

## **PE1770/H**

Glasgow City Council submission of 26 November 2020

In our submission of 8 January 2020, it was explained that the intervention from the Spiers family prompted the Water Safety Group to look again at the issue of throw ropes, but it was felt that a way to deter theft and vandalism was required. This led directly to discussions with rope makers and from this a distinctive rope with a unique yellow, orange and purple weave was designed, which was applied to 70 lifebelts within the city centre area of the River Clyde last November.

A year has now passed since these unique ropes were rolled out along the Clyde in the city centre, this has allowed Glasgow City Council to evaluate their effectiveness in reducing theft and vandalism.

The ropes have surpassed expectations and for the first sustained period in decades the new ropes have mostly remained in place, this is undoubtedly due to the distinctive colours deterring theft. This has also been aided by the publicity campaign that the Glasgow Water Safety Group and the Spiers Family have undertaken to highlight the uniqueness of the ropes and the importance of the lifebuoys and throw bags.

In Glasgow city centre there are now significantly fewer lifebuoys being thrown into the Clyde. The Council has also been able to deploy additional throw bags onto the City centre bridges in the knowledge that the unique ropes, which are attached to them, deters vandalism. Reducing vandalism of water safety equipment has raised the odds that safety equipment will be in place ready to be deployed in the event of an incident on the river.

Due to the nature of the river incidents it is difficult to keep an accurate record of how many times the lifebuoys have been used since the ropes were attached however anecdotally it is estimated the life boys and ropes have been deployed at least six times in the last 12 months to aid in a river rescue in the city centre.

Margaret and Duncan Spiers have made clear their desire to see their campaign extended across the rest of the country. If our experience in Glasgow with the uniquely coloured lifebuoy and throw bag ropes provides any basis for wider reduction in vandalism and improvement to incident outcomes, then the petition from Margaret and Duncan Spiers is worthy of the most serious consideration.