  

**OWS Safety Rules & Code of Conduct**

* Open Water Swim season with Stafford Triathlon Club will take place each year from May - September every Thursday 18:00 - 19:30 (weather and light permitting).
* No entry into the water will be allowed until the Desk & Waterside volunteer marshalls have completed the Safety Checklist.
* All swimmers will agree to adhere to Stafford Triathlon Club’s safety code and rules regarding open water.
* Each year all swimmers must complete and sign an Open Water Declaration Form and give it to the Registration Desk volunteers.
* Declaration Forms are retained by the Stafford Triathlon club for the season purely for safety reasons. If any of the details change it is the swimmers responsibility to notify the Safety Officer.
* All swimmers must be capable of completing 800 metres continuous swimming.
* All swimmers must wear a wetsuit at all times when in the water.
* All swimmers will wear brightly coloured hats (not white or blue) at all times when in the water. Swim hats can be purchased at reception at an additional cost. Tow floats are an acceptable alternative to caps and are at the swimmers discretion.
* All swimmers will carry a whistle while in the water, to call for help if in difficulty. These can be purchased at reception at an additional cost.
* Swimmers under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult and wear a tow float unless they have proof of proficiency signed by a parent/guardian & club coach.
* Each swimmer must register their name, emergency contact information and sign in with the Desk Volunteer before they enter the water.
* Each swimmer must pay at the registration desk before entering the water:
  + Stafford Triathlon Club Members £4
  + Non-Members £6
  + Accessories (cap / whistle) £3
* Each swimmer will be issued a numbered band. The band must be worn at all times and returned after exiting the water to the swim registration point.
* All swimmers must swim inside the designated area (yellow spiky buoys) and not enter into the water space of other watersport users or fishermen.
* **In the event that you hear THREE BLASTS of an AIR HORN, all swimmers are required to exit the water at the nearest point and make their way to the Swim Registration Point (Clubhouse). To ensure all swimmers are booked back in safely please do not leave the site before signing back in.**
* On entry / exit from the water and at the bottom of the reservoir there may be sharp and uneven objects. Please be careful when entering / exiting the water and avoid standing on the bottom of the reservoir.
* On exiting the water the first responsibility of the swimmer is to ensure they notify the Waterside & Desk Volunteers that they are out of the water.
* Swimmers will enter and exit the water at the designated location unless instructed to do so by the Waterside Volunteer Marshal.
* The Desk & Waterside Volunteers will advise you if there are any deviations from the normal procedures.It is the swimmers responsibility to inform the Desk Volunteers at registration if they have any relevant medical conditions such as Epilepsy, Asthma, Heart Conditions etc.
* Open water swimming can be a dangerous activity and as such there is a risk of drowning. Swimmers enter the water at their own risk. By swimming at Blithfield Reservoir, Stafford Triathlon Club, Blithfield Sailing Club and South Staffs Water do not accept any liability of death or injury.
* **If you are experiencing difficulty in the water you must roll on your back, raise one arm in the air, and sound your whistle.**
* Participants should swim in pairs or groups at all times.
* No diving, horseplay, throwing, pushing or dunking other swimmers.
* Do not deliberately approach or try to interact with the wildlife in, on or around the reservoir.
* It is the responsibility of the faster swimmer to overtake safely & courteously.
* When a coached session is taking place do not stop by the buoy adjacent to the water entry / exit, please swim straight through.

**For further information or clarification please contact your OWS Rep:**Fuchsia [openwater@staffordtriclub.co.uk](mailto:openwater@staffordtriclub.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.staffordtri.co.uk/coaching/swimopenwater](http://www.staffordtri.co.uk/coaching/swimopenwater)

**Social Media:** @staffordtriclub **| Facebook Group:** @StaffordTriMembers

