

Report of the Strategic Director

THROW LINES ADJACENT TO OPEN WATER

1. Purpose of report

To update members on the throw line locations and to provide information on issues relating to usage and vandalism since their installation.

2. Background

A review of the Council's areas of open water in 2017 identified that no formal risk assessment had been undertaken with regards to water safety. It was therefore decided that the Council's Health and Safety Manager, together with the officers in the Environment team would undertake such an assessment.

The initial exercise identified all the major areas of open water in the borough managed by the borough council. These sites are detailed below:

Nottingham Canal – a major land holding running north to south through the borough. Whilst not accessible to boats it does contain large areas of open water.

Ponds – a variety of sizes of open water on a number of sites including Local Nature Reserves, Parks and Housing amenity areas.

SuDS – Sustainable drainage systems at a number of parks and open spaces provided by developers as part of new housing schemes.

Having identified these areas, a formal risk assessment for each site was undertaken. Further information is detailed in Appendix 1.

3. Financial implications

The ongoing repairs and maintenance to the water safety devices is contained within the revenue budgets for managing the relevant sites.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX 1**Risk Assessment**

Looking at visitor numbers, location, type of area of open water each site was assessed as:

Red – high risk

Yellow – medium risk

Green – low risk

A list of additional controls and actions was then drawn up to minimise the risk.

These included:

- Improved signage
- Additional signage
- Fencing
- Provision of hand rails
- Provision of throw lines

The installation of the throw lines was the most detailed part of the assessment involving meetings with Nottinghamshire Fire Service, the Canals and Rivers Trust and the Council's Health and Safety Manager. The focus was to identify a system that would work and could easily be understood if it had to be used. On advice from the Fire Service throw lines were chosen over water safety rings. A key part of the decision making process was the use of a numbered key pad to make the devices secure and less vulnerable to vandalism.

The risk assessment identified 4 areas of open water that required throw lines.

Nottingham Canal, Awsworth Fishery – 3 locations

Cooky's Pond, Bramcote – 2 locations

Colliers Wood, Moorgreen – 2 locations

Nottingham Canal, Wroughton Plantation, Trowell – 1 location

Total 8 throw lines

There are also 3 throw lines using the same principle located at Beeston Weir managed by the Canals and Rivers Trust.

Throw Lines system of operation

If there is an emergency and somebody is in the water the following procedure applies:

- Dial 999
- Ask for Fire Service
- Quote location on the water safety board at the site, e.g. BBC 06
- The operator will have access to the combination lock at this location and will provide the number for it over the phone

- Open combination lock
- Open door
- Pull line bag out and follow instructions on the water safety board.

A fire team will, at the same time, be directed to the location by the operator with both the postcode for the site and the ordnance survey eastings and northings.

Update

Since their installation in early 2019, fortunately none of the throw lines have had to be used. There have however been acts of vandalism to one of the key safes and throw lines at Cooky's Pond and all 3 of the key safes and throw lines at Awsworth Fishery. On each occasion the door was forced open and the throw line removed. This has resulted in the supply of new lock housings and throw lines.

The throw lines are inspected monthly to make sure they are operational, the throw line is in place and there is no graffiti present.

If, as part of new housing developments, additional SuDS are created within areas of open space managed by the Council they will be risk assessed and a decision taken as to the requirement for additional throw line locations.