



The 154th Open at Royal Birkdale

Update Bulletin July 2026

Welcome and Overview

Final preparations are now well underway for The 154th Open at Royal Birkdale, taking place from 12th – 19th July 2026, as Southport prepares to welcome visitors from across the UK and around the world.

With the Championship site build nearing completion, activity is now increasingly focused on final operational preparations across the wider area. This includes enhanced cleansing, destination dressing, visitor welcome, marketing activity and a programme of events and promotions designed to help local communities and businesses benefit from the Championship.

More than 50 local volunteers have now been recruited to join The Open Host Team, while the destination marketing campaign, business toolkit, dedicated visitor content and local area guide are now live. All main Championship days are now sold out, underlining the scale of interest in The Open's return to Royal Birkdale. Opportunities remain to attend the practice days, providing further opportunities to experience the build-up and spectacle of one of the world's greatest sporting events.

This bulletin provides a final update for residents, businesses and community groups as preparations move into the delivery phase. Official Championship updates can also be found at TheOpen.com.

Championship Site Build Nearing Completion

The extensive temporary build at Royal Birkdale is now approaching completion following several months of activity across the Championship site. Grandstands, hospitality & transport facilities and wider temporary infrastructure have progressively taken shape, with activity now moving towards final completion ahead of the first practice day on Sunday 12th July.

Residents should continue to follow all local signage and temporary access arrangements around the site and Birkdale Common while final works are completed and the Championship moves into its operational phase. Following the conclusion of The Open, a phased dismantling programme will take place, with works scheduled to be completed by September 2026 and affected areas fully reinstated.



Enhanced Cleansing and Waste Arrangements

Sefton Council's cleansing teams are working closely with The R&A to help maintain cleanliness around the Championship site and across local villages and town centres throughout The Open. Enhanced provision will be in place along Waterloo Road, transport locations and areas expected to experience increased footfall. This will be supported by additional cleansing activity, litter picking and waste capacity where required.

Waste collection arrangements have also been planned to minimise disruption during Championship week. Where any residents are affected by temporary changes to their scheduled household waste collections, they will be notified directly in advance with details of the revised arrangements.

An Open Welcome

Residents will increasingly see Southport and surrounding areas dressed and promoted as the host destination for The 154th Open as final preparations are completed. A major programme of destination dressing is being installed across key routes and arrival points, including lamp-post banners along Waterloo Road, creating a strong sense of arrival on one of the principal routes towards Royal Birkdale.

Additional gateway dressing is being installed at the Plough Roundabout, Kew Roundabout and the Coastal Road/Liverpool Road junction, alongside further bannerings around Hillside, the designated rail station for Championship spectators. Together, the programme will provide a coordinated welcome at key entry points, celebrate the return of The Open to Royal Birkdale and reinforce Southport's position as the Capital of England's Golf Coast.

Destination Marketing Campaigns Now Live

Destination marketing activity supporting The Open is now live, encouraging Championship visitors to explore more of Southport and the surrounding towns and villages, support local businesses and return in the future. The Open for All Ways campaign showcases the breadth of experiences available beyond the fairways, including the coast, outdoor activity, food and drink, shopping, family attractions, culture and events.

Anchoring the campaign is a new Fourball competition, delivered in collaboration with Royal Birkdale Golf Club and specifically designed to encourage visitors to explore the towns and villages surrounding the Championship site. Visitors can enter a special golf prize draw as they discover more of the local area, supported by a new local area visitor guide, maps and dedicated digital content highlighting businesses, hospitality venues, attractions and experiences.



Alongside this, the Open for Always campaign is being delivered with Liverpool to showcase the close proximity and complementary strengths of the two destinations, encouraging visitors to experience more during their stay while building awareness and inspiring future return visits. Dedicated landing pages have also been developed on [VisitSouthport.com](https://www.visitsouthport.com), bringing together visitor information, events, local experiences and places to visit throughout Championship week.

Business Toolkit and Marketing Assets Now Live

The dedicated Open Business Toolkit is now live, providing practical information to help local businesses prepare for Championship week and maximise the opportunities associated with increased visitor numbers. The toolkit includes guidance on visitor patterns, operational readiness, staffing, customer service, travel and transport, licensing, sustainability and wider business considerations. Businesses can access the toolkit [here](#).

Alongside the practical guidance, an online marketing toolkit is also available, giving local businesses access to approved campaign assets for use across their own websites, social media channels and customer communications. Businesses are encouraged to use the resources to help create a coordinated welcome across the destination, promote their own activity and increase awareness of local events, offers and experiences.

Southport Gets Ready

Southport Market will become The Open Visitor Hub for Southport during Championship week, providing a focal point for visitors and residents in the heart of the town centre. From Monday 13th July, the Market will broadcast coverage of The Open on TV screens, enabling visitors to follow the action while enjoying the food, drink and atmosphere of the town centre.

Special dressing, visitor information and a programme of events, entertainment and promotions will help create a Championship atmosphere throughout the week.

For first-time visitors, the Hub will also provide information and inspiration to help them get out and about after watching the golf, explore the wider town and surrounding area and make the most of their stay.

The activity will form part of a wider programme across Southport, bringing together live entertainment, special events, local business activity and promotions to extend the atmosphere of The Open beyond Royal Birkdale. Residents and visitors are encouraged to check the latest listings through [VisitSouthport.com](https://www.visitsouthport.com) as Championship week approaches.



The Open Host Team

More than 50 local volunteers have now been recruited to join The Open Host Team, helping provide a warm Southport welcome to spectators at the course entrance and key arrival points throughout Championship week. The volunteers will provide practical assistance, orientation and local information, as well as distributing the new local area visitor guide to help spectators explore Southport and the surrounding towns and villages.

We are extremely grateful for their support and the important role they will play in helping deliver a great welcome to Southport and the wider area, while connecting visitors with local businesses and explaining the range of things to do beyond the course.

Tickets and Opportunities to Experience The Open

Demand for The 154th Open has been exceptionally strong, with all main Championship days now sold out. There are, however, still opportunities to experience the build-up and atmosphere through available practice day tickets, with spectators able to see many of the world's leading golfers preparing for competition at Royal Birkdale.

The practice programme also includes the Last-Chance Qualifier on Monday 13 July, when 12 players will compete for the final place in The 154th Open field, and the Heroes Classic on Tuesday 14 July, a special short-format showcase featuring Champion Golfers and invited guests. Confirmed participants include Scottie Scheffler, Tommy Fleetwood, Justin Rose, Jordan Spieth and Pádraig Harrington, adding to what is expected to be the busiest of the four practice days.

Residents and visitors interested in attending are encouraged to check the latest official ticket availability and information through TheOpen.com.

Travel, Transport and Local Access

With the Championship now approaching, residents, businesses and visitors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the latest travel and transport information. Detailed planning has been undertaken with The R&A, emergency services, transport operators and local authorities to manage spectator movements and minimise disruption as far as possible.

Residents and businesses directly affected by traffic management measures, temporary restrictions or local access arrangements have been contacted as detailed plans have been finalised. Visitors are strongly encouraged to plan journeys in advance and use public transport wherever possible.

The latest information is available through Sefton Council's dedicated The Open 2026 webpage and official Championship travel information.



Stay Updated

Residents, businesses and community organisations are encouraged to continue checking official channels for the latest information as The Open approaches. Useful links and contacts include:-

- Sefton Council - The 154th Open: www.sefton.gov.uk/TheOpen2026
- Visit Southport: www.visitsouthport.com
- Southport BID: www.yoursouthport.com
- Business Support Services & Advice: investsefton@sefton.gov.uk
- Official Championship Information: TheOpen.com
- R&A Community Enquiries: communitysupport@theopen.com
- Championship Enquiries (Sefton Council): tourism@sefton.gov.uk

Looking Ahead

With The 154th Open now just days away, the focus turns to making the most of an extraordinary opportunity to showcase Southport and the surrounding area to a worldwide audience. Residents and businesses are encouraged to embrace the Championship, help create a warm and welcoming atmosphere and show visitors the very best of the area throughout their stay.

The response from the local business community has already been incredible, with more than 70 businesses delivering special events, activities and promotions during Championship week. This collective effort will help bring Southport and the surrounding area to life, create memorable experiences for visitors and provide a wealth of positive content to showcase the destination to audiences far beyond the Championship itself.

Dedicated pages on VisitSouthport.com will bring together event listings, promotions and visitor information, helping spectators discover more of what is happening across the area and encouraging them to explore beyond the course.

The activity taking place throughout the week will also provide an important platform to raise the profile of Southport, its businesses and surrounding communities, supporting the wider ambition to inspire future visits long after the Open Champion 2026 has been crowned.