

The RNLI

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution, or the RNLI, is a charity that helps save lives at sea.

Lifeboat stations

There are 238 RNLI lifeboat stations around the coastline of the United Kingdom. The lifeboat crew use the boats and equipment that are kept in the lifeboat station to help people in trouble in the water. Small inshore lifeboats help people near the coastline. Large all-weather lifeboats are used to help people further out at sea.

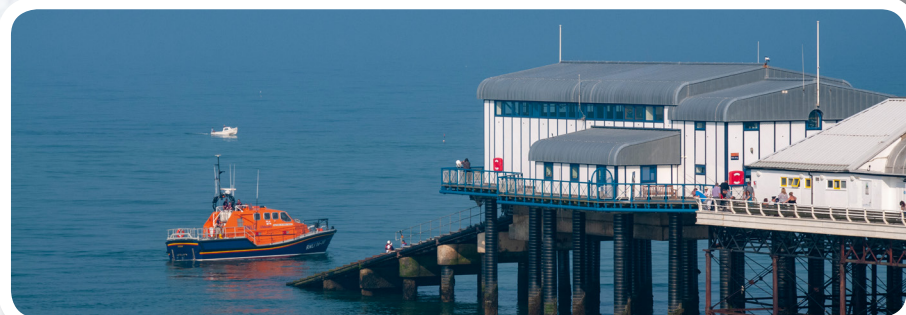


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RNLI volunteers

Many people who work in lifeboat stations are volunteers. They live close to the lifeboat station so that they can get there quickly when someone is in trouble in the water. It only takes a few minutes for the crew to arrive at the lifeboat station, get dressed and launch a lifeboat onto the sea.

Special clothing

The lifeboat crew wear special clothing to keep them warm and safe in the water. Life jackets keep them afloat if they go into the water, helmets protect their heads and waterproof clothes, a 'woolly bear' suit, gloves and boots keep them warm and dry.

Rescues

The lifeboat crew carry out all sorts of rescues. They save people who have fallen into the sea or been swept away on inflatables and bodyboards. They help people who have become stuck on rocks when the tide has come in suddenly. They come to the rescue of boats that are damaged or have capsized far out at sea.



RNLI crew members carry out a rescue.

On the beach

RNLI lifeguards also look after visitors on beaches at busy times of the year. They put out safety flags to tell people if it is safe to go in the water, give people safety advice and go into the sea to rescue people. They also provide first aid to anyone who is hurt or taken ill on the beach.



RNLI lifeguards keep watch on the beach.

Image from: urbanbuzz/Shutterstock.com

Contacting the RNLI

People ring 999 if they need help from the RNLI. Over 8000 people are helped by the RNLI every year.

Glossary

capsize	To turn upside down in the water.
launch	To push or roll a boat into water.
volunteer	A person who works for a company or charity and doesn't get paid.

