



South Ayrshire
**COMMUNITY
PLANNING**
Partnership



COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP WATER SAFETY

Windsocks

Vincent McWhirter is Troon Lifeboat volunteer Water Safety officer and Lifeboat crew for 20 years. He began working to improve public awareness of wind direction after noticing a rise in the number of RNLI rescues to paddleboarders and young people on inflatables especially during and after Covid with multiple callouts to the public being blown out to sea in offshore winds.

He says: 'I contacted South Ayrshire Council and proposed they fund windsocks at key beaches. Using RNLI emergency call out maps to highlighted frequent call-out locations on the coast, I worked with the council to support windsock and signage installations along the coast'.

At present, there are currently several windsocks installed on Barassie, Troon, Maidens, Girvan and Ballantrae beaches, with additional installations planned soon for the main hotspots of Ayr and Prestwick. These will be soon accompanied by safety signage designed to educate the public about offshore winds and the associated risks.

Full press release available [Here](#)



Water Safety Training

Vince also initiated a stand-up paddling safety programme between 2021 and 2025.

After securing funding from a local Ayrshire charity, Vince partnered with Adventure Paddle Co. and launched a SUP safety training course in Summer 2021 before the official Paddle UK SUP Safer course was introduced in 2022.

Since then courses have been delivered annually across Ayrshire reaching hundreds of participants including families and young people. Key areas covered by the training are SUP equipment, environment and weather, planning, and on-water safety.

Impact report highlights a **90%** drop in lifeboat call-outs across Ayrshire over 4 year period.



"thanks to initiatives like this we can help to save lives at sea, which has been the charity's aim for the last 200 years"

RNLI Lead