

Harrogate Tri Club: Open Water Swim Operating Procedure During COVID-19

Date Prepared: June 29th 2020

COVID-19
Following the new guidelines announced by the UK Government on 13th May 2020, open water swimming has been able to resume. Nonetheless, it is essential to Stay Alert, so we must not be complacent about the opportunity to exercise in the water outdoors.
Swimming is of course an individual form of exercise and is not a sport engaged in with others thus swimming like running and cycling is clearly an activity which is not only allowed but encouraged by the government.
Problems that arise for swim venues in terms of social distancing arise principally in the context of entry and exit of the water, where this comprises one location.
No swimmer or swim leader should attend the session with any symptoms indicating they may be unwell, even if these do not appear to be consistent with those known for COVID-19. Likewise, if you have no symptoms but are shielding for any reason, we would not advise that you attend, although that is a decision you need to make for yourself.
You must book onto the session via bookwhen more than 30 minutes before session start time and, prior to arriving on site, write your number on your hand with marker pen. This system will be used to identify swimmers in place of the orange bands used previously. There should be no informal swapping of bookings between members
There will be no briefing at the swim so please familiarise yourself with these guidelines and also the emergency procedures document. By signing in to the session, each swimmer agrees to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Declare any new medical condition which may be relevant;- Abide by the Club's Code of Conduct and safety rules regarding open water training; and- Will be aware of the Emergency Action Plan.
It is necessary for the club to impose a rigid system of regulation to allow swimming to resume in a safe environment and fully in accordance with the revised exercise rules.
No non-swimmers should attend the site.
Please don't arrive prior to the session start at 7pm Monday and 6pm Saturday.
Access to the swim venue is via the A6065 north of Knaresborough, to Calmwater Bay via the access road. Parking is available on the right before the cabins.
There is plenty of parking – please park at least 5m apart, use the available space and bring footwear to walk across the tarmac/gravel.
The possibility of large numbers of swimmers turning up to swim and then congregating and changing in a small area, albeit in the open air, is something that needs to be avoided at all costs for a considerable time to come.
There will be absolutely no use at all of the portakabin either for changing or toilet facilities. The portakabin will remain locked at all times and will only be opened in the case of a medical emergency.
All swimmers must either arrive already changed and ready to swim or must change in or near their cars which in all case must be at least three meters (as a minimum) from the nearest other swimmer (unless they are of the same household). Swimmers cannot request wetsuit zipping from other participants (unless from the same household and, therefore, car).
There is no kit bag storage or car key storage. The only items you can bring to the lakeside are footwear to enable you to walk to and from your car and hand sanitizer.
Please bring your membership card and clip it on to the board as you proceed to the water. (hand sanitizer will also be available here).
The only point of entry will be the slipway. There will be no jumping off the jetty.
It may take up to ten minutes to get into the water. Please be patient. If you don't plan to swim more than 2 laps, please allow those wishing to swim more than 3 laps to get in first. Some

people may be nervous about social distancing so please give them space and do not stand directly behind them. Swimmers will observe social distancing at all times when entering and leaving the compound and again when entering the water.

No more than 30 swimmers will be allowed to attend any given session.

Your name (and number) will be checked by the swim leader before you enter the water.

At each session, the club will have an appointed swim leader who can enforce compliance with the rules.

The swim leader will be responsible for opening and closing the gate and will use handwash both before and after handling the padlock. Swimmers should not touch any surfaces other than their own equipment or vehicles or the water.

The swim leader will instruct his/her group of swimmers on the number of laps they are able to swim which will not normally be anticipated to exceed three.

All swimmers should undertake acclimatisation activities during the first part of the swim i.e. treading water or floating (and adjusting goggles etc) around close to the jetty/slipway until the swim leader is satisfied that the swimmer is acclimatised. This may mean that swimmers must stagger their entry to the water to avoid crowding in this area. Nonetheless, please listen to the swim leader, and clear the jetty area as requested to avoid congregation in the water close to the entry point.

While in the water there is to be no unnecessary congregation around buoys. If a swimmer arrives at a buoy and finds someone there already treading water the swimming now arriving must decide either to swim on or if they must stop for a breather they must do so at a distance of at least three meters from the other person.

Only the existing lake buoys will be used for routing setting and navigation. Buoys must not be touched.

All swimmers are encouraged to provide their own tow float if they have one, and all swimmers must wear a wetsuit. There will be no non-wetsuit swimming.

Swimmers should keep an eye on their position and that of other swimmers at all times. This may mean that swimmers should stop more regularly than they would normally do in open water to meet this requirement.

Swimmers should exit the water via the slipway, first treading water to check that no one else is present on the slip way, either entering or exiting the water.

A single safety observer will be present in addition to volunteer staff present on the two kayaks.

Sessions are limited to 1hr between the time of the first swimmer entering the water and the last swimmer to exit the water. This is to reduce the risk of overexposure to cold water, given the lack of safety cover.

The session will not constitute a coached session.

Only members who have had extensive previous experience of swimming at Calmwater Bay, and are strong confident swimmers, are encouraged to swim. The swim leader will have the final say and may request a swimmer exit the water if there are any concerns regarding swim competency on the night. All swimmers should be able to swim 1000 m in open water.

Induction swims for new members will not be allowed. This is not the time to try out open water swimming for the first time.

Any competent swimmers, but who need a refresher swim regarding open water, should seek to undertake a coached session on the Saturday session by arranging in advance with our OWS coach, Jess Trewin. This would be at additional cost and arranged directly with Jess.

After exiting the water from their swim, and being ticked off the register, swimmers should collect their card and proceed immediately to their cars and get changed promptly and leave the site. As much as the social aspect of the club is a wonderful one, at this time this is not possible in order to implement adequate safety measures to permit swimming to go ahead.

Swimmers should clean and disinfect their equipment at home after use.

Volunteer Kayaks

All club members attending swim sessions should also volunteer at least twice during the season to take a turn on a safety kayak.

Each volunteer should arrive promptly at the session start time and be ready in the water for the first swimmers entering the water 15 minutes later.

Ideally, only those volunteering should handle the kayaks. Please clean the main points of contact with the kayaks and radios at the end of the session with the wipes provided, and please use hand sanitizer following the session end. Avoid touching your face.

Emergency Procedure

Emergency Procedure: On hearing continuous blasts of a whistle, the lake must be evacuated immediately in the event of an emergency.

Swimmers to make their way to the slipway, exit the water to be counted, and leave site immediately.

Please only attend these swim sessions if you have agreed to physical contact if you need to be rescued.

Medical PPE will not be available.

Please read section 6.7 of

<https://www.rlss.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=ae8c35fd-3e46-484b-afc0-5c26e402341a> regarding reduced contact rescue

If the session needs to be cancelled for any reason, notification will be made to club members ahead of the session via a facebook post.

Before each session, the water temperature will be taken and recorded.

No responsibility will be accepted by the Harrogate Triathlon Club, Calmwater Bay Ski Club or other associated companies, its staff or any other person on the premises for any injury, death or any loss howsoever caused. This notice is applied to any person attending the Harrogate Triathlon Club open water training sessions, whether swimming or not.

The rules (and their application) will be reviewed on a regular basis and will not be relaxed until such time as the Government announces further changes to lockdown.

Club members are referred to the relevant guidance on which this document is based.

<https://www.rlss.org.uk/guidance-for-open-water-swimming-operators-managing-lifeguards-during-covid-19>

<https://www.sh2out.org/documents/covid-19/SH2OUT%20-%20COVID-19%20Guidance%20-%20Final%20Swimmer%20-%20Version%203%20-%2015th%20June.pdf>

We appreciate your support with the measures we are putting in place. Our objective is for everyone to have a safe swim, so please help us make it work!

BRIEFING CHECKLIST

DATE:	
Water temperature	°C
Swim exit time	
Wetsuits compulsory?	Y / N
Swim direction	Anticlockwise / Clockwise
Full circuit? (if shortened, state)	
Entry and exit at slipway? (if no, state)	
Number and level of coaches present	
Number of safety craft present	
Type of craft (delete as appropriate)	Kayak / paddle board
Number of swimmers present	
Number of first time swimmers	
Number of buddies required	
Swimmers briefed re emergency procedure?	Y / N
Swimmers briefed re environmental hazards?	
- Weil's disease	Y / N
- Hypothermia	Y / N
- Cover open wounds	Y / N
- Shower afterwards	Y / N
- Do not swallow lake water	Y / N
Any other comments:	