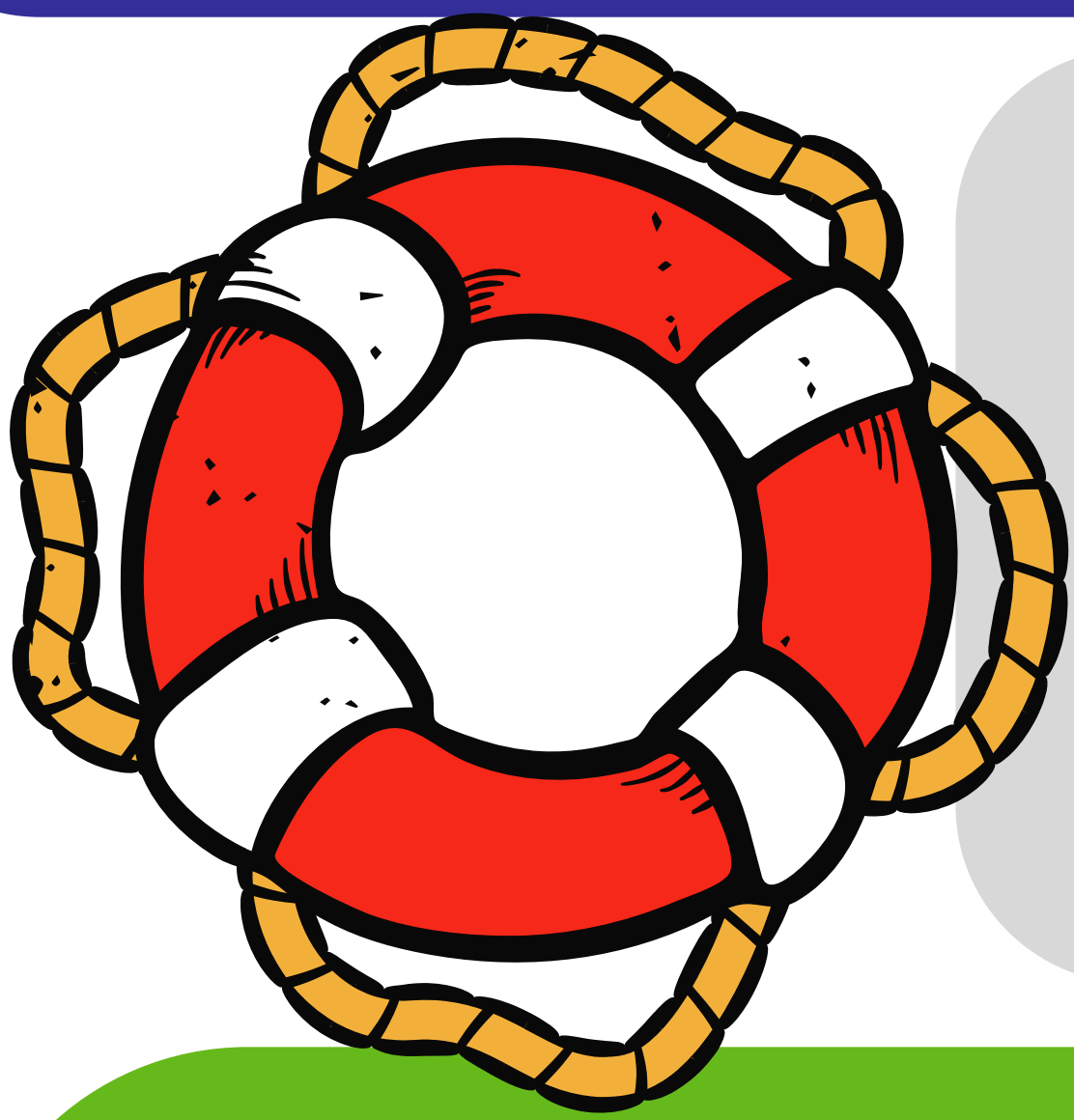


Water Safety in the Wakefield District

Wakefield District is rich in blue and green spaces, but water risks persist. Tragically since 2019, Wakefield has seen 3 child deaths and a number of adult deaths due to water incidents, underpinning the need for a localised response.

Wakefield Council Public Health Children and Young People's team partnered with Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP), the Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS) and Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), to consider what action could be taken to educate children that playing in/near open water is not a safe option.

The Multi-Agency Group 'The Wakefield District Water Safety Group' formed in 2021 with the aim to promote water safety awareness and prevent water-related accidents among children. Members include various Wakefield Council services including Public Health, West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership, Wakefield District Housing, Yorkshire Ambulance Service,




Issues Identified by Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

- The children couldn't swim
- No visible safety signage or life-saving equipment at the waterside
- All 3 deaths occurred at sites where no lifeguards were present

CDOP concluded that all 3 deaths could have been avoided and therefore wanted to explore ways to prevent this from happening in the future.

Actions Taken

- The creation of a dedicated water safety page on the **Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership**. Scan QR code for the water safety page 
- Water safety information, resources and messaging are regularly promoted via the WSCP e-bulletin, X, Instagram aimed at children, CDOP newsletter.
- A Wakefield District Water Safety Group has been initiated (see above section).
- Multi-agency awareness days at water safety hotspots around the district. These events include activities such as throw line training, live water rescue demonstrations, and the dissemination of information through leaflets, talks, and charities.
- Yorkshire Water deliver live assemblies for Wakefield schools incorporating water safety and resources shared with schools designated safeguarding leads.



Installed discreet wildlife cameras to monitor safety equipment and potentially prosecute individuals responsible for any damage



New throwline installed



Launched our first 'Wakey Water Safety Weekend', which provided throw line training, rescue demos and information disseminated



Created a 'Be Water Wise' educational video

Please scan the QR code for the Be Water Wise video



Launched its first Live Campaign, in which the "Cold Water Kills" promotion has been added to the side of bin lorries

Future Plans. . . .

Further community engagement events and partnership working / Implement Public Space Protection Orders / Winter weather planning

Impact Made:

To date (September 2024), there have been no further deaths of children or young people in the Wakefield District. This is the first time since 2020 that a water-related death of a child has not occurred in the summer months!



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