

# Taking the plunge at Portobello

Earlier today photographer Anna Deacon and journalist Vicky Allan were joined by over eighty swimmers to launch their book *Taking the Plunge: The Healing Power of Wild Swimming for Mind Body and Soul*, by taking to the water in their best fancy dress.



The swimmers then headed to Bellfield Hall for hot drinks and cake, where the six best dressed were awarded with a signed copy of the book, plus Nancy Farmer swimming hats, Speedo towels and hats, and a copy of Outdoor Swimmer magazine.

Anna and Vicky have spent the last year travelling the country seeking out inspirational stories from those who wild swim – discovering the incredible ways in which it has benefitted the swimmers' physical and mental health.

Stories include those of Dawn, who went from being wheelchair bound to swimming as part of a relay team across the channel, Itamar, Bryony and Hayley who have all found outdoor swimming to help with their grief after loved ones have passed away, and Andie, Karin and Katie whose swimming offers pain relief for a multitude of conditions, as well as calming their anxiety. The book supports these stories with interviews and research from psychologists and physiologists.

































*Taking the Plunge* also covers the body confidence wild swimming brings, the great sense of community and support

network found by joining a wild swimming group, how cold water immersion works, the practicalities on how to get started and how to stay safe.

*Taking the Plunge is published on 7<sup>th</sup> November by Black & White publishing, priced £20.*

All photos Anna Urban

