



## Water Safety Ireland Press Release

23 Nov 2020

### **Fifty-one lives saved in near-drowning rescues** **Water Safety Ireland to honour remarkable rescuers** **National Awards Ceremony 2020** Online at [www.watersafety.ie](http://www.watersafety.ie) Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 7pm

Fifty-one lives were saved from drowning by rescuers who will receive recognition at Water Safety Ireland's National Annual Awards Ceremony, broadcasting online on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm.

The Minister for Rural & Community Development, Heather Humphreys will acknowledge recipients of the 'Seiko Just in Time Rescue Award' and other rescue awards being presented to 67 rescuers in appreciation for saving 51 lives in 32 incidents.

"It is an honour to pay tribute to these deserving award recipients", commented Minister Humphreys. "Without their bravery, quick thinking and selflessness, the outcomes could have been very different. On average, ten people drown in Ireland every month and while one drowning is one too many, the figure would have been higher but for these courageous rescuers."

"I would also like to commend the efforts of Water Safety Ireland volunteers. The Lifeguard service is also crucial to safety on our waterways and would not be possible without the teaching and assessment conducted by Water Safety Ireland Volunteers nationwide. This summer, Lifeguards rescued 468 people, administered first aid on 3,450 occasions and reunited with loved ones, 251 lost children found wandering unsupervised near water."

"I would ask all adults to make themselves more aware of the dangers of drowning", commented Martin O' Sullivan, Chairman of Water Safety Ireland. "Tragedy can strike in seconds but with the right knowledge, skills and attitudes everyone can avoid the hazards and take responsibility for their own safety. Encourage your family, friends and colleagues to read Water Safety Ireland's guidelines at [www.watersafety.ie](http://www.watersafety.ie) so that they can enjoy Ireland's waterways safely."

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Information below on each rescue incident (contact numbers on last page):

## SEIKO Just In Time Award & Rescue Appreciation Award Recipients

Presented to those who came to the assistance of person(s) in difficulty in water and in danger of drowning.

1. [Sam Rodden and Patrik Orals, Roscommon, River Boyle, 11 Oct 2019](#)

Students Sam and Patrik were returning to school when they saw somebody in the river. They ran along the riverbank, throwing a ringbuoy as the current took him away but the person submerged and did not resurface so they got into the river and pulled the unconscious person out. The boys put him in the recovery position and got blankets to keep him warm. He regained consciousness just as the emergency services arrived and he made a full recovery.

[Well done Sam and Patrick.](#)

2. [Our next recipient is Jack Nolan. Cork, Youghal, 8 Jan 2020](#)

Jack was returning to the harbour from a fishing trip. As he passed a lighthouse, he saw a woman in the water. He was wearing a lifejacket so he jumped in and saved her until emergency services arrived.

[Well done Jack](#)

3. [Our next recipients are Niamh McMahon, Lynn McCarthy, Beth Darrer. Cork, Incidoney, 27 May 202](#)

Niamh was surfing when she saw four friends in danger of drowning. She paddled over and pulled one person onto her board while another held on tightly. Beth and Lynn were walking the shoreline and after getting people to call emergency services, they grabbed a ringbuoy and swam out to help Niamh. Exhausting for everyone but they all got back to shore safely.

[Well done Niamh, Lynn, and Beth.](#)

4. [Our next recipients are Jamie Venner, Cillian Foster, Richard McSweeney, Kate Horgan and Harry Pritchard. Cork, Fountainstown, 28 Aug 2020](#)

These five teenagers were fishing in a Rigid Inflatable Boat when they saw a nine-year-old boy on an inflatable toy being swept out to sea by a strong current, along with the boy's father who was swimming to save him. The boy made it back to shore but the father was left exhausted and clinging to a marker buoy in the strong current. Thankfully, the teenagers were in the right place at the right time to save him.

[Well done Jamie, Cillian, Richard, Kate, and Harry](#)

5. [Our next recipient is Conal Dolan. Westmeath, River Shannon, June 2019](#)

Conal certainly put his training as an Emergency Medical Technician to good use when he saw a woman in danger of drowning. Without hesitation, he got into the water and brought her safely to shore where he checked her vital signs and put her in the recovery position in an effort to drain excess water. She made a full recovery.

[Well done Conal.](#)

6. [Our next recipients are Nathan Holding, Cathal Keohane and Connell O Herlihy. Cork, Inchidoney, 24 June 2019](#)

A father and son were caught in a very strong rip current but thankfully the three boys were able to use their boards to help. The father had become exhausted fighting the current but after a time the boys broke free of the rip and got safely back to shore.

[Well done Nathan, Cathal, and Connell](#)

7. [Gardai Adrian Corcoran, Mick O'Connell, Dave Coughlan, Laois, River Barrow, 8 March 2020](#)

[Our next recipients are Gardai Adrian Corcoran, Mick O'Connell, Dave Coughlan.](#)

Adrian got into the high and fast flowing river to save a woman in danger of drowning. Sergeant O'Connell soon arrived and got in to help Adrian bring the woman to the riverbank where Garda Coughlan also helped to pull the woman to safety.

[Well done Adrian, Mick and David.](#)

8. [Our next recipients are Gardai Niall Lennon, Mark Murphy & Sergeant Leo Kiernan. Galway, Loughrea, 9 May 2020](#)

These three Gardai came to the rescue, not of a person, but a dog that had become entangled in a water buoy and was drowning. Luckily they were able to avail of a local fisherman's lake boat to rescue the dog and get it back to its worried owner.

[Well done Niall, Mark and Leo.](#)

9. [Our next recipient is Garda Nigel Desmond. Cork, Lancaster Quay, 12 Feb 2020](#)

Nigel arrived at the scene to find a man semi-submerged in freezing cold water, holding onto a ringbuoy that had been thrown to him. Nigel jumped in straight away and kept the man's head above water and with some help, managed to get close to the riverbank until Cork Fire Brigade's Swift Water Rescue Team arrived.

[Well done Nigel.](#)

10. [Our next recipient is Garda Fergal O'Connor. Carolow, River Barrow, 28 Oct 2019](#)

Fergal arrived to the riverbank to find that several people had attempted to save a drowning man by throwing ringbuoys but none of the ringbuoys reached him. Fergal immediately jumped in and used a ringbuoy to keep the man afloat while his Garda colleagues pulled them both back to the riverbank and out of the river.

[Well done Fergal.](#)

11. [Our next recipient is Sergeant Cathal O'Neill. Limerick, River Maige 31 August 2019](#)

Cathal's local knowledge came in handy to find a woman who was brought nearly 200 metres away from where she was first spotted in the water. He called emergency services and got into the strong current and in poor visibility, managed to find her and bring her to the riverbank where first aid was performed successfully.

[Well done Cathal.](#)

12. [Our next recipients are Gardai Karl Carroll and Evan Guilfoyle. Dublin, River Liffey, 31 Dec 2018](#)

Both Karl and Evan used a temporary ladder to access a pontoon where they managed to bring a man to safety from a strong current.

[Well done Karl and Evan](#)

13. Our next recipients are Gardai Dean O'Sullivan and Darragh Khan. Carlow, Knockroe, 6 Oct 2019

Dean and Darragh managed to avoid rocks as they swam a strong current to reach a drowning man and bring him to shore where Dean performed CPR.

Well done Dean and Darragh.

14. Our next recipients are Mr James Brennan, and Gardai Breda Fahy, Tom Kelly, Aidan Hynes, Joyce O'Grady and Ken Narney. Westmeath, Athlone. 29 Sept 2018

James used a rowboat to get to a drowning woman and hold onto her while Breda and Tom used another boat to assist. They pulled the woman into a boat and then Aiden, Joyce and ken threw them a rope and pulled them all safely back to safety.

Well done to all.

15. Our next recipients are John Boyle and – posthumously to Dan Boyle and Brian Friel. Donegal, Mullaghduff, July 1975

People out walking Mullaghmore noticed from a distance that two men in a boat had lost an oar on their wooden boat and were in extreme difficulty. Brian Friel and Dan Boyle, local residents at the time, along with John Boyle, launched a boat and lifted the casualties on board. They were shaken and hypothermic but thankfully made a full recovery.

A very deserving award indeed.

16. Our next recipient is Jane Friel. Donegal, Port Salon, 28 July 2020

Jane ran to a mother's cries for help and saved FOUR people from drowning in a strong rip current. She ran with a ringbuoy into the water and after rescuing the nine year old girl, went back out to reassure two more girls and their father, encouraging them to help by kicking their legs as she helped them to shore and out of the rip current.

Well done Jane.

17. Our next recipients are Gardai Pearse Murphy & Gary O'Donohoe. Louth, Drogheda, 3 May 2019

Pearse and Gary used a ringbuoy to pull a heavily bleeding man to shore where they administered first aid and got him to hospital where he made a full recovery.

Well done Pearse and Gary.

18. Our next recipients are Garda John O'Brien and Reserve Garda Brian Murray. Wicklow, Arklow, 22 Sept 2019

John arrived to a river that was heavily swollen due to heavy rainfall and could see a woman face down in the middle of the waterway. He swam with a ringbuoy while his colleague Brian held the rope however the rope was not long enough but nonetheless John continued swimming with the ringbuoy until he reached the drowning woman. He pulled the woman towards him and used the ringbuoy to help him swim 20 metres back to shore where both Gardai administered CPR.

Well done John and Brian.

19. Our next recipient is Callum Keane. Meath, Navan, 12 Aug 2020

Callum was out for a walk when he saw two boys shouting for help. They got into difficulty in the rushes growing in the river. He swam to the first boy and brought him safely through the rushes to the riverbank. He then went back into the river to rescue the second boy trapped in the rushes.

[Well done Callum.](#)

20. [Our next recipient is Garda Liam Glendon. Cork, Mallow, 16 May 2020](#)

Liam, who is also a volunteer with Mallow Search & Rescue, received an alert that someone was drowning in the river Blackwater. He got to the scene quickly and swam to the drowning man who soon made a full recovery.

[Well done Liam.](#)

21. [Our next recipient is Garda David Fenton. Cork, Castletownbere.](#)

David, who is also a volunteer with the RNLI, received an alert that a woman was drowning near the pier. He swam to the woman and kept her calm and safe in the water until a boat arrived to take her to shore where she was brought to hospital and made a full recovery.

[Well done David.](#)

22. [Our next recipient is Garda Dean Phelan. Wicklow, Bray Head, 22 August 2020](#)

Dean received an alert that a man was drowning at The Cove in Bray Head. He swam to the unconscious casualty, brought him to shore and placed him in the recovery position. He made a full recovery thanks to Dean and the ambulance service.

[Well done Dean.](#)

[Well done Dean.](#)

23. [Our next recipient is Garda Micheal Carroll. Wexford, Wexford Quay, 12 April 2020](#)

When Micheal received an alert that a man was drowning near the quay, he rushed to the scene, swam to the rescue and brought the man to safety.

[Well done Michael.](#)

24. [Our next recipients are Gardai Brendan Crawford, Ciaran Murray & Ciara Galvin. Dublin, Clondalkin, 17 June 2020](#)

When a woman was pulled into the water by her dog, Brendan and Ciaran tied a rope to each other and entered the water to rescue the lady while Ciara held the rope securely on the river bank to help them all back to shore.

[Well done Brendan, Ciaran and Ciara.](#)

25. [Our next recipients are Jack Groves & Gardai Christopher Smith & Jamie Lillis. Dun Laoghaire, 8 Feb 2019](#)

Christopher and Jack swam to the rescue of a drowning man, using a ringbuoy to keep him afloat while they all waited on rocks for the Irish Coast Guard which was called by Jamie from shore. The man was brought back to the pier and treated at the scene.

[Well done Jack, Christopher, and Jamie.](#)

26. [Our next recipients are Gardai Roisin O'Donnell and Keenan McGavisk. Louth, Ardee, 30 March 2020](#)

Roisin and Keenan entered the water and crossed the entire river. using a torch to locate a man at risk of drowning. They found him, rescued him, and got him to hospital where he made a full recovery.

[Well done Roisin and Keenan.](#)

27. [Our next recipients are Callum Curtin & Kevin Sharkey. Clare, Spanish point, 20 Sept 2020](#)

When a child was swept out to sea, Callum and Kevin grabbed their surfboards and rescued both the child and a person who tried to rescue the child but got into difficulty. Within moments, they saved three more children who were swept out by a strong current. Shortly after that, they saved another young girl and two adults trying to save her. Within 45 minutes, they had saved eight people from drowning.

[Eight very lucky people - Well done Callum and Kevin](#)

28. [Our next recipient is Joe Breen. Waterford, Tramore, 3 June 2020](#)

Joe paddled to help rescue two very distressed paddleboarders drifting out to sea on an offshore wind. As emergency services were called, Joe placed the lady on his paddleboard as her husband paddled alongside, eventually helping to get them both safely back to shore.

[Well done Joe.](#)

29. [Our next recipient is Jim Swift. Waterford, tramore, 28 May 2020](#)

Jim used his surfboard to help a young girl caught in a strong rip current at Tramore beach. His quick response as the lifeboat arrived, helped to ensure that the girl was taken to safety and assessed by emergency services.

[Well done Jim.](#)

30. [Our next recipients are Clodagh West Keogh & Lorna Keogh. Kilkenny, River Dinan, 01 June 2020](#)

Clodagh and Lorna were painting on the side of the riverbank when they heard two men shouting for help downstream. Clodagh grabbed a ringbuoy and ran towards the men who were struggling in the water. Lorna swam across the river to calm their young children who were panicking. Clodagh entered the water and twice used the ringbuoy to save both men.

[Well done Clodagh and Lorna.](#)

31. [Our next recipients are Tony Collins, Paddy Collins, Conor Hayes and Ben Tennyson.](#)

[Kilkenny, River Nore, 6 November 2019](#)

Tony, Paddy, Conor and Ben were walking across St John's bridge when they saw a man bobbing up and down in the water in distress. They grabbed a nearby ringbuoy and threw it a number of times until they reached the man and pulled him to safety.

[Well done to all.](#)

32. [Our final recipients in the Rescue Award Category are Patrick Oliver and his son Morgan. Galway Bay, 13 August 2020](#)

Patrick and Morgan rescued two paddleboarders, Ellen Glynn and Sara Feeney who were swept out to sea and spent fifteen hours lost overnight. As a massive search and rescue effort involving the Irish Coast Guard, the RNLI, local fishing vessels, and many onshore walkers continued, Patrick and Morgan took to their fishing boat and found the girls clinging to a

lobster pot south west of Inis Oírr, after using their local knowledge to estimate where the currents might have carried them.

Well done Patrick and Morgan.

**ENDS**