

Scanning:

16 year old Robbie Lea drowned in the Lea Valley Park in May 2017

The partnership's objective was to educate young people about the dangers of open water swimming to prevent such a tragic incident reoccurring.

Professionals involved in the rescue operation of Robbie, Sara Doe (Robbie's mum) and some community organisations met to discuss what issues contributed to Robbie's death to prevent it happening to someone else. These were identified as:

- Cold water shock.
- Dangers of unsupervised open water swimming.
- Location of Lee Valley Park.

Partners identified we would need an expert in the field of water safety (RNLI) to achieve our objective of keeping our young people safe. Partners shared their knowledge and experience and took on specific tasks to fully understand what had happened and why to see if an education programme would help.

Analysis:

Factors identified that contributed to Robbie's death; unsupervised open water/ cold water shock was the main issue. Analytical work and research identified that young people did not receive any input as part of their education about dangers of unsupervised open water swimming. The target age of the programme was secondary school children.

The partnership spoke to schools to ask if they would be interested in a package by the partnership being delivered into schools. The partnership identified learning material that was already available and agreed to utilise it to keep the cost to a minimum.

Response:

- The partnership launched at the Olympic White Water Centre. The event engaged 90 students from 6 educational establishments in Broxbourne.
- Summer term time of 2018 the partnership implemented its workshop format for secondary schools.
- Swimming Patrols were conducted by Parks Patrol.
- Ongoing work to continue improving accessibility and known location to the Lee Valley.
- Documentary around Robbie's death in production by media students.

Assessment:

Over 2000 secondary school students have received the input by the partnership in 2018. The partnership have provided information to Crucial Crew who in turn have delivered the dangers of unsupervised open water swimming message to over 10,000 year 6 students across Hertfordshire in 2018. Sea cadets have made contact with the partnership asking for the programme to be delivered to them. Feedback has been extremely positive from all that have received the programme.

The partnership continues to develop and grow. We continually seek feedback to ensure we are making everything in our programme relevant to keep our young people safe.

Section C: Description of project



The Robbie Lea Water Safety Partnership

On Thursday 25 May 2017, 16 year old Robbie Lea came into difficulties while trying to swim to a small island in a lake in the Lee Valley Regional Park. Despite efforts from Herts Fire and Rescue, paramedics and air ambulance piloted by The Duke of Cambridge, Robbie was pronounced dead at the scene.

The partnership, launched in memory of Robbie Lea aims to innovatively educate children about the dangers of cold water shock and open water swimming.

Inspired by Robbie's mum, Sarah Doe and her drive to raise awareness, the campaign brings together organisations from across Hertfordshire including: Lee Valley Regional Park Authority; Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue, Hertfordshire Police; Crucial Crew; RNLi; Borough of Broxbourne Council; Hertfordshire Sports Partnership; Canal and River Trust; Cheshunt Football Club and Lee Valley White Water Centre.

Partners aim to educate young people about the dangers of swimming in the lakes and rivers including the Lee Valley at Broxbourne, from cold water shock. Ultimately the partnership is working together to prevent any further tragic loss of life.

The Lee Valley Park is over 1000 acres and cannot be policed by vehicles. Park Guard and Police patrol known 'cooling off' areas on hot days however, due to its locality, it is vital that our response takes an educational stance and is proactive in getting the message across regarding the dangers of cold water swimming.



Robbie Lea

Scanning:

Fortunately the tragic incident that led to Robbie's death is not something that happens every year. However in the last three years there have been three deaths in the Lee Valley with drowning as contributing factor towards death.

The partnership objective was to stimulate behavioural change and raise awareness of water safety issues with young people through a positive educational approach utilising Partners to provide their skills and knowledge to deliver water safety messages and enable educators and students to disseminate them through the student community.

In July 2017, those involved in the attempted rescue operation of Robbie, Sara Lea (Robbie's mum) met to identify the key root issues that contributed to Robbie's death.

Factors in Robbie's death identified by partners were:

- Cold water shock.
- Dangers of unsupervised open water swimming.
- Geographical location of Lee Valley Park.



Lee Valley Park

The partnership drew on the expertise of the RNLI with statistics and analytical data provided from Canals and Riverside Trust to inform us of the dangers of cold water shock and unsupervised swimming. As a collective of professionals we learnt that anything below 15°C is defined as cold water and can seriously affect breathing and movement, meaning the risk is significant to anyone swimming in open water all year long. Average UK and Ireland sea temperatures are just 12°C. Rivers such as the Thames and pits in the Lee Valley are colder - even in the summer. As professionals from the emergency services and the Lee Valley if we didn't have this knowledge how could we expect the general public and our young people to know this?

Crucial Crew were integrated into the partnership as it was identified they delivered personal and safety education messages (to 10 and 11 year olds) and seek to encourage model behaviour and good citizenship through active participation in a range of scenarios including: fire, personal safety and water safety. The partnership wanted to explore how we could utilise Crucial Crew and get an understating of how they delivered their education package to obtain best operating procedures and what water safety education package is delivered.

Police provided information of major injury incidents/ fatalities in the Lee Valley. Police and Fire Rescue drew on operational experiences and shared with partners the difficulties of responding to emergencies in the area.

The Youth & Schools Manager (Karen Wheeler) from the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority spoke to the secondary schools in the Broxbourne area to identify what, if any water safety advice was delivered to their students. There was none.

During school commuting times PCSO's and officers engaged with secondary school children to find out their knowledge of water safety issues. The results were that knowledge was extremely poor. This was anticipated due to the gaps in water safety training within schools.

Speaking to the local PCSO's who cover the area including Lee Valley, it was identified that if an emergency was to happen they would not be confident in being able to give an accurate location of where they were (even with GPS facilities on their phones). This identified that if officers who know an area better than most don't know where in the park they are, then how this can be accurately articulated in an emergency situation.

The founding partners were: Crucial Crew Community Safety, RNLI Education, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue, Herts Sports Partnership, Lee Valley Park, Canals and Riverside Trust and Sara Lea. This form of partnership was different to all involved as most problem-solving issues with police are usually about reducing crime and ASB. In this case it's about saving lives and reducing casualties. Every single partner worked tirelessly with passion to ensure we keep our young people safe.

In the days and weeks after Robbie's death the community was so impacted by this tragic event that various members and groups of the community held various event's and fund raising initiatives to raise money for Robbie's funeral. The amount of money raised within weeks was in tens of thousands of pounds. This money subsequently was not used for Robbie's funeral and was donated to the East of England air ambulance service, but just as important Robbie Lea's name and tragic circumstances around his death was highly published to the community.

Analysis:

Reviewing the circumstances into Robbie's Death, certain factors were raised that we believe contributed to Robbie being in the Lea Valley and taking the decision to have a swim with his friends.

- 1) The day Robbie died was one of the hottest days of the year but the water temperature was the same in late May as what it would have been in February due to the lake being a used pit.
- 2) Robbie was a competent swimmer but was not aware of the dangers of cold water shock or how to react to it.
- 3) The area that Robbie went for a swim was incredibly idyllic and appealing to swim in.
- 4) The location of the lake where Robbie died is not visible to the public. Access to the lake is via a small footpath that was overgrown and secluded.
- 5) Park Guard patrols Lea Valley and surrounding parks. No data regarding people found swimming in the water in the Lee Valley had ever been recorded.

Factor 1-3 comes down to Robbie and others his age not knowing the dangers of swimming in pits and unsupervised open water swimming.

Factors 4 is down to the location of Lee Valley park.

Karen Wheeler met with the local schools where it was established none of the secondary schools deliver into dangers of cold water swimming. The schools were asked if they would be interested in an input by partners on the dangers of outdoor swimming and cold water shock. All schools agreed.

Karen fed this information back to the partnership where she met with the education providers of the RNLI to see what packages they had, how they delivered it and how the partnership could utilise what they have.

The partnership is made of all government based/ voluntary organisations so funding a package from scratch was never a viable option.

The RNLI identified that they use drowning prevention video. This video was shared within the partnership. It was informative, educational and engaging. The partnership sought permission to use this video for our proposed educational deliveries. Permission was granted by the RNLI for the partnership to utilise this video on the condition all partners delivering the package were trained by the RNLI to accurately deliver this interactive video. This was to ensure the right messages are being delivered.

Crucial Crew identified they delivered a water safety package to year 6 students in primary school. It was decided that any water safety from the partnership for this age group could be written into the Crucial Crew workbook. National research shows that primary school aged children are rarely found swimming unsupervised in open water, however this was an opportunity to efficiently deliver early preventive advice.

The education package was drafted and adapted from current water safety education sessions/ resources by RNLI, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority & Canal and River Trust.

The partnership explored how we could enhance the RNLI video to make it personal to Robbie. The idea of doing a short documentary film surrounding Robbie's death was agreed upon. The Police media department initially agreed to produce this documentary. However after meeting with the media team, it was established that the documentary would be in depth with all partners wanting a high quality production. The police media team did not have the capacity, the time or the correct equipment to produce a high quality documentary.

Grant Bennett from the police explored other avenues on how this documentary could be produced. Enquiries with private companies to produce the documentary were made, but the costs for production were too high. Seeking innovative resolutions for the films production, the Police identified that the local College (that backs on to the Lee Valley Park) have an excellent media production department. Chris Rutter from Herts Police met with the College. This was the College that Robbie attended. As a result of the meeting the college agreed that the year 13 (17-18 year old) media production students would produce the film. The benefits of this was that from the outset the students were highly energised. Their equipment and expected production quality was far superior to the Police's media departments. This was pier to pier education. The production also contributed towards the producer's qualifications and education as well as the producers becoming first hand experts in water safety as the Royal Life Saving Society offer to be advisors to the film.

From the first meeting in July 2017 the idea was that the education package would be delivered in time for summer 2018. To engage schools, enhance publicity and spread our message we wanted the launch of the partnership to engage and educate our community. Within the Lee Valley is the White Water Centre that was used for the 2012 London Olympic games. It was identified this would be the perfect location to officially launch the partnership. The partnership met with the White water rafting centre who agreed to host the event.

The Borough of Broxbourne later joined the partnership. This was hugely beneficial as they employ Park Guard. It was identified we would be able to utilise them to patrol and collect data to enable us to identify areas most used for swimming/ cool off areas.

It was decided that the educational workshops would be delivered in the spring and summer time of 2018.

Response:

The launch

The launch event was held on the 20th February 2018 at the Lee Valley White Water Centre to generate external publicity for the partnership and raise awareness within the student community prior to the 'in school' sessions.

- The event engaged 90 students from 6 educational establishments from Broxbourne.
- A wide range of partners provided practical scenarios and students were given the option to see first-hand the low temperature of the water at the Lee Valley White Water Centre.

The launch allowed the partnership to build strong rapport with the schools and the selected students who came to the launch.



Photos from launch event. Top right is Sara Doe

Education-based approach 2nd schools

Following from the Launch in February 2018, in the spring and summer term of 2018 the partnership implemented its workshop/assembly format for secondary schools.

The assemblies and workshop engaged every school/ college in Broxbourne (except 1). Due to the partnership being made up of various emergency services, it was always planned that there would be two organisations from Lea Valley Authority, Police, Fire and Rescue and RNLI would always be utilised (in case one of the agencies had an incident to respond to).

A water safety awareness letter for parents to share with their children highlighting key safety messages, the partnership and the RNLI's Respect the Water campaign was sent to all secondary schools and colleges at the end of the summer term. The letter was strategically issued at that time to coincide with the summer holidays.

Initially the package was only going to be delivered to the secondary schools in Broxbourne. However there were two occasions where children from Waltham Abbey (Essex area but borders Broxbourne) were found jumping into the water at the White Water Centre. The police identified these children, made contact with their schools and the partnership delivered its workshop in the King Harold Academy in Waltham Abbey.

Due to the documentary delays, it was not completed in time for the 2018 roll out. The educational workshops were completed were delivered without the documentary, however it will be ready for the 2019 spring and summer roll out.

Education-based approach Primary Schools

Despite the Robbie Lea Water Partnership delivering interactive sessions to only secondary schools, we have utilised Crucial Crew as an active partner. The Robbie Lea Water Safety Partnership provided information for the 2018 primary schools Crucial Crew workbook. A number of partners also sponsored the workbook production. The Robbie Lea Water Partnership message of dangers of open water swimming has been published in the crucial crew work book meaning it has been issued to 10500 young people in Hertfordshire.

Documentary

The documentary is currently in production by Herts Regional College. Once complete at the end of year 2 the partnership will review whether this package can be delivered in fully interactive format in schools without the demand on partners being present.

Swimming Patrols

Park Patrols conducted patrols of Lee Valley Park. These patrols were increased in periods of hot weather. Parks patrol would record any persons found in the water. This was then feedback to the partnership.

Knowing where you are in the Lee Valley

As identified, location and access in the Lee Valley is a difficulty. A communication method with the emergency services within the Lee Valley Regional Park to enable more specific access to various water bodies with the correct access point is being reviewed and a system which will benefit the crews attending emergency incidents is being developed. A basic coordinate grid system has been overlaid onto the park by the Lee Valley Planning Team however it is not yet fully integrated into Emergency Services systems. Route and access arrangements have been shared with the intention to provide information on the quickest and most appropriate routes for emergency services into specific locations within the Park.

Enhanced working relations

As a result of this partnership and enhanced relations:

- Police have worked with Lee Valley partnership in professional directional reviews which assess quality of their service.
- Partners have drawn on each other to help in daily business.
- Cheshunt Football Club hosted a Police v Broxbourne student's football match to enhance community engagement.
- Improved rapport with schools students (especially police).
- Enhanced relations with the White Water Centre. The police have met with them as part of a Safety Advisory Group as they are hosting the world cup canoeing championships in 2019. The White Water Centre has invited the Robbie Lea Water Safety partnership to be present at the canoeing World Cup in June 2019 with a stall in the expo to demonstrate what the partnership do. The White Water Centre have also offered us the facility for another water safety event (same as the launch) in February 2019.
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue have run water rescue demonstrations and discussed water safety in wider formats, such as pub watch.
- Information from the partnership has been disseminated to the Lee Valley Park Ranger Service who have distributed it at Ranger Drop in sessions and will continue to use it at summer events.

Assessment:

The Launch

Following the launch the partnership sent feedback sheets to the teachers present. Of note:

Tara Haddock, Assistant Head Teacher, The John Warner School said:

'The water safety launch event which our school attended was an excellent opportunity for our students to learn some essential life skills. It was a pleasure to be involved in something so positive following the terrible tragedy of Robbie Lee's death.'

Abi Naugher, Assistant Head Teacher, Broxbourne School said:

'It is always sad when a tragedy instigates an event like this; however the pupils took an enormous amount from the day, it was fun, educational and will hopefully save lives in the future.'

Feedback for development the partnership have taken note of for the 2019 anniversary event:

"The groups could have stayed at the centre and started to develop their ideas on how the information they learnt could be shared with others. Either creating posters or developing a presentation to deliver in an assembly."

As a result of the launch some of the schools who attended, assigned a group of students to become water safety ambassadors and ran assemblies for their peers on the learning from the launch prior to partnership delivering their package.

School based assemblies and workshops for secondary school and college students

The assemblies and workshops engaged every school/ college in Broxbourne (except Robert Barclay Academy). The partnership also engaged King Harold Academy in Waltham Abbey. Overall, assemblies/ workshops engaged 2215 students/teachers.

The assemblies gained very positive feedback from School Senior Leadership and pupils:

Goff's Churchgate Academy staff said:

'This was a fantastic presentation that delivered the hard hitting message that our students needed to hear'

Via Crucial Crew 10,500 year 6 students were given an insight into The Robbie Lea Water Safety Partnership.



Others asking for our workshops and inputs

As a result of positive publicity and word of mouth of those who have received the input there has been an interest in the delivery of the partnerships workshops by other organisations. In January 2019 the partnership will be delivering its input to Cheshunt's Sea Cadets. There is an anticipated demand from similar organisations in 2019.

Water safety assessments and swimming Patrols

As a result of the swimming patrols there was no displacement of the problem in our age category although there was an increase of families in the water. All of these families were from the Eastern Europe region where it is part of their culture as a family to swim in the closest body of water on hot days. The partnership as a result of this data is reviewing what we can do to get our message across/ prevent

families in swimming. For 2019 funding is being sought to obtain signage in various languages to accommodate the nationalities that see the Lee Valley

During this period Park guard conducted 166 "Swim Patrols" of water features, rivers and lakes within the contract area during these patrols they interacted with 37 separate groups and families warning them of the dangers of swimming or engaging in any water based activity, issuing River Safety leaflets and bye-law infringement notices wherever possible.

Separate to these groups 160 individual swimmers were directed to leave the water or were given warnings about swimming. Amongst these swimmers and groups were 30 children, most in family groups actively in or having recently been in a body of water on the patrol's arrival

Parks Patrol identified Water Safety signage needs to be refreshed as a result of their patrols. This has been reviewed and new secondary signage has been produced and rolled out at key sites within the Park. All existing signage has been updated with stickers which give new contact numbers and the new text number to send non-emergency incidents directly to rangers.

Parks Patrol statics

Site	Visits	Time
Bowyers Water	30	22:15
Broxbourne Riverside	3	1:05
Broxbourne Sailing Club	3	0:50
Cheshunt Country Walk	41	37:21
Dobbs Weir	3	1:28
Friday Lake	1	0:20
Glen Faba	24	22:28
Hooks Marsh	2	0:53
Kings Weir	1	0:15
Lee Valley Boat Centre	1	0:20
Lee Valley Country Park	2	1:43
Metropolitan Pit	1	0:45
Nazeing Meads	14	8:58
Old Mill and Meadows	1	0:27
Rye House Gate House	1	0:15
Stanstead Innings	1	0:24
Bowyers Water	10	21:13
Gunpowder Park	1	6:09
Knights Pit	1	0:29
Lee Valley Showground	1	0:45
Myddelton House	1	0:15
Waterworks	21	24:44
Wild Marsh West	2	2:35
Grand Total	37	56:10

Water Safety Assessments are ongoing to review existing documents and highlight key 'hot spots' around the Park where further control measures may be required to mitigate unauthorised swimming activity. This is a large-scale piece of work and is expected to be completed by end of 2018, this will then allow for any further controls to be implemented over winter months. The key areas of assessment are; accessibility,

difficulty for rescue, isolation/seclusion, water appeal, general use, winter hazards, water hazard (depth/flow), incident history. These are all scored on a scale of 0-5 (0 low likelihood and 5 high likelihood) with a percentage score as output which corresponds to a Risk Rating Table.

A role has been developed by rangers and the volunteer's team for a Water Safety Warden. This role has been developed primarily to act as extra eyes and ears around the park specifically looking at water related issues and incidents. Volunteers will not challenge swimmers but will advise them on the dangers and will report to Park Guard or rangers any incidents. An induction programme has been developed and all volunteers are given information on water safety.

Numbers engaged through the partnership 28th July 2017- 29th July 2018

Date	Activity	Audience	Age of participants	No of participants	Venue
29th July 2017	Community Cup Event	Public Event	Various	300	Cheshunt FC
6th to 17th Nov 2017	Broxbourne Crucial Crew	Yr6 Children	10/11yo	1,500	HRC, Turnford Campus
28th Feb 2018	Water Safety Partnership Launch Event	Goffs School	Year 9/10	12	Lee Valley White Water Centre
28th Feb 2018	Water Safety Partnership Launch Event	Hertford Regional College	Year 9/10	29	Lee Valley White Water Centre
28th Feb 2018	Water Safety Partnership Launch Event	John Warner School	Year 9/10	14	Lee Valley White Water Centre
28th Feb 2018	Water Safety Partnership Launch Event	St. Mary's High School	Year 9/10	12	Lee Valley White Water Centre
28th Feb 2018	Water Safety Partnership Launch Event	The Broxbourne School	Year 9/10	14	Lee Valley White Water Centre
28th Feb 2018	Water Safety Partnership Launch Event	Turnford School	Year 9/10	9	Lee Valley White Water Centre
15th March 2018	Water Safety Assembly	John Warner School	Year 9/10	190	John Warner School
17th April 2018	Water Safety Assembly	The Broxbourne School	Year 9/10	217	The Broxbourne School
18th April 2018	Water Safety Workshops	Hertfordshire Regional College	Level 1 students	15	Hertfordshire Regional College
28th April 2018	Water rescue demonstration	Public event	Various	12	Crown Public House
4th May 2018	Water Safety Assembly	King Harold Academy	Year 11	137	King Harold Academy
13th May 2018	Ranger Drop in Session	Cheshunt	Various	50	Cheshunt - River Lee Country Park
7th June 2018	Water Safety Assembly	Halleybury Turnford School	Year 7	163	Halleybury Turnford School
10th June 2018	Ranger led Park drop in session	Public event	Various	60	Fishers Green
11th June 2018	Water safety talk	Leverton Primary School	age 7-8	60	Leverton Primary School
20th June 2018	Lifeboat station visit	Leverton Primary School	age 7-8	57	Southend RNLI LBS
4th July 2018	Water safety talk	Saffron Green Primary School	Age 10/11	110	Saffron Green Primary School
10th July 2018	Water Safety Assembly	St Marys School	Year 9/10	400	St Marys School
10th July 2018	Water Safety Assembly	Goffs Churchgate school	Year 7, 8 & 9	140	Goffs Churchgate
18th July 2018	Water Safety Assembly	Goffs Academy	Year 7, 8, 9 and 10	883	Goffs Academy
		Total		4,384	

Conclusion

There has been no other unsupervised open water safety injuries or fatalities in the borough in 2018. The partnership continues to grow and expand way beyond its expectations. The partners involved are passionate to keep our young people safe. Sara Lea's passion to spearhead the partnership to ensure no one else loses their child to such a tragedy is shared by all of us.