



Overview

Ryde Beach Lifeguards (RBLG) part of Waterside Community Trust (Registered Charity 1174631) can continue to be proud of the service they gave to visitors to Sandown Beach this summer.

During the season RBLG performed 49 preventative actions and assisted over 92 people through everything from rescue to casualty care to searches for missing persons. Some incidents occurred which, without this invaluable service and the quick response of the beach lifeguards, would have most certainly resulted in hospitalisation or additional strain on the emergency services.

Due to the poor weather this summer, it has been considerably quieter than previous years, which is evident in the statistics. Despite the weather, the team worked hard through rain, wind and sun, providing a high quality service to residents and visitors to Sandown this summer.

RBLG delivery for Sandown Town Council has developed over the years and as such we have adopted five key areas that we now focus on each season.

These are:

1. Community Lifesaving
2. Personnel
3. Lifesaving Performance
4. Equipment
5. The next generation



Our Team:

Kat Head Lifeguard	Tom Beach Lifeguard
Todd Beach Manager	Ben Beach Lifeguard
Jack Head Lifeguard	Dan Beach Lifeguard
Jacob Head Lifeguard	Fraser Beach Lifeguard
Erin Head Lifeguard	Jess Beach Lifeguard
	Will Beach Lifeguard
	Sam Beach Lifeguard
	Lewis Beach Lifeguard
	Beach Safety Team:
	Ethan, Ella, Piran, Noah & Ashton

Community Lifesaving

This year, we offered local schools the opportunity to participate in our Sea Safe program. This program delivers the same important drowning prevention knowledge as our traditional school talks but in a more interactive, immersive and fun learning experience.

The hour-long sessions taught the children and their teachers about how to stay safe at the beach, where to get advice and what to do in an emergency.

This was followed by an immersive experience, with the children being taken into the sea and learning about cold water shock, how to get out of danger and how to summon help.

Each child was provided with a free Southern Water swim hat as well as a RBLG Sea Safe Certificate.

In total, over 500 children participated over 24 separate sessions. This included Godshill, Priory, St Marys, Broadlea, Oakfield, St Blasius, The Bay, Queensgate and Greenmount.

This would not have been possible without funding from Southern Water.



Personnel & Training

The lifeguards themselves are at the core of the RBLG service and each year there is a challenge of recruiting and training lifeguards who will be at the frontline of service delivery.

Recruitment starts in January with the training for the team taking place in April, May & June. This year we had 9 members of the team return from 2022 however, the rest of the team were new team members having got through our tough recruitment process.

We welcomed 7 new members to our team.

The lifeguards are all trained in house by an RLSS Trainer Assessor, all achieving their RLSS NVBLQ, First Aid at Work, Defibrillator specialism, RYA VHF, RYA PWC and SLSW IRB training.

Throughout the season the lifeguards undergo regular training and their performance on duty is regularly monitored by spot checks from the Beach Manager. During the midseason scenario this year, the lifeguards noticed and retrieved a drowning casualty approximately 200m out and brought them back to the shore, all in less than 40 seconds. Which is very impressive and a testament to their high standard of training.

RBLG works closely with emergency services, and we received the below from HM Coastguard this season:

“Your team has been amazing again this year, both in Sandown and Ryde. Please pass on our thanks to the team for their professional, happy, proactive, dedicated and determined approach to tasking. You are truly a great asset to our search and rescue operations, thank you.”



Type	Total
Beach Visitors	27,867
Lives saved	0
Rescue	4
Assistance	1
Rescue due to inflatables	6
First Aid	25
Search	1
Missing/Found	5
Enforce Bylaws	14
Antisocial Behaviour	0
Lives Lost	0
Prevention	49
Other	1
Total Actions	106

Lifesaving Performance

In 2023, there were over 27,867 recorded visitors to Sandown Beach whilst RBLG were on duty. This was an decrease of 46% in visitor numbers compared to the previous year. This was certainly due to the weather, which for the vast majority of the summer season was rainy, cloudy or windy, putting visitors off the beach.

There was a total of 92 incidents that required the lifeguards assistance.

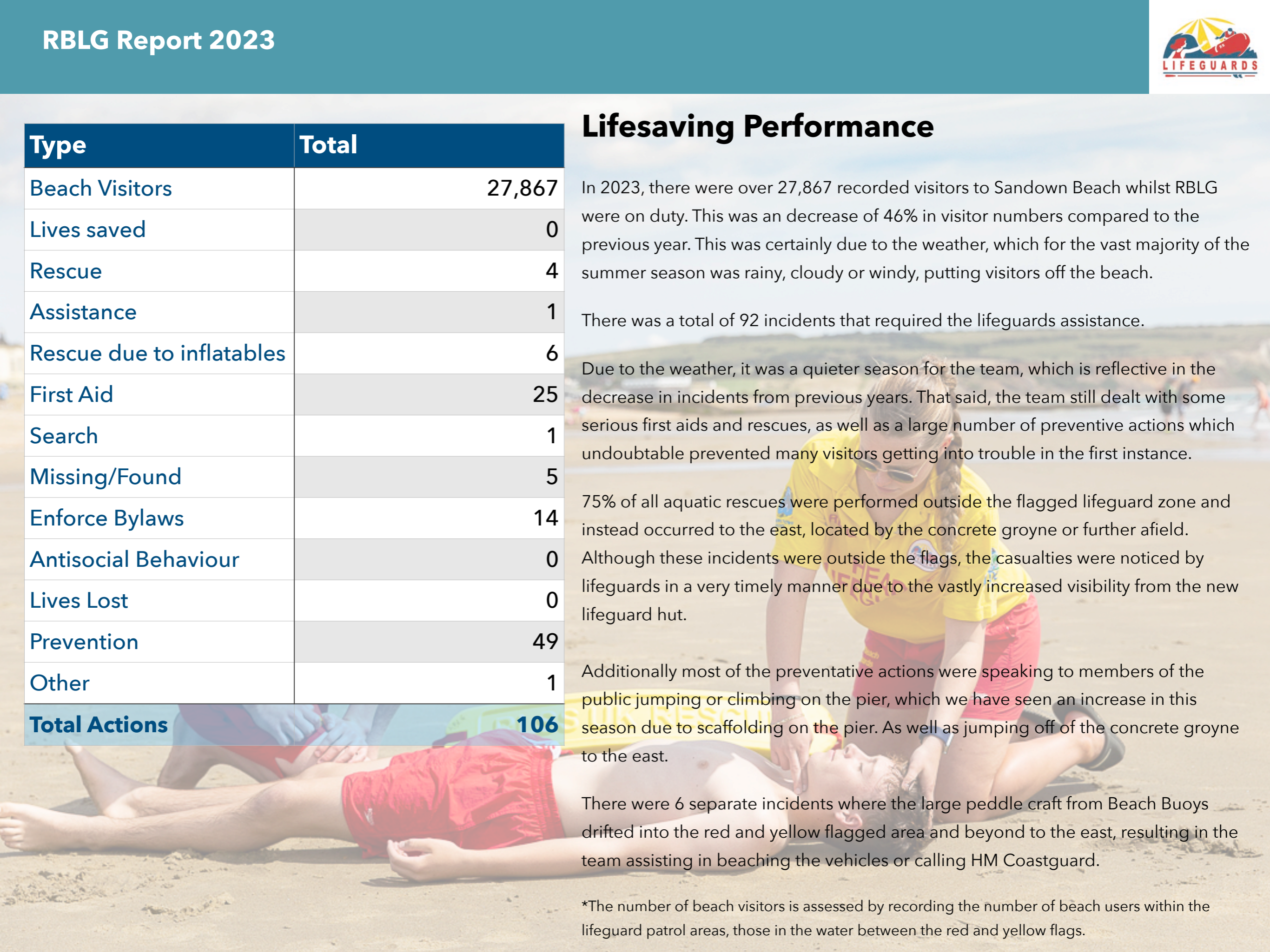
Due to the weather, it was a quieter season for the team, which is reflective in the decrease in incidents from previous years. That said, the team still dealt with some serious first aids and rescues, as well as a large number of preventive actions which undoubtable prevented many visitors getting into trouble in the first instance.

75% of all aquatic rescues were performed outside the flagged lifeguard zone and instead occurred to the east, located by the concrete groyne or further afield. Although these incidents were outside the flags, the casualties were noticed by lifeguards in a very timely manner due to the vastly increased visibility from the new lifeguard hut.

Additionally most of the preventative actions were speaking to members of the public jumping or climbing on the pier, which we have seen an increase in this season due to scaffolding on the pier. As well as jumping off of the concrete groyne to the east.

There were 6 separate incidents where the large peddle craft from Beach Buoys drifted into the red and yellow flagged area and beyond to the east, resulting in the team assisting in beaching the vehicles or calling HM Coastguard.

*The number of beach visitors is assessed by recording the number of beach users within the lifeguard patrol areas, those in the water between the red and yellow flags.



0

LIVES SAVED

10

RESCUES

25

FIRST AID

5

MISSING/
FOUND

0

ANTI-SOCIAL
BEHAVIOUR

49

PREVENTATIVE
ACTIONS

106

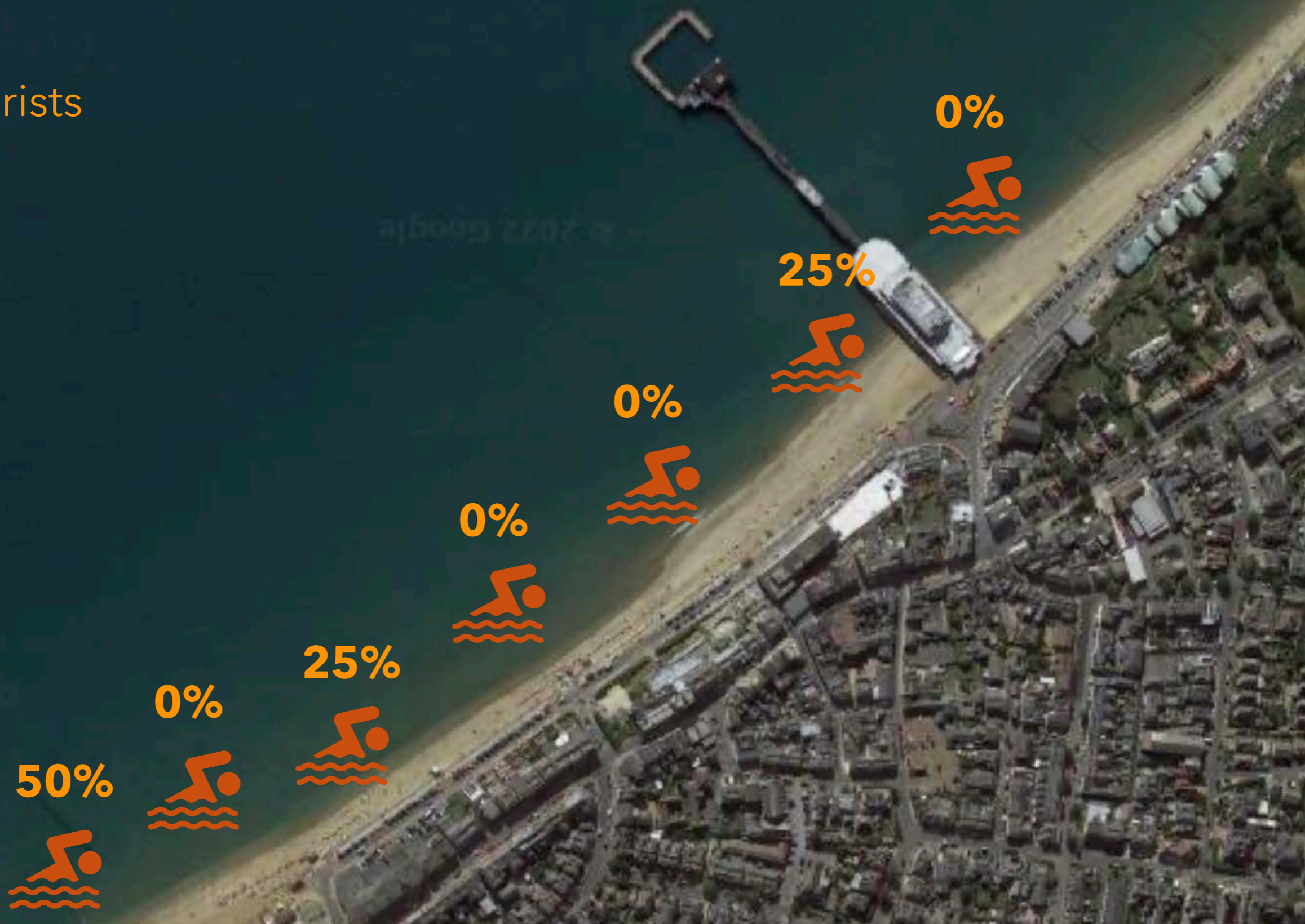
TOTAL
ACTIONS



Rescues performed by lifeguards

100% Tourists

0% Locals



The next generation

We were able to deliver our Beach Rookies Programme again this summer. With a total of 64 children participating over two separate weeks, it was our busiest beach rookies to date. The weeks worth of activities, taught the rookies not only how to save lives but also the dangers of the sea, first aid, CPR and much more. With each participant achieving an RLSS Rookie Lifeguard Award, ranging from Bronze, Silver and Gold. With Ethan Tanner Rolf and Ella Singleton receiving their Bronze Medallion, the highest award achievable in Beach Rookies.

Some of the Rookies, Ethan, Ella, Piran, Ashton and Noah joined our Beach Lifeguard team as Beach Safety volunteers, allowing them to get a better understanding of the day to day duties of a Beach Lifeguard, as well as assisting with patrol, preventative advice and minor first aids.

Next year, Piran who has participated in Beach Rookies for a number of years will be one of our first rookies to join the team as a fully fledged Beach Lifeguard in 2024.



Equipment

RBLG constantly reviews and adapts its rescue service to the evolving demands of lifesaving to ensure the lifeguards have the facilities and equipment they need and deserve.

The team are provided with high quality uniform suitable for all weather conditions, including the introduction of wetsuits that enable the team to patrol for longer on the boards without feeling the effects of the elements.

Additionally the team have an IRB, RWC, ATV, Rescue Boards, Kayak, first aid equipment and various other rescue equipment. This year saw the introduction of our new Rescue Watercraft, which even given the poor weather conditions have been used for over 40 hours on patrols, safety cover and rescues. Proving to be very versatile with quick response times and a greater presence in the water.

This year we purchased new wetsuits, VHF radio's, board holders and flags, as well as the Rescue Water Craft and Sled.

Looking ahead to 2024 we are hoping to add the RWC (Rescue Jet Ski) to the service in Sandown, again improving the versatility of the service during busy periods and to enabling easier casualty pick up near the harbour rocks where most bathers get into difficulty. This would require a safe and secure storage facility, with running water and easy access to the waters edge to be feasible.

We also hope to work with Sandown Town Council to continue the improvements on accessibility as best we can.



Fundraising

We organised a cross Solent swim to raise money for the service.

The swim was organised by Todd (Beach Manager), with the swim starting at GAFIRS in Gosport and finishing at the Beach Lifeguard HQ in Ryde covering a distance of approximately 5km.

The swim was very successful, with 5 Lifeguards taking part and raising over £1,000 in fund-raising.

The first lifeguard completed the swim in just over 1.5 hours, with all swimmers completing in under 2 hours.

We also had three siblings organise a bake sale for the service, raising just over £30. They received certificates of thanks from the team.

Additionally we provided safety cover for West Wight Sports Centre's cross Solent swim to Colewell Bay, as well as Island 7's.

Beach Wheelchair

The beach wheelchairs have been a humbling addition to the service we provide, with the adult beach wheelchair being used on 5 occasions and the children's beach wheelchair being used on 14 occasions.

The addition of the children's beach chair was thanks to a successful grant application to Wight Aid.



2024

Each year we aim to improve the service we provide to Sandown Town Council, so over the winter we will assess all the incident data collected from the lifeguards on paper incident report forms and review our procedures if necessary.

All the lifeguard team provided their own feedback during their end of season appraisals with the head lifeguard which will also be taken into consideration for our 2024 delivery.

Some of the seafront concessionaires were extremely helpful and supportive, so we hope to continue this close relationship into 2024.

From all of the Beach Lifeguard Team, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Sandown Town Council for their continued support of the service and for of course choosing us to deliver the beach safety service.

RBLG look forward to delivering the service again for Sandown Town Council, the local community and the visiting general public in 2024.



Todd Miller
Beach Lifeguard Manager



Ryde Beach Lifeguards
Waterside Community Trust
Esplanade
Ryde
Isle of Wight
PO33 1JA

rydebeachlifeguards@gmail.com