

**Guidance Notes for Coaches, Competitors and Parents**  
**London Region Open Water Swimming Championships**  
**5<sup>th</sup> July, 2026**

**TRAVEL AND CAR PARKING**

The venue address is:

Docklands Sailing and Watersports Centre  
235a Westferry Road  
Docklands  
London E14 3QS

Please see link below for guidance on getting there by public transport.

<https://www.dswc.org/contact/>

The centre is accessible by bus, tube (Jubilee Line), DLR and the Thames River Boat.

If you are coming by car, please note that local parking is extremely limited and is strictly reserved for officials and athletes with disabilities. Canary Wharf offers ample parking with 6,000 spaces, including 2,500 in public car parks. These car parks include Cabot Square, Canada Square, Jubilee Place, and Westferry Circus. Parking at Canary Wharf is cashless, requiring debit / credit cards or contactless payment methods. Please note that the walk time from parking facilities is c20mins.

**SITE RESTRICTIONS**

Please note the following conditions of entry into the event:

- There is no smoking / vaping allowed **anywhere** on the site.
- There are **no** dogs allowed on site.
- There is to be **no** changing into or out of swim wear **anywhere** apart from the changing facilities provided.
- Drones **are not** allowed to be flown on site.

If any attendee at the event is witnessed breaching any of the venue's conditions of hire, by either a member of the regional team or a member of venue staff, they will be asked to leave the event and site.

The Region and venue operator accept no responsibility for any damage incurred to vehicles.

## **ARRIVAL**

Please plan to arrive well before your allotted briefing times.

On arrival, we ask that Age Group swimmers please contact their coach, who will have information packs and race materials necessary for the day.

## **COACHES INFORMATION PACKS**

Information packs for club coaches (or Team Managers) will be available from the registration area. We will be conducting swimmer briefings throughout the day, so coaches should be aware that swimmers will be arriving during the day – please ensure they can contact you when they arrive in order to gain access to the deck area.

No access to the controlled event area can be made by Age Group competitors until their named coach or Team Manager is present and has collected their club pack.

For Age Group swimmers packs will be prepared for each club. They will contain all the necessary information for that club. This pack will be given to the coach or Team Manager and it will be up to them to ensure that competitors are given their wrist bands, race caps and other relevant information. **Individual adult entrants will have their own information packs.**

## **ACCESS TO THE CONTROLLED EVENT AREA**

The Controlled Event Area will **ONLY** be accessible to coaches, swimmers, officials and volunteers. There are specific viewing areas for parents and other spectators. For competitors, toilets are available by the changing facilities. Spectators should use toilets located on the upper floor of the building near the café / bar area.

Age Group swimmers who are coming to one of the races where there is a later reporting / briefing time should ensure you make arrangements to meet your coach as they will have your competitor bands and information.

Any competitor who is not wearing the appropriate band **will not** be permitted entry to the controlled event area.

Any coach / TM who is not wearing the appropriate coach / TM pass **will not** be permitted entry to the controlled event area.

Competitors and coaches / TMs are asked to please return all bands / passes at the end of the day. This enables us to keep our event costs down.

**BRIEFING AND EVENT START TIMES**

Event	Brief Time	Start Time	Wave Details
1 KM	10.00	10.30	Open/Males & Females
5 KM	10.40	11.30	Race 1 – Open/Males Starting 5 minutes later Race 2 - Females
2 KM	12.00	14.00	Race 1 – Open/Males Starting 5 minutes later Race 2 - Females
3 KM	14.15	15.15	Race 1 – Open/Males Starting 5 minutes later Race 2 – Females

**ALL SWIMMERS MUST ATTEND THEIR BRIEFING**

A roll call will be taken as part of this briefing which includes important safety information for swimmers. **You will NOT be permitted to swim if you have not attended the briefing for your race.**

**WATER TEMPERATURE**

The venue operator regularly monitors the water temperature in the dock at various depths. These readings are published on their website ([see link](#)). For the purposes of the London Region Open Water Championships, the readings taken at a depth of 0.35m provide the most relevant guidance

in respect of decisions around the use of wetsuits. Please note that the London Region will take its own water temperature readings on the day of the Championships.

## **COSTUMES / WETSUITS**

This event is being run under World Aquatics rules (part 3, article 10). As set out in the Conditions documents (see championship webpage), this has implications for the use of wetsuits:

- If the water temperature is below 18°C, the use of wetsuits is compulsory.
- Wetsuits are not permitted in water where the temperature is 18.0°C and above (although the Chief Referee may, upon the recommendation of the Safety Officer and Medical Officer, declare wetsuits as mandatory in temperatures up to 20.0°C when conditions are hazardous for the competitors).
- If the water temperature is below 16 degrees, the event will be postponed or cancelled.

In the event that wetsuits are not permitted, as per Conditions documents, the following rules for costumes apply:

- Only 1 costume may be worn (same as for pool competitions)
- Must be of fabric material (same as for pool competitions)
- The costume may extend from neck to ankle but it must be armless (applies to both open/male and female competitors)
- Conventional pool costumes may be worn.

In the event that wetsuits are to be used, we provide the following guidance for wetsuits:

- There are now some approved wetsuits which can be found on the World Aquatics website.
- London Region, however, has decided that wetsuits do not have to be World Aquatics approved.
- That said, wetsuits do need to have been manufactured specifically for swimming (i.e. not for surfing, paddleboarding, sailing or diving, and not dry suits etc).
- Wetsuits (for both open/male and female competitors) shall completely cover torso, back, shoulders and knees. They shall not extend beyond the neck, wrists and ankles.
- It is expected that officials will apply common sense when dealing with references to neck, wrists and ankles.
- The Chief Referee will have responsibility for the overall management of the rules.

## **SWIMMING CAPS**

Swimmers can wear two caps. However, the top cap must be the one supplied by the competition organisers which will be marked up with your competitor number.

## **JEWELLERY**

Swimmers will not be permitted to swim wearing any jewellery. This includes watches and electronic devices. A wedding ring may be worn but it must be taped for safety reasons.

## **TOE AND FINGER NAILS**

Finger and toe nails must be short so that they cannot cause any injury to another competitor. They will be checked as part of the preparation process. We will have clippers available for anyone whose nails are considered too long. As this is a safety requirement, you will not be permitted to swim if you do not comply.

## **MARKING UP, GREASING AND SUN CREAM**

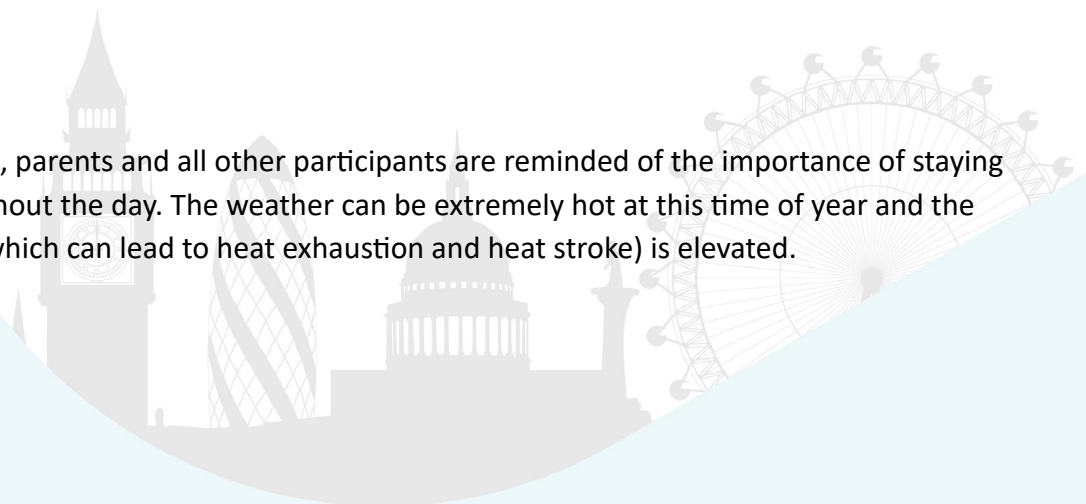
Competitors will be marked up with their competitor number using a permanent marker pen. Competitors will be marked up on upper arms, shoulders and the back of hands (the reason for this is to enable officials to identify a swimmer). Swimmers are permitted to apply a reasonable amount of grease to ease chaffing e.g. Vaseline, but this should not be applied until after you have been marked up.

In the event that wetsuits are necessary, competitors will be marked up on the back of hands only (competitor numbers will also be displayed on race caps).

Please note that weather can be extremely hot at this time of year and the risk of sunburn is heightened in and around water. With this in mind swimmers and coaches are strongly advised to have adequate sun screen cover. Sun screen should only be applied to swimmers once they have been marked up.

## **HYDRATION**

Competitors, coaches, parents and all other participants are reminded of the importance of staying well hydrated throughout the day. The weather can be extremely hot at this time of year and the risk of dehydration (which can lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke) is elevated.



## **FOOD, DRINK AND CATERING**

Please note that the bar area at the venue will not be open. Swimmers, coaches and supporters must bring their own food and drink for the day. The venue has a number of picnic table which swimmers, coaches / TMs and supporters are encouraged to use.

## **SWIMMING IN OPEN WATER**

The water quality at the facility we are hiring is regularly tested and meets current requirements. However, it is not the same as swimming in a pool. You should ensure that you shower, or at least wash your hands, before eating any foodstuffs after you have swum. There are changing facilities at the venue. If you should become ill with a cold or fever within 2 weeks of the competition you are advised to seek medical advice. Please ensure you inform medical professionals that you have recently swum in an Open Water event.

## **ENTRY DETAILS**

We will publish a list of entrants for each event shortly after the event closes for entries. Please check to ensure that your details have been recorded correctly. You will have until **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June** to notify the organiser of any incorrect entries / corrections. Please do so in writing to [openwater@londonswimming.org](mailto:openwater@londonswimming.org).

## **COURSE LAYOUT**

Please see diagram of the course layout on the Championship ([see link](#)). Note that one complete circuit of the course is 1000m long. All races will be swum over the same course. Swimmers will swim in an anti-clockwise direction and will complete the following number of laps depending upon the distance.

Distance	Number of laps
1k	1
2k	2
3k	3
5k	5

The course will be marked with large buoys at each turn and smaller buoys in between. The finish area will be a swim through funnel which must be swum through on each lap and will be clearly marked.

## **SWIMMING PROTOCOL AND DIVISION INTO AGE GROUP, MASTERS & OPEN COMPETITION**

All events will be swum as a single race but there may be several waves for each distance. This is because there is only room for about 30 swimmers to start in each wave. The separate waves are indicated on the start list.

Please note that the processing of the results of open water swimming events cannot begin until the last swimmer in the last wave has completed the event (this is different to pool swimming). There are a large number of entries. We ask that coaches and parents bear with the organisers who will publish results as soon as possible.

To be eligible for inclusion in the Regional age group results you must comply with the relevant age rules for the distance being swum **and** you must be swimming for a club that is affiliated to Swim England through the London region. Medals will be awarded in accordance with the entry conditions which can be found on the Championship webpage ([See link](#)).

## **SALE OF HOODIES AND TEE SHIRTS**

We will have an outside supplier in attendance selling Regional Open Water Championships branded hoodies and tee shirts. These can also be ordered after the event using the link to the order form on the championship webpage. Please note the link will not be enabled until after the competition.

