

New floating 'Throwlines' could save lives

A new initiative that will help police to undertake water rescues is being launched in Southampton.

New floating 'Throwlines' will allow immediate response officers, who are called to the scene of someone in the water, to be able to pull them to safety.

Sponsored by yacht insurers Pantaenius UK Ltd, the idea was discovered at last year's Southampton Boat Show as a way to address the problem of missing or vandalised water rescue equipment around the city's waterways.

The 'Throwline', a rope with a floating bag attached to the end, was inspired by a quick-thinking officer who saved a man's life after fashioning a makeshift line from a dog's lead.

Sergeant Debbie Ashthorpe, who has been overseeing the implementation of the project, said: "Our officers have been keen to get trained to use this new piece of equipment which could literally make the difference between life and death for someone who needs rescuing from any of the rivers, estuaries or the sea around Southampton."

John McCurdy OBE, Managing Director of Pantaenius UK Ltd, said: "I am delighted to support this initiative and to enter into a partnering arrangement with Hampshire Constabulary which would lead to lives being saved."

"Our offices abroad in Germany, Denmark and Austria also work very closely with their respective police authorities and we are pleased to be able to assist here," he added.

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