

Nearly half of UK boaters don't wear a Personal Flotation Device when on the water.

Submitted by: ADPR

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Research released today by global sailing brand Helly Hansen, a partner of the RNLI, has revealed that UK boaters are not taking the right precautions while out on the water, and they believe experience and age are reasons to go without a suitable Personal Flotation Device (PFD).

Most respondents to the survey think they are a good example to others when it comes to water safety (81.6%), however, only around half (56.2%) always wear a PFD while on the water. Of those who do not always wear a PFD, only half (50.76%) say they wear one in bad weather, one fifth (22.84%) say they don't need to wear one because they can swim, and only a third (29.44%) say they wear one if they're sailing alone.

Every year, around 150 people die at the coast around the UK and Ireland; last year, the RNLI launched over 8,000 times to those in need of help.

Findings from the survey include:

- Less than half (47.6%) of respondents think that you should always wear a lifejacket when sailing no matter your age.
- 17% thought it was acceptable to not wear one from 13 years old.
- 64% said that when they were learning to sail, there were occasions when they were made to wear a lifejacket when more experienced members of the group didn't – this was higher for the younger generation at 72.22% for 18–24-year-olds and much lower for the older generation at 29.55% for 55+.

To help raise awareness around the importance of wearing a lifejacket when out on the water, Helly Hansen and the RNLI have been placing lifejackets on statues across the UK. Over the last few weeks, lifejackets have been popping up on statues in coastal towns and cities across the country, please see imagery via the links below:

- Another Place, Crosby Beach, Merseyside (<https://we.tl/t-X8Pj1ocUaq>)
- Annie Moore, Cobh, Cork (<https://we.tl/t-f9G4AvMMMyO>)
- Mrs Booth, Margate, Kent (<https://we.tl/t-TfalA4DXIN>)
- Dr Salter's Daydream, Bermondsey, London (<https://we.tl/t-ADx0hvqJyW>)
- Whitby Walk with Heritage Project, Whitby, Yorkshire (<https://we.tl/t-xxp8R1jH5U>)
- The Rescue, Seahouses, Northumberland (<https://we.tl/t-HANEiiLS7L>)

Gareth Morrison, Head of Water Safety at the RNLI says, "Our advice is simple, always wear a lifejacket when you're on the water, as accidents can and do happen to anyone, regardless of your experience or ability. The results in this survey are worrying as they show people are putting their lives at risk, with many thinking the advice to wear a lifejacket doesn't apply to them. Our brave volunteers rescue thousands of people every year, and unfortunately at times witness first-hand the effects that losing someone to drowning has on their loved ones. Research has proven that wearing a lifejacket can increase your chances of survival by up to four times if you're immersed in cold water. Whatever your activity

and whatever level of experience you have, wearing a well-fitted, well-maintained and suitable lifejacket or buoyancy aid could save your life.”

Pip Hare, a professional sailor and Helly Hansen ambassador, says, “Cold water shock can affect everyone. Even if you are an experienced sailor or a very confident swimmer, cold water shock causes an uncontrollable reaction which elevates your heart rate and breathing. This can lead to breathing in water and potentially drowning and it can affect even the fittest of people. Wearing a lifejacket with the correct buoyancy is vital to survival.”

Emma Russell, Marketing Manager for Helly Hansen in the UK, Ireland and Benelux, commented on the findings, “This research reveals something we have suspected for a while – that most UK boaters just don’t believe they need to wear a suitable PFD while out on the water. We also see an underlying danger that younger generations are inadvertently being taught that lifejackets are a precaution for less experienced sailors, rather than an essential piece of kit that should be worn at all times, as they are often made to wear lifejackets by experienced sailors who aren’t wearing one themselves.”

Helly Hansen and the RNLI have been strategic partners since 2018 and are committed to working together to educate and influence those at risk from drowning. For advice on PFDs and how to keep safe while out on the water, visit the RNLI website www.rnli.org/safety.

For more advice on choosing the best lifejacket visit the Helly Hansen website:
www.hellyhansen.com/news/how-to-choose-a-life-jacket/.

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Notes to Editors:

For further press information or hi-res images please contact: Hellyhansen@adpr.co.uk

Photo captions:

1. Helly Hansen and the RNLI lifejacket campaign: Another Place, Crosby Beach by Antony Gormley and photographed by Matt Thomas.
2. Helly Hansen and the RNLI lifejacket campaign: Annie Moore Statue, Cobh, Cork by Marcus Kircher and photographed by Derek O Rourke.
3. Helly Hansen and the RNLI lifejacket campaign: Mrs Booth, Margate, Kent by Ann Carrington and photographed by Sonja Earl.
4. Helly Hansen and the RNLI lifejacket campaign: Dr Salter’s Daydream, Bermondsey, London by Diane Gorvin and photographed by Charlie C Pryor.
5. Helly Hansen and the RNLI lifejacket campaign: Whitby Walk with Heritage Project by Emma Stothard and photographed by Ceri Oakes.
6. Helly Hansen and the RNLI lifejacket campaign: The Rescue, Seahouses, Northumberland by Richard Evans and photographed by Andy Craig.

The RNLI’s Mayday Campaign

Mayday is a call for help. Usually, RNLI lifesavers answer mayday calls and go to rescue others. But this May, they are asking for your help. Visit www.rnli.org/mayday for more information on this year’s

campaign.

During the month of May 50% of all sales made within Helly UK stores and at HH.com are being donated to support the RNLI Mayday campaign.

Further stats from the survey

Of those that always wear a PFD:

- 85.05% said they see them as an essential part of their kit
- 77.58% said they wear it to keep them safe
- 45.55% said they have to wear it due to club rules
- 35.94% said they are told they must wear one
- 37.72% said they wear one because they see other/more experienced sailors wearing them
- 2.85% stated other reasons

Of those that do not always wear a PFD:

- 50.76% would wear them in bad weather
- 34.52% would wear one out at sea but not in the harbour
- 29.44% wear one when using their tender
- 29.44% wear one if they sail alone
- 26.90% wear one due to club rules
- 23.86% wear one when they have others on board
- 22.84% said they can swim if needed
- 20.81% said while they don't always wear one, they have one on board if they need it
- 13.2% said they are very experienced and don't feel the need to wear one
- 5.58% didn't state a reason/didn't know
- 2.54% stated other reasons

About Helly Hansen

Founded in Norway in 1877, Helly Hansen continues to develop professional-grade apparel that helps people stay and feel alive. Through insights drawn from living and working in the world's harshest environments, the company has developed a long list of first-to-market innovations, including the first supple waterproof fabrics more than 140 years ago. Other breakthroughs include the first fleece fabrics in the 1960s, the first technical base layers in the 1970s, made with Lifa® Stay Dry Technology, and today's award-winning and patented H2Flow™ temperature regulating system.

Helly Hansen is a leader in technical sailing and performance ski apparel, as well as premium workwear. Its uniforms are worn and trusted by more than 55,000 professionals and can be found on Olympians, National Teams, and at more than 200 ski resorts and mountain guiding operations around the world.

Helly Hansen's outerwear, base layers, sportswear, and footwear are sold in more than 40 countries and trusted by outdoor professionals and enthusiasts around the world. To learn more about Helly Hansen's latest collections, visit www.hellyhansen.com.

About the RNLI

The RNLI charity saves lives at sea. Its volunteers provide a 24-hour search and rescue service around

the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland coasts. The RNLI operates over 238 lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland and more than 240 lifeguard units on beaches around the UK and the Channel Islands. The RNLI is independent of Coastguard and government and depends on voluntary donations. Since 1824 the RNLI has saved over 143,100 people.

Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), a charity registered in England and Wales (209603), Scotland (SC037736), the Republic of Ireland (20003326)