



# OPEN WATER SWIMMING SAFETY CODE



## Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers



**Make a risk assessment before every swim** - identify hazards, consider the risks and your own abilities, and take precautions to avoid harm.



**Wear appropriate swimming attire** for the conditions – well-fitted wetsuits offer both warmth and buoyancy.



Always carry a **means of calling for help**.



**Alcohol/drugs/prescription drugs can reduce coordination**, impair judgement and reaction times, and affect your body's response to cold.



**Make sure you know where you can get out** before getting in.



**Check for any signage or flags** which could warn you of **potential risks**.



**Be aware of other water activities** that may pose a threat to you, such as powered craft and angling.



A **brightly coloured swim hat** and a **tow float** can help you to be seen.



**Stay close to shore unless** you are an experienced cold water swimmer.



If you begin to **feel unwell at any point**, **let somebody know** and leave the water immediately.



Cover all cuts, shower after swimming and to **try not to ingest water whilst swimming**.



## Stay Together, Stay Close

- Swim with others if possible. Always let someone know where you are going and when you will be back.
- If you experience cold water shock, float on your back until you can control your breathing. If you have a tow float, use it to help you float
- Lean back, extend your arms and legs, keeping nose and mouth clear from the water.
- Call for help and then swim to safety.



## In an Emergency, Call 999

- If you see another swimmer in trouble, do not put yourself at risk. Call 999 or 112.
- Tell the person to stay calm and float.
- Look for a throw line or life ring to help whilst you wait for emergency services.