



COLD WATER DIP EVENTS

INTRODUCTION

Becky Nelson | RNLI Events Business Partner



Lifeboats

INTRODUCTION



Over 600 fundraising groups



Lifeboats

INTRODUCTION



Over 600 fundraising groups

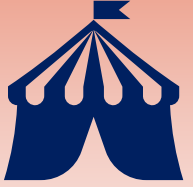


£16M



Lifeboats

INTRODUCTION

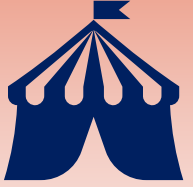


Around 13,000 events taking place



Lifeboats

INTRODUCTION



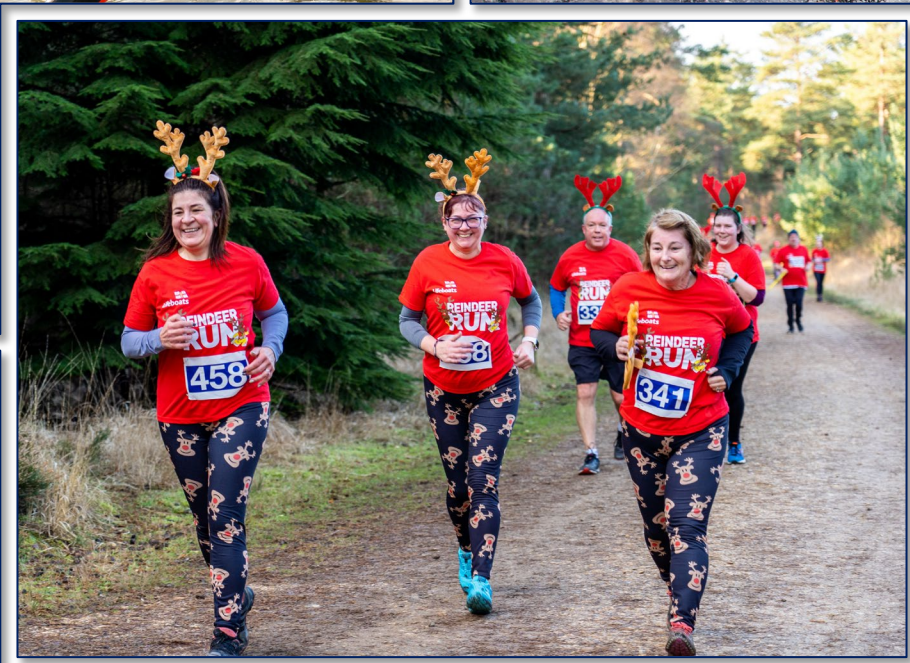
Around 13,000 events taking place




No governance in place



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DEFINITION

A background image showing several people in cold water. One person in the foreground is wearing a bright green wetsuit and a green headband, with their arms raised. Another person is visible in the background, smiling. The water is choppy and reflects light.

“An RNLI organised mass participation event at which participants run into cold water as part of a fundraising challenge”



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HEADLINE ISSUES

- **Conflict of interest with water safety campaign**
- **No proper risk assessments in place**
- **No event safety plans**
- **Limited or inappropriate water safety support**
- **RNLI staff not made aware events were taking place**



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ACTION

- **Chair (events)**
- **Water safety**
- **Media**
- **Engagement (fundraising volunteer managers)**
- **Operations (lifeboats and lifeguards)**
- **Health and safety**

INTERIM GUIDANCE

- **Submitted safety/planning documentation**
- **Event best practice requirements**
- **Expected safety standards in place**
- **Inclusion of water safety information**



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SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- 
- A background image showing several people in wetsuits and swim caps in cold water. One person in the foreground is wearing a black wetsuit and a colorful swim cap, with their arms raised in a celebratory gesture. Another person in a yellow wetsuit and green swim cap is also visible, with their arms raised. The water is splashing, and the overall scene suggests a cold water dip or swim event.
- 1. Cold water dips are stopped**
 - 2. Cold Water Dips continue - with strict guidance to mitigate risk**
 - 3. Cold water dips are restricted based on water temperatures**



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DECISION AND NEXT STEPS



COLD WATER DIPS TO CONTINUE...



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DECISION AND NEXT STEPS



COLD WATER DIPS TO CONTINUE...

- Staff are notified in advance that an event is taking place
- All event organisers must follow the guidance
- Safety paperwork was draw up and submitted



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DECISION AND NEXT STEPS



COLD WATER DIPS TO CONTINUE...

- Staff are notified in advance that an event is taking place
- All event organisers must follow the guidance
- Safety paperwork was draw up and submitted

Decision will be reviewed on an annual basis



Lifeboats

SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

Risk assessment and event safety plan templates

RISK ASSESSMENT									
Hazard	What might happen?	Consequences	RISK RATING			Control Measures			
			Severity	Frequency	Overall	Prevent	Reduce	Rescue	Recover
Peer pressure leading to unsafe behaviour	Participant Staff	Participant could be injured but not seriously if not with damaged to body, damage to boat if force applied, falling and collision	Minor	Low	Low	• Avoid offering heavy items if possible • Use mechanical lifts if necessary (check for heavy items) • Lift in a safe manner where lifting aids are not available (you must seek assistance for any items over 20kg) • Ensure anyone who lifts items from ground level • Use proper lifting technique (bend knees, not back) • Keep feet shoulder width apart			
Diving - accident while diving to and from site	Participant Staff	Collision with moving object or participant causing physical harm, damage to boat if force applied, falling and collision	Minor	Low	Low	• Ensure all are using a water that has had regular vehicle checks • Avoid driving in adverse weather conditions • Avoid driving in wet weather, allow for greater braking distances • Avoid driving in high winds, especially if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving			
Diving - objects falling to water	Participant Staff	Participant could be injured but not seriously if not with damaged to body, damage to boat if force applied, falling and collision	Minor	Low	Low	• Avoid driving in adverse weather conditions • Avoid driving in wet weather, allow for greater braking distances • Avoid driving in high winds, especially if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving			
Signs and signs board without barriers off road/highway	Participant Staff	Participant could be injured but not seriously if not with damaged to body, damage to boat if force applied, falling and collision	Minor	Low	Low	• Avoid driving in adverse weather conditions • Avoid driving in wet weather, allow for greater braking distances • Avoid driving in high winds, especially if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving			
Swimming pool	Participant Staff	Participant could be injured but not seriously if not with damaged to body, damage to boat if force applied, falling and collision	Minor	Low	Low	• Avoid driving in adverse weather conditions • Avoid driving in wet weather, allow for greater braking distances • Avoid driving in high winds, especially if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving • Put provisions in place to prevent loss of a vehicle if you are driving			

EVENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

26 December

Bedrock Marina

Annual Big Bedrock Dip


Headed up by accomplished Volunteer Event Organiser, Wilma Flintstone

The annual big bedrock boxing day dip is taking place once again

Headed up by accomplished Volunteer Event Organiser, Wilma Flintstone

This year promises to be a bumper year due to securing a new site and lots more volunteer stewards to help with the logistics

Safety cover is being provided by the marina's kayaking club and volunteers from the RNLI's lifeguarding community.



SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

Risk assessment and event safety plan templates



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PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION – <name of event>

Participant details – for adults only
(if you are giving parental consent, please only fill out the form on page 2):

PRIVACY NOTICE *Privacy notice should be placed before the date is collected*

By completing this form, you are providing consent for the **RNLI BRANCH NAME HERE** to process the personal details provided for the administration of this event. The information will not be used for any other purpose or shared with third parties for their own marketing purposes. The data will be stored for a maximum period of 12 months from the date of the event.

Please note any preferences expressed here does not effect on how you will hear from the RNLI centrally. If you wish to change how you hear from the RNLI centrally, please contact data_protection@rnli.org.uk.

For more information about the RNLI's Privacy Policy and your Rights visit our website at www.rnli.org/footer/privacy-and-security.

Participant first name:	Participant last name:
Address:	Email:
Over 18: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Please provide a contact number which will only be used in the case of an emergency:

A screenshot of a Facebook event page for the 'Selsey Seal Dip'. The event is scheduled for Friday, 4 May, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The cover photo shows a group of people in wetsuits and swimwear standing in the shallow water of a beach, with a small boat visible in the background. The page indicates that ticket sales have ended, with a note that 'Ticket sales have now ended'. A 'Sales Ended' button is visible, along with a link to 'Explore similar events'. The event is categorized as 'Sports & Recreation' and 'Local'. The location is listed as 'Selsey, Selsey, England'.

[illegible][illegible]

Registration of participants

SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

Risk assessment and event safety plan templates



Lifeboats

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Participant details – for adults only
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Participant first name:	Participant last name:
Address:	Email:
Over 18 : Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Please provide a contact number which will only be used in the case of an emergency:

		Common Injuries				Injury Type		Injury Cause	
Scenario	Who might be injured?	Consequences	Prevalence	Severity	Prevalence	Severity	Prevalence	Severity	
Team annual building	Everyone Staff	Strains and sprains but not limited to back pain, damage to limbs, bruising, lacerations, broken bones, sprains, dislocations, bruising and cuts.	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	
Recreation, obstacle activity to get the team working	Everyone Staff	Collisions with moving vehicle or equipment causing fractures, sprains, lacerations, bruising, cuts, abrasion, lacerations	Possible	Major	Possible	Major	Possible	Major	
Drinking, obstacle, playing in water	Everyone Staff	Slips, trips and falls, bruising, cuts, abrasions, lacerations, sprains, dislocations, bruising, cuts, abrasions, lacerations	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	
Relay race, team building, obstacle activity	Everyone Staff	Slips, trips and falls, bruising, cuts, abrasions, lacerations, sprains, dislocations, bruising, cuts, abrasions, lacerations	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	
Swimming practice	Everyone Staff	Slips, trips and falls, bruising, cuts, abrasions, lacerations, sprains, dislocations, bruising, cuts, abrasions, lacerations	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	Possible	Minor	

The image shows a presentation board titled "EVENT MANAGEMENT PLAN". At the top right is the Lifeboats logo, which consists of a red flag with white saltire cross and the word "Lifeboats" below it. The main title "Annual Big Bedrock Dip" is written in large, bold letters. Below the title, it says "26 December" and "Bedrock Marina". A paragraph states: "The annual big bedrock boxing day dip is taking place once again Headed up by accomplished Volunteer Event Organiser, Wilma Flintstone". Another paragraph says: "This year promises to be a bumper year due to securing a new site and lots more volunteer stewards to help with the logistics of the day." A third paragraph mentions: "Safety cover is being provided by the marina's kayaking club and volunteers from the RNLI's lifeguarding community." To the right of the text is a map showing the coastline of Bedrock Marina. The map labels various locations: "Northcliffe", "Preston", "Marine", "Moorings", "Rough Water", "Landing", "Beach", "Cliff Top", "Cliff Path", "Cliff Edge", "Cliff Base", "Cliff Face", "Cliff Summit", "Cliff Ridge", "Cliff Gully", "Cliff Trench", "Cliff Ravine", "Cliff Valley", "Cliff Hollow", "Cliff Cleft", "Cliff Crack", "Cliff Crevice", "Cliff Fissure", "Cliff Gap", "Cliff Opening", "Cliff Passage", "Cliff Way", "Cliff Road", "Cliff Lane", "Cliff Drive", "Cliff Avenue", "Cliff Boulevard", "Cliff Circle", "Cliff Square", "Cliff Triangle", "Cliff Polygon", "Cliff Hexagon", "Cliff Octagon", "Cliff Decagon", "Cliff Dodecagon", "Cliff Icosagon", "Cliff Stellate", "Cliff Star", "Cliff Cross", "Cliff Circle", "Cliff Square", "Cliff Rectangle", "Cliff Trapezoid", "Cliff Parallelogram", "Cliff Rhombus", "Cliff Kite", "Cliff Arrowhead", "Cliff Crescent", "Cliff Semicircle", "Cliff Quarter-circle", "Cliff Arc", "Cliff Chord", "Cliff Tangent", "Cliff Secant", "Cliff Radius", "Cliff Diameter", "Cliff Circumference", "Cliff Area", "Cliff Perimeter", "Cliff Volume", "Cliff Mass", "Cliff Density", "Cliff Temperature", "Cliff Humidity", "Cliff Wind Speed", "Cliff Wind Direction", "Cliff Rainfall", "Cliff Snowfall", "Cliff Ice Thickness", "Cliff Rock Composition", "Cliff Soil Type", "Cliff Vegetation", "Cliff Fauna", "Cliff Flora", "Cliff Microclimate", "Cliff Geology", "Cliff Topography", "Cliff Hydrology", "Cliff Meteorology", "Cliff Climatology", "Cliff Oceanography", "Cliff Atmospheric Science", "Cliff Environmental Studies", "Cliff Earth Sciences", "Cliff Biological Sciences", "Cliff Physical Sciences", "Cliff Chemical Sciences", "Cliff Mathematical Sciences", "Cliff Computational Sciences", "Cliff Engineering Sciences", "Cliff Medical Sciences", "Cliff Agricultural Sciences", "Cliff Social Sciences", "Cliff Humanities", "Cliff Arts", "Cliff Literature", "Cliff Music", "Cliff Dance", "Cliff Theatre", "Cliff Film", "Cliff Television", "Cliff Radio", "Cliff Internet", "Cliff Computing", "Cliff Telecommunications", "Cliff Transportation", "Cliff Infrastructure", "Cliff Urban Planning", "Cliff Architecture", "Cliff Design", "Cliff Construction", "Cliff Manufacturing", "Cliff Industry", "Cliff Commerce", "Cliff Economics", "Cliff Finance", "Cliff Law", "Cliff Politics", "Cliff Government", "Cliff Education", "Cliff Research", "Cliff Innovation", "Cliff Creativity", "Cliff Imagination", "Cliff Inspiration", "Cliff Motivation", "Cliff Passion", "Cliff Dedication", "Cliff Commitment", "Cliff Responsibility", "Cliff Accountability", "Cliff Transparency", "Cliff Integrity", "Cliff Honesty", "Cliff Trustworthiness", "Cliff Reliability", "Cliff Consistency", "Cliff Predictability", "Cliff Stability", "Cliff Resilience", "Cliff Flexibility", "Cliff Adaptability", "Cliff Openness", "Cliff Inclusiveness", "Cliff Diversity", "Cliff Equality", "Cliff Justice", "Cliff Fairness", "Cliff Compassion", "Cliff Empathy", "Cliff Sympathy", "Cliff Solidarity", "Cliff 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Noblesse de Dieu le Prime", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Tierce", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Sexte", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le None", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Vesper", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Compline", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Office", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Liturgie", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Sacrament", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Eucharistie", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Communion", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Messe", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Pontifical", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Canon", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Rituel", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Ceremonie", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Fonction", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Ministere", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Ordre", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Classe", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Grade", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Rango", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Dignite", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Prebende", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Cure", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Vicar", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Recteur", "Cliff Noblesse 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Dieu le Name", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Name", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Title", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Title", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Rank", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Rank", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Position", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Position", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Office", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Office", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le Post", "Cliff Noblesse de Dieu le

Registration of participants

Appropriate water safety and first aid cover



SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

Inclusion of water safety information

Cold water shock

The effect on the body of entering water 15°C and below is often underestimated. This shock can be the precursor to drowning.



Underwater shot of crew training in the sea survival pool at RNLI College

Why is cold water shock dangerous?

Anything below 15°C is defined as cold water and can seriously affect your breathing and movement, so the risk is significant most of the year.

Average UK and Ireland sea temperatures are just 12°C. Rivers such as the Thames are colder - even in the summer.

Top tips for cold water dips

Lifeguards

Watch later Share



SEA SWIMMING

HOW TO ENJOY COLD WATER SAFELY

YouTube

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Top tips for cold water dips

Lifeguards



SEA SWIMMING

HOW TO ENJOY COLD WATER SAFELY

YouTube



Coleman
Marine Insurance
A Gallagher Company

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

16th December 2021

Our Ref: AJG/4580157

Dear Sirs

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution, RNLI (Trading) Ltd, RNLI (Sales) Ltd, RNLI (Enterprises) Ltd, SAR Composites Ltd, RNLI Heritage Trust, RNLI College Ltd & RNLI Heritage Collection 2012

We act as Insurance Brokers to the above and are pleased to confirm that the following cover has been effected for the period 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, both dates inclusive:

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY	
Insurers:	Zurich Insurance plc
Policy No.:	LQ62191
Limit of Indemnity:	£10,000,000 anyone occurrence
Indemnity to Principal:	Included

7 Quay House
The Quay
Poole
Dorset
BH15 1HA
Tel: 01202 497410
www.colemanmarine.co.uk

Insurance broker approval

SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

HOW TO: COLD WATER DIP EVENTS

UPDATED: Jan 2023

OWNERS: National Events | Water Safety

REVIEW DATE: March 2023



Introduction

Cold water dips are a popular choice across the festive season. Typically, they take place on Boxing Day or New Year's Day and involve people 'dipping' in cold water (often in fancy dress) to raise money.

As with any water-based event, organisers must approach the task of organising a Cold Water Dip with the highest regard for safety management to ensure the safety of participants, volunteers and the public.

This guide is designed to support event organisers by highlighting the key considerations for safety and compliance when planning to deliver an RNLI cold water dip and includes links to appropriate templates and relevant guidance resources. However, it is not an exhaustive list of considerations and as with any event location, participant demographic, applicable health and safety regulations and on the day conditions (to name a few) can all affect the type and level of in-depth planning required. Specific advice is also available from your Community Manager or specialist guidance from the [Events Business Partners](#).

Important - please note: Cold water dips involve immersion into water that's almost certain to be colder than 15°C when taking place in the UK and Ireland. They are therefore considered a hazardous activity, with potential risk of Cold-Water Shock; peripheral cooling leading to incapacitation and Hypothermia.

Please ensure you thoroughly read through the 'Cold water shock and hypothermia' section of this document to understand hazards, risks and mitigations you will be responsible for.

Who is this information for?

This information is for RNLI staff or volunteers who are organising an RNLI Cold Water Dip event (rather than attending a third party organised event).

If you are not RNLI staff or volunteer, please contact the Fundraising 'In Aid Of' Team at: fundraising@rnli.org.uk | 0300 300 9908 (UK) or 01 511 9834 (outside UK).

What does organising an event 'on behalf of' the RNLI mean?

When you are organising an event 'on behalf of' the RNLI, you are representing the organisation and the RNLI is ultimately accountable for your activity. As such it is an RNLI organised event and so as the event organiser, you have a personal responsibility to ensure that you deliver the event in line with any relevant legislation and expected safety and compliance standards, as well as applying due diligence and best practice event management.

Before embarking on any event, an event organiser needs to be confident they are willing to take on the responsibility of leading the organisation and delivery of the activities involved. Events are a huge amount of fun but do require careful thought and planning to ensure everything is in place to make them a success, both from a fundraising perspective and safety and compliance perspective. The information in this document demonstrates the level of planning and documentation expected for a cold water dip.

Key tasks when organising and RNLI cold water dip

It's essential that cold water dips only operate with comprehensive and well managed risk assessments and event management/safety plans in place, along with the provision of registration processes. Each of the following tasks must be in place for all RNLI organised cold water dips as well as liaising with the relevant official bodies and local authorities/landowners to obtain all required permissions; this guide goes into more detail on each element.

- Notify your Community Manager: Before planning any fundraising event, always speak to your Community

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Event Planning Overview/Process

The diagram below is a reminder of some of the key steps you need to take when planning your event. A more detailed event checklist is available as [APPENDIX A](#) of this document. When to start planning will depend on the scale, and complexity of your event, as well as factors such as whether this event has been organised before or how experienced your organising team are in planning events of this nature. For brand new events, you should start your planning at least 6 months in advance.



Scoping and Logistics

Budgeting

It is important to carefully consider and forecast your costs and potential income so you can make an informed decision on whether your event is likely to make a return on investment. You should aim for a 1:3 expenditure to income ratio.

Start by putting together a list of all the things you think you are going to need - there are lots of ideas in this guide but there are likely to be other elements specific to your event to also consider. Identifying all requirements will help to prompt the items on the budget sheet. Remember to think about everything from stationery to the cost of first aid and safety cover providers. Once you have an idea of costs, consider how best to make a good return on investment, for example:

- Registration fees - In some cases, registration income alone can provide a return on investment but depends on factors such as number of participants you can accommodate and what is a reasonable to charge. It's recommended to some research to see what other charities are charging for similar activities.
- Minimum fundraising targets - Some charities require a minimum fundraising target from participants to cover costs and raise funds. However, be mindful that whilst lots of people will reach their target, you cannot guarantee this and therefore can be a riskier option. However, you could ask for this in addition to a registration fee.

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APPENDIX A:

Cold water dip event - planning checklist



First steps

Before putting any planning in place, please ensure you inform your RNLI manager of your intention to organise a Cold Water Dip Event. This will help them to support you with any planning tools or training you may require, as well as ensuring you have the right insurance in place. The checklist below provides prompts for some of the things you think about when planning your event. Please read the full 'how to' guide above for more detailed information.

Identify requirements

Start by listing all of the things you might need for your event. Think of each element, from the very start of your planning to event day and post event, drilling down into each section to put together a list of all the things that need attention. The checklist below gives you some pointers, but your planning will depend on many factors including the location and amount of people attending.

ACTION	✓
INITIAL PLANNING	
Budget - start to prepare your budget; list as many of the predicted costs as you can think of at this stage as well as expected income - this will tell you whether you are likely to make a return on investment. You should aim for a 1:3 expenditure to income ratio.	
Event Date - make initial enquiries for your chosen location and dates that it might be available. Check on whether there are any other events in the region at the same time as this may have a negative impact on your plans affecting things like transport, accommodation and pressures on local emergency services.	
Participant registration - start to prepare a brief for your registration requirements and ensure you use an RNLI approved platform for signing up participants; are there different types of tickets? Do you need to ask the age of the participants so you can ensure a parental consent is provided? How much are you charging per entry? Have you asked for a health declaration? <i>Remember: registration is a very important part of your event planning as you need to account for everyone that goes into and comes out of the water.</i>	
Kit and materials - start your kit/materials list as soon as possible and feed all estimated costs into your budget sheet. Remember to record gifts in kind to reflect any cost savings.	
Licences and permissions - establish whether you need to apply for any permissions such as road closures or the use of land for your event.	
Contracts - check any contract T's and C's for third party providers or sponsors with the legal team.	
Risk assessment - <i>remember as this is a water-based event, you need to get your event approved by the RNLI's insurance brokers before it can go ahead.</i> Do your site visits and start your risk assessment as early as you can. Event documents should be submitted via your RNLI Community Manager for insurance approval. Even if you have done your event before, you need to get approval annually.	
Event management plan (EMP) - start your event management plan at the same time as your risk assessment. This document will contain all the key information about your event (what, how, who, where and when). <i>A template is available to guide you through preparing an EMP.</i>	
LOGISTICS	
Participants comms - you need to design your participant communications or 'supporter journey' and programme when to send out any key information in the lead up to the event such as how to get to the site, where to park, registration instructions and safety briefings. This can be set up automatically through the registration platform. Regular contact with your participants keeps them informed and engaged and using an online platform ensures that their data is dealt with securely.	

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Lifeboats



CURRENT STATE

- We know exactly how many dips we now have
- Actively engaged with the volunteers on a regular basis
- Huge improvement in the quality of their plans
- Now filtered out ‘informally’ into other events

Number of CWDs	
Year	No
2021	8
2022	12
2023	14
2024	15

