

Minutes

Swim England South West Region's Swimming Committee Meeting, held on Wednesday, July 15th, 2026, via Teams, at 18:30 hours

- Attendees:** Mike Coles, Regional Chair
Roger Downing, Regional Vice Chair
Andrew Ryczanowski, invitee
Andrew Smart, Dorset ASA Representative
Barry Aldrick, Dorset ASA Independent Representative
Jon Brayne, Devon ASA Independent Representative
Esther Rookes, Devon ASA Secretary (deputising for Martin Walters)
Jill Beard, SESW Regional Officials Training and Development Coordinator
Libby Bell, SESW Welfare & Governance Officer
Lisa Atkinson, Gloucester County Independent Representative
Lily Lowe, Gloucester County ASA Representative
Nicola Vouse, SESW Officials' Secretary
Rachel Aldington, Somerset ASA Independent Representative
Richard Smith, Wiltshire ASA Independent Representative
Stacey Millett, SESW Regional Development Officer
Chris Vickery, SESW Regional Administrator
Steve Williams, SESW Regional Manager
- Apologies:** Jason Quiterio, Cornwall ASA Independent
Kelly Podbury, Somerset ASA County Representative
Martin Walters, Devon ASA Representative (substitute Esther Rookes)
Lesley Leffers, SESW Regional Licensing Officer
Sandra Yeoman, Wiltshire ASA County Representative.

1. **Welcome:** SESW Regional Chair, Mike Coles, gave a warm welcome to the attendees, especially thanking the newly appointed independent county representatives attending. He continued: Our objective moving forward is simple: we are a working group dedicated to championing swimmers' interests by delivering meaningful development and competition. To put it bluntly, we are here to drive progress, not to become a talking shop for complaints. This is precisely why we have introduced openly recruited independent members. We want to bring fresh energy to this vital committee. My hope is that every one of us—whether an independent voice or a county-appointed representative—will roll up our sleeves and dive into the work ahead. Together, we will align this committee with the region's other disciplines, setting the gold standard for how we develop, monitor, and run regional swimming.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
 - 2.1. Andy Smart specified an interest in Item 9.1 regarding Poole Swimming Club's intent to hold a licensed meet at Millfield School, in Somerset. He is a member of that club.
3. **Minutes from previous Meetings**
 - 3.1. Minutes from the meetings on September 10, 2025, and March 9, 2026, were formally approved as a true record
4. **Matters Arising from said minutes**
 - 4.1. New Terms of Reference were received by all members, which aligned with Swim England's updated governance code.
 - 4.2. Election of Swimming Committee Chair. Andrew Ryczanowski was introduced to the committee as the Officers of the Region's choice of the new Chair of the Swimming Committee. Those present voted, and he was appointed Chair by a majority vote with one abstention. At Andrew's request, Mike and Roger continued to facilitate the remainder of the meeting.
 - 4.3. Appointment of Swimming Manager, together with the Job Description: Lily Lowe and Stacey Millett were appointed to take on the role jointly in a volunteer capacity. The committee discussed the long-term potential of transitioning these administrative duties

into a single professional paid role (combining events and licensing), which will be discussed at the next regional board meeting on September 2, 2026.

- 4.4. Swimming Events Manager: Richard Smith was voted to continue in this capacity on a volunteer basis.
- 4.5. Licensing Officer Transition: With Lesley Leffers stepping down due to ill health, **Dean Stojic** (Bridgwater SC) will take on the role, undergoing a supportive, direct transition and training period with Lesley, subject to safer recruitment protocols

5. Reports and Technical Updates

- 5.1. **Use of Strobes:** The committee formally approved a motion proposed by Roger and seconded by Jill Beard to fully facilitate strobe requests. As hearing is a hidden disability, the committee agreed that officials should not pass judgment on requests and must facilitate them to maintain inclusivity.
- 5.2. **Training and Officials:** Jill highlighted a highly positive recruitment period, noting 14 referee candidates this year and excellent conversion rates from J1 to J2 and J2 to starter.
- 5.3. **County Reports:** Reports were noted for Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and Gloucestershire. A late report from Wiltshire (presented by Sandra) highlighted a successful development gala in Salisbury and the popularity of awarding ribbons for 4th to 8th places. No report was received from Somerset ASA.
- 5.4. **Licensing Concerns:**
 - 5.4.1. Poole SC's open meet has been allocated a date at the end of June 2027 (moved from July due to Millfield booking clashes).
 - 5.4.2. A licensing sub-committee consisting of the county licensing officers will convene quickly to address Devon's proposals to remove first-come, first-served options for Level 3 meets and curb Level 4 meets during county championships.
 - 5.4.3. Reimbursement Rates: The regional mileage rate will remain at **45p per mile** for volunteers next year on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, despite Swim England recommending 55p.

6. Development and Competition Reports

- 6.1. **Development Camp Residential:** Stacey Millett's proposal to transition the second day of the age 14–16 and regional development camps into a 2.5-day residential camp at Taunton School was approved. The estimated cost is £350 per swimmer (partly subsidised by previous AP camp profits).
- 6.2. **County Camp Selection:** Stacey clarified that current county camp selection criteria will remain "business as usual" for the 2026/27 season while Swim England completes a national review, with new guidance expected by next summer for 2027/28.
- 6.3. **Spectator Ticketing and Live Streaming:**
- 6.4. Due to strict venue safety and evacuation capacities (750 at Millfield, 850 at Hen Grove), future regional meets (including Winters) will operate on a strict **pre-booked ticketing system via Order Whizz**. Spectator tickets can be bought per session rather than just full day passes.
- 6.5. The events manager will research options to implement live streaming to alleviate spectator capacity concerns.
- 6.6. Security personnel will be employed at Hengrove Leisure Centre and Millfield School Pool to protect event staff and volunteers.
- 6.7. Ongoing problems with Plymouth Life mean it will not be used for Regional Events in 2027. The Regional Chair and Regional Manager are scheduled to meet with the centre's management to discuss these issues and, hopefully, eradicate them for future use.

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1. **GL1 Leisure Centre:** Regional Manager Steve Williams is coordinating a meeting with GL1 management to resolve ongoing facility concerns (specifically regarding the slide).
- 7.2. **Catering:** The committee voted to recommend switching the meet catering at Millfield to Mary (who charges £10/head for full-day catering, including refreshments and baked goods) over Sonia (£7.50 for lunch only). This recommendation will be submitted to the regional Finance Committee.
- 7.3. **Martin's Law:** Lily raised queries regarding the upcoming anti-terrorism legislation. Libby Bell clarified that compliance with event security and baggage policies under the

law is the responsibility of the host venues (who are already public-facing and accustomed to high-capacity events with kit bags).

8. **Next Meeting Date:** Wednesday, October 7, 2026.

County Reports

Cornwall ASA

By Belinda Caslake

Most recently, we held our Rising Stars Summer Championships. This was a great success. Most of the clubs in Cornwall were able to take part.

Prior to that, we held our Junior Inter Club in early July. Disappointingly, only three clubs participated. Clubs that didn't attend either because the event clashed with surf lifesaving events or because they felt they didn't have enough swimmers to form a team. Rules had been reviewed, including allowing smaller clubs to join a team to make participation easier, but this made no difference.

Planning is underway for our County Champs. Dates have been identified and pools booked for 2027. We will be keeping the 17-and-over age group.

We plan to send a team to the Inter County Champs in October.

We are also planning for our CDP 26/27 programme.

Devon ASA

By Martin Walters

Sadly, I must inform the committee of the passing of Mel Jeynes, a former President of the County and the Officials Trainer for Devon before Esther. He has guided many Officials through their training over the years and will be greatly missed by both his club, Kingsbridge Kingfishers, and Devon County.

In June, the county held its Development and Sprint meet, which was aimed at non-regional swimmers. However, the numbers were much lower this year than usual. We are asking the clubs who did not enter why, and it was noticed that one of the clubs was holding its own Club Championships at L4 on the same date. We may have to look at the Licence level for this meet going forward, as it was very difficult to cover the required Official numbers to ensure the meet met licensing criteria, though this was met eventually.

Following the event, it was discussed at the County Management Committee about Meets in the County in general, and a proposal was raised for discussion with the RLO, and I had hoped to bring it to this meeting as well, but as I am unable to attend, it will have to wait until the September / October meeting. There is concern within the County regarding First Come meets, with the majority of clubs now looking to run these rather than a fixed closing date and then entries accepted. So they are currently meeting the 1 First Come Meet per year as it's different clubs.

Do we have any feedback on the regional events this year and on what is happening for the Winter 06 and Summer 2027 Championships?

Devon does hope that cost will not be the driving factor when swimmers and officials have to travel from the south of the Region to the north, and this will be discussed, including each of the venues being used. Feedback received has included the lack of hotels near Hengrove and the cost of parking. Clubs in Devon are looking forward to the event returning to Plymouth in 2027 and will be very disappointed if it doesn't.

Dorset ASA

By Andrew Smart

Dorset County ASA has participated in a Sports Built Facility survey run on behalf of BCP and Dorset County Councils, which included a review of facilities for swimming and other aquatic sports in the county. All DCASA clubs responded to the survey and DCASA has been asked to participate in the Steering Group taking place later this month (July 2027).

Since May 2025, Club Support (officials and volunteers) provided at each County Competition has been monitored and published to participating clubs afterwards. The outcome has been positive, with clubs that struggle to recruit officials providing more than their fair share of volunteers and other clubs providing an encouraging number of trainee officials.

The Dorset Graded Meet for 9-12-year-olds took place in May in Dorchester, with a welcome 35% increase in entries. The inaugural Dorset Masters Open Meet, which incorporated the Dorset Masters Championships, took place in June, with a World Record set by a competitor from Bracknell & Wokingham.

Dorset will again take part in the Swim England County Development Programme for the 12-year-old age group for the 2026/27 season. For the 2025/26 Programme, DCASA reverted to the previous format of three f-to-f camps, delivering Camp 2 as a half-day f-to-f with classroom and pool focus on 200IM instead of the online teach-in that had our rising 12s tuning out rather than tuning in. The f-to-f format will be continued for 2026/27.

Gloucester County ASA

By Lily Lowe

Planning for County Championships is well underway and going positively.

No significant changes had been made to the county executive at the AGM.

We have a coach development day coming up in September, presented by Ryan Livingstone.

This is open to all our County Coaches and is a repeat of last year which was very successful.

We are also starting the planning for our county development camps. Are we still restricted on the 200 IM selection criteria or are we able to widen the criteria as we see fit?

Another question concerned the upper-limit times for multi-club LL4 meets. There are region-suggested ULTs for L3 meets, and we think there may be a need for similar ones at LL4 meets to cap swimmers at appropriate developmental standards.

The county has been working with GL1 to help support it become more appropriate for competition, including funding for new lane ropes. Despite conversations and attempts to build positive relationships, Freedom Leisure and GL1 continue to cause issues for clubs running meets due to a lack of care and upcoming refurbishment plans. Currently, the air ventilation isn't working, meaning that the GCSC meet this weekend is at risk. They don't seem to understand the requirements for meet licensing and the fact that poor air quality/ pool temp, etc could lead to the loss of a license. They are also looking at building a flume as part of the refurbishment, which would remove a large portion of the spectator seating. The pool is used by many of the North Gloucester clubs to run meets and generate income; it is also used by the County for its short-course portion of County Champs, and by GB Aquatics for artistic and water polo comps. It would be great if the region could assist in applying pressure to GL1, helping them understand the severity of missing licensing requirements and the importance of meets for the financial health and swimmer opportunities of clubs within the region.

Somerset ASA

No Report Received.

Wiltshire ASA

By Sandra Yeoman

Things have been relatively quiet since the Regionals.

We ran our Development Gala for 10–13-year-olds at Salisbury in May. Entries are still a bit light, but the swimmers who attended enjoyed the event, and some good times were achieved. The highlight for the swimmers seems to be that we give medals to the top 3 and printed ribbons on a pin for 5th–8th. Not cheap, but for their first-ever County event, they seem to be appreciated. Qualifying times for 2027 have been sent out, and we are currently finishing the event pack for January.

We did not run a Wiltshire Open water event this year, but have been awarded medals for normal age groups and Masters from the Regional Event. Again, a popular move.

Competition Reports

Summer Championships 2026

A wash-up meeting was held following the three weekends of championships.

Overall, the weekends were a great success with a larger number of swimmers than in previous years.

Points raised and addressed for future Championships are as follows: -

- Adjustments made to conditions to cover spectator's behaviors

- Announcing of finalists and music playing during the distance events
- Ticket sales only for entry to the events therefore ensuring we don't go over capacity of the venues.
- Arrangement of lunch/refreshments to be made clearer to ensure volunteers, officials and coaches and TMs are aware.
- Security to be arranged for all venues
- Parking issues occurred despite having stewards- causing a delay in racing (TD decision) needs closer monitoring
- Expenses – being discussed

Venues for 2027: Millfield School and Hengrove Leisure Centre.

Winter Championships 2026

Conditions are in draft format we wish to continue with the success of the Summer Champs with the relevant improvements required following the Wash Up meeting

- Venue is Millfield
- Security has been booked
- Catering we are looking into changing dependent upon the two quotes we receive
- Capacity will be monitored closely with spectators only by prior ticket purchases. Ticket sales set up to cover Session by Session
- Area to be made for Para Swimmers on poolside
- Nicky to organize Officials
- Volunteers Rota to be set up
- An announcer needs to be sourced
- Volunteers from the Swimming Committee to be arranged who are willing to attend and assist with the running of the event

SESW Officials Secretary Report

2026 SESW Summer Championships

By Nicky Vause, SESW Officials Coordinator

A Technical Officials Manual was produced for each venue to help develop standardised operational procedures across the region, including event information.

All licensed officials and trainees were invited to support all 2026 SESWR events earlier in the year.

Sign-ups for the Summer Championships were initially slow until swimmer entries were confirmed and offers began to trickle in. Thank you to the regional team for following this up with clubs and via social media. All three weekends were well supported, and it was possible to facilitate mentoring opportunities across all levels of officiating.

Number of officials-

25-26 April Millfield Age Groups - 67

2-4 May Hengrove Youths / Para - 73

9-10 May Millfield Age Groups - 78

Post-event, all officials were thanked for volunteering and asked for any feedback on officiating.

Three responses were received, one regarding car parking which was forwarded to the regional team, another regarding duties allocated which was sent to the Technical Director and another asking when the expenses would be paid which I replied to.

SW officials at national/international events:

Aquatics GB Championships (London Aquatics Centre) 14-19 April – Fiona Wilkinson (Cornwall), Nicky Vause (Somerset).

World School Games (LAC) May – Dave Avery (Devon), Paul Robbins (Wilts).

Junior Para (Coventry) 13-14 June – Sue Gabriel (Cornwall), Nicky Vause (Somerset).

Regional Licensing Officer's Report

By Lesley Leffers, SESW Licensing Officer.

Licensing Overview

Licensing is going well. County Licensing Reps continue to be a great help in keeping the calendar from becoming too congested. My thanks go to them. Rosie Gordon – Cornwall, Martin Walters – Devon, Di Gibbs – Dorset, Keith Smith – Gloucestershire, Kelly Podbury – Somerset & Sandra Yeoman – Wiltshire.

The Region currently has 121 meets either pencilled in or Licenced for the remainder of 2026 with 171 meets completed. We already have 171 meets pencilled in for 2027, although a few of these do still need to be agreed with the County Reps. I am not accepting any dates for 2028 yet and will not do so until at least March of 2027.

I have 2027 County Dates for all but Devon County and the SWR dates for 2027 pencilled in, although I believe the SWR are still working on venues for their competitions so those are TBC. Late June and July seem to have been hit by some sort of meet overload/lethargy, with five meets having to be cancelled or downgraded due to lack of entries and/or officials. Having said that these two months were unusually busy and this could have caused the issue.

First come, first served meets (for discussion in AoB) continue to cause some counties problems, particularly in Devon, where they seem to cause more issues than in others, despite our one FCFS meet per club per year.

Devon County have asked for the below to be considered and agreed by the SWR going forward:

Below is a proposal from Devon County that was discussed and agreed last week, which we would like to proceed with from January 2027 for Meets Run by Devon Clubs in Devon. We are aware that you have the final say on this, but as it's a proposal we would welcome your feedback and advice.

- 1. No Meets will be licensed in the County if the County is running a Licensed Meet on the same date. This includes single club L4 meets.*
- 2. No L3 or L4 meets can be run as First Come meets.*

Rationale behind this:

- 1. Developments this weekend were down on numbers, and we struggled with Officials; a club in the County was running a L4 meet on the same weekend, which we wish to not be permitted going forward. We are aware that the club could still run an unlicensed meet on the same dates.*
- 2. We have limited pools capable of running a L3 meet, and by running the majority as FCFS meets, this is now limiting the opportunities for swimmers. These meets are often full within a few hours of entries opening, and, due to the small number of clubs with accepted entries, they struggle to secure Officials. Although they are currently licence compliant, it is often a last-minute achievement. It has now become the norm to hold an FCFS meet rather than having an open entry and accepting entries after the closing date. As a County, we feel these should be the exception, not the rule, and would want a very good rationale for why it had to be a FCFS meet.*
- 3. With the change in definition of a L4 meet, more could be planned and run which would upset the current balance of what we require for the benefit of the swimmers.*

This is not a decision the RLO can make. Having checked with SE Head of Licensing, only the Region can agree/sanction these sorts of changes. However, we must be careful that clubs in Devon are not subject to different Licensing rules from the rest of the Region, particularly since it is a type of meet that SE allows as an option.

Upper Limit Qt's for L3 Meets. It does seem that clubs are starting to understand the need to ensure L3 meets are for our slightly slower swimmers. Times should not be much faster than the SWR Summer QTs, allowing swimmers to qualify for the Regional Competitions but not allowing swimmers who are at the faster end of these competitions to enter and take up much-needed places for the true L3 swimmer. Suggested Upper Limit times are available and have been distributed by email to all promoters. On the whole, clubs have accepted this and are falling in line with the expectation.

Exhibition Swimmers – This term has come to us via Hy-Tek entry systems and is not something we will accept at our L3 meets. If a swimmer is too fast for the upper limit times, they cannot enter the meet under any circumstances. This includes 'Exhibition Swimmers', Time Trial-only swimmers, or swimmers who are too fast but are used to boost numbers at undersubscribed meets.

No Time entries are no longer accepted in L3 meets and are discouraged in Low L4 meets as well.

L1 & L2 Meets - There seems to be a lack of L2 Meets being held in the SWR, and it would be good for some clubs to consider running them at the appropriate time of year for qualification into both SWR & National competitions.

L1 meets are not a problem and overall are being run successfully at the correct time of year.

L4 Meets Change of definition - Level 4 Purpose: For the development of inexperienced athletes and those seeking to compete outside their own club environment. These include single-club events, such as Club Championships and Time Trials, as well as meets involving several clubs, such as Development Meets organised by Regions, Counties, or clubs and aimed at this level of swimmer. It includes meets which satisfy the Swim England definition of a "Low-Level Competition".

Times recorded: These are suitable for entry into County Championships, where acceptable to the County concerned, and into Meets at Level 3. Times are not acceptable for entry into Regional and National Events.

Pool Length: Only times set in 25 m or 50 m pools are entered into Rankings. Open to Club Train and Club Compete members as appropriate to the competition.

Events: Varied Range of strokes and distances is recommended

Age Groups: As at 31st December in year of competition or age on the last day of the competition. This date shall be the same for all age groups.

Minimum Age: as specified in Swim England Regulations appropriate to the competition. Swimmers being accepted to take part in multi-club meets must be at least 8 years old on the specified date, which would need to be the last day of competition. Single Club events can be any age with age on the last date of competition or 31st December. The meet should not have more than eight

Electronic Timing: recommended but not essential.

Officials: The Requirement for Officials has, for a very long time, said: Timekeeper/Inspector of Turns (start end) [1 per lane] That would have had the effect of putting the Timekeepers/Finish Judges in a 50 m event in a Long Course pool at the wrong end. It has been changed to finish end.

Licence Fee: 20 pence per accepted entry, or £25 per calendar year for single club events.

Paying Levy Fees – This is getting much better, and the majority of clubs are sending screenshots of timely payment. However, a few I am having to chase consistently; I point out again that I do not have access to the SWR Bank accounts so cannot see what has/has not

been paid. It is a requirement of the licensing agreement that clubs will provide proof of payment within 14 days post-meeting with all other documents.

Officials Returns – These should be returned on the Excel spreadsheet that can be found on the SWR website or requested from me. I use a formula to check officials, which saves me hours of checking, so I will not accept anything other than this form. A reminder also for Officials to load qualifications to their SE profile and then make the qualifications visible to all please. If you do not complete this process, I cannot see them and then must chase proof via the clubs. It is very simple and does not show any personal information if you follow the below –

Show Qualifications & Certificates

Please go to <https://www.swimmingresults.org/membershipcheck/>

Search your membership using your member ID

Click on - Member Options

Log in using your Member ID and Password

Click on - Online Membership System

Click on - Log in as Member

Click on - Edit Details

Click on - Data Protection Choices

Click yes in all boxes except the last four. If Disability does not apply, say no. You do not want any personal info such as address and email/telephone numbers showing, so say no.

Click Save

Officials' Claims for Reimbursement - As I am sure you know, the Government has now issued updated fuel rates for Taxed Road Vehicles, with the rate increasing to £ 0.55 per mile. I asked SE if Clubs/Promoters had to respond to this increase due to huge amounts now being claimed by some Officials staffing meets.

Response from SE Licencing

Subject to the Policy above, clubs can offer what they like. Many clubs pay 45p, but the fee is reduced to 20p if the Official has a swimmer at the meet.

The club have to offer whatever they think they need to get the Officials, helpers, etc., that they need.

The Policy spelt out in the requirements for Officials is clear – “A copy of the meet expenses policy must be made available to all officials at the point of invitation to allow an informed decision to be made on whether to volunteer.”

A good policy lays out mileage rates (with or without a swimmer?), meals included (for all, or just those doing at least two sessions?). Parking, hotels/accommodation will only be paid if agreed with the Promoter in advance.

Swim England are currently looking at the implications of the increase on staff expenses, and I have reminded them to bear in mind the effect on volunteer rates.

Disability – Para Swimming - Disabled swimmers should be invited to and accepted into all Licensed meets if requested to do so. All Meets should have an applicable Disability condition
Example: All swimmers must have an authorised SE/IPC swimming classification, a Certificate of Disability, or a Certificate of Exception. In addition, details of disability must be provided with entry. Please ensure you present a Certificate of Disability or Certificate of Exception to the Referee prior to each competition session; failure to do so may result in disqualification. Also state in your conditions whether you are awarding medals to Disability swimmers separately from the able-bodied category.

A suggested condition could be: - Medals will be given to the top three Para/Disabled swimmers based on British Disability Points. If there is only one entry in an event, the swimmer must match or better the entry time to be awarded the gold medal.

Development Programme Updates

By Stacey Millett, SESW Regional Club Development Coordinator

Regional Development Programme

The 2025/2026 RDP was a great success with 48 athletes engaged in two pool camps at Millfield school, they were held on 14th September 2025 and 1st March 2026.

We selected 24 male and 24 female athletes based on their 200m Individual Medley ranking position, within this we selected for 3 male and 3 female athletes have been selected based on their short course 200m Individual Medley time, this is inline with the selection criteria which states any exceptional Short Course Performance can be selected at the discretion of the lead coach.

The Coaching team were as follows:

Lead Coach – Rachel Aldington (Taunton School)

Skills Coach – Heidi Hine (West Dorset SC)

Skills Coach – Lee Harvey (Clevedon ASC)

Skills Coach – Ellen Maude (Wincanton SC)

Skills Coach – Andrew Dibble (Weston Super Mare)

Skills Coach – Paul Perry (Wells SC)

Skills Coach – Abigail Wales (Seagulls SC)

Skills Coach – Louis Joyce (Exeter City SC)

They will be supported by two Team Managers:

Gareth Jones (Okehampton Otters)

Andrew Kennedy (Salisbury Stingrays)

Weekend 1 – Lead Coach Report

Millfield School, Sunday 14th September 2025, 0845-16:30

Swim 1

Rachel led all 8 lanes through a butterfly and breaststroke development session with lane coaches supporting, ensuring that skills were preformed as prescribed and rewarding those who made great progress.

Coaches explored the technical, psychological and sociological techniques that were selected to facilitate:

- Behaviour management
- Growth Mindset
- Athlete ownership

Including – language choice to purvey high expectations, goal setting due to layered targets, lane management to facilitate athlete engagement.

Gym

Luke led the athletes through a body weight programme, focused on injury prevention and movement competency.

Screening

Luke ran a battery of tests to find areas of improvements for each individual.

Swim 2

Rachel has underwater footage of each individual completing a 100m IM. The lane coaches ran sessions for their groups based on IM development. When the swimmers receive their videos, they

have been tasked with using it as a conversation starter with their coach. They have been encouraged to ask questions about what they see.

Pre-Pool Planning

The athletes created videos / flash cards of pre-pool routines, including the 3 targeted exercises as prescribed following their screening.

Timelines

The athletes explored pre-race routines that could improve race-day performance.

Weekend 2 Millfield School, Sunday 1st March 2026, 0845-16:30

Highlights of the Welcome Meeting:

People develop at different rates throughout their teenage years; we want you to remain in the sport beyond adolescence. Today we get to see your 6-month progress. Selection to the programme MAY have been influenced by training and maturation, but progress reflects your commitment to daily habits.

Everyone in the race/sport has the same goal; they all want to win. Wanting it isn't enough. Wanting it doesn't make it happen. Think about your direction, rather than your destination. Start with where you are now. 1% better or 1% worse? Focus on trajectory.

"The person who is having fun is dangerous; when it gets difficult, they're way more likely to stick with it" James Clear. "I **get** to..." vs "I **have** to..."

"What can I do today to make life easier for future me?" Be aware of your brains' bias to find the most energy effective way. Is this the easy choice, or is this the choice that will help me to go faster on race day?

Swim 1

Rachel led all 8 lanes through a skilful warm up and a recap of butterfly and breaststroke drills and backstroke to breaststroke crossover turns. Lane coaches supported, giving individual feedback and praise.

Coaches were introduced to several pedagogical strategies, including **Think Partners, praising and modelling success, off-the-cuff adaptations, and strategies to support attention and listening.**

Gym

Rachel led the whole group through mobilisation and activation, linked to swim skills. The group split into 4, for exposure to four key movements (Pull, Push, Squat, Hinge) led by lane coaches. The sessions finished with fun core competitive activities

Swim 2

The lane coaches ran individual sessions to allow athletes to reinforce their IM switch turns. The squad came together to explore some dive start drills, then their stance and flight phase were videoed.

Dive analysis

Maria and Rachel showed the team how to use their dive videos, alongside documents from Off The Blocks, to analyse their dives.

Regional Distance Development Programme

The 2025/2026 Regional Distance Development Programme started in November with the first pool camp on Sunday 16th November at Millfield School, Street. The Open Water (Lake) session was on Saturday 2nd May 2026 at Lake 86 Cotswold Water Park.

Selections of 48 athletes (24 male and 24 female) based on 800m and 1500m pool times as detailed below to take into account different age groups:

- 12 – 14 years of age on 31st December 2025
- To reflect relative age, two selection bands will be implemented, with the aim of selecting equally between the two where possible.
 - Selection Band A – birthday between and including 1st January to 30th June
 - Selection Band B – birthday between and including 1st July to 31st December
- Additional selections, if required, can be made for either selection band from swimmers meeting the required minimum standard.
- The top 4 long course ranked swimmers per age and sex in **800m and 1500m Freestyle**
 - 4 male and 4 female 800m 12 years
 - 4 male and 4 female 1500m 12 years
 - 4 male and 4 female 800m 13 years
 - 4 male and 4 female 1500m 13 years
 - 4 male and 4 female 800m 14 years
 - 4 male and 4 female 1500m 14 years
- Times used for selection to the ROWDP must be taken from the Swim England national long course rankings, and be achieved between 1st November 2024 and 3rd August 2025
- Further selections can be made from fifth, sixth etc. ranked positions until maximum numbers are achieved. Where swimmers have an equal ranking, selections will be prioritised based upon the highest World Aquatics point score
- Any exceptional short course performances in the 800m & 1500m events can be considered at the discretion of the ROWDP Programme Lead / Head Coach

Pool session November

We welcomed 36 swimmers from the South West region to the RDDP at Millfield School. The swimmers were greeted by the team managers and coaching staff for the day.

The schedule included two swim sessions, along with pre- and post-pool activities. For some, this was their first experience with these specific protocols. We also incorporated Strength and Conditioning work, with a well-deserved lunch break in between.

The training sessions focused on swim drills to improve distance per stroke, alongside a test set of 10x100m @ 2 minutes to assess consistency. We also introduced Open Water skills in preparation for our upcoming camp at Lake 86, Cotswold Water Park.

Staff Team:

- John Ferguson: Head Coach
- Joel Howard: Skills Coach
- Andrew Stanford-Jason: Skills Coach
- Neil Oviatt: Skills Coach

- Gareth Griffiths: TM
- Helen Bristow: TM
- Laura Matthews: Skills Coach

Cotswold water park lake 86 June

Although attendance was slightly lower than anticipated with 28 swimmers, the day was a great success, and all participants thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We were based at the De Vere Hotel, which provided a comfortable and welcoming environment for the group. After our initial meet-and-greet, I led an open water briefing to cover skills not addressed in the pool session and to provide an overview of the day's agenda.

Upon arriving at the lake, swimmers were given the choice to use wetsuits. Given the comfortable water temperature of 24°C, most swimmers opted to swim in skins. The morning session focused on key open water techniques, including sighting, pack swimming, drafting, and turns. To provide immediate, high-quality feedback, our coaches were stationed on paddleboards and kayaks, remaining in close proximity to the swimmers throughout the session.

Following a lunch break at the hotel—which offered a welcome reprieve from the sun—we concluded the day with race practice and a distance swim. The day ended on a lighthearted note with the swimmers enjoying the chance to push the coaches into the water, a well-deserved reward for the team who had been on the water throughout the day. Overall, the swimmers had a fantastic time and took away valuable new skills.

Staff Team:

- John Ferguson: Head Coach
- Andrew Stanford-Jason: Skills Coach
- Neil Oviatt: Skills Coach
- Helen Bristow: Team Manager
- Laura Matthews: Skills Coach