

Free Swimming in Gateshead

Young people aged 17 and under can swim for free in Gateshead from 1 April 2009.

Gateshead Council is taking part in Swim4Life, the Government's £140 million free swimming programme that has been designed to give more people the opportunity to swim and to maximise the health benefits of swimming. In addition people aged 60 and over can also swim for free.

All Gateshead Council swimming pools are participating in this initial 2 year programme, however it does not include swimming lessons or courses. In addition free Gateshead Active Cards will be provided now to both of these age groups to help encourage them to get swimming.

Swim4Life contributes to the Government's ambition of getting two million more people more active by 2012 and has been designed to attract new participants as well as encouraging existing swimmers to go more often, and to focus on sustaining increases in participation. Swim4Life is part of the Change4Life movement that recognises in order to maintain a healthy weight we need to both eat well and move more.

This initiative is also a key part of plans to leave a lasting legacy from London 2012, helping more people across the country get active.

It's a truly cross-Government initiative with funding contributions from the Department of Health, the Department for Work and Pensions, Communities and Local Government, the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

This initiative comes at a time when all five of Gateshead's swimming pools are undergoing a £29 million transformation as part of Gateshead Council's Building an Active Future programme. Gateshead Leisure Centre closed earlier in the year to begin redevelopment, Blaydon and Felling Pools are to be replaced with brand new facilities and Dunston and Birtley Pools will also be redeveloped. Work is due to be complete by 2011.