

WWSCC Solent Swim 2026 - Safety Support

Kayakers registration form

Solent Swim 2026 takes place on Saturday 25th July with a backup date of Sunday 26th July

The Solent Swim is organised by West Wight Sport and Community Centre as a fundraising event for the West Wight Sports and Community Centre Trust (registered charity number 273334).

WWSCC is more than just a swimming pool - it is a community hub, providing a range of facilities and services focusing on health, fitness, personal growth and development and supporting both physical and mental health and well-being.

As a charity, we rely on ad hoc grants and fundraising events such as the Solent Swim to support our work and ensure the Centre can continue to operate.

We face a huge financial challenge each year in order to be able to maintain our services to the community, and need to raise around £200,000 a year to fill the gap in funding. The Solent Swim is the main fundraising event for the Centre and since our first event in 2010, nearly 500 people have swum the Solent and raised over £200,000 for the charity.

THANK YOU very much for offering to help us with safety support - without our kayakers we would not be able to run the event. Please read and take note of the following, which has been drawn up by Dave Lutas of the IoW Canoe Club, before signing up.

Any person taking part as Kayak Support for this event must ensure the following:

- Kayak is in a seaworthy condition and suitable for the crossing.
- Inflatable kayaks are not suitable for a Solent crossing and will not be allowed.
- Must be competent to complete the crossing and the return journey.
- Must wear appropriate clothing, ie waterproofs, suitable footwear etc.
- Must wear at all times a correctly fitting buoyancy aid or life jacket.
- Are required to carry a pealess whistle within easy reach at all times.
- Must be familiar with "rafting up" procedure with other kayaks.
- Must be available to take part on both 25th July and the backup date of 26th July if required.
- Are available to take part in at least one rescue and recovery practice at Colwell Bay on:
 - Sunday 28th June at 10:00
 - Tuesday 7th July at 18:30
- Are available to attend the mandatory pre-event safety briefing on Friday 24th July at 19:00 at West Wight Sports and Community Centre.

Please click to confirm you are available for all three dates:

- I confirm that I will be available for an early morning crossing of the Solent from Colwell Bay on 25th July 2026
- I am available for the backup date of 26th July 2026
- I will attend the pre-safety briefing on 24th July at 19:00 at WWSCC

Kayakers Instructions

In addition to the mandatory safety briefing on Friday 24th July at 19:00, Kayakers must register their attendance at Colwell on the morning of the swim at a time to be confirmed. There will be a short briefing and numbered wristbands will be issued which must be worn at all times during the event. Kayakers will be escorted by the Freshwater Inshore Lifeboat across the Solent. The wristbands can be exchanged for refreshments onshore when the event has ended.

Kayakers will escort a maximum of two swimmers across the Solent.

Kayakers must ensure that the swimmers stay together during the swim.

If the swimmers need to be split up due to difference in pace, the kayaker must request assistance of a spare kayaker.

Kayaker is responsible for the initial safety of the swimmers; the Freshwater Lifeboat is in overall control on the water during the event.

In the event of a panicked swimmer, the kayaker must calm the swimmer using reassurance before getting close and assisting.

Once the swimmer is calm, offer the bow or the stern of your kayak. This way the swimmer will not capsize the kayak.

To call for "non emergency" assistance, raise your paddle in a vertical position until help arrives.

In the unlikely event of an unconscious swimmer, the kayaker should turn the casualty so that their head is facing out of the water and summon assistance immediately.

A whistle must only be used in an **emergency**. The emergency signal is a series of long blasts which continue until attention has been drawn. Assist the safety craft by being vigilant of any other swimmers in the vicinity.

If kayakers have a VHS radio, the channel will be confirmed at the safety briefing.

It is good practice for kayakers to be "self-sufficient" wherever possible. Carry a spare paddle if you are able, wear a towline if you have one and are trained its use, carry a pealess whistle, have a high energy drink and snack available, carry a first aid kit if you are qualified to use it.

Kayakers are safety conscious at all times, constantly aware of their surroundings and always respect the environment.

- I confirm that I have read and will abide by the Kayakers Instructions

Kayakers Registration Form

Full Name:

T-shirt Size (please choose 1):

XS S M L XL XXL

Address:

First line:

Second line:

Third Line:

Town:

Post code:

Home Phone Number:

Mobile Number:

E-mail Address:

Have you ever participated in a similar event, and if yes, when?

Kayak details: hull colour and markings:

Colour of clothing/ life jacket:

Declaration:

- I understand that whilst all reasonable measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of all participants in the Solent Swim, the organisers (West Wight Sports and Community Centre Trust) accept no responsibility for damage, loss or injury to those taking part.
- I declare that I am competent to undertake the crossing to Hurst Point and to safely and competently accompany and guide swimmers from there to Colwell Bay. My role will be to provide directional guidance and safety support for up to 2 swimmers.
- I am in good health and physically capable of taking part as Kayak support for the 2026 Solent Swim.
- I will at all times follow the instructions of the organisers and/or coastguard or its agencies.
- I will be over 18 on the date of the event

I have read, understood and agree to the declarations above

Next of Kin details for contact in an emergency:

Name:

Relationship:

Next of Kin Address:

First line:

Second line:

Third Line:

Town:

Post code:

Next of Kin contact number on day of swim: