Affiliated to Swim England, BLDSA and the CS&PF

Safe Swimming Policy

Swim organisers are the Committee members alongside volunteers. They can be recognised by wearing High Viz jackets.

When you arrive at a swim

- Anyone swimming needs to give his or her name in to the swim organiser.
- Be aware of any vehicles, boats, etc. that may be using the slip or areas where we meet.
- A briefing will be given to inform you of what course we will be swimming.
- Club hats must be worn on all club swims
- On Tuesday evenings we normally swim at St Catherine's Bay and we go around the boats or to the headland before Mike's Slip and back.
- Anyone who wants to swim outside of the designated swim course will be informed that they are swimming at their own risk and will not be part of the club swim. Anyone swimming at their own risk will not be covered by the club's insurance.
- We strongly advise all swimmers to use a tow float at all times when in the sea. This adds to your safety by making you more visible to (potentially dangerous) water craft that often cannot see you.
- Tow floats will be issued to groups of swimmers if they do not have one of their own.
- A tow float is a visual aid and not a life support. It can, however, be used to support you if you get into difficulty until help arrives.
- Where it is deemed necessary, one or more kayakers will escort and support swimmers during a club swim.
- Swims may be cancelled at short notice or moved to a new location. This will be done for your safety. These changes will be posted on the club facebook page.
- You may feel cold when you get out, especially early in the season so bring plenty of layers, warm clothes, hat, socks, gloves, etc.

Swimming

- A Committee member or designated swimmer will always go out with the juniors or novice swimmers. The ratio depends on age / ability of swimmers, sea and climate conditions etc but as a minimum it's 1 adult: 3 juniors.

- Inform them before starting your swim if you are nervous or unsure of anything. Don't be shy, they are there to help you.
- Enter the water slowly (especially in cold water) - To help yourself acclimatise, splash cold water on your neck and face.
- **Do not swim alone.** Make sure you have someone to swim with before setting off. (someone of a similar ability/pace)
- Always make sure that someone in your group has a tow float so you are visible from the shoreline and to boat users etc.
- If you get into difficulty whilst swimming roll onto your back and raise your arm. Someone in your group and/or a kayak will come to your aid.
- If you see someone in difficulty, alert the on water support who will come to their aid. Use a tow float as support, stay and reassure them until aid arrives.
- Stay within the designated areas that you have been told to swim in.
- Lookout for the other people you are swimming with, even experienced swimmers can get into trouble. Stay close and keep them in sight.
- Be vigilant of any other activities that may be happening in the area you swim in.
- Also be aware of any obstacles that may be out there, rocks, buoys, boats, etc.
- If you are new or learning you will have a competent swimmer assigned to you.
- Build up to longer distances.

<u>After your swim</u>

- Exit the water carefully and be aware of what, and who, is around you. Be careful over rocks and on slipways - they can be very slippery and therefore dangerous. Consider wearing swim shoes if you are unsteady on your feet.
- Give your name in to the person holding the register. This is done for your safety and for us to know that you are out, and safe.
- Sign out of the swim session before jumping and/or diving in after your swim. Juniors must be supervised by a parent. Be aware of other swimmers who may still be in the water.
- Get out of the wind, get dry and changed quickly. Add layers of loose clothing, put a hat on and 'big' socks. Have a warm drink and keep moving to get the blood circulating. Don't stand around with just a towel around you. You will find you get colder once you are out of the water.
- In the early season especially, have a warm drink ready, don't go straight to your car and put the heater on full blast. Similarly, don't rush home and jump in a very hot shower. You need to warm up naturally, from the inside (core) out not the other way round. If you cannot control your shivering you cannot control your car. Do not drive until uncontrollable shivering has stopped.
- Be aware of activities, obstacles or traffic around you.