



WINCHESTER AQUA BESTS



2025

Participant, Family Carer and Day Service pack

Supported by Community Grant funding from

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Aqua Bests – Event Aim and Objectives	4
Roles & responsibilities	5
Lead Coaches.....	6
Volunteers.....	7
Event information.....	7
Venue:.....	8
Access and parking	8
Guidelines for participants.....	10
Before you swim.....	10
What to wear	10
Accessibility and The Hoist.....	11
Mobile phones	12
What to bring	12
Poolside	12
Timeline	13
Activities.....	13
Certificates and medals.....	14
Event control.....	14
Food & hygiene.....	15
Toilets.....	15
Lost participant	15
Safeguarding & welfare	15
Photos and Videos	16
Noise.....	16
Quiet Spaces	17
Risk assessments.....	17
Appendix: Sensory Guide Information.....	18

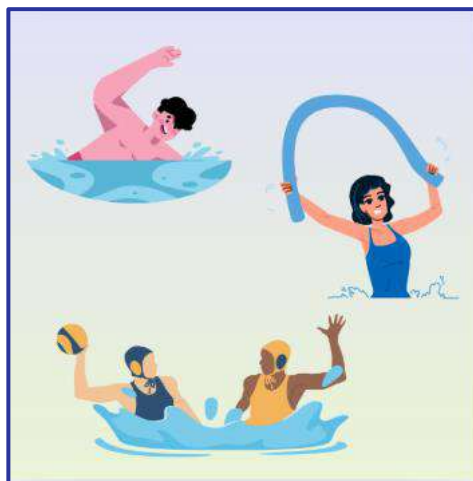
Introduction

Welcome to **Winchester Aqua Bests** – our first ever water activity day for adults with learning disabilities.

Aqua Bests was created from the success of our Winchester Personal Bests event, launched in 2012 – the year the Paralympic Games came to London. The Personal Bests and Aqua Bests are all about having fun, trying new activities, and doing your best in a friendly and non-competitive way. Everyone is celebrated for joining in and giving it a go.

Over the last few years, the demand for swimming at the Personal Bests has grown. Feedback from participants made us realise that we could do better. It spurred us on to explore a new way of offering swimming and other pool-based activities. We decided to create a standalone, special water-based event. We hope Aqua Bests will help even more people enjoy being active in a fun, inclusive and social way. Many of our learning disabled friends told us they wanted to try aqua aerobics and more structured water-based activities – so with a bit of help, we've made it happen!

Thank you for being part of Aqua Bests. Let's make a splash and have a brilliant day together!



Supported by Community Grant funding from

Aqua Bests – Event Aim and Objectives

Our Aim

To bring people with learning and physical disabilities together for a morning of fun, friendly, and inclusive water-based activities.

We want everyone to enjoy being active, try something new, and feel proud of what they can do.



Our Objectives



Inspire Participation

Give people the chance to try new water activities, have fun, and discover something they might want to keep doing regularly.



Celebrate Achievement

Help everyone feel proud and confident by recognising personal progress and celebrating effort, not just results.



Promote Healthy Living

Encourage people to be active and healthy and raise awareness of the great opportunities in disability sport within our community.



Build Connections

Bring together participants, support providers, coaches, and clubs to create lasting connections and new opportunities to get involved locally.



Empower and Educate

Involve participants in shaping future events, and offer training and support to volunteers, staff, and coaches so we can all better support people with learning disabilities and autism.

Roles & responsibilities

The event is management team (EMT)

Organisation	Member of EMT
 Active LD	Betty Chadwick Kevin Stevens
 Winchester City Council	Calum Drummond
 everyone ACTIVE	Bex Woodford

It is the event management team's responsibility to:

- Plan and deliver a successful event.
- Coordinate bookings and registration.
- Promote and advertise the event.
- Provide regular communication (i.e. any updates/ changes) to coaches, volunteers, day services, carers, and participants.
- Be the main point of contact for coaches, volunteers, day services, carers, and participants.
- Ensure everyone associated with the event are safe throughout the day.

Lead Coaches

Coach	Activity	Organisation
David Smith	Swimming	 Winchester City Swimming Club
Toby King	Water Polo	
Sarah Beven	Aqua Aerobics	

A huge thanks to our coaches and the organisations that they represent in their generous support of the Winchester Aqua Bests 2025.

Our coaches will:

- **Deliver Inclusive, Safe, and Enjoyable Sessions**
Plan and lead well-structured activities that are fun, engaging, and safe for everyone involved.
- **Encourage and Involve All Participants**
Support and motivate participants of all abilities, making sure everyone feels included and valued.
- **Adapt to Individual Needs**
Be understanding and flexible—respecting different needs and allowing space for rest or time out when needed.
- **Be Prepared**
Bring any necessary equipment and complete risk assessments to ensure a smooth and safe session.
- **Foster a Positive and Supportive Environment**
Create a welcoming atmosphere where all participants feel respected, confident, and part of the team.

Volunteers

There will be both land based and water-based volunteers to help the day run smoothly.

The land-based volunteers will be wearing RED t shirts.

The water-based volunteers will be wearing RED swimming caps.

Volunteers are not support workers or care providers. They are there to help participants have a great time at the event. Volunteers have been advised not to provide any personal care (e.g. not to help participants get changed or go to the toilet). Volunteers who do not have a current DBS check will not be left alone with participants.

Our volunteers will have a range of experience of people with learning disabilities – for some the Aqua Bests will be the first time that they see how fantastic the learning disability community is.

Volunteers and coaches have been invited to attend our online autism awareness session (<https://www.activeld.org/news-article/autism-awareness-training>) to help increase understanding around some of the extra challenges our autistic and learning-disabled participants may face on the day.

Event information

Volunteer Briefing (on Teams)

Day service staff and family carers are also welcome to attend our volunteer briefing (recommended for support staff who have not attended a Personal Bests event before).

Tuesday 28th October 2025

TIME: 18:00

LINK: [Click here](#)

Meeting ID: 332 149 301 650 1 Passcode: 4UU63ha6

Aqua Bests – Event Day

Day:	Thursday 30 th October 2025
Participants Arrive:	10:00am
Start (ready and poolside) :	10:30am
Finish (time to get out of the pool):	12:00noon
Awards and Social (in the café)	12:30 – 1:30pm

*Please let Betty know if you will be arriving late (events@activeld.org.uk or 07884 063201) so that we know what time to expect you.

Venue:

We are enormously grateful to Everyone Active for hosting the Winchester Aqua Bests at:

- Winchester Sport & Leisure Park (Bar End Road, SO23 9NR) – **WSLP**

Access and parking

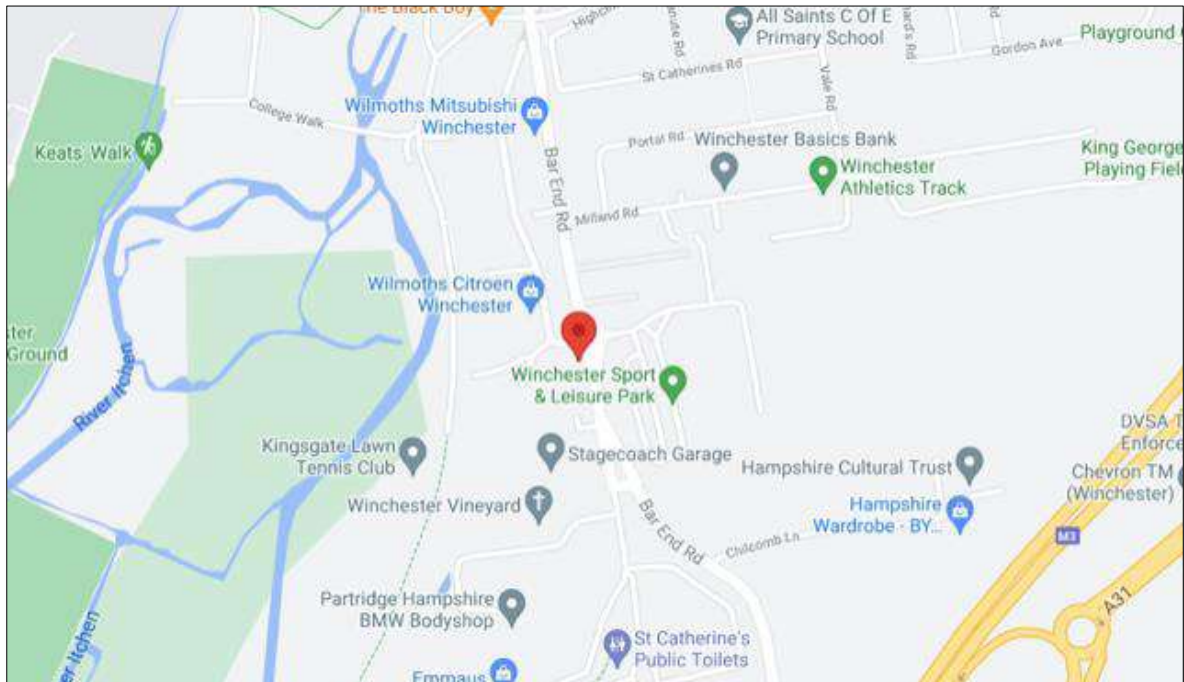
Please advise Betty (events@activeld.org) in advance if you are bringing a minibus so that your park can be allocated.

There are disabled parking bays at the Winchester Sport & Leisure Park (SO23 9NR) but these are limited and will not be reserved.

Free parking is available for up to 3 hours – there are machines inside the leisure centre to authorize this. Parking beyond 3 hours at the Winchester Sport & Leisure Park is managed through the Ringo App.

Supported by Community Grant funding from

If you wish to park for the whole day (or more than 3 hours), we recommend using the Barfield Park & Ride car park (SO23 9PH) which is just opposite the leisure centre.



Participant fee

All participants pay £5.00 to attend the event, this is arranged after completion of the registration form.

On the day registration (10:00am)

Registration will take place at the Winchester Sport & Leisure Park reception, in a designated area. This will be easily visible, and well sign posted for participants and day-services.

Guidelines for participants

Before you swim

- Have a quick shower and use the toilet first.
- Please don't swim if you have been sick or had diarrhoea in the last 2 days.
- Wait at least 1 hour after eating before swimming.

What to wear

☑ Good swimwear

- Swimming trunks or shorts
- One-piece swimsuits or tankinis
- Swim dresses

⊘ Not allowed

- Underwear
- Clothes with rude words or pictures
- Denim, cotton leggings or baggy T-shirts
- Long, heavy, or flowing clothes

Swimming headwear

We prefer our participants to wear a swimming cap, but we understand that some people will find this difficult.

Participants with long hair will be asked to tie their hair back.



Footwear by the pool

WSLP has a no shoes policy.

Outdoor shoes must be removed at the entrance of the changing village.



Stay safe

- Please follow the coach lifeguard instructions — they want everyone to have fun safely.

Accessibility and The Hoist

WSLP has a seated hoist available to help participants who find getting in and out of the pool difficult.



WSLP is a symbol friendly site. There are widget symbol boards available to use throughout the site.



Mobile phones

Mobile phones are not allowed to be used in the changing rooms.



What to bring

- Towel
- Goggles or swim mask (recommended but optional)
- Swimming hat (recommended but optional)
- Poolside footwear (optional)
- Change of clothes
- Toiletries (shower gel, shampoo) for shower after swim.
- Lunch and snacks
- Bottle of water
- Noise cancelling headphones if needed (the poolside can get noisy, ear defenders are recommended for participants who are sensitive to noise).
- Fidget toys, communication cards and/or a favourite comfort item if needed.
- Personal medical requirements (our volunteers, coaches and event staff do not provide personal or medical care. If a participant requires help with medication they will need their carer/support to assist them with this).

There are lockers available by the sports hall you will need a £1 coin to use them. We will have a few locker tokens available at the registration desk to lend you if needed. We encourage participants not to bring valuables (e.g. jewellery) with them.

Poolside

Please follow the WSLP Pool Safety rules when you are by the pool.

We recommend you bring your towel and water bottle to the poolside area where there will be a bench for each team. You are welcome to leave a small bag there too.

Some participants may prefer to wear a T shirt over their swimwear when they are not in the pool. If you have a Personal Bests T shirt, please do bring it with you.

Each team will have a pack containing communication cards which can be borrowed during the day

Timeline

The timeline below sets out the running of the day. Participants have been asked to arrive at 10am for registration.

Time	Activity
09:30	Volunteer welcome
10:00	Event registration
10:30	Participant welcome and briefing poolside
10:35 – 11:00	Activity 1
11:05 – 11:30	Activity 2
11:35 – 12:00	Activity 3
12:30	Awards and social in the café (and packed lunch)
13:30	Finish and leave
13:30 – 14:00	EMT close site/ pack up

Activities

Participants will have the opportunity to take part in 3 different sessions, each for 25 minutes. These will be delivered by a qualified, DBS checked sports coach.

1. Water Polo
2. Structures Swim

3. Aqua Aerobics

Around 30 adults with learning and physical disabilities are expected to attend the Aqua Bests this year. There will be qualified coaches who will deliver fun sessions, with volunteers to support, along with participant carers and day service staff.

Certificates and medals

Everyone will be awarded with a certificate and medal to celebrate their participation. Our awards ceremony will take place in the café area 12:30 – 1:30 during the lunch and social time.

The following prizes/ awards will be given to individuals during the awards ceremony:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Champion of Swimming: | Certificate and Trophy |
| • Champion of Aqua Aerobics | Certificate and Trophy |
| • Champion of Water Polo | Certificate and Trophy |
| • Overall Aqua Champion: | Certificate and Trophy |

Event control

The event is organised by Winchester City Council in partnership with Everyone Active and Active LD. In an emergency, the emergency services will be contacted and will arrive on-site.

First aid & reporting

All accidents and injuries that occur will be dealt with by Everyone staff, all of which are first aid qualified to deal with minor medical situations. All accidents will be

recorded. In the unlikely occurrence of a major injury, then a member of staff will call the emergency services.

Food & hygiene

Participants are expected to bring their own packed lunch however; food will be available to purchase from the leisure centre's café located on-site. The café is card only. Participants are expected to clear up after themselves and place all rubbish in the bins.

Toilets

Toilets are available for participants to use in the leisure centre. Signs will be clearly displayed providing clear direction.

Lost participant

In the unlikely occurrence that a participant is missing; coaches, staff, carers, and volunteers will report this to the Winchester Sport & Leisure Park. Staff will then carry out the necessary procedures to search the building and surrounding areas.

Safeguarding & welfare

The welfare of vulnerable people is taken very seriously by the event team. A copy of the Personal Bests Safeguarding policy can be found on Active LD's website: <https://www.activeld.org/policies>

All members of the EMT and all lead coaches have received recent Safeguarding training.

Our event Safeguarding Lead is Betty Chadwick, Executive Director at Active LD.

All participants are required to provide the following before attending:

- A completed registration form including signed disclaimer
- A record of whether they have given consent for photographs to be shared.

- Day services and learning disability group leaders are advised to complete a risk assessment for their group's participation at the Personal Bests (in the same way that they would for other day trips/outings).

Photos and Videos

- Photos and filming will take place during the event to capture the fun, showcase our amazing facilities, and help new participants know what to expect at future events.
- Consent has been gathered at registration
- An official event photographer will be taking photos and videos poolside during the event. There may also be some water-based shots taken during the event.
- These photos will be shared on Active LD's website and social media.
- People who prefer not to have their image taken will be wearing PINK wristbands.
- This applies to participants, volunteers, staff, and carers

Sharing Photos

We'd love to capture special moments at Aqua Bests!

We ask that you do not post photos of participants on personal social media, to respect privacy and consent (unless you have the appropriate consent in place).

Feel free to share photos from our official posts — these will only include those who have given consent.



We would love to encourage you to share photos from our social media posts (which will be checked for photo sharing consent prior to being published).

Here's a link to Active LD Facebook page



Noise

People who are sensitive to noise are encouraged to bring ear defenders.

Everyone Active staff will also be asked to only use the tannoy in emergencies as some participants may find this disturbing.

Quiet Space

Quiet Spaces

We are aware that some participants will be sensitive to noise, and they may prefer to have some chill out time. There will be a designated quiet space in the leisure centre to take some time out if needed.

Fidget toys and communication cards will be provided in the Quiet Space.

Risk assessments

Risk assessments have been completed by our coaches and are available on request.

Cancellation Policy

In extreme circumstances, the Event Management Team may need to make the difficult decision to cancel the event. This will be posted on our website (www.activeld.org/personal-bests) and on Active LD's social media (Facebook/Instagram).

Sadly, we are unable to offer refunds.

Contact details on the day:

Betty Chadwick: 07884 063201

Kevin Stevens: 07598 406120

Appendix: Sensory Guide Information



- The swimming pool area stimulates lots of our senses
 - smell (chlorine)
 - noise (the pool area can seem quite loud at times)
 - vision (things can look a little different under the water)
 - taste (the taste of chlorinated water)
 - touch (feeling of water on the skin).
- A café is available inside the centre on the ground floor near the entrance.

Strategies

- Find a quiet place to recover or visit the Quiet Space.
- Vision – Sunglasses
- Hearing – Ear defenders or ear buds
- Smell – Scented handkerchief
- Taste – Avoid
- Touch Avoid

Please tell the site volunteers if you have any specific sensitivities and they will try to help you manage.