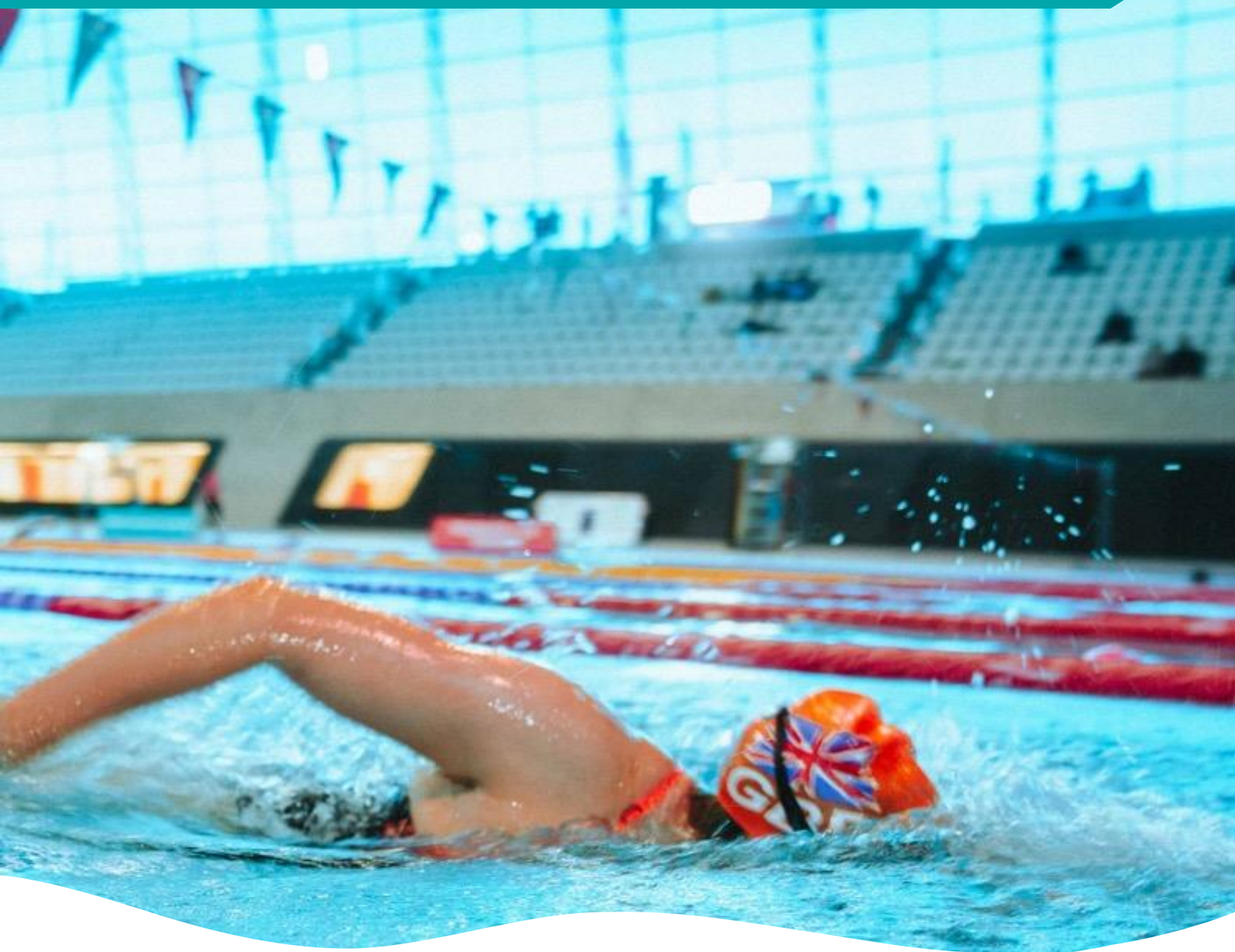


# MARATHON SWIMS



LONDON AQUATICS CENTRE

## SWIMMER GUIDE





September 2025

## Dear Marathon Swimmer,

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the #PoolofChampions, the London Aquatics Centre, on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for Marathon Swims 2025 on Saturday 8 November. We are once again almost SOLD OUT with just a handful of charity places and 1k Challenge places remaining.

This year will be our 7<sup>th</sup> year hosting a live event, so thank you very much for your support. We'd also like to thank the 11 individuals who are our amazing 'Ever Presents' – these swimmers have taken part in each of our previous live events.

This year also sees more charity entrants than ever before, so we wish you all well in your fundraising efforts and we hope to once again break our event fundraising record.

We set out to create 'London's marathon of swimming'. With the London Aquatics Centre, we have an iconic, stunning venue with Olympic heritage. With the marathon distances, we have epic, long distance swimming challenges. And thanks to you, our fantastic participants, and your supporters, you help create a wonderful supportive and uplifting race day experience. So, thank you all for your contribution.

Whether you are a new participant, or returning to claim a PB, to take on a longer distance challenge, to raise money for charity or to simply enjoy the experience of competing in an Olympic venue, we wish you all the best in achieving your goals.

Good luck and enjoy London's marathon of swimming.

## Diccon Loy

Marathon Swims Founder

# KEY INFORMATION:

**Event:** <http://www.marathonswims.com/>

**Social Media:**

Please follow us:

**Twitter/X:** @MarathonSwims

**Facebook:** Facebook.com/MarathonSwims

**Instagram:** @MarathonSwims

**Hashtags:** #MarathonSwims

**Dates:** **Saturday 8 November 2025**

**Key Timings:** Event open to public 07:45, event starts from 08.30, event ends 20.30

**Venue:**

**London Aquatics Centre, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford, E20 2ZQ**

The event entrance is on the main (upper) concourse on the side of the building facing the London Stadium. Only participants and registered spectators can access this entrance.

The venue is operated by Everyone Active. Parking at the venue is approx. £20 per day (if you use the ticket machines inside the venue). Public transport is recommended. Further parking is available at nearby Westfield Stratford Shopping Centre, some of which is 24 hour.

Stratford is the nearest station and is served by National Rail, Eurostar (Stratford International), London Overground, DLR, Central Line, Jubilee Line.

**Pool:** **The event takes place in the main competition pool**

**FAQs:** The [FAQs](https://www.marathonswims.com/faq) on the website: <https://www.marathonswims.com/faq>

**Rules and Etiquette:** Please read the event [Rules and Etiquette](#)

|    |                               |                                                                   |
|----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Marathon 10k (individual)     | 10 course loops of the pool                                       |
| 2. | Half Marathon 5k (individual) | 5 course loops of the pool                                        |
| 3. | 1k Challenge (individual)     | 1 course loops of the pool                                        |
| 4. | Marathon 10k (team of two)    | 10 course loops of the pool (shared between the two participants) |

**Format: MARATHON SWIMS**

You can see highlights of previous year's events on [YouTube](#). You can also see the format of the event in this [30 second animation](#)

We operate a full pool for the entire event. As one participant finishes their challenge, another will be started by our start team. The start times/waves are staggered throughout the day from 08.30 to 18:00. Your actual start time will depend on the speed of the swimmers in the pool at the time and the estimated completion time that you entered when registering for the event. Generally, the slower swimmers will have earlier start times, with the faster swimmers swimming later. Each swimmer has an individual start.



**What to Bring - Checklist****We recommend you bring the following items:**

- Swimming Costume ☐
- Goggles (maybe two pairs just in case?) ☐
- Water Bottle(s) - filled with water/energy drink (ideally brightly coloured or named so easy for you to identify in Transition). Any pre, mid or post-race drinks you require. ☐
- Watch (maybe helpful for timing your own swim) ☐
- Swim cap - you can buy a Marathon Swims swim cap at the event or bring your own or not wear one ☐
- Body glide (or form of lubricant) if required ☐
- Your race number - please make a note of it ☐
- Photo ID or bank card for identification ☐
- Towel(s) ☐
- £1 coin for use in lockers (coin is returned to you) ☐
- Mobile phone (remember you can leave it in the "Selfie Station" on poolside ready for that post or even mid race selfie!) ☐
- Cash/card - for buying Marathon Swims merchandise, food and drink post-race ☐
- Flip flops/Sliders ☐
- Post-event snack - please be aware that the LAC café is only open 9am to 4pm. There is a Pret a Manger open 7am to 6.30pm close to the LAC, and numerous caterers in Westfield Shopping Centre ☐
- If you are supporting a charity - something with their logo on for a great race day photo ☐
- Please read the event [Rules and Etiquette](#) ☐
- A BIG smile ☺ ☐

**MARATHON  
SWIMS**

## ON THE DAY:

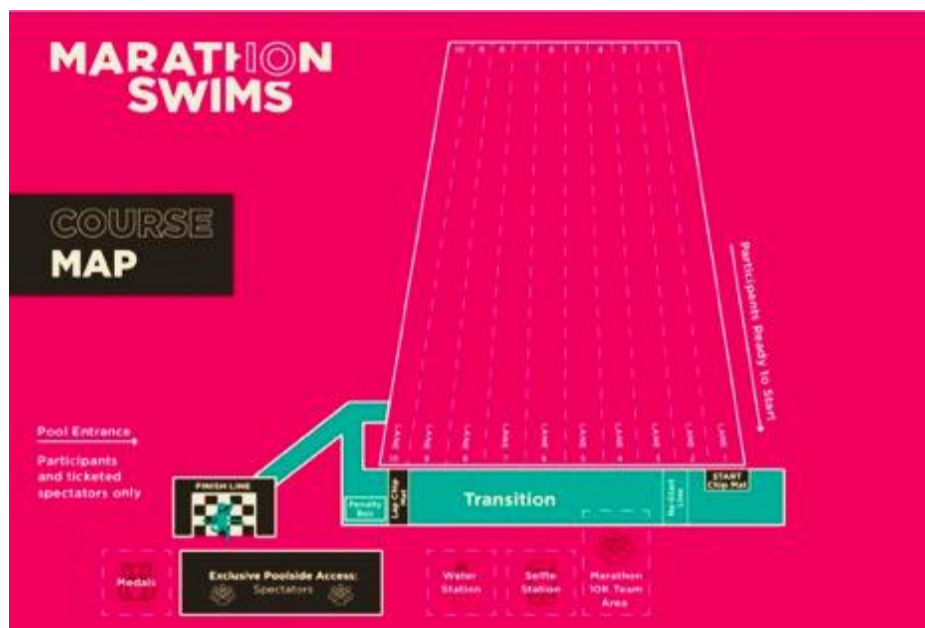
## MARATHION SWIMS

Please arrive between 45-60 mins before your start time. However, if your arrival time is 2-3pm or departure time of 4.30pm – 5.30pm, please leave additional time to get to or away from the venue due to a West Ham FC Premier League game at the London Stadium (kick off 3pm, end of match approx. 4:50pm).

Your start time listed is approximate.

All swimmers have an individual start, so the last swimmers to start in a wave may not actually start their swim exactly on the wave start time. All participants are chip-timed, so your time only starts when you have crossed the timing mat, which is located just before you enter the pool.

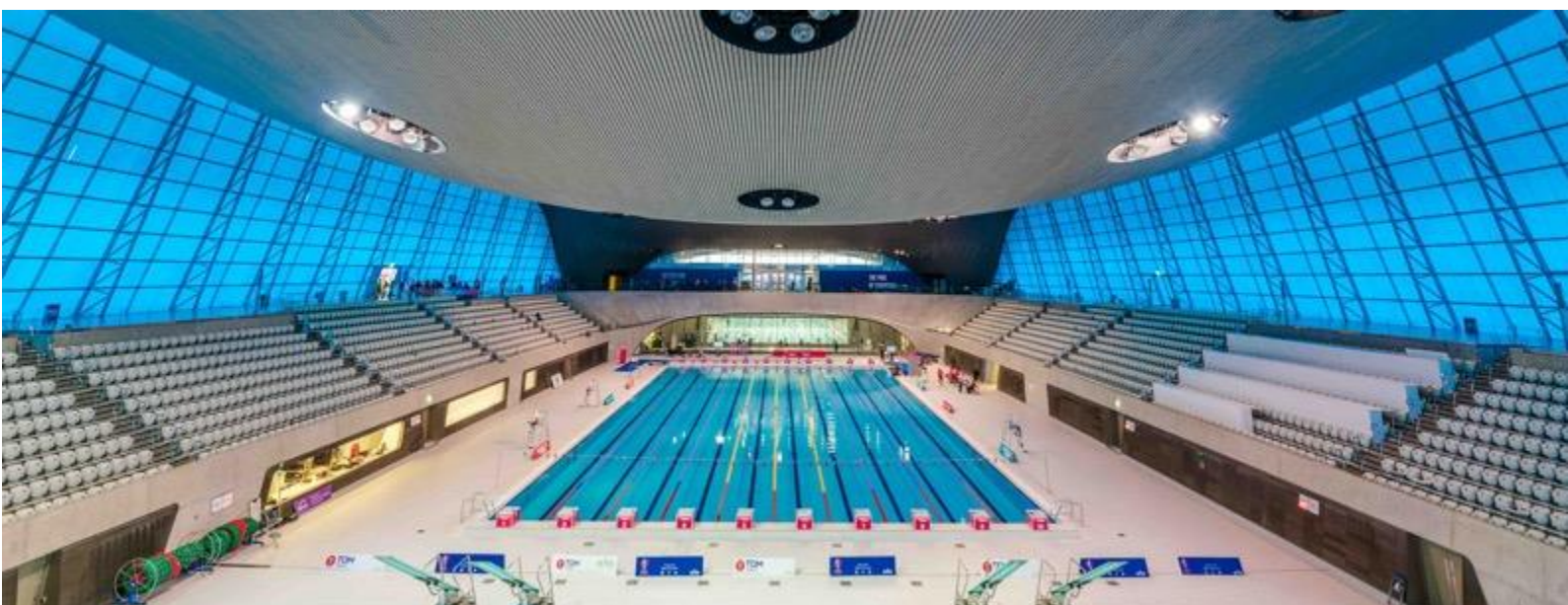
### Course map:



### The Swim Course:

The swim course is designated by the nine lane ropes separating the pool into 10 lanes. The Transition area is marked out with blue carpet to allow participants to progress through Transition in a safe manner (and run if desired). The route to the finish line from the exit point of the pool is also marked out with blue carpet.

The leaderboard is displayed on screens and will show how the top five positions in each distance (and gender) throughout the event.





## Start Times:

Marathon Swims start times and race numbers can all be found **online** from early Oct 2025. Start times range from 8.30am to 6pm. Slower swimmers have earlier starts, faster swimmers later starts.

The start times are approximate. Please arrive at the venue 45-60 minutes before your start time.

All swimmers are placed in appropriate start waves based on their swim speed, taken from their estimated completion time from registration. This is to ensure that all participants have the best race day experience as possible. After all, it is not much fun either constantly over-taking or being over-taken.

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Please know your race number in advance. Check out the start times list for your race number (from early October): <https://www.marathonswims.com/start-times>

Our chaperones will provide you with all the information you need about the event and escort you to the changing village. The Race Team will then take over on poolside. They will advise you on how to apply the tattoos, give you a race briefing and you'll be ready to start. Swimmers will be placed in a line, with the lowest numbers first. You will be started by the start team when there is adequate space to allow you to start. It may take up to 30 minutes for everyone in a wave to begin their challenge.

We recommend you take your water bottles onto poolside and place them on the tables provided. You can also bring mobile phones on poolside for that all important selfie! There are some areas to keep your phones, if required, however these are not monitored and we take no responsibility for any lost items. All items left are at your own risk.

## Race Pack Collection:

There is no pre-event mail-out. You will collect all event material on the day of your challenge. You will collect your race tattoos (numbers), participant wristband, spectator poolside wristbands (if purchased), race timing chip and any other purchases you made as part of your entry as you enter the London Aquatics Centre. You will not be able to collect any race materials before the day of your event.

Please bring a photo ID or a bank card as identification for your race pack collection and any food or additional merchandise purchases.



## Race Numbers and Timing Chips:

Each participant is allocated a race number. The race numbers will show which distance you have entered. Race numbers starting with a 1 are the Marathon 10k, starting with a 2 are Half Marathon 5k, starting with 3 are 1k Challenge and starting with a 9 are teams.

| The race numbers are allocated as follows: |           |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Marathon 10k –                             | 1001-1215 |
| Marathon 5k –                              | 2001-2110 |
| 1k Challenge –                             | 3001-3100 |
| Team 10k - Captains.                       | 9001-9032 |
| Team 10k – Team members.                   | 9001-9032 |
| Spare numbers                              | 9990-9999 |

The Team 10k participants are allocated the same number, but given different chips. This enables the team mates to distinguish the times of each of their swims.

The race timing chips are activated when you cross or go near the chip mats. There is a chip mat at the start of lane 1, end of lane 10 and at the Finish Line. Please make sure that at all (non-racing) times that you are poolside you stay well clear of the chip mats.

All timing tags should be worn on the ankle (NOT the wrist). Either ankle can be selected but the chip should always be positioned on the outside (ie not between your legs) for maximum swimmer comfort and tag readability.

The timing chips and ankle straps must be removed as soon as you have finished your swim and placed in the buckets provided. Charges (from the timing company) may apply for any swimmer not returning their chip.





## Marathon Swims Race Number Tattoo:

You will receive two tattoos in your race pack – these are to be placed on your upper left and right arms. Please read the instructions on the rear of the tattoo.

Our Race Team on poolside will be ready to assist.

Participants in the Marathon 10k Team event share the same race number as their team member, although have different chip numbers.

## Wristbands:

The following shows the wristbands and access for participants and spectators and need to be worn at all times:

| Wristband | Who                                   | Specific Access to                        |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| PINK      | Participants                          | Poolside – Field of Play during your swim |
| BLUE      | Spectators purchasing poolside access | Poolside – spectator area only            |
| GREEN     | Registered Spectators only            | No access to poolside                     |

## Race Rules and Etiquette:

Marathon Swims is a unique format and as such has created its own rules. We recommend that you read the race rules and etiquette to ensure a good event experience for all.

Time penalties may apply for any rule violations as issued by our Race Referees (e.g. overtaking in the final 5m of the end of the pool at which you change lanes).

Race rules and etiquette are online:

<https://www.marathonswims.com/event-format>

## Warm up:

Unfortunately, you cannot warm up before their swim in the main competition pool or diving pool. However, if you wish to warm up by swimming please purchase a standard entry to the London Aquatics Centre Training Pool on the day, subject to availability. Entry to the Training Pool can be purchased at the main swimming pool entrance (not the Event Entrance).

## Water and Food:

Please bring your own water (in a distinct water bottle) and food (small bars/gels) that you'll need for your swim. It is recommended that you bring your water/fluid in brightly coloured, easily identified water bottles, which will enable you to find your own bottle quickly in Transition. Top up water will be provided. You might also want to bring your own food for pre/during and post event. No gels or bars are provided by the organisers.





## Mobile Phones:

We encourage you to bring your phone poolside, so you can capture some great pre or post-race images, videos and share them on social media. We have hanging pockets and KitBrix bags to keep your phones in while you race. Left at own risk.

## Rests and Comfort Breaks:

You may rest in Transition. Your time spent in Transition is included in your overall time. Comfort breaks are permitted and the bathrooms are located in the main changing village. Please take care to avoid getting close to any of the chip mats if you are leaving or returning to the field of play.

## Number of laps:

It is your responsibility to count the number of course laps completed. However, the display screens at times do show the number of laps completed so far.

## Fast Wave Cut off times:

There are set cut off times for each challenge (4 hours 30 mins for the Marathon 10k, 2 hours 30 mins for the Half Marathon 5k and 1 hour for the 1k Challenge). These cut off times only apply for the fast (later) waves. If you are in a medium or slow wave and take longer than the cut off time to complete your challenge, that is ok, you will claim a medal and have a valid time recorded. All swimmers must finish before 20:30.

## Results:

Your results will be sent to you via text message after your swim. Results will also be available online throughout the event. There will be QR codes displayed around the event, which will take you directly to the results page, where you'll be able to find your result.

If you have entered the event previously, you can see your past results [here](#).

The provisional results will be available online throughout the event. The final results for the event will be displayed on the website from Monday 10 November 2025.

If you're super-speedy, you may be able to get yourself into our [Hall of Fame](#), where we list all record times and notable achievements.

## Medals:

The Marathon Swims medals are different depending on your distance. Only participants who complete their entire challenge will be awarded a medal. If a participant has entered the Marathon 10k and they only complete 5 course laps (5km) before retiring, this does NOT enable them to claim a Half Marathon 5k medal.

The 24 podium places - top three in each challenge, male and female and top three teams (any gender) - will receive a gold/silver/bronze 'M' inserts which fit inside their medal.



## Volunteers:

A massive thank you to our amazing team of volunteers who keep the event running.

We have some great roles for our Volunteer Race Team to do, everything from medal awarding, tattoo applying to registration.

Our Volunteers come from swimmers, family/friends of swimmers and from people who are keen to support the sport of swimming and/or our charity partner.

Volunteering doesn't mean working the whole day. We ask our volunteers to sign up to a 4 hour shift of their choosing.

## Volunteer Swimmers:

You can enter the event as a swimming volunteer. We have discounted places available in all distances (subject to availability). As a swimming volunteer, you'll have your Marathon Swims session booked, but you can also choose a volunteering shift before or after your swim.

Checkout our entry page for availability of **Volunteer Swim places.**

If you have purchased a Volunteer Swim place, as soon as you have your start time, you can then select the appropriate shift. We are happy to move any Volunteer Swimmer's swim start times, if required to make a preferred volunteering shift.

To register your Swimming Volunteer preferred time, please **click here.**

## Friends and Family Volunteers:

Dear friends and family, we know that supporting your family and friends doing an endurance event takes a lot of time and dedication. So, thank you for all the support you give.

By volunteering to support their challenge, you can have a great time meeting other volunteers and participants, seeing the action up close and contributing to the event experience.

To register for Volunteering at Marathon Swims, please **click here.**

## Next steps:

Once you or your friends/family have volunteered, we'll be in touch shortly before the event to confirm your role, start time and details of where to go and who to see.

We have our own dedicated Volunteer Manager to assign roles, facilitate breaks and support your welfare.

As well as some snacks and refreshments, you'll also be able to keep your Marathon Swims RACE TEAM t shirt.

Thank you once again for all your support.

## Post swim:

Post event, similarly to the warm up situation, you will not be able to swim down unless you purchase a swimming session from the main pool entrance for the Training Pool. Again, access to the Training Pool is subject to availability.

Participants will be asked to leave the pool and building from 8.30pm when the event is finished.

## Retiring from the race:

If you wish to retire from the race, please inform the Race Director or Race Referee immediately. If you retire you will not be awarded your medal.

## Marathon Swims 2026:

We hope to launch Marathon Swims 2026 very soon. We are selling out earlier each year, so if your friends want to enter, please direct them to register their interest [here](#):

## Marathon Swims Partners

We could not host the Marathon Swims event without our fantastic partners. So, a massive thank you to all our event partners and thank you for your support:

- Everyone Active are the Venue Partner for Marathon Swims
- Alzheimer's Society are our fantastic official Charity Partner of Marathon Swims
- Swim Quest are the official swimming holiday provider for Marathon Swims
- Wavecrest Swimming are the official swim training provider for Marathon Swims
- Outdoor Swimmer are the official swimming media partner for Marathon Swims
- KitBrix

everyone  
ACTIVE

Alzheimer's  
Society



SWIMQUEST®  
Swimming Holidays

OUTDOOR  
Swimmer

KITBRIX  
no fuss, just organized kit

## Marathon Swims Merchandise

If you purchased merchandise - it will be available for collection as you enter the event along with your event pack.

Some on-the-day merchandise sales may be possible, subject to availability.

Participants may only exchange t shirts on the event day. No exchanges will be possible at a later stage after the event.

## Spectators

Spectators will have the ability to access the designated seating area to watch the event, or if they or you have pre-purchased places they may be able to gain Exclusive Poolside Access. Exclusive Poolside Access is a cordoned off area of poolside. Spectators in this area will be able to get close to the action and take photos of the event/their friends. Access to this area is only possible with a BLUE Wristband. Spectators with poolside access can also access the designated spectator seating area.

## Catering

The London Aquatics Centre cafe is usually open from 9am to 5pm.

Smoking or vaping is not permitted in any area of the venue.









## Social Media:

Please give our Marathon Swims social media accounts a follow.  
Use #MarathonSwims and we'd love to see all your race day prep  
and hear about your story so far.

## More Great Events:

Finally, if you'd like to find out more about the awesome events that  
Participation Sport run, [register your interest here](#).

*Thank you once again for your  
support of Marathon Swims.  
Good luck with your race preparation  
and we look forward to you  
becoming a Marathon Swimmer!*