



Lifeboats

OUR WATCH

RNLI STRATEGIC INTENT 2020-24



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This document contains our Strategic Intent for the next 5 years (2020–24). Our planning and budgeting will draw on this Intent so that the RNLI consistently moves forward in one direction.

It is written primarily for the RNLI's volunteers and staff to guide all of our efforts in the coming years, although we hope it will also be read by supporters, donors and others interested in the lifesaving work of the RNLI. If we are all focused on the

same things, we have a greater chance of achieving our long-term Vision: to save every one.

The document focuses on the period 2020–24: Our Watch. It recognises the 195 years of lifesaving that has gone before, considers today's challenges,

and sets out our future Vision, Outcomes, goals and plans. Although the majority of the document covers the next 5 years, consideration has also been given to the significant factors that will impact our future and that we need to be acting upon in the short term. This document provides the golden thread that explains the things we must do. It underpins our Purpose, draws guidance from our Values, and defines Strategic Outcomes to drive our activity for the next 5 years and

OUR OUTCOMES

1

WE KEEP OUR PEOPLE SAFE

2

WE FOCUS ON WHAT WILL SAVE THE MOST LIVES IN OR NEAR THE WATER

3

WORKING WITH PARTNERS, WE INFLUENCE IMPROVED SAFETY ON AND BESIDE THE WATER

HOW WE WILL DO THIS?

- By giving volunteers and staff the training and tools to keep themselves safe.
- By improving the technology and equipment on our boats and beaches.
- By providing Trauma Risk Management and mental health first aiders.

- By ensuring we have the right people and assets in the right places.
- By upgrading our infrastructure, asset base and networks.
- By working with partners to understand and prepare for the lifesaving challenges of the future.

- By focusing on the highest-risk locations and activities at home and internationally.
- By forging and maintaining strong partnerships with like-minded organisations.
- By working together to build awareness, gather evidence and develop effective interventions.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING?

Measured by incident trends.

Measured by the effectiveness of our rescue service, including the number of lives saved.

Measured by reduction in coastal risk score in the UK and Ireland, and data related to our targeted international activities.



beyond. The document closes with a letter to our founder, both honouring our history and looking forward to the next 200 years.

The Outcomes will guide our work over the next 5 years. Achieving these Outcomes will result in our saving more lives while ensuring the safety of our volunteers and securing the future of our charity. Our ongoing performance against each Outcome will be monitored quarterly and annually and reflected in our Annual Report.

We use a variety of measures from both internally generated and externally sourced data to support our analysis. Any trending changes will result in us adjusting our plans accordingly.

Below are the key activities on our journey to achieving each Outcome and how we will measure our success. For each Outcome, there is a section further on expanding on the activities we intend to achieve by the end of 2021 and 2024. We know we need

to invest in key areas such as our technology and coastal infrastructure and we also need to focus on our supporters and donors. Building lifetime relationships with our supporters will help us to raise funds to enable this investment. We need to stay focused and ensure that every penny and cent count. And most importantly, we need to support each other, the crew who make the RNLI great. This is our watch. Let's make it count.

4
OUR PEOPLE LOVE BEING PART OF THE RNLI

- By upscaling our training and providing greater development opportunities for everyone.
- By attracting more volunteers and staff from a variety of backgrounds.
- By providing greater support to our volunteers and staff.

Measured by staff and volunteer engagement in our annual surveys.

5
WE RAISE THE FUNDS WE NEED AND SPEND DONORS' MONEY WISELY

- By diversifying our income sources and focusing on commercial opportunities.
- By engaging with new audiences and inspiring our existing supporters.
- With continued rigour in our financial discipline, making every penny and cent count.

Measured by annual donations and our level of free reserves.

6
OUR FUTURE IS SUSTAINABLE AND SECURE

- By reaching out to younger generations.
- By maximising the impact of our Poole campus as a manufacturing, training and heritage centre to support the whole RNLI.
- By creating a sustainable strategy and roadmap to 2050.

Measured by the level of organisational risk we are carrying, and the development of our 2050 roadmap.



Mark Dowie is pictured with lifelong RNLI supporter Joan Webb on her 100th birthday

WE ARE ONE CREW THIS IS OUR WATCH

Working together towards a shared goal is what makes any crew great. This document lays out our shared intent for the next 5 years (2020–24). This is how we will work together as one crew to run the RNLI with passion for our community, with kindness for all those we serve and each other, with efficiency and with a razor-sharp focus. What we do today lays the foundations for the RNLI of tomorrow.

As you read this document and understand what it means for you, I would like you to remember three things:

We are all lifesavers. We are all fundraisers. This is our watch.

WE ARE ALL LIFESAVERS

We work together so that the RNLI can save as many people from drowning as possible. By traditional and innovative means; whoever is in danger and wherever they are located. We will be there for those who need us. We are going to fit and equip our network, and work with partners to meet the lifesaving challenges of the future. We will also use our experience and skills to prevent people getting into trouble in the first place by raising awareness, by training others and by influencing world leaders and global policy. We are going to upscale our training to deliver a better service locally and at the RNLI College in Poole, to make our people safer and give them something to take away from the RNLI. It is my intention that the College will significantly grow its capacity as part of this future.

WE ARE ALL FUNDRAISERS

We should all build and nurture relationships by being kind to others, by inspiring each other and those we meet, and by giving our energy

and time. We should be proud of our charity and speak with passion and care about its work. It is my intention that, as well as improving the experience for our existing and loyal donors, we will diversify our income to include a significant proportion from sources we don't use today. We will build resilience and sustainability through this diversity.

THIS IS OUR WATCH

It is our time. There will be no waste, no stone unturned. Like generations of lifesavers before us, it's our job to keep our charity safe and secure for the next 200 years so that it can continue to save lives while being loved and treasured by so many. This means doing the right thing for the RNLI. It means recognising the impact of our actions on our organisation and being responsible for this wonderful charity. It also means preparing for the next watch by modernising, by pushing boundaries and by exploring new ways we can save lives, together with our partners. We will also prepare by enriching the talent within our charity

with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Specifically, I want the RNLI to attract many more volunteers from the wider population, with a target of at least 20% of our operational crew being female and a much enhanced contribution from the BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) population.

This Strategic Intent sets out the road for the next 5 years. Now it's over to you to decide how you can help us make the most of the opportunities ahead.

We are one crew. This is our watch.



Mark Dowie
RNLI Chief Executive



Port Talbot lifeboat crew launch through surf

RNLI STRATEGIC INTENT 2020–24

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[RNLI.org](https://www.rnli.org)

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The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603), Scotland (SC037736), the Republic of Ireland (20003326), the Bailiwick of Jersey (14), the Isle of Man, the Bailiwick of Guernsey and Alderney

THE RNLI PURPOSE, VISION AND VALUES

OUR PURPOSE

The RNLI is the charity
that saves lives at sea

OUR VISION

To save every one

Our Vision is a statement of the future that we want to be part of. It may take us a long time to get there, but drowning is preventable, and we believe that even one drowning is one too many. Our volunteers don't sign up to save just a few. We will always strive to save **every one**.

We know this is an ambitious Vision, and it will take all the efforts of our volunteers, our staff and our partners to achieve this, working together as one crew.



OUR VALUES

Our Values reflect the way we work.
As one crew, we strive for excellence and are:

COURAGEOUS:

To have the courage to take on the most demanding challenges.

SELFLESS:

To put the needs of others first.

DEPENDABLE:

To be reliable, consistent and authentic.

TRUSTWORTHY:

To hold the trust of the public, our volunteers, supporters, partners and staff.



THE DROWNING EPIDEMIC

In the UK and Ireland, we love and respect the water. But it can be terrifying when things go wrong, and more and more people are calling for our help every year.

In 2018 we launched our lifeboats 8,964 times from 238 lifeboat stations. That's an average of 24 launches a day. Our search and rescue teams have never been so busy: ordinary people doing the extraordinary, responding to calls for help day and night, every day of the year, no matter what.

RNLI lifeguards work on almost 250 of our busiest and most dangerous beaches – beaches visited a staggering 19 million times in 2018.

They attended 19,449 incidents, coming to the aid of 32,207 people. More importantly, they proactively managed beach safety to ensure as few people as possible got into trouble in the water. That meant taking 3½ million preventative actions, from managing safety flags through to public announcements and giving one-to-one safety advice.

Year on year we've seen the numbers needing our help go up, and with this the demands on our volunteers and our resources have increased.

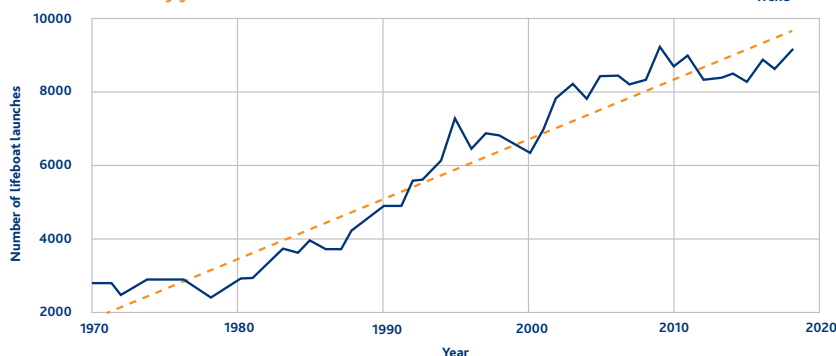
The challenges we face in Ireland and the UK are part of a global problem. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 320,000 people drown around the world each year but believes the true figure is likely to be significantly higher. To put this into context, 320,000 deaths is the equivalent of almost the entire population of Cardiff.

The WHO identified drowning as a silent epidemic because its impact is not yet understood by the affected

countries and the development sector. Because of this lack of understanding, many affected countries and agencies have yet to allocate resource to the problem.

This document sets out how we plan to respond to the needs of those at risk of drowning, both domestically and internationally, powered by our community of amazing volunteers and supporters. We know that drowning is preventable, and we believe that one drowning is one too many.

Lifeboat launches by year



THE DROWNING CHAIN

The circumstances under which people drown, such as where they are and what they're doing, vary enormously. However, research has highlighted a common set of risk factors that lead to people drowning or being seriously injured in or around water.

We intend to tackle drowning not just by rescuing people, but by reaching out to those at risk at each part of the Drowning Chain.

The RNLI has been using the Drowning Chain for the last 5 years to guide our actions and we will continue to do so.

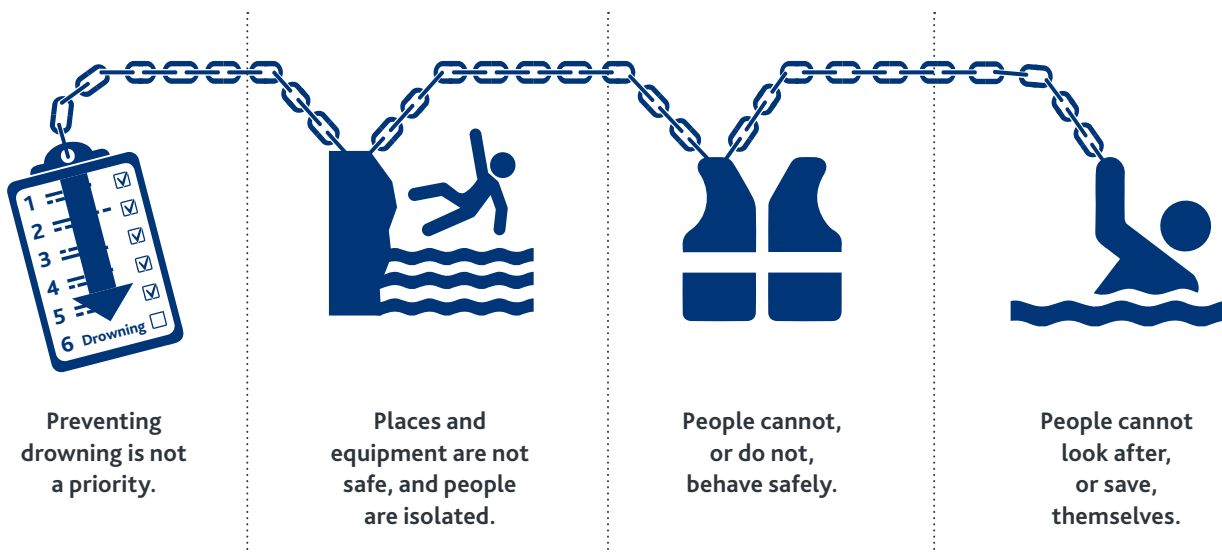
Taking action to break each link of the chain reduces the risk of drowning.

When drowning is recognised as an issue, when places are less dangerous, when people behave safely, and when people are supervised and rescued if needed, fewer will drown.

We will focus on the things that will save most lives on or near the water, and on stopping people before they get into difficulties. Even with the fastest lifeboats and the best trained crews and lifeguards, we won't get to everybody in time if we rely on rescue alone.

It is only by breaking the links at every stage of the Drowning Chain that we can truly hope to save every one.

THE DROWNING CHAIN



The Drowning Chain, developed from initial research carried out by the WHO



THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

As we strive to save every one, we are inspired by the lifesavers who rescue people and work to keep others safe every day. Generations of people would not be here today were it not for the courage and commitment of RNLI volunteers and staff. These stories show the difference we make.

'THE REASON I HAVE MY FAMILY'

Vicky Murphy got in touch in 2019, just after her daughter Rae's 10th birthday. A decade ago, while pregnant with Rae, Vicky was rescued by RNLI lifeguards.

She writes: 'I'll always remember my body being battered about horizontally in the water.

'The relief of seeing the orange

boat coming around the corner gets me emotional to this day.

'I'd been battered by the sea and hadn't felt my baby move. When the hospital told me there was still a heartbeat, they said: "You should count your lucky stars."

'I can't thank the RNLI enough for saving me. They are the reason I have my family today.'



The relief of seeing the orange boat coming around the corner gets me emotional to this day.

Vicky Murphy
Rescued by lifeguards whilst pregnant with daughter Rae



Vicky, Rae and husband Marc



Chapel Porth Beach, Cornwall



RNLI lifeguards keep people safe on almost 250 beaches

LIFESAIVING ADVICE

Nathan had travelled to Durdle Door, Dorset, for an August summer holiday. 'I'd been a few years ago and vowed to come back on my birthday,' he says. 'I came up from my hometown in Cambridgeshire with my best friend. Conditions were perfect and you couldn't get me out the water!'

He saw the stone arch that reaches into the sea from the shore and, after watching a few people swim through it, decided to try it himself.

'It looked easy, but the current had a bit of a suction through the arch and I was pulled out of my depth. I realised I couldn't get back. I was swimming and kicking but nothing was happening.'

Nathan started to panic but then he remembered the RNLI Float to Live

message he'd heard on the radio.

'Instead of fighting the water, I just lay back and started floating and kicking my legs. Eventually, after about 20 minutes, I managed to get back to the safety of the beach. It saved my life.'

MAYDAY AT THE HARBOUR MOUTH

Six fishermen found themselves drifting towards a rocky shore when their boat lost power in October 2018. In gale-force winds and a 4–5m swell, Castletownbere lifeboat crew were called on to help.

Coxswain Dean Hegarty recalls: 'It's only about 2 miles to the harbour mouth, but the conditions at that particular spot were very poor. The way the tide was going out

and the wind was coming in, it churned it all up like an explosion.'

In these treacherous conditions, the fishing boat was close to being broken up on rocks when the lifeboat crew arrived – just a few minutes after launching.

The RNLI volunteers got as close as they could to the fishermen and got a tow rope across on the first attempt.

It took about an hour to tow them home. 'There was a massive swell and the fishing boat was going up and down,' Dean says. 'It was a big boat. We kept the lifeboat in gear, just enough to pull it.'

'The fishermen were so thankful. And they were lucky. They did the right thing putting out a mayday straight away, especially with the weather conditions and where they were.'



Nathan Slack

We are one crew. Whatever your role at the RNLI, these success stories belong to you. Every life saved in the last year, in the last 5 years, in the last 200 years, is cause for celebration. But there's much more work to do as hundreds of thousands worldwide still drown unnecessarily.



THE OUTCOMES WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS

This is our watch. It's our turn to show true courage and commitment, to make the right decisions for the RNLI, and to do all we can to prevent drowning so that we can save every one

This Strategic Intent sets out six Outcomes we continually strive for. When we have achieved these Outcomes, we will know that we are saving more lives, while ensuring the safety of our volunteers and the future of our charity. We will be on course to saving **every one**.

OUR SIX STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

1

WE KEEP OUR PEOPLE SAFE

2

WE FOCUS ON WHAT WILL SAVE THE MOST LIVES IN OR NEAR THE WATER

3

WORKING WITH PARTNERS, WE INFLUENCE IMPROVED SAFETY ON AND BESIDE THE WATER



Exmouth lifeboat is launched on exercise

4

OUR PEOPLE LOVE BEING PART OF THE RNLI

5

WE RAISE THE FUNDS WE NEED AND SPEND DONORS' MONEY WISELY

6

OUR FUTURE IS SUSTAINABLE AND SECURE

OUTCOME:**WE KEEP OUR PEOPLE SAFE**

The RNLI relies on its volunteer crews and lifeguards to save lives at sea, and we have a duty to ensure their safety and the safety of those who support them. Lifesaving in an unpredictable environment is inherently hazardous, and even with the best boats, the best training and the best kit, accidents can happen.

For nearly 200 years the RNLI has been at the forefront of technological advances to keep its crews safe, from early lifejackets and self-righting lifeboats through to today's cutting-edge launch and recovery systems. That pioneering work continues today.

Keeping our lifesavers properly equipped with the knowledge, skills and equipment they need to keep themselves safe is paramount. In the last 2 years, we have provided our all-weather lifeboat crews with new personal protective equipment to give them the very best protection from the elements.

Giving crews and lifeguards the best kit is one thing, but all volunteers and staff must be able to identify the risks around them and know how to keep themselves and others safe. That means sharing stories on what has and hasn't worked, learning from the experiences of others, and taking preventative action.

We are committed to reducing the number of injuries people suffer while volunteering or working with the RNLI, whether that be at sea, on beaches, in our factories, out in the communities, or in our offices. By keeping our people safe, we can continue to retain and recruit volunteers to help deliver our Purpose of saving lives at sea.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2021?

Work to review the risks at all our lifeboat stations is under way, including the many ways we launch and recover our lifeboats, the ways we maintain them, and even how we keep them clean. Staff and volunteers at all 238 RNLI lifeboat stations are working to identify practical ways to reduce risk so our crews can continue their lifesaving work and ensure they return safely to their loved ones.

Towing is one of the most hazardous jobs our crews are called on to do, and it comes up in over 24%

of shouts. To help reduce the risk to our crews, a group of engineers, safety professionals and expert operators are



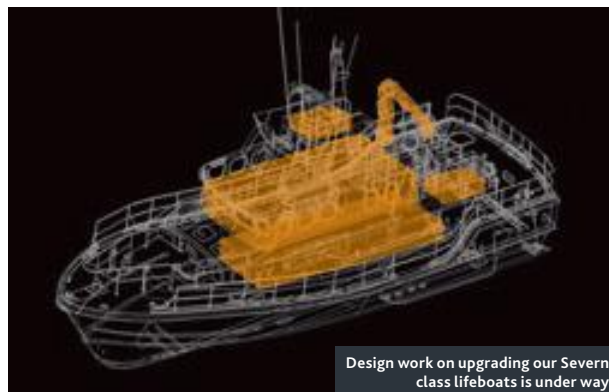
High-quality kit protects our crews from the elements



We ask so much of our volunteers.
We have a duty to keep them safe.



Towing may look straightforward, but it can be hazardous



Design work on upgrading our Severn class lifeboats is under way

working hard to identify ways to make towing safer. This includes awareness, training, and equipment solutions.

Saving lives can also present another, less obvious risk. Some shouts and beach incidents can leave a lasting and invisible impression on our crews and lifeguards, particularly those involving tragedy or acute distress. We will continue to develop the wellbeing support available to volunteers and staff, learning from the first steps taken to implement a Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) approach and continuing the training and provision of mental health first aiders across all RNLI departments and communities.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2024?

By 2024 we will have determined requirements for a new inshore lifeboat, based on types of shouts we expect in the future and the needs of our volunteer crew. This will include

improving the fit of the boat's seating and adjusting the controls to increase comfort and safety.

We will aim to reduce the physical impact of crewing a lifeboat in challenging conditions. We also want to design the new lifeboat in a way that reduces our impact on the environment.

We are extending the life of our largest lifeboat, the Severn class, by some 25 years through a programme of work that will introduce modern, tested and proven seating, upgraded information and control systems, and modernised electronic systems to improve reliability and safety.

The first prototype of the extended Severn class is being worked on by our team at the All-weather Lifeboat Centre, and by 2024 we will be upgrading up to six boats a year.

We also need to help our volunteers and staff to keep themselves and each other safe, and that means equipping

them with the knowledge and skills to spot hazards and take action, preventing accidents before they happen.

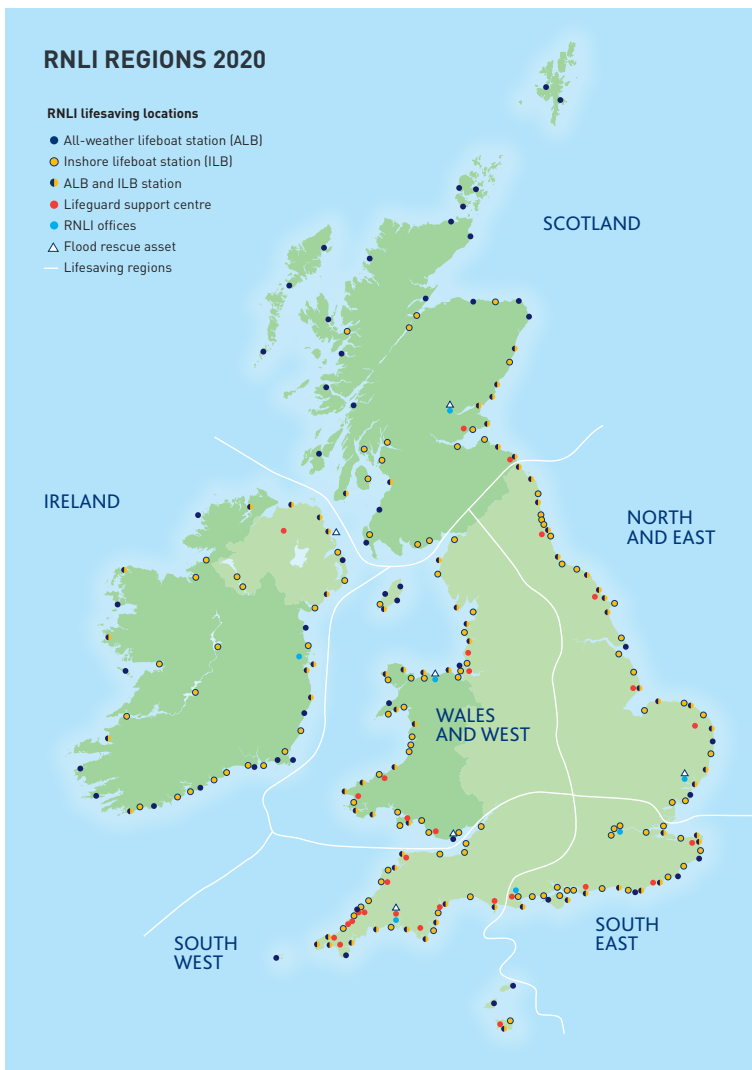
We will be working with internal and external specialists to develop a range of tools and training to help people understand the risks they face, make the best decisions they can, and share lessons when things don't go to plan.

We will also have developed and implemented a fit-to-serve policy, which will clearly define the standards our people need to meet to safely serve as crew.

Overall, it is our goal that by 2024 we will see a downward trend in the number of injuries suffered while volunteering or working for the RNLI.

OUTCOME:

WE FOCUS ON WHAT WILL SAVE THE MOST LIVES IN OR NEAR THE WATER

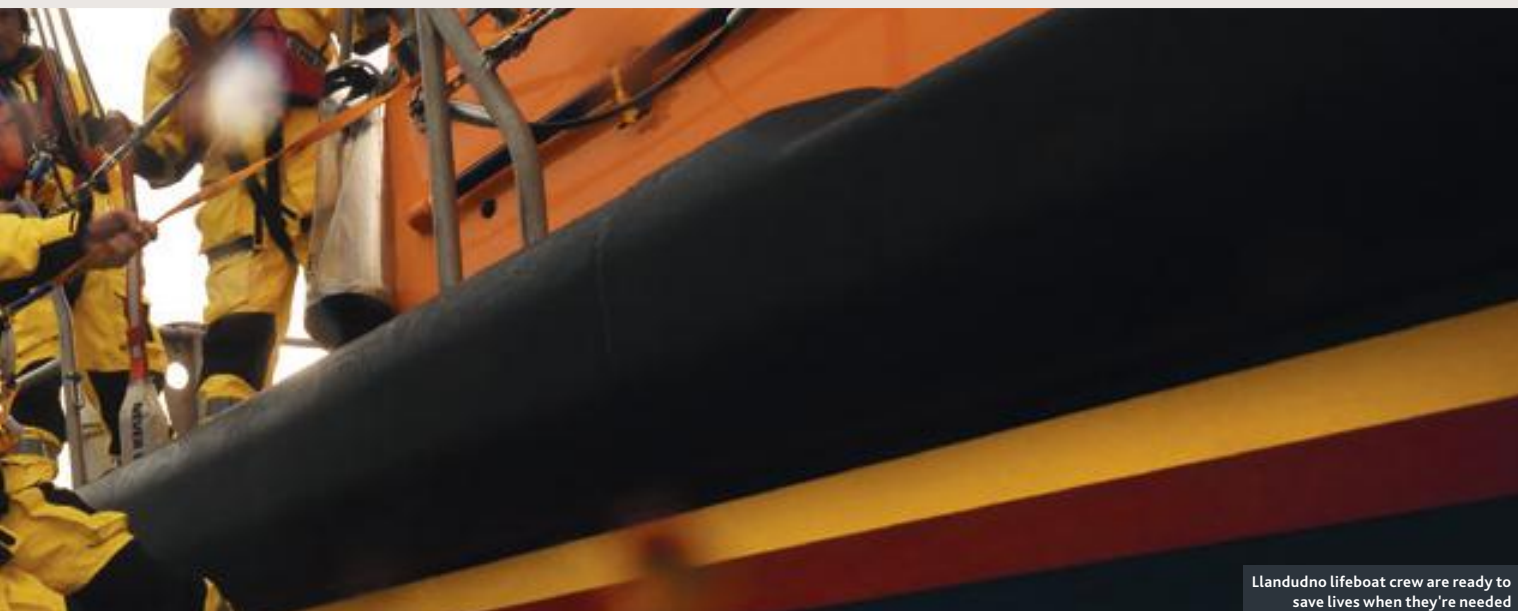


We are a search and rescue service and remain focused on being there to save people in need. Every year we help over 40,000 people in, on and near the water.

Over the last 50 years we have seen a significant rising trend in watersports participation, which has created an increasing and changing demand on our services. 2018 and 2019 were very busy years for lifeboat launches and lifeguard interventions.

People need our help now more than ever and this looks set to continue. Climate change is now also contributing to this trend, as we are seeing warmer weather with the 10 hottest years on record in the UK all occurring since 2002. Warmer weather drives increasing numbers of visitors around our coastline. This increased number of visitors, coupled with growth in beach activities, means we have to be prepared to adapt to meet the needs of the public, particularly on our beaches.

As we are anticipating this increase and change in demand, we need to think about our volunteers and staff, as we cannot save lives without them.



Llandudno lifeboat crew are ready to save lives when they're needed

This includes looking at who delivers our lifesaving operations and how they do so, while ensuring those on the front line have the support they need to save lives in the most effective way.

We are also looking at how technology can help us. We're working with the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the Irish Coast Guard and other partners to understand how we can support the changing nature of, and demand for, our services.

We know that one of the key challenges when people get into trouble is not having a means of calling for help. Today, one third of the RNLI's lifeboat stations are in 'not-spots' for mobile and data coverage, where there is poor data coverage. This can make calling for help incredibly difficult for those in need. It can also have an impact on the operations of our stations. This impact will increase as our reliance on data and technology grows.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2021?

We are introducing a new regional support structure across the UK and Ireland in 2020, to help our volunteers focus on their lifesaving work.

We are aiming to build a new floating lifeboat station at Tower, our busiest lifeboat station, replacing the existing station by the end of 2021. This modern station will have better welfare, safety, training and medical facilities.

The infrastructure for our pager system will have been updated and

will be able to sustain us for another 10 years. This means that crew will still be able to rely on their pagers wherever they are, as well as using new mobile apps that give greater information.

We will have updated the training that we give our lifesaving staff and volunteers. Not only will they have the skills to meet the maritime standards we work to, but there will also be development opportunities for those who want to progress and work towards new lifesaving roles.

We will be expanding and deepening our training offering to improve the accessibility of our courses while providing a valuable and fulfilling experience for our volunteers. This will include both looking at our RNLI College-based training and enhancing local training opportunities, which reduces the need for our volunteers to be away from home and families.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2024?

By 2024 we will have updated our networks and data infrastructure to help our lifeboat stations communicate and operate in the way we all wish they could today. This should reduce the amount of information our volunteers need to capture as it will be obtained direct from their lifeboats through connected networks.

We will work with the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the Irish Coast Guard to take a risk-based approach, looking at future

demand and environmental factors. This will help us determine the operational requirements of our future lifesaving network and assets, including whether services are delivered locally, regionally or nationally.

The increasing intensity in predicted domestic and global rainfall patterns for the future shows that the need for flood provision may evolve. By the end of 2024 we will have worked with partners, such as fire and rescue services and industry, to understand future flood trends and to determine what RNLI flood support will look like over the next 10 years (2020–30).

Overall, it is our goal that by 2024 we will have a clear plan to optimise our networks and assets for the risks they face. We will equip our lifesavers with the training and technology they need to be more effective.



3

OUTCOME:

WORKING WITH PARTNERS, WE INFLUENCE IMPROVED SAFETY ON AND BESIDE THE WATER

To save every ONE

We know from our research on the Drowning Chain that, even if we had a lifeguard and lifeboat on every beach and every stretch of water, we would not be able to save every one through rescue alone. To achieve our Vision, we must work hard to stop people getting into trouble in the first place, and help them make the right choices to reduce their risks. This is why we invest in water safety.

OUR LOCAL FOCUS

From our analysis we know that 51% of total annual accidental coastal deaths occur in just 11 of the 79 coastal counties around the UK and Ireland. We also know that men over 35 are the most at risk group.

We know the activities that are putting people at most risk of serious incidents: sailing, motorboating, diving, fishing and swimming.

Coastal suicide rates have also steadily increased in recent years.

Our volunteers have always helped those most in need, and unfortunately there is a growing trend of mental health problems across Ireland and the UK. We need to ensure our lifesavers are trained to support all those at risk.

The RNLI and our partners are working hard to make sure everyone gets to go home safely.

With our partners, we have successfully implemented the following programmes in recent years:

- The Float to Live campaign has been giving practical advice on what people should do if they fall into cold water. We are seeing a growing body of anecdotal evidence that this advice is saving lives.
- The Swim Safe programme that we undertake with Swim England has reached thousands of children, teaching them how to be safe in and around open water.



Rock anglers can stay safe while enjoying their hobby, with our advice

- Working with the RYA and the UK MCA we have helped to develop the SafeTrx app, which monitors boat journeys and can alert emergency services if needed.

• **Targeted safety messaging to:**

- increase lifejacket wear in sea angling and commercial fishing
- encourage watersports enthusiasts to carry a means of calling for help
- encourage divers to be aware of their individual health risks.

• **Working with local councils to:**

- develop local drowning prevention plans
- install safety equipment such as life rings in high-risk areas, and train people to use them

- install and maintain signage and barriers in locations that put people at greatest risk.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2021?

We will have updated our Water Safety Plans to target the areas of greatest risk. This includes high-risk locations and at-risk groups such as divers over 45, rock anglers, and sailors who forget or choose not to wear lifejackets.

We will have developed 11 county-level drowning reduction plans based on all the insights generated historically and our ongoing analysis.

We will continue to develop our training to ensure that our lifesavers are able to support those at risk due to mental health problems.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2024?

We will broaden our education programme to include adults in the most at-risk groups, and target areas in the most effective way.

We will continue to work with partners who are experts in suicide support. We will make sure we're giving our crew the support they need both before and after difficult events, as part of our own wellbeing programme.

Overall, it is our goal that by 2024 there will be a downward trend in the number of serious incidents, particularly in our priority locations.

OUTCOME 3 CONTINUED OVERLEAF >>



RNLI lifeguards carried out more than 3½ million safety interventions in 2018



Working with partners, we helped train people in communities along the Thames in how to use rescue throw bags



With **courage** **NOTHING** is impossible

OUR GLOBAL FOCUS

Over the last decade, 4 million people drowned globally. This is an international development challenge that lacks recognition, and for this reason it has been identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the silent epidemic.

Over 90% of drowning deaths happen in low and middle-income countries. In many parts of Asia, drowning is now a leading killer of children over the age of 1.

WITH COURAGE, NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

We believe things need to change. Inspired by our founder, Sir William Hillary, we have been at the forefront of drowning reduction around the UK and Ireland for nearly 200 years. When Sir William appealed to the nation for a national lifeboat service in 1823, he said that we 'should extend our views [of drowning prevention] from our own immediate coasts, to the most remote quarters of the globe, and to every neighbouring state'.

We are proud that we invest a small part of our income in saving lives internationally, inspiring other

organisations to see that, with courage, nothing is impossible.

Making a difference globally will require the coordinated efforts of international organisations, institutions, countries and civil society. With nearly 200 years of experience, the RNLI's role internationally will be as a catalyst for drowning reduction. While we have a lot of experience in drowning prevention in the UK and Ireland, we also understand that internationally there are a variety of situations that put people at risk. That is why it is so important to work with local organisations who have first-hand experience to co-create interventions that will not only be effective at saving lives, but will also be sustainable. The learning from this activity can also inform our work in the UK and Ireland.

We have already worked with a number of organisations in Tanzania and Bangladesh to help them reduce drowning. The interventions have included low-cost rescue equipment, educational tools for schools, swimming lessons, lifeguarding and even daycare provisions to protect the youngest children from the immediate risks of drowning.



In Bangladesh, Reshma (8) and Ridoy (9) go fishing in floodwaters. Neither child knows how to swim.

Over the next 10 years we, along with other like-minded organisations, will aim to elevate the issue onto the global agenda, widen the research base, grow skills and continue to identify practical and cost-effective solutions. Above all, we will encourage governments and institutions to develop sustainable approaches to drowning reduction so that fewer people drown, particularly where there is an unacceptably high burden.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2021?

We will continue to operate three programmes of activity: one globally and two at a country level. Funding for this work already comes from multiple sources, and by the end of 2021 we will aim for all this work to be fully funded by donors who support our international work. Depending on the level of funding, this may enable us to expand to four countries so that we can have a greater impact.

Our work will hopefully lead to the first-ever resolution linked to drowning prevention being agreed at the United Nations.

There will be a significant rise in awareness of the drowning issue (at governmental level) for over 30 countries in the WHO Pacific and South Asian regions as a result of the RNLI-sponsored WHO country reports.

The impact of low-cost interventions will have been

demonstrated through our research in the Barisal region of Bangladesh. This should influence government and institutions to take ownership of the issue.

Overall, our work globally will have helped raise the profile of the issue with key influencers. We will also have gathered evidence of drowning in West Bengal and developed strategic alliances to enable sustained drowning prevention activity.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2024?

Substantial change to this epidemic will take time, but by 2024 the work we are doing with our partners in these countries, and in the development sector as a whole, will have developed and matured in line with our plan. This will result in a much wider understanding of the risks, challenges and potential solutions connected with the issue of drowning.

Overall, it is our goal that by 2024 drowning prevention will be a higher priority and better resourced in areas of the world with the greatest drowning burden. More institutions and agencies will be involved, more evidence will be available, new innovative solutions will have been developed, and more lives will have been saved.



Supervision (including creche and daycare schemes) is one potential solution to the drowning problem in Bangladesh



4

OUTCOME:

OUR PEOPLE LOVE BEING PART OF THE RNLI

We're powered
by **passion**
TALENT and
kindness

Whatever role we do as a volunteer or employee, whatever time we give to our charity, we are the engine that keeps the RNLI running.

We are one crew. Every one of us has an important role to play. No one person or role is more important than any other. We must all respect, value and support each other as equal members of the RNLI family. Whether staff or volunteer, lifesaver or fundraiser, we all work together and learn from each other.

Our investment in employee engagement surveys allow us the opportunity to gain insight into the views of all our staff, and in 2019 we also piloted a volunteer survey. The results of this survey will be available in 2020 for us to take action. These surveys are important, as they help us understand the priorities of our volunteers and staff, enabling us to focus our efforts on what matters most.

Our recent decision to increase the regional emphasis on lifesaving and fundraising, providing more resource closer to the communities where we operate, has been informed

by this feedback. This will ensure our communities have the support they need, and deserve, and feel involved in our future direction.

We are listening and working to ensure our staff and volunteers have the best experience while working with our charity by:

- providing a clear vision for the future RNLI
- giving volunteers and staff a voice in shaping the future
- investing in wellbeing
- providing good opportunities for personal development.

As one crew, we need to have the skills, confidence and opportunity to make the biggest difference we can when it comes to saving lives. To help us achieve the Outcomes set out in this document, we want all volunteers and staff to love being part of the RNLI, and feel inspired to do their best to take our charity forward. We also need future volunteers and staff to want to become and remain part of this family.



Generations of volunteers
have enjoyed saving lives
with the RNLI

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2021?

The new regional model will be making a difference across the RNLI. Through building a more regional way of working, decisions will be made that reflect regional priorities. We will make sure our support services are designed so that communities receive the help they need.

We will have the results of the 2019 pilot volunteer survey, we will complete a broader volunteer survey (2020) and we will be taking action on the things that matter most to our volunteers. We are an inclusive organisation and want to ensure everyone has a voice.

We will have extended our volunteer recognition scheme so that people can be properly recognised for their contributions to lifesaving and fundraising. This will be in addition to the existing Gallantry awards.

In 2019, the RNLI had 58

apprentices across 17 different programmes, allowing development for existing employees and bringing new people into the organisation. We will continue to develop our volunteers and staff and give greater opportunities for progression. This will include the provision of training courses, practical on-the-job learning, and apprenticeships in a variety of areas.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2024?

We will continue to develop a range of opportunities to meet the evolving needs of our volunteers. This will include a variety of roles to suit volunteers' skillsets, availability and preferences.

We will continue to celebrate our volunteers for the amazing work they do to save lives at sea.

Our people come from a wide range of backgrounds, with different

skills, experience and ideas. Through our recruitment and operating practices, we will continue to increase diversity in all forms and in all roles throughout the organisation. This will ensure that we reflect and support the needs of the communities where we work.

We will continually review how our ways of working need to adapt and change in response to the changing needs of our volunteers and staff and to make sure that the RNLI is an inclusive organisation that allows everyone to thrive and succeed.

The RNLI will be recognised for its training excellence, and the amount of training we deliver locally and at the RNLI College in Poole will have expanded materially. We will champion learning, which will help us to grow our capabilities by attracting new volunteers and staff, and by helping them develop.



Coxswain David MacAskill holding the Bronze Medal for Gallantry he was awarded in 2016

Overall, it is our goal that by 2024 we will see an upward trend in staff and volunteer engagement and retention.

5

OUTCOME:

**WE RAISE THE FUNDS
WE NEED AND SPEND
DONORS' MONEY WISELY**

We volunteer
to face the
STORM
together

We cannot save lives at sea without the fundraisers and supporters who so kindly give time and money. We take this support seriously and strive to ensure that every penny and cent raised and donated makes a difference. Over the next 5 years we aim to grow our crew of supporters and to show them why they are valued lifesavers too.

It cost £163.5M to run the RNLI in 2018. That's the equivalent of over £447,000 (€504,000) a day.

Year on year, our costs continue to rise, but our income has not risen at the same rate. We know that there are some essential things that we need to invest in, such as technology and infrastructure, and we need to raise the funds to meet this investment.

We have also seen the number of supporters on our database decline. Attracting and maintaining new supporters will also involve investment – whether in the form of new campaigns, activities that put the fun back into fundraising, or technology that demonstrates impact in a personalised way (such as alerts showing when a lifeboat has launched).

We will put our donors and supporters at the heart of what we do and how we talk about our work.

After all, it is thanks to them that our lifeboats can launch, our lifeguards can keep people safe on beaches, and we can help tackle the global drowning problem.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2021?

We will have recruited new donors, secured more pledgers (people who have told us they'd like to leave us a gift in their Will), and reinvigorated the support given to our 850 fundraising branches. This will be achieved by offering more people the opportunity to give to the RNLI in traditional ways (such as making donations, pledging gifts in Wills and joining community fundraising groups), and in new ways (such as through contactless technologies and social media channels).

Our growing family of supporters will enjoy a tailored RNLI experience, thanks to technology that will allow



Our fundraisers give their all, and we have a duty to spend every penny they raise wisely

us to personalise the communications they receive.

We will continue to develop our culture of value for money: making our funds go further and maximising the impact of every pound and euro donated. We will work to ensure that we continue to receive competitive commercial arrangements with our suppliers, and that we are resourced in the most cost-effective way.

All staff and volunteers will take responsibility for ensuring our income is used to help save every one.

We will focus on generating income from commercial opportunities, particularly corporate partnerships. These partnerships will help us generate income, as well as providing benefits such as delivering safety messages and raising relevance with new audiences.

We will align our fundraising and volunteer support in our lifesaving regions. We will also grow our network of fundraising branches across Ireland and the UK.

We have seen an increasing amount of support for our international work, and we will continue to engage with these people and others who have an interest in this area. By the end of 2021, it is our intention that our international activity will be completely funded by these supporters.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2024?

We will bring people together to celebrate the RNLI's 200th

anniversary. It will be a spectacular year of remembering two centuries of courageous lifesaving, thanking everyone who has given their time, support and sometimes, sadly, their life. It will also be an opportunity to show why we need more people to help us save more lives. It is our intention to recruit a million new supporters (donors and volunteers), and to engage generations to come.

Over the next 10 years (2020–30), we will invest significantly in our infrastructure and ensure that it is fit to support our lifesavers for years to come.

By 2024, we will also have invested in both our paging and data networks. This will help us operate swiftly, with agility, and with good cyber security.

Funding plans will be in place to ensure the income we receive can meet the cost of the investments, including major projects such as the Severn class lifeboat life extension programme.

We will have diversified the range of income streams – especially income resulting from commercial growth. This will be part of a robust financial plan that ensures the RNLI is sustainable for decades to come.

We will have developed a greater level of certainty that our future income is sustainable. This will be achieved by growing the number of donors and pledgers we connect with, by keeping them engaged with our work, and by growing our commercial income.

Overall, it is our goal that by 2024 we will be raising enough funds to cover our increased lifesaving work, to support the required investment in our infrastructure and to build resilience for the future.



Attending events like the Bournemouth Air Festival helps us attract new supporters

OUTCOME:

OUR FUTURE IS SUSTAINABLE AND SECURE

Trustworthy
Courageous
 SELFLESS
 Dependable

In 2024, we will be celebrating the RNLI's 200th anniversary. We need to make sure the RNLI is set up to continue to save lives for the next 200 years.

We want to be there for our children, grandchildren and future generations. So we need to understand what is likely to happen beyond the next 5 years and to make sure that any decisions we make will stand the test of time.

In the 20th century, the RNLI was part of many people's lives from a young age, from raising money to supporting a Blue Peter appeal, to learning about some of the tragic disasters that took so many lives.

But, over time, studies have shown that younger people see us as less relevant. We need to change this so that future generations know the RNLI and can be involved in saving lives at sea in their communities.

We need to ensure that everything we do is sustainable, from our finances to our environmental footprint. We are committed to playing our part in the transition to a low-carbon world. We are working on finding and implementing opportunities to move towards being zero carbon.

We have already taken steps to reduce our carbon footprint through installing more renewable energy sources, such as solar panels and ground source heat pumps to heat our stations.

Good governance is vital to our reputation, and we need to ensure we operate legally and within the regulations that govern our activities. We will continue to have independent oversight through our Trustee Board. Industry advisors on our councils and special interest groups will ensure that we have excellent advice, whether on developing training for our crew or on our sustainability work.

We will continue to report progress on the environmental, safeguarding and inclusivity elements of our sustainability activity in our Annual Report each year.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2021?

We will better understand how younger generations perceive the RNLI brand and what we can do to improve our relevance with new audiences to



Though programmes like Swim Safe, we are building relevance with a whole new generation

generate greater awareness and support.

We will have started to develop our Roadmap to 2050. This will involve staying true to the Purpose of the RNLI but deepening the way we work with current partners, including the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the Irish Coast Guard, and building relationships with new partners who will be able to help us save every one.

We will better understand the impact of climate change on the demands on the RNLI, our ability to operate, and the communities where we live and work.

We will have a more detailed understanding of the waste we produce, so we can plan how we stop sending waste to landfill.

Social and environmental criteria will be further embedded into our procurement processes and be understood by all those who buy things or commission work to be done.

We will ensure that we have clear activity plans for the next 5 years, to support everyone in achieving our Outcomes. These plans will be understood and visible to all, so that we all understand our part in securing the RNLI's future.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 2024?

By achieving our first five Strategic Outcomes and living our Values, we will be promoting the RNLI's lifesaving work, managing risks to our reputation and helping to ensure our future is secure and sustainable.

We will have developed our longer term Sustainability Plan and will be monitoring changes in legislation and key risks and opportunities for the RNLI.

We will have made substantial progress towards maximising the effectiveness of the Poole campus as a support and manufacturing centre, heritage site, training college and cultural heart of the RNLI.



An RNLI education volunteer makes an impression on the people we're counting on for support in the future

We will have prepared a 5-year plan to see us through to 2029, and will be working towards saving even more lives through our communities and our crew.

Overall, it is our goal to ensure that the RNLI is set up to continue saving lives and work towards saving every one.



Porthdinllaen Lifeboat Station is one of many to use a ground source heat pump



BEYOND 5 YEARS: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We believe
that even
ONE
DROWNING
is too many

The way we deliver our lifesaving, water safety and fundraising activities will change over time as technology and methods of communication emerge rapidly.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change will have a significant impact on the RNLI in the future, both domestically and internationally. It will affect those in need of our help, and also how we equip those who provide that help.

As we look beyond the next 5 years and out to 2050, science tells us that Ireland and the UK will see hotter drier summers, wetter warmer winters and more extreme weather events like storms. The UK Government's Committee on Climate Change is suggesting the higher end of sea level rise predictions are now more likely, potentially meaning a sea level rise of 50cm by 2080.

Two hundred thousand properties are in areas predicted to suffer substantial erosion, and there will be double the amount of homes located on areas likely to be classified as flood plains.

Rises of this magnitude will threaten some coastal communities,

their people, and their lifeboat stations. If people cannot live in a community, we will have no crew and no support. If a lifeboat or station is damaged, it will be difficult to provide a search and rescue service.

We will ensure that our buildings can withstand the projected rise in sea levels. In some circumstances, we will use modular buildings, and potentially some that are fully mobile.

Coastal erosion and extreme weather may make watersports more unpredictable and dangerous. Our safety and education work will be based on an understanding of the highest risk activities and demographics. We expect to see more people entering the water unintentionally, and a continued need to educate people in how to behave safely and increase the chances of rescue.

Climate change and flooding may also have a significant impact on Irish and UK infrastructure, road networks,



Climate change will have a significant impact on the way we deliver our services in the future

and communities. We are considering the impact that this may have on the way we work with our lifesaving partners and how this will impact the type of support we need to offer those we rescue.

Over the next 20 years, it's likely that the impact on inland waterways from extreme rainfall will lead to increased inland flooding, requiring a multi-service response.

Internationally, low and middle-income countries will be least equipped to cope. UNICEF estimates that 800 million children live in areas of extreme flooding risk. Unpredictable changes to river courses are already having an impact due to increased ice melt from mountain ranges. Over the next 5 years we will be working with our partners to understand how this

risk will evolve and what interventions need to be put in place.

SUSTAINABILITY

The RNLI is committed to becoming a low-carbon, climate-resilient and more sustainable organisation. Today, most of the electricity we use comes from renewable sources, either our own or through our energy suppliers.

Looking beyond 2024, we aim to replace more of our road and beach vehicles with electric models and reduce our emissions further. For the long term, we have designed our Tamar and Shannon class lifeboats to provide 25 years of service, before being refurbished and refitted for another 25 years. We are also thinking about how we will power our lifeboats in the future.

We plan to continue the adoption of appropriate renewable energy systems in all new builds and major refurbishments.

We will continue to closely track the changes in available fuels, mobile energy sources, energy infrastructure and marine engine technologies, trialling and testing where appropriate.

We are also committed to removing avoidable single-use plastics from all of our activity, retail sales and supply chain. This work is already underway.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF >>



Our stations, lifeboats and volunteers will need to be ready for a likely increase in the number of storms



The Shannon class lifeboat is built with sustainability in mind



BEYOND 5 YEARS: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The **RNLI** is
the charity that
**SAVES LIVES
AT SEA**

HUMAN FACTORS

We know that the UK has an ageing population. By 2050 the population over 60 will have increased by 50%, and the millennial generation will make up the majority of the workforce. We need to understand what this generational shift means, in terms of how we will be spending our leisure time and the impact on demand for the RNLI, how we provide our search and rescue services, and how we fund them.

In some coastal areas, there are real challenges for people to be able to live and work in their own communities. In some cases, this is directly impacting the number of available RNLI volunteers and consequently our ability to operate an effective lifesaving service. By 2030 we are predicting that there will be a reduction in available volunteers, and that the needs of those volunteers will have changed.

But in the longer term, as automation and robotisation increase, spare time for volunteering may well increase, and we may see new skills become available that are currently the domain of paid staff. We are working to understand this evolving

change and how the RNLI as a volunteer-led community organisation can support the future needs and lifestyles of our volunteers, while creating sustainable opportunities for new audiences to engage with us.

We are also aware of the changing nature of volunteering across the charity sector. While there will always be people who choose to volunteer regularly, many are seeking alternative ways to offer their time through flexible and micro volunteering opportunities.

TECHNOLOGY FACTORS

As the UK and Ireland's onshore and nearshore data and mobile coverage improves, so will the usage of aerial devices and live camera footage.

We are working with partners and suppliers to understand which of these technologies we will use to best effect together. Over time, these solutions could help our lifesavers around the coast and those calling for help.

In the future, they have the potential to change how swiftly and precisely we and our partners can find people in danger and carry out a rescue.

The evolution in data coverage, developments in aerial technology, and progress on smart infrastructure



We owe it to our younger crew members like Georgia (19) to plan for the future

all have the potential to help us in ways that have yet to be developed. We will stay close to those who are developing these and other technologies for the commercial sector, and work together to see how we can use them to save lives.

By 2050, if not sooner, we think we will be using automated search technology to help our volunteers in our endeavours to save every one.

Automation is developing swiftly, and we are already looking at the

development of automated launch and recovery equipment and those with integral electric drives. This could make launch and recovery operations safer for our volunteers.

BEHAVIOURAL FACTORS

To change people’s behaviour and make them safer around water, we need to understand why we act in the way that we do. For example, there are many reasons that people involved in commercial fishing

don’t like lifejackets, and this is something that applies the world over. So simply providing lifejackets will not result in safer fishing communities, be that in the Gower or in Zanzibar.

Instead, we need to understand the concerns of those working in commercial fishing, and watch how they operate day to day. Only then can we design an intervention that is likely to be used and become effective.



We need to understand the people who work in fishing if we are to keep them safe



Stuart Popham

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The RNLI is a dynamic organisation. Always seeking ways to save more lives and reduce the number of people who drown. Always seeking to do that more efficiently, as we depend on voluntary donations to operate. Always seeking selfless people who are willing to push the boundaries and ensure we are at the forefront of water rescue.

The strategic approach set out in this document illustrates our intentions – ambitious intentions.

The RNLI is a charity and we, the Trustees, have responsibility both in law and morally to meet our charitable purpose: to save lives at sea. We take our responsibility as seriously and as attentively as we can. We are committed, on our watch, to the achievement of our ambition. With you, we are lifesavers. We endorse the

strategic direction set out in this document and will strive to see the RNLI achieve these intentions.

Drowning can be prevented and our waters can be safer. Our Values, so ably demonstrated by everyone at the RNLI, best place us to achieve our Vision – with the help of all our supporters and partners – to save every one.

Stuart Popham CMG
*Chair on behalf
of the Board of Trustees*

Like **generations** of selfless **LIFESAVERS** before us
We're **READY** to **SAVE LIVES**



Exmouth Shannon class lifeboat *R & J Welburn 13-03*. Launch and recovery exercise with the Supacat Shannon launch and recovery system



RNLI lifeguard on a rescue watercraft (RWC) with St Michael's Mount near Penzance in the background

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024:

A LETTER TO OUR FOUNDER



4 March, 2024

Dear Sir William,

Two hundred years ago today in a letter to HM the King, you wrote a plea for volunteers to 'risk their own lives for those whom they have never known or seen'. Good people responded then, and have continued to do so for 200 years: men and women showing extraordinary courage, supported by volunteers and donors who hold your values dear. In this letter, we lay out our ambition for the future, hoping that you will find it true to your inspiration and your mission.

First and foremost, we will continue to save lives on and near the sea, both at home and abroad. You brought independent lifeboat stations together, and we are committed to operating as one crew: a community working together to save every one. We will use all the information available to make sure we are helping where we are needed most. From the very outset of our charity, you foresaw a need for skilled crew, and today it is clear that our crews will need to be ever more highly trained to deal with the increasing risks the future has in store.

You understood in 1824 that new technology could help more people, looking for ways to use rockets, steam power and signals. Where you looked to steam power, we will look to autonomous boats and unmanned aerial vehicles. Where you experimented with signals, we will investigate satellite-driven automated alerts. But the principles remain the same: we will use technology to respond to those in need as quickly, and as safely, as possible.

In building Douglas's sea defences and Tower of Refuge, you showed that saving lives isn't just about rescue. We will continue to show that drowning is preventable, collaborating with those who are experts in their fields, wherever we are needed in the world.

We remember that you were a volunteer. It is our job to make sure that the generations of today and tomorrow are able to give, whether of their time, their skills, their money, or their passion. We will reach out for support in the same way that you reached out at the very beginning.

Your letter serves as a reminder and an inspiration in so many ways. We write you this reply so you can rest assured that the RNLI continues to do what you dreamed of: saving the lives of those whom we have never known or seen.

Yours sincerely,

The crew of 2024



Lifeboats

Whoever we are Wherever we are from

We are one crew

Ready to save lives

We're powered by passion **talent** and **kindness**

Like generations of selfless lifesavers before us

This is our watch

We lead the way

Valuing each other Trusting each other **Depending on one another**

Volunteering to face the storm together

Knowing that **with courage nothing is impossible**

That is what has always driven us

to save every one we can

It's what makes every one of us

a lifesaver
