



Wild Wye Swim Sunday 17 Sept 2023



We look forward to welcoming you to Symonds Yat on Sunday 17th September for the 4th Wild Wye Swim. This is organised to raise money for the Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA) - the Lifeboat and Inland Search and Rescue Organisation which covers this area.

We are grateful to Lucozade Ribena Suntory (based in Coleford) for supporting this event.

Please note that this event takes place through private land and private owned fisheries. This is an opportunity to have an organised and safe swim along this route with the permission of the landowners and fishery owners. SARA has permissions in place which would not normally apply outside of this event.

Event HQ

The Event HQ is at Huntsham Bridge HR9 6JN. This is on the north bank of the Wye, close to the B4229 road from Whitchurch on the A40 to Kerne Bridge, on the minor road heading to Symonds Yat East. This is where all the swims will finish.

You should park at Event HQ, and here you will find registration and toilets. Hot drinks will be available. There should be adequate parking at the field. 4x4 vehicles will be available if stuck!

The key timings are as follows:

- 0800 Registration opens - at Huntsham Bridge
- 0900 Bus shuttles to the starts begin - see timetable below
- 1130 1km Swim: Walk to the Start
- 1200 1km Swim Start

We estimate the first 7km swimmers will finish around 1030; the first 10.5 km ones around 1130.

The Key Points!

- Ensure that your swimming kit has been Checked, Cleaned and Dried before you arrive (see p9).
- Aim to Register 45-60 mins before your bus (see below), and after 1030 for the 1km, not earlier.
- Your cap colour relates to the your distance, the electric tag goes on the opposite wrist to your watch, and the sticker goes on the bag goes with you to the start (we bring it back to the finish).
- There are toilets at the Event HQ but NOT at the Swim Start areas.
- Tow-floats ARE allowed.
- Skins Swimming (without a wetsuit) IS allowed, please complete the extra disclaimer and hand it in at your start (not at Registration)

And it's not a race, so please try to enjoy it!

Bus Timetable

7k Swimmer Numbers		10.5km Swimmer Numbers	
1201-1241:	0900	1-41:	1000
1241-1281:	0915	41-81:	1030
1281-1321:	0930	81-121:	1050
1321-1361:	1015	121-161:	1115
1361-1401:	1100	161-200:	1130





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Registration

Please aim to Register 45-60 mins before your bus (see above), and after 1030 for the 1km, not earlier. This to reduce congestion and queuing.

At Registration you must hand in a completed Disclaimer Form (see Page 10) and will receive a wristband with your Swimmer Number, a numbered electronic wrist tag, a coloured swimming cap, and a numbered sticker.

You will also have to sign to confirm you have checked, cleaned and dried your swim kit, to reduce the risk of bio-contamination.

There will also be an 'info desk' for any changes of distance etc. A small number of entries on the day will also be available on a first-come, first served basis.

You will also be asked to sign a separate form to confirm that you have checked, cleared and dried the swim kit you will be using.

The 10.5km and 7km Swims

Please ensure that your swimming kit has been Checked, Cleaned and Dried before you arrive (see p9). A series of buses will ferry swimmers to the 10.5km and 7km Swim starts. Please get on the correct bus for your swim number (although if you are swimming with friends and you have different bus times, please just all get on the earlier bus, so don't worry too much about the bus details).

At registration you will be given a sticker with your Swimmer Number, put that on a small bag and take that on the bus. At your swim start you can place your footwear and other clothing in the small bag. This will be brought back to the baggage zone at HQ for collection after the finish.

Each start area may be in use by the public and by commercial canoe companies. This is particularly the case at the 10.5km start at Kerne Bridge. Here you must join the queue, if there is one, to get to the water and please no more than 10 swimmers between each canoe. It won't take long and then you can get in the water.

Please follow the direction of the marshals and keep out of the way of other users, so far as possible. There are no toilets at the start areas though there is the 'Paddle Cafe' at the 10.5km start.

At each start you can start when you are ready, you just need to 'beep' your wrist tag with a marshal before entering the water. The 'Beeper' will be at the top of the steps down to the river.



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Except for emergencies, the only entry and exit points from the river are the two start areas, the two refreshment areas, and the finish.

The river is mainly deep enough to swim without interruption, though sometimes breaststroke might be the only option. If the water level is low, in the 10.5km swim there is a short area of shallows after about 2km. There is also a short area of shallows about 1km before the finish. It may be most comfortable to float through these feet-first, aiming for the fastest-moving water. These areas will be marshalled. The 1km after Lydbrook (as far as the Youth Hostel on the right) is also pretty shallow. The first aid point is after this shallow section. At Lydbrook itself the 10.5km swimmers will be directed to keep right, in the deeper channel, so far as possible.

Basic refreshments (fresh water, coke, Lucozade, bananas) will be provided on River Right at the Youth Hostel, after Lydbrook, (ie after 4km) for the 10.5km swimmers, and on River Left at the 'Halfway House' refreshment area before Yat Rock, on a raft in the river. Please avoid bunching up at these, and be aware that your hands may be contaminated from the river water. There will be a First Aid point at both these locations. There will also be a toilet at Halfway House. There will be coloured buoys upstream of both refreshment points to indicate that you are close! NB Use of the refreshment points is optional - they are not 'checkpoints' and you do not have to stop.

Wetsuits are optional. If worn, they must be clean (see below). Those who wish to swim without a wetsuit must hand in an additional disclaimer at their Swim Start. There may well be fishermen using the bank, please respect their need for quiet. In most cases they will have paid to be there. We need their consent to operate the event, so your cooperation is appreciated.

Please note that the water in September may be 12-14 degrees, depending in the weather, and heavy rain can drop the temperature in a few hours. If you get cold, it can be a long way to the finish and there are no easy short-cuts back to the finish if you withdraw.

The 1 mile Swim

Please ensure that your swimming kit has been Checked, Cleaned and Dried before you arrive (see p9). The 1mile swimmers will be walked to the start, in a single group departing at 1130. At registration you will be given a sticker with your Swimmer Number, put that on a small bag and at the swim start you can place your footwear and other clothing in the small bag. This will be brought back to the baggage zone at HQ for collection after the finish.

Accompanied juniors are allowed to swim this course, 1:1 with an adult (18 or over). The adult must remain with the junior at all times. Wetsuits are not required for this 1mile swim. There is a short area of shallows shortly after the start. It may be most comfortable to float through this feet-first, aiming for the fastest-moving water. This area will be marshalled. After that it's all nice and steady!



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First Aid and Emergencies

SARA will be providing safety and first aid cover. The river will have marshals approx every 1km, all of whom will have radio contact with HQ, and water rescue equipment. There will be a number of powered craft, which will also have radios, and there will be a number of kayaking 'marshals', these will have whistles for raising alarm if necessary. The course will be 'swept' after the last swimmer.

In the case of difficulty swimmers should attempt to reach one or other bank, and stand up. If not possible, lie on your back and raise one arm. Swimmers are asked to look out for each other, escort anyone in difficulty to the bank and if necessary attract the attention of a marshal.

There will be a number of yellow and orange buoys in the river; these are for the identification of areas in case of an emergency.

First Aid points will be located at the Youth Hotel after Lydbrook, at the Halfway House refreshment point, and at the HQ (i.e. Finish). The primary ambulance RV point is the HQ. First aid points will have a good supply of blankets, for swimmers who withdraw, but such swimmers may need to remain at that location for a considerable time before transport is arranged back to Event HQ. They will be required to wear a mask.

Swimmers must beep themselves 'out of the water' at the finish. Swimmers should not abandon the swim without informing a marshal of their Swimmer Number - anyone doing so will not be permitted to enter again.

The Finish, Timing, Results, Prize-Giving

The Event Finish is at the top of a short bank. Contrary to popular belief, this is not a vertical cliff (far from it!) although after 2-3 hours of swimming it might feel like it. Ropes will be positioned to help you to walk up, and SARA team members will be available to assist you up.

Swimmers must beep themselves 'out of the water' at the finish and place their timing chip in a bucket.

There will be cups of coke at the finish, to swill our your mouth after the swim. We recommend that you do not drink water from the river and that you thoroughly wash and disinfect your hands prior to eating or drinking after being in the river.

This event is intended as an experience and for many as a challenge. It is not a race, and there will not be any timing, results or prize-giving. All swimmers who complete their distance will receive a memento.

A good variety of refreshments will be available at the HQ area, including basic hot food for sale after the swims.



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Looking after the Environment

The event takes place in the beautiful River Wye, in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the Wye Valley AONB) and much of it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is also an important commercial fishing area. We therefore ask all entrants to abide by the following guidelines provided by Natural England:

- Check, clean and dry all wetsuits in fresh water before use, to prevent any cross contamination from others areas. There are some particularly persistent creatures like Killer and Demon Shrimps which are in neighbouring catchments and not yet in the Wye so we don't want them to spread. See p9.
- Use only the designated entry and exit locations from the river. In particular, at Lydbrook the only entry and exit point is the steps, downstream of the shallows. At the finish, please be guided by the marshals up the marked path. In both these locations there are areas of Japanese knotweed which we need to avoid.
- Avoid swimming in shallow areas and close to the banks, which is where salmon may be resting.
- Avoid walking over gravel areas. NB The dry and wet gravels of the River Wye are very important for many invertebrate species which are prone to disturbance and trampling. A recent survey carried out by Buglife showed how the gravels trampled by animals or canoeists were significantly reduced in invertebrate quality.
- Do not litter. Bins and spare bags will be provided at the refreshment areas.

Spectators

Spectators are welcome at the Swim Starts, and can then easily watch the swim from much of the bank. Please note that at Lydbrook (7km start) spectators will be asked to park in a designated car park approx 200m from the start location, to avoid congestion. This will be marked.

At the 10.5km start there is a small cafe - the 'Paddle Cafe' with riverside seating.

There are public footpaths alongside the river for most of the way, including the Wye Valley Walk. The best way to follow the whole course is on the right bank, ie opposite to the 10.5km and 7km starts. The old black railway bridge at Lydbrook has been repaired and is now a very convenient place to watch swimmers go past underneath; this is about 300m away from the nearest parking, which is just before the road from Lydbrook turns left and starts to climb to English Bicknor.

Please note that the footpaths are on private land; there is little direct access from the footpath to the river itself. Please do not litter!

There may well be fishermen using the bank, please respect their need for quiet.

The finish is arranged to be spectator friendly, and the last section is visible from the HQ field area. Spectators should not use Huntsham Bridge, which is very narrow even for cars!

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The Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA)

SARA is a Lifeboat and Inland Search and Rescue organisation. SARA is entirely manned by volunteers who are on standby 24/7/365, and are often called out at anti-social hours, in response to 999 calls to the Coastguard, Police, Fire or Ambulance Services. SARA is perhaps best known for providing the declared lifeboat service to the tidal Rivers Severn, Wye and Usk, and parts of the Bristol Channel not covered by the RNLI.

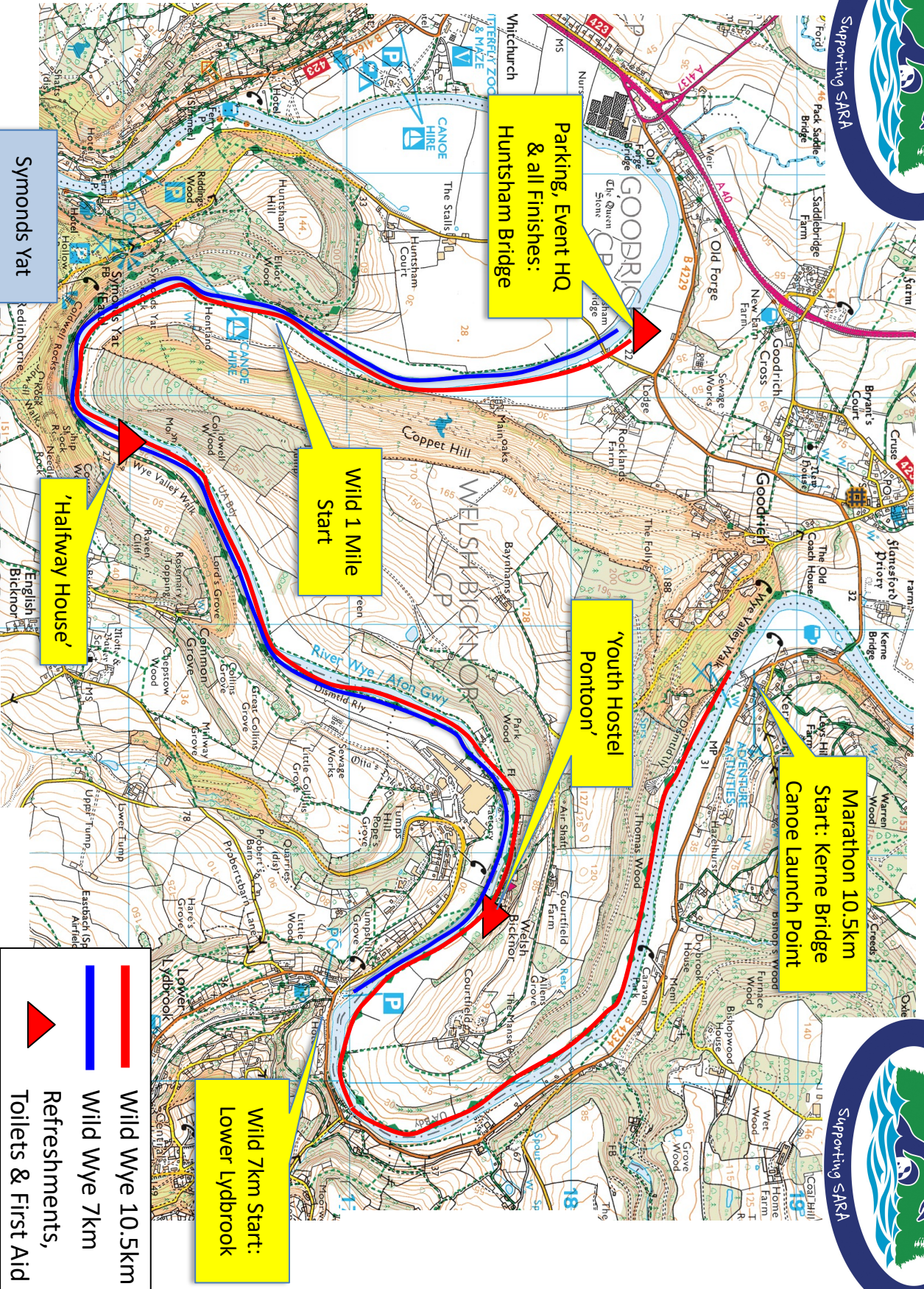
SARA is not directly funded by any central or local Government agencies and depends completely on donations to fund its operations. Please see www.sara-rescue.org.uk for more information, and you can follow SARA's updates on Facebook (facebook.com/severnrescue) and on Twitter (@severnrescue). SARA is a Charity CIO, No 1193634.

Your entry fee forms the largest proportion of the funds raised, but any further efforts to support us with donations or sponsorship large or small for your swim are greatly appreciated. However, unlike some other events, sponsorship is not compulsory and we are happy to see you either way.



SARA on Exercise on the River Wye at Tintern

Wild Wye Swim

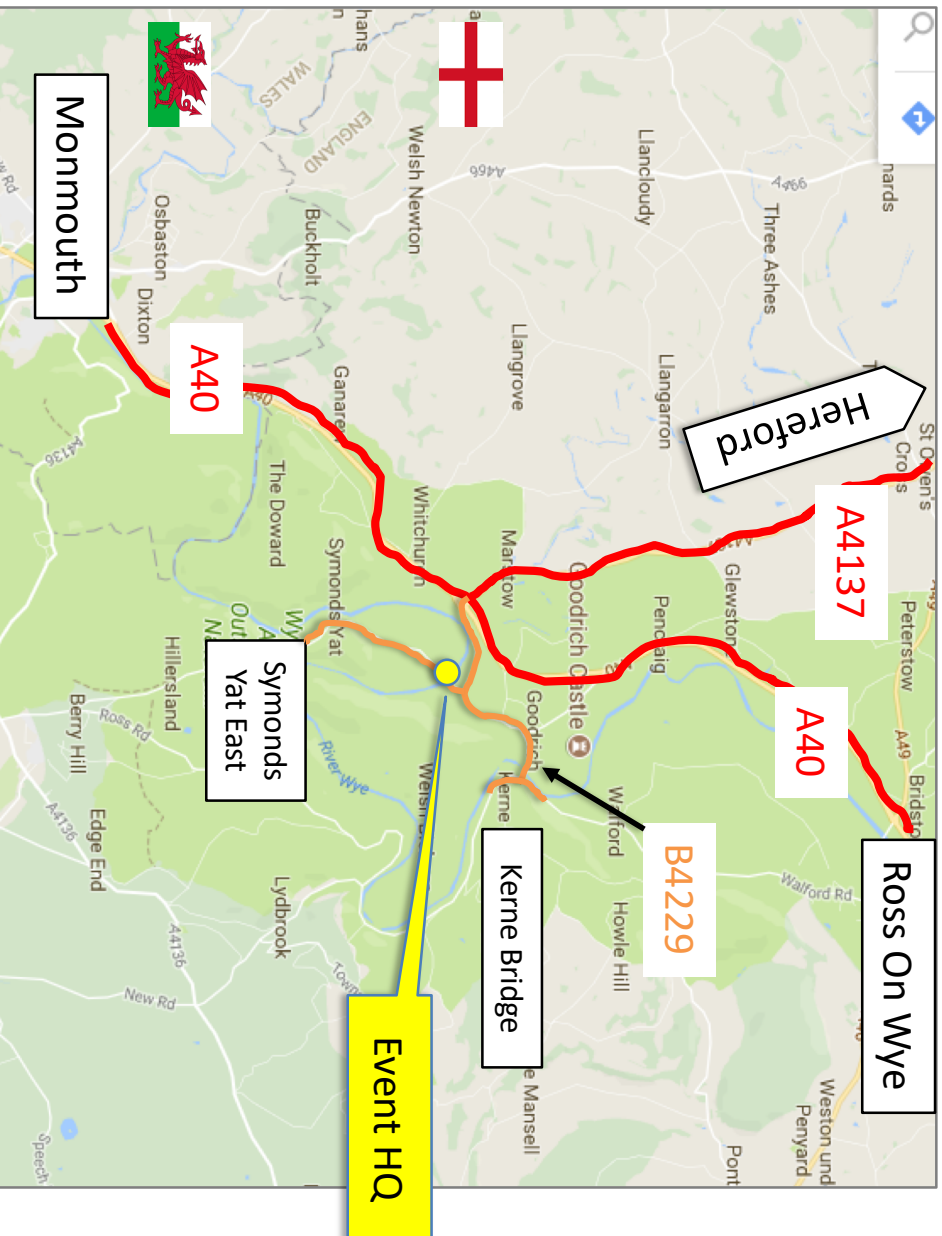




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How to Find Event HQ

(Huntsham Bridge, HR9 6JN)



STOP THE SPREAD



Are you unknowingly spreading invasive species on your water sports equipment and clothing?

Invasive species can affect fish and other wildlife, restrict navigation, clog up propellers and be costly to manage. You can help protect the water sports you love by following three simple steps when you leave the water.

CHECK

Check your equipment and clothing for live organisms - particular in areas that are damp or hard to inspect.

CLEAN

Clean and wash all equipment, footwear and clothes thoroughly. Use hot water where possible. If you do come across any organisms, leave them at the water body where you found them.

DRY

Dry all equipment and clothing - some species can live for many days in moist conditions. Make sure you don't transfer water elsewhere.

For more information go to www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry



SARA



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An impression of the Course...



The 'Black Bridge' just below Lydbrook, which once carried the Monmouth-Ross Railway over the Wye and into a tunnel.
Looking up at Yat Rock, from the Halfway House refreshment point area
(on a very cold morning!)



Looking down from Yat Rock, towards the 1km Start



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Swimmer No:

Participant Disclaimer & Next of Kin Details

Please be aware that the River Wye is a natural river with changing depths & currents. There maybe hidden/ submerged objects which could be sharp and may cause personal injury. Examples could be rocks/fallen trees and waste debris.

Although every effort has been taken to identify such risks, please be aware that it is your responsibility to assess your surroundings at all times. You must use defined access / exit points - these are for your safety.

- All swimming equipment must be cleaned, dried and checked before use
- No alcohol or unlawful drug use is permitted
- Numbered wrist band, wrist tags and Event Swim caps must be worn
- You must follow the event course at all times and follow any directions given by event officials
- Ensure that if you are reliant on regular medication, it is available at the refreshment points. We will arrange this if it is provided to us at Registration. Please describe details below.
- If at any point you want to retire, you must notify either a marshal or a safety crew member
- Under 16 years of age entrants in the 1 mile swim must be supervised by a suitable adult at all times. Ratio = 1 under 16 to 1 adult.
- We recommend that you do not drink water from the river and that you thoroughly wash and disinfect your hands prior to eating or drinking after being in the river.
- Power driven emergency rescue boats will be operating in the water during this event.
- The event takes place in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the river is a SSSI. Please be aware of other river users such as canoes, pets and fisherman, and respect all other users

By signing this disclaimer you also confirm that you are physically fit to participate in this event and understand that the water may be cold!

Your name

Your Signature

Date:

Details of any medical conditions
of which the organisers should
be aware:

Next of Kin Details

Name

Relationship to you

Contact number

Contact number 2



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Disclaimer: Swimming without a Wetsuit ('Skins Swimming')

Please be aware that the river depth and current vary. The water can be quite cold in places, and the swim can take up to 3 hours.

Swimming without a wetsuit is permitted for experienced open water swimmers

I agree that:

- I am confident that I can complete this event without wearing a wetsuit and without requiring support
- I have swum at least one mile in open water without a wetsuit in the past 2 months
- I understand the risk of not wearing a wetsuit, in particular that I may get cold and that I will not be naturally buoyant.
- By signing this disclaimer you agree with the above statements

Your name

Your Signature

Date:

**NB This form is to be handed in at your Swim Start,
only if you are swimming without a wetsuit**