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Portobello Beach Safety Signage



Portobello Beach is considered Edinburgh's seaside, at two miles long it provides a valuable outdoor space for visitors, city residents and outdoor enthusiasts alike.

However the beach length can bring its own challenge in an emergency situation when it comes to ensuring public safety. Visitors to the beach may have little knowledge of the area and not knowing where you are on the long length can be significant challenge if an emergency occurs. Being aware of your location can be key to providing a swift and successful outcome.

Imagine a visitor to Portobello Beach requires emergency assistance on the beach. Their child's inflatable raft has become detached and is caught by the wind. It is quickly taken out to sea. You are too far away to read a road sign. You pass a dog walker and they aren't sure of a nearby road name....

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In a water emergency, seconds and minutes really do count.

This fictional scenario could easily take place on Portobello Beach and extremely similar situations have taken place, but with the installation of beach safety signage, assistance can be greatly improved.

Whilst emergency services will always respond to a general location – an accurate location is often extremely important. However in a water situation an added importance to this as a floating object doesn't stay in the same place. With a fixed reference point surface drift rates can then be calculated which allow a rescue helicopter or lifeboat to move quickly to a predicted location.

Close relationship between Police Scotland, HM Coastguard and City of Edinburgh Council

Closer links between HM Coastguard, City of Edinburgh Council have been forged over the last few years, this has resulted in considerable partnership working being conducted in terms of meetings, consultation and training being done. As a joint approach the Police Scotland and HM Coastguard have looked at best practice throughout the United Kingdom and established that emergency location signage would benefit Portobello Beach.

Work has been ongoing with the Beach signage for some time, however this has been disrupted due to the current COVID-19 health crisis, yet it is recognised that

Signage has the following benefits,

- 1) Exact location of each individual sign will be available to a 999 call handler**
- 2) Location is available for all Emergency Services to coordinate a last known location for an incident. A lifeboat or helicopter can use it as a visual aid.**
- 3) They serve as a clear and unambiguous marker to members of the public in a crisis situation.**

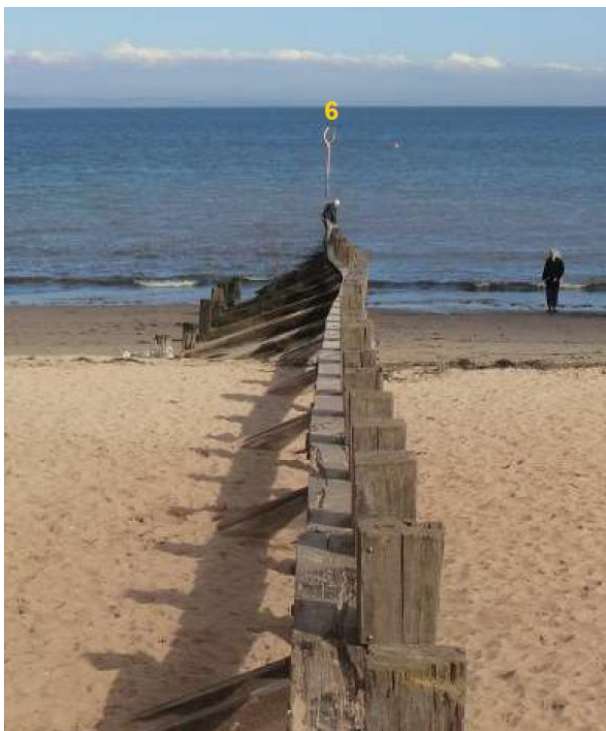
Portobello Beach defences have a number of groyne structures, along the waterfront, 6 in total.

In simple terms it is aimed to make use of these structures and place numbered location signage on them. The number will be positioned on top of the existing pole and circular navigation globe. It will be approximately 600mm high and 450mm wide.

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The aim is that each sign will be numbered 1 to 6. The sign number will face into land and be mounted at the top of the groyne.

It is considered that this approach is the least intrusive to the beach as a whole, and it is important to stress that the emergency location signage primary aim is to save life by providing clear location information to someone in an urgent situation.



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The benefit of the signs is not only focused towards water emergencies but can easily assist in terms of a missing person on Portobello Beach, medical emergency and police with incidents/crime etc.

Key aspects.

The signage and cost will be borne by the City of Edinburgh Council

A public social media and information campaign will accompany the implementation of the signs

Due to the primary purpose of this signage being the safety - it does not require planning consent.

The signage project is only a part of an approach being conducted to keep people safe at Portobello Beach, and Police Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council and HM Coastguard will continue to work closely together building on the pre-existing work.

A review of the signage is planned for the later part of 2021, where the signage and incidents will be fully evaluated.

The colour of the signage is still to be finalised however it will be a high visibility colour.

Projected timeline

Physical implementation – Week commencing the 29th of March 2021, considered from a planning viewpoint to have the best spring tides before summer.

Evaluation of project – October 2021.

Should you wish any further information, please email

EdinburghCPTNorthEast@scotland.pnn.police.uk

and place in the header/subject field – Portobello Beach Safety Signage.

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Pre – Covid 19 Partnership working at Portobello Beach.



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HM Coastguard

◆ EDINBURGH ◆
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



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