

New Chair Appointed to Water Safety Ireland

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has today appointed Clare McGrath as the new Chair of Water Safety Ireland (WSI), which works to prevent drownings.



Clare McGrath, Chair, Water Safety Ireland

Ms McGrath has been a lifelong advocate for drowning prevention and in addition to being a volunteer with WSI and serving on the WSI Council, is the Water Safety Development Officer with Clare County Council since 2014.

Ms McGrath received a thirty-year Long Service Award at the WSI National Awards Ceremony in November for her voluntary efforts as an Instructor, Examiner and Tutor and her experience predates this Award, having won National Lifesaving Competitions aged sixteen and lifeguarding at seventeen. As a current member of the WSI Council, she has helped to develop a National Drowning Prevention Strategy. As the current Chair of the WSI Sports Commission, she has played a key role in developing Lifesaving Sport in which participation levels are at an all-time high.

Currently the Chair of the Federation of Irish Sport, and the former Chair of Swim Ireland, Ms McGrath has a particular penchant for teaching the Water Safety Ireland Lifeguarding and Lifesaving Sport syllabus through which a corps of Lifeguards is educated so that waterways and pools have competent cover to protect the public.

Announcing the appointment, Minister Humphreys said: “I am delighted to appoint Clare McGrath as the new Chairperson of the Council to Water Safety Ireland. Clare brings a wealth of experience as a lifelong member of Water Safety Ireland and Swim Ireland. I also want to acknowledge the contribution of Martin O’Sullivan, the outgoing Chair, and to thank him for his strong contribution and dedication to Water Safety Ireland over several years. WSI is an organisation with a rich history of volunteerism and is deeply committed to these volunteers who teach swimming, lifesaving and promote drowning prevention initiatives nationwide. WSI has been consistently to the fore in raising awareness of the dangers of drowning in water over many years as well as the education and training of thousands of people in water safety.”

Commenting on her appointment as WSI Chair, Ms McGrath said: “My objective is to bring drownings down by promoting the necessary rescue skills, attitudes and behaviours that will prevent drownings and water related accidents. I very much look forward to working with the WSI Council and engaging it’s Commissions, our thirty Water Safety Area Committees nationwide and the members, Local Authorities, and other Agencies to develop policies and projects that help encourage more participation and engagement at all levels. Over the next five years as Chairperson I look forward to providing leadership to the Council in the continued delivery of Ireland’s National Drowning Prevention Strategy 2018-2027, and the strategic development of the organisation. I thank

the outgoing Chair Martin O’Sullivan for his commitment and the WSI staff for the support they give to drowning prevention.”

The CEO of WSI, John Leech and staff welcome this appointment and look forward to working with Ms McGrath on delivering many projects ahead.

ENDS

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