



Open Water

NATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

CONFIRMATION PACK

26 JULY 2026 | ROTHER VALLEY COUNTRY PARK



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WILL JOHNSTON
PHOTOGRAPHY



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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	
Safeguarding and Welfare	
Email: safeguarding@swimming.org	
Championships Website	
Swim England Open Water National Masters Championships 2026	

Pre-event Information (online briefing)

Pre-event Information (online briefing)		Tuesday 14 July 2026
Option 1	12 noon	JOIN HERE
Option 2	18:00	JOIN HERE

One representative from every club or athletes 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 mandatory race day safety briefing.

Schedule*

Events*	Registration	Race
Swim England National Masters – 5km	08:00	10:00
Swim England National Masters – 1km	10:20	12:30
Swim England National Masters – 3km	12:15	14:20
Swim England National Masters – Mixed Relay 4x500m	14:30	16:30

***NOTE:** Event schedule is subject to last minute changes and the timings are estimate

Competitors will also be required to attend a pre-race briefing, see the detailed schedule and waves, on p.5 for timings.

Important Course – Race Starts/Course Layout

Due to the current prolonged dry weather conditions, we have been monitoring, and will continue to do so, water depths in the lead up to the Championships. All race starts may change, at short notice, to an in-water start and the course revised accordingly. The course layout changes will be minimal, but the starting position will be adjusted.

Updates, when available, will be published on the Championships online hub [here](#); communicated to all competitors via email; in the pre-event online briefing and mandatory race day 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, in particular, 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.



Competition Information

Conditions

The Swim England National Open Water National Masters Championships 2026 Conditions can be viewed/downloaded on the [Competitor Information](#) page of the event website.

Entries

All submitted entries for the Swim England Open Water National Masters Championships 2026 can be viewed online via the [Confirmed Entries List](#).

All entries should be checked to ensure they are correct. If there are any entry errors, please contact NationalEvents@swimming.org as soon as possible.



Schedule*

The schedule and waves are subject to change.

Sunday 26 July

Events	Registration	Briefing	Warm up	Start	Cap Colour
5km Race					
Wave 1	08:00 - 08:45	09:00	09:30	10:00	Yellow
Wave 2	08:00 - 08:45	09:00	09:40	10:10	Pink
Wave 3	08:00 - 08:45	09:00	09:50	10:20	White
1km Race					
Wave 1	10:20 - 11:05	11:20	12:00	12:30	Yellow
Wave 2	10:20 - 11:05	11:20	12:10	12:40	Pink
Wave 3	10:20 - 11:05	11:20	12:20	12:50	White
3km Race					
Wave 1	12:15 - 13:00	13:15	13:50	14:20	Yellow
Wave 2	12:15 - 13:00	13:15	14:00	14:30	Pink
Wave 3	12:15 - 13:00	13:15	14:10	14:40	White
Wave 4	12:15 - 13:00	13:15	14:20	14:50	Green
Mixed Relay Race 4x500m**					
Wave 1	14:30 - 15:15	15:30	16:00	16:30	TBC

***NOTE:** Event schedule is subject to last minute changes and the timings are estimate

Relay Declarations

All those due to compete in team relays, need to complete the relay declaration form confirming team's swimmers for the day, the team relay category and team's age group:

Relay Team Declarations	SUBMIT TEAM RELAY DECLARATIONS HERE
	Opens 12 noon, Monday 14 July
Deadline	12 noon, Thursday 24 July



Registration

Upon arrival, please ensure you report to the Registration desk, located inside the Registration gazebo between the times scheduled for your specific race. This will be clearly signposted. You will check in for your race and collect your race pack which will include:

- Race specific coloured swimming cap;
- Race numbers;
- Timing chips;
- Athlete Declaration Form submitted at the time of entry.

Multiple Races

Competitors who will compete in multiple events (e.g. 1km and 3km) will only need to register once but **need to attend all briefings for each race entered** in order to swim.

Each race will have a separate pack provided at registration:

- First Race Pack: Includes swim cap and swim cap numbers for first race, competitor body numbers and timing chips.
- Subsequent Race Packs: include a swim cap and swim cap numbers only for each race.
- Reusable Equipment: competitor body numbers and timing chips will be valid for all races.

Competitors are responsible for ensuring that all timing chips and wristbands are securely fastened before the event. Please note that a fee of £56.00 will be charged for any lost timing chips. Your cooperation in helping us minimise losses is greatly appreciated.



Athlete Declaration

On registration you will also be asked to check, reconfirm and sign your previously submitted **Athlete Declaration Form** – without this you will not be able to participate in the competition. Please ensure you have flagged any medical points of note on the athlete declaration form.



Mandatory Race Day Safety Briefing

The Safety Briefing will take place in the Briefing marquee which will be clearly signposted. It is essential that every competitor and their coaches are present at the briefing as important information will be provided about the race and safety procedures will be explained. All competitors will be marked in and out of briefings to ensure everyone has received the information.

Competitors must attend the briefing specific to their wave, at the time listed in the schedule ([see p.5](#)). Any swimmer who has not attended the briefing will not be able to swim.

Changing

Male and female group changing facilities, toilets and 50p lockers for personal belongings are available at the Water Sports and Activity Centre. Boxes for footwear will be provided before entry on to the pontoon. If you have any specific requirements, please contact [National Events](#).

Mobile Phones

Swim England members are reminded that the use of mobile phones or devices in changing rooms is prohibited throughout the Championships.

This follows an update to Swim England's safeguarding policy and procedures document, [Wavepower](#).



Swim England launched a Keep it in Your Locker campaign to raise awareness of the change, which has been introduced to help protect members from instances of inappropriate photos or video footage being taken.

To find out more, and watch a video, please scan the QR code above or click [here](#).



Warm up

Warm up will be available to competitors in the warm up pod at the time specified. Swim England recommend that swimmers spend at least 5 minutes in the water prior to the start of their race to help acclimatise to the water temperature.

Water temperature and Swimwear

As detailed in the Event Conditions (published in the [Entry Pack](#) from p.11):

25. **Water Temperature & Swimwear:**

In line with World Aquatics Competition Rules, Part Three, Rules 7 and 9.1.6.3:

- 25.1 **Water Temperature 16 – 17.9°:** wetsuits are compulsory and deviation from this rule is not permissible.
- 25.2 **Water Temperature 18.0 – 31°:** wetsuits are not permitted, however, as per clause 14, competitors who declare their choice to deviate from clause 25.2 on the day of the event at registration may elect to swim in a wetsuit, which would mean that they would be classed as a participation race entrant and not be part of the championship race.
- 25.3 **Water Temperature 18.0 – 20°:** if conditions are deemed hazardous for the competitors, the Event Management may, upon recommendation from the Safety Officer and Medical Officer, declare wetsuits as mandatory in temperatures up to 20.0°C. Should this be the case, wetsuits will be mandatory for all competitors.

Swimwear

As detailed in the Event Conditions (published in the [Entry Pack](#) from p.11):

- 26. Wetsuits and swimsuits must comply with World Aquatics Open Water Rules (see Part One 7 and Part Three 7.1 – 7.3 [here](#)).
- 26.1 Wetsuits shall completely cover torso, back and thighs. They shall not extend beyond the neck, wrists and ankles. The body parts, after the shoulder and/or below the thigh do not necessarily need to be covered.
- 26.2 Swimsuits shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the ankle. Subject to these specific shape specifications, swimsuits for open water swimming competitions shall further comply with all other requirements applicable to swimsuits for swimming-pool competition.
- 27. Swim Gear: No competitor shall be permitted to use or wear any device, which may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy. Goggles, cap, nose clip and ear plugs may be used. Only one swimming costume is allowed.
- 28. Grease: Competitors shall be allowed to use grease or other substances providing these are not deemed as excessive, in the opinion of the Referee.

Swimwear should be of a textile material, as pool rules apply. Our guidance is: *The material used for swimsuits can be only "textile fabric" defined as material consisting of natural and/or synthetic, individual and non-consolidated yarns used to constitute a fabric by weaving, knitting, and/or braiding.*

It is expected that officials will apply common sense when dealing with references to neck, wrists and ankles. As in all Open Water events held in the home counties of England Scotland and Wales the Chief Referee will have responsibility for the overall management of the rules.



Medical

The course will be marshalled by safety boats and kayaks.

There will be a Paramedic Ambulance and crew in attendance to assist in an emergency and first responders to administer first aid where necessary. If medical assistance is required, please approach the nearest Swim England staff member, volunteer or venue staff.

Rotherham Hospital

Moorgate Road

Rotherham

S60 2UD

It is 6.6 miles away, approx. 13-minute drive.

Location of Defibrillators:

- Echo Fire & Medical Event Team
- Park Office (located in the Café Courtyard)



Race Instructions

Important Course – Race Starts/Course Layout

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Updates, when available, will be published on the Championships online hub [here](#); communicated to all competitors via email; in the pre-event online briefing and mandatory race day safety briefing.

Race Course

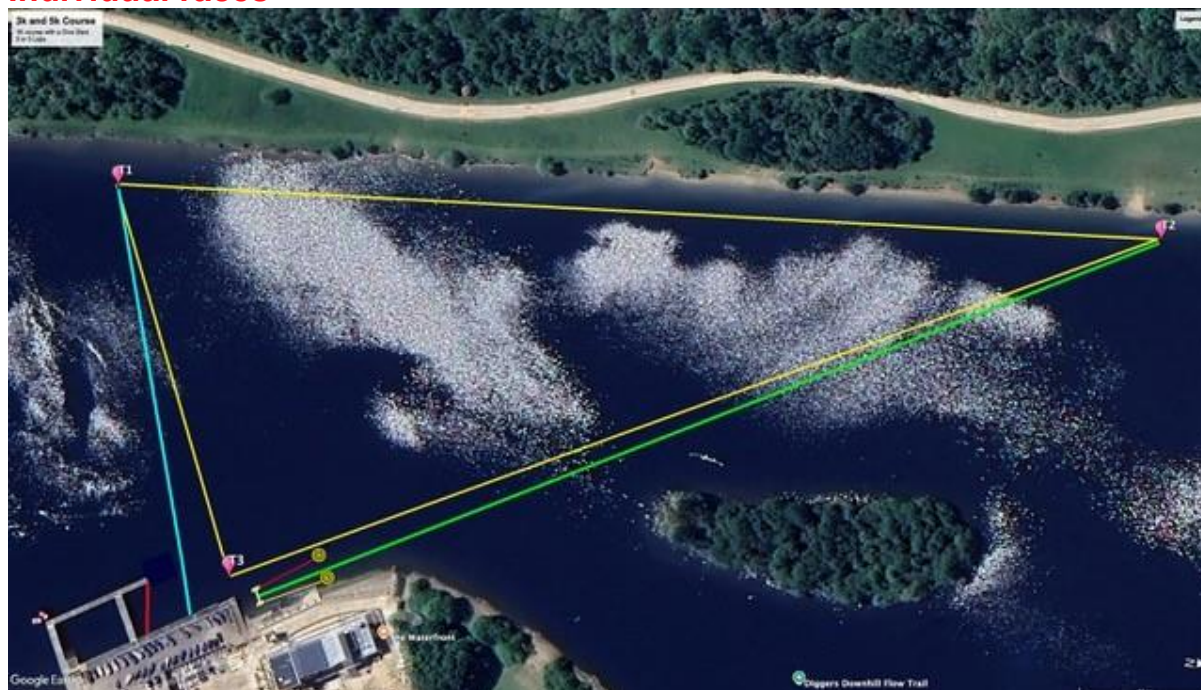
Please note different race course layouts for the 2026 Championships (to previous years). Due to exciting development at the Country Park, with the build of a new café overlooking the lake, this year's Championships course has been updated to enable best participation and spectator experience.

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. If wetsuits are worn then number will only be on hands and hat. Competitors will also be checked by the chip timing company and must ensure their timing chip is on each wrist, with the additional safety tally band 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.

Individual races



- Start with a dive from the pontoon / in the water at the pontoon from allocated position
- Course is run anticlockwise: T1, T2, T3
- Repeat number of times to achieve race distance. Do not enter finish funnel until final lap
- 1 lap = 1 km (1000 metres):
 - 1km swim 1 lap
 - 3km swim 3 laps
 - 5km swim 5 laps
- On turning at T3, 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.

Team Relay Races – 4 x 500m



- Start with a dive from the pontoon /in the water at the pontoon from allocated position
- Course is run clockwise: T1 and R2
- First 3 swimmers in each team swim outside/past the finish to pontoon
- Hand-over to next teammate at allocated position on pontoon
- Final member of team completes their lap by heading 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.



Waves

Races will be conducted in the waves detailed in the event schedule above ([p.5](#)).

Further details regarding the race procedure will be given at the competitors' briefing.



Timing and Results

The race will be electronically timed by Race Timing Solutions.

It is important that you wear the two timing chips you have been provided with, with one fastened to the wrist, and that you reach up and touch the finish banner to ensure your timing and place is registered.

Unofficial results will be available to view online and onsite. Confirmed results will be posted on the [Swim England National Open Water Hub](#).



Presentations

Medal presentations will take place as soon as possible after results for each race have been confirmed and after everyone in the wave featuring that Masters has finished. Competitors who have achieved medal positions should report to the presentation podium as soon as possible fully dressed.



Safety Information

- Safety boats will be on the water and course officials patrolling the edge of the lake. If a competitor gets into difficulties, they should lie on their back in the water with their arm in the air. A rescue boat, equipped with blankets, will come and collect the swimmer. Water marshals, kayaks and land marshals with throw ropes will all be on hand should a swimmer experience any difficulties.
- Competitors are never far from the lake bank and the turn sections of the course are indicated by large fluorescent buoys.
- Please use sun block whatever the weather; always apply after numbering or an hour before numbering to allow time for it to soak in.
- Wear mirrored goggles to prevent glare and wear goggles underneath the swim cap. This will avoid goggles being knocked off the head at the start and around the turn buoys.
- Stay relaxed at the start of the race and do not panic. Cold water can make competitors breathe rapidly. If this happens, try to stay calm and concentrate on breathing deeply until the body adjusts to the water temperature.



Accreditation

There will be no accreditation in force at this event for athletes or coaches/team managers.



General Information

All updates and additional information will be uploaded to the [Swim England Open Water National Masters pages](#).

Venue

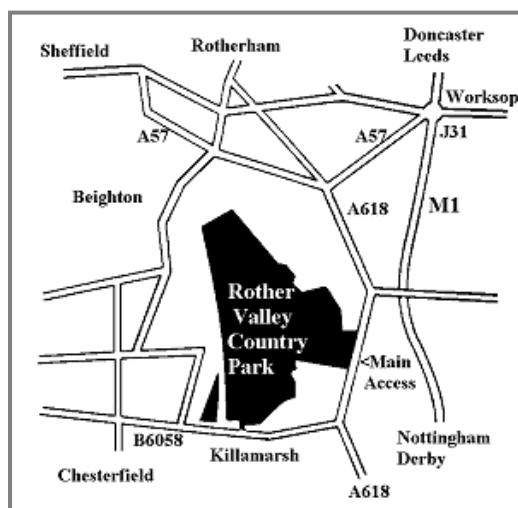
Rother Valley Country Park

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 5 lakes within the park, with the competition being held in the Main Lake which is 1 mile long. The Nature Reserve offers fantastic bird watching with over 260 different varieties of birds recorded over the past two years.



Travel

Car

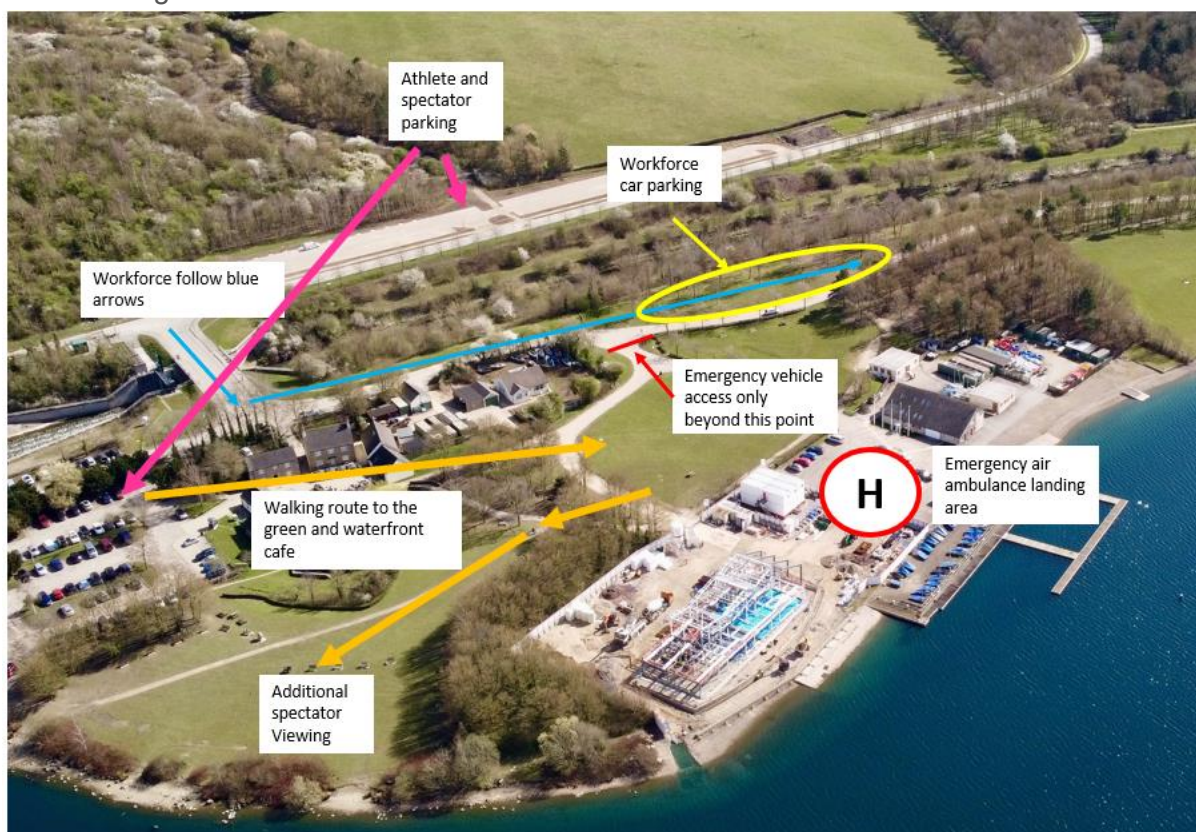
We advise you to not use the above postcode in your Sat Nav to find the venue, as it takes you to an industrial estate nearby.

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.

Athlete/spectator car parking is different to previous years as shown below. Please follow the signs and the directions of the marshals.



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.



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.



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.**

Viewing Platform: exclusive access to a balcony above the waterfront cafe, offering the perfect vantage point of both the race start and finish, for ticket holders only. Which includes complimentary tea and coffee.



Tickets are on sale now and are valid for one distance racing only, and are subject to availability:

Premier Spectator Viewing

Viewing Platform

[Purchase HERE](#)



Event Merchandise

Event Hoodies and T-Shirts pre-orders

Pre-orders are now closed and will be available for collection at the Championships from the Front of House Desk.

NOTE: Event hoodies and T-shirts for other events, including the Swim England Open Water National Age Group 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 venue sales

Subject to availability, event specific merchandise will be available to purchase.

Swim England Merchandise

Swim England merchandise will also be available for purchase from the Front of House desk.



Event Photography

Official event photography will be provided by Will Johnston Photography www.willjohnstonphotograph.com.



WILL JOHNSTON PHOTOGRAPHY

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

Have specific requests?

Text us on 07777 764684 with details of competitors and their race number and we will do what we can to focus on them.

Photographs are available on our website:
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



Join the Conversation

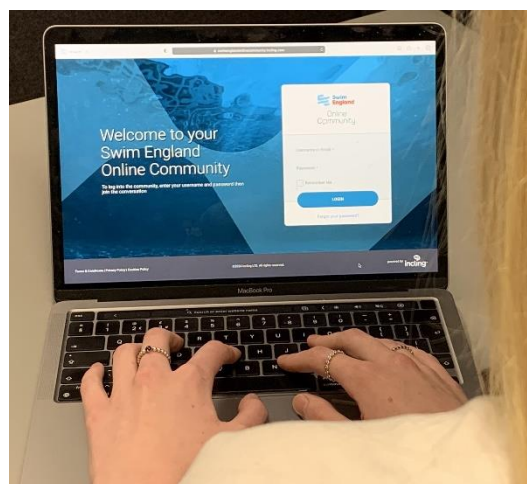
Swim England's members are being encouraged to 'join the conversation' and be at the heart of the national governing body's decision-making.

The member-driven **Swim England Online Community** will give hundreds the chance to have their say and help shape future opportunities and experiences.

It is open to all members aged 16 and over from every aquatic discipline.

Parents with children aged under 16 who are Swim England members can also join as there may be opportunities to complete some activities together.

To sign up for the Swim England Online Community, [please click here](#).



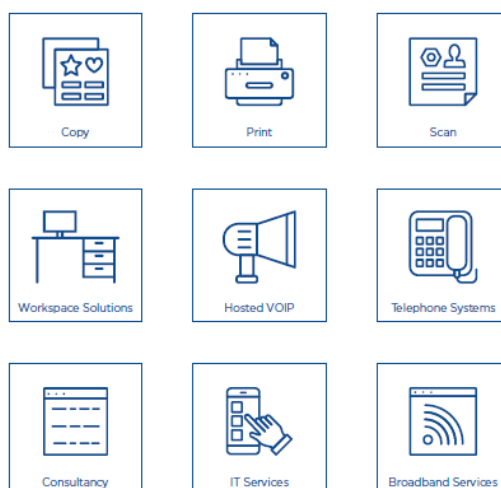
Thank You

We would like to thank all our volunteers, officials and event stakeholders for supporting the planning and delivery of Swim England Open Water National Age Group and Masters Championships.

Office problems?

At SOS Group we have the knowledge to iron out the niggles and help make you and your business as productive as it can be.

Copiers Printers Scanners | VOIP & Mobile | IT Solutions | Workspace Solutions



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