



FAQs – Regional Swimming Championships 2026 (short course)

Why has the meet gone back to single weekend instead of the 2 meets announced during this year's long course events?

After publishing draft "save the dates" for separate age and open championships during late April, we were contacted by a number of clubs regarding the demand on volunteers and families if the events were split across 2 weekends. Coaches of each club were asked to consider some options for the scheduling of the short course championships and every club that responded indicated that the one weekend option was preferable.

What if we have booked accommodation?

The dates listed in April were not confirmed with any event details – they were intended as a 'save the date' notification only, listed at the bottom of an info page for the long course events. The advice of the Regional team and most clubs is to always book on a semi-flex or flexible basis when it comes to accommodation. Situations often change and it is not uncommon for swimmers to need a late withdrawal from any event during the season due to illness, injury or changes in the scheduling or availability of venues.

Why have the 800/1500m events been altered for this event?

When considering the inclusion of these events at the short course meet in November, 2 main issues entered the discussion;

1. Timing of the event within the first macrocycle of training (usually 14-15wks in length) for the 2026-2027 season, and the stage of aerobic development and preparation that swimmers have returned to following their summer break
2. Event logistics and purpose of the meet

Issue 1 is straightforward. After 7-8 weeks of training at the beginning of a new season, swimmers are likely to have completed 3-4 weeks of general prep work for the year ahead (technique, drills, skills and low level aerobic conditioning) followed by 3-4 weeks of aerobic development which will lay the foundations for the target meet in cycle 1. At the time of the regional event, swimmers are not yet physiologically ready for sustained efforts at 90-100% of their maximum heart rate. The target meet for cycle 1 is usually either Scottish or British SC Championships in December, or another level 2 meet as directed by the club head coach. Leading into this key meet, coaches will spend the final 6-8wks after regionals working on maximal aerobic and race pace training to optimally prepare their swimmers.

Coaches requested the inclusion of these events specifically for swimmers trying to achieve qualifying times for the winter nationals (i.e. older swimmers 15yrs+, not age group swimmers 11-14yrs), and based on last year's data (7 swims from 53 entries across 800/1500m were new qualifiers) we opted to add an opportunity for older swimmers to gain these QTs on Friday evening to prevent the Saturday and Sunday schedules from being over

12hrs in duration like they were in 2025. The data also confirms a low rate of personal best times (35% PB / 65% non PB) being achieved in these events, which would confirm what we know from the explanation given above about training cycles and readiness to compete in the most demanding endurance events so early in the season.

Issue 2 is exactly what we have tried to balance when considering coaches feedback and what the purpose of the event is, and should be, at such an early stage in the season. It is an early season opportunity to get back to racing. Swimmers and coaches can try out new strategies, test their skills (e.g. starts and turns are essential to racing well in short course – a perfect opportunity to identify areas for improvement) and get their competitive edge back for the year ahead. At this point in macrocycle 1, coaches are just beginning to add in high end aerobic work and anaerobically challenging components, so racing 50,100,200 and 400m events can act as a useful stimulus as this part of the cycle begins. The longer events require significantly more conditioning and adaptation before swimmers can be expected to both compete and recover well from them – after all, they are sustained efforts at 90-100% of V02 max and max HR – i.e. very, very high intensity for 9-16 minutes.

Where is the information about para swimming events?

As in previous years, we are providing the opportunity for para swimmers to compete during the championships if they meet the minimum points required as agreed with Swim England – info on the points threshold will be published in the meet conditions in due course as usual.