

## Respect the Water: Elmbridge Water Safety Plan



(linking in to the UK Drowning Prevention Strategy 2016-26)

## **UK Drowning Prevention Strategy 2016-26**

Drowning is among the leading causes of accidental death in the UK; about 400 people drown every year and many of these tragedies involve children and young people, cutting short lives and devastating families. In addition, a further 200 people take their own life through drowning. The National Water Safety Forum has therefore produced the first [UK Drowning Prevention Strategy](#) (2016-26) with the aim of reducing accidental drowning fatalities in the UK by 50% by 2026.

The national strategy includes the following themes:

- Develop partnership working to ensure consistent guidance for the safe enjoyment and management of activities in, on and around water
- Reduce the drowning risk amongst the highest risk populations, groups and communities.
- Ensure every community with water risks has a community-level water safety risk assessment and water safety plan
- Increase awareness of everyday risks in, on and around water
- Recommendation that all recreational activity organisations should have a clear strategic risk assessment and plans that address key risks
- Develop a better understanding of water-related self-harm
- Improve evidence and data to better understand the causes of drowning
- Support partners and networks
- Provide leadership and advocacy
- Mobilise resources and sustained investment in drowning prevention
- Measure success

## **Linking in to the national Strategy to make Elmbridge a safer Borough**

Elmbridge is a very green Borough, but at the same time also has a large volume of water passing through the area, including the River Thames to the north, rivers Ember, Wey, Mole and Rythe, several ponds on the Elmbridge Countryside (Black Pond, Middle Pond, Littleworth Pond) and some former gravel pits which are now deep water ponds (Littleheath Pond).

There are also several water holdings across the Borough which are situated on private land, including reservoirs, fishing lakes and golf courses. The Borough does not have a direct role in the management of these land holdings and these all are managed by the landowner.

The longest stretch of water in Elmbridge is the River Thames, which runs through the Borough from Long Ditton to Weybridge. The Local Authority owns very little land immediately adjacent to the river along the length of the River Thames with bulk of the riverbank and bed owned by a variety of landowners including private landlords, the Environment Agency, Network Rail, as well as small portions in Local Authority control. The riparian landowners throughout this stretch have responsibility for assessing and managing their risk, be they private or public bodies. Where there is a public right of way the responsibility still rests with the landowner. There are also a number of properties based on islands along the Thames which present challenges and increased risks through access, but also in times of flood. Responsibility for safe access to these sites is again vested with the landowner be the private properties or land in common ownership.

The Borough has a vibrant culture, much of it linked to the water with many active water based sporting clubs, open spaces and riverside bars and cafes as well as an extensive network of other rivers and canal towpaths used for more informal recreation and walking. This does however make it is a high-risk location for drowning and sadly such tragedies do occasionally occur (two in the last 5 years alone). The Elmbridge Community and Safety Partnership is therefore eager to work with its partners and link in to the national strategy and its ambition to at least half the number of deaths by 2026. The approach of the local plan will be to continue to encourage people to use the

rivers and canals for recreation but ensure they do so in a safer and more informed way. Particular emphasis will be given to educating people about the high-risk activities of impromptu wild water swimming and jumping from bridges (tombstoning).

### **Informing the local strategy**

In order to inform a local plan, research was undertaken with partners into drownings, including any recorded near misses in the Borough in the last five years, as well as data from the Water Incident Database (WAID) to establish where these happened, who was involved and what the circumstances were. This information is provided in a table in Appendix 1. Not all the details surrounding these incidents especially near misses are known, but in order to understand why they keep happening, it was necessary to employ a detached, subjective approach. As can be seen from the table, some of the drownings and near misses were partly related to local factors such as the cold and fast moving River Thames however, similar to the national picture, many of the incidents were not 'accidents' in the true sense at all, but an inevitable consequence of ill-judged behaviour. This was typically connected to male 'bravado' (between 80% and 90% of all those who drown are male), occasionally further influenced by alcohol or other substances, and, or, a complete lack of awareness of the dangers posed by 'wild water'.

Understanding the extent to which swimming abilities played a part in many of the drownings is difficult to establish as even a strong swimmer would struggle to survive in a river in full flood, whilst subject to thermal shock, and in some cases further incapacitated by alcohol or other substances. Also, similar to the national picture, very few drownings occur locally in connection with formal recreation activities in, on or around water. Given the rowing and boating culture in Elmbridge this is very significant, and further demonstrates that deaths are predominantly caused by people entering the water impulsively or accidentally.

A number of the incidents were linked to fishing activity on the Thames and this is an area that this plan will consider.

### **Reducing the risks**

Practical measures can be devised to try to reduce some of the location specific risks, but the biggest challenge will be trying to change behaviour by increasing awareness of the significant risks posed by wild water. Getting this message across will require a multi-faceted approach, and input from a wide-range of professions, particularly those who work with young people and other high risk groups.

Due to changing weather patterns, including the occurrence of warmer, wetter winters, flooding in the borough has increased over recent years. Care needs to be taken to reduce any risks associated with this and hidden dangers.

Although formal recreation activities on the waterways pose only a low risk this should not lead to complacency and there is a need to ensure all clubs have their own detailed risk assessments and follow best practice endorsed by the relevant national governing bodies.

The use of signage to warn people of waterway dangers is a contentious issue; signage can create clutter and spoil scenic river views, and is also subject to constant graffiti and theft. In some cases through joined up working smart design can incorporate a number of messages from multiple agencies on one information\ pictorial sign. The public perception of the 'health and safety gone mad culture' has also led to a loss of credibility regarding risks warning signs so these are often just ignored. It is therefore not recommended that signage is used extensively, but possibly just where there are very specific location hazards, that could place people at risk inadvertently.

Similarly, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) guidance makes it clear that the installation of water safety equipment must be seen as part of the overall assessment of the hazards presented and preventative measures. The guidance cautions against the provision of lifebelts other than at specific locations where they can be dropped vertically such as in a lock (locks are the EA's responsibility). This is because they are extremely difficult to throw any distance horizontally such as from a river bank due to their weight and shape (and are vulnerable to vandalism and theft).

A draft risk assessment identifying all the significant potential hazards connected to Elmbridge's waterways, where they are most likely to occur, who is most likely to be involved and possible mitigation strategies has been initiated below, and colleagues and partners are now invited to contribute to this. However, if we are to be successful in our aim to reduce the number of drowning tragedies by at least half by 2026 contributing to the creation of this strategy will only be the first step and it is intended to remain a living document. It is vital that all stakeholders continue to work together to update and implement the strategy and this will be revisited through the Elmbridge Community and Safety Partnership as a regular standing agenda item.

In the absence of a single body responsible for water safety in Elmbridge, and in recognition for the important role that the rivers and other water courses have in the Borough's culture and amenity this Local Drowning Prevention Plan has been produced working with partners through the Elmbridge Community Safety Partnership which will retain responsibility for its monitoring and delivery.

#### Agency Contacts.

	Contact	Role	Email
Elmbridge Borough Council	Ian Burrows 01372 474572	Head of Leisure	<a href="mailto:iburrows@elmbridge.gov.uk">iburrows@elmbridge.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:nmartin@elmbridge.gov.uk">nmartin@elmbridge.gov.uk</a>
	Nic Martin 01372 474399	Policy Officer (Partnerships)	
Surrey Fire and Rescue	Kevin Noble	Assistant Group commander- Elmbridge	<a href="mailto:kevin.noble@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk">kevin.noble@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk</a>
Environment Agency	Russell Robson	Waterways team leader	<a href="mailto:russell.robson@environment-agency.gov.uk">russell.robson@environment-agency.gov.uk</a>
RNLI	Samuel Johnson	Youth Education Manager	<a href="mailto:Samuel_Johnson@rnli.org.uk">Samuel_Johnson@rnli.org.uk</a>
RLSS	Helen Bowker	Community Drowning Prevention Coordinator	<a href="mailto:helenbowker@rlss.org.uk">helenbowker@rlss.org.uk</a>
Surrey Police	Inspector Sarah Milligan PC Phil Jebb	Surrey Police	<a href="mailto:Sarah.milligan@surrey.pnn.police.uk">Sarah.milligan@surrey.pnn.police.uk</a> <a href="mailto:Philip.jebb@surrey.pnn.police.uk">Philip.jebb@surrey.pnn.police.uk</a>
Surrey County Council	Chris Beck	Team Manager Elmbridge Youth Support Service	<a href="mailto:Chris.beck@surreycc.gov.uk">Chris.beck@surreycc.gov.uk</a>
Spelthorne Community Safety	Paul Farrow / Paul Smith	Community safety officers	<a href="mailto:Community.spelthorne@spelthorne.gov.uk">Community.spelthorne@spelthorne.gov.uk</a>
Surrey County Council	Nanu Chumber Stanley		<a href="mailto:nanu.chumber@surreycc.gov.uk">nanu.chumber@surreycc.gov.uk</a>

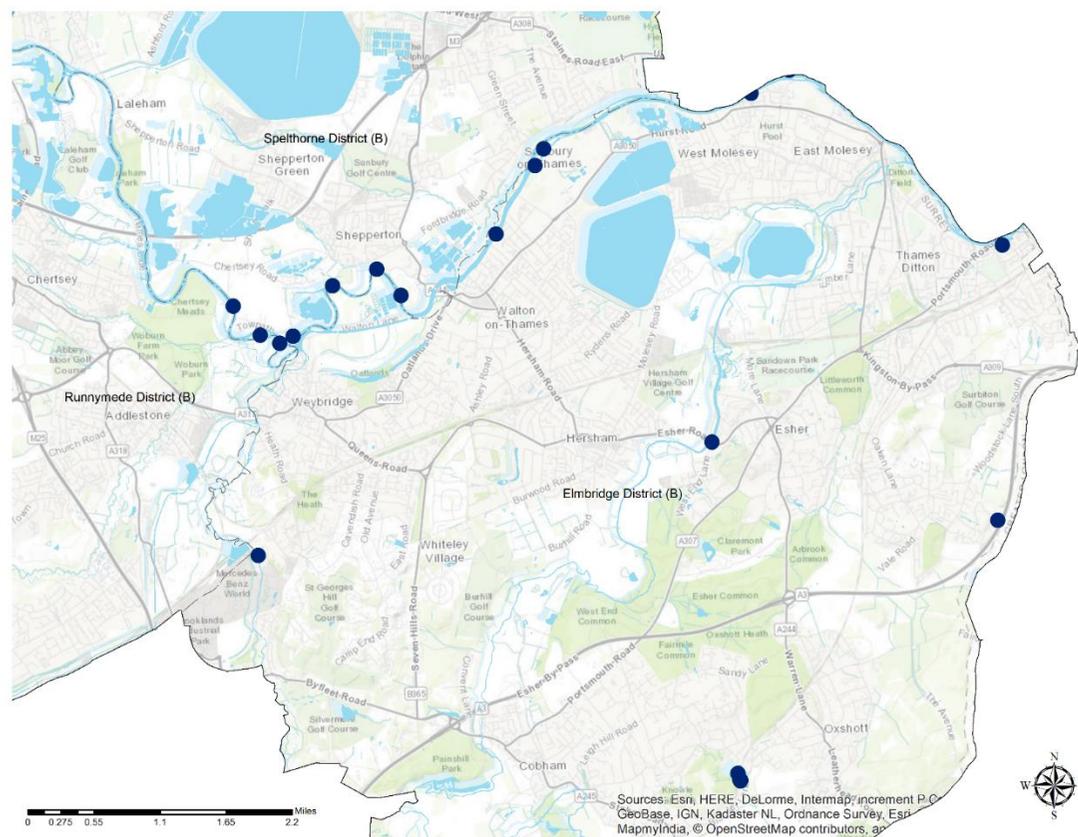
## Communications Contacts

In the event of an incident on the Thames or an area with more than one agency dealing with an incident, all communications agencies should liaise to agree a joint approach to managing media communications.

	<b>Contact number</b>	<b>Email</b>
Elmbridge Borough Council	01372 474474	communications@elmbridge.gov.uk
Surrey Fire and Rescue	020 8541 7259	Laura.downton@surreycc.gov.uk
Environment Agency	0800 917 9267	communications_London@environment-agency.gov.uk
RNLI	07785 296 252 07786 668 825 01202 336 789	Tim Ash Paul Dunt
Surrey Police	01483 571212	mediarelations@surrey.pnn.police.uk
Surrey County Council	020 8541 7259	Laura.downton@surreycc.gov.uk
Eikon (Surrey Youth) Head of Fundraising and Communications	01932 347434	Natasha.iles@eikon.org.uk
Lifetrain Trust	01372360875	eleni@lifetrain.org.uk
Surrey Care Trust	07867578543	justine.aldos@surreycaretrust.org.uk
Rydens School	01932 242994	dtaylor@rydens.surrey.sch.uk
SSCB (Safeguarding) Communications Group	01372 833330	Jane.donson@surreycc.gov.uk
Surrey CC (Public Health Lead)		Karen.simmonds@surreycc.gov.uk

## Local incidents

Information detailing drownings and recorded near misses in Elmbridge 2006 to 2016 have been mapped to show locations:



**The evidence from the survey broadly correlates with the statistics given in the UK Drowning Prevention Strategy 2016-26:**

- The large majority of drownings and near misses were male and mainly people in their teens and 20s
- Compulsive/ill-judged/reckless behaviour was a significant contributing factor in many of the incidents
- The influence of alcohol or other substances may have been a contributing factor in a number of cases
- A number of incidents were likely to have been attempts at suicide
- Poor swimming abilities may have been a factor in some cases, but even very few strong swimmers now have experience or an understanding of cold, wild water conditions.

## Elmbridge Community and Safety Partnership Health & Safety Risk Assessment

<b>Environment</b>	The Borough's waterways, towpaths and river/canal banks		
<b>Activity Description</b>	Formal and informal activities on, in or near the waterways		
<b>Assessment date</b>	March 2017		
<b>Review date</b>	Annual March 2018		
<b>Names of assessor(s)</b>	Elmbridge Community Safety Partnership.		
Hazard & Description	High risk locations	High risk groups	Control measures (and Risk Owner)
<p><b>Slips, trips and falls:</b></p> <p>Numerous trip hazards such a mooring rings/spikes, ropes, gangplanks, occasional potholes, and eroding and unstable banks.</p> <p>There is a reluctance among some small boat owners in wearing buoyancy aids when visiting pubs, as nowhere safe to store equipment.</p> <p>Nationally 44% of all drownings occur when the person apparently had no intention of entering the water, so in a riverine Borough like Elmbridge falling in to the river/canal will always remain a potential risk. There is also a risk of actually being knocked in to the water by a jogger or cyclist (see below).</p> <p>Dog owners have been known to enter the water to rescue their dogs, placing both themselves and their dog at high risk.</p> <p><b>Hazards:</b></p> <p>Sprains, cuts and bruises, fractures and back injuries.</p>	<p>Slips, trip and falls along towpaths and riverbanks can occur anywhere.</p> <p>Boat owners can create a serious risk of falling in to the water in any location if they do not take care to create a safe method of access to their craft.</p> <p>The number of illegally moored boats in the Borough should be monitored in case obstruct safe passage on the towpath.</p> <p>Poplar dog walking locations adjacent to the river (i.e. Hurst Park, Black Pond etc)</p>	<p>The number of potential trip hazards along the towpaths could create a greater risk of slips, trip and falls for the elderly or those with mobility issues. However, the flat, level topography of the towpaths and riverbanks provide ideal walking routes for both these groups (and people recovering from illness/injury), and the physical and psychological benefits of walking in these pleasant environments far outweigh the low level risk.</p> <p>People with visual impairment</p> <p>Children (particularly toddlers)</p> <p>Runners, walkers and cyclists who use the towpath</p> <p>Boat owners</p> <p>Those under the under the influence of drink/drugs</p> <p>Island dwellings who use small boat craft to reach the mainland or local shops and restaurants</p> <p>Dog owners</p>	<p>The Council and its partner Places For People offers free swimming for under 8s when accompanied by an adult and reduced rate swimming for 5 to 16 year olds living in the Borough whose parents or guardians are in receipt of eligible benefits. <b>(EBC)</b></p> <p>The Thames towpath is managed largely by the County Council and Thames Trails Other areas of the river bank are the responsibility of the landowner. <b>(All Landowners)</b></p> <p>Elmbridge are working closely with the Environment Agency to manage illegal moorings and storage of items along the towpath, all of which create trip hazards and obstruction. <b>(EBC &amp; EA)</b></p> <p>The RNLI has delivered water safety awareness at the Elmbridge Junior Citizen since 2009. Each year over 1200 year 6s from Elmbridge Schools attend Junior Citizen. This equates to approximately 9600 children from Elmbridge who have received water safety advice from the RNLI. <b>(EBC &amp; RNLI)</b></p> <p>Explore lockers at quaysides for pubs to encourage river users to wear lifejackets. <b>(RNLI EBC)</b></p> <p>Communication plan to promote safety to dog walkers and <b>Action: RNLI &amp; all.</b></p> <p>Runners and Walkers campaigns <b>(RLSS)</b></p>

<p>Risks of drowning if slip, trip or fall is in to the watercourse.</p>			
<p><b>Cycling along the towpaths:</b></p> <p>Some areas of the towpath along the Thames especially are well used by large numbers of recreational cyclists. The number of cycling events\ sportives has seen a rapid growth following the success of <b>London 2012 and subsequent Ride London cycling events.</b></p> <p>The Thames towpath is also used by rowing coaches on bicycles who ride along keeping up with their boat to give instructions to the crew (and often steer the bike with one hand whilst using a megaphone in the other).</p> <p>The narrowness of the towpath creates competition for space between cyclists, and between cyclists and pedestrians. As a result altercations and collisions are fairly common.</p> <p>Pedestrians and cyclist moving out of the way to avoid other cyclists creates further risk as hazards such as mooring rings/spikes and ropes etc increase the closer you get to the water's edge.</p> <p><b>Hazards:</b> Injury through collisions and falls.</p> <p>Risk of drowning through accidently riding/falling in to the watercourse; or a pedestrian or bicycle rider being</p>	<p>The area most heavily used by cyclist is the Thames towpath between Hampton Court and Weybridge. Along this long stretch of the towpath the path narrows considerably between fencing, walls, treelines and the watercourse. There is therefore only a narrow confined space for walkers and cyclists and very little room for error when riding manoeuvring a bicycle.</p>	<p>All cyclists and pedestrians using the towpath.</p>	<p>Continue to promote good cycling behaviour through cycling groups and the Elmbridge Cycle plan. <b>(EBC\ SCC)</b></p> <p>Raise awareness of large sportive\ running events on the towpath through social media <b>(EBC)</b></p>

knocked into the river/canal by a careless cyclist.			
<p><b>Flooding:</b> Many of the city's towpaths and surrounding areas flood during the winter, causing a risk of unseen hazards, and the rivers edge being obscured underwater.</p> <p><b>Hazards:</b> Risk of drowning</p>	<p>All areas of the river and adjacent areas throughout the Borough are subject to occasional flooding (i.e. Graburn way, Hurst Park, Sadlers Ride, Brooklands Community Park).</p> <p>Even during winters with normal rainfall the rivers in the city are frequently at a high level with very strong currents (and on red boards)</p>		<p>Direct signage which can be erected at times of flooding to warn people not to enter. For example:</p> <p>Do not enter! Towpath flooded – danger of drowning Collapsed banks maybe hidden under the water.</p> <p><b>(EBC, EA, SCC)</b></p>
<p><b>Jumping from bridges in to watercourses\ tombstoning:</b> This occasionally occurs in summer at a small number of locations in the Elmbridge area especially at the end of the school summer term and local conditions make it an unacceptable risk.</p> <p><b>Hazard:</b> Risk of drowning as a result of the above and effects of thermal shock.</p>	<p>Walton Bridge</p> <p>Cobham Mill</p> <p>Hampton Rowing Club</p>	<p>This activity is almost exclusive undertaken by boys and young men.</p> <p>The evidence that some people injured or killed undertaking this activity had poor swimming abilities suggests immature/inexperienced risk judgement combined with male bravado and possibly peer-pressure. In some cases risk inhabitation and awareness is further clouded by alcohol or other substances.</p>	<p>Educate potential high risk groups through a wider wild water awareness campaign, including working with schools, Surrey Youth Services and Junior Citizen to spread the message. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Targeted multi agency social media campaign to reach younger audience. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Multi agency school visits to raise awareness of risks <b>(SFRS, RLSS, RNLI, SP)</b></p> <p>Targeted letters sent to schools adjacent to the River Thames <b>(EA)</b></p> <p>Use of Elmbridge Impact website to promote dangers <b>(EBC)</b></p> <p>Any council, police, EA officers who see this happening to advise those taking part of the extreme risks and attempt to stop them. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Xcel and Hurst Pool to promote the RLSS Rookie Lifeguard Course, which targets 8 – 12 year olds and teaches water safety and lifesaving skills. Offer an increased number of courses at both sites at weekends and holiday periods. <b>(EBC, RLSS)</b></p>
<p><b>Informal children's water play:</b> During the summer a number of sites</p>	<p>River Thames- the Thames has a number of small scalloped areas</p>	<p>This is mainly undertaken by children and young people during the summer.</p>	<p>Uniformed associations (Scouts\ guides etc)</p>

<p>in the Borough are used for informal paddling (see right).</p> <p><b>Hazards:</b> Risk of drowning</p>	<p>where young children can paddle safely.</p> <p>Black Pond -The local conditions at this site make it a potential Leptospirosis hot spot.</p> <p>Littleheath Pond- a former brick pit this site is very deep and potentially very cold increasing risk of thermal shock</p>	<p>Most children enjoy paddling and the health benefits of swimming are obviously beneficial for all. However, this can pose a risk so needs to be appropriately supervised.</p>	
<p><b>Informal wild swimming:</b> During the summer a number of sites in the Borough are used for informal wild swimming and paddling (see right).</p> <p><b>Hazards:</b> Risk of drowning</p> <p>Leptospirosis: This is a potentially fatal illness transmitted from rats or cattle to people through contact with ditch, canal or river water – particularly through open wounds or accidental swallowing.</p>	<p>River Thames- the Thames is used at various locations with increased risks from fast moving water, submerged objects and reeds.</p> <p>Black Pond -The local conditions at this site make it a potential Leptospirosis hot spot.</p> <p>Littleheath Pond- a former brick pit this site is very deep and potentially very cold increasing risk of thermal shock</p> <p>There is increased danger from swimming in any restricted areas such as locks and weirs</p>	<p>This is mainly undertaken by young people during the summer, but there are also a growing number of experienced older swimmers or regularly wild swim.</p> <p>People with a lack of experience of wild water conditions are also unprepared for how cold river water is and the effects this can rapidly have on the body and brain.</p>	<p>Educate potential high risk groups through a water awareness campaign, including working with schools, Surrey Youth Services and Junior Citizen to spread the message. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Targetted multi agency social media campaign to reach younger audience. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Multi agency school visits to raise awareness of risks <b>(SFRS, RNLI, SP)</b></p> <p>Staff on patrols to advise people not to swim in open waters and restricted areas such as locks and weirs. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Elmbridge to continue to promote swimming lessons in the Councils pools. <b>(EBC)</b></p> <p>Xcel and Hurst Pool to promote the RLSS Rookie Lifeguard Course, which targets 8 – 12 year olds and teaches water safety and lifesaving skills. Offer an increased number of courses at both sites at weekends and holiday periods. <b>(EBC, RLSS)</b></p> <p>Continue to promote the free under 8's swimming offered at Xcel and Hurst Pool. Available to children when accompanied by a paying adult. <b>(EBC)</b></p>

<p><b>Impulsive jumping in to watercourses:</b> This is one of the major causes of drownings nationally. It is a distinctively different from premeditated wild swimming, and is an impulsive act often influenced by alcohol and other substances, but can also just be an ill-judged high spirits spur of the moment attempt at wild swim without considering the location or conditions. Other motivations can include trying to rescue items that have fallen in to the water (such as footballs).</p> <p>The motivations for this impulsive behaviour are such that it can occur at any times of year, even when the water is very cold. So putting aside all other factors, the level of physical impairment and reactions to thermal shock alone can be one of the most significant contributing factors in drowning.</p> <p><b>Hazard:</b> Risk of drowning resulting from unconsidered location dangers (such as strong currents) and lack of experience of wild water conditions including the effects of thermal shock, and, or judgement and swimming abilities impaired by intoxication.</p>	<p>The high number of young male students in the Borough makes it a high risk area in general. The nature of this behaviour means that it can happen at any location within the Borough.</p>	<p>This almost exclusively involves boys and young men, but can also include children in general in the act of trying to retrieve items for the water.</p> <p>Those under the influence of alcohol/drugs.</p>	<p>Educate potential high risk groups through a water awareness campaign (incl poster competition, including working with schools, Surrey Youth Services and Junior Citizen to spread the message. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>A campaign specifically targeted at young males: <b>Don't Drink and Drown (RLSS)</b></p> <p>Xcel and Hurst Pool to promote the RLSS Rookie Lifeguard Course, which targets 8 – 12 year olds and teaches water safety and lifesaving skills. Offer an increased number of courses at both sites at weekends and holiday periods <b>(EBC)</b>.</p> <p>Continue to promote the free under 8's swimming offered at Xcel and Hurst Pool. Available to children when accompanied by a paying adult. <b>(EBC)</b></p>
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<p><b>Water-related self-harm:</b> Nationally a third of all drownings result from a person's apparently deliberate act to end their own life. However, in some cases the person may not have entered the water consciously considering it would end in their death; it can be an impulsive act of desperation or 'cry for help', but as discussed above, any impulsive entering of a water course carries a very high risk of drowning regardless of intention.</p>	<p>The nature of this behaviour means it can happen at any location within the Borough.</p> <p>Walton Bridge Chertsey Bridge Staines Bridge</p>	<p>There are certain groups most at risk from suicide (particularly young men) but this can involve anyone.</p>	<p>Any council, police, EA officers who see anyone near a watercourse who looks like they may be distressed should approach and engage them to assess whether there is genuine cause for concern. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Have an awareness campaign for boat owners and other river users/riparian residents so they know what to look out for and who to contact if they have concerns about anyone. <b>(EA)</b></p> <p>Monitor attempted\ completed suicides to identify high risk locations. Offer suicide prevention training to local officers\ community workers who may respond to such incidents. (SCC)</p> <p>Develop a local alert system: so if there is someone looking distressed there is a local alert system (SCC)</p>
<p><b>Working on or near the waterways:</b> Each authority and agency working on or near the waterways has their own risk assessments based on their specific roles and policies. However, their staff face a number of generic risks, including some of those listed above, but also from encountering members of the public getting in to difficulties in the water, particularly during the summer months.</p> <p><b>Hazard:</b> Risk of drowning from trying to help others in difficulties.</p>	<p>Anywhere within the Borough.</p>	<p>All staff working on or near the waterways.</p>	<p>All agencies involved in the management of the waterways in the Borough meet (River Thames Alliance\ Community Safety Partnership) and communicate regularly to share intelligence regarding waterway issues and use this plan as a live document. <b>(All)</b></p> <p>Staff are trained not to put themselves at risk in order to help others in difficulties in the water. The procedure is to phone the emergency services first and then try to reach people from the bank using throwlines (where available), or other items such as clothing or branches if they are near the bank. If the character of the bank or situation makes it risky to pull the person out of the water they should be helped to hold on to the bank until additional help arrives. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Staff to advise anyone who has got in to difficulties in the water to seek medical attention, even if they seem okay as water may have entered their lungs which can lead to secondary drowning - children are particularly susceptible to this. <b>(ALL)</b></p> <p>Communication with boat owners and residents <b>(EA)</b></p>

			Training to be arranged for businesses, residents, contractors and sports clubs adjacent to the river and funding for throwlines to be sought <b>(EBC, SFRS, RLSS, RNLI)</b>
<p><b>River based sporting activity (Rowing and regattas, Sailing Canoeing):</b> The Borough has a large number of sports clubs offering a range of activities for all ages. The standard of these clubs is very high and all are encouraged to follow their own National Governing Body guidance, and seek to accredit with Clubmark (a national accreditation scheme recognising best practice)</p>	<p>Molesey, Weybridge, Walton Rowing Clubs</p> <p>Weybridge Sailing Club</p> <p>Sea Scouts</p> <p>Elmbridge Canoe and Kayak Club</p> <p>School rowing clubs</p> <p>Thames Regional Rowing Council.</p> <p>Uniformed associations (Scouts\ guides etc)</p>	<p>All participants</p> <p>Beginners who are new to the sport and unaware of the risk</p>	<p>Continue to work with the Borough's sports clubs to encourage best practice and to seek clubmark accreditation (EBC)</p> <p>All water based activity clubs to give consideration to effective means of calling for help when on the river (i.e. whistle, torch, accessible phone)</p> <p>Flow meters, <a href="#">data source</a> (can EA expand) <b>(EA)</b></p> <p>Risk assessment for rowing clubs agreed through British Rowing</p> <p>Clubs to adopt polices not to enter river above a set flow rate. <b>(RNLI, EA)</b></p>
<p><b>Swimming pools</b></p> <p>The Borough has a range of providers offering access to high quality swimming facilities and a programme of swimming lessons through schools and private tuition to teach young people to swim</p>	<p>Swimming facilities are available to the public across the Borough:</p> <p>Xcel Leisure Complex</p> <p>Hurst Pool</p> <p>Other providers</p> <p>Colets Health &amp; Fitness Club</p> <p>David Lloyd Club (Weybridge Brooklands)</p> <p>Notre Dame School</p> <p>Nuffield Health (Surbiton)</p> <p>Pavilion Sports &amp; Fitness Club</p>	<p>New swimmers</p> <p>younger children</p>	<p>The Council's leisure contractor Places for People (PFP) currently offers free swimming for under 8s (when accompanied by an adult) and has been since the end of the Government's free swimming offer in 2010. <b>(EBC)</b></p> <p>11 schools currently use Xcel and 13 schools use Hurst Pool. The majority are Elmbridge schools. PFP to target Elmbridge schools who currently do not utilise their swim lesson scheme to see if they can be accommodated. <b>(EBC)</b></p>
<p><b>Ponds\ open water</b></p> <p>In total Elmbridge is responsible for out and maintains 49 Deep Water Risk assessments, which are reviewed at least every 2 years (or in the case of an incident, or change to the physical nature of the site), and are monitored through the Council's</p>	<p>Littleheath pond</p> <p>Black pond</p>	<p>Unsupervised children</p> <p>Young People</p>	<p>Mitigation measures on Elmbridge sites have included cutting back vegetation to avoid inadvertent slips into deep water and the provision of warning signage at certain locations, e.g. Littleheath and Thames Ditton slip. <b>(EBC)</b></p> <p>All partners should reinforce the dangers of deep or fast flowing water and implementation of a No Swimming Policy where appropriate and following a suitable risk assessment. <b>(ALL)</b></p>

<p>Covalent performance management software.</p> <p>There is an increased risk during extreme cold periods where people believe it is safe to walk on the ice</p>			<p>EBC write to the residents of the adjacent properties to Littleheath pond reminding them of the risks from the deep water and the potential for very cold water from „Thermal Inversion“-</p> <p>If residents continue to use their leisure craft on this stretch of water it is strongly recommended the suitable life saving equipment is worn at all times and that young persons are supervised’.</p> <p>Ensure a prohibition of swimming at any time at Littleheath pond (supported by a By Law.). <b>(EBC)</b></p> <p>Signage to be erected on frozen ponds to warn of the dangers of thin ice and dogs on leads (see CFO stock posters). <b>(EBC\ SFRS)</b></p>
<p><b>Angling</b></p> <p>Elmbridge is a popular fishing destination along the length of the Thames and in many of the larger ponds.</p> <p>There is an increased risk of fishermen, especially when under the influence of alcohol, of inadvertently falling in to the water with inappropriate clothing.</p>	<p>River Thames</p> <p>Littleheath Pond</p> <p>Black pond</p>	<p>Anglers</p>	<p>Communications about public rescue when in water (SFRS\RNLI)</p> <p>Messaging to anglers about water safety to be included as a part of their license application. Life preservers. (EA)</p>

## Appendix 1: Table of information detailing drownings and recorded near misses in Elmbridge 2006 to 2016

(It should be noted that near misses are rarely recorded but previous research suggests there is likely to have been at least one near miss for every fatality).

Date	Incident	Location	Did they enter the water deliberately or accidentally?	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Causes
Mar 2011	Male youth drowned while fishing after inflatable raft sank in the middle of the pond (former brick pit)	<b>Littleheath Pond, Oxshott</b>	Deliberate	M	15	IC1	Immature/inexperienced risk judgement. Probable thermal shock of cold water as very deep former brick pit Was believed to be a swimmer
19 Jul 12	Three males fallen into river after driving a speed boat too fast and turning too quickly. Two males got out of the river but the third male went under the water and did not come back up. Body later recovered at Desborough Island. Male unable to swim and flotation jacket not worn.	<b>River Thames near Manor Park Car Park/Desborough Island, Weybridge</b>	Accident	M			Excessive speed\ bravado. No flotation devices worn.
21 Jul 12	Report of 13 year old youths jumping in the river	<b>Portsmouth Road, Thames Ditton</b>	Deliberate	M	13		Risk taking behaviour.
10 Aug 12	3 males very intoxicated trying to pull a boat out into the lock, and trying to start the engine. Have already fallen into the water twice. Police intervention, all in order	<b>Sunbury Lock, Walton on Thames</b>	Accident	M			Under the influence of alcohol.
11 Jul 13	Call from resident to say there is a large group of youths jumping into the lake. Doesn't believe they can be local as they would know about the boy who drowned there. Lake is dangerous and there are signs all around stating no swimming. Lake is old brick quarry and is about 70 foot deep.	<b>Littleheath Common, Fairmile Cobham</b>	Deliberate	M			Risk taking behaviour.
17 Jul 13	Call from resident to say there is a large group of youths jumping into the lake with the aid of a swing. Lake is dangerous and there are signs all around stating no swimming. Advised that they are drinking smoking cannabis, making swings from the trees to swing over the lake as well as lighting BBQs. Concern due to a young boy drowning a couple of years ago. Elmbridge Borough Council informed and Local Bailiff to the area will carry out patrols.	<b>Littleheath Common, Fairmile Cobham</b>	Deliberate	M			Risk taking behaviour.

2012/13	Adult male drowned swimming across the Thames. 2 young boys and 1 woman attempted rescue.	Hurst Park	Deliberate	M		Polish ?	Attempted to swim the Thames whilst Ferry was on a break fully clothed wearing a backpack. Under the influence of alcohol.
12 Mar 15	Call from female stating that her husband had contacted her whilst he was in a lake as he wanted to take his own life. Police attended and the male was located in shallow water with head above the water. Police have removed the male and administered first aid. The DP had the dog lead tied round neck however no apparent injury from this. Male suffered first signs on hypothermia and was treated by ambulance.	<b>Ruxley Crescent, Claygate.</b>	Deliberate	M			Attempted suicide
3 Jul 15	Male found beside own narrow boat drowned. Face in the water but torso out of the water, discovered by owner of neighbouring narrow boat. Not suspicious, male has attempted suicide in the past.	<b>Thames at Manor Park off Russell Road, Shepperton</b>	Deliberate	M			Likely attempted suicide
Jul 15	Summer school prom, students jumping into river	Desborough Island	Deliberate	M&F	17		No incident. Near miss
19 Jul 15	Report of a paddle board floating free, unsure if anyone has fallen from it or it is abandoned. Youths nearby admitted to swimming out to the board then playing around on it before bringing it back to the shore. Owner of board unknown.	<b>Sunbury Lock, Weir public house, Walton on Thames</b>	Deliberate				Risk taking behaviour
3 Oct 15	Report by two fishermen of a male floating in the river. Non suspicious and no markings on body to suggest foul play.	<b>Weybridge Weir</b>	Unknown	M	50		drowning and alcohol intoxication
22 Jul 16	Informant calling reporting youths playing in the lake. Lake is an old brick pit with many hazards and a young boy drowned there in the past.	<b>Littleheath Common, Fairmile Cobham</b>	Deliberate				Risk taking behaviour
31 Aug 2016	Male Youth drowned in the River Thames while swimming with friends Male is a 15 year old boy who was swimming with two other friends.	River Thames, Nr Felix Road, Walton.	Deliberate	M	15	IC1	Immature/inexperienced risk judgement. Was believed to be a swimmer
Dec 16	Adult male entered the water from a work van, then tried to reach side but drowned.	Shepperton, Dock Eddy Lane	Deliberate	M	39		Likely suicide
Jul 16	Travellers fishing below the Shepperton lock, 2 slipped and fell in 1 recovered, 1 drowned.	Shepperton Lock	Accident	M			No buoyancy aids
	Owner tried to save dog who had entered the water	Brooklands community park\ Mercedes benz	Accident				

	Near Miss: young people, having broken up from school, jumping in to the thames from the roof of the Rowing Club.	Hampton Rowing Club	Deliberate				No incident. Near miss
	Capsize boat	Taggs island	Accident				
	swimming	Pharoas island	Deliberate				
	Near miss: Private school rowing 8 got into difficulty near ? lock. Coaches launch went to assist but was pulled against and through the lock.		Accident	M			End of training run and pupils tired.
	Canoeist capsize	Shepperton					
7 Mar 2017	Near miss- 3 young males (Ashford school) stopped by Police from jumping in to river at Lammas Lane	Hersham	Deliberate	M	15		Stopped from entering by Surrey Police.

Appendix 2 Annual communications plan



### Appendix 3 Social Media Channels

	Twitter	Facebook	Snapchat\ instagram	Other
Environment Agency	<a href="https://twitter.com/envagency">https://twitter.com/envagency</a>	<a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/environmentagency">https://en-gb.facebook.com/environmentagency</a>		<a href="https://www.instagram.com/envagency/">https://www.instagram.com/envagency/</a>
Elmbridge Borough Council	<a href="https://twitter.com/ElmbridgeBC">https://twitter.com/ElmbridgeBC</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/MyElmbridge/">https://www.facebook.com/MyElmbridge/</a>		
Surrey Fire and Rescue	<a href="https://twitter.com/SurreyFRS">https://twitter.com/SurreyFRS</a>	<a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/SurreyFRS/">https://en-gb.facebook.com/SurreyFRS/</a>		
Surrey Police	<a href="https://twitter.com/SurreyPolice">https://twitter.com/SurreyPolice</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/SurreyPolice">https://www.facebook.com/SurreyPolice</a>		<a href="https://www.instagram.com/surreypolice/">https://www.instagram.com/surreypolice/</a>
RNLI	<a href="https://twitter.com/rnli">https://twitter.com/rnli</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/rnli_teddington">https://twitter.com/rnli_teddington</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/rnli">https://www.facebook.com/rnli</a>	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/rnli/">https://www.instagram.com/rnli/</a>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/officialrnli">https://www.youtube.com/user/officialrnli</a>
RLSS	<a href="https://twitter.com/RLSSUK">https://twitter.com/RLSSUK</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/RLSSUK/">https://www.facebook.com/RLSSUK/</a>	<a href="http://www.rlss.org.uk/instagram/">http://www.rlss.org.uk/instagram/</a>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/RLSSUK">https://www.youtube.com/user/RLSSUK</a>
ROSPA	<a href="https://twitter.com/rospace">https://twitter.com/rospace</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/rospace">https://www.facebook.com/rospace</a>		

## Appendix 4 Existing resources

### Youth Messaging

<https://rnli.org/youth-education/education-resources/activity-sheets-and-posters>

<https://rnli.org/youth-education/education-resources/teaching-packs/decision-making>

<https://rnli.org/youth-education/educational-visits>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/595017/Preventing\\_unintentional\\_injuries\\_guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595017/Preventing_unintentional_injuries_guide.pdf)

Attached booklet has all relevant messages for young people.

### Respect the Water

<http://www.respectthewater.com/>

<http://www.respectthewater.com/know-what-to-do/dont-end-up-in-trouble/>

[https://rnli.org/safety/beach-safety?utm\\_source=various&utm\\_medium=vanity\\_url&utm\\_campaign=unknown&utm\\_content=beachsafety](https://rnli.org/safety/beach-safety?utm_source=various&utm_medium=vanity_url&utm_campaign=unknown&utm_content=beachsafety)

### Programmes

<https://swimsafe.rnli.org/>

### River levels\ flow

information on river levels and flow data in the borough on the Thames:

<http://www.gaugemap.co.uk/#!/Map/Summary/1224/1352>

### Samaritans

<http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/what-speak-us-about/i-want-kill-myself>

### Impact Website for young people (to be updated)

<http://www.elmbridgeimpact.co.uk/personal-safety/>

to confirm:

Beneath the surface

Filling up

British rail suicide intervention training

RNLI app – near misses