



Bedfordshire

Fire & Rescue Service

 bedsfire.gov.uk
 Southfields Road
Kempston, Bedford
MK42 7NR
 bedsfirealert.co.uk
   @bedsfire

For the attention of Parents and Guardians

Children/Young People swimming and jumping into local water sites across the County

Dear Parents,

I hope this letter finds you well. Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Bedfordshire Police and the Local Authorities, have been contacted by residents across Bedfordshire raising concerns for young people swimming and jumping into outdoor water sites including:

Priory Marina – Bedford
Wixams Lakes – Wixams
Kempston Mill - Kempston
Blue Lagoon – Arlesey
River Ivel - Shefford

Over 400 people accidentally drown in the UK and Ireland every year, and many more have non-fatal experiences with some of these being life changing.

We want to alert parents and young people of the potential dangers and risk to life, especially as we are now enjoying the hot weather and sunshine.

Even the strongest of swimmers can get into trouble in water outdoors and we have particular concern for young people who could be putting themselves at risk without knowing the dangers.

Outdoor water can contain many hazards such as entrapments, weeds, rubbish, drains, broken bottles, pollution, under water currents and it can be very hard to judge depth meaning that deep water can suddenly catch someone out but jumping into shallow water could result in serious injury.

Young People may not understand the effects of cold-water shock which can occur when jumping into a river or lake on a hot day. The average water temperatures in the UK are just 12C and anything below 15c is classed as cold water.

Please help to educate young people by showing them and discussing the video below:



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Cold Water Shock Video <https://youtu.be/27Kexl-BSzM>

We have further advice on water safety on our website;

<https://www.bedsfire.gov.uk/Community-safety/Outdoor-safety/Water-safety.aspx>

There are also activities that parents can do at home with their young people to educate on water safety and other areas of safety;

Water Safety Advice | Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK)

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/learning-from-home/water-safety>

Despite the obvious safety risks, Fire service have no authority to stop people swimming outside or in open water, but if you have concerns of safety or anti-social behavior, we would ask you to report this through to the Police non emergency number on 101

If someone is in trouble and needs help in an emergency, please call 999

I hope you find this information useful

Stay safe!!!

Kind Regards

Stacey Moore
Community Safety Officer
Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

