

OPEN WATER SWIMMING

Open to breast cancer patients post-treatment

**Free sessions funded by Lingen Davies Cancer Fund
Limited spaces - booking is essential.**

Alderford Lake, Tilstock Rd, Whitchurch, SY13 3JQ

Sunday, 27 April - (1pm start time)

Then Sundays at 9am on:

- 18 May
- 22 June
- 13 July
- 31 August
- 28 September
- 19 October
- 23 November

To book: hello@lingendavies.co.uk / 01743 492396

The important bits...

Q. What should I wear? A. A simple swimsuit is all that is required. Some people may like to add a rash vest, or even a wet suit, but as a rule anything that doesn't frighten the wildlife is fine!

Q. Will somebody be with me in the water? A. A wild swimming volunteer will be with you throughout your swim.

Q. What will access to the water be like? A. You can walk from the grass into the water or there is a slope with artificial grass and a rail at the side if you felt more comfortable with a handrail.

Q. Do I need to be a strong swimmer? A. Not at all, you can swim as little or as much as you like and can stand up around the edge of the lake but you do need some ability to swim.

Q. How big will the group be? A. We aim to keep the 'first swim' group small, between 4-6 people so that everyone is equally supported.

Q. What do I need to bring with me? A. A Towel, something loose, warm and easy to change into after your swim. Perhaps pack a bobble hat in case you feel a little chilly afterwards.

Q. Are there changing rooms? A. Yes there are changing rooms there for you to use. However, it is quite liberating to arrive with a swim suit under your clothing on and then get dried and changed at the water's edge for a real 'wild' experience. We will also provide a changing robe on the day, for your first few swims.

Q. Do I need swim shoes? A. If you don't mind standing barefoot on the grass, or the sandy lake bottom, then swim shoes won't be needed. You could always pack an old pair of socks just in case.

Q. Do I need an open water TOW float? A. You don't need a TOW float during the summer months at Alderford. We will however provide a TOW float for your first few swims. TOW floats are not emergency flotation devices but many swimmers just like to use them to rest on while they natter in the water, or store the car keys in a plastic bag inside the dry chamber within the float. The float just clips around your waist with an adjustable belt and will bob in the water behind you. Please note TOW floats are mandatory at Alderford if you choose to carry on through the colder winter months.

Q. What if I start to feel cold? A. It is normal to feel cold for the first few minutes until you get the warm euphoric feeling as the hormones kick in. If however, you start to feel cold during your swim please let your volunteer know and they will guide you out from the water. This is important as cold water swimmers can experience after-drop where their core body temperature can drop for a further 20 minutes.

Q. How deep is the water? A. We will swim around the edge of the lake, where you can stand up at any point with many exit points around the lake. As your confidence grows you may want to venture further into the middle and even reach the tree, where you can also stand up.

Q. Is the water clean? A. Alderford Lake has a regular water testing programme and results are published on the venue's website.

Q. Are there fish in the lake? A. Yes there are fish, but relax, they are more scared of you!

Q. How cold is the water? A. From May to September temperatures range from about 13 -22 degrees. Current temperatures are published weekly on the Alderford Lake website.

Q. How long are you in the water? A. For some it's a quick dunk, for others it can be longer. Everyone is different, but you should limit your first cold water swim to 15 minutes until you get used to the temperatures.

Q. Do you just jump in? A. The best way to enter cold water is to gently wade in and get the tingle before moving off into the water - we don't rush. Take your time, breath, feel empowered, be at one with nature and enjoy the massive rush of the happy hormone endorphin. Interaction with nature enhances health and well being and getting into cold water leaves you with a feeling of euphoria.

Q. Do I have to put my head under the water? A. Not at all unless it was something you really wanted to do.

Q. Do I need swimming goggles? A. Not unless it makes you feel more comfortable in water.

Q. What if I get there and change my mind? A. Resistance is natural and if you can overcome this you will realise how good it is to gain control of your mind. That said, if you get to the water and it really isn't for you, come join us for your coffee and cake afterwards anyway.

Q. Will I have to pay for parking ? A. Currently parking is free for 3 hours.