



# Water Safety Policy 2016

Jane Pritchard

Community Greenspace

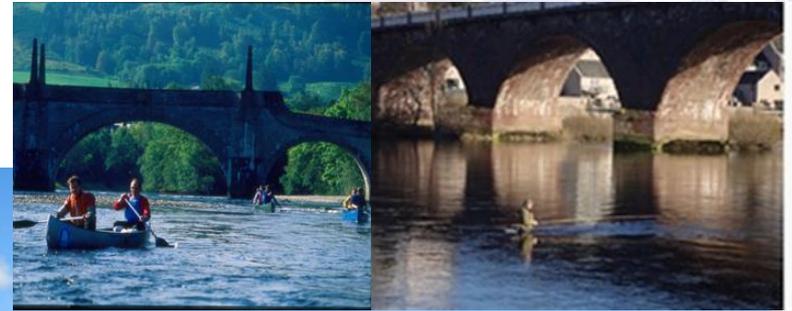


PERTH &  
KINROSS  
COUNCIL

Securing the future... • *Improving services*  
• *Enhancing quality of life* • *Making the best use of public resources*

# Perth and Kinross

- Rivers & lochs used for recreation & tourism.
- Council land includes riverside parks eg Perth Inches on River Tay.



# Perth City - incidents

Perth bridges – instances of deliberate entry to water - self harm – ‘cry for help’.

River islands – youth parties/camping – tragic accidents/ misjudge dangers.



# Policy stakeholders



## **Environment Service (TES) :**

- CG parks & open spaces - RAP site inspections.
- Operations – inspection & maintenance of PRE.
- Roads & Structures – cycle paths & street placement of WSS/ PRE.

## **Housing & Community Care (HCC):**

- Perth & Kinross Water Safety Partnership (PKWSP).
- Community Wardens – role where there's vandalism of PRE.
- Mental health & suicide prevention.

## **Education & Children's Services (ECS):**

- School based water safety messages & 'Safetaysiders'.
- Outdoor Education – rescue skills, teacher training.

## **Health & Safety**

# Aim of Policy



To :

- Ensure effective, efficient & sustainable water safety management of Council land.
- Reduce accidental & deliberate entry to water.
- Use a risk assessment process (RAP) to identify appropriate water safety response.

Formalised existing practice – few changes required.

# Policy basis

Legislation – duty of care (reasonable steps, RAP based)

RoSPA advice – used to inform both pre policy RAP & policy.

- Consultant advice (1993 & 2006).
- Assessing Inland Accidental Drowning.
- Water Safety Policy in Scotland – A Guide

Drowning incidents information

WSS & PRE in place pre policy  
& PKWSP additional WSS  
placement ongoing at popular rural  
locations on private & Council land.



# Policy basis - drowning incidents

## Inland accidental drowning (RoSPA)

- 2009-2011 – 260 in UK (equates to 30ish in Scotland)
- Water sports – Council fishing permits have WS advice.
- Falls from land based activities high (big group)

**Implications** – education, edge protection.



# Policy basis - drowning incidents

SFRS – Perth & Kinross Jan 2010 – April 2014

- 68 water rescues attended
- 38 from moving water
- 8 fatalities & 18 non fatal casualties

**Implications** - first response phone 999,  
PRE where there are recurring incidents.



# Policy – design for safety & amenity

Public amenity – access to edge or separation from edge?

- Edge protection & views:
  - Design - routing of paths, gradients.
  - Barriers & secure edges.
  - Vegetation management & wide margins.
  - Pond planting to discourage access & encourage biodiversity.



# Policy changes – RAP inspections

Site reassessments (RAP) repeated every 4 years unless:

- Change to site (repeat RAP within 1 month).
- Report of incident (repeat RAP within 5 working days).

Appendix to Policy – Guide for Risk Assessors.

Includes easy to follow flow charts for officers – encourages consistent standards based on site characteristics.



# Policy changes - PRE

## Limitations of PRE:

- Need for training.
- Risk to rescuer.
- Distract from 999.

## PRE at locations where:

- There is known & recurring entry to water
- They are highly visible.
- They can be used effectively.
- They can be regularly inspected and maintained.

## PRE not to be used where:

- High falls injury, rescuers at risk.
- Fast currents carry casualty out of range.



# Policy changes - PRE inspections

Reduce multiple PRE to most effective locations to increase efficiency & enable sustainable inspections & maintenance.

Continue to inspect PRE on Tay Street, Perth daily.

Reduce PRE inspections on greenspace sites (weekly April-Oct & monthly rest of year).

Repeated vandalism – consider relocating PRE or replacing with WSS.



# Policy changes - WSS

WSS only at:

- Slipways.
- Deep/fast water adjacent to public facility.
- Known & recurring incidents of entry to water.

Otherwise in parks and countryside sites often located at main access points or car parks rather than at waterside.



# Policy in action

Appendix to Policy – Guide for Risk Assessors – consistent standards based on site characteristics. Training to encourage common approach. RAPs ongoing for all parks & countryside sites.



# Policy in action – RAP example

Perth's Riverside Park large riverside frontage and feature ponds.  
Annual Riverside Light Nights – free lightshow 59,030 people attended 16 nights in Feb 2019.  
Pre event RAP in 2017 required additional fencing along riverside.

