

Frequently Asked Questions



Q. Where exactly will this event take place and where do I park?

A. The Wildwood swim takes place in the stunning Ashdown Forest at Weirwood Reservoir just outside of Forest Row. Please use the postcode of the sailing club to find the exact location (please note parking may be on site or a 5-minute mini bus journey from the venue) Weir Wood Reservoir, Weir Wood, Forest Row RH18 5HT

Q. How much is it to enter?

A. Registration for each distance is £45 per person

Q. Is there a minimum sponsorship amount?

A. Yes, the minimum sponsorship for this event is £175 which could pay for three families and their child to each have a couple of hours splashing about safely in the hydrotherapy pool, accompanied by a specialist nurse. But don't worry, our friendly events team is on hand to offer hints and tips to support you in reaching your fundraising goals!

Q. Is the water cold?

A. The water in the reservoir we will be swimming in will be around 17- 20 degrees on our swim date, and while this may sound warm, it is actually around 10 – 12 degrees colder than your average swimming pool. Wetsuits are mandatory on this event, and will help to keep you warm, but we also strongly suggest acclimitising by getting in lots of open water swim experience before the day itself! Once you have signed up, you will be given a training plan for your 1km or 3/5km swim, as well as being invited to a closed Facebook group dedicated to Chestnut Tree House swimmers.

Q. Is the water deep?

A. The short answer is yes, the water is deep, and you will be unable to touch the floor with your feet throughout many points of the swim, this is why it is really important to get that training in before the event. There will be an experienced safety crew on hand in both kayaks and boats, as well as on land. The 1km beginners swim will also be 2 laps of a 500metre course, giving you the opportunity to stop and catch your breath half way if needed.

Q. is the water clean?

A. Weirwood Reservoir is a Southern Water site, and as such the water is frequently tested to ensure it is clean and safe.

Q. Is this a competitive event?

A. This event is not a race, and we want to create an environment where everyone is welcome.

Q. Will there be a mass start?

A. We have limited each time slot to only 50 swimmers, which means starts will be very relaxed and there is no pressure for everyone to begin their swim at exactly the same time.

Q. What safety support do you have in place?

A. We have an experienced water safety crew who regular run swimming activities at the reservoir and know the body of water very well. They will be out to support swimmers in both kayaks and a motorized boat. We will also have first aid service available on dry land.

Q. Do I need previous swimming experience?

A. We are here to support you every step of the way in preparing for your swim. You will need to be able to swim at least 500 meters in a swimming pool to be able to take part in the event, this is in order to keep you safe and to ensure you get the very most out of the event. We also recommend that you get as much experience in the open water as possible in the lead up to the event!

Q. How long will the swim take me?

A. The length of time the swim takes you very much depends on your own swimming speed, and there is no pressure to go any faster than you are comfortable with. However, as a guide, please see below we estimate

1 km swim	30 – 90 minutes
3 km swim	1 hour – 2 hours
5km swim	1.5 hours – 3.5 hours

Q. Is it laps? And if so, how big are they?

A. Yes, this event is set up as swimming laps. The 1km event will be 2 laps of a 500m circuit, and the 3km and 5km circuits will consist of 3 X1km and 5 X1km respectively. Should you decide that you wish to exit the water after 1 or more laps but before the end of your distance, this is not a problem. Please just be sure to let one of the marshals know upon your exit.

Q. Is there somewhere for me to get changed?

A. Yes, we are working with the local sailing club. So you will have access to indoor changing rooms and toilets.

Q. How do I train for this event?

A. Swim, swim, swim and get out there in the open water as much as possible (but be sure to stay safe and never swim outdoors alone.). We will also be offering training guides and recommended swim distances to achieve throughout your training time, as well as a closed Facebook group dedicated to Chestnut's Open water swimmers! We are here to support you!

Q. Do I have to wear a wetsuit?

A. Yes, wetsuits are compulsory for this event. But don't worry if you don't have one, we are working with a fantastic company Tri wetsuit hire, where you can book a wetsuit for the event day to pick up when you arrive, or alternatively rent a wetsuit from them for the whole season to cover your training time too! Visit www.triwetsuithire.co.uk/collections/event-hire-pages/products/chestnut-tree-house-events We recommend using a wetsuit that is designed for open water swimming, and not a surf wetsuit, however it is your choice when it comes to what is most comfortable for you.

Q. How much does wetsuit hire cost?

A. The cost of wetsuit hire will depend on how long you wish to hire the suit for. One day hire for the event will be £25 and you will be able to collect and return the wetsuit at the venue. For more options on rental duration and costings visit Tri Wetsuit Hire's website www.triwetsuithire.co.uk/collections/event-hire-pages/products/chestnut-tree-house-events

Q. Do I need to wear a swimming hat?

A. A commemorative swimming hat will be provided to you on the day to wear for your swim, and for you to keep as a memento after the event.

Q. What swimming stroke can I use?

A. We want you to feel comfortable and to really enjoy your swim, so please use the stroke that feels most natural to you. This is not a race, so breaststroke, front crawl or a combination of both will work perfectly!

Q. What facilities are available at the venue?

A. Weirwood Sailing Club are kindly supporting the hospice on this event, and have a range of facilities available on site including;

- Showers
- Toilets
- Changing rooms
- Hot drinks and snacks available
- Green space for your family to watch and enjoy the day

Q. What time will I be swimming?

A. Your swim time will be sent out to you nearer the time and will depend on which distance you have chosen. We are keeping all time slots to a maximum of 50 swimmers to give you the best and most personal experience possible.

The first slot for those swimming 3 or 5km will be around 8 am, with the 1km swims starting at 12 30pm and 3pm. If you prefer a specific timeslot please indicate on your sign-up form.

Q. Can I bring my family and friends along to watch?

A. Yes definitely! Supporters only add to the excitement of the day, so please do bring along your friends and family to watch you swim. There will be spaces for families to sit and watch, and opportunities to buy refreshments and some games for children to enjoy too!

Do you have a question that we didn't answer here?

Please email the events team at events@chestnut-tree-house.org.uk and we will try our best to help!