Venues. Winter Classes are also held in Cavan Sports Complex and The Forum in Enniskillen. A total number of 1,756 Certificates for swimming and Lifesaving were issued to pupils by Cavan Water Safety last year.

We would also like to acknowledge, a special word of thanks to Sarah Galligan Cavan Water Safety Development Officer. We would also like to acknowledge Cavan County Council for their support and co-operation for the replacing and upkeep of the life saving equipment at the various swimming locations throughout the county. Thank you to all who contribute to the success of Cavan Water Safety.

The Irish Water Safety Motto:
"Every Person a Swimmer and Every Person a Lifesaver".



L-R: Eddie Mullins (Governor of Loughan House), Sarah Galligan WSDO
Helen O'Hara Instructor Sarah White Instructor and Mary Duffy (Chairperson of Cavan IWS)

An Irishman's Diary:

On the kiss of life and the Thomas Moore statue

Frank McNally

(First published in the Irish Times May 4, 2016. Reprinted with kind permission).

It may have escaped your attention, reader, as it had mine, that the Old Testament's prophet Elijah was an expert in mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. But it's true. And having somehow never heard about it in church, I have instead just learned this fascinating fact from a book called *The History of Irish Water Safety*.

Not that there is any mention of water in the biblical story. What there is is a young boy, apparently dead, from causes unexplained, until Elijah "lay

Molloy was swept away by a current as his older brother watched, helpless.

Rescue

That was until a man swam to the rescue, and Molloy, as he summed up many years later, was "drowned and revived". By 9pm, he was home in bed, while his brother invented a cover story for their parents about him eating "a green apple" and feeling unwell. Then the local Elijah called around to check on the patient, whereupon the cover-up collapsed, and Molloy's

stories about what Healy called such "noble and valuable work". It sells for €15 (soft-back), €25 (hard) from bookshops, or from the head offices of Irish Water Safety: Tel: 1890-420202.

I apologise in advance for the indelicate segue, but news that the public toilets at Dublin's College Street have been demolished to make way for the Luas reminds me of James Joyce's old joke: the one he has Leopold Bloom echo as he passes the gents there, and the Thomas Moore statue, and reflects upon "the Meeting of the Waters".

Moment of terror

This is a pattern in the book, which also includes an account by the late Irish Times columnist John Healy of a severe water scare he suffered once.

He saved himself, but the "naked moment of terror" never left him. Recalling it many years later, he helped publicise a new Swedish-made "lifeline", to reduce drownings.

Written by Tiarnan O'Sullivan *The History of Irish Water Safety* is full of stories about what Healy called such "noble and valuable work". It sells for €15 (soft-back), €25 (hard) from bookshops, or from the head offices of Irish Water Safety: Tel: 1890-420202.



upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth [. . .] and the flesh of the child waxed warm" (II Kings 34).

Clearly, humans have been saving lives in this way for millennia. Even so, the method went out of fashion for a while in more recent centuries, probably because of concern about disease transmission. And it took a resurgence of interest in the 1950s to put the "kiss of life" back into mainstream use.

Luckily for another child – the one who grew up to be government minister Bobby Molloy – the technique was known to at least one person in Galway circa 1943. Aged 7 at the time, and floating on a tyre tube off Salthill,

brother received an Old Testament-style smiting. As for the child, he grew up to become a trained lifeguard and, as minister for local government, to oversee establishment of the Irish Water Safety Association.

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Creating more than just one splash at Cahore water safety week at Ballygarret Co Wexford where 140 candidates and a group of 7 adults and 15 instructors came under the watchful eye of IWS Volunteer and Council member Anne Ryan.

Irish Water Safety - Kildare



IWS Kildare Newbridge College Canoe Club complete Safety 1/2 & BLS 1 Training, with IWS Kildare - Instructor Elizabeth Tivnan



IWS Volunteers - Front row L to R: Conor Pyke, Tomas McGuinness, Aoife Commene, Dylan Molloy, Sarah Mullaly, Dan O'Connell, Aine Doyle.
 Middle row L to R: Jordan Coby, Kevin Pyke, Greg Coby, Colum Mullaly, Elaine Hill.
 Back row L to R: Philp Keleghan, Caitriona Burgess, Lisa Mullaly, Sinead King, Hannah Divney, Bridie Mullaly, Amy Garry, Michael Brogan.

IWS Kildare get to grips with IWS publication

“First Aid for Lifeguards” - practising many of the skills & situations that the publication deals with...



Above: Sisters Sarah, IWS Instructor & Lisa, Trainee IWS instructor deal with Hypothermia situation under the watchful eye of Philip Kelleghan, IWS Examiner, Dan O'Connell IWS Examiner and Dylan Molloy, Trainee IWS Instructor.

Below: Eliane Hill treats Amy Garry for wounds and practices dressing the wounds .



IWS Kildare Rescue Cover Team at Blessington Sailing Club Triathlon



L to R: Kevin Pyke, Philip Ryall, Patrick Maye, Sarah Mullaly, Lisa Mullaly, Loretta Nolan, Niall Williamson, Sinead King, Alan Kinahan, Ciaran Kinahan, Martin Kelleghan.

NEWS UPDATE...



IWS in Kilkenny

Presentation to Breda Collins, stepping down as Chairman of Irish Water Safety at the Water Safety Development Officer's Conference in Kilkenny Rivercourt Hotel, Kilkenny.

IWS Wexford



Winning team for Junior Competition at the Wexford lifesaving competition.

Team: Molly O'Keeffe (Captain)
Robin Hutchinson, Alex Maher & Eimear Dooley.

Also present, Coach Lisa Power, Chairman Mary O Sullivan, Treasurer Tom Keating and Sports Officer Gary Knox.

IWS in Switzerland



Presentation to the Chairman of IWS

The International Life Saving Europe (ILSE) Board of Directors held their annual meetings in Lucerne, Switzerland from May 20 to 22nd where Irish Water Safety Acting Chairman Martin O'Sullivan was presented with the highest award of the ILSE, the "Ambassador Award" by the ILSE President Dr. Detlev Mohr.

This prestigious Award was presented "in recognition of Martin's devotion to the cause of the saving of life in aquatic environments." The full title of the Award is Ambassador of the Order of Lifesaving.

Irish Water Safety - Clare

By Áine Purcell PRO

"On Sunday May 8th, Irish Water Safety - Clare, in conjunction with An Taisce Clean Coasts organised a cleanup of White Strand Beach, Miltown Malbay. It showed the strength of a community working together, with over 70 children and adults participating, including locals, members of Clare Water Safety, 15th Miltown Scouts, Clare County Council, representatives from

An Taisce, and Miltown Malbay Tidy Towns Committee, instructors, examiners and lifeguards. It was the perfect start to the 2016, highlighting the importance of giving something back and protecting our coasts"





The International Lifesaving Federation

by Martin O'Sullivan

The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) is a global, non-profit federation of over 100 national lifesaving organisations. ILS leads the worldwide effort to reduce injury and death in, on, or around the water. The vision of ILS is "a world free from drowning". ILS pursues this vision through the work of its member lifesaving organisations and by delivering on the strategic goals of the organisation contained within the ILS Strategic Framework 2012-2015:

- Build the capacity to reduce drowning within targeted communities;
- Position ILS as the world authority of drowning prevention, lifesaving and lifesaving sport;
- Reduce the drowning of children globally through partnership and collaboration;
- Expand the scope, reach and recognition of lifesaving sport;
- Create a sustainable business model;
- Establish and promote global best practice; and,
- Engage with every nation.

THE RESCUE COMMISSION

The Rescue Commission works to reduce the incidence of drowning and aquatic injuries throughout the world:

- through the development of organised lifesaving in areas of the world where it does not exist
- support for existing lifesaving organisations
- support for standardised public information and education
- tracking the incidence of drowning throughout the world and publishing this data
- development and identification of best medical practices
- reviewing, identification, and development of best practices in rescue
- identification of best practices in the training, staffing, and equipping of lifesavers

My election as a Member of the ILS Rescue Committee happened in 2004. At the next General assembly in 2008 I was elected as Chairman of that same Committee. Subsequently on 2011, under new structures, I was elected as the Chairman of the ILS Rescue Commission. There are four Committees reporting to the ILS Rescue Commission: Education, Rescue Operations, Rip Safe and Medical. Each of these Committees work on various projects, central to which are ILS Position Statements.

In order to view more closely these Position Statements, you should go to the ILS website which can be found at <http://www.ilsf.org>

Type in Position Statements and click on Search. You will find a large number of Medical and Lifesaving Position Statements. These are not rules and regulations but they are the result of extensive research and/or based on expert consensus.

POSITION STATEMENTS

If we look more closely at some of the Position Statements we can see how they can be of benefit to Irish Water Safety

MP17 has the following Title:

SEIZURES AND EPILEPSY

RISKS FOR BATHING, SWIMMING, LIFESAVING AND LIFEGUARDING

The following are the Recommendations to the Public:

1. Bathtub use for children with epilepsy should have direct, close (in the room), and continuous supervision. Older children and adolescents with epilepsy should not bathe or shower with the bathroom door locked.



The International Lifesaving Federation

2. When children reach the age of independent bathing, they should shower with a maximum temperature regulation of 43°C
3. Epilepsy carries increased relative risk of submersion and drowning. Children and adults should be advised of this increased relative risk.
4. Individuals with unstable or potentially unstable epilepsy should avoid water activity until stability is re-established.
5. Epilepsy submersion and drowning risk is greatest in an identified high-risk group that includes:
 - those with frequent (more than one per year) seizures
 - those with unpredictable convulsive seizures, and/or
 - those who have other disabilities.Extra precautions and attention are warranted. This patient group should avoid water activities, or should participate in clear, shallow, still water, with a personal flotation device securely fastened, and they should be within arm's length of a capable support person.
6. Individuals with stable, controlled epilepsy and no other risk factors, who participate in recreational, instructional, and competitive water activities, should do so in supervised areas and with another capable person.
7. Individuals with chronic disabilities who are intellectually and neurologically able and medically stable should be encouraged to undertake swimming and lifesaving training.
8. It may be helpful to provide absolute risks, so that persons with epilepsy and their advocates can make informed risk management decisions.

Perhaps the logical next step for IWS is a Safety Leaflet which lays out clearly the advice that is given in MP17

On the ILS Medical Committee is the Dr Ian Mackie Fellow. This prestigious appointment was made to the Irish Water Safety nominee, Dr Matthew Sills, in 2015. He now plays a significant role in the various exchanges between members of the Medical Committee, which are always grounded in the strict application of evidence based findings.

The Lifesaving Position Statements, which are the focus of the Education and the Rescue Operations Committees, are also evidence based, but do have a significant element of expert consensus. Thus for instance the following development with the International Surfing Association is taking place at present. This is what the ILS Board agreed at its last meeting:

That ILS Education Committee and Rescue Commission work with International Surfing Association (ISA) to develop courses for ISA instructors that meet ILS and ISA rescue and aquatic safety requirements.

You will be aware that IWS has already such a course in place and so we have been central to this discussion. You will find the IWS equivalent in our new Syllabus under the Title "National Surf Instructor Beach Award".

The ILS Rescue Commission meets just once a year. In between there is a great deal of email exchange, which leads to the production of a Position Statement. These Position Statements are then voted on and recommended to the ILS Board of Directors. If the Board accepts then they are included in the Position Statement list on the website, from where they can be used to inform debate on a topic that is under discussion by any of the ILS member Federations.

Martin O'Sullivan
Acting Chair, Irish Water Safety
Chairman, ILS Rescue Commission

Family hopes drowning death of son will lead to greater awareness

Boy in water for 10 to 15 minutes; a good portion of that time he was not breathing

Tim O'Brien
(First Published in the Irish Times Jun 4, 2016), reprinted with kind permission.



Some time in the early days of June 2015, somebody took a lifebuoy from its stand on the banks of the Shannon, just north of the railway bridge in Athlone. About the same time the lifebuoy was removed – it was later be found burned out on nearby waste ground – local schoolboy Caolán Seoige Webster turned 15.

At 6ft 1in, the blue-eyed Caolán was the apple of the eye of his extended family at St Patrick's Terrace in Athlone. His parents Bernadette and Seán lived next door to Caolán's uncle Pádraig and aunt Máire. Cousins and siblings wandered freely around both houses. Both sets of parents, like many in Athlone, warned the children of the dangers of the river.

Caolán's parents say their son, who had just completed second year in the local Marist college, was proud of the way his body was developing. He played a lot of football and was looking beyond the next year's Junior Certificate to a career in the Army, perhaps inspired by the town's Custume Barracks. He wanted a small house, a field and two ponies, he told his mother.

None of that was to happen. On June 10th, his parents understood he was going to play football, but Caolán had met some friends and gone to the river. He was a competent swimmer.

Where the friends gathered wasn't an approved swimming place and Caolán's father thinks he may not have known the water was nine feet deep. It was also his first swim of the year

and he may not have known Ireland's waterways are still dangerously cold in June. In seconds he was in shock and struggling.

His mother thinks there was an element of bravado in getting into the river. He wouldn't have wanted to appear "chicken". His father says he was "just two arms lengths from a jetty" but nobody could reach him and the lifebuoy was gone.

Caolán was in the water for between 10 and 15 minutes, a good portion of that time he was not breathing. Members of the nearby Athlone Sub Aqua Club pulled him from the water and he was taken to hospital in Ballinasloe, before being transferred by helicopter to Temple Street Hospital in Dublin, where he died in the early hours of June 11th.

In Athlone yesterday, his parents, his uncle Pádraig and aunt Máire said they would like to think publicising their loss might help prevent such disaster happening to others. Seán was keen that people be educated to the fact that a stolen lifebuoy could mean a stolen life. He thinks phone numbers should be displayed on lifebuoy stands so people could report when the buoys were missing. "And cameras, if they are going missing a lot," he said.

Bernadette emphasised the need for young people themselves to know and appreciate the dangers of water and bravado. Thursday would have been Caolán's 16th birthday and

Pádraig said they had a gathering at his grave, later releasing 16 balloons from the house.

According to Roger Sweeney of Irish Water Safety, Caolán's case is a stark example of the many factors that can go horribly wrong. "People do underestimate the coldness of the water at this time of year and this often coincides with an overestimation of their own ability. People just don't realise how dangerous water is," he said.

Thirty-seven children aged 14 and under drowned in the decade to 2014. In total 1,379 people drowned in that decade, an average of 137 every year, or 11 every month.

Mr Sweeney is concerned that in about a month's time, over half a million primary schoolchildren will be released for the summer break. "We created a water safety curriculum and introduced it in 2004 but we are only scratching the surface in terms of getting buy-in as it is a non-mandatory part of the curriculum," he said.

Mr Sweeney warned that drowning risks increased during bank holiday weekends, with alcohol present in one third of drowning victims. Some 62 per cent of drownings occur inland, with 80 per cent of drownings occurring close to the victim's home. He called for "a cultural shift" around water safety, just as that attributed to public perception of road safety.

Watch Seán's message on our Facebook and YouTube channels.

www.facebook.com/IWSie

Left: Seán and Bernadette Seoige Webster from Athlone, with a picture of their son Caolán. For his 16th birthday, his family had a gathering at his grave, later releasing 16 balloons from the house.

Photograph: James Flynn/APX

A Special Gathering

by Cavan WSAC

Swimming Instructors and I.W.S. local volunteers, from far and near, attended a special gathering on Sunday 27th December 2015 in the McNear Resource Centre, Blacklion, Co. Cavan. This gathering brought together instructors who had been trained at Blacklion Boat Quay from 1984 to the present day and volunteers who had assisted in the administration and organisation of swimming classes over the same period. This event was the brainchild of Kathleen Richey, who wished to acknowledge the achievement of Blacklion I.W.S. instructors and erect a public record of the 166 instructors who had qualified under the auspices of IWS since 1984. It is to be noted that in some families, four or even five siblings are all instructors and in two cases the second generation have now qualified. Philip and Margaret McKay, who had taught some of the earlier groups of swimmers in the 1970's and 80's, travelled from Dublin to participate in this event.

A brass plaque was unveiled by Kathleen Richey in the McNear Resource Centre which features all 166 instructors' names in chronological order of the year they qualified. At the unveiling ceremony Grace Timoney, the very first instructor, who had travelled from England, and Donall Flanagan, one of the most recently qualified groups, represented the instructors. Speeches by Kathleen Richey and Sarah White, one of the first instructors and now an examiner, followed and the assembled crowd were regaled with the tales of "tents", "The Richey Rub" and even, "Matchmaking"!

A photographic exhibition of swimmers' groups over the 45 year period prompted much conversation such as "Who's that?"..., "Where's she now?"... "I remember the time when..."

A selection of awards presented to Kathleen Richey, on a personal basis and also as a representative of IWS Blacklion and Cavan were on display. Refreshments were served as old acquaintances were renewed and friends got a chance to "catch up". All present agreed that the event was a great opportunity to come together to celebrate and pay tribute

to local initiative and community spirit and all involved felt justifiably proud to be associated with such a worthwhile and successful venture in a small, rural area of West Cavan.

Kathleen Richey and her late husband Canon Robin Richey have been synonymous with swimming in the Blacklion area and its hinterland since 1971 when classes first began. Nowadays the formidable and indomitable Mrs Richey would be described as a community activist/advocate, but at a time when "The Troubles" still prevailed, she was in fact a "builder of bridges" long before the phrase was coined. She promoted swimming for all and brought together communities from both sides of the border.

Just as a harvest is reaped from the seed that is sown and well tended so is Blacklion Water Safety a testament to the passion and dedication of a woman we all refer to as "Our Mrs Richey-the Swimming Lady!"



Some of the IWSA Instructors who travelled to Blacklion in the early days of Water Safety Classes. From left: Janette Sloane, Mary Sammon, Pearl Moffitt, Kathleen Richey (co-ordinator), Philip McKay, Margaret McKay and Eugene Greene. PHOTOS: PAUL DONOHUE

YOU'LL GET FISHED OUT IF YOU FLOAT



"You'll Get Fished Out If You Float" - Irish Water Safety volunteers Amy Walsh and Frank Carty are giving advice to fishers and their families at the Skipper Expo International in the Galway Bay Hotel. Reaching out to families within the fishing community is one example of our efforts to build a safety culture around our aquatic environments so that the proper attitudes and behaviours are adopted to safeguard against aquatic injury. Our primary school programme is an important part of this initiative. Resources and certificates are free and in just a few short teacher-driven sessions, your child will have the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to stay safe at our wonderful waterways.



Irish Water Safety

.. every person a swimmer... every person a lifesaver...

Our Blue Flag Beaches

John FM Leech, Chief Executive

I recently had occasion to make a presentation to the Blue Flag Coordinators of the Local Authorities on Irish Water Safety's role in the administration and judging of the Blue Flag Beach and Marina Awards. The Blue Flag concept started in 1985 and Ireland first entered this award scheme in 1988 which is funded by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. There are 4,136 beaches worldwide in 48 countries. In Ireland we have 87 beaches and three marinas. The Blue Flag guarantees an international standard of environmental quality, information and safety to ensure that the public have an informed and enjoyable day on the beach and marina. Irish Water Safety is part of the jury which judges on all the applications, our main aim is ensuring public safety. Risk assessments must be completed by our members every three years to guarantee this standard. An Taisce have successfully co-ordinated this award system throughout its history and in recent years have extended the Awards system to the Green Coast Awards which is a similar but not quite as high a standard as the Blue Flag, where normally there are no lifeguards on duty but they will also be risk assessed and have public rescue equipment in place. We also have one of our members on this jury. I was encouraged to learn that An Taisce is extending their awards scheme to include Licensed passenger vessels for Eco tourism in 2017. These would include vessels that do day trips out to our wonderful islands and to view our birds and cetaceans. As we all know, if we get a decent summer our beaches are second to none in the world so let us all hope that we have a good summer this year where we can have an opportunity to enjoy these excellent facilities.

We had a record turnout at our National Lifesaving Sport Championships at University of Limerick Pool in February, Clare lifesavers emerged as the dominant county once again despite strong challenges from Wicklow, Cork, Donegal, Wexford, Sligo and Waterford over the two days. The championships attracted a record entry of 310 competitors from around Ireland. This annual competition gives the best swimming pool lifesavers in Ireland an opportunity to compete in conditions that Lifesavers can encounter in real life rescue situations. Norma Cahill made a new world record in the masters competition in the 200m obstacle swim, shaving 5.15 seconds off the previous record holder in Germany.

Last weekend I made a presentation on water safety to the Irish Cruiser Racing Association. In the last decade we have seen a reduction in drownings and aquatic injuries in this sector. One percent of all accidental drownings occur in sailing such has been the improvement in safety which is very encouraging. This has been achieved by these sailors wearing lifejackets when on the water and as a result of improved training by the Irish Sailing Association who are proactive in this regard and have given strong leadership. Improvements in water safety technology and improved Search and Rescue assets around our coast and on our rivers and lakes means that when a casualty gets into trouble, we now have lifeboats and helicopters that can be deployed in minutes to save them, so long as they are wearing a life jacket or buoyancy aid and suitable protective clothing for the cool water temperature we experience in our temperate climate. Hopefully we can achieve zero percent drownings in the next decade.



Irish Water Safety - Kerry

NEWS FROM PAWS...

My name is Tara O'Connor, a Primary School Teacher, from Valentia Island, County Kerry. I have been an Irish Water Safety (IWS) Instructor on the beaches in Kerry for the last thirteen years. I have been teaching in the two local primary schools in both Ballinskelligs and The Glen since September 2012. I am also the Secretary of Kerry WSAC since March 2011.

Aquatics is a component of the Physical Education Strand of the Primary School Curriculum. In 2004, IWS developed a pool based programme that incorporates all aspects of the Aquatics Strand called 'PAWS' (Primary Aquatics Water Safety). The most important role of PAWS is to teach children how to stay safe in and around water. Its aim is to significantly reduce the number of our young people lost to drowning each year and to familiarise pupils with water safety best practices.

There are two sections to the PAWS Syllabus:

1) Land PAWS – classroom based lessons comprising the theory of water safety and are generally taught by the class teacher. There are 3 Awards – Land PAWS 1, 2 & 3.

2) Water PAWS – pool based swimming lessons by qualified IWS Instructors. There are 8 Awards – Water PAWS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.

Every pupil receives both a Land and Water PAWS certificate for the level that they achieve.

In February 2013, I contacted all the Primary School Principals in South Kerry to see if any of them were interested in taking part in the PAWS Programme. Seven schools expressed an interest: Coars N.S, Foilmore N.S, Portmagee N.S, The Glen N.S, Ballinskelligs N.S, Aghatubrid N.S, and Caherdaniel N.S. However, we ran into a unique problem: we have no swimming pool. Our closest swimming pools are in Killarney and Tralee. Due to our ruralness, it would take schools in South Kerry, on average, a 2.5 - 3 hour round trip to get to a swimming pool. This is for just 1 swimming lesson.

I looked at our options. In South Kerry we have many beautiful beaches. I corresponded with Anne Daly to set up Water PAWS lessons on the beaches in South Kerry for June 2013. PAWS lessons had never been run on any beach in the country prior to this. I decided to try it out that year and see how it worked. The 4 beaches the lessons were run on, and still currently are, are: Ballinskelligs, Reencaheragh, Kells, and Derrynane.

All my liaising with the local school Principals and instructors is mainly done through email. Every year in February, I email all the instructors to see who is available for swimming instructing the following June. I also email all the school Principals in South Kerry. If they wish to book their school in for lessons they must provide the following information: their preferred swimming dates, the number of lessons they wish to take part in, and an estimate of the number of pupils they are enrolling for the swimming lessons. The number of swimming lessons the schools wish to book in for is optional. They vary from 3 / 4 / 5 lessons per school. I then create a timetable that best fits the dates

the schools request and instructor availability. Our lessons commence every year after the June Bank Holiday weekend. All the swimming lessons start at around 12 noon. Some schools are lucky enough to be walking or cycling distance from the beach so no transport is required.



Pupils from Ballinskelligs walking to the beach for their swimming lessons.

As a teacher working with a school staff whose school has been awarded an Active Flag, walking and cycling the pupils to the beach is very important to us. For the other schools, the school bus / parents collect the children at school, drop them to the beach and bring them home from the beach at 2.45pm – 3pm when the swimming lessons are finished for the day.



Some pupils from Ballinskelligs attending their lessons in the water in the background and some waiting for their lesson.

Last year, a grant for teaching Land PAWS in the classrooms became available. Each classroom of children receives two Land PAWS lessons over two separate days from their swimming instructor. These lessons take place at 9:40am – 10.45am on the morning of their swimming lessons.



Some pupils from Ballinskelligs attending their lessons in the water in the background and some waiting for their lesson.

Take June of 2016 as an example, there were 7 schools, 9 instructors and almost 300 children participating in both Land and Water PAWS lessons. This is a huge advantage to the schools and children of South Kerry because there is no swimming pool near any of them due to their remoteness.



Pupils from Ballinskelligs with the PAWS Coordinator Tara and their instructors Deirdre, Sinéad & Gemma (left). Pupils from Caherdaniel attending their lessons (right).

This gives pupils over an hour in between lessons to eat their lunch, walk / cycle / get transported to the beach, and get changed into their swimming gear on time for the swimming lessons at 12 noon. The instructors also hold brief Land PAWS lessons on the beach prior to the children entering the water.



Pupils from Ballinskelligs attending a Land PAWS lesson by the lifeguard hut (above) and practising throwing a Ringbuoy (below).



The most important point to remember is that there are almost 300 children in South Kerry getting valuable lessons which combine both the theory and practical elements of swimming and water safety on their nearby beaches, which for these children, is their local natural environment. If it was not for this PAWS Programme, which is now running every year in June, many of these children might never be brought for swimming lessons. Principals, classroom teachers and swimming instructors in South Kerry are working very hard and contributing so much towards reducing the number of our young people lost to drowning which will hopefully save a life / lives in the future. If it was not for the excellent cooperation I receive from the schools and local swimming instructors this Programme would not be possible. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the IWS swimming instructors, Principals and classroom teachers who are making the PAWS Programme in South Kerry possible and such a success.



“Every Person a Swimmer – Every Swimmer a Lifesaver”

Irish Water Safety - Louth

St Patrick's Day Parade 2016



Lovely Friendly Ringbuoys

Joan Finnegan, Galway

I was sitting with my husband Keith at a window table in the Corrib Tea Rooms at the Waterside in Galway, having just come from the Town Hall Theatre where we went to a matinee as part of Baboró International Children's Arts Festival. Directly opposite the window on the other side of the road was a lifebuoy,



We continued our walk along the waterways, over the three bridges, onto Long Walk and around New Docks with me taking photos of these colourful guardians which dotted our route, some standing tall and proud, others shining through the graffiti which darkened their lovely bright yellow.

I went home with my 50 odd photographs, itching to get started on some kind of project. I am studying Art and Design in CCAM in Galway and had been stuck for inspiration since returning in September. The lifebuoys were to save me!

I printed some of the images at home and got more developed in town the following day. Over the next few weeks I sketched them, painted them, manipulated some of the photographs I had taken of them and made collages. I could see the possibility of making little models of them all around me and used a matchbox, an empty Easter egg box, a Rubik's cube keyring and even Lego! Katie my daughter received a bunch of yellow roses and I was itching to dry out a few of them to see what I could create. I was giving life and character to these very important protectors of our waterways in a way.

sheltered under a tree. As we chatted and had our coffee, the lifebuoy kept attracting my attention. It was a nice day and people were walking by the river and past the lifebuoy, a man with his dog, a family of four holding hands and more. I started to think of the lifebuoy itself and its existence there, under the tree in a lovely spot in Galway watching the world go by day after day.

I took a photograph of it through the window and when we wrapped up after our coffee we walked along the waterside where there were many other lifebuoys around about, one beside a bench, another standing on its own, one peeking out from some greenery near the boat club, some facing out to the water and others facing in. Each one had his own 'patch' to mind and in my mind they came alive!



Even though the lifebuoys might seem to all look the same, for me they had their own identities and personalities. I had identified the posh one, the proud one and the untidy one! I was hooked!

I grew up in Galway City at New Docks, where my Dad still lives, so water and lifebuoys have always been part of my life. It was fun to work with the image, with its bright happy appearance.



My next project is taking the image of the diving board at Blackrock and running with that, seeing where it will take me. The diving board is also very special to me – but not because of my swimming skills! Before it was built in the early 1950's my Dad was asked to make a model of it from drawings, which he did, and this model was on display in the window of the Galway City Council's offices, which were in Dominick Street at the time, so that the people of Galway could see what the diving board would look like when it was built! Now here I am many years later, collecting little bits of wood to paint and getting my glue and paints ready to create my own version of it!

See Joan's artwork on front cover.

Record turn-out at Irish Water Safety National Championships

CLARE DOMINATE IN LIFE-SAVING SPORT AS WICKLOW MAKES STRONG CHALLENGE
Record turn-out at Irish Water Safety National Championships at UL Pool in February Clare lifesavers emerged as the dominant county once again despite strong challenges over two days at the University of Limeric pool for the IWS National Championships in February. Defending their overall titles in several key events, Clare won the Junior Boys and Men's contests and but were beaten into second place by Wicklow in the Junior Girl's standings. Wicklow also placed second in the Senior Ladies series. Cork successfully defended the Mixed Masters title by winning again this year.

The championships attracted a record entry of 310 competitors from 12 counties around Ireland in addition to several other competition records. This annual competition gives the best swimming pool lifesavers in Ireland an opportunity to compete in conditions that Lifesavers can encounter in real life rescue situations. The sport of lifesaving teaches participants the skills necessary to rescue people in distress in water. Many of the competitors, having worked as Lifeguards in pools nationwide, got their chance to pitch their skills against the finest lifesavers in the country. The events are varied and challenging with competitors swimming under obstacles, rescuing 'casualties' from the water and skilfully testing a variety of lifesaving skills in the process. "The strong turnout this year means we can look forward to a steady stream of new lifeguards for Ireland's pools and beaches in the coming years," commented Seamus O'Neill, IWS Sports Commission chairman. "Competitors not only acquire life-saving skills but form enduring lifelong friendships around Ireland and overseas." The championships encourage people to enrol in one of Irish Water Safety's many courses nationwide in swimming, rescue and

lifesaving skills. The event promotes the fitness and readiness for action of the lifesavers and demonstrates Lifeguard water rescues to the public through a series of competitions based around key lifesaving skills such as swimming, towing, line-throwing and use of mannikin dummies.

A total of 71 teams entered from 12 counties around the country and a team from Belfast.

Ten Irish National Records were broken; two from the Junior age category (13-16), seven in the Senior category (16+) and one world record in the masters (50 - 54)

RESULTS:

Junior Boys:

- 1st: Clare A
- 2nd: Cork A
- 3rd: Waterford A

Junior Girls:

- 1st: Wicklow A
- 2nd: Clare A
- 3rd: Waterford A

Senior Men:

- 1st: Clare A
- 2nd: Waterford A
- 3rd: Sligo A

Senior Ladies:

- 1st: Clare A
- 2nd: Wicklow
- 3rd: Wexford

Masters (male/female combined):

- 1st: Cork
- 2nd: Donegal
- 3rd: Wexford

New World Record (Masters aged 50-54):

Norma Cahill: 200m obstacle
(2m27.29secs, beating 2m32.44secs)

Is your county ready for next year ?





Dates for your Diary...

Provincial Nippers Surf Championships

Ulster/Connaught

Date: Saturday 20th August
Venue: Co. Mayo
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 4th August

Munster

Date: Saturday 20th August
Venue: Co. Waterford
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 4th August

Leinster

Date: Saturday 20th August
Venue: Co. Louth
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 4th August

Water Events:

- Surf Race
- Board Race
- Swim with Fins
- Taplin Relay

Beach Events:

- 15m Flags
- 50m Sprints
- Sprint Relay

Details:

- All competitors must be registered members of IWS.
- Entry: €10 per competitor to cover all events.
- County team hats or county skull caps are mandatory.
- IWS high visibility rash vests are mandatory for water events.
- Nipper boards mandatory - Soft top only.
- Age group by year of birth.
- 7 Individual Age Groups. (8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)
- 2 Relay Age Groups. (8-11 & 12-14)
- No mixed relays. (Gender or Age)
- Max. 6 teams per gender per county for relay events.
- Top 10 individuals in surf race & Top 6 individuals in all other individual events & top 3 in each relay event to go through to the National Championships from all regions.
- No Overall Trophies for Regional events anymore.

Provincial Junior/Youth Surf Championships

Ulster/Connaught

Date: Saturday 21st August
Venue: Co. Mayo
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 4th August

Munster

Date: Saturday 21st August
Venue: Co. Waterford (TBC)
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 4th August

Leinster

Date: Saturday 21st August
Venue: Co. Louth
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 4th August

Water Events:

- Surf Race
- Board Race
- Ski Race†
- Tube Rescue
- Board Rescue
- Taplin Relay‡

Beach Events:

- 20m Flags
- 90m Sprints
- 4 x 90m Sprint Relay
 - International Racing Ski's or Lifeguard surf skis can be used.
- Taplin: swim, board, ski, and run.

Details:

- All competitors must be registered members of IWS.
- Entry: €15 per competitor to cover all events.
- County team hats or county skull caps are mandatory.
- IWS high visibility rash vests are mandatory for water events.
- Age group by year of birth.
- Junior (& Youth) competition to be ran as one event with medals than awarded separately for youths.
- Top 16 individuals in all individual events & top 6 in each relay event to go through to the National Championships from all regions.
- No mixed relays. (Gender)
- Members of Relay teams to be named on the entry form.
- Max. 6 teams per gender per county for relay events.
- There will be no overall trophies awarded at Regional events.



Dates for your Diary...

National Surf Referees 'B' Course

Date: Saturday 26th-28th August
Venue: Co. Donegal
Enquiries: sport@iws.ie

National Nipper Surf Championships

Date: Saturday 27th August
Venue: Rosssnowlagh, Co. Donegal
Closing Date for Entries: Automatic from provincial results

Water Events:

- Surf Race
- Board Race
- Swim with Fins
- Taplin Relay

Beach Events:

- 15m Flags
- 50m Sprints
- Sprint Relay

Details:

- All competitors must be registered members of IWS.
- Entry: €10 per competitor to cover all events.
- County team hats or county skull caps are mandatory.
- IWS high visibility rash vests are mandatory for water events.
- Nipper boards mandatory - Soft top only.
- Age group by year of birth.
- 7 Individual Age Groups. (8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)
- 2 Relay Age Groups. (8-11 & 12-14)
- No mixed relays. (Gender or Age)
- Overall Trophies will be awarded for the Junior & Senior Nippers, based on points from the top 4 competitors in each individual event & top 2 in relay events.

National Junior/Youth Surf Championships

Date: Sunday 28th August
Venue: Rosssnowlagh, Co. Donegal
Closing Date for Entries: Automatic from provincial results

Water Events:

- Surf Race
- Board Race
- Ski Race†
- Tube Rescue
- Board Rescue
- Taplin Relay

Beach Events:

- 20m Flags
- 90m Sprints
- 4 x 90m Sprint Relay
 - International Racing Ski's or Lifeguard surf skis can be used.
- Taplin: swim, board, ski, and run.

Details:

- All competitors must be registered members of IWS.
- Entry: €15 per competitor to cover all events.
- County team hats or county skull caps are mandatory.
- IWS high visibility rash vests are mandatory for water events.
- Age group by year of birth.
- Junior (& Youth) competition to be ran as one event with medals than awarded separately for youths.
- No mixed relays. (Gender)
- No substitutions in relay teams from regional competitions except under the circumstances allowed in the substitutions policy.
- Overall Trophies will be awarded, based on points from the top 4 competitors in each individual event & top 2 in relay events.

Like us at facebook.com/IWSie





Dates for your Diary...

World Lifesaving Championships

Date: 1st-15th September
Venue: Netherlands
Age Groups: Juniors, Seniors & Masters
Website: www.lifesaving2016.com

National Senior Surf Championships

Date: Saturday 24th September
Venue: Co. Waterford
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 9th September

Water Events:

- Surf Race
- Board Race
- Ski Race
- Ocean Man/Woman
- Tube Rescue
- Board Rescue
- Taplin Relay

Beach Events:

- 20m Flags

Details:

- All competitors must be registered members of IWS.
- Entry: €15 per competitor to cover all events.
- County team hats or county skull caps are mandatory.
- IWS high visibility rash vests are mandatory for water events.
- Age based on year of birth
- No mixed relays. (Gender or Age)

National Masters Surf Championships

Date: Saturday 24th September
Venue: Co. Waterford
Closing Date for Entries: Friday 9th September

Water Events:

- Surf Race
- Board Race
- Ski Race
- Ocean Man/Woman
- Taplin Relay

Beach Events:

- 20m Flags

Details:

- All competitors must be registered members of

IWS.

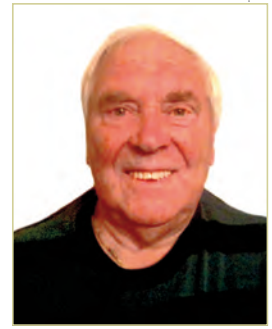
- Entry: €15 per competitor to cover all events.
- County team hats or county skull caps are mandatory.
- IWS high visibility rash vests are mandatory for water events.
- Age based on year of birth.
- 3 Age Groups: 30-39, 40-49, 50+. (Individuals)
- One relay age group. (30+)
- No mixed relays. (Gender)

***ALL COMPETITORS MUST BE MEMBERS OF IWS**



Irish Water Safety- Louth
assisting with rescue
cover for Boyne Swim at
Drogheda Maritime Festival

The opening of Newbridge Swimming Pool



Frank McCormack,
IWS Kildare, IWS Instructor

Newbridge Swimming Pool opened at Ryston in July 1970. First it was blessed by the parish priest Monsignor Miller and then officially opened by Minister for Industry and Commerce P. J. Lalor. After the official opening and speeches a life-saving demonstration was given by myself and John Reddy. The first person to take charge of the pool was Des Hogan, who was in charge for a few years until myself and Frank Fagan took it over. The Co. Council officially took over the running of the pool and Paddy Kearney, from Naas, was put in charge. After that Mary Domican was in charge until it closed sometime around 1983.

We started life-saving courses which were a great success and we formed a committee to run Water Safety in Kildare. We had a lot of good people in it over the years to name but a few: Leo McBride, Terry Mahon, Paddy Kearney, Johnny Reddy, Billy Hyland, Gabrielle Behan, Mary Domican, Frank Fagan. John Joe Murray was the first chairman of the Swimming Pool Committee.

The money for the pool was collected by a group of volunteers. It was hard work. A lot of houses in Newbridge volunteered to give 6d. a week. Six pence then is about two cent now. This was done by door-to-door collecting by volunteers and pool committee members, so it took a lot of effort to get the money to put the pool there. It was a great asset to Newbridge. One of our biggest problems was when we were locking up at 8 o'clock at night outside the pool about 20-30 would be waiting for us to go and then they would get in over the fence. We could do nothing to stop them, but the only good thing was they never did any damage to the pool.

The pool was opened from the middle of June for about three months. Every day there would be about 100 people using it, hail, rain or shine. I think it was a shilling to get in, which wasn't that cheap. It never had any accidents or series mishaps in its time. The pool closed as far as I can remember around 1983 and it is a sad thing to see it now in ruins and overgrown. The plaque is still there for all to see and reads:

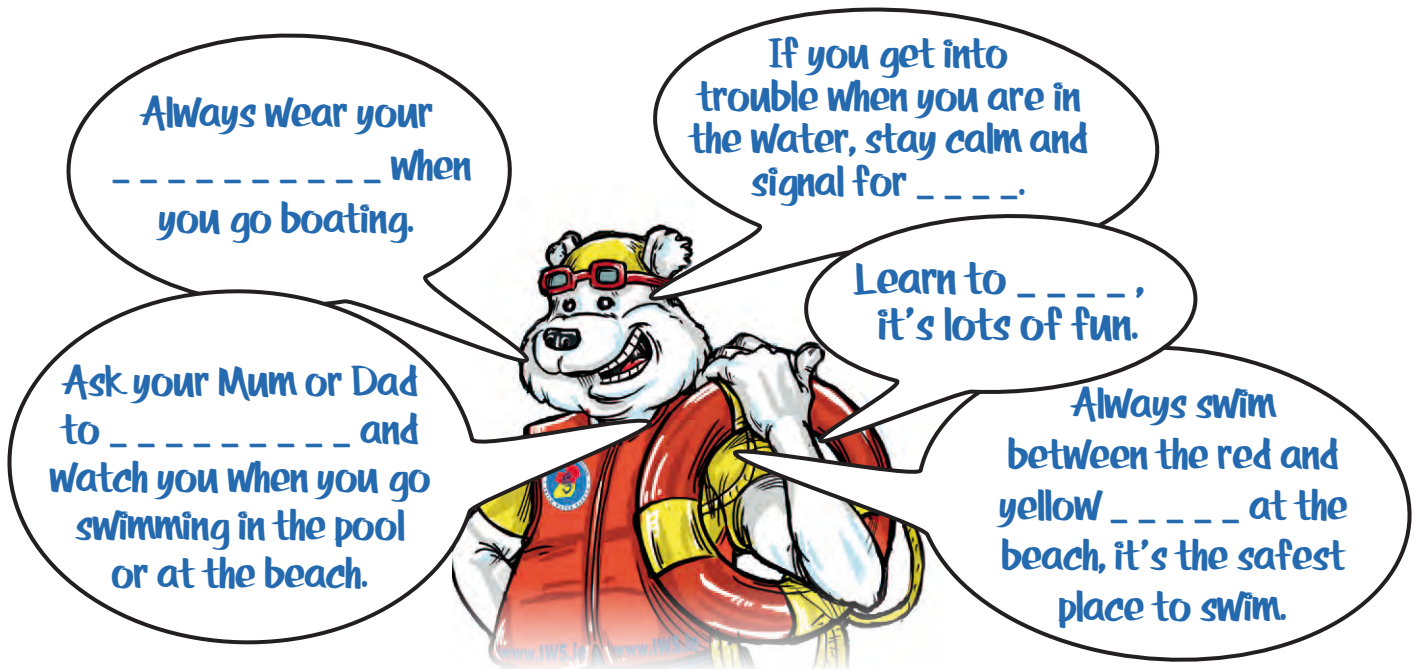


The following is the inscription on the Plaque:

'The first sod for the swimming pool was turned in September 1969 and it was formally blessed and opened in July 1970. The money was subscribed by the people of Newbridge and it stands as a monument to community spirit and effort. May God bless and protect all who swim here.'

WATER SAFETY MESSAGES FROM UISCE BEAR...

FILL IN THE MISSING WORDS TO FIND OUT ALL THE WATER SAFETY MESSAGES TO KEEP YOU WATERWISE THIS SUMMER.



• LIFEJACKET • SUPERVISE • SWIM • HELP • FLAGS •

Follow **Uisce Bears** advice and use these steps when calling the **Emergency Services**.

Do not panic
Dial 999 or 112
Say what service you require
Give your name
Tell them where you are
Tell them the details of the accident

It's as easy as
WATER SAFETY 1. 2. 3.

WATER SAFETY WORD SEARCH

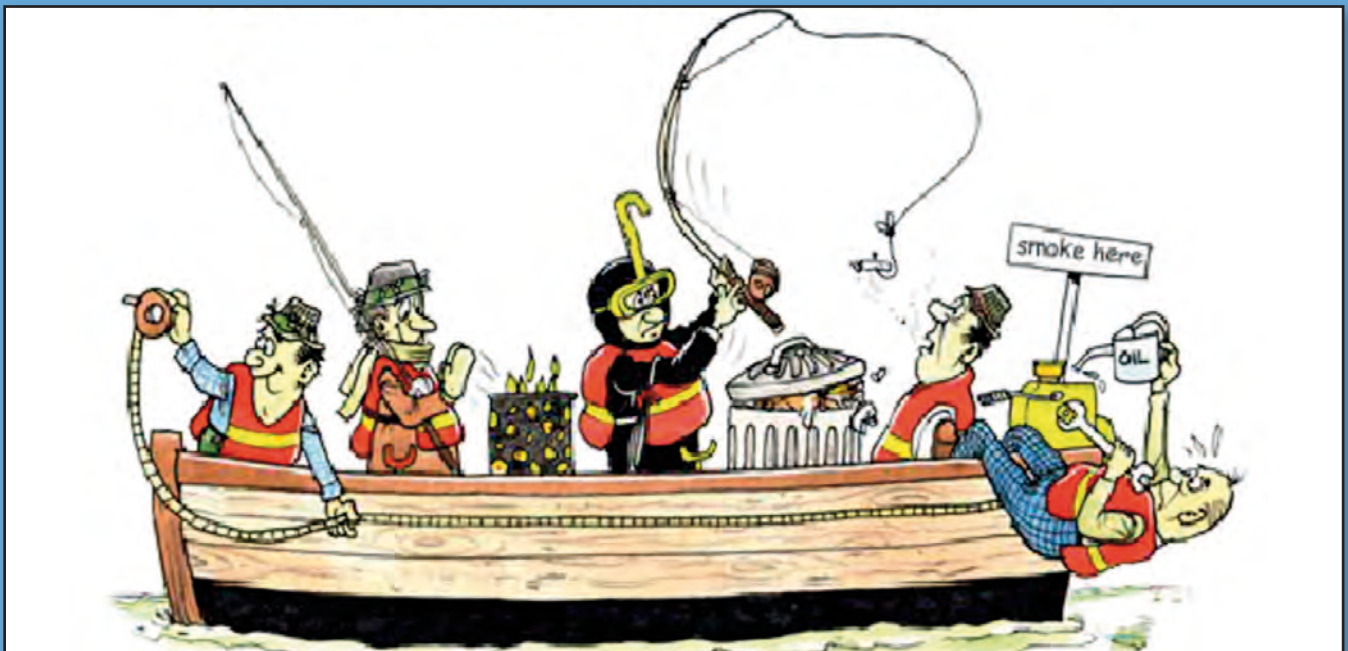
Find these words in the pool safety puzzle.

- LIFEGUARD
- BUDDY
- SWIM
- POOL
- SHALLOW
- DEEP
- DIVE
- WALK

L	B	U	D	D	Y
I	T	E	E	D	S
F	R	E	E	W	H
E	N	M	P	A	A
G	P	O	O	L	L
U	S	F	W	K	L
A	Z	W	X	B	O
R	Q	E	I	P	W
D	I	V	E	M	C



**CAN YOU SPOT
THE 9 DIFFERENCES
ON THE TOP BOAT?**



**UICSE BEAR NEEDS
TO MATCH THE
EQUIPMENT TO
THE NAMES**



Cambuoy Ringbuoy Throw Rope

Let's dive with Irish Water Safety

Ailbhe Culleton, 2015 Laois Rose

On the 24th of April 2015 I was selected as the 2015 Laois Rose after a long day with participants taking part in individual and group interviews and finally an onstage interview. During my individual interview one of the Judges asked what charity would I like be involved with if I was selected as Laois Rose. I instantly chose Irish Water Safety. My reason for choosing Irish Water Safety was very personal. In November 2008, my cousin Eoin Doran left Ireland in search of adventure. His first stop was New Zealand. In the two short weeks he was in New Zealand he met with lots of other Irish people; all with a similar sense of adventure and fun. With his new friends Eoin travelled to the Waikato Region on the North Island. The group decided to go for a swim in the local river. While Eoin was swimming he got into difficulty, and despite the heroic efforts of friends and local people Eoin drowned in the Waikato River. I got in contact with Roger Sweeney, Marketing Manager



& Deputy CEO of Irish Water Safety and shared my story with him. Roger relayed to me the statistics outlining the alarming number of drownings that happen in Ireland each year and the importance of raising people's awareness of the safety messages issued by Irish Water Safety. With Roger's support my fundraising journey began. To fundraise for Irish Water Safety I decided to do a tandem skydive. Despite the inclement weather conditions I completed the tandem skydive in Clonbullogue Parachute Club before my year as Laois Rose ended. Through the incredible generosity of family and friends €1,650.03 was raised for Irish Water Safety. The most important part of this journey for me is that the funds raised will help Irish Water Safety create awareness of the dangers of the water and hopefully this awareness will help reduce the numbers drowned, both here at home and abroad. Eoin would have been 28 years old on the day I was selected as Laois Rose!

Coastal drownings – a snapshot from the Drowning Database Working Group – by Roger Sweeney

Irish Water Safety partners with the RNLI, NUIG, the CSO, An Garda Síochána and the Coroner Service to inform its Drowning Database Working Group that informs initiatives to target specific at-risk groups. Here are some headline findings from drowning data specific to our coastal regions.

Of the 114 drownings in 2014, 47 were coastal. 14 were accidental, 14 were suicides and 19 were of undetermined cause. Approximately twice as many males drowned than females in coastal locations. The most common cause of coastal drowning among males was accidental, accounting for 65%. Less commonly, male coastal drowning due to self-harm was 12%. By comparison, female drowning fatalities were primarily due to suspected self-harm (56%), followed by accidental causes (33%).

The majority of coastal drownings occurred in Cork (15). Galway had the second highest number of coastal drowning incidents (10) followed by Donegal (7). Data from additional sources is currently being gathered that will identify additional unique coastal drowning information to improve coverage of these tragic fatalities, and ultimately help prevent them with location-specific interventions.



Pictured during a meeting of the project team at the RNLI's head office in Poole, UK are George Rawlinson, RNLI Operations Director & Chair of the UK's National Water Safety Forum and Roger Sweeney, Marketing Manager and Deputy CEO, Irish Water Safety. IWS - collaborating to build relationships that will safeguard you, your family and friends for generations to come. "Know What You're Getting Into".

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FOR
2016**

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Junior Lifeguard Programme

Levels 1 - 5



- Swimming • Lifesaving • Lifeguard • Awareness •
- Teamwork • Education • Fun • Life Skills • Rescue •



Irish Water Safety
Sábháilteacht Uisce na hÉireann

Analysis of Drownings in 2015

By Roger Sweeney

Irish Water Safety - targeting at-risk groups with drowning prevention initiatives...

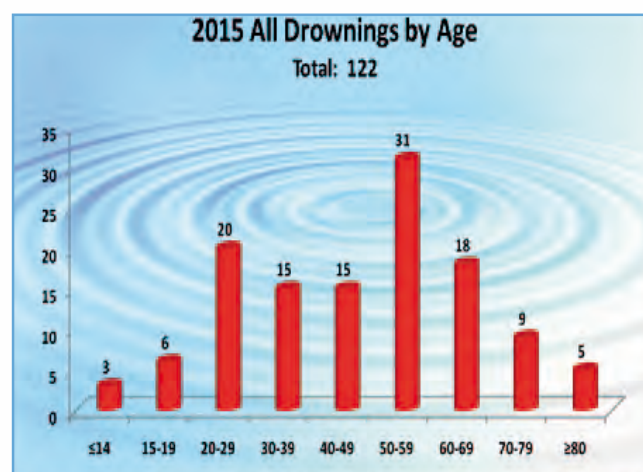
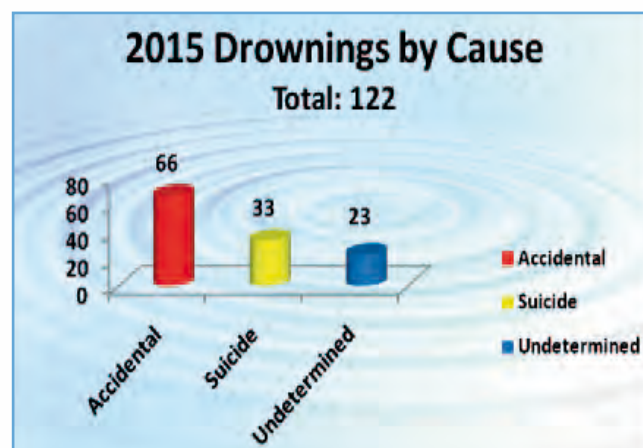
The total number of drownings in Ireland in 2015 was 122, eight more than in 2014 when 114 drowned. The average number of annual drownings over the last ten years was 133. Thirty children drowned in the last decade. Each figure in the following graphical analysis, be it accidental, suicide or of undetermined cause, reflects a preventable tragedy that affects so many lives. Irish Water Safety continues to target at-risk groups with initiatives to highlight best practices so that drownings are reduced. Stay up to date on our Facebook page.

A synopsis of some general contributory factors:

1. Poor or inadequate equipment (e.g. boats or lifejackets);
2. Not wearing a correctly fitting lifejacket (with crotch strap);
2. Alcohol consumption;
3. Falling unexpectedly into water;
4. Improper use of boats and equipment;
5. Overestimation of skills; underestimation of ability;
6. Lack of local knowledge when travelling in Ireland and abroad;
7. Not being able to swim or not having lifesaving and water survival skills;
8. Easy unauthorised access to waterways;
9. Cold water shock and hypothermia;
10. Current (including rip currents, river currents, and tidal currents);
11. Offshore winds (including the use of inflatable toys and other devices);
12. Pre-existing diseases (e.g. heart disease);
13. Underwater entanglement;
14. Bottom surface gradient and stability;
15. Waves (coastal and lake and their influence on watercraft);
16. Water transparency;
17. Impeded visibility (including coastal configuration, structures, overcrowding, hidden edges inland);
18. Lack of parental supervision (infants and children);
19. Change in weather conditions;
20. Excessive "horseplay" or over exuberant behaviour;
21. Swimming outside the depth of the user.

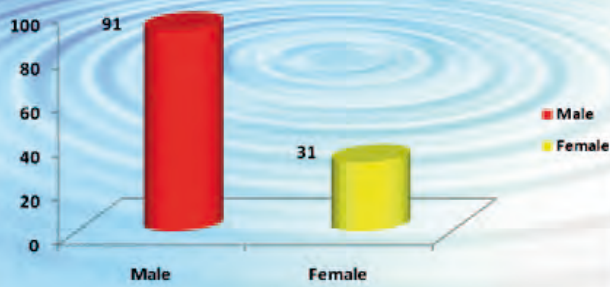
A synopsis of some general preventive and management actions:

1. Public education by Irish Water Safety regarding hazards and safe behaviours;
2. Teaching children to stay away from water when unsupervised through the IWS PAWS (Primary Aquatics Water Safety) programme;
3. Continual adult supervision of children;
4. IWS media campaigns that drowning can happen quickly and quietly;
5. Promote in IWS press announcements, the restriction of alcohol provision before or during aquatic activities;
6. Provision by Irish Water Safety of properly trained and equipped lifeguards;
7. Provision of rescue services;
8. Irish Water Safety Risk Assessments that include assessments of local hazard warning notices, access to emergency response and availability of resuscitation skills/facilities and other factors;
9. Development by Irish Water Safety of rescue and resuscitation skills among general public and user groups;
10. Coordination by Irish Water Safety with user group associations concerning hazard awareness and safe behaviours;
11. Wearing of adequate lifejackets and Personal Flotation Devices when boating;
12. Fencing to isolate outdoor aquatic environments.



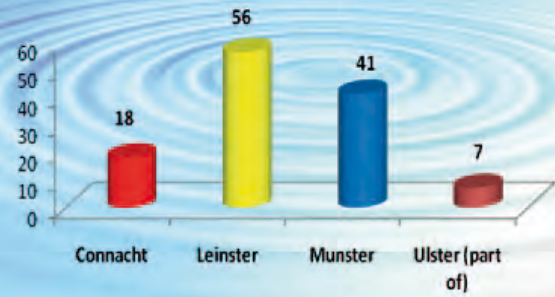
2015 All Drownings by Gender

Total: 122



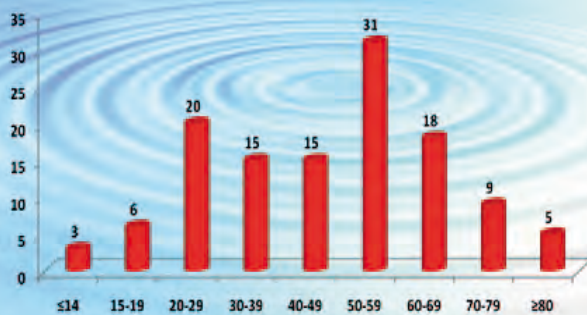
Drownings By Province

(Total = 122)



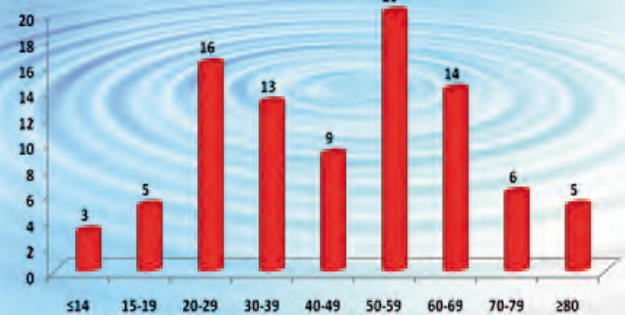
2015 All Drownings by Age

Total: 122



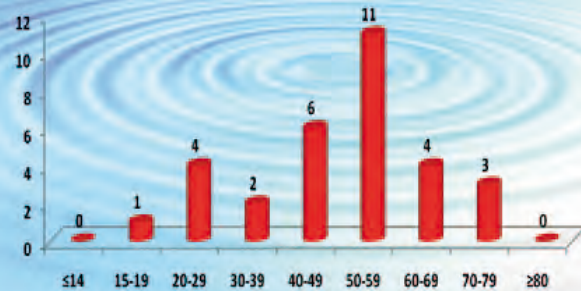
2015 Male Drownings by Age

Total: 91 of 122



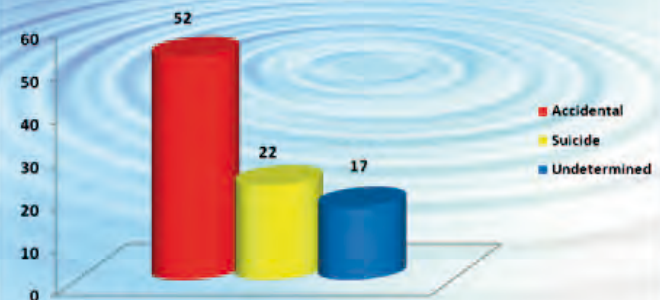
2015 Female Drownings by Age

Total: 31 of 122



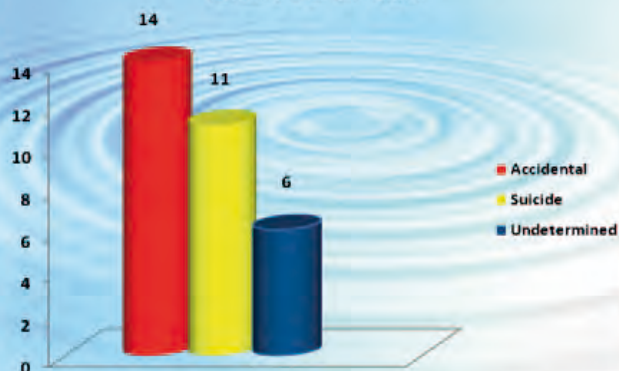
2015 Male Drownings by Cause

Total: 91 of 122



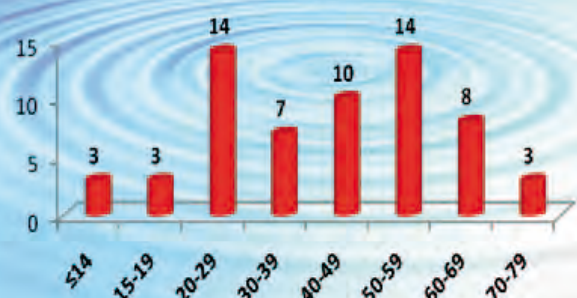
2015 Female Drownings by Cause

Total: 31 of 122

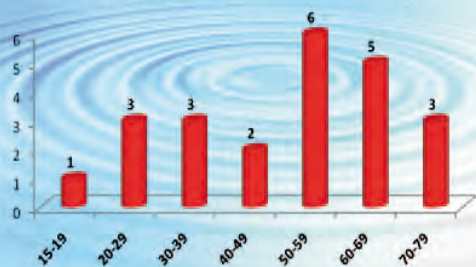


2015 Drownings by Age:

Accidental (Total: 66)



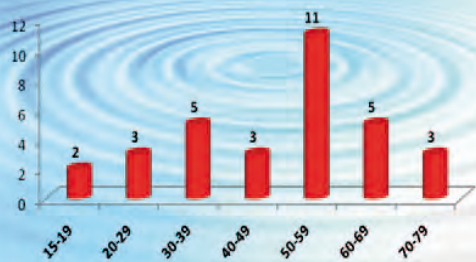
**2015 Drownings by Age:
Undetermined Cause (Total: 23)**



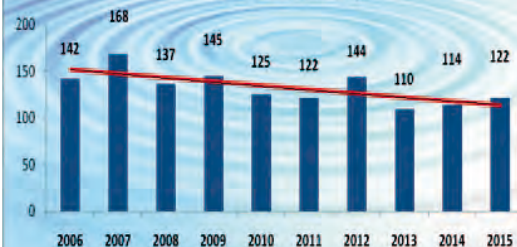
**2015 Drownings
by Gender and Cause**
Male / Female (Total: 122)



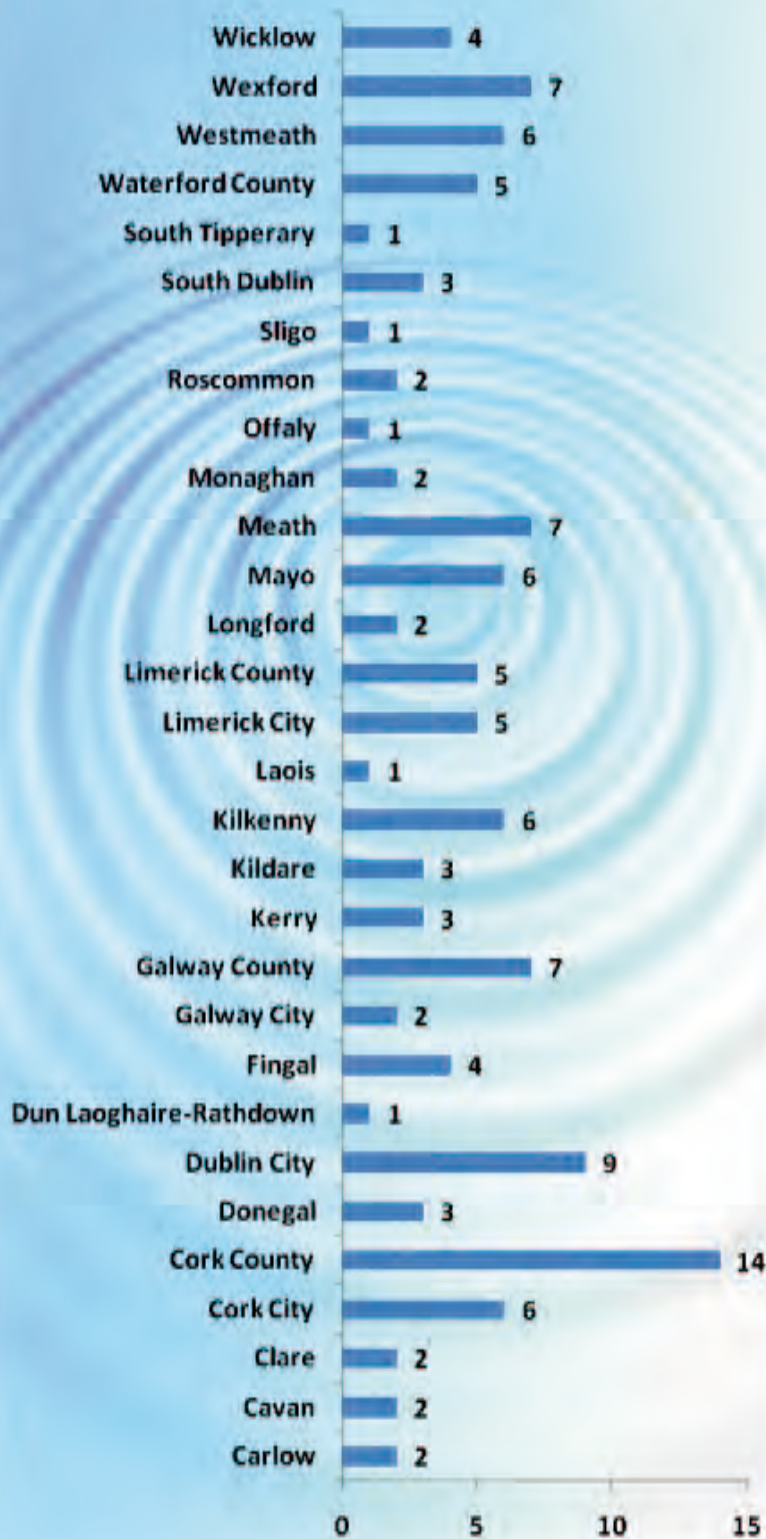
**2015 Drownings by Age:
Suicide (Total: 33)**



**Total Drownings
Decade to 2015**
Average: 133 annually



2015 Drownings by County
Total: 122



Irish Water Safety ...Know what you're getting into...iws.ie...

**Lifeguards saved 418 people from drowning last year...
And reunited 448 lost children with loved ones.**



WATCH OVER YOUR CHILDREN CLOSELY NEAR WATER



Partnerships are important and although Irish Water Safety's link with Water Babies might be less recognisable than this connection between Alan and Quinn Crisford, our work intersects within the common goal of preventing drowning through education and training.

Water Babies works closely with Irish Water Safety to educate parents and change behaviour to prevent drowning and water related accidents and has created a helpful guide for parents, which is available from

www.waterbabies.ie



IWS, Respond 2016 - Mullingar

Michael Lyster's love of sport clearly extends beyond the field as the RTE correspondent hears about Irish Water Safety's Lifesaving Sports programme, an important part of the IWS national curriculum designed to give people a Lifeguarding skill that can save lives in their communities. Michael recounted his own reliance on the Basic Life Support (BLS) skills of the emergency services represented at Respond 2016, the third National CFR conference held recently in Mullingar. IWS was on hand to give a talk about our own work and there are many similarities in that the ethos of volunteerism, so essential to the life of a community, is shared by IWS volunteers and the 130 CFR schemes now registered with the National Ambulance Service. It is an example of an IWS collaboration, in this case with PHECC, the Irish Heart Foundation, the National Ambulance Service and a network of volunteers trained to safeguard your community.



Michael with Roger Sweeney, IWS Marketing Manager & Deputy CEO.

iws.ie

School's Out!

LEARNING ISN'T

Irish Water Safety
Sábháilteacht Uisce na hÉireann



SWIM SAFE THIS SUMMER

Look out for this summertime message on a billboard near you