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'THEY DID A PRETTY FANTASTIC JOB,' SAY PIER BOSSES



■ Rescue - Lifeboat crews and the beach patrol during the rescue at Clacton Pier

Heroic pier workers help save swimmers

by **GEORGE KING**
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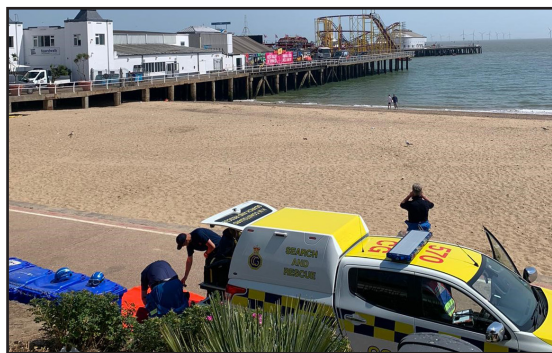
HEROIC seaside workers rescued a group of people after they got into difficulty out at sea before a huge operation was launched to find a missing man.

Clacton Pier employees, some of whom are only teenagers, have been praised after their quick-thinking potentially saved the lives of four beach-goers.

Shortly after 11am on Tuesday, the team leapt into action after hearing distressing calls for help coming from the east side of the historic attraction.

They soon realised at least four people, believed to be in their late teens or early twenties, were being pushed by the sea towards the rip currents underneath the pier.

The workers launched life rings attached to ropes into



■ Closed - The empty beach

the water before the casualties managed to grab hold of the floats.

Within minutes Tendring Council's Beach Patrol team arrived on a jet ski and collected one of group before two Clacton lifeboat teams picked up the others.

Nigel Brown, communications manager at Clacton Pier, said: "Our guys up on the pier were holding onto these ropes

and I looked over the side and there were people hanging on.

"They did a pretty fantastic job because it is not something they are particularly trained for but they rushed to help whoever they could.

"Two members of the staff also got into the water along with a member of the beach patrol and they were doing their best to point the lifeboats to the casualties."

According to Nigel, those that found themselves stranded in the sea had been positioned in the water close to the beach before venturing slightly further out.

The group, who apparently were all fully-clothed, then became caught up in a powerful tide and current which swept them in the direction of the pier.

Following the rescue, one of the casualties was reported missing, prompting an urgent search operation.

Nigel added: "There were some guys in the water shouting about there still being one more person in the sea.

"That is when ambulances, police officers, firefighters and the coastguard arrived, as well as the air and sea search helicopter, and the beaches were cleared.

"It has been a fairly major operation."

Beach-goers reminded to stay safe

BEACH-GOERS have been reminded to stay safe after the Clacton coastline was hit with a fourth sea-related emergency in just four years.

In 2018, Ben Quartermaine, 15, drowned in the waters near Clacton Pier, before siblings Malika and Haider Shamas, aged 14 and 18, also died after getting into trouble at the sea in Clacton a year

later. The same seafront was yesterday the scene of yet another incident after six people found themselves in danger out at sea, before one was reported missing.

Since then hundreds of residents online have called for more stringent safety measures to be put in place, while others have asked for

more education. Bosses at Tendring Council, which sent a Beach Patrol team to help support the emergency services, have now urged locals and tourists to be careful on the coast.

A spokesman said: "While we do not yet know what has happened in this incident, we would like to remind everyone who visits our coastline

to stay safe. "While Clacton is a safe place to visit, as with any seafront there are risks and people are asked to stay away from piers, groyne and breakwaters which can produce strong currents and sudden changes in depth. "Our thoughts are with those affected by this incident."