





Lifeboats



# FIGHT YOUR INSTINCT, NOT THE WATER

**F**IGHT YOUR INSTINCT TO PANIC OR SWIM HARD  
**L**EAN BACK IN THE WATER TO KEEP YOUR AIRWAY CLEAR  
**O**PEN YOUR BODY UP, EXTEND YOUR ARMS AND LEGS, PUSHING YOUR STOMACH UP  
**A**CTIONS GENTLY MOVE YOUR HANDS AND FEET TO HELP YOU FLOAT  
**T**IME IN 60-90 SECONDS YOU'LL BE ABLE TO CONTROL YOUR BREATHING

If you fall unexpectedly into water, fight your instinct to swim until cold water shock passes.

Regain control of your breathing by floating to increase your chances of staying alive.

Help save lives. Share our Float to Live advice.  
[RNLI.org/RespectTheWater](http://RNLI.org/RespectTheWater)

Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), a charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736). Registered charity number 20003326 in the Republic of Ireland



It really struck me that RNLI volunteers give up so much time to train and save more lives. I'm proud to be involved. We can make a real difference.

Jackie Tyrrell, Kilkenny

Photo: RNLI/Nathan Williams



Lifeboats

WORKING TOGETHER  
TO PREVENT DROWNING



RESPECT  
THE WATER

# Welcome

As the season gathers momentum, the RNLI and the GAA are proud to be working together to prevent drowning.

## What is the problem?

On average, 28 people accidentally drown around the Irish coast every year\*. We believe that many of these deaths can be prevented by educating people in how to stay safe.

Whether it's the sea, a lake, a river or a canal, water is central to life in our towns and villages. We use it for work and for leisure. It's part of our history and culture.

We want people to get out on the water and enjoy it, but to respect its power.

## What can you do?

We're asking people to Respect the Water, and to know what to do if they get into trouble.

Together, we believe we can help people enjoy the water, while making sure they come home safely every time.

**We all have a role to play in helping the RNLI to prevent drowning. Pass it on.**

\*Figures from 2011-13. Accidental and natural causes. Average 23 in the Republic of Ireland, according to Irish Water Safety. Average 5 in Northern Ireland, according to the Water Incident Database (UK).

**Here's how you can help save lives ...**



Paul Boissier

'The GAA understands courage, commitment and community. We're pleased to have such a natural and influential partner for Respect the Water.'

Paul Boissier  
Chief Executive, RNLI



Aogán Ó Fearghail

'In the RNLI the GAA sees an organisation that mirrors its core values of community activity and volunteerism. We welcome the Respect the Water campaign and its efforts to keep people safe all year round.'

Aogán Ó Fearghail  
President, GAA

**■ If any of these deaths can be avoided, we have to back this campaign and hope that it reaches as many people as possible. ▶**

Neil McManus, Antrim

Photo: RNLI/Nathan Williams



## How you can prevent drowning

For more than a century, RNLI lifeboat stations and GAA clubs have been at the centre of communities all around Ireland.

Now, the GAA has joined forces with the RNLI to tackle a serious problem: drowning. Well-known player ambassadors for the partnership include Lee Chin (Wexford), Lyndsey Davey (Dublin), Neil McManus (Antrim) and Jackie Tyrrell (Kilkenny).

Every club, community, team and individual can play a vital role in preventing drowning. By promoting the messages of the Respect the Water campaign, together we can save more lives.

## So how can your club get involved?

### Spread the word online

Visit [RNLI.org/RTWresources](https://RNLI.org/RTWresources). You'll find a range of films and social media graphics to share on your social channels. Consider Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Feel free to use these resources on your club website too. You'll also find posters and radio ads to use in your community.

### Get to know your local lifeboat crew

It's all about teamwork. To reach more people, nothing beats working together at a local level. Find your nearest station at [RNLI.org/stations](https://RNLI.org/stations). The crew would love to hear from you.

### Hit the headlines

Arrange a local press launch or news release with your local station. If your club doesn't have a press contact, the lifeboat station will. Working together also creates some great photo opportunities.

### Wave your flag

Fly the Respect the Water flag at your club, use the campaign pint glasses in the bar, and put posters up around the building.

### Host an event

An event at your club, or hosted jointly with your local lifeboat crew, is a great way to raise awareness. You could hold a beach walk or training session, a quiz night, or anything else that gets people thinking about water safety.

### No station near you?

We also need to get the Respect the Water message out to inland communities. Rivers and lakes can be deadly, and many people will visit the beach over the summer, whether at home or abroad. If there's no lifeboat station near you, we still need you onboard.

## Respect the Water: Know what to do

Respect the Water is at the heart of the RNLI's drowning prevention work, helping achieve our goal of halving the number of accidental coastal deaths by 2024.

Over half who drown never intended to enter the water. And everyone who falls unexpectedly into cold water follows the same instinct, to swim hard and to fight the water. But when people fight it, cold water shock makes them gasp uncontrollably and breathe in water. They are then more likely to drown.

If you fall into water, fight your instinct to swim. Float, until the cold water shock passes.

If you see someone else in trouble in the water, call 999 or 112 and ask for the Coast Guard.



Respect the Water was launched in 2013, inspired by successful public safety campaigns in Ireland and the UK.

In 2016, the campaign reached 45M people in Ireland and the UK. Our research has found that 39% of the Irish population now recognise the Respect the Water campaign. And 91% now say they take more precautions in the water following the campaign.

Now, with the help of the GAA, as well as the RNLI's own volunteers at lifeboat stations and in fundraising groups around Ireland, we're aiming to embed the campaign where behaviour change really happens – at a community level.

**[RNLI.org/RespectTheWater](https://RNLI.org/RespectTheWater)**  
**[#RespectTheWater](https://twitter.com/RespectTheWater)**



## What's next?

Respect the Water is coming to a community near you.

Look out for:

- films, posters and social graphics for you to use at [RNLI.org/RTWresources](http://RNLI.org/RTWresources).
- posts on social media from RNLI and GAA accounts, at a national and local level. These posts will feature shareable safety messages as well as moving real-life stories.
- press releases and photography from both organisations. Visit [RNLI.org/press](http://RNLI.org/press) and [GAA.ie/news](http://GAA.ie/news).
- local activity in your community, as we build relationships and begin sharing messages and saving lives.

For more information:

**[RNLI.org/RespectTheWater](http://RNLI.org/RespectTheWater)**

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(209603) and Scotland (SC057736)

## Working together

'Our partnership with the RNLI brings to life one of the fundamental messages of GAA Healthy Clubs: working with respected partners to deliver evidence-based campaigns to enhance the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve.'

Colin Regan, Community and Health Manager, GAA

Together, the RNLI and the GAA will give clubs, players, volunteers and supporters the information they need to stay safe by the water.

Initial research by the RNLI found that a number of drowning victims have had strong connections with the GAA. At least 17 such cases have been identified in recent years. We believe that, in getting behind Respect the Water, the GAA can help get important safety advice out to clubs and the wider community.

Now the GAA has joined with the RNLI to share lifesaving advice, with the help of players and clubs around the country.

We hope that, through this partnership, more people will come forward and share their experiences to help others.

If you have a story to share, email [RTW@rnli.org.uk](mailto:RTW@rnli.org.uk).

There are 333 GAA clubs within a 10km radius of an RNLI lifeboat station:

- RNLI lifeboat station
- GAA club

