

Charlotte Burns Silfra Crack Dive, Iceland

We are very sad to announce that Charlotte Burns' proposed dive in the Silfra fissure, Iceland, that was scheduled to take place [on Saturday 26th September](#), has had to be cancelled.

When we first announced our plans for Charlotte's dive in June 2015, the story was carried by a national Icelandic news publication. After a few days of national coverage, another article was published reporting that the dive in fact may be illegal, compromising an old law in Iceland which prohibits any under 17 year-olds from diving. Although we had initially been led to believe that the waiver which Charlotte had been granted by the Icelandic dive authorities was sufficient, the news article reported that the dive might still compromise Icelandic law. This was later confirmed to us by the dive centre in Iceland, and that our plans would have to be cancelled.

Naturally, the news was devastating to Charlotte who had been very much looking forward to diving in the beautiful natural surroundings of the Silfra region. Months of planning had gone into the dive, and Charlotte had undergone a programme of intense training in preparation for the dive. Furthermore, a team of students from Coventry University were planning to film the dive in anticipation of making an educational documentary about the fissure, and a number of companies had sponsored the expedition.

In planning the dive, liaison had taken place between the British Embassy in Iceland, Icelandic government departments, and the Icelandic dive centre who were co-ordinating the dive. On receipt of the news that the dive would need to be cancelled, we spoke with the British Embassy in Iceland and the Icelandic government itself to see if anything could be done. Charlotte's case was reviewed by the Icelandic Interior Ministry and it was later confirmed to us that the law, initially referred to in the newspaper article by [mbl.is](#), was in fact correct and no mitigating waiver could be granted under current Icelandic law. We appreciate the uncovering of this by [mbl.is](#) as they prevented what could have been an awful situation of Charlotte breaking Icelandic law and the associated effects of that with the Icelandic dive company, Dive.is, and associated sponsors.

In a review of the case, the Icelandic government have been very sympathetic to the unfortunate position all parties have found themselves in but, at present, the current law cannot be immediately changed. Nonetheless, in the process of reviewing Charlotte's case, the government have welcomed the opportunity to re-examine current Icelandic scuba diving laws which prohibit anyone under the age of seventeen from diving. The diving age in most countries is ten years of age, although the unique dive conditions in Iceland are considered to be different to elsewhere. As such, the Icelandic government have invited Charlotte to visit Iceland at the end of September in order to give a presentation to government officials on her PADI training, qualifications and diving experiences. There, Charlotte will answer any questions that they may have in relation to possible changes in current dive laws.

What has occurred has sadly been beyond our control, and it is a great shame that these developments have come about. From the beginning we never intended to compromise Icelandic law, we sought the correct permissions for the dive through the official channels and believed this had been achieved when the waiver was issued. We are moving on and seeing what positive outcomes can arise from this unfortunate situation. We would like to thank [dive.is](#) for accepting full responsibility for this unfortunate situation and are very grateful to the Icelandic government for doing all they could to resolve the matter. Charlotte is honoured to have been invited to Iceland on the [25th September 2015](#) to assist and inform government officials in their review of this particular law.

Dive.is have issued the following statement regarding the cancellation of the dive: *"We are truly sorry that it has not worked out for Charlotte to dive here in Iceland at this time. We believe that, as in other countries, the decision to dive with minors should be up to their parents and the responsible Dive Instructor or Dive Center."*