

# Session 17

## Swimming promotion and policy in Birmingham

Andy Stead – Birmingham  
Wellbeing Service



# This is Birmingham

## THIS IS BIRMINGHAM:

- The second largest City population in the UK of 1.1 million that is growing at a rate faster than the national or regional average, and a significant rise in the number of residents born outside the UK
- A population which is younger than average – 25% under 16 years and 46% under 30 years
- Access to a working population of over 4 million people
- As a whole, the 10th most deprived Local Authority in England
- 51% of the population are located in the most deprived 20% of wards
- There is a broad ethnic population mix, with around 40% non-white
- There are nearly 600 Parks or Open Spaces across the City
- Birmingham has a major sports event programme and legacy opportunity

## HEALTH GUIDANCE:

- Adults should have at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity (or 75 minutes of vigorous) aerobic activity each week
- Adults should have muscle-strengthening activity on at least 2 days each week
- Children should be physically active every day for at least



## THE CHALLENGE:

- 52% of adults are considered to be inactive (doing less than 30 minutes of exercise each week), with over 80% not reaching 3x30 minutes of exercise each week

52%



- 26% of Birmingham children are overweight or obese when they start school, rising to 40% by the time they leave primary school

- Adult diabetes levels are above national average with an estimated 1 in 10 adults diagnosed



- There are approximately **200,000** people registered with a disability in Birmingham, yet only 13.5% are physically active at least once a week

- There are significant health inequalities and life expectancy variation between the most and least deprived communities

## THE IMPACT:

### PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH

- Obese people are over ten times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes; regular exercise is twice as effective as medication in prevention
- There is a 40% reduction in the risk of cardiovascular disease from being regularly active
- Regular exercise reduces risk of dementia by 2-3 times, compared to least active
- Obese people have a 55% increased risk of developing depression over time; 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity each week is effective at treating mild and moderate depression
- 90 minutes of moderate intensity activity each week can reduce the risk of all-cause mortality by 14%



### EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

- 80% of employers value volunteering on a CV, and 9 in 10 employers believe it to have a positive effect on career progression
- 1 in 4 adults in England volunteer
- 1 in 5 of all volunteering is in sport and recreation



- Employers aren't satisfied with the skills of school/college leavers – participation in sport and physical activity is shown to improve earning potential, leadership skills, teamwork, confidence and resilience



- Childhood membership of a sports club increases likelihood of being active as an adult by 3-4 times
- Physical activity programmes at work can reduce absenteeism by up to 20%

### SOCIAL COHESION

- 7 out of 10 teenagers believe antisocial behaviour occurs because young people are bored; sport and recreation can prevent boredom, teach important life skills and divert young people from crime and foster social inclusion

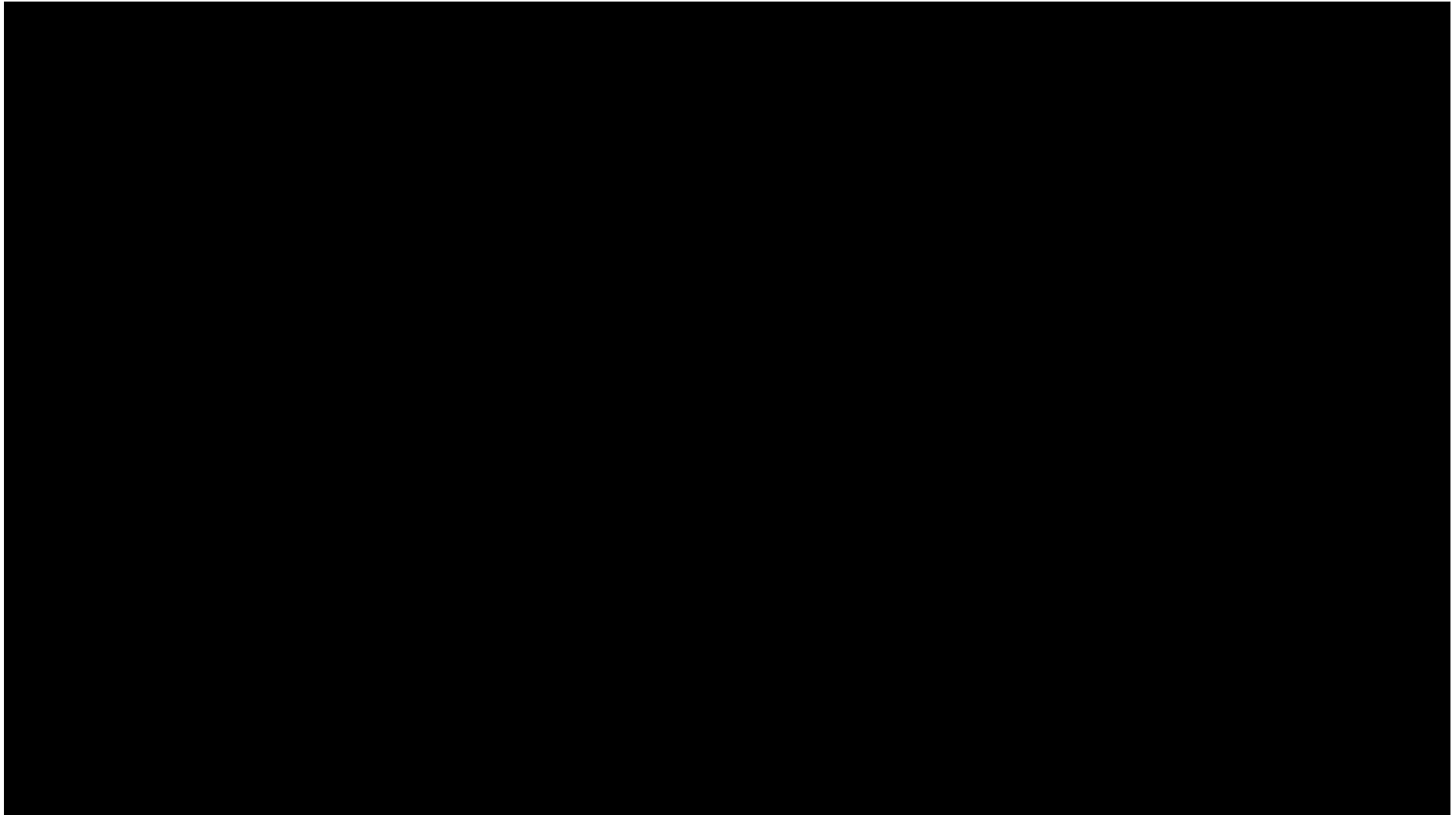


- 1 in 3 people state they have only 1 or 2 close friends; sports clubs can help to create new social circles – 81% of sports club members say they make friends through their exercising compared to just 14% of fitness users

Ref: SRA 'Game of Life' Literary Review

# Learn to Swim Pathways

- We follow the Swim England Learn to Swim Pathway in the city.
- We don't only teach young people to swim using the four strokes we also give them a number of other skills, which when put together, give young people the ability to do a range of other water-based sports.
- We have found that the easiest way for a child to learn a new skill is through fun and games. This Framework still has a high focus on having fun and enjoying being in the water.



# The games led approach

This gives the core aquatic skills needed to become competent swimmers.

These are:

- Entry
- Exits
- Floatation and Balance
- Rotation and Orientation
- Streamlining
- Aquatic Breathing
- Travel and Coordination
- Water Safety
- Health and Fitness

By learning and then mixing together these skills, a child will be able to understand the processes needed to swim all of the four strokes; front crawl, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly.

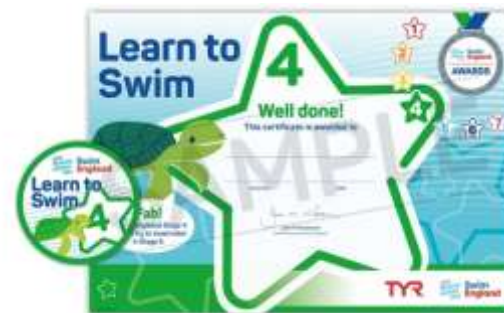
# The 10 Stages

The learn to swim programme has 10 stages from learning to swim in stage 1 to pre competitive development in stage 10

In each stage the child gets a badge and certificate

At the end of the programme young people have the opportunity to continue swimming in different activities which may include joining a club in Swimming, Water Polo, Diving or Synchronised Swimming, or completing the Rookie Lifesaving course.

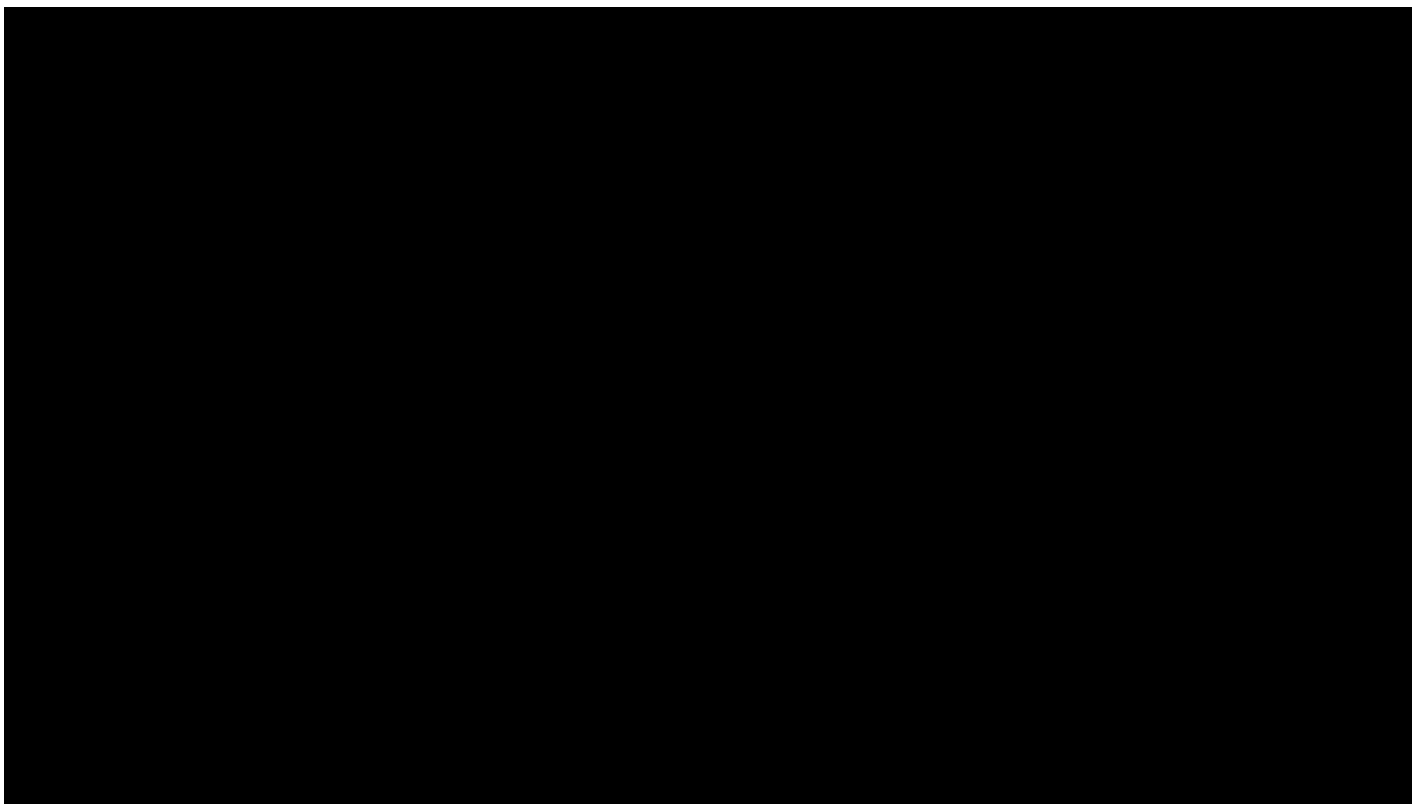
There are also recreational swimming opportunities and other water based sports.





**Swim  
England**

# Guidance for teachers



# Links to Clubs

The learn to swim programmes across Birmingham have links to the Warwickshire ASA who oversee 35 competitive aquatic clubs in the county of Warwickshire.

In the county we want to encourage young people into swimming pathways to encourage them to stay in the sport.

The ways we do this are:

- Encouraging swimming at club level
- Going into teaching and coaching
- Volunteering in clubs and at learn to swim programmes
- Officiating
- Going into different aquatic disciplines





# Young Aquatic Helpers

To achieve this we have linked with other providers including the Birmingham Community Leisure Trust who took over the running of some of the cities leisure centres.

We encourage young people in the higher stages of the learn to swim scheme who are over the age of 14 to get involved in volunteering to help with the delivery of swimming lessons at their local pool.

The young people are provided with training and are allocated to a swimming instructor to become a teaching assistant

We also work with swimming clubs to train young people there to help with learn to swim and coaching sessions.



# Young Aquatic Helper Case Study

## Erdington Leisure Centre Programme

- There have been young volunteers working alongside the swimming teachers at Erdington Leisure Centre for the past 4 years.
- They help with all stages from 1 to 7
- This young people are all qualified young aquatic helpers
- Following the support and training they have received on the site so far 100% of them have gone into swimming teaching, lifeguarding or officiating once they reach 16 with 5 currently employed at the centre as part time staff members
- We are looking to roll this out to other leisure providers in the region.



# Links to Charities

- In Birmingham we link with various disability charities to improve the access to aquatic sports for disabled people.
- The activities we have put on are:
  - Specific lessons for young people with a particular impairment
  - Hosted events for disabled people to start to get involved in swimming
  - Hosting inspirational events with elite swimmers
  - Setting up youth forums led by young disabled people to have a youth focused programme

# Getting young disabled people into work in swimming

We work to inspire young disabled people to get involved in different areas of aquatics.

We asked the disability communities in Birmingham about what sports they would like to access and 74% of those we asked stated that swimming was the sport they wanted to access and 35% of them were unsure or not confident in how to achieve this.

By engaging with the communities and the charities that work with disabled groups we are engaging more disabled people into the sport than before.

# How we did it?

To achieve the goal we started by training our swimming instructors

We linked with charities such as Dwarf Sports Association, British Blind Sport , National Deaf Children's Society and National Autistic Society to get the best possible training for our staff to work with people of different impairments.

We consulted with the people who wanted to swim and found out their requirements and helped come up with solutions to problems and barriers that arose.



- Level Water provides specialist one-to-one swimming lessons for children with physical and sensory disabilities.
- The aim is to give children physical, social and emotional confidence through sport and change their trajectory in life.
- The lessons are aimed at children between the ages of 6 and 11 and are fully funded by the charity.
- The charity fund the teacher time at the pools and each pool donates the water space to enable these lessons to happen.
- In Birmingham we currently have 9 children on the scheme.
- The goal is to get children included into mainstream swimming lessons when they are at around a Stage 3 level.

# Level Water Training

- Training is provided to all teachers delivering the Level Water programme.
- The training is a recognised qualification and takes half a day to complete.
- These have been running across the UK and are in high demand as providers want to run level water sessions.
- Teachers are trained in how to adapt their lessons to work with children of different physical disabilities
- It is a mixture of classroom learning and water time.

# How lessons have been adapted

Teachers have had to be creative in their teaching styles.

They have used equipment in different ways and have learned to constantly adapt their teaching styles.

Consultations with parents and children have proven invaluable

Teachers have started to think outside the box when delivering lessons and are bringing a greater passion into all of their lessons.



# Adaptations in facilities

In our facilities we have:

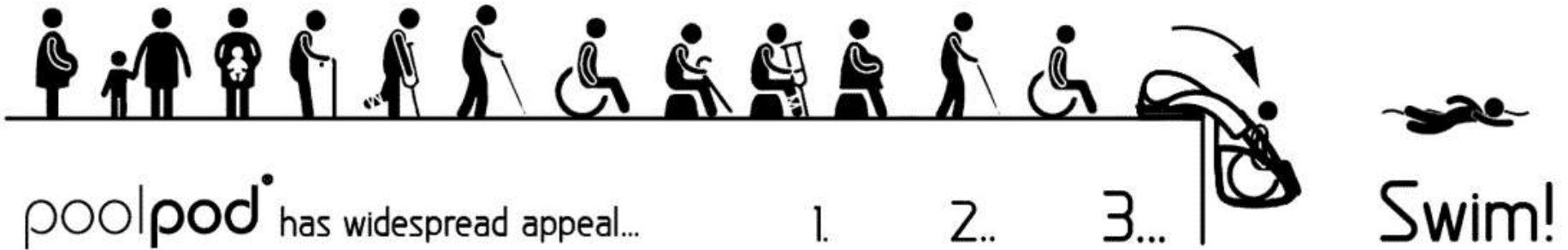
- Fitted Changing Places changing rooms
- Improved signage around the buildings
- Trained front of house staff on welcoming people with additional needs and meeting their requirements
- Fitted ramps and wheelchair lifts where possible in our centres.
- Fitted lockers at lower levels for the use of wheelchair users
- Have scheduled quiet times where it's more suitable for people with autism or the elderly who don't want to feel rushed.



# Adaptions to pool access

Across Birmingham we have a variety of different pieces of equipment to help disabled people access our pools from the dipper to the PoolPod.

The poolside staff are trained in guiding visually impaired people to their destination and have a basic understanding of communication methods with people with hearing impairments.



# School Swimming

In December 2015, the UK Government published its sports strategy Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation.

- Within the strategy it was noted that learning to swim is an important life-skill for children. It stated concerns that too many children were leaving primary school unable to swim.
- As a result the Government tasked the Swim Group to submit an independent report setting out recommendations for improving curriculum swimming .
- This Group included representatives from across the education, sport and leisure sectors. It also included a technical group of frontline expert deliverers.

The final report was submitted to Government in spring 2017. It focused on six key areas and made 16 practical recommendations on improving curriculum swimming in primary schools.

The report focused on six key areas:

- Ensuring all children meet the national curriculum requirements
- Ensuring the national curriculum requirements are fit-for-purpose
- Ensuring quality swimming tuition
- Ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation
- Ensuring access to facilities
- Ensuring good communication about Curriculum Swimming and Water Safety

# National Curriculum Outcomes

The minimum requirement is that, by the time they are ready to leave Key Stage 2 (Aged 10/11) every child is able to:

- swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres
- use a range of strokes effectively
- perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations



# National Curriculum Content

The purpose of the swimming area of the curriculum is to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- Are physically active for sustained periods of time
- Engage in competitive sports and activities
- Lead healthy, active lives.

The importance of swimming and water safety has been recognised through the inclusion of a specific programme of study.

In Birmingham we are committed to making sure every child leaves primary school able to swim and with a good knowledge of water safety.

To support this aim which is the same as Swim England, the Swim Group have created a resource pack for all those involved in the delivery of curriculum swimming and water safety.

The resource pack has been split into four to provide dedicated information for each group. Each section provides practical guidance on how to plan, deliver and report on curriculum swimming and water safety.

In addition, new guidance on the PE and Sport Premium has been released to help schools understand how they can use this funding to support their swimming and water safety sessions. There is also a requirement to show the percentage of pupils in Year 6 who meet the minimum national curriculum standards.

# School Resource Packs

The resource pack has been split into five to provide dedicated information for each group. Each section provides practical guidance on how to plan, deliver and report on curriculum swimming and water safety.

## Primary Schools

This pack includes:

- Why it is important to teach swimming and water safety;
- what is meant by the three national curriculum outcomes;
- how to up-skill teachers and provide Top-up lessons;
- ways to engage and support all pupils;
- how to make lessons as cost and time effective as possible.





## Pool operators

- What support is required by primary schools to deliver swimming and water safety lessons;
- what is meant by the national curriculum outcomes and how to ensure all children achieve them;
- the challenges primary schools face and how to work together to achieve joint aims.

## Swimming Teachers

- How the national curriculum outcomes are different to other learn to swim programmes;
- how schools can support with lesson planning and at the pool;
- school monitoring requirements.



## Parents and carers

- What you should expect from your primary school;
- what your child should learn from their curriculum swimming and water safety lessons;
- how you should be updated on your child's progress;
- how you can support your child's swimming after they finish primary school.

## Water Safety Resource

- What elements to focus on; what is meant by safe self-rescue; how to teach and record attainment.



# Engaging School Staff

In Birmingham we have a number of ways in which we are engaging school staff:

- Training for school teachers through the National Curriculum Training Programme
- On site support from swimming instructors
- Support and guidance on planning
- Advice on teaching water safety in the classrooms
- Updating schools on the latest advice from the Department of Education and Swim England

# Water Safety in Schools

In Birmingham we have set up a scheme names “SAFE: Keeping Birmingham at the Heart of Water Safety” it is a coordinated, multi-agency programme to promote water safety.

To put together this resource we have worked with:

- Swim England
- RNLI
- Royal Lifesaving Society
- Canal and River Trust

The aim is to keep the children in the city safe around the many areas of inland water that surround us.

# A Local & City issue

- Birmingham has more canals than Venice
- RNLI statistics show coastal drownings are people from inner cities
- 12 drownings linked to Birmingham last year
- 2 young people lost their lives in the summer of 2016
- Communities not aware of the potential dangers
- Link to Anti-social behaviour problems



# Birmingham SAFE: schools

- A coordinated set of interactive resources
  - Assemblies
  - Lesson Plans
  - Parent resources
- Aimed at all key stages:
  - Early Years
  - Primary
  - Secondary
  - Further Education
- Links for parents



# Water Safety Award for schools

Linked to National Swimming Targets

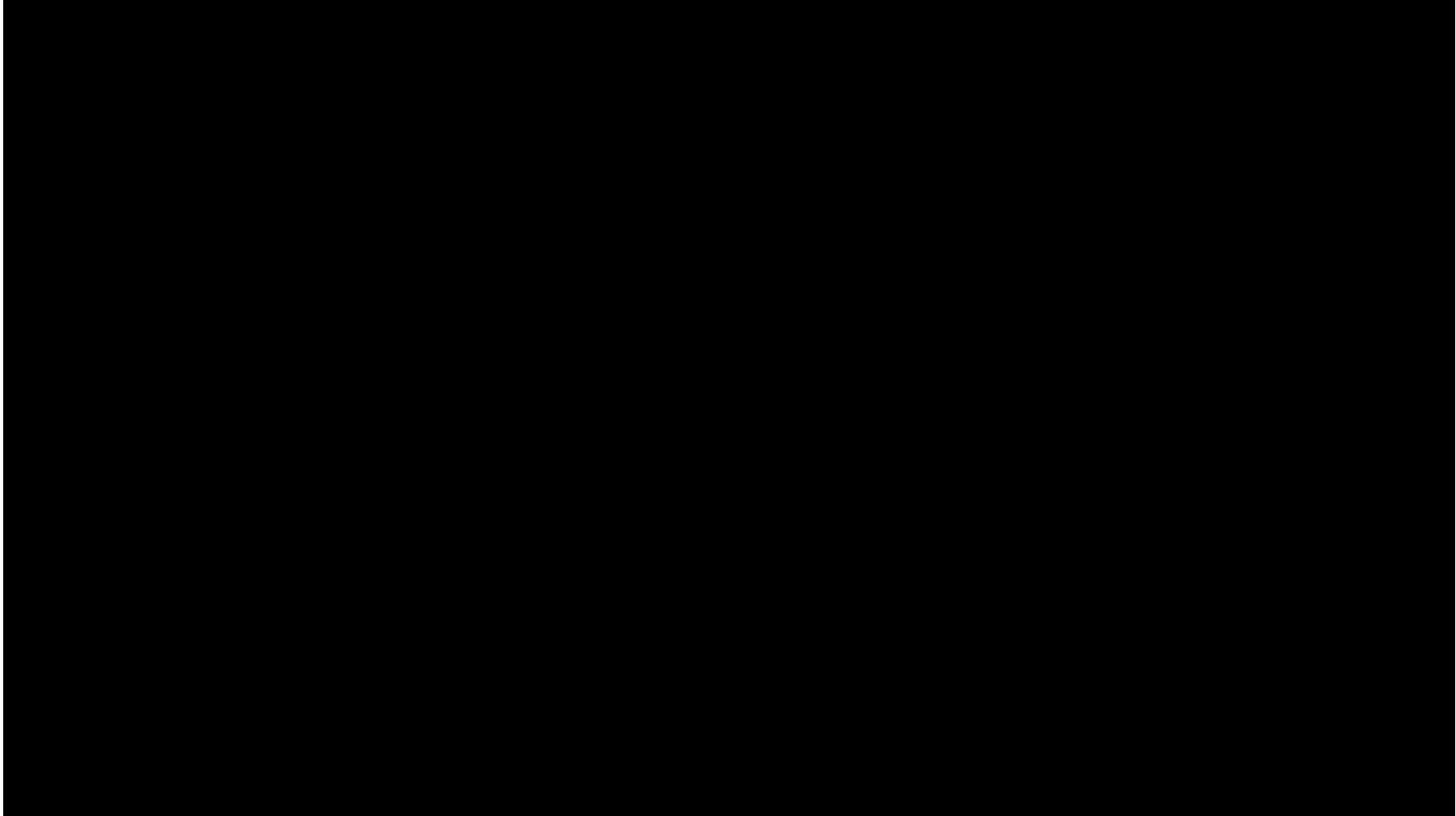
- Bronze Award
  - Assembly
  - Impact measurement
- Silver Award
  - Assembly
  - Classroom discussions & Curriculum links
  - Impact measurement
- Gold Award
  - Assembly
  - Classroom discussions & Curriculum links
  - Parent engagement & information
  - Impact measurement





WITH SWIM ENGLAND AND THE RNLI

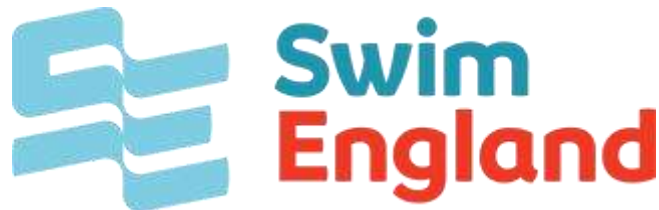




# Dementia Swimming

The Dementia Friendly Swimming Project was developed to enhance the swimming experience of those living with dementia and their carers by improving facilities and removing barriers.

There are 800,000 people living with dementia in the UK. Research shows that low impact exercise can be beneficial for physical and mental health and can improve the quality of life for people in all stages of dementia. Swimming in particular has the added benefits of reducing anxiety, improving mood and enhancing psychological well being.



# Martha and Charles' story



# Links

[Level Water](#)

[Curriculum Swimming](#)

[SwimSafe](#)

[Dementia Friendly Swimming](#)

# Thank You

Andy Stead

Birmingham Wellbeing Service

[Andrew.stead@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.stead@birmingham.gov.uk)

+447775024721