

Para-swimmer inspires a new wave of inclusive swimming

Edinburgh-based Paralympic medallist supports 'See My Ability' campaign.

A national campaign is championing inclusive swimming across Scotland by breaking down barriers and creating multiple pathways into the sport.

The team behind the Learn to Swim National Framework, have launched the annual 'See My Ability' campaign which sets out to highlight that swimming is for everyone and aims to break down barriers for individuals with disabilities.

This year the campaign is celebrating Edinburgh based former para-swimmer and swim teacher Scott Quin, a Paralympic silver medallist and inspiring advocate, who is championing inclusive, mainstream swimming lessons for children with disabilities.

The Learn to Swim Framework is open to everyone regardless of age, ability or skill levels, with the partnership committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all.

Launched in 2019, the See My Ability campaign forms part of wider efforts to remove barriers to swimming across Scotland and is showcasing the vital role that swim teachers like Scott play in inspiring others and helping to make swimming more accessible for people in all life stages.

His journey from elite athlete to swim teacher at Edinburgh Leisure's Leith Victoria Swim Centre has inspired many, positioning him as a local hero and mentor for aspiring

swimmers of all abilities.

Scott is now a dedicated swim teacher to over 120 people a week from ages three and a half to adults. He said: "I am beyond grateful for the support I've received throughout my Paralympic career, and I'm thrilled to give back through teaching.

"Watching people learn and enjoy the water reminds me of the joy swimming has brought me, and I want everyone to experience that – whatever their ability.

"It takes a whole community to make swimming possible – from lifeguards to facility staff. Every person contributes to a supportive environment, and I am honoured to be part of that. My mission now is to help others experience the magic of swimming, just as I have."

Scott was born with Crouzon Syndrome, a condition requiring multiple surgeries throughout his youth. Despite these challenges, he achieved success as a swimmer, proudly representing Scotland on the world stage. Now, as a swim teacher, he is an inspiration to others, using his platform to encourage young athletes with disabilities to embrace swimming as a lifelong passion.

His journey from athlete to swim teacher has been bolstered by Edinburgh Leisure's inclusive support, which allowed him to seamlessly transition into a new role.

The organisation, one of 38 providers of the Learn to Swim Framework – a partnership between Scottish Water and Scottish Swimming – is dedicated to creating inclusive, supportive and quality environments where Scott and other enthusiastic Learn to Swim teachers like him across Scotland can thrive.

Marie Kneeshaw, Aquatics Development Officer, from Edinburgh Leisure commented: "Scott's commitment to fostering an inclusive swimming environment aligns perfectly with our

mission.

“His journey from competitive swimming to teaching is an inspiring testament to the power of sport to unite, and we’re proud to support his role in promoting equality in swimming.”

Euan Lowe, CEO of Scottish Swimming said: “Learning to swim should be accessible to everyone and anyone. The Learn to Swim programme provides a setting to allow children, no matter their ability, to learn the skill with their peers.

“The framework has been specially designed so that the lessons can be adapted for all levels and abilities, to help increase the accessibility and inclusion of swim lessons to all children.

“Not only is swimming a vital life skill but it is proven to have a positive impact on social development.”

Peter Farrer, Chief Operating Officer at Scottish Water, said: “Learning to swim is such a vital life skill, especially in Scotland where we have so many miles of rivers, reservoirs, lochs and coastline.

“It’s great to hear about inspiring swim teachers like Scott, who exemplify the values of Learn to Swim in helping to build inclusive and supportive environments where individuals of all ages and abilities can thrive, get active and learn and enjoy swimming in a safe way.

“It is so important to provide supportive, inclusive environments where everyone – no matter their ability, skill level or age – can learn to swim and the gain basic water safety knowledge and skills to help them feel safer in, on and around water. Plus, they’ll also get to experience the other health and social benefits that swimming can offer.”

The ‘See My Ability’ campaign has championed inclusivity since its inception in 2019, and recent results highlight its

success.

The approach promoted for disability swimming is to assess, allocate and review. This encourages swimming lesson providers to create the best environment available, and if appropriate adapt lessons, to ensure children develop and progress.

In some cases this might require smaller group sessions, one-to-one or additional support, however where possible “See My Ability” encourages providers to include children with disabilities in mainstream lessons to learn with their peers.

There has been a rise in mainstream participation, with 66% of children with disabilities on the Learn to Swim Framework now enrolled in mainstream lessons compared to 54% in 2020. The campaign encourages children of all abilities to take part in swimming lessons in a safe and supportive environment.

Around 81,000 children and adults are learning to swim each week through the national framework.

The Learn to Swim Framework is focused on reaching an additional 100,000 children by 2025. This programme is already making a significant impact, helping thousands of young people stay safe and thrive in the water.

<https://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/>

<https://www.scottishswimming.com/learn-to-swim>





