

From: Olivia
Sent: 24 July 2021 12:04
To: Info <Info@witney-tc.gov.uk>
Subject: A change needed

To whom may concern,

I am writing as both a Wood Green Sixth Form student and as a young adult pleading for action to be taken in response to teenage fatalities caused by unsafe water related incidents. Our community suffers as a result of a limited safe outdoor facility. Raising awareness for water safety is a fundamental start, but the real progress will be the action taken. Being a part of a school community I have seen and felt the devastating impact this tragedy has caused in both the school atmosphere and the local one. There needs to be a response from the wider community ensuring that accidents like this one never happen again. Water fatalities **can** be prevented: this issue needs to be addressed sooner rather than later.

As climate change is a significant issue within our global community our summers are only going to get hotter and longer, we need address the urgent demand locally for safe open water environments to prevent the inevitable if action is not taken. Oxfordshire geographically is land locked, therefore unlike many other coastal counties we are restricted to safe open water areas without lifeguards. Growing up in Witney myself I have noticed as I have got older swimming in rivers and lakes is the only outdoor alternative when the weather gets hotter. The Leys is targeted towards younger children and we have limited options. Therefore, I'm urging you to give children of all ages, backgrounds and generations to have a choice in the future summers to come. At this current moment in time young people in this area do not have the choice for a safe open water alternative and this needs to change! Chipping Norton have a lower population and yet still facilitate a lido this is something we need to seriously consider to keep your children safe. We cannot ignore Witney's growing population.

Therefore, I am proposing that we need to begin to consider an outdoor pool facility for our community. A good start would be clearer signage around Ducklington lake as many people are unaware of the serious dangers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated just how much community matters more than ever. Many young people have missed out on opportunities around wellbeing and enjoyment. As well as a global pandemic we are currently in the midst of a mental health crisis. Our community needs something to look forward to especially after such devastating local news. We need to come together for both funding and support to ensure all children can feel safe outdoors. I know that this will be a challenge, but when the lives of young children have been lost I'm sure you'll agree that a change is needed.

Yours faithfully,

Olivia