



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Local Authority Leaders
via email only

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As many of us return from summer breaks either in the UK or abroad, I wanted to write to you on the important matter of water safety, which has been highlighted recently in the tragic incidents, including the one at Camber Sands. It is an issue which has also recently been raised with the government, by a correspondent who lost her son in a drowning accident at a quarry some years ago. Her moving story acts as a reminder that, especially in hot weather, there are temptations for people to swim or cool down in locations where it is not safe to do so.

I am conscious that responsibility for sites, such as quarries, may often lie with other organisations, companies or private individuals. But given the life-changing accidents that do sometimes occur, I wanted to ask you to ensure that your authorities seek ways of safeguarding people in these situations.

A number of councils have been involved in improving and increasing community safety near and around danger spots. Activity has included erecting fencing around certain sites; introducing or increasing the amount of signage at areas where bathing is known to occur; and providing press notices to warn communities of the dangers of bathing in unsuitable areas. I would very much encourage you and your staff to work with communities to identify such areas and find ways to warn communities of those dangers in order to protect the lives of youngsters and people who may go to their aid.

I hope that through collective action and cooperation, we can all ensure that the numbers of accidents involving drowning are significantly reduced, in line with the National Water Safety Forum's UK Drowning Prevention Strategy 2016-2026.

MARCUS JONES MP

CC: Local Authority Chief Executives