



The Active Life Oysterman Triathlon 2024

I am really looking forward to welcoming you all to this year's Active Life Oysterman Triathlon. I've been involved since the very first Oysterman Triathlon back in 2015 but after 10 years I'll be handing over the reins to a new race director after this year's event. Whether you have done every single Oysterman or whether this is your first, please read through this document in detail to ensure that you have a great race day.

The forecast over the next couple of weeks is typical for what we are now used to across the UK, a mix of sunshine and showers. Hopefully the showers won't have any impact on race day and that the sunshine continues to warm the sea.

Although the event is set up with you in mind, there are a few elements that add extra meaning to the event. The RNLI Sea swim, the Active Life Bike course and the Porchlight Run are all named after charities connected to the event. It's the RNLI's 200th anniversary this year and I'm sure you are aware of the incredible role they play within coastal communities. Active Life have been involved with every Oysterman event since it started, with hundreds of Oyster men and women using its facilities to prepare as well as nurturing new participants into the sport. This year another 100 people are doing their first ever triathlon. Last but not least, doing a triathlon is a challenge, something that Porchlight service users experience every day. If you are fundraising for Porchlight then please ensure you let them know as Emma from Porchlight will be handing out a free place for next year's Oysterman to this year's top fundraiser at the trophy ceremony at 10am.

Porchlight support more than 8000 homeless and vulnerable individuals and families across Kent over the last year. For more information on how to support Porchlight follow the link to their Just Giving fundraising page: <https://www.justgiving.com/porchlight>. If you have a spare 5 minutes, please take the time to watch [Jacqui's story](#) – which will show you how your fundraising is helping people that are really struggling right now.

Once again the University of Kent's Sports Therapy and Rehab students will be providing post race massage to aid your recovery. The team run a student-led clinic at the University of Kent: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/sports-clinic/rehab>. There will be donation buckets in the massage tents if you would like to make a donation to Porchlight or the RNLI for your post event massage. Staff from the University will also be looking for people that are willing to complete a free VO2max assessment using a Virtual Reality headset at their research facility in Canterbury at some point in the next few months. If you are interested then speak to the University staff at the massage tent after the event.

Lastly from me, the Oysterman continues to strive to be a plastic free event. Our suppliers will be providing the swim caps, timing chips and medals without individually wrapping. The medals and trophies are made from sustainably sourced wood and made in the UK. The swim caps are yours to keep, but if you won't ever use it again, please drop it in one of the collection boxes to be upcycled.

I wish you the very best of luck on the day. If you are new to the sport and would like a few race day preparation tips from a former participant then follow the link – Race Day Tips. If you have any specific questions, please contact me by email before the 13th July: giles.seaford@activelifeltd.co.uk.

Giles

Oysterman Race Director

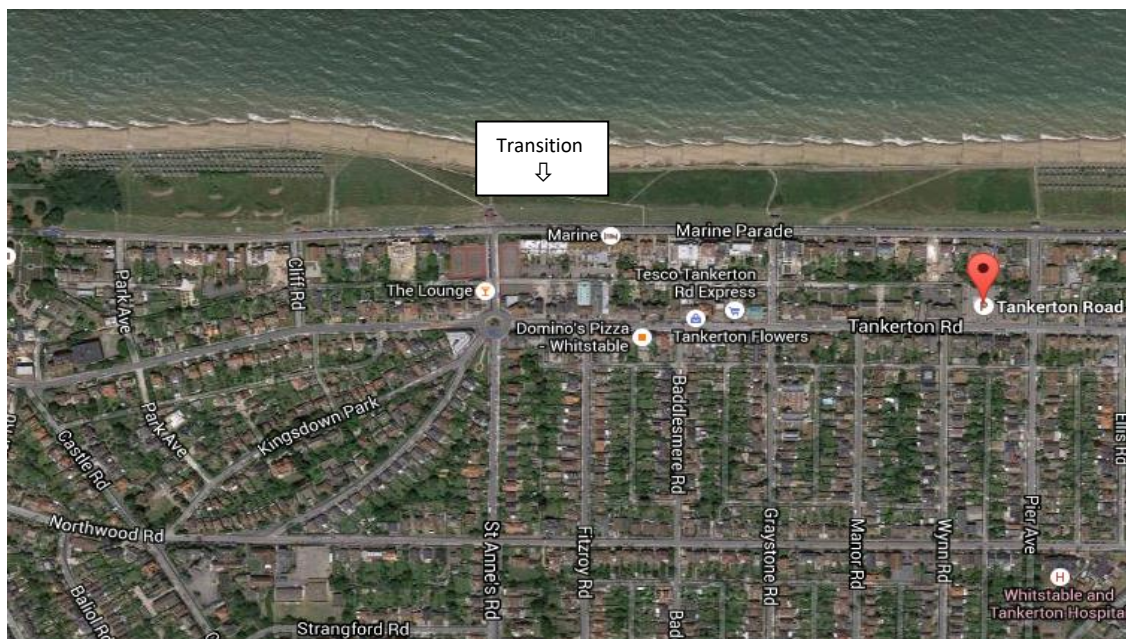
1. Venue:

Please make your way to the race pack collection area to the east of the cafe opposite St Anne's Road, on Marine Parade, Tankerton, CT5 2BE. Please see the map below.

2. Travel:

We do not have an official car park for the event but there will be plenty of space along the roads that connect to Marine Parade, leaving a short walk to transition. Alternatively, there are a couple of car parks nearby. Tankerton Road Car Park, CT5 2AS is a 5-minute walk to transition, whilst the much bigger Gorrel Tank Car park, CT5 1LB is a 10-minute walk to transition but please beware there is a height restriction barrier here.

Whitstable train station is 0.8 miles away (approx.17-minute walk) and Chestfield and Swalecliffe train station is 1.2 miles away (approx. 23-minute walk).



3. Race Pack Collection:

We will be opening race pack collection on the Saturday evening (13th July) from 18:00-19:30. This helps spread the collection process over two sessions and makes for a more relaxed race day morning. So if you are able to, do come and get your race packs in advance. If you are not able to come on the Saturday, race pack collection will be open again from 05:45-06:45 on Sunday morning.

Please note that you will not be able to rack your bikes on Saturday evening, this can only be done on the morning of the event but will mean you can go straight to transition in the morning. Before you head into transition please put your bike helmet on. Your race pack has 2 stickers, one small one for your helmet and one for your seat post. Please follow the instructions on the sticker and make your way over to transition for your bike inspection.

You **MUST** bring **PHOTO ID** to collect your race pack, **NO ID, NO RACE PACK**. If you are a current Triathlon England member please use your membership card as your photo id. Please collect your race pack according to your swim wave. Your swim wave can be found in the pre event information email or on the Oysterman website.

With your race pack you will receive -

- 1x Timing chip and velcro band which should be attached to your left ankle
- 1x coloured Swim Cap relating to your swim wave
- 1x Race number and safety pins
- 2x Numbered stickers for your bike and helmet. The small sticker goes on your helmet and the long sticker wraps around your seat post.

You will not receive any information in the post and your race number will be allocated at point of collection. If you ordered a t-shirt when booking this will be available to collect at the same time. If you are not sure if you ordered a t-shirt, you will be able to find this on your booking confirmation email or you can ask at the t-shirt collection area.

If you are collecting your race pack on Sunday morning you will need put your helmet and bike stickers on before attempting to go into transition.

4. Equipment:

You will be allowed to take a small bag into transition. Please note for safety reasons and in line with British Triathlon rules, no boxes or bags larger than hand luggage will be permitted in transition. The following list might be helpful, but choose what will work for you:

- Swimwear (costume, goggles)
- Wetsuit
- Towel
- Footwear to walk down to the swim start (flip flops, crocs)
- Any specific medication (inhaler etc...)
- Bike (road, mountain or hybrid but must be road legal and not banned by Triathlon England)
- Helmet (this needs to be close fitting so that it won't come off)
- Race belt (you will only receive one race number)
- Bike Shoes, running trainers and socks
- Tri suit or top and shorts
- Transition gear (small towel/anti chafe cream/race belt/sunglasses)
- Water Bottles and energy gels/drinks

Certain items are banned under the British Triathlon rules, these include MP3 players, mobile phones and personal video recording devices during the race. Please only bring what you need into transition. Fixed wheel bikes (bikes that use the pedals as a brake) are not permitted in the race, e-bikes are also not permitted. Please follow the link to the current [British Triathlon rules](#). The 2024 rule changes are also available via this link. [British Triathlon Competition Rules Update 2024](#)

5. Transition:

Only competitors will be allowed into transition and it will be staffed at all times. Please bring your bike with you on your arrival and have your helmet on your head and strapped up. Your main race number will allow you in and out of transition. You will only be allowed out of transition with your bike at the end of the race with all your race numbers still attached and matching. This is to ensure your bike and helmet goes home with you and not with someone else. Please ensure the end of your handlebars are covered and there is no exposed metal before you arrive at transition. There will be a Triathlon England Technical Official in transition to monitor all competitors. We will not be body marking competitors, if you wish to do so, this can be done inside transition. Racking will be numbered with odd numbers on one side and even numbers on the other with signs to help direct you to where you need to rack. Bikes should be racked by your seat with the racking number facing towards your handlebars. Once you have set up your kit please take what you will be using for the swim and make your way out of transition to allow others to rack their bike.

6. Relay entries:

For those of you competing as a relay, you will only have one timing chip which needs to be handed over to your team mate inside transition. You will not be able to take anything out of transition once the race has started and until the last competitor has finished unless a timing chip is attached to your ankle and you are participating in the race. If you are competing on the bike leg, you must be waiting by your racked bike before collecting the timing chip. If you are on the run leg, you must wait until your team mate has racked their bike before collecting the timing chip and then making your way out of the run out. There will only be one set of race numbers so the number changeover between bike and run must be made before leaving transition. For the bike leg, your number needs to be on your back and for the run it needs to be on your front.

7. Race Briefing:

There will be a race briefing for all competitors that will take place between the transition area and the finish gantry at 06:45. This will be to inform you of any important changes, or key information that may impact you. Once this has taken place, we will invite everyone to head down in their swim waves to the swim start, with each swim wave being counted into the water separately.

8. Food/Drink:

You will need to provide your own hydration throughout the event. There will be no water stations on the course to reduce our reliance on single use items. However, we will have a large jerry can inside transition that you can refill your water bottles after the finish. The on-site café will be open from 06:30am on the day and they only accept cash! Whitstable has a great food offer for after the event but if you are after anything specific, booking in advance is essential.

9. Toilets:

There will also be 2 portable toilets inside transition that will be just for participants but the public toilets by the café near the swim-in will be opened at 06:00 and will be far more plentiful. There are no changing facilities on site. We recommend wearing your race suit to the event leaving just your wetsuit to put on when you arrive.

10. Spectating:

The setting for the Active Life Oysterman Triathlon is perfect for spectating. There is plenty of space to watch the swim from the slopes or from the beach. However, please ask any friends and family to keep any dogs on leads and be mindful that there may still be people setting out on their run as the first finishers arrive at the finish funnel.

11. Medical information:

If your medical history has changed since registering for this event and may impact you or others in some way then please let us know. Phoenix Medical Services will be on site throughout the morning should you require any assistance. They will be located both near the finish area and will also have a first responder out on the bike course.

12. Wetsuits:

We would strongly advise everyone to wear a wetsuit as it will improve buoyancy and is safer. This has been the key message from Triathlon England over the last couple of years. The current sea temperature along the swim course itself is between 14 and 15 degrees so as it stands you will need to wear a wetsuit. The Triathlon England technical official and the race director will notify you in the race briefing on the day whether it will be a wetsuit optional swim.

The north Kent coast does have jellyfish in the summer months but the majority of them are not able to sting humans. Those that can sting feel a bit like a stinging nettle. Wearing a wetsuit reduces the chances of being stung considerably.

13. The RNLI Swim:

The swim start will be in 3 waves. The waves have been created based on the swim times you provided when registering for the event and adjusted where requests have been made to start with friends. However, this is not always possible, particularly where the difference in expected swim times is broad. You will be swimming with people of a similar ability on the whole.

Marshals will begin to lead you down to the swim start just after the race briefing. Please give yourself plenty of time to get down to the swim start area which is a few minutes' walk from transition. Please keep to the paths as Tankerton Slopes is nationally recognised for its rare flora and fauna.

The first wave will be starting at 07:00 with each wave going off every 3 minutes. If you need time to get acclimatized in the water then you will have a couple of minutes in the water before you will be called to the start line. We will call each wave to be counted into the water separately. The swim hats provided are compulsory as they indicate which wave you will be in. If you are allergic to latex then you will be permitted to wear your own swim hat under the one we provide. It will be obvious if you are in the wrong swim wave as your swim hat is coloured based on which swim wave you will be going off in. The swim start will be in the shallow water along the foreshore and the starting line will be the line between 2 lifeguards in the water.

The swim course is 500m with large sighting buoys for easy navigation. The swim entry and swim exit are separate so if you really don't like walking (or running on pebbles) you may leave footwear at the swim exit but please don't block the exit for other swimmers when putting them on. There will be matting leading to the swim start and from the swim exit. At the swim exit you will be funnelled over the timing mat before making your way up the slope to transition.



In the unlikely event of adverse weather conditions or poor water quality, we may have to cancel the swim section of the event and turn the event into just a bike and run. This will be a decision made on the morning of the event with the swim safety team and will be in the interest of your safety. The

current forecast is looking mixed, with an air temperature around 15 degrees and a gentle westerly breeze which hopefully will mean good swim conditions, but an update will be provided in the race briefing. Water quality is tested frequently and will be carried out in advance. In general the water quality at Tankerton is good but understandably some of you may be worried about this. To put your mind at rest, the [Environment Agency data](#) shows their sampling figures for the last 10 years that the bathing area is safe to swim in.

14. Swim Safety:

For many, the swim is the most daunting part of the race, but don't worry! Our water safety team will be there to guide you and help if required. The team, provided by Canterbury City Council's Foreshore services will be supported by a team of volunteers from Whitstable Canoe Club. The lifeguards are the same lifeguards that patrol the sea throughout the summer. If this is your first triathlon, or swimming is not your strongest discipline, the only swim stroke that we ask you to avoid is backstroke. Otherwise take your time, you won't be asked to leave the water unless it is clear that you are not moving forward and have not done so for a while. If you get into any difficulty, lie on your back and raise your arm; a lifeguard will come to you and if necessary, arrange the safety team to take you to the shore. If you hear the lifeguards blowing their whistle, this is because someone is either in difficulty or drifting way off course. Please check they are not trying to get your attention. If you don't complete the swim you will be permitted to continue your race but your race time will show as DNF. If you are in the third swim wave and are struggling with the swim, you will be permitted to hold onto a kayak to catch your breath momentarily.

15. The Active Life Bike course:

Please take your time to study and make a mental note of the bike route, as it is slightly different to previous years. The state of Kent's roads on the whole are not great and the bike course is no different. There are some sections of newly tarmacked road along with a few sections that are well overdue being resurfaced. There is one deep pot hole in Herne village that will be sprayed with pink paint and covered with a cone. The short section of road surface along Thornden Wood Road is pitted with lots of shallow pot holes and a small section of Molehill Road between Chestfield Road and the Drove is quite bumpy.

Marshals will be out on the course to assist and signs will indicate a change in direction. The marshals will not be stopping traffic for you and it is still your responsibility to check for traffic when pulling out of a junction. For those new to the sport, British Triathlon rules state that it is your responsibility to know the course and this point cannot be exaggerated enough. As a fairly technical course, the better you know the course the easier it will be to manage.

[The Active Life bike course](#)

[Video of the Active Life Bike course](#) – (please note this was filmed in the middle of the day with some roadworks that won't be in place on the day)

The bike route is on open roads so you will need to adhere to the road traffic act and highway code at all times. Please don't be tempted to cut corners, or ignore a roundabout! Helmets must be worn and fastened before the bike is touched, and remain fastened until the bike is racked at the end of the cycle stage. You will need to display your race number on your back during the bike leg. As you will be provided with just one race number consider buying, borrowing or even making a race belt to make this much easier

Competitors must maintain 10 metres behind other riders on the bike segment unless overtaking. You will have 20 seconds to pass the bike in front of you, or you will need to return to your position.

This is a non-drafting event and anyone reported or caught drafting by the marshals or our motorcycle technical officials may face time penalties or disqualification.

Do not mount your bike until you have crossed the mount line and please dismount before you reach the dismount line. Marshals will be giving clear instructions on where to mount and dismount and there will also be signage to show you where the lines are.

16. The Porchlight Run course:

The run is a predominantly fast and flat one, starting with a long slightly downhill grassy stretch to the promenade by the skate park. At the skatepark there is a new concrete path that has been put in as part of some excavation work by Southern Water with protective fencing on either side. As you exit the fenced area a marshal and signage will direct you right along the path on outside of the nature reserve joining back on the promenade and up to the turnaround point. On the return, you will go straight through the nature reserve. before re-joining the promenade all the way until a steady incline back onto the Slopes leaving you only 300m run to the finish line. Please keep right all the way along on the promenade and overtake to the left (taking care to avoid oncoming runners).

You will need display your race number on your front during the run leg and ensure it is visible when coming into the finish area as the timing chips are backed up by video technology that ensures times are accurate. We will also be letting spectators know who to cheer across the finish line, we can't do this if we can't see your race number. Here is a link to the [run course](#).

The promenade and slopes are open to the public, on a sunny summer's day there will be walkers and dog walkers at some point along the run course so please give people and animals a wide berth.

17. Race Finish:

We will help competitors remove their timing chips and place into receptacles. However, we know many of you will just want a bit of space after completing the course so please come back to get your timing chip removed if you need to lie down. Marshals and the timers will keep nagging so please spare them by dropping it in the boxes once you have crossed the line. Transition will be open as soon as the first finisher crosses the line. The live results will be available on the [Oysterman Triathlon website](#) as you cross the finish line. Any timing queries about your race time should be sent by email to results@racetimingsolutions.co.uk.

Your race medal will be waiting for you at the finish. There will be an award ceremony at approx. 10:00 by the finish area. Trophies will be awarded for the first place relay and the first finisher for each of the 7 age groups for both the Female and Open categories.

The post-race massage will be in the race pack collection tent. If you can, please make a cash donation to Porchlight or the RNLI in the buckets provided.

18. Between now and race day:

Unfortunately, it is now no longer possible to defer your entry to next year. We will be contactable by email up until Saturday 13th July at 9am so if you have any queries please email them over to giles.seaford@activelifelttd.co.uk before then. All that's left is to continue to taper your training and unless this is your first time, don't try anything new on race day! If you are still after some tips and like listening to a podcast then have a listen to one of our past entrants [podcast](#) on what to do at your first triathlon.

Good luck with your final preparations, relax and take time to enjoy your race.

In case you are interested: We have been asked by one of the Oysterman entrants whether anyone wants 2 evening tickets to the Paris Olympic Games on Monday 5th August to watch the Athletics. They are willing to take offers for the pair. If you are interested please email Giles so that we can put you in touch with the ticket holder.