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Resumption of Lifesaving Activities: Open Water Training

I am pleased to announce that, following careful consideration, Keynsham Lifesaving Club has decided to offer a limited programme of open-water training during the Autumn Term.

The safety of our members and volunteers is always our top priority. This means that these sessions will be different to the open-water sessions that we've run in previous years, as we have put measures in place to comply with the government's coronavirus guidelines. Please read this letter carefully – it contains lots of important information to keep you safe!

Open Water Training Sessions

These sessions are a great chance to put your lifesaving skills to the test in a real-life environment, supervised by our experienced team of instructors.

- Time: 5:00pm-6:00pm
- Venue: Bristol Avon Sailing Club, Mead Lane, Saltford, Bristol, BS31 3ER
- Cost: £5 / session
- Parking: Park behind the sailing club (drive through the wooden gate on the left, immediately after the clubhouse).

Coronavirus Precautions

The latest Government Guidance¹ says that "You can now exercise...with up to 5 other people from outside your household." and that "Social distancing guidelines should be followed between people from different households wherever possible. This means a distance of 2m between people from different households, or 1m plus mitigations (such as face coverings or avoiding face-to-face contact) where 2m is not possible."

To ensure your safety we've put in place a few simple precautions to comply with these rules:

- There are 6 places per session. These must be booked in advance.
- Please arrive promptly (but no more than 5 mins early) for your allocated session. At the end of your session, please leave promptly to avoid overlap with other groups.
- If the riverbank is crowded, it may not be possible to maintain safe social distancing from other water users. In this case we may need to cancel the session at short notice via text message, so please ensure we have a valid mobile-phone number and check your messages before you set out. Whilst this is understandably disappointing, it is a necessary measure to ensure your safety.
- To minimise the risk of cross-infection, there will be no toilet, shower or changing facilities available. Please use the toilet at home and get changed into your swimwear *before* you travel to the venue. You can then put your wetsuit on in the car park. On completion of the session, you should remove your wetsuit, towel yourself dry, and travel home in your swimwear (you may

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-phased-return-of-outdoor-sport-and-recreation> updated 19 Aug 2020.

want to bring a towel to sit on, and maybe a jumper or dressing-gown to keep you warm). Please *do not* get changed in the car park.

- Participants must maintain a 2-metre gap from other people at all times. On arrival at the venue we will have a quick (socially distanced) safety briefing, then we will walk to the river bank. You will each be allocated your own station (at a safe distance from other participants) and rescue equipment for your exclusive use.
- Parents or guardians must remain in attendance throughout the session. This is to ensure that you are immediately on hand to take your child home if they start to feel cold (remember: to minimise the risk of cross-infection there will be no shower or changing facilities available at the sailing club). To comply with the government's coronavirus guidelines, parents should remain in their cars at all times, so I suggest that you bring a book or magazine to read during the session.

Pre-requisites and Water Safety

No previous experience of open-water lifesaving is required; however participants must be at least 8 years old and have a good level of water fitness (participants should be able to complete a continuous swim of 100m on their front and 100m on their back, and be able to surface dive and tread water for 2 minutes).

Participants must wear a wetsuit, a brightly coloured swim hat, and lace-up trainers/wetsuit boots to wear in the water (*not* sandals because they'll fall off). Footwear **MUST** be worn at all times including in the water! Participants should not wear any jewellery or bring any valuables with them.

With a few simple precautions, swimming in open water is generally safe. There is always a small risk of infection associated with swimming in open water, but this can be minimised by a few common-sense preventative measures: cover open wounds with a plaster before entering the water, avoid swallowing the water, shower thoroughly after training, and wash your face and hands before eating or drinking. If you feel ill or develop flu-like symptoms up to 30 days after swimming in open water, you should take the precaution of seeing a doctor.

If your child wishes to participate in this trip, please book a place via our website (www.klsc.co.uk).

Questions

If you have any questions about the management of this event, please don't hesitate to give me a call to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

David Fielding
Chair
Keynsham Lifesaving Club