

HEALTH AND WELL BEING AND THE ROLE OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Executive Summary

The Chairman requested information on the link between health and well being and the role of leisure activities within the Borough of Woking. The importance of social, mental and physical well being is raised along with the variety of activities available at Community Centres in the Borough, that aim to improve the community's quality of life.

Recommendation

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.
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Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Sylvie Marshall, Community Development Manager
Email: Sylvie.Marshall@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3803

Contact Person: Sylvie Marshall, Community Development Manager
Email: Sylvie.Marshall@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3803

Date Published: 14 February 2019

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Leisure activity plays a very important role in wellbeing as they provide opportunities to meet life values and needs. Through participation in leisure activities, people build social relationships, feel positive emotions, acquire additional skills and knowledge and have an overall positive impact on their day to day life. Even relatively small increases in physical activity are associated with protection against chronic diseases, improved mental health and an improved quality of life.

1.2 Physical benefits of recreation:

Taking part in recreational activities, particularly outdoors, can improve your physical wellness, reduce the number of visits to the GP, lower body mass indexes and blood pressure. Outdoor activity provides an excellent opportunity to increase the level of exercise for individuals.

1.3 Leisure Lowers Stress and Depression:

Mental wellness is an important part of your overall health and can impact on your physical wellbeing. Participating in leisure and recreation activities can help individuals better manage stress and reduce depression. Offering a way of finding balance in life and provides a healthy way to handle stress and emotions.

1.4 Improving quality of life:

Engaging in accessible, affordable cultural activity can play a major role in supporting independence, providing an opportunity for people to socialise which is vitally important as loneliness can have a negative impact on cognitive decline and memory problems. Positive health benefits can include improvements in cardiovascular fitness, muscle strength, balance, mood and cognitive function.

2.0 Community Centres and Sports Facilities

2.1 Woking has four main Community Centres: The Vyne, St Mary's, Parkview and Moorcroft, each of which hosts a variety of accessible activities and Wellbeing opportunities; the activities within the Community Centres are included in 3.2 below. Each centre also offers a varied programme of daily activities designed to both entertain and challenge individuals including arts, crafts and games. In addition the centres offer access to Foot Care, Hairdressing, Reflexology and a variety of support groups.

2.2 Sports facilities within the Borough include the Leisure Centre and Sports Box which offer swimming, gym, Spinning, and access to a variety of classes all designed to encourage and enable participation and integration.

3.0 Our offer (not definitive):

3.1 Improving Children's Health and Well-Being:

Surrey Youth Games
Interaction with local schools
Sports Box Activities - Varied
Leisure Centre - varied
Swimming – including disability specific
Football
Rugby
Athletics
Gymnastics

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Tennis
Key Card for looked after children
Youth Clubs

3.2 Improving older Adults' Health and Well-Being:

Walking Football/Netball/Basketball
Swimming – including disability specific
Seated exercise
Boccia
Short Mat Bowls
Well Balanced fitness
Tai Chi
Tea Dances
Seated Dance

3.3 General Well-Being

Yoga
Dance Fit
Zumba
Line Dancing
Weight Watchers
Badminton
Tennis

4.0 Freedom Leisure's Woking Active Communities Team

4.1 The Leisure Operator, Freedom Leisure, has a specific team called the Woking Active Communities Team that is tasked to work with partners to deliver a bespoke offer that meets local needs. The key priorities of the Woking Activity Communities Team are to:

- Encourage the use of key leisure and recreational opportunities to assist people to keep themselves fit and healthy
- Concentrate resources to develop services which are accessible for disadvantaged vulnerable members of the community
- Improve access to information so that individuals can minimise preventable health problems
- Promote the general uptake of activity targeted at improving the overall wellbeing of Woking's community
- Promote physical activity, healthy diet and healthy weight

4.2 The Woking Active Communities Team delivers against these priorities by increasing participation within the following specific target groups; Active Sport, Active Young People, Active Ageing, Active Communities, Active Health and Active Workforce. The team has put together a comprehensive programme of projects and activities that encourage active participation in sport and physical activity by delivering sessions to suit different needs. Below are some examples of the ongoing projects that the team is delivering.

- Woking Friday Night Project – This project offers 11 – 18 year olds a multi-sport activity evening delivery weekly on Friday evenings between 6.30pm and 9pm at Woking Pool in the Park and Woking Leisure Centre. The session fees are kept at a low cost to ensure that the activity remains inclusive to local young people. Around 100 to 150 young people access this opportunity every Friday evening. The sessions are supported by Freedom Leisure staff and youth workers. The activity prevents antisocial behaviour in

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the local area whilst offering a safe and supported environment for young people to access sport and physical activity.

- Walking Sports – Walking Sports are offered as a means to encourage and support adults aged 50+ to get back into sport and physical activity, weekly Walking Netball, Football, and Basketball sessions take place at Woking Leisure Centre. The sessions not only support the physical side of health and wellbeing of the participants but also the emotional and mental state by increasing community and social cohesion.
- Team Woking Specsavers Surrey Youth Games Sessions – The team actively support the delivery of the Team Woking Squash training sessions, by offering 8 weeks of free squash training sessions for new players and supporting the young people aged 7 – 13 years with a club exit route programme. For the 2019 Games the team will also deliver Table Tennis for 7 – 15 year olds and Couch to 2km for 12 – 16 year olds.
- Swim Lessons for Children with Learning Disabilities – Working in partnership with the Swimming Coordinator at Pool in the Park and with Woking Borough Council the team have been able to facilities swimming lessons for young people aged 4 – 11 years with learning disabilities. The 10 week course aims to improve water confidence and teach parents how to assist their children in the water.

4.3 The Woking Active Communities Team offers a broad range of programmes that all aim to increase the health and wellbeing of the local community. By offering an inclusive programme of activities that caters for the wider community and specific target groups, the Team is making positive changes to increase the social value, perceptions and behaviours of the benefits of physical activity and health related activity in Woking.

6.0 Implications

Financial

4.4 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resource/Training and Development

4.5 There are no direct human resource or training and development implications arising from this report.

Community Safety

4.6 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

4.7 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

Sustainability

4.8 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Equalities

4.9 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Safeguarding

4.10 There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

REPORT ENDS