

Following the update on Monday, 16 March 2020 from the Prime Minister and release of our statements regarding the cancellation of our National and Regional events for the foreseeable future and guidance for affiliated organisations, we have received queries from organisations around future activities and what it means for them in the short and long term.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM SWIM WALES AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS:

We will be updating this FAQ document as and when appropriate, and we are in regular dialogue with Sport Wales and our insurers.

POSTED 29/05/2020

Are there any updates on future licensed meets?

In March, when the situation escalated we published a statement outlining guidance for clubs, including the cancellation or postponement of licensed competitions in Wales.

We would like to reiterate that no licensed meets will take place before 1 September 2020 and that the licensing of meets after this date would be reviewed when the situation becomes clearer.

Whilst there is still no timetable available to give an indication as to when we will be returning to competition, we are preparing plans. Until further notice, no new licences will be issued for meets taking place after 1 September 2020 and licences that have already been issued for the period September to December will be reviewed, and may be withdrawn at a later date. No licensed meets can take place until explicit instruction is given and the conditions of any licence may be varied.

To reiterate our support for you as clubs, we completely appreciate the competitive and financial importance of meets for you. Our Aquatic Development team will be working closely with you to understand the impact of not hosting meets and once the landscape becomes clearer, we will be reviewing the meet licensing process.

All Aquatic activity will be dependent on Government guidelines and Swim Wales will follow these in line with facility operator procedures.

What are Swim Wales' plans with regards to 'Return to Water'?

We have created a four phased, and structured approach to returning that highlights and articulates the measures in place from Welsh Government. Collaborations with Welsh Government, Sport Wales, British Swimming and all home nations are regularly taking place.

What does this mean for aquatic activity? Elite athletes and high performance swimming programmes may return to the water (first) with specific facilities being able to relax restrictions to accommodate these initial transitions. We're working to develop a framework that outlines **Community Protection Concept for the Resumption of Aquatic in Wales**. The derivation of the

model has been approved from the work completed by Suisse Rugby "Return to Play" approach (national/international collaborations).

This piece of work highlights the guidance and measures on general practice, specific activities, premises management and helpful notes on reducing any further risk of infection and transmission. This framework can and will supplement the high level phased approach that generalises aquatic activity.

We are also developing - in-line with Home Nation & Irish colleagues - guidelines for the 9 user groups; Learn to Swim, Technical Officials, Clubs (Training & Competition), Elite Squads, Water Polo, Open Water, Diving, Artistic Swimming and General Public.

What are Swim Wales' plans to support us as clubs to return to the water?

As well as the Return to Training & Competition guidelines we will be working with you and your facility operators to fully understand the specific challenges you're facing outside of the water as well.

Through individual and collective conversations, we are very conscious of the challenges athletes are facing and ultimately clubs may be losing members.

Whilst it is too early at this point to understand the financial impact between operators and clubs regarding lane time/costs for example, we would encourage you to engage with them ASAP to discuss your plans and start working through what is feasible for both parties once the doors reopen and activity is allowed (subject to Government restrictions/policies).

Communication will be key between all parties: Clubs - NGB – Facility Operators – Athletes, to educate and build confidence that the return to the pool is safe providing guidance and amended policies are adhered to.

How can Swim Wales support us as clubs to retain our workforce, both paid and voluntary?

We appreciate there will be additional challenges for clubs, related to workforce, in respect of returning to the water.

We appreciate that whilst people may still want to be involved and volunteer, the knock on health and safety affects for their families cannot be compromised. This may lead to challenges running sessions, supporting pool side and many other aspects.

Working with you, we will be looking to conduct an audit with clubs to understand the specific Workforce challenges that you face and we will be developing some guidelines for, and in collaboration with; Volunteers, Coaches and Officials.

What are Swim Wales' plans with returning to training and competitions?

Safe return is the priority and a key focus for us all. An important first step to understand the needs and challenges and where we can help and provide support. We will be working proactively with facilities and operators and engaging with our affiliated aquatic clubs to prepare for returning to training. We are working closely with Welsh Government, Welsh Sports Association, Sport Wales, Home Nations and British Swimming to derive guidance, risk assessments and medical validation.

Athlete welfare is paramount. Athletes return to training and competition need to be physiologically and psychologically prepared through a graduated return. We will be working closely with all partners to develop staff & customer confidence particularly in accordance with health and safety. This will be a collaborative approach using evidence based and medical reassurance on all phased returns to operations of normal activity.

We are yet to initiate work on the return to delivery of licensed meets from club to national level with no competitions running in the immediate future. We will need to work closely with facilities (following Government and the sector guidance) on amended normal operating procedures (NOPs).

A [Swim Wales Elite Statement](#) has been released and can be found on our website/social-media channels.

A suggestion from at our Club Chairs WebEx on 12/05/2020 was to for clubs to take the lead and create "hubs" of best practice and create a network to support each other. We will be supporting this.

Would Swim Wales be willing to support us as club in conversations with our facility provider/operator?

Yes, absolutely. We will support and facilitate these conversations where appropriate, to derive the optimum outcomes for all involved as we move forward. We would encourage you to engage with your facility provider ASAP to establish a line of communication, and give an indication of what your return to training plan looks like. If you would like support in these conversations, please get in touch and will be more than happy to help.

Do Swim Wales intend to continue engagement with key stakeholders?

Yes.

We have designed an engagement schedule which includes all the key stakeholders involved within our Sport. Health & safety, as well as building consumer confidence and safeguarding considerations are priority topics that we must all work collaboratively on to ensure a successful return to the water.

For full details, up to date as of 22nd May, please see our Engagement schedule in Appendix 1. This schedule will be updated on our website and emailed to you with details on how to book on.

Have there been any discussion around a National Marketing Campaign to encourage people back into the water safely?

A potential National marketing campaign has been discussed as a way to reassure and encourage people to safely enjoy the water again. Any National campaign would be targeted at increasing Aquatic activity in the safest and most enjoyable ways possible, including signposting people towards Club Membership.

As the National Governing Body we would welcome and drive such a campaign, however it needs to be rolled out in partnership with all key stakeholders and underpinned by the relevant Government policies and guidelines.

What is Swim Wales' position on club and membership renewals?

Amongst other benefits of Swim Wales membership, it is important to renew your members and club affiliation so you have insurance cover for any form of ongoing engagement, activity, communications and safeguarding. To support our Aquatic community we extended the registration deadline to the end of May. We are really encouraged by the high percentage of clubs who have re-affiliated already and who have registered their membership. We are aware of clubs that are planning ahead for the future but it is too early to suggest what will happen with affiliation fees for next year's membership renewals. We are committed to supporting you as affiliated clubs and your registered members. If you have any concerns at all, please get in touch with us to discuss on an individual basis so we can fully understand your situation.

What can Swim Wales do to support us when applying for funding opportunities?

We are currently working very closely with two of the main grant funding providers; Sport Wales & Swimathon.

As of today:

- Sport Wales – Emergency Relief Fund: 9 Applications
- Swimathon Grant - 12 Applications
- Sport Wales - Sport Resilience Fund: Live from Early to mid-June

On the Club Chairs call last week, it was confirmed that we would run a specific workshop for Clubs, for the Sport Resilience Fund. Once we have had the criteria and the process for submission

We also have the [Swim Wales Club Funding guide](#) available on our website.

If you have any further questions on this please contact your Regional Development Manager for support Victoria.waters@swimming.org or Jack.brown@swimming.org.

POSTED 26/03/2020

What happens to our licensed events?

Swim Wales' recently published statement outlined guidance for clubs, including the cancellation or postponement of licensed competitions in Wales. The Events Team and the Regional Development Managers have produced a toolkit of resources to help you make this decision; the team are also on hand to support clubs including reviewing the competition calendar and licensing agreements.

Please contact your Regional Development Manager or Events Team to discuss any of the above.

What happens to the license fee that we have paid if we cancel or postpone our meet?

Clubs cancelling meets can request a refund, or the payment will be held as credit, and will be used against another license application for those postponing.

What level meet should we run?

A postponed or rearrangement meet might look very different to your original plan. We encourage clubs to be flexible and creative when thinking about this e.g. what is the most effective use of pool time? Could you run short distance races to increase entries? Could you work in collaboration with another local club to combine your resources and delivery? This can be discussed with your RDM and/or the Events Team.

What support will Swim Wales be providing to the general athlete and coaching community in clubs across Wales?

The Swim Wales Performance team will be providing useful resources and advice to athletes and coaches on a weekly basis, through their membership with an affiliated club. This will be delivered primarily through the Swim Wales social media streams and website as follows:

- Every Monday will see the release of progressive levels of the skills development framework and associated land mobilisation and activation exercises. This will enable athletes to stay connected to their strokes and maintain/develop swimming specific conditioning. It will also provide coaches with a resource from which to advise the athletes they work with on a daily basis.
- Every Friday holistic support themes will be posted via social media, and this will include advice relating to lifestyle, psychology, well-being and nutrition. When content has been exhausted, repeated content will be re-posted to reinforce important messages.

Why is it important to maintain insurance cover provided through Swim Wales? Particularly in relation to non-pool based activity.

The insurance cover that affiliated clubs and their members access through Swim Wales, covers all activity agreed and recognised by individual clubs and Swim Wales. This includes activities in and out of the pool, including all authorised virtual activities. All safeguarding/welfare concerns and liability cover.

POSTED 17/03/2020

Will Swim Wales issue a statement relating to "social distancing" and what is the policy around this?

No, Swim Wales won't be issuing a statement relating to social distancing, other than to follow Government advice. As at 9am this morning (18 March 2020) we have been in contact with a number of pool providers across Wales and they remain open at the moment. We are monitoring Government guidance and local policy very closely however the situation is changing rapidly and we fully expect facilities to close, therefore our feeling is that Clubs should now make appropriate preparations including communication plans for when training is suspended.

The Government says not to go to social gatherings. Our guidance is to follow and embed these guidelines from the Government. If training is classed as a gathering, and a club still chooses to run these sessions and an incident occurs which requires a notification to be issued to the insurers, is there still cover and what are the implications for clubs if training continues?

We spoke to our insurers and received the response below:

'Thank you for your e-mail. I am sure you are getting many queries from clubs looking for guidance, at the present time we can only advise you and your clubs to follow the government advice.

Within any insurance policy there is a reasonable precautions condition and if clubs are not adhering to Government advice this may impact on the liability indemnity being available.

All clubs should record their decisions and reasons to proceed or not with their activities, and ensure that risk assessment and risk management is considered through their process.

The health and wellbeing of everyone is of primary importance as per the Government's guidance'.

What is Swim Wales' guidance with regards self-employed coaches/staff?

Clubs must check the contracts they have in place with their coaching staff. We would encourage where possible an agreement to be made around payment with coaches during this difficult time. In doing so clubs should consider how best to maintain finances in conjunction with any changes of expenditure linked to the section below on club finances.

We are not employment law professionals, so should you have any queries at all we would urge you to contact the free legal helpline on 0330 100 7901 or visit the [ACAS website](#) for professional advice. They offer a free advice helpline.

Is there any guidance/suggestions around club finances?

Each club will need to consider their own circumstances on this. Current and future expenditure needs to be considered and engaging with the facility providers for costs, parents in relation to revenues and the long term sustainability of the club. Club Management committees should lead in this matter and will be supported by Swim Wales Teams. Regular communication is key!

If we choose to cancel training will we need to continue to pay pool hire?

We have been in touch with a large number of pool providers across Wales and at this time we encourage you to contact your pool provider about this. You should also check the terms and conditions of your agreement with your provider and open a dialogue with them around what is realistically achievable. Please contact your Regional Development Manager for guidance and support on managing your programme, partnerships with providers and support on finance management.

South East - Victoria Waters – Victoria.waters@swimming.org

West - Joe Tucker – Joe.tucker@swimming.org

North - Hope Filby – Hope.filby@swimming.org

This is an ongoing and fast moving situation and as such any guidance and advice will be subject to further review and recommendations from the Government. The Government advice supersedes all guidance from Swim Wales. In the meantime please continue to follow Government advice and make use of the following online resources for up to date information about Coronavirus:

[NHS Wales website](#)

[UK Government Coronavirus guidance website](#)

[UK Government Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice website - specific to China](#)

[UK Government Foreign and Commonwealth Office website – for all countries](#)

The Public Health Wales [Twitter](#) , [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts for public health information in Wales