

## **Runners and walkers**

### **Don't assume you're not at risk of drowning because you don't intend to go into the water**

Almost half of the people who drowned in 2015 had no intention of entering the water. Every year on average around 400 lives are lost in the UK's waters – more than one a day – and they're not just confined to the beach and coast. Nearly half the people who drowned in 2015 had no intention of entering the water.

People who enjoy running or walking near water remain a very high-risk group of accidental drowning.

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is increasing awareness of everyday risks in, on and around the water as part of Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Week. Astonishingly, the vast majority of those who drowned did not intend to be in the water – a large number of people die each year after falling in while walking or running, with many of those being alcohol related.

Many coastal walking fatalities were alone at the time of the incident and runners are often distracted by their activity, which can result in not noticing the hazards. None of these drowning's are inevitable – they simply don't have to happen.

### **Top Water Safety Tips near open water:**

- Be aware of your surroundings and take notice of any warning signs when out and about
- When running or walking next to open water, stay well clear of bank edges. They are often unstable and this can create slips, trips and falls
- Try to always walk or run with a friend
- Always let someone know where you're going – take your mobile phone
- Learn swimming and lifesaving skills
- Take a fully charged mobile phone and check signal strength, know how to use it and who to call in an emergency
- Don't assume just because you have walked or run a route many times before it is still safe.
- Avoid walking or running near water in the dark

### **Tides:**

In the UK tides are relatively regular and predictable, yet despite this fact every year a number of people are caught out by rapidly rising water and end up being trapped in isolated bays. If you intend to venture across any beach or bank affected by tidal water make sure you know when the incoming tide is expected and know where all the exits are.

<http://www.esfrs.org/your-safety/water-safety-drowning-prevention/walkers-runners-and-cyclists/>