



Open Water

NATIONAL AGE GROUP CHAMPIONSHIPS

ENTRY PACK

25 JULY 2026 | ROTHER VALLEY



Open
Water



Funding Partner



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Introduction

This document contains the required information needed to enter Swim England Open Water National Age Group Championships 2026. Please ensure you read this document carefully as some information may be new to you.



Contacts

Swim England	Venue
Events Officer	Rother Valley Country Park Mansfield Road, Wales Bar Sheffield S26 5PQ Tel: 01709 334455
Jade Williams Email: NationalEvents@swimming.org	
Designated Welfare Officer	
Email: safeguarding@swimming.org	
Championships Website	
Swim England Open Water National Age Group Championships 2026	



Key Dates

	Pool based	Regional qualifiers
Entries Open	12 noon Monday 8 June 2026	12 noon Wednesday 24 June 2026
Membership Queries	12 noon Monday 22 June 2026	12 noon Wednesday 8 July 2026
Athlete Declarations Close	12 noon Friday 26 June 2026	12 noon Tuesday 14 July 2026
Entries Close	12 noon Wednesday 1 July 2026	12 noon Wednesday 15 July 2026
Pre-Event Information (Online Briefing)	12 noon OR 18:00 Tuesday 21 July 2026	

Pre-event Information (online briefing)

Pre-event Information (online briefing)		Tuesday 21 July 2026
Option 1	12 noon	Joining instructions will be detailed in the Confirmation Pack
Option 2	18:00	

One representative from every club due to participate in the Championships (this can be a coach or team manager) is encouraged to attend an online pre-event briefing to hear all the key event information.

Only one of the above meetings needs to be attended, as the same information will be conveyed. There is no requirement to sign up in advance. Although this is not a mandatory briefing, we strongly encourage participation.

The online briefing does not replace the race day mandatory safety briefing.



Privacy Policy and Photography Consent

All individuals attending Swim England events are asked to complete the photo consent form below, prior to attending the event:

PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT FORM

To view further details about how Swim England manages your data, please refer to Swim England Privacy Policy (Policy: [SE1046 Privacy Policy](#)).



Travel Insurance

Affiliated Swim England clubs and members thereof have the benefit of third party and personal accident insurance effected by Swim England. However, this does not include travel insurance for trips in the UK or abroad there is no cover for travel or accommodation costs for the cancellation of an event.

Some clubs and members may already have the benefit of their own group or personal travel insurance. For those that do not have travel insurance for this event and wish to get a Sport Travel Insurance quote please contact Howden directly on 0121 698 8052. Alternatively, you can seek cover from another insurance provider.

Unfortunately, non-Swim England members do not have the benefit of third party and personal accident insurance effected by Swim England and would therefore need to seek insurance coverage separately.



Schedule

NOTE: Take careful note of the age group and race distance, as race distances may differ from those at the regional qualifiers.

Age Group*	Race Distance	Registration	Race
16 years 17/18 years 19+ years	7.5km	07:30	09:30
14 years 15 years	5km	11:30	13:30
13 years	3km	14:15	16:15

***Please note**, the above timings are subject to change depending on the number of entries received.

Competitors will also be required to attend a pre-race briefing, timings for which will be confirmed in the Confirmation Pack after close of entries.



Event Conditions

Before starting the athlete entry process, please ensure you have reviewed the event conditions and race distances. Carefully read the entry information below and resolve any membership-related queries as soon as possible.

Event Conditions can be downloaded from the Championships' online hub [here](#).



Athlete Declaration -

Your safety during the event is of the utmost importance to us.

Entry will not be permitted until the athlete declaration form has been completed and submitted. Please ensure the form is completed in advance to allow time for any issues to be resolved before the entry deadline. (See [How to Enter section on p.6](#))

Feeding Station (7.5km race only)

As detailed in the Event Conditions, which can be viewed/downloaded [here](#):

22. A feeding platform will be available for 7.5k races only and, if used by a competitor, coaches are to provide the feeding poles and sustenance abiding by the following:
- i. Feeding poles are not to exceed 5m in length when extended.
 - ii. Coaching and the giving of instructions by the competitor's coach on the feeding platform is permitted. No whistle shall be allowed.
 - iii. No objects can be thrown from the feeding platform to the competitors, including sustenance. The competitors shall receive their feeding in biodegradable containers directly from their coach by a feeding pole.

Further details will be included in the Confirmation Pack and provided in the pre-event online briefing as well as the mandatory event day briefing.

How to Enter

Entry Deadlines

	Pool based	Regional qualifiers
Entries Open	12 noon Monday 8 June 2026	12 noon Wednesday 24 June 2026
Athlete Declaration Closes	12 noon Friday 26 June 2026	12 noon Tuesday 14 July 2026
Entries Closes	12 noon Wednesday 1 July 2026	12 noon Wednesday 15 July 2026

All athlete declarations, entries, and payments must be received by the stated deadlines. Late submissions, incomplete entries, missing payments, or incorrectly completed forms will not be accepted beyond the closing deadline.

The following must be in place first to ensure the athlete is available for selection in the entry system and an entry can be submitted:

- Correct membership category and Club
- Submission of completed athlete declaration

Entry Process

	Pool based	Regional qualifiers
Membership Queries	12 noon Monday 22 June 2026	12 noon Wednesday 8 July 2026
Online Membership Check	MEMBERSHIP CHECK	
Online Membership System	Online Membership System	

International entrants

Please email NationalEvents@swimming.org for further details on how to enter.



Athlete Declaration -

Entry will not be permitted until the athlete declaration form has been completed and submitted. Please ensure the form is completed in advance to allow time for any issues to be resolved before the entry deadline.

NOTE:

- ensure all information is entered correctly, paying special attention to the **Competitor membership number** field shown below. It must be entered without spaces, text, or any other characters. If incorrect, the entry system will not recognise it, and you will be unable to complete your entry.

Competitor Membership Number *

- the entry system should update immediately after submission; however, please allow up to 12 hours for processing. If you are still unable to enter after this time, contact NationalEvents@swimming.org for assistance.

See [Appendix 1 – p.12](#)) for sample athlete declaration.

	Pool Based	Regional Qualifiers
Athlete declaration submission closes	12 noon Friday 26 June 2026	12 noon Tuesday 14 July 2026
Athlete declaration form	Submit HERE	

You will be required to check and reconfirm the athlete declaration at registration on the day of the event.

Online Entry

	Pool Based	Regional Qualifiers
Entry Fee	£35.00	
Online Entries System	Submit entry HERE	Submit entry HERE

- **Pool based entries:** enter your membership number or surname in the box and follow the instructions
- **Regional qualifiers:** select swimmer(s) from the drop-down list and follow the instructions

Payment Methods

Please follow the payment instructions.

The entry is not complete until payment is processed, and a confirmation email has been received.

Clubs/entrants are reminded that electronic entrants are bound by the conditions of entry without signature.

Entry Confirmation

All successful entries can be viewed online:

[View online received entries list:](#)

[CONFIRMED ENTRIES](#)

Clubs and competitors are asked to check their details carefully and contact the Events Team with any errors as soon as possible.

A Confirmation Pack will be circulated to all entrants once the initial entry deadline has passed.



Accreditation

Athletes

Accreditation for athletes **will not** be in force at this event.

Coach, Team Manager and Chaperone

New for the 2026 event, coaches can purchase accreditation to gain access to the race finish area, allowing entry into the accredited zone close to the finish.

Poolside Accreditation Pass Charge	£7.50
	Available from Monday 8 June 2026
Overseas Accreditation Applications:	No later than 12 noon, Monday 6 July 2026
Swim England Accreditation Queries:	No later than 12 noon, Wednesday 8 July 2026

Coaches, team managers and chaperones requiring access to the finish area must purchase an accreditation pass in advance of the event. Clubs/teams must follow the guidance as set out in the current version of [Wavepower](#) and individuals may only act in one role at the event and fulfil the following criteria:

To obtain an accreditation pass, coaches, team managers and chaperones must fulfil the following criteria, as required by their role, when applying to attend a Swim England National event:

1. DBS

You must have a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with Barred List check.

2. Safeguarding Certificate

All coaches, team managers and chaperones are required to have an approved and in date safeguarding certificate recorded with the Swim England's Membership department.

3. Minimum Qualification/Requirements (specific to the role)

Coaches must have a qualification in line with the Swim England [Coaching Policy](#). Team Managers must have the appropriate Team Manager module for the competition and Chaperones must only be in attendance on a 1:1 support basis for an athlete as per the [Team Manager, Coach and Chaperone Policy](#).

Membership Check	MEMBERSHIP CHECK
Further info and How to Guide	Accreditation Information
Apply for Accreditation - England	Apply for Accreditation
Apply for Accreditation – Scottish, Welsh & Overseas submitted no later than 12 noon, Wednesday 8 July 2026	Apply for Accreditation

Misplaced Accreditation Passes

A £10 charge will be applied on all lost or forgotten passes if a coach etc arrives at the event without their accreditation. Accreditation checks will be carried out to enter the finish area and entry will not be allowed into this area without a pass.

Race Courses*

***NEW for 2026:** please note different race course layouts for the 2026 Championships (to previous years). Due to exciting development at the Country Park, with the build of a new café overlooking the lake, this year's Championships course has been updated to enable best participation and spectator experience.

7.5km Race course

Access to the swim start will be via the slipway located at the left hand side of the pontoon, adjacent to the 7.5km start.

Prior to accessing the start funnel, for safety reasons, it is competitors' responsibility to ensure that the race numbers provided in competitor race packs are clearly displayed on competitor's hat, shoulders, arms and back of hands throughout the race, if wetsuits are worn then numbers will be on the back of hands and hats. Competitors will also be checked by the chip timing company and must ensure their timing chips are on both wrists, with the additional safety tally band either on the wrist or ankle.



- Start is in the water
- Course is run clockwise:

- 1 lap = 1.5 km (1500 metres):
 - 7.5km swim 5 laps
- Do not enter the finish funnel until final lap
- On turning at T2, for final time, head directly towards and into finish funnel.
- The finish is "swim through" and competitors MUST reach up and touch the finish banner. This is essential to determine place and to ensure your timing chip is read.

Feeding Station (7.5km race only)

As detailed in the Event Conditions, which can be viewed/downloaded [here](#):

22. A feeding platform will be available for 7.5k races only and, if used by a competitor, coaches are to provide the feeding poles and sustenance abiding by the following:
- i. Feeding poles are not to exceed 5m in length when extended.
 - ii. Coaching and the giving of instructions by the competitor's coach on the feeding platform is permitted. No whistle shall be allowed.
 - iii. No objects can be thrown from the feeding platform to the competitors, including sustenance. The competitors shall receive their feeding in biodegradable containers directly from their coach by a feeding pole.

Protocol

The following protocols must be followed to ensure the safety of everyone:

- Feeding poles are to be provided by the coach / athlete representative.
- Poles will be checked at the mark up station and you'll be issued your swimmer number(s)
- Swim England will provide an identifying label (athlete number) to attach to the pole.
- Entry to the pontoon will be controlled by a Pontoon Official
- Please leave the pontoon as soon as possible after feeding and re-enter the holding area
- Feeding will be available on laps 1-4.
- Feeding from any other place than the feeding pontoon will not be permitted
- One representative per swimmer will be allowed
- Coaches must wear a buoyancy aid and appropriate non-slip footwear when on the pontoon
- Instructions from the technical officials and safety team must be followed at all times.
- Feeding will be permitted with the use of feeding poles only – feeding by hand will not be permitted for safety reasons.

Further details will be provided at the online briefing which will take place as detailed on [p.3](#) and in the mandatory safety briefing on the day of the event ([p.5](#)).

5km & 3km Race Course

Access to the swim start will be through the gate by the right-hand side of the Water Sports Centre and onto the start pontoon.

Prior to accessing the pontoon, for safety reasons, it is competitors' responsibility to ensure that the race numbers provided in competitor race packs are clearly displayed on competitor's hat, shoulders, arms and back of hands throughout the race. Competitors will also be checked by the chip timing company and must ensure their timing chip is on the wrist, with the additional safety wristband either on the wrist or ankle.

The event will start with a dive start from the pontoon. Competitors may start in the water if they inform the Referee at the briefing.



- Start with a dive from the pontoon / in the water at the pontoon from allocated position
- Repeat number of times to achieve race distance. Do not enter the finish until final lap
- 1 lap = 1 km (1000 metres):
 - 3km swim 3 laps
 - 5km swim 5 laps
- On turning at T2, for final time, head directly towards and into the finish funnel.
- The finish is "swim through" and competitors MUST reach up and touch the finish banner. This is essential to determine place and to ensure your timing chip is read.

Anti-Doping Information

Anti-Doping Rules	Anti-Doping Rules
Swim England – further support	antidoping@swimming.org
Information on medications	UKAD website, click here
Medications check	Global DRO, Medications Check
How to apply for TUE	UKAD website, click here
National TUE Pool check	UKAD website, click here

By entering this event the athlete consents to report to Doping Control, if requested, at any time during this event and agrees to abide by the British Swimming Anti-Doping Rules (2021), which Swim England is signed up to.

If an athlete is tested through doping control at an event, they should ensure they provide detail of all medications (prescribed or over the counter and including dosage) and supplements taken within the last 7 days in advance of the test on the Doping Control Form. Any previously disclosed medications or supplements to the athlete's club and/or talent programme are still required to be included on the doping control form.

Medications

- Medication should be checked via Global DRO (see above).
- If the medication being taken is prohibited in or out of competition, a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) may be required.

Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE)

- If an athlete IS WITHIN the National TUE Pool they are required to obtain a TUE before using a prohibited medication or method. Athletes can check if they are within the National TUE Pool via UKAD website (see above) and by selecting 'aquatics'.
- If an athlete is NOT within the National TUE Pool but using a prohibited medication or method and is subject to doping control they are required to apply for a retroactive TUE as soon as possible after doping control. A retroactive TUE must be submitted to UKAD (UK Anti-Doping) within five (5) working days of the testing taking place.

All athletes are subject to 'Strict Liability' which means an athlete is wholly responsible for any banned substance found in their system, no matter how it got there.



General Information

All updates and additional information will be uploaded to the [Swim England Open Water National Age Group Championships 2026](#)



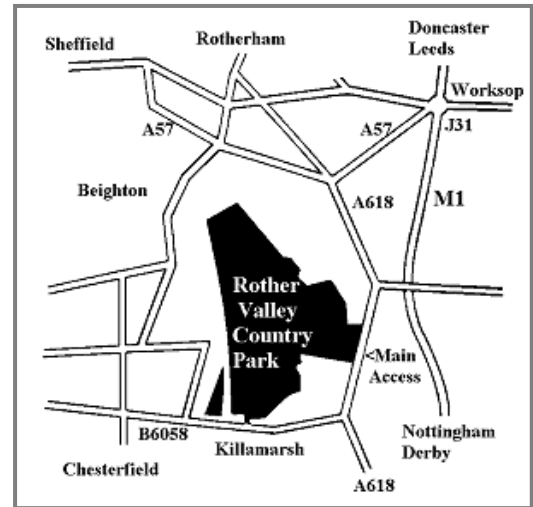
Venue

[Rother Valley Country Park](#)

Mansfield Road,
Wales Bar
Sheffield
S26 5PQ
Tel: 01709 334455

The Park

The 750 acre park hosts a number of walking and cycling routes which link into the TransPennine Trail and Sustrans Route 6. Bicycles are available to hire from the Water Sports and Activity Centre. Photographic ID will be required to hire a bicycle.



There are five lakes within the park, with the competition being held in the Main Lake which is one mile long. The Nature Reserve offers fantastic bird watching with over 260 different varieties of birds recorded over the past two years.



Travel

Car

We advise you to not use the above postcode in your Sat Nav to find the venue, as it takes you to an industrial estate nearby.

From Junction 31 of M1, take A57 towards Sheffield. At the roundabout take A618 towards Mansfield, Wales Bar and Clowne. At the traffic lights go straight on and the park entrance is at the bottom of the hill on the right.

Parking

Parking is available onsite. Once past the gatehouse please follow the Swim England Event signage and the signage to the Water Sports and Activity Centre.

NOTE: the speed limit reduces along the access road, please adhere to the speed limit signs at all times.

Pay on exit:*

- £1.70 for the first hour
- and then an extra £1 per hour up to a maximum of £6.50 charged per car or motorcycle per day.

Payments can be made by cash or card at the payment machines located in the park for a speedier exit or by contactless card only at the exit barriers.

*Car parking cost may be subject to change by the park.



Spectator entry

General spectator entry into the Park is free of charge, so feel free to bring as many supporters with you as you like!

New for 2026 - Premier Spectator Viewing

The new [Waterfront Cafe](#) is now open right next to where the main action will take place.

Enjoy a **Premier Viewing Ticket for just £5**, granting exclusive access to a viewing platform above the waterfront cafe, offering the perfect vantage point of both the race start and finish.

Tickets go on sale from **8 June** and are valid for one distance racing only, and are subject to availability.



Premier Spectator Viewing

On sale from 8 June

[Purchase HERE](#)



Food and Drink

NEW: The Waterfront cafe sells a range of hot and cold food alongside beverages. There is ample indoor and outdoor seating.

The Stables café will also be open throughout the day selling a range of hot and cold food and beverages. There will also be mobile outlets serving hot and cold food, snacks and drinks.



Event Merchandise

Event Hoodies and T-Shirts pre-orders

Event hoodies and t-shirts will be available to pre-order [HERE](#).

All pre-orders must be received by **Wednesday 8 July**. **Pre-orders** will be available for collection at the Championships from Front of House.

NOTE: Event hoodies and T-shirts for other events, including the Swim England Open Water National Masters Championships, will be available for purchase at the same time. Please ensure you select the correct hoodie/T-shirt, as exchanges and refunds will not be possible.

Event Hoodies and T-Shirts on-venue sales

A limited selection of hoodies and t-shirts will be available to purchase at the event, subject to availability.

Swim England Merchandise

Swim England merchandise will be available to purchase at the Front of House desk.





Event Photography

Official event photography will be provided by Will Johnston Photography (<http://www.willjohnstonphotography.com/>).

Please see below for the exclusive offer open competitors of Swim England Open Water National Age Group Championships 2026.



**W I L L J O H N S T O N
P H O T O G R A P H Y**

Will Johnston Photography is proud to be the official photography provider for this event.

Have specific requests?

Please text us on 07777 764684 details of competitors, cap number, and heat and lane numbers we will do what we can to focus on them.

Photographs are available on our website:
www.willjohnstonphotography.com



Prices increase by 20% within 48 hours of event so order today!

email: pictures@willjohnstonphotography.com **telephone:** 07777 764684 **@whljohnston**
www.willjohnstonphotography.com

Appendix 1 – Athlete Declaration



Swim England Open Water National Age Group Championships 2026 Athlete Declaration

Event: Open Water National Age Group Championships 2026

Date: 25 July 2026

Location: Rother Valley Country Park

This is not an entry into the event. If you have not submitted your details through the official entry system website, please do so, as your entry will not be confirmed until both this athlete declaration and your entry via the entry system are completed.

IMPORTANT - Please read this document carefully, you will be required to sign this at the event, please make sure you are familiar with all the below points.

Any queries should be raised with Swim England Events nationalevents@swimming.org

1. I am aware of the need to seek appropriate medical advice if I have concerns as to the state of my health. I have not been informed by any medical practitioner and I do not have any knowledge of any medical condition which would make it inadvisable for me to

2. I am aware of and appreciate the inherent risks involved in Open Water swimming competitions including the possibility of injury and accident.

3. I undertake at all times to use my best endeavors to compete in a safe and proper manner and not to do anything, which would expose myself or fellow swimmers to unnecessary risk or injury.

4. I further undertake at all times to take all reasonable safety measures for the protection of myself and fellow swimmers and to inform the Referee of any concerns I may have as regards to safety.

5. I have read and understand the above provisions and agree to abide by them.

6. (You will be required to sign this form at the event.)

By entering the competition, the competitor acknowledges and consents to the inherent risks involved in open water swimming. Swim England cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to personal belongings and the competitor must take all reasonable steps against any such loss or damage.

Are you a member of Swim England *

Please Choose

Competitor Membership Number *

Name of Competitor *

First

Last

Competitor Date of Birth *

DD

MM

YYYY

Competitor Email Address *

Email

Confirm Email

Event/s competing in: *

- 3km
 5km
 7.5km

Do you have any medical conditions that the organisers should be aware of to ensure your safety? *

Please Choose

- I consent to Swim England processing any medical data that I may have supplied, for the purposes of ensuring a safe event.

Are you a parent/guardian completing this form on behalf of a child under 18? *

- Yes
 No

Signature (parent/guardian if under 18) *

Emergency Contact Name *

First

Last

Emergency Contact Telephone Number *

Submit