

Returning to the pool

Guidance for **Users**

Published 17 June 2020 v2

Covid-19: Returning to the pool

Foreword

We have all been missing the water during the Covid-19 enforced closure of swimming pools. For many of our members across all our disciplines, this will have been the longest period out of the water, which can take a toll on both our physical and mental wellbeing.

As the recognised national governing body, Swim England is therefore delighted to be able to produce this guidance to help ensure the safe return to the water once swimming pools are allowed to open once more.

Our first priority remains the safety of everyone involved in our sports, be they participants, leisure centre staff, coaches or volunteers. We will at all times be led by the latest government guidance and regulations. This guidance has been produced in collaboration with experts from across the sector and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to its creation.

The guidance covers a range of settings and audiences, including;

- Operators
- Users
- Swimming Lessons
- Community Swimming
- Clubs.

When pools reopen, it will not be a case of 'business as usual' and we know that things will have to be different, but if we are to play our part in protecting the NHS from another wave of Covid-19 admissions, it is important we follow the latest guidance and adjust to the new 'normal'.

Swim England will continue to push for more financial support for the swimming sector to ensure we can all continue to enjoy the sports we love.



Jane Nickerson
Chief Executive, Swim England

Guidance for Users

Introduction

This document has been developed in co-operation with industry partners. It aims to support pool users in returning to swimming facilities following the period of closure, due to Covid-19, and provides guidance on reducing the risk of Covid-19 transmission within the swimming pool environment.

It will highlight the continued requirements for safe social distancing and enhanced hygiene regimes, along with guidance on how this will impact on the different experience the pool user will have. The guide will include details on booking your swim, what to do before leaving home, on arrival at the pool and in the water itself.

Other sections will provide guidance for pool operators and practical advice relating to the control of Covid-19 in swimming facilities and during various activities. Links to best practice and other industry standard guidance will be provided where appropriate.

As with all environments, there is still a level of risk of Covid-19 transmission in aquatic settings that requires control measures to be implemented, based on your Covid-19 Risk Assessment.

If you have any questions relating to the guidance, please contact guidance@swimming.org.

Pool user guidance

Booking and timetable

- Check the facility website/social media channels or contact the facility directly for timetable, user guidance and booking instructions.

Before leaving home and on your return

- Do not come to the facility if you are showing any symptoms of Covid-19 (temperature, cough, difficulty breathing, or anosmia e.g. loss of taste or smell).
- To reduce time spent in changing areas, please consider the following guidance:
 - Arrive ready to swim (private changing should still be available for those that require it). Once you have finished your swim, leave the venue as soon as you can.
 - Shower at home, pre and post swimming (showers may be available at the facility but by arriving wearing your swimwear under your clothing and showering at home pre and post swimming you will help minimise time spent in the changing rooms and help maintain the water quality).
- Check the operator's instructions on arrival time, parking, travel arrangements and plan your journey accordingly.
- Take hand sanitiser with you.
- Take any equipment/aids with you (floats, kick boards etc.) ensuring it is clean and identifiable as yours before you arrive.

- Ensure you have any booking confirmation required as part of the facility guidance.

At the facility

- Please follow the operator's guidance on pre swim arrival, duration of swim and post swim arrangements.
- Whilst in the building and the pool, follow the operator's guidance on social distancing, direction of travel and other risk control measures that are put in place.
- Use hand sanitiser/wash stations wherever made available.
- Spend as little time as possible in the changing rooms, whilst following the operator's guidance on maintaining safe levels of distance.

In the pool

- Follow the operator's directions for entry and exit to the pool.

Respect

- People of different standards and abilities will use the pool. Please respect their right to enjoy their swim.
- Do not make physical contact with other participants.

Speed and overtaking

- Choose your lane using the fast, medium and slow signs and by watching those already swimming. Please do not overtake whilst swimming. Before pushing off at each turn, check to see if anyone faster is approaching.

Direction

- Please follow the directional signs and move across to the appropriate side of the lane for each length.

Space

- Always attempt to maintain appropriate social distance between yourself and another swimmer.

Strokes

- Wide strokes such as butterfly should be avoided when the lanes become busy. If you change to a slower stroke as part of your session, think about moving lanes.

Equipment

- Follow the operator's guidance on use of any equipment.

Resting

- Whether stopping for a rest or catching your breath after completing your swim, please be mindful that others using the lane will want to keep on swimming without stopping; so keep yourself to the edge of the lane allowing others to turn at the wall, turning head away and allowing others to maintain social distancing measures.
- Stay hydrated by bringing your own 'pre-filled' water bottle on to poolside during your swim.

Acknowledgements

Swim England would like to thank everyone involved in the creation of this guidance, in particular:

UK Active

Sport England

Public Health England

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Members of the Swim Group

PWTAG

Scottish Swimming

Swim Ireland

Swim Wales

Craig Logan – Commercial Programme Manager, Fusion

Andrew Clark – National Sports and Aquatic Manager, GLL

Ian Cotton – Swim Product Manager, Everyone Active and Chair of Club Leadership Group.

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Mark Haslam – Head of Swimming and Sport, Places Leisure

Andy Read – Head of Safety, Places Leisure

Simon Ferrarelli – Corporate Manager, Barnsley Premier Leisure

Kieran Charles – Sports Facilities Business Manager, Tendring District Council

Sarah Livesey – Aquatic Manager, SIV

Geoff Wade – Active Communities Officer (Aquatics), GO Gateshead Sports and Leisure

John Wileman – Head of Sport, Leisure and Business Management

Kaye Stephenson – Principles Aquatic Manager, Durham County Council

Mark Moore – Leisure & Southwater Group Manager, Telford and Wrekin Council

Ricky Hayes – Head of Sports Activities and Aquatics, 1610

Jennifer Huygen – Engagement and Policy Manager, England & Wales, Community Leisure UK (formerly Sporta)

David Walker – ROSPA

Dr Toby King – Chair, Swim England Water Polo Leadership Group

Dr Neil Martin – Medical Advisor, Swim England

Robert Gofton – CEO, RLSS UK

Neil Booth – Swim England Trustee and Chair Sport Operations Committee

Joan Wheeler – Swim England Trustee and Chair Swim England East Region

Dr Wendy Barclay – Imperial College London

Chris Hayes – BSPF

Ian Jones – Circadian, Director Building and Environment, Circadian Trust

Aqua Aims Swim School

Swim Buddies Swim School

Updates

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Additional point added:

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- Arrive ready to swim (**private changing should still be available for those that require it**). Once you have finished your swim, leave the venue as soon as you can.

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