



Lancashire Fire  
and Rescue Service

# Water Safety in Lancashire





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# LFRS Incidents (01 Jan 2020 - 30 Sep 2025)

## Water incidents from the past 5 years (01/01/2020 – to 30/09/2025)

(incidents attended by LFRS – there will be some overlap with WAID figures)

### All incidents -

- **Total number of Water Incidents attended (non-suicide related) – 273**
  - (2025 – 38 up to 30th Sept)
- **Number of casualties rescued from water (inc. fatalities) – 322**
  - 53% - male, 25% - female, 22% - no gender recorded
  - Where gender recorded - 68% - male, 32% - female
- **Suicide attempts at water locations - 39 incidents**
  - 14% of total number of incidents
- **Fatalities – 34**
  - 85% male, 12% female, 3% not known - in line with UK data
- **Suicide fatalities – 5**
  - 100% male
  - 15% of total number of suicide attempts – half of UK percentage

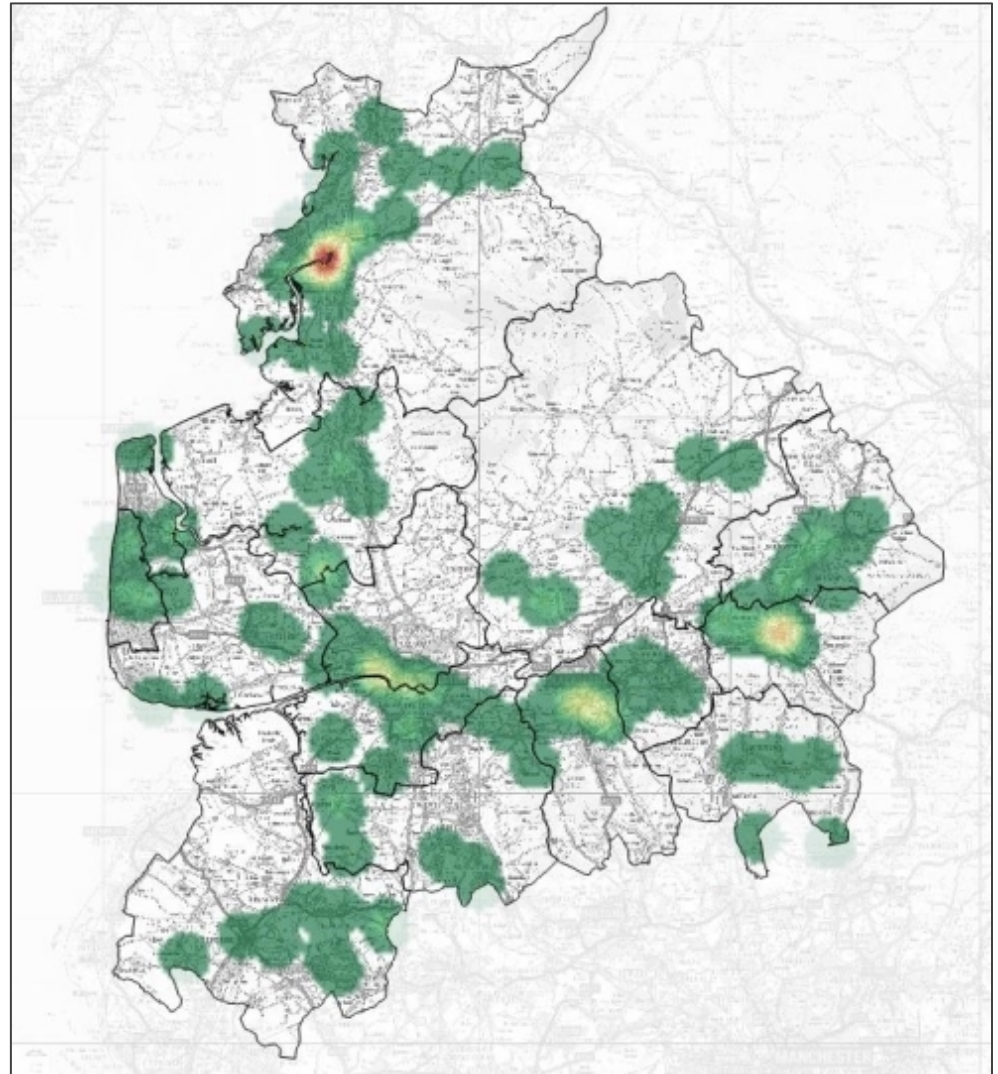


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# Heat map of Water Rescues (for incidents LFRS attend) 2020 - 2025

The districts of Lancaster (almost 25% of the total), Preston, Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley have seen the highest concentration of LFRS attended water incidents.

**Note:** Just over 50% of the water related incidents for Oct24 - Sep25 were linked to flooding in the Winter months, mainly in January 2025 all of which were vehicle related.

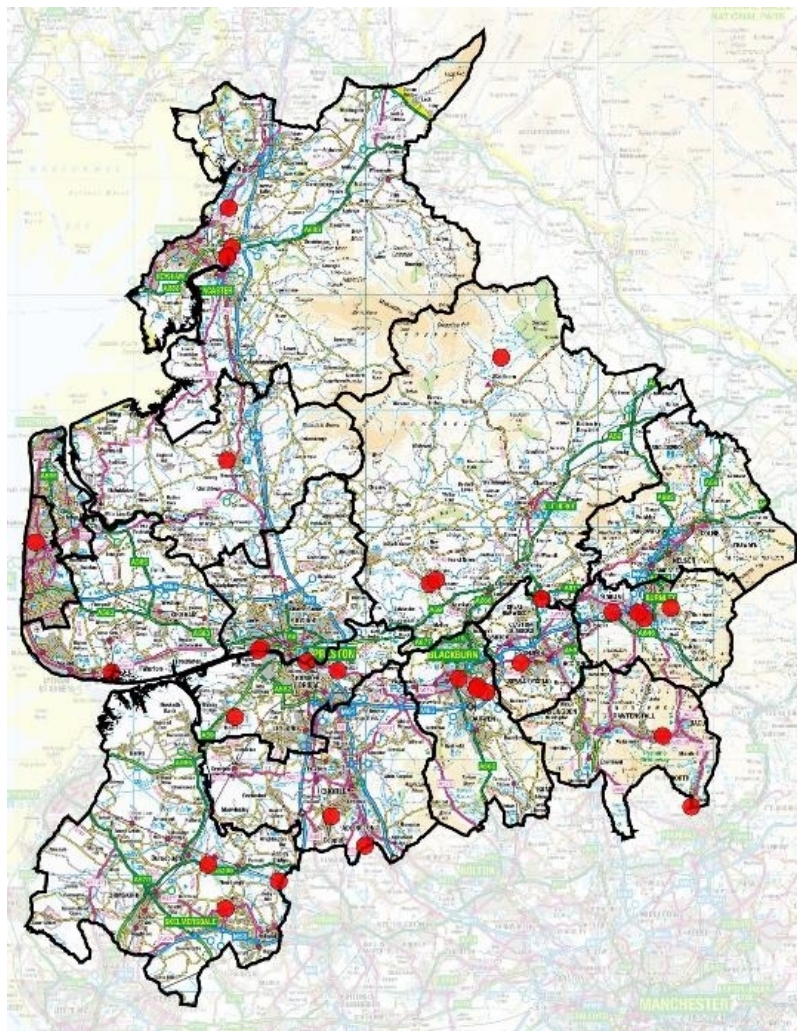




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# Water Related Fatalities (for incidents LFRS attend) 2020 – 2025

Eastern Area (as a whole) has experienced the most fatalities, followed by Southern, Pennine and Northern (though the latter only includes one District – Lancaster)



| District              | Fatalities |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Blackburn with Darwen | 4          |
| Burnley               | 4          |
| Lancaster             | 4          |
| West Lancs            | 4          |
| Preston               | 3          |
| Ribble Valley         | 3          |
| Chorley               | 2          |
| Hyndburn              | 2          |
| Rossendale            | 2          |
| South Ribble          | 2          |
| Blackpool             | 1          |
| Fylde                 | 1          |
| Pendle                | 1          |
| Wyre                  | 1          |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>34</b>  |





# LFRS Incidents (Yearly Breakdown)

|  | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 * | Total |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|--------|-------|
| Number of water incidents attended (non-suicide related) | 54   | 45   | 42   | 48   | 36   | 48     | 273   |
| Suicide attempts at water locations                      | 1    | 4    | 7    | 6    | 13   | 8      | 39    |
| Number of casualties rescued (Inc. fatalities)           | 69   | 47   | 48   | 52   | 48   | 58     | 322   |
| Fatalities   | 3    | 4    | 5    | 15   | 3    | 4      | 34    |

\* Year to date – 01/01/2025 – 30/09/2025



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# LFRS Incidents and Fatalities by known age

| Age     | Lancashire Casualties<br>(2020 – to date)<br>131 (313 total) |      | Lancashire Fatalities<br>(2020 – to date)<br>14 (34 total) |      | UK Fatalities<br>(Waid 2024 only)<br>163 (193 total) |      |
|---------|--|------|--|------|--|------|
|         | No.  | %age | No.  | %age | No   | %age |
| 0 - 9   | 4  | 3%   | 0  | 0%   | 6  | 4%   |
| 10 -19  | 23   | 18%  | 3  | 21%  | 21   | 13%  |
| 20 - 29 | 31   | 24%  | 4  | 29%  | 29   | 18%  |
| 30 - 39 | 17   | 13%  | 0  | 0%   | 13   | 8%   |
| 40 - 49 | 13   | 10%  | 1  | 7%   | 15   | 9%   |
| 50 - 59 | 14   | 11%  | 1  | 7%   | 21   | 13%  |
| 60 -69  | 12   | 9%   | 1  | 7%   | 27   | 17%  |
| 70 - 79 | 13   | 10%  | 1  | 7%   | 18   | 11%  |
| 80 - 89 | 2  | 2%   | 2  | 14%  | 11   | 7%   |
| 90 - 99 | 2  | 2%   | 1  | 7%   | 2  | 1%   |

Top Age ranges in each category



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# Targeting Water Safety Prevention Work

## Highest Incident Districts:

Lancaster (24% of total) , Burnley (10%), Preston (10%), BwD (8%)

## Highest Fatality Districts:

Lancaster, Burnley, BwD, West Lancs

## Highest Fatality Districts in proportion to number of incidents there:

Hyndburn, West Lancs, Rossendale, Fylde

## UK Fatalities (National Water Incident Database (WAID) 2024):

84% males .

## Lancashire Fatalities:

85% male, 12% female, 3% not known

## Lancashire Casualties rescued from water by recorded gender (inc. fatalities):

68% male, 32% - female

LFRS Data –  
01 Jan 2020 –  
30 Sep 2025

### Note:

- New LFRS Incident Dashboard allow quick view, as well as more detailed, analysis to aid prevention work [link](#)
- There will be slight discrepancies to already given figures due to year ranges



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# Target Audiences - What can we do?

The target audience relates to both age groups and activities and can be explained through key themes which also take their guidance from national messaging:

- Activities in water
- Activities near water
- (almost 40% of people who lose their lives to accidental drowning did not intend to enter the water in the first place)
- Away from home
- In an emergency - who to call and what to do





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# What we are currently doing in Lancashire

- **Supporting national water safety campaigns**

Link to LFRS Campaign and local risk reduction objectives in conjunction with RNLI, RLSS, National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the National Water Safety Forum (NWSF)

- **Education - Delivering KS3/4 Water Safety Package**

Offered to all high schools in Lancashire

Schools in high-risk localities – in-person session

Schools in lower risk localities – virtual assembly session

2025 figures - approx. 17,000 learners from 43 school  
(at least 8,000 in-person, 9,000 virtual)

Total engagement (education specific and community engagement recorded as approx. 26,000)

- **Working with Partners**

Multi-agency collaboration inc. -

- training/demonstration/awareness events
- engaging with people at known or perceived high-risk sites.
- helping install Water Safety Boards



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# Water Safety Boards (WSB)

The Prevention Support Team at LFRS are responsible for the Water Safety Board initiative and work closely with landowners, NWFC and other key partners.

WSBs have been installed at recognised high-risk locations in collaboration with landowners, inc.

- United Utilities
- Canal and River Trust
- Cuerdon Valley Park Trust
- District councils
- Local clubs

How they work –

- Clear instructions advising what to do in an emergency.
- Unique location reference code linked to Fire Control mobilising Action Plan and Risk Information on Fire Appliance computers.
- Throwline and whistle in a locked canister. Lock combination is provided by Fire Control after dialling 999.
- Board design has a consistent look but can be adapted and tailored according to location and situation.
- Boards have warnings to raise awareness of the location dangers.
- Boards include a Damage Reporting Number so any issues can be addressed promptly.





- Look into developing online options so teachers etc. can download resources for different age groups providing lesson plans and activities for class/community groups with a variety of outcomes.
- Encourage a team of Water Safety Ambassadors, possibly from Cadets/High Schools to help monitor "where the kids play" - which could highlight potential spots for education as well as raising the profile in the community of education about water safety in the KS3 and KS4 environs.
- Links into Water Safety in the National Curriculum for KS2 in schools swimming and KS3 and 4 for PSHE and the knowledge of the water safety code - which is the new element included for this year.
- Further resources to be produced for particular times in the calendar to highlight specific risk e.g. holidays/beach (Spring/Summer), Freshers' Week (Autumn), Ice and Flooding (Winter/Spring) so this can be delivered working with our partner educators.

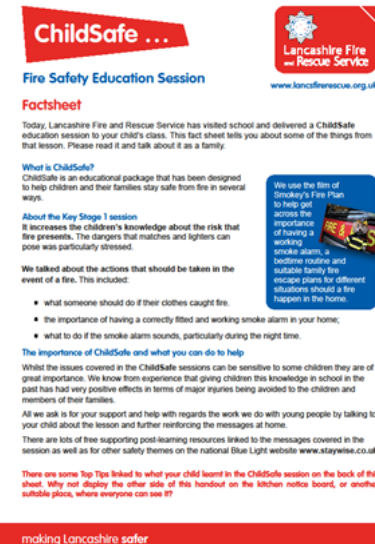
After each education session (inc. Water Safety) the teacher/lead adult is given a QR code and asked to use it to access the Education Webform. This compiles the results automatically -

[LFRS Education Session Teacher Feedback](#)

After each Y2 (Fire Safety) and Y6 session (Road Safety) we also give the children a 'Factsheet' – in effect, a letter home to tell parents/carers what they did in the session. On each form there is also a QR code for the children to complete with their parents/carers to help us get an indication of what they learnt/remembered from the session.

[LFRS Education Session Pupil Feedback](#)

We will be looking to do similar for Water Safety education sessions.





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# Lancashire Water Safety Partnership

**The Lancashire Water Safety Partnership, with LFRS taking the lead, was established in 2022 to bring together key stakeholders to help shape, develop and promote water safety across the whole of Lancashire. The aims of the Lancs WSP are to:**

- Reduce the number of drownings in Lancashire.
- Enhance the safety of residents and visitors around water when they are in Lancashire.
- Enhance the safety of residents of Lancashire around water wherever they are.

**This can be done by:**

- Effective use of Data
- Sharing Learning
- Working Together





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# LWSP – Ways forward

- Continue to support Landowners who wish to install Water Safety Boards at identified risk locations – either historical or perceived.
- Continue to promote joint Comms, messaging and activity regarding water (and similar, such as ice and flooding) risk at appropriate times of the year.
- Improve the data collection and analysis of water related incidents by gathering more accurate information where it is available and permissible to do. This would involve close co-operation with those agencies that attend and report on incidents such as the Police, RNLI and Coastguard as well as the Coroner's office for fatalities. This should enable improved targeting for prevention.







# Water Safety



## Questions?

