A revised Free Swimming Initiative, funded by Welsh Government and delivered by Sport Wales in partnership with the Torfaen Leisure Trust, will be introduced in public pools across Torfaen from October 2019.

The aim is to attract young people and people over the age of 60 people who face the most barriers in accessing a pool, the chance to learn a life skill and to swim more frequently.

The revised Sport Wales initiative comes after an independent review of the current scheme found it to be no longer fit for purpose. The number of young people benefiting from the scheme has been in decline since 2013/14.

For the 60 plus age group, the review estimated that only 6% of the target population across Wales currently access the programme.

The new initiative will be delivered against a reduced national budget of £1.5m per annum from April 2020. However an additional £1million has been allocated for capital investment to update swim facilities and Torfaen Leisure Trust is intending to use their allocation to improve lockers in all pools.

From October 1, the changes will see a reduction in the overall grant given to the Torfaen Council from Sport Wales of 50% and this will in turn impact on the number of free sessions available at Torfaen Leisure Trust Centres.

Angharad Collins, CEO of the Torfaen Leisure Trust, said: ‘The new grant is aligned with the Vision for Sport in Wales and Welsh Government’s Wellbeing objectives.  We will receive a smaller budget which will result in a reduction of the amount of sessions available, but our aim is to target the Torfaen residents who stand to gain the most.

There will still be free sessions for young people every weekend throughout the year with additional midweek sessions in the summer holidays and pools will also be offering free Fit Swim sessions for over 60s. From October we will be communicating widely with customers and the new scheme will commence from the 14th of October. Using an insight led and partnership approach we will work with local organisations to ensure free swimming continues to play a role in supporting people to swim. Not only is swimming a life skill but it can also provide many added physical and mental health benefits.

‘We understand that change may not be positive for everyone and apologise to some residents who may find their normal sessions rescheduled or no longer free. Changes to timetables will be displayed on our website, our social media channels and at Torfaen Leisure Trust Centres.’

For information regarding the Free Swimming sessions at Torfaen Leisure Trust pools, enquiries@torfaenleisuretrust.co.uk or visit [www.torfaenleisuretrust.co.uk](http://links.govdelivery.com:80/track?type=click&enid=ZWFzPTEmbXNpZD0mYXVpZD0mbWFpbGluZ2lkPTIwMTkwOTI0LjEwNTc1ODIxJm1lc3NhZ2VpZD1NREItUFJELUJVTC0yMDE5MDkyNC4xMDU3NTgyMSZkYXRhYmFzZWlkPTEwMDEmc2VyaWFsPTE2NzkyMjQxJmVtYWlsaWQ9Y2xlcmtAcG9udGhpcmNvbW11bml0eWNvdW5jaWwuZ292LnVrJnVzZXJpZD1jbGVya0Bwb250aGlyY29tbXVuaXR5Y291bmNpbC5nb3YudWsmdGFyZ2V0aWQ9JmZsPSZtdmlkPSZleHRyYT0mJiY=&&&100&&&https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.torfaenleisuretrust.co.uk&data=02%7C01%7C%7C6ead42de73b843b8f15a08d740f15485%7C2c4d0079c52c4bb3b3cad8eaf1b6b7d5%7C0%7C0%7C637049277567081474&sdata=E6RlLxa%2F4mMUyQLPGMVu5Sxhp8RUq3zlsZ9HnH7vuAk%3D&reserved=0) or sign up to receive email updates and timetable changes relating to free swimming sessions.

Please contact the enquiries inbox to be added to the database for further information regarding all wet activities at Trust Centres.