



OXFORDSHIRE AND NORTH BUCKS COUNTY PATHWAY PROGRAMME

Developing and Supporting the County Age Group Swimmer

The County Pathway Programme Camps are a joint venture with England Programmes to provide not only development opportunities for the County's 11yr old (**2009 born**) swimmers, but also similar opportunities for the "team" around them – coaches / team managers / parents and guardians.

About The Talent Pathway

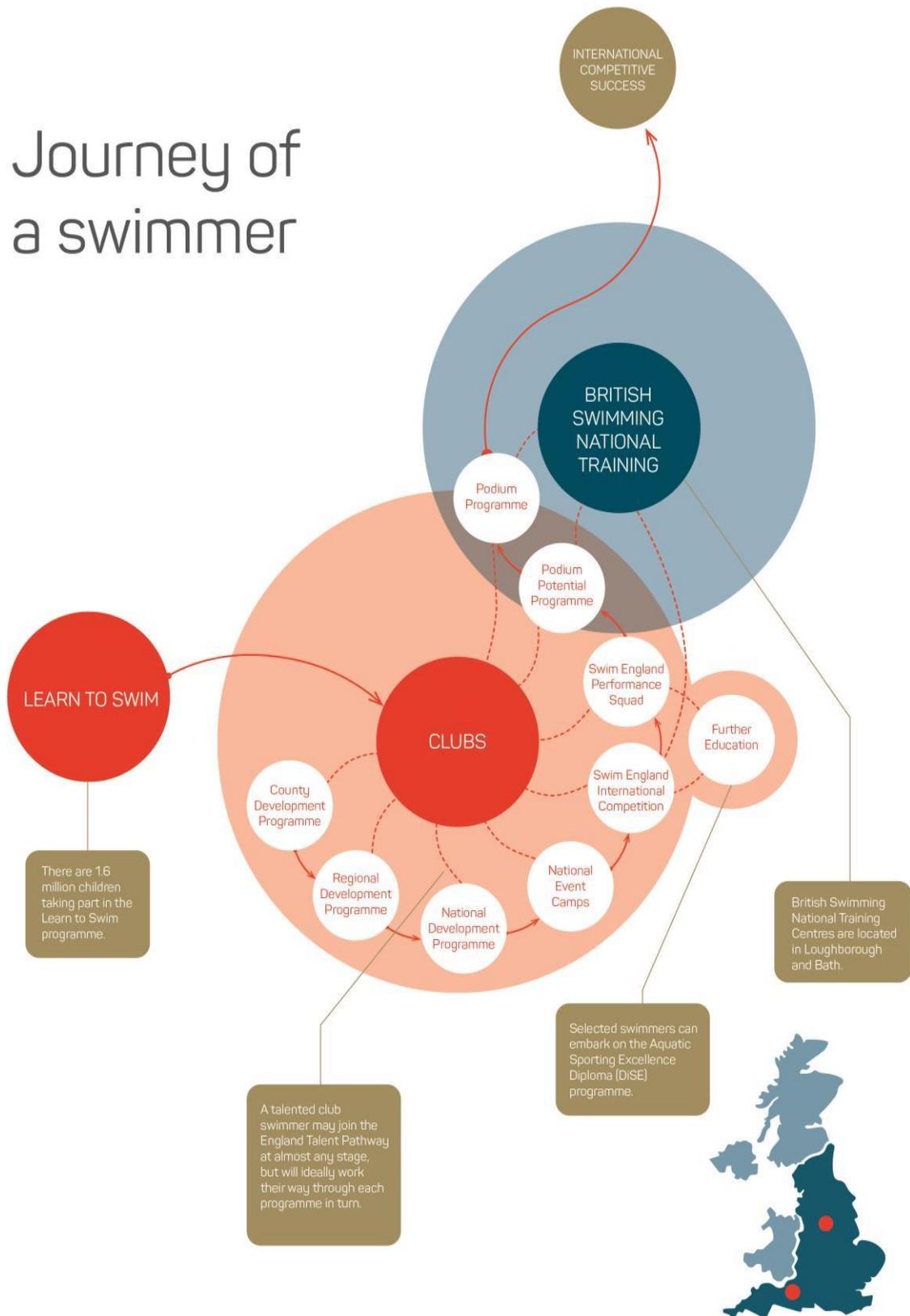
The Swim England talent team believes that to become a future international athlete the fundamentals of efficient swimming and appropriate performance behaviours need to be world class.

The pathways system aims to develop and enhance the skills, knowledge and behaviours at each stage of the journey. It aligns with British Swimming's World Class Programmes and will assist the swimmer in gaining podium success.

This all begins with the County & Regional Pathway Programmes, after this swimmers can progress to National Programmes and then to international competition. The most outstanding swimmers from this stage may be selected for the Swim England Performance Squad and ultimately onto British Swimming's World Class Programme.

As a parent, your role is critical to the success of your swimmer and Swim England have put together a few helpful guides to the vital role you play and how to put that into practice

Journey of a swimmer



- 1) Journey of a Swimmer infographic – depicts how our clubs are central to the development of our swimmers. Clubs provide the environment in which these young athletes train on a daily basis, and the coaches within these clubs are the people who are ultimately responsible for navigating the young swimmer’s journey through the sport. This will often necessitate moving through different club environments along the way. Typically the swimmers selected to the GB Swimming Team at the Rio Olympics in 2016 had transitioned through three different daily training environments throughout their career as their performance level improved.
- 2) The domestic competition programme then provides opportunities for swimmers to be able to periodically benchmark their progress. Championship competitions are run within the 33 County Swimming Associations from the age of 10/ 11 years, the 8 Regional Swimming Associations from the age of 11/ 12 years and at Home Nation (England) and British level from the age of 12/ 13 years. These championship competitions are then supplemented by opportunities to attend open meets and to compete in various league competitions.
- 3) The development programme pathway opportunities (listed around the ‘clubs’ in white) are programmes designed to ‘enhance’ and positively influence the work being done back in our club programmes; the intention being to develop and support not only the swimmers but also coaches, parents and guardians, team managers, sport scientists and our tutor workforce. It is really important to clarify from the outset that swimmers will be selected to these programmes based on **objective performance criteria** but not achieving selection in any given year does not mean that will be unsuccessful in the long term! Each swimmer will take a different journey through the sport and there will inevitably be some ‘bumps in the road’.

Optimum Athlete Development Framework (OADF)

The 6 ACCESS pillars of the OADF describe the approach and underlying principles that British Swimming will use to develop and then transition the ‘Future Performance Potential’ athletes on to becoming a ‘Great British Swimmer’. What we will also look to do across the pathway programme is to encourage these ‘pillars’ to live and breathe in everything that we do.

The pillars are defined as follows:

A – Athlete Centred: Our athletes are at the heart of every decision we make.

C – Coach Led: Our coaches are effective in leading our athletes by setting high standards.

C – Culturally Defined: Our culture defines world – class behaviours to deliver podium success.

E – Expert Informed: Our decisions are guided by expert knowledge.

S – Science Supported: Our practitioners work as an interdisciplinary team to service our athletes.

S – System Aligned: Our system is wholly cohesive and aligned.

The Competition Pathways for the swimmer



A new domestic competition programme was introduced in 2015 and has been gradually phased in over the past three years. After a relatively poor home Olympics for the GB Swimming Team in London 2012, it was felt that British Swimmers needed to be exposed to a domestic competition pathway that was more 'fit for purpose'.

This pyramid outlines the identified championship competitions, looking to be underpinned by intra and inter club galas as swimmers are now only able to begin competing at County Championship level at 10/ 11 years where they were previously allowed from the age of 9.

The key aims of these competitions would be to introduce young swimmers to focusing on the 'process' rather than the 'outcome'. We are a competitive sport and as such our participants often aspire to win races/ get medals etc. but we know that if they dive in thinking about the outcome they will easily become distracted by their competitors as opposed to focusing on what they can control.

The Athlete Triangle

The athlete triangle consisting of the coach, athlete and parents/guardians, is a natural aspect of the youth sport setting. The coach's and parents roles in this process are critical to the success of any program.

Coaches provide Informational, Emotional & Esteem support

Parents provide Emotional, Esteem & tangible support

The County Pathway Programme will look to engage with our parents / guardians because we understand and appreciate that, alongside the coach, you are clearly the most influential people in your young swimmer's life.



As the athlete develops, it is highly likely that the number of key people enlisted to support the athlete will grow to allow the engagement of specialist staff such as physiotherapist, psychologists. However, the relationship between the swimmer, parent and coach should firmly remain at the centre of this 'system', in order to ensure that the individual swimmers needs are central to all of the key decisions made.

For the triangle to work at its best for the athlete the following needs to be set in place

- Provide positive & constructive support
- Value effort over achievements
- Support the coach when they provide Process focussed goals such as stroke counts, fly kicks off the wall, breathing patterns etc. (See picture below)
- Do not offer coaching or technical advice to your athlete as this may conflict with the coaches advice and confuse them.
- Attend social activities to improve team cohesion.
- Support the club yourselves as parents in the following roles - Team Managers, Timekeepers, judges, Marshall's, announcers to name a few
- Adhere to and help to enforce squad rules i.e. compulsory Team Kit.
- Allow your children to attend overnight camps/ competitions where the team is accommodated together overnight or attend finals sessions to support team mates.
- Encourage and support the athlete in adopting an increased level of self-sufficiency (relative to the stage of development)
- Please refrain from providing negative and in constructive feedback - discuss outcomes with the coach

Race Objectives

Name: _____



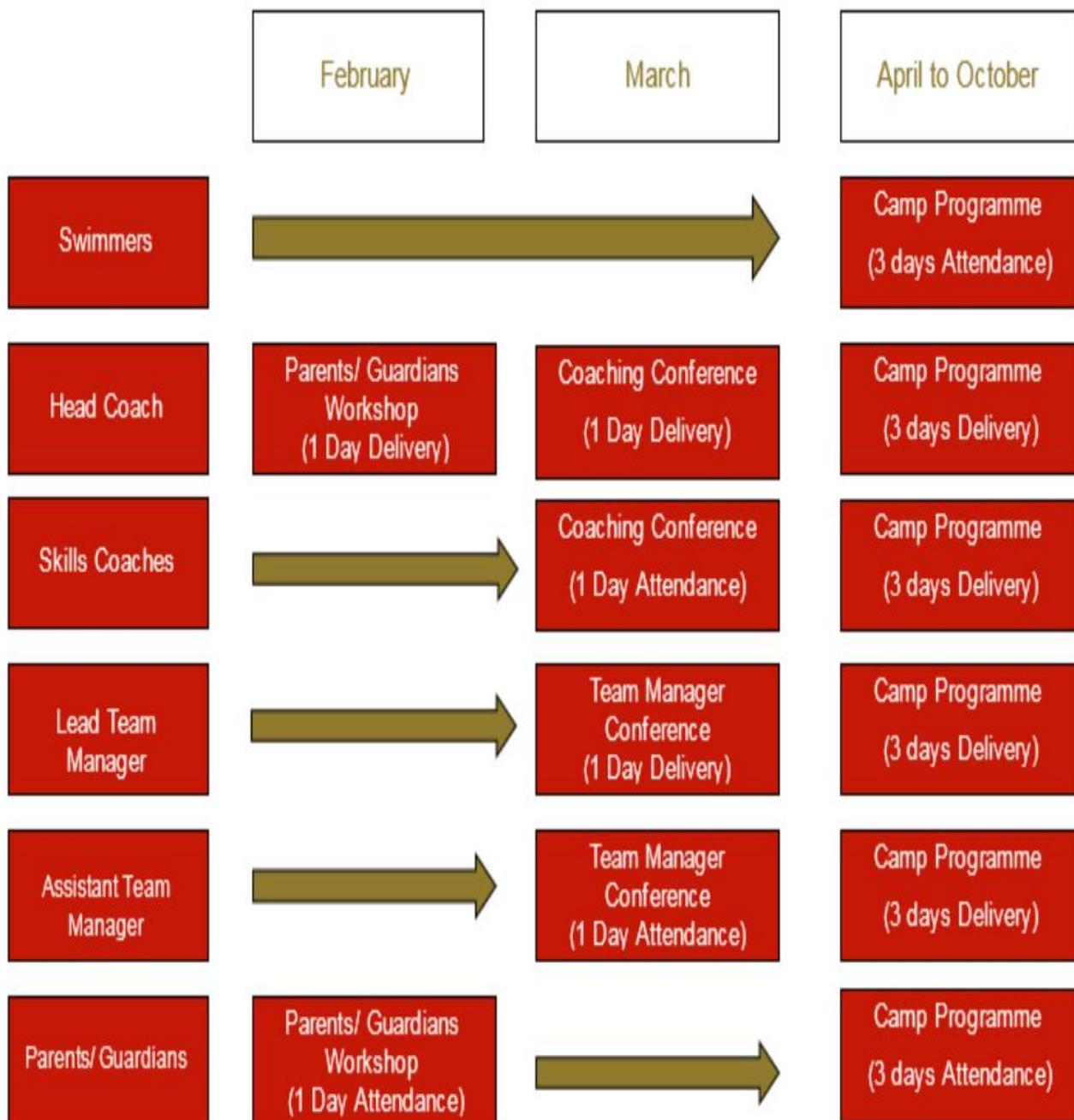
Competition	Flanders Meet				Rate Objectives 1 to 5 5= Great, perfectly achieved				
Event	4001M				H	S-F	F	(Circle)	
Main Objective	Match Fly & FC Splits by pacing Fly easier (22 Strokes)				1	2	3	4	5
2 nd Objective	Improve turns off walls using 5 kicks (7-10m). On the last turn kick as fast (and go as far) as possible				1	2	3	4	5
Split Emphasis [Not times]	1 st 25/50/100	2 nd 25/50/100	3 rd 25/50/100	4 th 25/50/100	Br -ve Split				
Result & Issues to work on	Pacing much better; Fly easier & 22 ki cks achieved. A verage turn distance 8-9m; last one 12.5m, Excellent! Must consolidate this work in other events.				1	2	3	4	5

County Development Programme

The County Development Programme commences after the county championships and involves 11 year old (**Born 2009**) swimmers in their first year of competing at this level.

Within the 2017 strategic review, the Swim England Talent team identified a 'need' to more effectively **support** and **develop** those people who are critical to the ongoing success of our sport: The county development programme therefore aims to concurrently support and develop all of the key people through a series of developmental activities.

The focus is not solely upon the swimmers!



Programme criteria

This is the first step on the talent pathway. Swimmers are selected to participate in the County Development Programme based on the highest rankings achieved at the County Championships. **The pathway programme is targeted at 2009 born 11 year old swimmers.**

Programme Aims

- Learn how to use the aquatic alignment as the foundation for excellent stroke techniques on both rotational strokes (freestyle and Backstroke) and the anti-rotational strokes (Breaststroke and Butterfly).
- Understand and adopt the correct streamlined position off the walls and transition effectively through the underwater phase to the surface.
- Away from the pool, fundamental movement skills will be covered in strength and conditioning sessions.
- Learn about nutrition, lifestyle management and key technical considerations for the four competitive strokes.

Duration

3 x 1 day camps

2020 Camp Dates

March 29th

June 28th

September 27th

Selection Policy

- Selected swimmers are expected to attend three one day events on 29th March, 28th June and 27th September 2020 at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Aylesbury.
- Only swimmers registered to compete for England will be considered.
- A minimum of 24 swimmers (gender split in accordance with performance and availability) will be selected using the following criteria
- The ASA rankings database will be used for selection purposes. Only times achieved between September 1st 2019 and the Monday following the final County Championship weekend in 2020 will be considered. Please note, selection will not be made until all times from the Counties are available on Rankings.
- Swimmers must have competed in a least one event at the County Championships.
- Swimmers are selected based upon their county of representation and not their club.

- The highest ranked 11 year old Male and Female (age as at 31st December in the year of competition, therefore born 2009), in each event competed at County Championships will be initially selected.
- Further selections will be made from the 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc. ranked swimmers.
- Where swimmers have an equal ranking, selections will be made prioritised according to the highest Fina Point Score in a single event.
- Selections will be made from short course rankings.
- Swimmer selections will be completed within one week of the completion of the County Championships.
- Swimmers/Parents and Home Coaches will be informed within two weeks of the completion of the County Championships.
- Swimmers must reply to confirm whether they will be accepting or declining their place on the programme within three weeks of the completion of the County Championships.
- Swimmers will only be selected if they are indicating that they can commit to the full three day programme. If they subsequently are unavailable for all three no refund will be given and no additional swimmers invited thus avoiding unnecessary disruption to the programme.
- Any reserve swimmers and their respective Home Coaches will be informed within four weeks of the completion of the County Championships.
- All paperwork must be returned as soon as possible, ready for the first camp of the programme which is scheduled to take place in March 2020.

The camps provide a great opportunity for our coaches (especially skills or assistant coaches) to observe others and the challenges presented by different athletes. This will help them to develop a wider selection of coaching resources (skills / drill selections / progressions and behaviour management techniques) that they can draw upon and therefore be more prepared, when a new challenge presents itself. Exposure to new ideas and asking "why?" are key factors in coach development.

Whilst the opportunity for those swimmers selected for the camps is amazing, the opportunity for home coaches to observe and pick up key messages on skills training and ideas to take back to all the swimmers in our clubs is invaluable.

The camps are designed to be a great learning environment not just for swimmers but also coaches and team managers who are invited to attend for free to ensure current best practices are passed on.

This is an example outline of our first camp and the timings of the day:

9.00 - 10.00 Registration & welcome
10.00 - 11.00 Land Training
11.00 - 12.45 Pre-pool, swim, post-pool
Lunch
13.15 - 14.00 Classroom based workshop (effective stroke technique)
14.00 - 15.45 Pre-pool, swim, post-pool

Focusing on:

- Aquatic Alignment (streamlining in prone & supine)
- Push off, underwater kick and transition to frontcrawl & backstroke (session 1) and breaststroke & butterfly (session 2)
- Land training = fun challenges and functional tasks to compliment the movement patterns required for efficient swimming

Our aim is to ensure that we take a 'long term' view, control the controllables and prioritise the development of skill/ technique.

We are really excited to be running this successful programme, we look forward to our Clubs fully supporting this year's events and seeing you there!

For further information

Key Websites

- **ONB County Swimming Association Website Address**
 - <http://onbcountiesasa.co.uk/>
- **Swim England South East Website Address**
 - <https://www.southeastswimming.org/>
- www.swimming.org
- www.britishswimming.org
- www.offtheblocks.info

County Head Coach: Amanda Ford

County Lead Team Manager: Jo Ulyett

Swim England National Talent Team: SwimmingPathway@swimming.org