



NEWS FROM THE RNLI LIFEBOAT TEAM IN DARTMOUTH

Lifeguard update June 2020

The RNLI will maximise its lifeguard presence on up to 170 beaches in the fastest possible time due to the increased demand and high number of beach visitors. This means the RNLI will have lifeguard patrols on 70% of the beaches we would normally cover.

As the coronavirus pandemic continues, our priority remains to ensure lifeguards can operate safely with the right PPE, procedures and infrastructure in place. As we roll out our service on more beaches, we will continue to do all that we can to protect lifeguards and the public from both infection and the normal dangers of the coast.

With the confidence in how the service is running so far, we recognise that the plan for 70 beaches was a conservative one because, at the time, stricter lockdown measures were in place.

Currently, 47 beaches in England, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands have RNLI lifeguards on duty, and we will see lifeguards returning on around 40 further beaches by Friday 19 June. We are also working hard to have all beaches on service by early July, in time for the government's proposal to lift restrictions on the tourism and hospitality industry. Locally there will be RNLI lifeguards on Bantham, and Sedgewell Cove now and Blackpool Sands and Challaborough from 4 July. There

will be no lifeguards on Hope Cove and Slapton Sands.

The restriction on even more beaches being protected is that the trained lifeguards who were laid off at the beginning of the pandemic are no longer available as they have found alternative work.

Measures to deal with the coronavirus means our lifeguard service looks a little different.

What is new?

Measures to deal with the coronavirus means our lifeguard service looks a little different this year. Lifeguards are wearing PPE, similar to ambulance crews in some situations. New protocols for all first responders mean lifeguards may not deal with some minor first aid cases but will support people

to treat themselves. They will also try to keep socially distant from beach goers, and may need to adopt different patrol methods at times, such as not using the red and yellow flags and asking people to keep apart but close to shore, to help keep people safe while maintaining social distancing.

As more beaches become patrolled, we will be updating our website to let our supporters know. Stay tuned on our website to see which beaches have RNLI lifeguards on duty over the coming weeks and months. <https://rnli.org.uk/find-my-nearest/beaches-with-lifeguards-on-patrol>.

Meanwhile, we will be continuing to encourage the public who may be planning to visit the coast to make sure they keep themselves and their families safe by following beach safety advice along with the government's advice on social distancing.



Jack Lowe's Lifeboat Station Project. Five years and still going strong.

Sunday 15th March was the turn of RNLI Dart to be photographed using Victorian photographic methods. We were station number 150 out of 238 to be visited in what is an amazing project and is taking up Jack Lowe's life!

So why did it take so long to take four photos? Watching the process unfold it is evident that the method of creating a 12x12 inch glass plate photograph is exceptionally task focussed and time consuming. He is travelling around the coast in 'Neena' – a converted ambulance and mobile dark room. 'Neena' smells a little of the chemicals which are used in the developing process, and is perfectly set up to assist in the process from blank glass to a wonderful and incredibly sharp photograph. Firstly Jack set up the camera with the desired shot and briefed those involved. We were asked to look natural, not grimace, to lean against something so that we were not moving and enjoy the moment. He then had to tweak the camera again – checking it is level and the light requirements satisfactory, which was not easy on a cloudy, often rainy, day.

The photograph was taken by removing the lens cap from the front of the tripod mounted camera for about 5 seconds. He then took the frame back to 'Neena' and developed the photograph under the watchful gaze of the crew involved.

Photos were taken of the station crew, helms, crew and the female volunteers. Jack talked to many of the crew and reading his blog it appears that he does this with every station in an attempt to learn as much as he can about the RNLI volunteers. The crew at RNLI Dart are looking forward to seeing the finished products and showcasing the photographs on the wall of the lifeboat station in Coronation Park.



Above: Photographer Jack Lowe - The Lifeboat Station Project is a documentary project about the lifeboat volunteers, for the lifeboat volunteers. Jack works as the Victorians used to, making the photographs on glass from his mobile darkroom.





Above: The whole Dart lifeboat team 2020 with the River Dart behind them.

Opposite page, middle: Dart RNLI Lifeboat volunteers Dave, Kevin, Jamie, Chris, Rich and Andy.

Opposite page, bottom: Higher ferry slipway where the lifeboat launches.

Right: Katie and Sophie, Dart RNLI Lifeboat volunteers

For further information on Jack and his amazing project, or even to become a patron, go to his website lifeboatstationproject.com You can also purchase copies of these images of the Dartmouth lifeboat station from the website.

