



## Regulation 28: REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS

NOTE: This form is to be used **after** an inquest.

	<p><b>REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT DEATHS</b></p> <p><b>THIS REPORT IS BEING SENT TO:</b></p> <p><b>1 Canal &amp; River Trust</b></p>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>CORONER</b></p> <p>I am Victoria DAVIES, Area Coroner for the coroner area of Cheshire</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>CORONER'S LEGAL POWERS</b></p> <p>I make this report under paragraph 7, Schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>INVESTIGATION and INQUEST</b></p> <p>On 26 November 2025 I commenced an investigation into the death of William Anthony Elvis WEBB aged 21. The investigation concluded at the end of the inquest on 20 February 2026. The conclusion of the inquest was:</p> <p>Accident</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEATH</b></p> <p>William Webb was found deceased in the Shropshire Union canal by Earles Port, Chester, on 24 November 2025. He had been reported missing by his mother at around 21.55 on 23 November, as he had been out drinking with friends the previous night and had not returned home. CCTV footage shows William walking along a path which then continues around behind a building and runs alongside the canal at around 04.30 on 23 November, before likely accidentally falling into the canal. Unfortunately, his efforts to self-rescue were unsuccessful and William died by drowning on 23 November 2025.</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>CORONER'S CONCERNS</b></p> <p>During the course of the investigation my inquiries revealed matters giving rise to concern. In my opinion there is a risk that future deaths could occur unless action is taken. In the circumstances it is my statutory duty to report to you.</p> <p>The <b>MATTERS OF CONCERN</b> are as follows: (brief summary of matters of concern)</p> <p>The area in which Mr Webb fell into the canal is close to student accommodation. Whilst this is a generalisation and is by no means all students, students as a group are within the demographic of people who will attend the bars, pubs and nightclubs of Chester and become inebriated to varying degrees. Once under the influence of alcohol, or perhaps another substance, it is then not inconceivable that they then take less care/ are more willing to engage in risky behaviours. The canal is near to their accommodation, which makes it more likely that they will be in that area. Once in the water, there is currently no safety equipment which could assist someone in getting out, whether they are in accidentally or intentionally, and the distance between the water level and the ground edge (the freeboard) is, in my view, such that it would be difficult to get out without assistance. There is also no signage nearby which alerts people to the potential risks. I heard varying evidence as to the depth of the water, with the police describing it as around 5ft, and the</p>



	Canal and River Trust indicating it was around 1 metre.
<b>6</b>	<b>ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN</b>  In my opinion action should be taken to prevent future deaths and I believe you (and/or your organisation) have the power to take such action.
<b>7</b>	<b>YOUR RESPONSE</b>  You are under a duty to respond to this report within 56 days of the date of this report, namely by April 23, 2026. I, the coroner, may extend the period.  Your response must contain details of action taken or proposed to be taken, setting out the timetable for action. Otherwise you must explain why no action is proposed.
<b>8</b>	<b>COPIES and PUBLICATION</b>  I have sent a copy of my report to the Chief Coroner and to the following Interested Persons  The family of Mr Webb.  I am also under a duty to send a copy of your response to the Chief Coroner and all interested persons who in my opinion should receive it.  I may also send a copy of your response to any person who I believe may find it useful or of interest.  The Chief Coroner may publish either or both in a complete or redacted or summary form. He may send a copy of this report to any person who he believes may find it useful or of interest.  You may make representations to me, the coroner, at the time of your response about the release or the publication of your response by the Chief Coroner.
<b>9</b>	<b>Dated: 26/02/2026</b>   <b>Victoria DAVIES</b> <b>Area Coroner for</b> <b>Cheshire</b>