

SWIM THE CHANNEL

**A one-hour documentary on BBC FOUR
Monday 18th July 9pm**



Inside the devoted community of coaches and swimmers who, every summer, work tirelessly together to achieve their dream of swimming the English Channel.

In 1875, Captain Matthew Webb – with little more than some brandy, beer and beef tea to keep him going - became the first man to successfully swim from England to France. Since then more people have conquered Everest than successfully swum across the Channel. To this day, it remains the ultimate open water swimming challenge.

“Swim the Channel” tells the story of those who keep Captain Webb’s vision alive – the volunteer coaches and the unlikeliest of athletes who they tirelessly support in their dream to swim from England to France. The rules are simple - no physical aids, no wimp/wet suits, just a swimsuit, goggles, the all important swimming cap and a spot of grease to stop the chaffing.

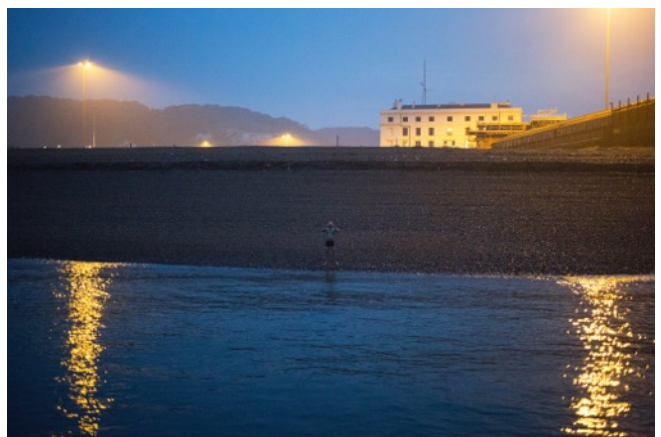
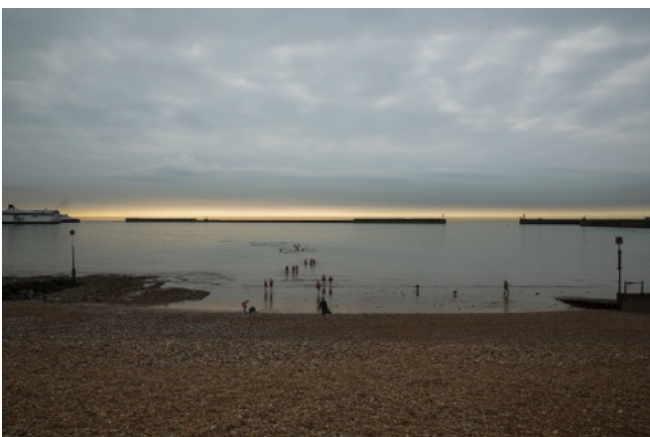
At the heart of the community are pensioners Freda, Irene and Barry. They can be found in Dover every weekend from May to September come rain or shine, ready to train, feed and grease the wannabe Channel swimmers. The swimmers do not take on this arduous journey alone, and also rely on the skill of the pilots who navigate them safely to the other side of the busiest shipping lane in the world.

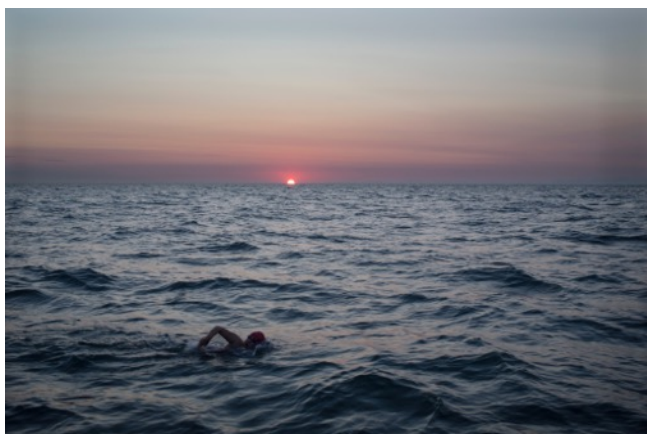
The community share their highs and lows both in and out of the water as they train together on this small stretch of pebbled beach shadowed by the ferry port. Feasting on jelly babies, and fuelled by adrenalin and dreams, the modern day swimmer continues to risk it all in this, the ultimate challenge of man versus nature.

Produced and directed by:	Steph Keelan and Emma Harpin
Director of Photography:	Olly Wiggins
Editor:	Alex Fry
Assistant Producer	Chris Black
Executive Producer:	Ben Anthony
Original score:	Electric Wave Bureau; Damon Albarn, Suzi Winstanley and Michael Smith
Commissioning Editor for BBC:	Carol Sennett

Mother Hen Films / S+O Media Production.







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