

PRESS RELEASE

January 2020

Free swimming pilot for pregnant women launched

From 1 February, pregnant women living in South Gloucestershire will be able access free swimming as part of a year-long pilot scheme from the region's Active Lifestyle Centres.

The scheme is being run as a joint partnership between Circadian Trust, the not-for-profit organisation operating the Active Lifestyle Centres, and South Gloucestershire Council. The pilot will run for a year, which will be monitored and reviewed, and the findings used to inform any future decision.

Swimming is a highly beneficial way to stay active during pregnancy and can be performed safely in all three trimesters. Widely recognised as a low-impact method of aerobic exercise, swimming provides a more comfortable environment for expectant mothers to maintain their physical health – as the water both keeps them cool and supports the additional weight.

In addition, researchers are now [discovering](#) that regular aerobic exercise during pregnancy has the potential to improve the mental and physical health of children well into adulthood.

To be eligible for the scheme, women will need to present their Maternity Exemption Certificate, supplied by their doctor or midwife, and will also need to show proof of address before their first session.

Mark Crutchley, Chief Executive at Circadian Trust, said: "As an organisation with health and wellbeing at its core, we're committed to making exercise accessible to all. Therefore, it's an absolute pleasure to be helping women to swim throughout their pregnancies for free.

"There are a vast number of benefits to exercising during pregnancy, from maintaining a healthy weight to reducing health-related complications for the mother and baby – and these benefits can have long-term effect on a child's development beyond birth. I sincerely hope that this pilot scheme is well-subscribed to, allowing us to continue offering the service well beyond the first year."

Cllr Ben Stokes, South Gloucestershire Council's Cabinet Member for Adult and Public Health, said: "We are committed to helping our residents at key moments in their lives, to encourage an active and healthy lifestyle and we are very pleased to be able to offer this free service for all pregnant women in South Gloucestershire. It's hoped that by supporting expectant mothers to be active at this critical stage, they will continue to exercise regularly with their child in their early years."

There are five Active Lifestyle Centres operated by Circadian Trust across South Gloucestershire - in Bradley Stoke, Kingswood, Longwell Green, Thornbury and Yate – and eligible customers will be able to access the sessions at any of the Centres.

For more details on the swimming facilities, please visit:

<https://activecentres.org/facilities/swimming/>

ENDS

Notes to editor:

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Alternatively, please call 0117 907 3400

About Circadian Trust

- Circadian Trust is an innovative, social enterprise operating as an independent charity, which successfully manages five Active Lifestyle Centres across South Gloucestershire. These are located in Bradley Stoke, Kingswood, Longwell Green, Thornbury and Yate.
- Circadian Trust work in close partnership with South Gloucestershire Council helping to deliver an overall shared philosophy to contribute to the improved health, cultural and social wellbeing, and quality of life the local community.
- Any profit made by the Trust is reinvested back into the business to improve facilities, equipment, and services for its customers and the local community.
- For more information, visit: www.activecentres.org/about-us/