

RNLI LOUD AND CLEAR 2024

(UK)



This information is for volunteers and staff to use when talking about the RNLI's work.

Before speaking to the media, please contact the RNLI Media Engagement Team on 01202 336789.

WHO WE ARE

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) is the charity that saves lives at sea

Vision

To save every one.

Values

Our volunteers and staff are trustworthy, courageous, selfless and dependable.

We are one crew. This is our watch.

We are one crew – volunteers, supporters and staff – and this is our watch. It's our responsibility to keep our charity safe and secure, like generations of lifesavers before us.

RNLI crews and lifeguards continue to save hundreds of lives each year. As an emergency service and a charity, we rely on your support.

MONEY IN 2023

Charitable spend: £191.2M

At £191.2M, charitable spend was £3.2M (1.7%) higher than in 2022. Most of this spend was on our lifeboat and lifeguard rescue services. While the RNLI continued to feel the effect of high inflation in 2023, careful cost control meant that we were able to limit the impact.



Net income available for charitable spend: £192.2M

In 2023, our total income available for charitable spend was £236.1M. After deducting the £43.9M cost of raising the income, our net income available for charitable spend was £192.2M. Legacies accounted for 66% of total income, while donations accounted for 28%.



Financial health

In 2023, the RNLI continued to face a challenging economic environment which resulted in increased costs and a decrease in cash and investments. Despite this, we remain in a stable financial position due to careful cost control throughout the year. Free reserves (unrestricted funds which we can spend as we see fit) stand at £138M – meaning, if we stopped fundraising right now, we would have enough to keep the RNLI running for 8.9 months. We continue to operate in an uncertain economic environment, but we still need to invest in our lifesaving service and infrastructure, so we expect to draw on our free reserves further in 2024.

Cost of living

Since 2019, prices have gone up across the board, including a jump of 25% for boat fuel and a 9% increase in utility costs.

We are responding to the changing financial picture. Our priorities are delivering our lifesaving service and investing in our future to ensure the RNLI remains financially secure.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US

Make a donation

As a charity, we rely on voluntary donations to power our lifesaving work – as we have done for 200 years. There are many ways you can give to the RNLI, such as by setting up a regular monthly gift, supporting one of our appeals or making a one-off donation. To find out more and to donate, visit RNLI.org/donate.

Raise money

Take part in an organised fundraising event, or plan one of your own – from challenges and sporting activities to coffee mornings and social events. However you choose to raise money for us, you can be sure you will make a lifesaving difference. Visit RNLI.org/fundraising.

Shop with us

All profits from the purchase of RNLI products, whether from our shops, retail branches or website – at shop.RNLI.org – go towards funding our lifesaving work.

Leave a gift in your Will

Gifts in Wills are our crews' protection at sea. In 2023, 66% of our net income was from legacies. This means that 6 in 10 lifeboat launches were possible thanks to the generosity of supporters leaving us a gift in their Will. Visit RNLI.org/legacy.

Become a member

RNLI membership is one way of giving on a regular basis. To view the different membership options and their benefits, visit RNLI.org/membership.

Donate in memory

Support the RNLI by donating in memory of a loved one. Via our Launch a Memory campaigns, more than 60,000 loved ones' names have been added to the letters and numbers that identify Shannon class lifeboats. Visit RNLI.org/LaunchAMemory.

Connect with us on social media

Join more than 1.25M supporters following @RNLI across social media.

Partner with us

If you have a connection with a national company that could support the RNLI, please email our National Partnerships Team at corporate@RNLI.org.uk.

Give time

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our charity.

97% of our frontline lifesavers are volunteers, including:

5,700+ lifeboat crew members

4,000+ shore crew (including station management)

98 lifeguards

Thousands more dedicated volunteers raise funds and awareness, give water safety advice and help in our shops, museums and offices. Find out more at RNLI.org/volunteer.

LIFEBOATS

The RNLI provides a 24-hour search and rescue service around the UK and Ireland, up to 100 nautical miles offshore.

238 lifeboat stations
441 lifeboats*, excluding hovercraft
160 all-weather lifeboats (ALBs)*
281 inshore lifeboats (ILBs)*
7 hovercraft*

2023 statistics

9,192 launches from lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland
10,734 people aided
269 lives saved**
29 aided per day, on average

*Including relief fleet.

**Had it not been for the intervention of the RNLI, emergency services and/or a third party, a life would've been lost.

Lifeboat costs

• Shannon	£2,781,000
• B class	£322,000
• D class	£101,000

This is what it costs on average to build the lifeboat, deliver it, and make it ready for service.

Crew kit costs*

• Drysuit for ILB crew member	£805
• Thermal suit for ILB crew member	£150
• Layered clothing and boots for ALB crew member	£1,600**
• Lifejacket	£590***
• Helmet	£350
• Gloves	£25

* These are recommended retail prices. We always try to get the best price for all kit and equipment. Where possible, we negotiate a lower cost.

** Includes outer jacket, salopettes, mid jacket, merino top and bottom, gilet and wellies.

*** This is the price of similar items, as the supplier does not sell to retail.

Training costs

• Average annual training cost for a crew member	£1,450
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LIFEGUARDS

In 2023, we provided lifeguard cover on 239 UK and Channel Islands beaches, with 1,565 lifeguards on patrol.

Lifeguard statistics 2023

14,213 incidents
19,979 people aided
86 lives saved*

* Had it not been for the intervention of the RNLI, emergency services and/or a third party, a life would've been lost.

Lifeguard kit costs

Local authorities and beach owners contribute to the RNLI's costs, which helps to cover lifeguard wages.

• Wetsuit	£250
• Binoculars	£149
• Sunglasses	£55
• Rash vest	£60
• Swimsuit	£60
• Trunks	£41

INTERNATIONAL

235,000 people drown worldwide each year – around one person every 2 minutes*

227 children under the age of 15 drown every day*

These are preventable deaths and we believe this needs to change. Our international work is a small and important part of what we do. We work with partners globally, and in countries where drowning is a significant problem, to raise awareness, carry out research, and find ways of saving more lives. Last year, less than 2% of our total charitable spend was on our international work. We received funding for this work from the overseas aid budgets of the Irish and Isle of Man governments.

*Global Health Estimates 2020, World Health Organization.

In 2023

- We helped over **9,000 children aged 6–12** to graduate from a series of swimming lessons in Bangladesh. And we helped keep over **11,000 young children safe from drowning** through community-based creches running at peak drowning-risk times.
- In Tanzania we worked with a local partner to test buoyancy device prototypes and improve weather reporting for fishing communities.
- We welcomed **15 candidates from eight countries** to the Leaders in Lifesaving course at the RNLI College in Poole, Dorset.
- We worked with the governments of Ireland and Bangladesh to help secure a first-ever resolution on global drowning prevention at the World Health Assembly in Geneva.

WATER SAFETY

Around 138 people* die by accident in UK and Irish coastal waters each year. Men and boys over 15 are most at risk. These 11 areas account for 51% of accidental coastal deaths: Cornwall, Devon, Gwynedd, East Sussex, London/Thames, Kent, Hampshire, Essex, Dorset, Cork, Highlands.

These eight activities account for the majority of coastal incidents and deaths: Sailing and motorboating, walking, paddleboarding, waterside and in-water play, swimming, kayaking and canoeing, commercial fishing, angling from a boat.

We prioritise our water safety work accordingly, so we can reduce risk, prevent serious incidents and save lives. We're asking you to help by sharing a safety message with others.

Float To Live

We know this advice saves lives, so if you find yourself in danger in the water, remember, **float to live**:

- Tilt your head back with your ears submerged
- Relax and try to breathe normally
- Move your hands to help you stay afloat
- It's fine if your legs sink, we all float differently
- Practice floating in a local pool if you can

If you see someone in trouble at the coast, call **999** or **112** and ask for the coastguard.

Carry a means of calling for help and keep it on you at all times.

Remember to check the weather forecast and tide times before heading out.

Activity tips

- **Sailing and motorboating:** Wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid, ensure everyone onboard knows how to call for help, get appropriate training, and check your engine and fuel before every trip.
- **Swimming:** Wear the right equipment (wetsuit, bright hat and tow float) and acclimatise slowly.
- **Visiting the coast:** Swim at a lifeguarded beach, between the red and yellow flags.
- **Paddleboarding:** Wear an appropriate leash and flotation device, keep a means of calling for help on you, and avoid going out in offshore winds.

Find out more at [RNLI.org/safety](https://www.rnli.org/safety).

*UK average (115 people) from the Water Incident Database (WAID) 2020-22. Republic of Ireland pro-rated average (23) from Water Safety Ireland (WSI) 2020-22.

RNLI IN HISTORY

The RNLI was founded by Sir William Hillary in 1824. The commitment and dedication of our volunteer crews and lifeguards remains as strong today as it was then. Collectively, they have saved over 146,000 lives since the charity was founded.

In 2024 we mark the RNLI's 200th anniversary – we remember our remarkable history, celebrate the modern lifesaving service we provide today, and look forward to inspiring future generations of lifesavers and supporters as we move into the next 200 years. Visit [RNLI.org/200](https://www.rnli.org/200).

OUR WORK IN THE CHANNEL

RNLI crews in south-east England continue to rescue people crossing the Channel in overcrowded, unseaworthy boats. Our volunteer crews are tasked in the UK by HM Coastguard. If anyone is in trouble and we are tasked, we will launch to help them – no matter who they are or where they come from, as the RNLI has been doing for 200 years.

After each rescue, we pass care of the casualties to the most appropriate agency. This is a complex situation, but we are proud of our volunteers and staff who remain focused on our core purpose of **saving lives at sea**.

Notable anniversaries in 2024

- 200th anniversary of the founding of the RNLI (1824)
- 140th anniversary of the original RNLI flag design (1884)
- 50th anniversary of the RNLI moving the Support Centre to Poole, Dorset (1974)
- 40th anniversary of Storm Force membership (1984)
- 20th anniversary of the opening of the RNLI College (2004)

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603), Scotland (SC037736), the Republic of Ireland (CHY 2678 and 20003326), the Bailiwick of Jersey (14), the Isle of Man (1308 and 006329F), the Bailiwick of Guernsey and Alderney, of West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ