



Toe in the water.
Face in the water.
Staying afloat.
Touching the
bottom. One length
without stopping.
Fifty lengths
without stopping.

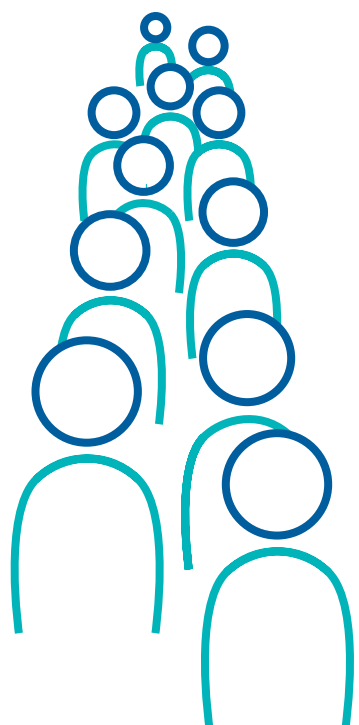
—

Me and the water.

We exist to encourage participation, develop excellence and regulate our sport.

We plan to be acknowledged as at the forefront of Irish sports bodies in terms of best practice and standards.

Everyone has a connection with the water.



Accessible

Swimming is open to people of all ages, abilities, genders and lifestyles.

9.4%

PARTICIPATION

At 9.4%, swimming is the second-highest participation sport among adults in Ireland.



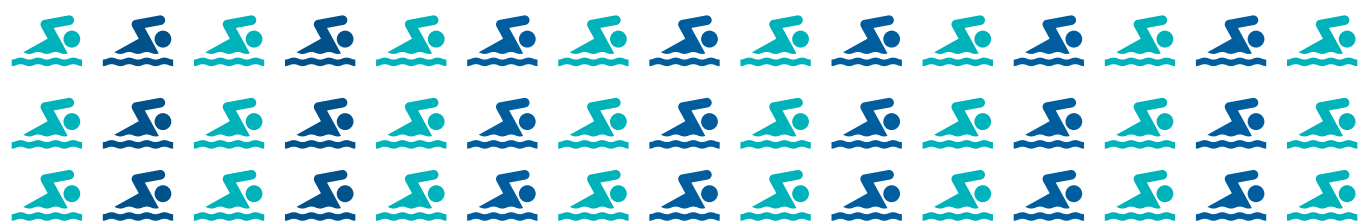
Healthy

Swimming is associated with reduced all-cause and cardiovascular mortality.

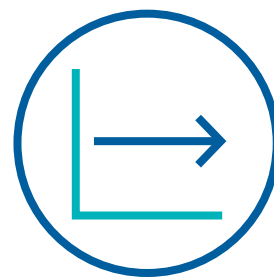
POPULAR

290,000

Adults swim at least once a week and it is the most popular activity among older adults.



RETENTION



Swimming suffers the least drop off in participation during the volatile early adult years.



Adult Participation

Swimming is the most popular sport taken up during adulthood.



Inclusive

Participation in swimming amongst adults with a disability is the same rate as amongst the able-bodied population and higher rates than all team sports combined.

TOP 3

Swimming is in the top three sports that girls and women say they want to participate in.

Our Goals

These five goals represent what we at Swim Ireland aim to achieve over the lifetime of this plan.

1

Education
—
Become recognised as the leading provider of accredited aquatic qualifications and programmes across the island of Ireland.

2

Mass Participation
—
Get Ireland Swimming.

3

Members' Participation
—
Further support and develop our aquatic community.

4

Performance
—
Provide an environment that helps our athletes perform to their best and produces Olympic and World medals.

5

Leadership
—
Be an organisation that leads with integrity and seeks to operate to high standards in all areas.

Education

Our Goal

Become recognised as the leading provider of accredited aquatic qualifications and programmes across the island of Ireland.

We will	How we will do it
Achieve QQI status for teaching programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish certain agreed Swim Ireland qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications (NQF) set out by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).Maintain and further develop quality assurance and monitoring processes to assure quality of standards and delivery.
Provide affordable qualification and CPD opportunities for our members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Qualifications reviewed and appropriate changes made that maintain the quality of the programme whilst making the qualifications more affordable.Introduction of innovative methods of delivery of qualifications and CPD programmes through on-line platforms amongst others.
Roll out Swim Ireland programmes in partnership with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish effective partnerships with particular focus on Local Authorities, Department of Education, private sector leisure operators, and Ireland Active to significantly increase the take-up of Swim Ireland programmes.
Improve awareness of quality and standing of qualifications and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a communications and marketing strategy to maximise the unique selling points of Swim Ireland qualifications and programmes.Establish Swim Ireland qualifications and programmes as a more easily recognised brand.
Deliver a comprehensive suite of programmes, qualifications and continued professional development modules offered to support the Long-Term Athlete Development Pathway	<p>Introduce new qualifications to enhance the curriculum of Swim Ireland qualifications to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Open Water CoachLevel 3 Water Polo (Coach)Level 4 & 5 Swimming (Coach)Level 3 Teaching AquaticsFitness CoachMasters CoachLevel 3 Safeguarding <p>Continuously promote and develop the new Swim Ireland Learn to Swim programme.</p>

Lying flat on your back. Out to the buoy and back. Holding your breath. Holding the rope. Relaying. Relaxing. Getting fit. Getting faster. Getting used to the water.

—
Me and the water.



Mass Participation

Our Goal
Get Ireland Swimming.

We will	How we will do it		
Develop exciting, high-profile events targeted at general participation	<p>Develop and roll out a calendar of events targeting mass participation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A National Swimming Day.• Continue to roll out Swim For A Mile programme extension (to include follow-on support resources for participants to address ‘what next’ challenge).• An Open Water Series in various locations across the country to attract participants and drive promotion and awareness of Open Water Swimming.• Events targeted at younger swimmers focused on achievement in participation rather than achievement in competition. <p>Develop initiatives to encourage larger spectator numbers at high-profile galas.</p>		
Provide a range of programmes to support all stages of the aquatic pathway	<p>Define a pathway to encourage higher levels of general participation in the Aquatics to include:</p> <table><tr><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aqua Babies• Learn to Swim• Schools• Swim Fit</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Junior Events• Swim For A Mile• Open Water Events• Aqua Fit</td></tr></table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aqua Babies• Learn to Swim• Schools• Swim Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Junior Events• Swim For A Mile• Open Water Events• Aqua Fit
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Roll out targeted programmes supporting general participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build effective partnerships to help drive swimming activity and deliver participation initiatives including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Community Aquatics Programme.– Go for Life Programme (targeting older generation swimmers).– Broad Aquatic Programme (offering multi-discipline lessons — swimming, mini polo, diving, open water).– Open Water Programme.• A Swim For A Mile style programme across primary and secondary schools to be run through Active Schools Programme.• Develop and roll out of a school- specific ‘Learn to Swim’ programme as part of the primary school aquatic curriculum.• Create and implement a development plan for third level institutions focused on driving growth.• Workplace wellbeing initiatives.		

In off the high
dive. In against
the waves. Marco
Polo. Water polo.
New best lap time.
Having a great time.

Me and the water.

Members’ Participation

Our Goal
Further develop and support our aquatic community.

We will	How we will do it
Support our regions and clubs to deliver a high-quality experience for their members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All clubs achieving Club-Mark status by 2021 with support materials and online capability to help streamline the process.• Club Support Officers continuing to provide practical ‘on the ground’ support to our regions and clubs.• The introduction of newly engaged Regional Pathway Development Coaches helping to improve the quality of coaching and coach support in our clubs and regions.• Ensure effective regional structures that reflect and are aligned to the national structures.
Increase our total membership from 17,000 to 25,000 by 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing further programmes and events to retain and/or reintroduce people to swimming.• Further designing and defining of our broader membership categories.• Working more closely with our clubs where programme and pool time is available for new members.• Develop pathways for engagement with other sports/bodies including Triathlon, Modern Pentathlon, Paralympics, Special Olympics, Irish Water Safety, Surf Lifesaving.
Provide a comprehensive competition structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Align clearly with the Performance Strategy and provide a multi-tiered competition pathway that supports the potential of our members.• Promote fun competitions that encourage retention in the sport.• Provide a well-structured education programme for the development of technical officials and other volunteers.• Continue to run and further develop the Schools’ Competition Programme.
Increase support for aquatic disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement the National Water Polo Development Plan.• Assess the viability of developing diving facilities and programmes in core centres of population and leverage the profile of diving post Rio 2016 to encourage increased participation.• Create and implement an Open Water Development Plan and engage with stakeholders inside and outside of the traditional Swim Ireland ‘family’ to drive growth of open water clubs and swimming.• Support the further development of Masters Swimming.

Performance

Our Goal
Provide an environment that helps our athletes perform to their best.

We will	How we will do it
Implement a Performance Programme which can deliver sustainable success on the Olympic and World stages	<p>Create a sustainable Performance System whose key characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear and accountable structure focused on long-term, sustained success driven by process.• Defined roles and responsibilities for all involved within the programme.• Effective and positive stakeholder engagement.• Focused investment aligned to the vision and underlying principles of the Performance Programme.
Ensure the competition model that support the Performance Pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and revise the domestic competition model for implementation from 2017-18 season onwards ensuring that there is a clear aim and purpose for all competitions and they are aligned to the pathway and performance journey.• Targeted international exposure for key athletes.• Focus on Olympic events.• Explicit focus on the development of high-performing Irish relays.
Put in place effective national and regional programmes providing athletes and coaches with a pathway from their club programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop regional pathways to offer athletes and coaches with the ‘step-up’ required to enable them to achieve the next level of performance progression by increasing the quantity and quality of coaching, training and competition available in each region underpinned by and aligned with the national programme.• Appoint regional Pathway Development Coaches to manage and co-ordinate activity across the regional programme.• Establish the National Centre (Dublin) as a hub for performance and as a centralised resource for Ireland’s highest-achieving athletes with a 2020 athlete progression focus.• Establish the National Centre (Limerick) as a hub for performance and the Performance Pathway which has a 2024 athlete progression focus.• Provide support to daily performance environments — introduce and develop Athlete Improvement Monitoring (AIMs) process.• Identify ‘quick gains’ that can be made through coaching and/or sports science/ sports medicine interventions.

“High-performing people in a high performance system working in unison to consistently achieve Olympic and World medals.”

We will	How we will do it
Develop performance knowledge for athletes, coaches and practitioners	<p>Through the National Centres, implement relevant performance testing and monitoring to drive critical questioning through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved understanding of exposure to pressurised situations and environments.• Structured education opportunities for key stakeholders.• Identify and act upon potential threats and weaknesses to Irish performance, enabling a competitive advantage.
Increase our influence within world swimming and within Irish sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisation and delivery of annual regional roadshows to disseminate plans and processes.• Strengthen relationships with the Olympic Council of Ireland, Sport Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland, LEN, FINA and other key partners.• Enhance the relations between swimming and diving within Swim Ireland through NPD oversight and through the Sport Ireland Institute relationship.• Develop a support network of aligned coaches and staff across all-Ireland and facilitate learning opportunities for key personnel.

Leadership

Our Goal
Be recognised as an organisation that leads with integrity and operates to high standards in all areas.

We will	How we will do it
Ensure that Swim Ireland is a well-run organisation and acknowledged as such	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to operate to best practice standards as set out in the Governance Code adopted by the board.Align national and regional bodies to the overall strategy and ensure they provide strong leadership within their areas.Continue to provide and expand the range of support services offered to clubs.Support our volunteer committees.
Ensure that our sport is providing a safe and secure environment for all our participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop, design and implement a new Young People’s Strategy reflecting what our young people want from their sport.Continual review of best practice and compliance in safe-guarding, child protection and updating of our child welfare and protection policies.Provide ongoing education, training, support and advice to our members and a platform for their voice to be heard.Supporting young people involved at a performance level of our sport and those around them to ensure a healthy journey whilst pursuing personal excellence.
Grow our financial base	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a strategy to generate a minimum of 50% self-generated revenue by increasing existing and identifying new revenue sources.Create and secure new commercial partnerships.Maximise funding opportunities through Irish and European public funding schemes.
Improve the profile of Aquatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to develop a marketing, PR and branding strategy to raise the profile of the Aquatics.Provide effective transparent and consistent communications internally and externally.



Appendix

2013–2016 Strategy Review

The previous strategy was born of the vision “to inspire and empower people in Ireland of all ages and abilities to participate in our sport and to embrace a healthy lifestyle”. The plan identified five strategic goals for delivery under which 16 key issues needed focus over the course of the strategy.

The plan was an ambitious one and challenged staff and volunteers on many fronts to deliver at the highest levels. In reviewing progress against the plan, we can be justifiably proud of our achievements under the five goal areas.

Some of the highlights include:

- We have succeeded in our ambition to provide additional support to our clubs on the ground and the introduction of regionally-based support was a particularly successful initiative.
- We are confident that we have built a strong governance framework to deliver on our plans for the future.
- Our voice is being heard and our message is strong and is reaching out beyond our traditional membership.
- Our vision “to inspire and empower people in Ireland of all ages and abilities to participate in our sport and to embrace a healthy lifestyle” is being heard.

Inevitably there are areas in which we have not achieved what we initially set out to do:

- We had mixed results at the highest level of our sport but have laid a solid foundation for developing our young swimmers and are now focused on putting in place a system to support their development to Tokyo 2020 and beyond.
- We have not yet secured a major sponsor for the organisation but we feel that we have successfully built our profile and brand and are confident that we will be able to do so in the short-to medium-term.

We said that our 2013–2016 Strategic Plan was ambitious. It was, and in the main we delivered on it. It provides a solid platform for continued growth and development of our sport.

A full in-depth review of the strategy is available at www.swimireland.ie/strategyreview2016

Notes

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