Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

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Water Safety

Dear Parents and Guardians

As we are approaching the summer months following a particularly wet winter, I would like to provide some information and support in relation to water safety. Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service along with our partners including the Police and Local Authorities are regularly contacted by residents who are concerned for the safety of young people who are accessing water sites for leisure activities.

Popular areas for leisure activities include but not limited to;

Priory Marina – Bedford
Wixams Lakes – Wixams
Kempston Milll - Kempston
Blue Lagoon – Arlesey
River Ivel - Shefford
Stewartby Lake – Forest of Marston Vale
The Old Mill - Sandy
The Riddy – Sandy

Unfortunately, accidental drownings happen all too frequently and even the strongest swimmers can find themselves in difficulties. There are also concerns for young and vulnerable people who may not be aware of the danger and risks that water poses.

As well as changes in water current and weather conditions, outdoor water can contain hazards such as entrapments, weeds, rubbish, drains, broken bottles and pollution. It is also difficult to judge the depth of water; shallow water can change to deep water quickly and jumping into shallow water could result in serious injury. In addition, cold water shock can also occur when jumping into a river or lake on a hot day.

Advice on water safety can be found on our website www.bedsfire.gov.uk, in addition there is also a link to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution website which gives further advice on how to keep safe in water.

The fire service are unable to stop people swimming outside or in open water, but if you have concerns of anti-social behavior please report this to the Police non-emergency number on 101.

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

Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Kind Regards

Lauren McEvoy
Community Safety Officer
Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service