



NOWCA.org

"Safe, Fun and Affordable. Now we can all go swimming"

CHELMARSH SAILING CLUB

OWS

Standard Operating Procedures

Chelmarsh Sailing Club

Chelmarsh Reservoir

Hampton Loade

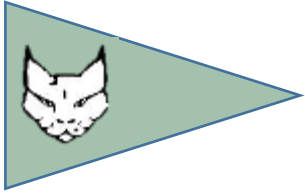
Bridgnorth

WV16 6BL

Revisions and Review List

To be incorporated in full annual review of document

Date	OWS Review LH/DP	Dynamic review: Club Risk Register updates
21 August 2020	Draft DP	
20 September 2020	Completion of NOWCA venue information and risks review (Appx A)	
1 October 2020	Presented to committee and H and S team	Review by full Chelmarsh SC committee, Risk Register to risk team.
4 December 2020	Clarification re water testing	



CHELMARSH SAILING CLUB

Open Water Swimming (OWS) was proposed to the Sailing Club Membership as a possible diversification at the AGM in December 2018 as part of a Diversification Strategy within the Clubs Development Plan. The committee had previously unanimously agreed on the Development Plan and this was approved by a majority at the AGM. Members noted the declining and ageing membership and also the research conducted by the RYA.

Sailing clubs nationally have broadened their offer and Chelmarsh has been proactive. The Club has introduced Stand UP Paddle boarding (SUP) and Radio Controlled Sailing, learning from these changes and has revised and reviewed its Risk Registers and Procedures to allow for this diversification. At the same time there has been a high level of interest in OWS.

A draft paper on OWS was presented to the club Committee and to South Staffs to propose and scope the activity. This was approved and both asked for detail and Operating Procedures and Risk Registers to be developed. Through 2019 and 2020 extensive research and detailed frameworks have been developed.

Safety is and will remain our key driver. The success of the sailing club and our continued operation is dependent on safe operations. This Standard Operating Policy seeks to ensure OWS is conducted in a safe and effective manner and in a way that complements the ongoing activities. Chelmarsh Sailing Club has a strongly developed Health and Safety Culture and members have always been aware of the risks of water use.

Our membership has been very clear in their support for diversification but equally is consistent in the demand for safe regulated activity. This SOP provides a mechanism to ensure safety and to communicate with all water users how OWS is regulated and governed at Chelmarsh. We have proven safety and administrative systems to control and regulate "new activities" This is a "live" document and should be reviewed and updated on a 6 monthly basis.

The document includes background, Chelmarsh specific Standard Operating Procedures and a detailed appendix with inclusion of standard NOWCA venue review detail and procedures which we have adopted.

INTRODUCTION

Extensive Research and consultation has been undertaken:

- Several members have expressed interest in OWS. Specifically one member has recently swum the channel and another is a swimming teacher and tri swim coach. In addition Club Officers have consulted with Netherton (a successful venue), Blithfield Tri Club and others. We are also indebted to NOWCA for their guidance and support.
- OWS is fast growing and new regulatory frameworks have made the sport more controllable and safer. This SOP uses the NOWCA framework which provides the highest safety standards

Info Sources:

- National Open Water Coaching Association (NOWCA) <https://nowca.org/>
- <https://www.rlss.org.uk/open-water-safety>
- <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/>
- <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/updated-guidance-lockdown-eased/> (specific guidance for OWS in coronavirus crisis June 2020)

Key drivers for Proposed Development Routes:

- All activity must be carefully regulated and conducted in a controlled manner with appropriately qualified people and appropriate structures and admin.
- Our experience with SUP shows the club can embody other activity and our safety and risk controls can be utilised to ensure safety.
- Using third parties to deliver services is useful but control of risks and regulating activity is easier if the activity is a club activity as such working arrangements need to be active and co-operative, we do not envisage a "sub contract" type arrangement as servicing the long term club needs.
- Existing Members of the sailing club are vested in building OWS and keeping this as part of the clubs diversification within the development plan
- We have reviewed safety arrangements at other venues specifically <http://staffordtri.net/blithfield-open-water-swim-instructions> and are confident the procedures herein exceed these minimum safety standards and will ensure regular review and analysis of any events.

FRAMEWORK

Operations:

- OWS will be conducted under NOWCA rules and regulation.
- The club and venue will be registered as a NOWCA venue
- The club will ensure facilities, safety procedures and controls match all required and advised regulation. A Swim Manager will be appointed for each session.
- Two sessions per week are envisaged:
 - Saturday am 7.00-9.00
 - Thursday Evening 18.00-19.15

Method Statement:

- Members work from NOWCA guidance as detailed below and to their session 'normal operating procedures.' There will be regular training and testing to ensure appropriate safe response times.
- Every session will be managed by the appointed Swim Manager who will ensure adequate members are available at every session which includes safety and reception. Safety comprises land and on water spotters. Safety SUP to be on the beach and prepared for use or launched on the water.
- All swimmers must have a valid NOWCA wristband when they enter the water. They will be recognized with their full profile, when onsite, time in water and out of water. No session can close completely until every swimmer has exited the water and scanned out on the NOWCA system. Each session is deemed closed only when the session has been pushed to the NOWCA server.

Procedures:

- All swimmers are pre-registered with NOWCA and will use electronic arm bands NOWCA swim bands: <https://nowca.org/> these provide a robust system to ensure increased safety and monitoring.
- First Aid and safety training modules for SUP members so they can assist in safety (the club has safe boards with high capacity to allow water rescue) some members hold safety certificates and we will provide update courses e.g. <https://www.academyofsurfing.com/find-courses/stand-up-paddle/sup-water-safety-rescue-award-flat-water-2282> and www.webcollect.org.uk/chelmarsh/event/aquatic-first-aid-course-1

OWS Membership

OWS Membership is a Restricted Membership of Chelmarsh Sailing Club.

Members join a sociable sailing club and can use the clubhouse, showers and facilities as well as having access to club swim equipment. (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)

OWS Membership is paid annually and is set at the social membership rate for Chelmarsh Sailing (£55 per annum for 2020).

OWS Members can use their own equipment or rent Chelmarsh equipment at agreed rates (tow floats etc).

Only Chelmarsh Members or NOWCA members who pre-register for swims may swim at Chelmarsh and NOWCA pre-registration confers temporary Club membership for that session. Temporary Members will pay a swimming fee of £6 per session.

Ordinary Sailing Club members and SUP members may also participate in swims but must satisfy the requirements of NOWCA/Chelmarsh OWS with reference to competency and must become NOWCA members and use the arm bands.

Club members may swim FOC but are expected to help at a number of sessions each year.

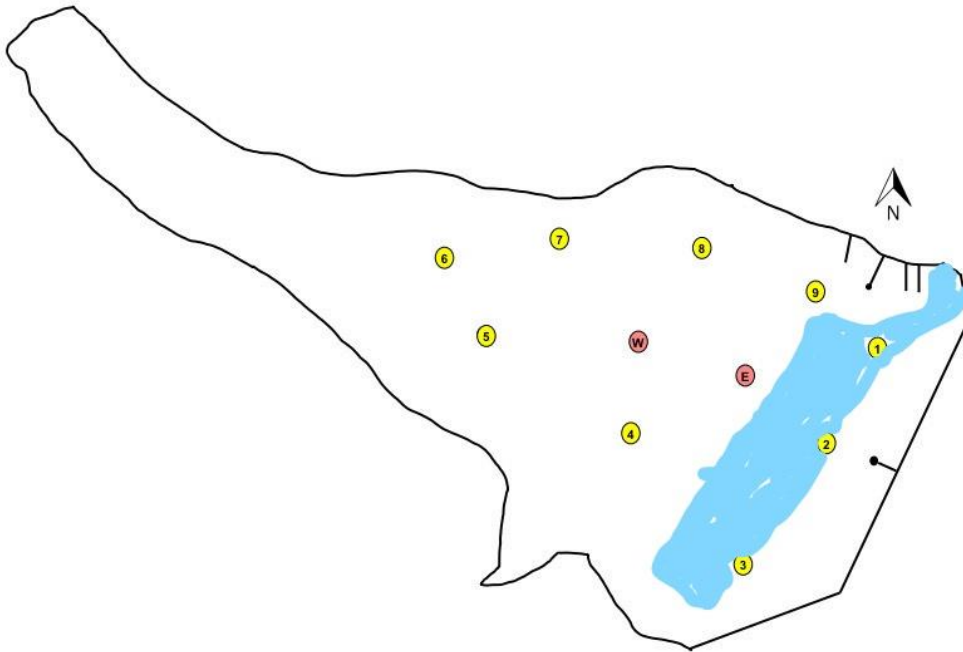
RISK MANAGEMENT

LOCATION:

Chelmarsh Reservoir

The reservoir has minimal current although care should be taken near inlet/outlet pipes. For this reason the Swimming Area has been defined.

Swimming Area: West of buoys marked 1-3 on the map below and to the East of a line from the pontoon to the far shore at 100m entrance and egress from the beach. No swimming within 100 M of inlet outlet towers.



The Reservoir has steeply shelving beaches and the water rapidly deepens, this is an advantage as shallow water is a risk. Students will be briefed on appropriate footwear and the nature of the beaches and also the slippery launch road (which should be avoided or used with care by SUP students).

The pontoons are floating and can move slightly, they also are often covered in bird excrement so students should be warned of this hazard. Buoyancy aids to be worn on all pontoons at all times.

Summary of Briefing (Location):

- Weather on the day; assess risks of exposure to cold, water and sun. Wind conditions direction speed and forecast changes. Any thunder or other risks. Brief swimmers appropriately.
- Location Hazards: Any other water activity Session Times Procedures
- Hygiene: Wash hands after activity

DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT

Weather

- **Wind:** ensure weather is as forecast, assess any deviation. Operating Limits
- **Cold:** Ensure wetsuits worn if water temp below 12°C, and for beginners wetsuits advised if temp below 16°C.
- **Sun and Heat:** Adequate supplies of drinking water and sun screen.
- **Lightening:** All activity must be cancelled if there is a storm risk. The 30 30 rule should be applied: if it takes less than 30s to hear thunder after seeing the flash activity must stop, not to resume until 30 minutes after event.

Water Hazards

- See **location** at Chelmarsh Reservoir check water levels beach hazards
- **Other Craft:** No powered craft should be operating in Swim sessions, only SUP. No SUPs to be in swimming area during sessions except for launch and /or SUPs being used for safety.
- **Operating Area:** Swimming is limited to the declared swimming areas; this mitigates against any event being un-witnessed and complies with Chelmarsh general rules.

Equipment Hazards

- All **Tow floats** to be safe and approved for swimming.
- **SUP spotters**: a leash to be worn at all times on the water, mobile phone to be carried in protective case, buoyancy aid to be worn on beach or on water.
- Any club **wetsuits** used to be rinsed after use and machine washed.
- **Clothing**: Swim Manager/Instructor/coach to check personal clothing subject to water temperature. Club space blankets and dry towels to be stocked.

User Risks

- **Swimming Ability**: All swimmers are pre assessed and have completed NOWCA entry and have had a formal swim test to ensure they are competent swimmers. The minimum set for open water approval is that a NOWCA coach or club official must monitor an 800metre (32 Lengths) swim in a pool or equivalent at an approved and regulated open water venue.
- **Low Fitness Levels**: Prior to activity fitness levels are assessed as OWS requires a basic level of fitness.
- **Medical Conditions**: A medical declaration is completed by all participants as a condition of NOWCA membership. For any coached or instructional sessions the Instructor will ask generally about health on the day and specifically ask about any communication difficulties.
- Users will complete a **COVID-19** declaration certifying that they are symptom free and have not been told to self-isolate.
A specific risk assessment should be made and advice sought about any particular medical condition prior to undertaking activity.
Opportunity should be explicit for a “private word” about any medical condition to avoid any risks of non-disclosure through group pressures.

Activity Risk

Specific Activity Risks (such as coaching, training etc) are covered under the detailed NOWCA procedures adopted by Chelmarsh reference attached in Appendix A

Chelmarsh Sailing Club OWS Emergency Plan

The Emergency Plan is published as a flow chart and available on club notice boards and on the website: <http://chelmarshsailing.org.uk/downloads.html>

COVID-19

General Club COVID-19 regulations are here:

<http://chelmarshsailing.org.uk/2020%20Policy%20-%20Re-Opening%20COVID-19.pdf>

All swimmers will be identified and record of attendance kept through NOWCA software. The Swim Manager on the day will also hold record of all volunteers and assistants.

Specific swimming COVID-19 Regulations are included below:

- 1) No groups of more than six no mixed household groups
- 2) Swimmers to socially distance at all times specifically on land and max four people entering water at any time
- 3) Max four people exiting water at any time
- 4) Entry and exit lanes
- 5) Socially distanced swimming, overtaking swimmer to maintain 2metres distance
- 6) Max swimming numbers will be set and phased entry exit times established using NOWCA software
- 7) No use of changing facilities, so swimmers must come prepared and shower at home post event
- 8) PPE to be carried on safety craft (masks, gloves, throw ropes and torpedo buoys (sanitised and washed after any use)
- 9) On line registration and entry ONLY
- 10) QR code available as an optional addition to registration process for personal registration with Track and Trace

Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS)

Method Statement	<p>Chelmarsh Sailing Club has: Carried out an up to date venue survey, hazards and risks identified herein</p> <p>South Staffs to provide information and provide any detail required by NOWCA on water quality.</p> <p>Carried out and established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk assessments• Emergency action plans• Standard operating procedures• Qualified Staff onsite during operations <p>Members work from these procedures.</p> <p>There will be regular training and testing to ensure appropriate safe response times. (see risk assessment)</p> <p>Every session will be managed by the appointed Swim Manager who will ensure adequate members are available at every session which includes safety and reception. Safety comprises of land and on water spotters. Safety SUP to be dockside and prepared for use or launched on the water.</p> <p>All swimmers must have a valid NOWCA wristband when they enter the water. They will be recognized with their full profile, when onsite, time in water and out of water. No session can close completely until every swimmer has exited the water and scanned out on the NOWCA system. Each session is deemed closed only when the session has been pushed to the NOWCA server.</p>
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Safety Qualifications	<p>All personnel wherever relevant – have First Aid at Work (to include OWS module), Open Water Lifeguard.</p> <p>SUP Safety Qualification: WoW course and approval for SUP safety from SUP Instructor (good competency, instruction on Torpedo floats and recovery techniques).</p> <p>Aquatic First Aid recommended for Swim Manager or one assistant at all sessions</p>
Coaches	<p>STA / NOWCA Level 2 OWS Coaching Qualification</p> <p>Level 2 Award in British Open Water Swimming</p> <p>Level 2/3 BTF Coach</p> <p>NOWCA In-house training</p>
Lifeguards	<p>RLSS open water lifeguard or Aquatic First Aid</p> <p>Swim Event Safety Award (SESA)</p> <p>SUP board experience – provided</p> <p>NOWCA or Chelmarsh In-house training</p>
Power Boat	<p>At Chelmarsh it is not envisaged that Powerboat will be used however any person using the Boat must hold valid</p> <p>RYA Power Boat Level 2.</p> <p>RYA Safety Boat (dependant on risk assessment)</p> <p>Chelmarsh and /or NOWCA In-house training</p>
Registration	<p>OW Lifeguard and First Aid at work wherever possible but not dependant.</p>

Age categories	<p>8 – 16-year-old participants must have a parent or guardian onsite for the duration of the activity and child to wear a tow float regardless of ability.</p> <p>17+ Beginner (at venue discretion to wear, wetsuit, tow float and or recommendation to attend OWS course) medical flags, bad weather, cold water temperatures to apply. (see risk assessment)</p> <p>17+ Intermediate – Advanced no restrictions unless: medical flags, bad weather, cold water temperatures. (see risk assessment)</p> <p>Note: swimmers can swim without wetsuits dependant on cold water experience, acclimatisation skills, water temperatures and weather. (dynamic risk assessment conducted every session)</p> <p><i>NB: see risk assessment: for operation procedure adjustments and control measures.</i></p>
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<p>Swimmer staff ratios: Reception, Coach, Lifeguard</p>	<p>8-16yrs Children: courses and coaching (see risk assessment for safety staff, coach numbers, quantity of children to each coach and placement during child coaching/courses)</p> <p><i>NB: there is also an option for additional support for the coaches using adult supervision by OWSwimmer parents and guardians who are experienced open water swimmers. Their role is solely to help their own children and no one else's.</i></p> <p>All children to be directed to specific course layouts depending on ability and experience.</p> <p>Adults: general ratios. One OWLifeguard to approximately 20 swimmers (see risk assessment for staff placements on water or land. Adjustments: time of year, water and weather conditions, course layout, number of swimmers in the water.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <p><i>Option 1 - Normal operating procedure applies. 200m and 400m course layout open. Safety SUP sits in the middle. Response time less than 60 seconds to any troubled swimmer in the water at all times. 20+ swimmers in water.</i></p> <p><i>Option 2 - Normal operating procedure. 400m course open. Safety staff on land who is also SUP trained. Response time less than 60 seconds to any troubled swimmer in the water at all times.</i></p> <p>See detailed guidance under provisions Page 17.</p>
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<p>Venue and Staff Equipment requirements</p>	<p>Android device(S) with NOWCA Venue Manager downloaded (1xhost device, options for – unlimited remote host devices, remote scanning devices availability) dependant on numbers, activities and events.</p> <p>NOWCA Scanners (attached to devices – above)</p> <p>Un-processed RfID wristbands (two sizes)</p> <p>SUP boards available including paddles (quantity according to: staff provisions, time of year, size of courses, swimmer numbers)</p> <p>Torpedo buoys for all SUP</p> <p>Buoyancy aids for safety staff</p> <p>2 way radios or working and waterproof mobile phones (each member of swim organising team to have a means of communication at all times)</p> <p>Whistles for SUP crew beach and swim manager as well as all swimmers.</p> <p>Sheltered facilities available for all sessions including hot drinks and warm showers FOR EMERGENCY USE (COVID-19 restriction not available generally)</p> <p>Thermometer (water temperature taken before every session – there is no minimum or maximum temperature - Review risk assessment for criteria on who can swim and any restrictions. Swim Manager has final decision.</p> <p>Wetsuit loan and hire - dependant on level of ability and offer.</p> <p>Neoprene loan and hire - dependant on level of ability and offer.</p> <p>Swimming caps are mandatory and must be highly visible (available to purchase or borrow)</p>
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<p>Staff Operating Positions</p>	<p>Reception based as near to entry exit as possible Note: wherever possible under cover and weather dependant</p> <p>Safety craft to be stationed at strategic placement depending on: response times, size of course, water temperatures, number of swimmers (see risk assessment options)</p> <p>The course must be clearly defined by semi-permanent marker buoys or placement each session. Swimmer</p> <p>Course sizes when applicable: 200m, 400m, 750m, 1000m, 1500m (dependant on time of year, water temperature, staff provisions, swimmer numbers and risk assessment)</p> <p>Swimming area away from pond weed wherever possible.</p>
<p>Water Temperature</p>	<p>Minimum water temperature and maximum temperatures.</p> <p>Minimum swim temperature 10°C degrees</p> <p>Minimum wetsuit temperature 12°C but advised if water temp less than 16°C unless proven experience</p> <p>Maximum temperature of water with wetsuit 25°C</p> <p>Water temp to be tested at start of each session</p> <p>Water temperature records to be held with report of each session.</p>

<p>Water Quality</p>	<p>Water is pumped river water from the River Severn allowed to settle and used after full purification as drinking water. The club will report any evident change to Quality (such as algae etc) and also monitor any adverse effects and immediately inform Swimmers.</p> <p>All swimmers should exercise normal precaution and avoid ingesting the water and where possible shower after swimming. Any health effect suspected of being related to Water Quality should be reported to the club.</p> <p>The sailing club ensures that potential pollution is minimal and has agreed procedures for preventing pollution or bio risks to the water.</p>
<p>Normal Operations handbook. Including Staff information</p>	<p>This procedure is made available for all members and attendees – held on website and up to date. Includes procedures: Risk assessments, Emergency action plans, Operating Procedure, Method Statement.</p> <p>Contact information and copies of Staff qualifications, staff training records will be held on file</p>
<p>Venue Signage</p>	<p>Operational session times.</p> <p>Safety signs posted around venue to prevent unauthorised access - Including relevant information on who can swim and when: <i>No unauthorised swimming with contact for more information details.</i></p>
<p>Member signs</p>	<p>Member rules and procedure. Rules and procedures available for all members on website and social media pages</p>
<p>Other Safety Considerations</p>	<p>Other water users not permitted in water or near swim courses during swim hours. SUP may operate but in distanced location.</p> <p>Anglers do not use areas designated for swimming, Swimmers will swim within swimmer course and direction.</p> <p>See venue risk assessment doc.</p>

<p>Swimmers Ratio to rescue personnel, SUP <i>(Advised by Jim Hawkins, Medical & Aquatics Health & Safety Expert and RLSS Tutor Assessor)</i></p>	<p>Provision A. 1 safety/rescue person on shore <u>or</u> with SUP on shore = 200m or smaller loop open Booking slots capped to 10 per half hour <i>Regular staff tests to measure and record response times</i></p> <p>Provision B. 2 safety/rescue persons (can include) 1 spotting from shore & 1 SUP on water = 400m loop Note: SUP sits in middle of 400m loop Booking slots capped to 20 per hour <i>Regular staff test to measure and record response times</i></p> <p>Provision C. 2 safety/rescue persons (can include) 1 spotting from shore & 1 SUP on water = 400m, 750m loops open Note: SUP sits on edge of 400m loop Booking slots capped to 25 per hour <i>Regular staff test to measure and record response times</i></p> <p>Provision D. 2 safety/ rescue person & 2 SUPs = 400 or 750m loops available to swimmers <i>Regular staff tests to measure and record response times</i> <i>NOTE: Provision A-D protocol allows increase of swimmers in water per half hour or hour (booking slots amended to reflect changes)</i> <i>NOTE: Swim Manager to dynamically risk asses where SUP or safety staff should be situated depending on weather, water temperature and numbers in water</i> <i>NOTE: Ratios above can be used to increase numbers with increased safety cover.</i></p>
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Appendix A

Chelmarsh Open Water Swim

Detailed addendum (appendix A) to SOP



Includes all standard NOWCA procedures adopted by Chelmarsh

Key Personnel

Chelmarsh Open Water Swim Team

Sponsor David Partridge

Key personnel/review of SOP Risk Plans Gemma Chafer, Tom Broadway,

Chelmarsh Sailing Club Risk Team: Terry Gumbley, Richard Woods, David Bibby.

NOWCA – Rick Kiddle Provision of detailed guidance overarching NOWCA guidance

POLICE /EMERGENCY SERVICES – 999

NON-EMERGENCY POLICE ASSISTANCE – 101

NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE - 111

OPEN WATER GENERAL SWIM FORMAT

Swim Format

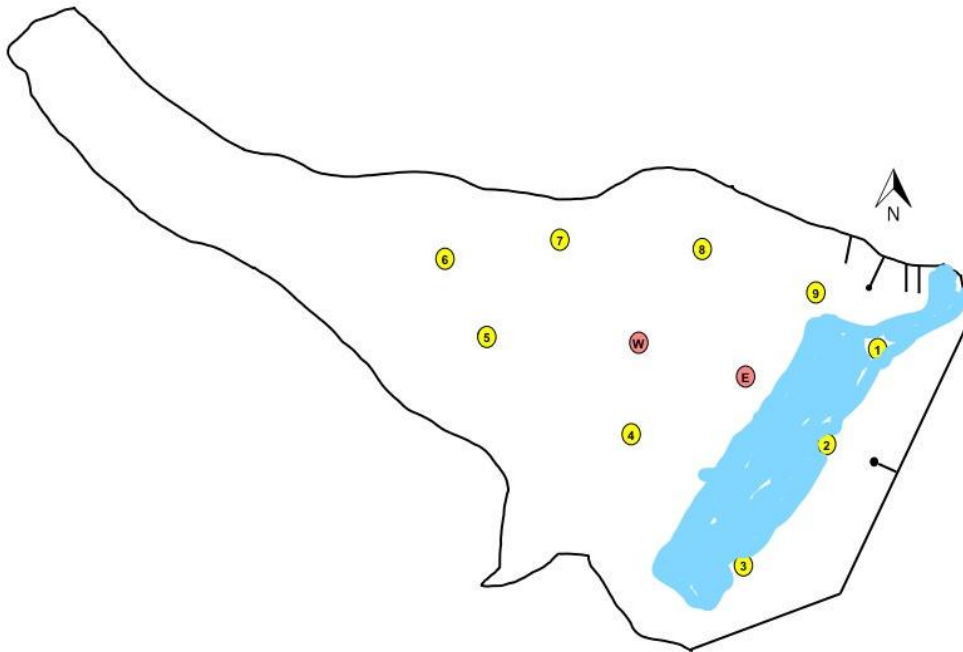
A measured distance based on permanent Buoys, with options for short medium and long markers.

Safety support equipment SUPs provided from the club.

Items stored on site and made available to NOWCA and Chelmarsh Swim Club SUP, Club Buoyancy aids and specific swim safety equipment to meet water safety requirements for sessions. Torpedo Buoys. Waterproof whistles and swim hats.

Lake Entry and Exit: Via beach area with in and out lanes to ensure social distancing between swimmers starting and completing swims.

Schematic showing approx. location of swim courses for 2021



RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DELIVERY

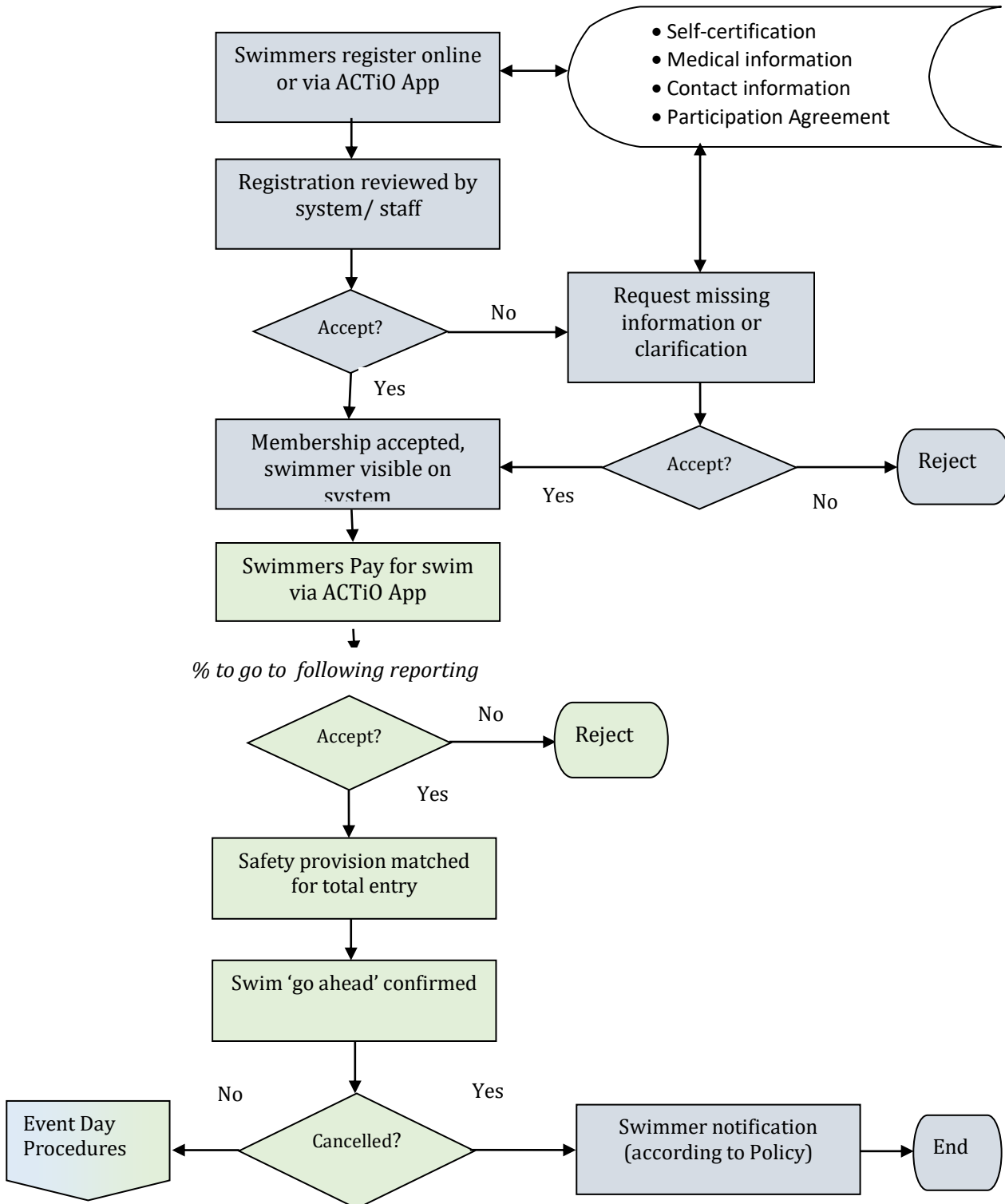
Chelmarsh Sailing Club will own the following responsibilities:

- Upkeep & General Maintenance of grounds
- Obtaining Water quality testing results from South Staffs Water and sharing of information with NOWCA and venue team. It is understood that the lake water is from natural untreated sources.
- Access to building units on site for use as storage facilities including use of electricity and water *Indoor spaces not available in 2020 to customers as part of the Coronavirus control measures*
- Chelmarsh Sailing Club and NOWCA will own the following responsibilities:
- Swimmer pre-booking, registration, medical information collection and self-certification process to current event standards.
- Marketing via social media and websites as an Open Water Swimming venue with key triathlon and OWS websites promoting this information too.
- Direct Marketing via email and/or poster to local triathlon and Swimming clubs
- Liaison with local swimmers, British Triathlon, Triathlon England & British Swimming to raise the profile of the venue
- Presence at all events to provide support and technical advice to swimmers.
- Swimmer notifications, including successful registration and cancellation information.
- Administration of Parental Consent documentation where required.

Chelmarsh Swim will own the following responsibilities:

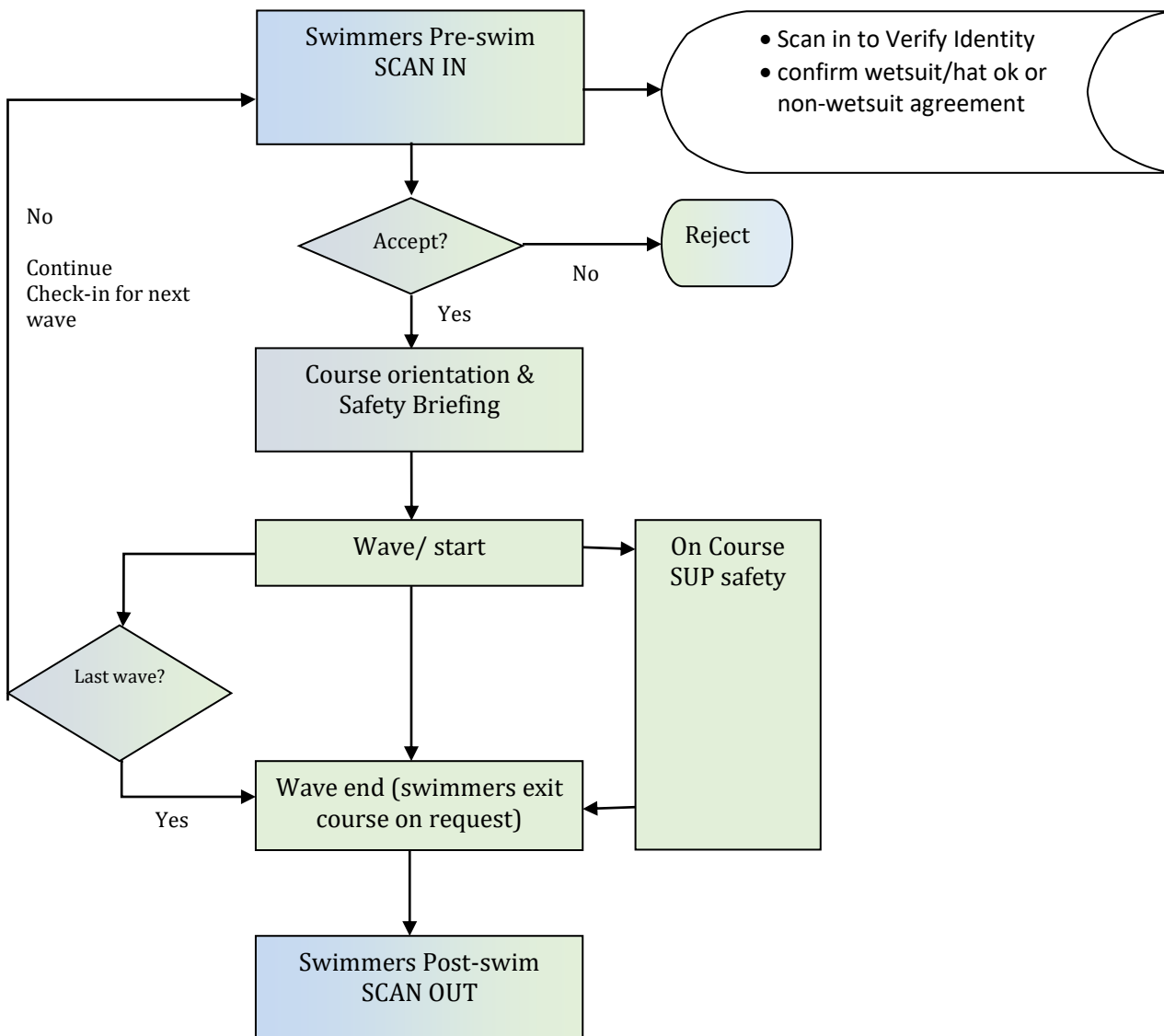
- Swimmer Scan-in and Scan-out including other use of the NOWCA System.
- Course orientation and pre-event/swim Safety briefing.
- Co-promotion.
- NOWCA will promote the Chelmarsh logo on NOWCA website and Open Water Swimming documentation and will work with Chelmarsh to co-promote relevant information.

Registration Procedure for Events, Weekend & Weekday evening swims



** To be accepted, swimmers must have acceptable and complete information including disclaimer agreements, medical information and self-certification for swimming competence done on NOWCA membership registration; be within the deadline for registration and payment and total numbers must not have been exceeded.*

Swim / Event Day Procedure



Swimmers may be rejected by **Chelmarsh Swim Manager** on reasonable Health & Safety concerns.

Note: All swimmers will be required to wear a colour coded, branded swim hat for safety which will not be included within the entry price and will identify the swimmers in the water.

RELEVANT HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES, PROCEDURES & DOCUMENTATION

Procedure / Documentation	Description
Chelmarsh Open Water Swimming Policies, Procedures & Guidelines	Specific SOP and Risk Registers for OWS available on website Links to be added when agreed
Risk Assessments: Open Water Swimming RA Instructing on Water RA Administering First Aid RA	Full and formal assessment of risk both On-water and Landside, published and reviewed at regular intervals, collaborating actively on any mitigating risk-reducing actions.
Standard Operations Procedure	General method statement set across all venues including details of staff qualifications, placement of staff, swimmer ratios, water testing, age groups.
On Water Emergency Procedure On Water Instruction First Aid/First Aid Administration Procedure	Clearly defined Emergency Action Plan published and reviewed at regular intervals. This Action Plan is shared for all activities at Chelmarsh Sailing Club and is available here: http://chelmarshsailing.org.uk/2020%20Emergency%20Procedures.pdf
Open Water Swimming Rules NOWCA swim (400m) Aquathlon Event Rules	OPEN WATER PARTICIPANT SWIMMING AGREEMENT (to abide by swimming safety) included as integral part of registration procedure
Cancellation Procedure	The conditions and defined process(s) for cancelling open water Swimming for safety reasons.
General Swimmer Advice	A set of general 'good practice' and Swimmer Code of Conduct guidelines for safe Open Water Swimming given to all swimmers on website and on social media and online
Other Swimmer Documentation	PARENTAL CONSENT (for children under the age of 16) required via online registration of children's membership Non-member REGISTER (in/out)

OTHER RELEVANT SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

During both events and normal swims Wetsuits will not be mandatory if prior skins (non-wetsuit) experience is proven. In the unlikely event that the water temperature exceeds that which British Triathlon Guidelines deem unsafe for wetsuit use (25C), wetsuits will NOT be allowed. Wetsuits MUST be worn if the water temperature is less than 12C and for all non adult swimmers.

Neoprene swim caps and feet covers will be allowed, along with training aids such as flippers and paddles.

Bright coloured swim hats are mandatory. The Chelmarsh Team will lend hats wherever possible but also ensure that swim hats are available to purchase (*hire/ loan not available during pandemic). Colour coded hat arrangements may be made for events.

Whilst all events are based on self-certification (per normal event rules), Chelmarsh will strongly recommend pre-event Open Water familiarisation courses offered by on site qualified Coaches or NOWCA to increase swimmer safety.

Any swimmer unable to produce suitable identification whilst collecting their membership or a temporary membership wristband will not be allowed to swim.

"ON WATER" EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

1: Applicability

This procedure is applicable to all open water swimming members who are called upon to deal with an incident/ accident/ emergency situation on water and who have been authorised to attend/ assist.

Because the weather may well play an important role in causing incident/ accidents/ emergency situations to arise on water, any preventative measures available must be taken and weather warnings observed and heeded. Regular weather forecasts must be obtained and relevant information relayed to swimmers and other members.

2: Aim

The aim of this procedure is to minimise any risks or hazards which may arise from an incident/ accident/ emergency situation on water. The aim of the person/ persons carrying out this procedure is to:

Adopt this procedure whenever called upon to deal with or assist with, an incident/ accident/ emergency situation on water.

Calmly and efficiently assess all given information regarding the incident/ accident/ emergency situation on water.

Request assistance from emergency services (if required), colleagues or members where necessary.

Prepare adequate SUP for dispatch, should the need arise.

All personnel dispatched to incident/ accident/ emergency situation are to follow instructions from "on water" incident safety member, emergency services (if present) or senior coach.

Deal with the incident/ accident/ emergency situation safely, efficiently, effectively and keeping within all NOWCA guidelines and procedures.

Maintain communications with all relevant parties i.e. safety SUP, emergency services.

Inform all necessary parties of the incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure, when safe to do so.

With weather related incidents/ accidents/ emergency situations, await confirmation from all water bound safety craft and all reliable sources of information, of the adverse weather conditions subsiding.

Return all staff, SUPs and equipment to their correct location, reporting any loss or damage immediately.

Thoroughly and accurately complete all necessary documentation. De-brief/ hot de-brief as necessary.

3: Essential responsibilities

On water safety

As a safety craft operator, the safety of yourself is paramount. Never put yourself or your craft in a position of danger or in a situation which could compromise your safety or wellbeing or that of anyone else.

If the craft that you have been allocated is or appears to be unsuitable for the task in hand, inform the Swim Manager or senior coach immediately. Ensure that:

- you have a working radio or phone in waterproof container for use whenever you are assigned.
- you are suitable dressed and have the correct PPE for the current weather conditions and have a detailed expected weather forecast for the day.
- the SUP allocated to you is prepared and kitted out correctly for its intended use; as recommended by NOWCA, governing body regulations and health and safety guidelines.
- an "on the spot" check of the safety craft is carried before use; as recommended by NOWCA, governing body regulations and safety guidelines.
- all safety equipment required for attending or assisting with the incident/ accident/ emergency situation is correctly stowed, stored, secured on the safety craft.

When requested to attend an incident/ accident or emergency situation as a safety craft team, you respond as quickly, efficiently and safely as possible. Ensure that:

- a thorough assessment of the incident/ accident/ emergency situation is carried out upon approach.
- all findings from incident/ accident/ emergency situation are reported back to Swim Manager and/ or senior coach as soon as possible.
- when proceeding forward to deal with incident/ accident/ emergency situation assess the situation and prioritise the needs of the casualties and circumstances.

- if the emergency services are called then they will take control of the situation
- all requests from the emergency services are met and facilitated without delay.
- all channels of communication are kept open to allow all parties to deal with the incident/ accident/ emergency situation effectively and efficiently.
- whilst attending or dealing with the incident/ accident/ emergency situation all Chelmarsh operating procedures and governing body regulations are adhered to at all times.

Upon receiving information of incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure from the appropriate source, ensure all staff, equipment and SUPs are returned to their correct location.

The incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure must be verified by Swim Manager.

Ensure a comprehensive list is compiled of any equipment loss or damage sustained during the incident/ accident/ emergency situation, for evaluation and replacement and attach equipment report to all relevant paperwork, incident logs and a reports e.g. accident log-book.

Information and actions logged correctly, accurately and as soon as possible to minimise the risk of errors. All reports, logs and paperwork e.g. accident log-book are correctly collated and completed with copies forwarded to all necessary recipients.

Ensure "hot de-brief"/ de-brief is carried out as necessary.

Shore staff

Please be aware that in certain circumstances there may be both an "on shore" and "on water" incident control officer (ICO). Ensure that:

- upon receiving radio or mobile telephone notification of, or request for assistance with, an "on water" incident/ accident/ or emergency, all relevant information is clearly received, understood and relayed to all relevant parties.
- if requested to do so by the attending safety SUP or ICO, the emergency services are called without delay and all given information relayed clearly and efficiently.
- all other sources of assistance are contacted if necessary per 'key personnel' details at the head of this document.

Under no circumstances are staff to respond or act without authorisation and clear instruction from the ICO(s), Swim Manager and/ or senior instructor.

The safety of all water users is paramount and adequate safety provision should be made available for all swimmer members using the water at the time. Ensure that:

- all students and groups are brought ashore when required and that adequate supervision is in place where necessary.
- Chelmarsh is cleared of all open water swimmers when necessary.
- any safety team dispatched to the incident/ accident/ emergency situation has adequate crew members on board to deal with the given task.
- all channels of communication are kept open to allow all parties to deal with the incident/ accident/ emergency situation efficiently and effectively.
- contact with all relevant parties is maintained.

All Chelmarsh open water swimming members should be prepared to assist should an incident/ accident/ emergency situation arise and will be required to do so when instructed and ensure that:

- all requests from the emergency services are met and followed and facilitated without delay.
- when official confirmation of incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure is received, it is relayed to all relevant parties.
- all necessary documentation is completed e.g. accident log-book and attend de-brief if relevant.

4: Hazards

Failure to comply with this procedure could result in an increased likelihood of the following hazards occurring.

Drowning, fatality, entrapment, hypothermia, heat/sun stroke, injury, head injury, muscular-skeletal injury, illness, slips, trips, falls, damage, stress, dehydration, poisoning, fire, burns, explosion, eye injury, skin irritation, collision, vehicle submersion.

Refer to Risk Assessment documentation and follow instruction.

5: Sources of information

This procedure is produced in conjunction with information found on/in: Chelmarsh Safety Procedures for SUP (SUP SOP) Sailing Club and emergency Plan <http://chelmarshsailing.org.uk/2020%20Emergency%20Procedures.pdf>

6: Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary

Procedure in or on water instruction

1: **Applicability**

This procedure is applicable to members who have been fully trained to governing body standards (STA L2 OWSC or BTF L3/ ASAL2 OWS), and hold relevant qualifications, in the process of instructing in or on water activities and have received training from NOWCA and Chelmarsh and have had their training records authorised.

2: **Aim**

The aim of this procedure is to minimise the identified risks and subsequent hazards detailed in the Risk Assessment. The aim of the person carrying out this procedure is to:-

- Adopt this procedure whenever appointed to carry out in or on water instruction.
- Attend briefing.
- Follow opening and closing procedures.
- Provide all equipment and teaching aids needed for efficient execution of course/ tuition.
- Carefully assess the weather forecast/conditions and locations, including beaches, banks and shorelines.
- Provide a full introduction to the centre/ site and include a thorough health and safety induction.
- Provide suitable clothing, PPE and accessories to guarantee the pupils welfare and safe being.
- Provide tuition in line with governing body regulations and coach: swimmer ratios.
- Uphold safety SUP contact if in the water or radio contact with the / Swim Manager/ senior coach.
- Correctly store and clean all equipment after use.
- Immediately report any faulty/ defective/ unsuitable/ unusable equipment or hire fleet clothing or accessories, to the duty manager and remove from circulation.
- Issue correct certificates and logbooks in accordance with governing body regulations.

3: **Essential responsibilities**

When carrying out any instruction in or on water, you are responsible for the swimmer/ students, and equipment allocated to you at the time (you also have a duty of care to any other water users you may encounter) and you are accountable to the senior coach and Swim Manager. You should ensure that:

- the briefing is attended.

- correct opening procedure is followed.
- V.H.F radio if used is in working order and a radio check with the Swim Manager is carried out if applicable. Ensure mobile phone is available in waterproof container.
- all equipment and teaching aids that are needed for the efficient execution of the instruction are prepared and ready for use.
You must report immediately to the senior coach or Swim Manager, any problems or maintenance issues that may arise and affect your instruction or the safety of you and/ or your students.
- the weather conditions are suitable for you to carry out your in or on water instruction safely and enjoyably.
- That pontoon and all beaches, banks, shore lines (access points) are safe and any hazards identified briefed out to all students.
- a safe and suitable location, with definable boundaries, is chosen to carry out the in or on water instruction.
- your students have a complete and full introduction to yourself.
- every student is informed of the structure of the in or on water instruction that they will be following.
Should you, during the duration of the in or on water instruction, encounter any unsuitable behaviour or confrontational problems from students; please report to duty manager/ senior instructor immediately.
- you have full knowledge of all relevant student medical conditions.
- all relevant safety information is relayed to your students, including the fire assembly point and procedures.
- your students have the correct attire for the present conditions.
- buoyancy aids are worn at all times whilst in or on or near the water.
- a swift and safe recovery of pupils from the water in the event of students getting cold or hypothermic etc.
- adequate safety cover is available to you and always inform the senior coach of your intended whereabouts.
- during the transference of a pupil from SUP to pontoon or beach, extra care is taken to avoid injury to student or equipment.
- all instruction/ tuition complies with governing body (STA/NOWCA) or Chelmarsh regulations/ standards and follows correct course/tuition structure where applicable.
- radio contact is upheld at all times if applicable (safety craft included) and report any issues or unforeseen problems immediately.
- all equipment is packed suitably away and in the correct location.
- all equipment is checked for faults and defects upon its return and any maintenance issues dealt with and corrected wherever possible. Any issues that cannot be resolved "on the spot" must be reported to the Swim Manager.

4: **Hazards**

Failure to comply with this procedure could result in an increased likelihood of the following hazards occurring.

Drowning, fatality, entrapment, hypothermia, heat/sun stroke, injury, head injury, muscular-skeletal injury, illness, slips, trips, falls, damage, stress, dehydration, poisoning, fire, burns, explosion, eye injury, skin irritation, collision, vehicle submersion.

Refer to Risk Assessment documentation and follow instruction.

5: **Sources of information**

This procedure is produced in conjunction with information found on/in:
All STA/RISS/NOWCA I2 manuals.

Instruction in water

All other NOP's, method statements, risk assessments

6: **Review**

This procedure will be reviewed annually or as deemed necessary

Procedure first aid/ administering first aid

1: Applicability

This procedure is applicable to members who have been fully trained in the process of administering basic first aid and have received the appropriate training and certification from a recognised first aid training institute and have had their training records authorised.

2: Aim

The aim of this procedure is to minimise the identified risks and subsequent hazards detailed in the Risk Assessment. The aim of the person carrying out this procedure is to:

- Adopt this procedure whenever called upon to administer first aid or assist in a first aid situation.
- Provide basic first aid to general public/ staff and visitors should the need arise.
- Quickly assess the situation and swiftly call the emergency services if required.
- Provide a clean and safe first aid area.
- Dispose of any first aid equipment safely and efficiently.
- Accurately document all accidents and incidents.
- Correctly fill in all relevant Chelmarsh forms.
- Have an awareness of all child protection policies and guidelines.
- Have a complete awareness of all manual handling guidelines.
- Never knowingly put yourself in any danger when called upon to administer first aid or to assist in a first aid incident or situation.

3: Essential responsibilities

Ensure that:

- a quick and efficient reaction when alerted to a first aid incident.
- the situation is assessed quickly and accurately and the duty manager is alerted as soon as possible.
Alert the emergency services as quickly as possible if the situation cannot be dealt with by a basic first aid person.
- the casualty is dealt with promptly taking care to make them as comfortable and calm as possible.
- all manual handling guidelines are followed.
- when dealing with a child or young person, that:
 - you are accompanied by another member of staff to guarantee the safety of you and the casualty.
 - where possible a parent or guardian accompanies them into the first aid area.

- the casualty, where possible, is advised of any further actions/ recommendations, e.g. advised to visit to hospital or GP.
- all first aid equipment/ supplies used, is checked for suitability, is in date and unopened/ undamaged.
- you alert the emergency services as quickly as possible if the casualty deteriorates
- where possible, that a friend/ family member is alerted to the incident.
- where possible, accurate details are taken from the casualty and recorded in the accident log-book.

If the casualty is in no condition to give personal details and is not accompanied by anyone who can give information on their behalf, contact duty manager to scan the NOWCA wristband, record all details of the incident as accurately as possible to enable all relevant documentation to be completed. All personal details can be obtained from the NOWCA venue management system.

- all used first aid equipment is disposed of correctly and safely.
 - the first aid area is left in a clean and safe condition.
 - the duty manager is completely aware of the incident/ situation and any outcome.
 - a record of the incident is taken in the e.g. accident log-book.
- Under no circumstances should you put yourself or anyone else in a position of danger when called upon to administer first aid or to assist in a first aid situation. If necessary, alert the emergency services and await assistance.

4: **Hazards**

Failure to comply with this procedure could result in an increased likelihood of the following hazards occurring.

Injury, illness, slips, trips and falls, deteriorating casualty, child incident, fatality, contamination.

5: **Sources of information**

This procedure is produced in conjunction with information found on/in: First aid Training

6: **Review**

This procedure will be reviewed annually or as deemed necessary

Emergency procedure “on land (site)”

(For events/ accidents/ incidents outside of normal daily operations)

1: Applicability

This procedure is applicable to all Chelmarsh members who are called upon to deal with an incident/ accident/ emergency situation “on land (site)” and who have been requested/ authorised to attend/ assist.

This procedure will apply to any major, unexpected incident/ accident or event should it occur on site, car park outside of normal daily operations

2: Aim

The aim of this procedure is to minimise any risks or hazards which may arise from an unexpected incident/ accident/ emergency situation on land (site).

This procedure is also aimed at providing an effective and efficient response to the incident/ accident/ emergency situation, assisting and supporting the emergency services where necessary; the main priority being to preserve life, property and the environment.

The aim of the person/ persons carrying out this procedure is to:

- adopt this procedure whenever called upon to deal with/ assist with, an incident/ accident/ emergency situation on land/ site.
- follow the chain of command at all times.
- calmly and efficiently receive and collate all information regarding the incident/ accident/ emergency situation. E.g. incident, location, number of persons involved, rendezvous point and any other relevant information.
- verify and re-confirm all details back to source of incident / accident/ emergency situation.
- calmly and efficiently assess all given information regarding the incident/ accident/ emergency situation.
- request assistance from emergency services (if required).
- initiate the emergency site access procedure if necessary
- request assistance from colleagues, or Chelmarsh staff, following the chain of command, as necessary
- provide a suitable rendezvous point (and reservoir access/ egress point, if necessary) as agreed by all concerned should the situation require.
- provide all necessary parties (i.e. Emergency services, senior coach, duty manager) with all information already collated from source. E.g. location, number of persons, rendezvous point, access/ egress points.

- request the assistance of any “on water” safety teams available from around the area, should the need arise, following instructions from the ICO/ ICO delegate. A separate emergency procedure - “on water” is in place should the incident/ accident/ emergency situation involve the lake site itself.
- deal with the incident/ accident/ emergency situation safely/ efficiently/ effectively following all Chelmarsh systems of safe working practices.
- provide support wherever necessary to persons immediately affected by the incident/ accident/ emergency situation.
- maintain communications with all relevant parties and follow the appropriate recreation chain of command as necessary.
- inform all necessary parties of the incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure, when safe to do so, following the appropriate recreation chain of command.
- for weather related incident/ accident/ emergency situation, await confirmation from a reliable source of weather report of the adverse weather conditions subsiding.
- thoroughly and accurately complete all necessary documentation and reports, accident log-book, de-brief/ hot de-brief as necessary with relevant parties.

3: **Essential responsibilities**

The chain of command is to be followed at all times. Ensure that:

- upon receiving notification of, or request for assistance with, an incident/ accident/ or emergency, all relevant information is clearly received, understood, logged and relayed to all relevant parties;
- a thorough assessment of the incident/ accident/ emergency situation is carried out upon approach/ arrival. Only attempt to approach if necessary and considered safe to do so.
- whilst attending, or dealing with, the incident/ accident/ emergency situation all TEST systems of safe working practice are adhered to at all times.
- you keep a safe, but suitable distance from the incident/ accident/ emergency situation to allow an “on the spot” dynamic risk assessment to be carried out.
- you only proceed further once the dynamic risk assessment has been carried out and only if it’s considered safe to do so.
- You deal with the immediate situation if able to do so.
- if you are in any doubt as to what course of action to take, or what is expected of you; await further advice/ instruction/ support/ assistance.
- you do not act outside of your personal capabilities or limitations.

- you never place yourself in a position of danger or in a situation which may compromise your safety or that of others.
- the emergency services are called without delay and all given information relayed clearly and efficiently.
- the emergency site access procedure is implemented as soon as possible, should the emergency services need to gain access to site.
- you enlist the help of responsible persons to act as ICO delegates should the situation require.
- you endeavour to ensure the safety of all staff, visitors, general public and contractors, following instructions from the ICO/ ICO delegates and emergency services.
- all other sources of assistance are contacted where necessary, as indicated by the ICO.
- a suitable rendezvous point is agreed and all parties informed.
- support is provided to persons immediately affected by the incident/ accident/ emergency situation, wherever necessary.
- all existing requirements are assessed and met as necessary, ensuring the continued safety of visitors/ general public/ staff and contractors.
- adequate records are taken, details are held within GDPR guidelines and individuals are aware as such and information recorded for the accident log-book.
- under no circumstances are staff to respond or act without authorisation and clear instruction from the emergency services.
- all channels of communication are kept open to allow all parties to deal with the incident/ accident/ emergency situation efficiently and effectively.
- contact with the ICO's and all relevant parties is maintained.
- all requests from the emergency services are met, followed and facilitated without delay.
- when official confirmation of incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure is received, it is relayed to all relevant parties.
- all units return to normality as soon as is reasonably possible.
- all buildings/ premises and site are left secure and safe.
- any safety/ security concerns are voiced to the relevant recreation personnel, following the appropriate chain of command

Upon receiving information of incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure from the appropriate source, ensure all relevant parties are informed.

The incident/ accident/ emergency situation closure must be verified by the ICO (s) and the attending emergency services.

Ensure all information and actions are logged correctly, accurately and as soon as possible to minimise the risk of errors and "hot de-brief"/ de-brief is carried out/ attended as necessary.

Ensure all necessary documentation such as the accident log-book is correctly collated and completed with copies forwarded to all necessary recipients.

References for all Chelmarsh policies & procedures on line

Health & safety guidelines for coaching in triathlon: athlete safety & welfare

STA/RISS / NOWCA, rule book

STA/NOWCA, code of practice for open water swimming coaches.

British triathlon, rule book

British triathlon, code of practice for triathlon coaches.

Cancellation & transfer policy & procedure

Conditions for cancellation

Chelmarsh will be responsible for cancellation of an 'event' based on, but not limited to, weather conditions, water quality and/or temperature and provision of safety cover and their decision is final.

Chelmarsh will immediately notify customers via email and/telephone as soon as a cancellation decision has been made.

All reasonable efforts will be made to confirm cancellation as far in advance of the session as possible to reduce unnecessary travel.

Swimmers booked into swim will receive an automatic credit towards a future swimming session at Chelmarsh.

Notification of cancellation to swimmers

"While cancellation is very unlikely, the very nature of open water swimming does mean cancellation may ensue due to unforeseen weather or unsuitable water conditions. Chelmarsh reserve the right to alter the date and start time of the event on safety grounds.

In the event of cancellation being necessary we will inform you directly by email using the email address you supplied at the time of registration. Public announcements will also be made on the Chelmarsh website and on Facebook/twitter & other social media channels"

Transfer between swimmers

"We are sorry but under no circumstances do we offer transfers between swimmers. This is for the safety of the participant. The swimmer who entered must register in person prior to their swim taking place with relevant id wristband. Swimmers will not be allowed to access the water without a personal safety wristband"

Open water event participation agreement

(Standard form completed online by all swimmers at Chelmarsh)

I agree to strictly abide by the swimming times and location advertised on the Chelmarsh web site and displayed on the notice by Chelmarsh.

I will not enter the water until all safety arrangements are in place and the safety officer/session leader has indicated that it is safe to do so.

I shall exit the water at the end of the session when instructed to do so.

I will enter and exit the water at the specified places(s) and stay within the designated swim route unless instructed otherwise by safety staff from Chelmarsh staff.

I will wear a wetsuit (unless advised by Chelmarsh that this is not required), a brightly coloured swim hat and goggles. I am aware that neoprene gloves and socks are also permitted if I wish to wear them.

I will sign the waiver at the first session if asked and subsequently scan in before entering into the water and will scan out after the session.

I agree to provide emergency contact details and any relevant medical issues and understand that this information will be recorded for my safety.

I will swim within my ability and respond immediately to any directions given by the safety officer/session coach and anyone providing safety cover, including any instruction to exit the water if required.

In the event I get into difficulty I will roll onto my back and signal for rescue by waving one arm in the air.

I will not deliberately obstruct or interfere with other swimmers.

I will not dive into the water from any platform or boat.

I will not swim if I am feeling unwell, or if I become unwell during a session, I will immediately inform the safety staff.

I have read and understood the general advice for swimmers provided by Chelmarsh.

I agree to take full responsibility for my possessions whilst swimming.

I have provided the correct contact details at time of registration and agree to notify Chelmarsh immediately if changes or updates as required.

I will attend the 'safety status' briefing given by Chelmarsh prior to a swim session and seek a coaching course if I have not been in open water before.

Surname	
Forename	
Date of birth	
Address	
Next of kin (name & relationship)	
Next of kin contact details (mobile & home telephone)	
Any relevant medical conditions	
Current medications	
Allergies	

I agree to abide by the safety measures detailed in this participant swim agreement and on any other safety requirements issued on the day from authorised safety staff of LOW.

I am fully aware of the dangers of swimming in open water and am aware of the fitness levels required.

I accept that NOWCA, coaching staff and Chelmarsh cannot be held responsible for any loss or injury howsoever caused.

I swim at my own risk.

Signature	
Date	

General advice to swimmers

Please ensure you have fully disclosed in your safety profile application, any swim-sensitive medical conditions; history of seizures, heart problems, high blood pressure, pregnancy and respiratory problems including asthma.

Whilst Swim England recognise these medical conditions as a potential risk in a swimming environment according, we can minimise risk by supporting you in following the below guidelines. You will also be provided with a coloured wristband that will alert our staff to stay vigilant to your presence in the water in case you should require assistance.

If you have a history of any of the above, please check with your doctor first before swimming with us. This will be checked on your registration and collection of wristband.

Do not swim if you feel unwell, have a temperature and/ or a persistent or paroxysmal cough *PLEASE SEE OUR COVID PROCEDURE*

Cover all cuts and abrasions with sticking plaster. You should not consider swimming if you have deep cuts or 'road rash' (grazing from falling off a bike at speed or similar event).

Make sure you have well-fitting goggles and a bright swim hat to aid visibility in the water.

Ensure your swim kit/ wetsuit is fit for purpose and the right size. Whilst a great buoyancy aid, an ill-fitting wetsuit can cause undue stress and panic if it is too tight and restricts air or too big and weighed down with water.

Make sure you are well fuelled and hydrated before your swim but allow a couple of hours before you enter the water if you've had a bigger meal.

Do not dive. Water depth is an unknown and will fluctuate even in bodies of water swimmers are familiar with. There may be objects under the water that cannot be seen from the surface that may cause spinal injury if dived on to.

Entry should be steady and measure. Rushed entry to the water can cause Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD). This is a recognised as a leading cause of swimming-related fatalities by the World Health Organisation.

Acclimatise to the water temperature before starting a swim. Rushed entry can bring on the onset of cold-water-shock through the actions of driving warm blood to power limb movement, sending cold blood from those extremities to the vital organs.

Do not stay in the water longer than your body is used to. Stay especially vigilant in water under 15 degrees the temperature which we recommend all swimmers wear a wetsuit if they are not cold-water acclimatised.

Your core body temperature is 37 degrees. It takes only a drop of two degrees for hypothermia to set in. As your body continues to lose heat when you leave water colder than your body temperature it is important to ensure you wrap up warm to prevent it dropping below safe levels.

Make sure you have warm clothes for after your swim, even on a warm day as the continued drop in body temperature and wind-chill will have an effect.

Try to ingest a minimum amount of water whilst swimming and stay hydrated with fresh water before and after your swim to ensure you are replacing any fluids lost through exercise.

Do not swim too close to the bank to reduce risk of bacteria and infection.

When the water is above 20 degrees, avoid weedy patches of water to reduce the risk of cercarial dermatitis aka 'duck mites' (from snail larvae). *PLEASE SEE SWIMMERS ITCH INFO*

If you cut/ break the skin during your swim or on exiting the water, wash immediately with fresh water and clean with an antibacterial wipe before applying a sterile dressing such as a plaster. Alert staff for first-aid access and so they can record in the accident log-book. Monitor and seek medical attention if any bleeding, discolouration, redness, sensitivity or pain persists.

Wash hands in fresh warm water for at least 20 seconds before eating after you have swum and use antibacterial handwash where possible.

Take a full shower at the earliest opportunity. On-site camping showers can be provided for a light rinse but a warm shower with soap should be taken when available.

Do not exceed your personal capabilities on the day of your swim; 'if in doubt, don't go out'!

If you feel unwell after a swim, seek medical attention immediately informing them that you have taken part in open water swimming. Follow up by alerting the venue at your earliest opportunity.