

Lifeguard Service Monitoring Report 2021 Wirral



1. Summary

This report outlines the service levels and provision of the RNLI Lifeguard service in the Wirral area during the 2021 season.

2021 has been the second year of running a lifeguard service during the current pandemic (COVID -19). This brought a continuation of challenges for the RNLI and lifeguard service. Specifically, increase in National Staycations.

We were able to begin training and recruiting new lifeguards again this year so ran 3 lifeguard courses (NVBLQ) to fill the scheme of compliment with added resilience in case of a covid outbreak. We operated our service on the below beaches.

- New Brighton
- Plateaux
- Harrison Drive
- Leasowe Bay
- Moreton
- West Kirby

This is the 7th year that the RNLI has provided a lifeguard service on the Wirral peninsula. The management team that ran the service on behalf of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) consisted of:

- Ryan Jennings, Full Time Lead Lifeguard Supervisor
- Max Evans, Seasonal Supervisor
- Jack McCarron, Seasonal Supervisor

Below the management team we have our Senior lifeguards who run each of the beaches daily and take responsibility for the extremely high standards set. The senior team consisted of lifeguards

- Lucy Tilston
- Amy Price
- Cameron Jacobie
- Rebecca Gilmore
- Henry Smith

The RNLI provided induction training for the full season lifeguards; an additional induction programme to accommodate for main season and a final peak season induction was conducted just before July. The induction training programmes consist of; the RNLI Casualty Care for Lifeguards course (an advanced first aid course including oxygen therapy and defibrillator training approved by the British Paramedic Association), health and safety training, manual handling training, familiarisation, and training with other SAR organisations (HM Coastguard, RNLI Lifeboat Stations across the Wirral), team building exercises and extensive local familiarisation on the beaches.

The lifeguard facilities and Staffing levels vary across the Wirral and are detailed as below. All beaches as a minimal operate with rescue tubes, fins and paddle boards:

New Brighton

During Peak season this is a 5 Person Beach operating from Perch Rock Fort all the way down to Egremont Slip. 3 of the 5 Person team operate from a Tower unit on the promenade in front of the Floral Hall Pavilion with an ATV and RWC. At specific times of the day (tidal dependant) the lifeguards will raise the Red and Yellow flags to create a safe bathing zone for the public to use. This team will also keep an eye out on the back of the Fort area in conjunction with the Plateaux Lifeguard team. The other two lifeguards patrol from the 4x4 positioned outside the black pearl. This team will be on a roving patrol down to Egremont along the promenade keeping an eye on the areas of mud and tidal cut off along the way. From the water the RWC will also patrol down to Egremont and can be tasked round as far as Leasowe Bay. A senior lifeguard was always posted on New Brighton beach. After introducing the new 'big foot' trailer (a trailer customised for fast launching and the ability to use in the beach environment) the lifeguards found they were able to launch the RWC a lot more effectively from the beach.

Harrison Drive and Leasowe Bay

These two beaches were categorised together under one patrol with 2 lifeguards patrolling up until peak season when this was raised to four lifeguards and the two beaches split into separate patrols. 2 lifeguards operating out of a 4x4 patrolling the leasowe area, using the 4x4 as a base maintaining a safe bathing area. The other 2 lifeguards would then operate out of Harrison lifeguard tower keeping observations on the "North Bank" and conducting foot and ATV patrols down to the hole in the wall.

West Kirby

During the Peak season West Kirby is a 5 Person team operating with a 4x4, ATV and an RWC. This beach obviously has its challenges with the Island chain a senior Lifeguard is present every day. There was a lifeguard unit positioned in the car park next to West Kirby marine lake to provide beach observations and a reference point for public to ask tidal advice regarding the Island chain and provide 1st aid or communications in an emergency. The 4x4 was then positioned out on Hilbre Island and used as a base of operations for the Lifeguards out on the tideline with all the rescue kit required. The ATV would be used as a patrol vehicle. The RWC would be then positioned as close to the tideline as possible and ready to launch in an emergency if needed.

All RNLI Lifeguard units were declared to the UK HMCG daily, with the Senior Lifeguards declaring manning levels, equipment, and hours of operation each day. The lifeguards were tasked on several occasions by HMCG to respond to incidents.

The lifeguards worked very closely with the HM Coastguard Mud Rescue team on several occasions and the local RNLI Lifeboat and Hovercraft Stations in a training capacity.

The school talk programme was Paused in 2021 due to COVID- 19

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3. Performance

Carry out a Risk Assessment to identify hazards and determine a series of control measures to mitigate against the 'risk'. These control measures to include where appropriate: provision of public education; safety literature; information and warning signs; zoning; barriers; trained surveillance; first aid; lifeguards (inc. lost children service); and, appropriate equipment, as set out in Schedule 1	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Risk Assessment to be reviewed annually and any changes reported to Wirral MBC. Next risk assessment review to take place in Dec 2020.		
Provide a beach safety and rescue service covering a period defined in the Risk Assessment, normally from May to September but which may be reduced or extended either way by agreement with LA based on the Risk Assessment.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Service provided across the area as described in services agreement.		
Provide a beach safety and rescue service on the beaches covering a series of Operational Areas (Beach, Normal and Extended) as agreed with the LA and as set out in Schedule 2.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Operational areas as agreed and amended in consultation with stakeholders.		
Provide a beach safety and rescue service in accordance with the Local Operating Procedures as set out in Schedule 3.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Local operating procedures created, reviewed and updated, copies of which have been made available. Any adjustments reported through end of season report and meetings.		
Ensure the service is provided in accordance with the criteria to comply with the European Blue Flag and/or Seaside Award standards where necessary.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Lifeguard service provided at agreed designated locations.		

Complete incident reports, daily logs and staffing level records on a daily basis to be made available to the LA on request and included in an annual report to the LA.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Achieved. No information requested.		
Observe the provisions of the LA's Health and Safety at Work Policy and Safety Working Practices together with the best practice lifeguarding principles ("Safety on British Beaches") wherever appropriate.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Achieved. Nothing to report.		
Ensure lifeguards observe high standards of courtesy and consideration towards members of the public at all times.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	All lifeguards employed by RNLI are required to undertake induction training and customer care.		
Inform the LA's appropriate officer responsible for environmental services regarding any beach cleaning requirements or pollution incidents.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Achieved		
Ensure that so far as reasonable all public relations, incident data, publicity and media releases are agreed between the parties beforehand.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Achieved.		
Recognise the Local Authority on all signs	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	PRE and signage has been conducted by the RNLI and will be brought up at the end of season meeting with Wirral MBC to discuss future.		
Keep the lifeguarding service fully insured for public liability and employer's liability risks as appropriate to a minimum cover in each case of £20 million for any one claim.	Not Achieved	Achieved	Exceeded
		E	
	Achieved.		

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2021 service levels

Area	Beach Name	Equipment	Easter Cover	No LG's	Full Start	No LG's	Main Start	No LG's	Peak Start	No LG's	Late Season	No LG's	Season End
Wirral	New Brighton	4x4, ATV &RWC	Yes	4	17th April	4	1 st June	4	3 rd July	5	5 th September	4	26 th September
	Plateaux	ATV	Yes	2	17th April	2	1 st June	2	3 rd July	3	5 th September	2	26 th September
	Harrison Drive	4x4/ATV	Yes	2	17th April	2	1 st June	2	3 rd July	2	5 th September	2	26 th September
	Moreton	ATV + Trailer	Yes	2	17th April	2	1 st June	2	3 rd July	3	5 th September	2	26 th September
	West Kirby	4x4, ATV &RWC	Yes	4	17th April	4	1 st June	4	3 rd July	5	5 th September	4	26 th September
	Leasowe Bay	4x4	No	0	NA	0	NA	0	3 rd July	2	NA	0	26 th September

Variations in service levels and season dates

Easter Cover 27th March – 04th April
 Full season (weekends only) 17th April – 31st May
 Main season 1st June – 2nd July
 Peak season 3rd July – 5th September
 Late season (weekends only) 11th September – 26th September

2022 service levels

Area	Beach Name	Equipment	Easter Cover	No LG's	Full Start	No LG's	Main Start	No LG's	Peak Start	No LG's	Late Season	No LG's	Season End
Wirral	New Brighton	4x4, ATV &RWC	Yes	4	30th April	4	28 th May	4	2 nd July	5	4 th September	4	25 th September
	Plateaux	ATV	Yes	2	30th April	2	28 TH May	2	2 nd July	3	4 th September	2	25 th September
	Harrison Drive	4x4/ATV	Yes	2	30th April	2	28 TH May	2	2 nd July	2	4 th September	2	25 th September
	Moreton	ATV + Trailer	Yes	2	30th April	2	28 TH May	2	2 nd July	3	4 th September	2	25 th September
	West Kirby	4x4, ATV &RWC	Yes	4	30th April	4	28 TH May	4	2 nd July	5	4 th September	4	25 th September
	Leasowe Bay	4x4	No	0	NA	0	NA	0	2 nd July	2	NA	0	25 th September

Variations in service levels and season dates

Easter Cover	09/04/2022 – 24/04/2022
Full season (weekends only)	30/04/2022 – 22/05/2022
Main season	28/05/2022 – 01/07/2022
Peak season	02/07/2022 – 04/09/2022
Late season (weekends only)	10/09/2022 – 25/09/2022

4. 201 Recommendations

Following a successful 7th season of operations in the Wirral area, RNLI Lifeguards make the following recommendations for approval by Wirral MBC, in preparation for the 2022 season:

- **Maintain current operational manning levels (as described) for each beach in the Wirral area**
- **Continue to display temporary operational signage daily across the season**
- **Continue to monitor Lifeguard staffing and equipment levels across the coast and notify the management team of any recommended changes.**

5. Report Appendix

Definitions of search and rescue criteria

Rescue – where a lifeguard responds to a person at risk, and physically returns them to shore or transfers them to another craft.

Major First Aid – where a lifeguard treats a patient who is at risk due to sickness or injury, and has called in external assistance.

Assistance – where a lifeguard aids a person in the sea who is at very little risk, but if left, would be at risk later.

Search – an organised search with other SAR units for a missing person either at sea or on land – includes body recovery

Near Miss – any occurrence where a person might have been injured by watercraft i.e. powered or otherwise

Life Saved – if the lifeguard had not intervened, life would have been lost.