
OVERVIEW OF LEISURE PORTFOLIO

Purpose of Report

1. During the last eight-week cycle the following were the main areas of work under my Leisure Portfolio.

Inclusion

2. The Darlington District Youth and Community Association, Darlington Association on Disability and the Dolphin Centre are working in partnership to gain joint funding in an attempt to sustain the Sportsability Club at the Dolphin Centre.
3. The Sportsability club is an introductory level course, which gives disabled young people aged 12–16 the opportunity to experience a range of sports. The 6-week taster course aims to boost participants confidence whilst having fun by encouraging them to become involved in physical activity and working as part of a team or as a whole group. Where transport is barrier to participation, transportation has been provided.
4. At the end of the course, the coach and young person review opportunities which could follow the programme and decide whether they want to remain at the same level or move into the mainstream clubs to continue the sport. The overall aim of the programme is to develop the club so it is self-sustaining the young people feeding in to the Multi Activity Club for mainstream children at the Dolphin Centre.
5. For children with special needs, parents and carers can swim free at the Dolphin Centre water confidence classes, promoting access and favourites such as disco floats and topsy turvy feature again in this year's activities. The disco float sessions are almost to full capacity with encouraging numbers visiting all other sessions.
6. The Arts Development Team, DASH and Investors in Children piloted a project, which took place during school half term in June 2005. The project, named Artsability encouraged young people to work together to create a musical drama piece, which was performed on stage at the Arts Centre Theatre to an audience, including many friends and family.
7. The Arts Development Team consider the project to be a huge success and have identified many more opportunities for young people with disabilities to participate in creative activities.

Summer Holidays

8. The Dolphin Centre has held a range of fun sessions throughout the summer. Intensive swimming lessons, courts for badminton, squash and table tennis are available at special prices. Included in the programme are some exciting new sports such as Boccia (similar to bowls) and New Age Kurling, a target-based game played on a badminton court.

Mobile Skate Park

9. Over the summer, the mobile skate park has visited the Market Square, Eastbourne Sports Complex and Hummersknott School, where it has been well received, with numbers of users doubling since last year.
10. The Sports Development Team and the Youth Service have worked together to deliver the activity. As it has been so successful, the teams are planning on how to incorporate the Truck into activities after the summer holiday period.

Zone Active

11. The summer Zone Active programme has been successful with young people aged between 8-16 years attending the weekly taster sessions. Young people aged between 5-11 years have attended the Skerne Park Play Scheme twice a week.
12. The Community Sports Leaders Award took place in July with thirteen young people who enrolled completing the course. Owing to the success of the programme, a number of the leaders have continued their voluntary leadership by supporting the Zone Active Project for 10 hours per week.
13. Adult weekly aerobics sessions are taking place at Clifton Court Community Centre in Skerne Park (Park East) and at Maidendale House in Firthmoor (Eastbourne).
14. The Dolphin Centre is working in partnership with Darlington Youth Service to provide Hip Hop dance class at Skerne Park Youth Club for young females in the area. The activity has seen a 50% take up within the community and it is anticipated that this attendance will further increase over the coming weeks.
15. The GEM (Getting Everyone Motivated) training group has been established. The group's first meeting was held in mid August. It is anticipated that a training course will be held in October 2005.

Eastbourne Sports Complex

16. Eastbourne Complex hosted an athletic season where 13 large events were held, an increase on the previous year.
17. As the bowling season draws to a close, this has been another successful season with 5320 users compared to 4712 users in 2004. External teams and visitors to the area have praised the facility.

18. The Sports Complex Community Pavilion has also hosted numerous event and meetings.
19. In Pulse 3 at the complex, the Monthly Motivators is a themed scheme to encourage users to use more machines in the gym. The motivators are usually set as challenges to reach a certain distance or perform a distance in a set amount of time and sometimes a prize of 10 free sessions in the gym is offered to the person who does it the quickest or completes the most amount of miles, as a little incentive to join in.
20. A Tour de France theme was held recently and proved to be a popular incentive for customers.
21. The centre has received excellent feedback on the new equipment, attracting many new customers and increased visits.
22. The Pulse 3 facility continues to grow in strength with a noticeable increase in visits and revenue, compared to 2004.
23. Darlington Hockey Club has continued regular training on Tuesday evenings throughout the season and the use of the facilities on match day, scheduled to take place on a Saturday.
24. Darlington Football Club has renewed their block booking to use the facilities. Not only will this provide increased revenue and increase awareness and profile of the complex.

Sponsorship

25. Alpha FM has confirmed that they will be the media partner for the Pedestrian Heart Launch event. As part of the partnership Alpha FM will provide a two-week on air campaign to publicise the launch of the project.
26. The Darlington 10K Road Run 2005, sponsored by Sherwoods and Darlington Primary Care Trust took place on 14 August. Donations were pledged by Highland Spring who provided 4000 bottles of water.
27. Fab Tech Ltd, Promovere Marketing & Events and Hayton & Lamb sponsored the Mayor's Charity Golf day, which was held in June 2005 at Stressholme Golf Course where 11 teams each with four people, participated in a golf tournament.
28. Magic 1170 and TFM held two nights of music, which formed part of the Darlington Festival 2005 held in the market square. The radio stations held a three-week promotion campaign prior to the events and Darlington Youth Services sponsored the TFM unsigned night on the Friday night.
29. Owing to adverse weather conditions, leading to public safety concerns, the Saturday event - A Magic Night of Music had to be cancelled.
30. Roman Limited has confirmed that they will sponsor The Northern Sinfonia 2005/6, follow the success of 2004/5 events. The orchestra will play four concerts in total, two at the Dolphin Centre and two at the Civic Theatre.

31. Lingfield Point has confirmed that they will sponsor the Yarm Road/McMullen Road roundabout.

Visual Arts

32. Pioneering textile artist, Alice Kettle is exhibiting Mythscapes at the Art Centre from 29 July – 10 September 2005.
33. Local artist Margaret Williams will be running daily workshops throughout Mythscapes to enable people to experience different types of textiles.

Schools Workshop and Exhibition

34. The Arts Development Team have been working with 9 schools on a number of arts projects over a period of ten weeks. Activities included dance, drama, ceramics, banner making and murals, and involved many hundreds of students and staff.
35. As the project was so successful, the work extended to staging a one-day exhibition at Carmel RC Technical College, held in July. The event attracted hundreds of visitors who enjoyed viewing the excellent work produced by young people. The artwork will be returned to the young persons schools where be display, leaving a positive legacy of the project.

Community Arts

36. The Youth Service and arts practitioners, Steve Ward and Pauline Wardle from Ward Visual Arts visited young people at Skerne Park Community Centre. The project encouraged young people to explore their interests and translate their ideas onto canvas. The final piece is to be mounted on a wall inside the community centre to continue to inspire young people within the community.
37. As the project inspired many young people involved, the Arts Development Team and Youth Services are developing plans to continue the project.

Local Authority Arts Forum (LAAF)

38. On 23 July, Darlington Arts Centre hosted the LAAF where Arts Portfolio holders and Arts Officers from the whole North East region join to discuss a pre agreed theme, which was, 'What Darlington Borough Council is doing for the their young people'.
39. Councillor Chris McEwan gave an entertaining presentation involving role-play which addressed the importance of creativity to young people. I presented a detailed account of the programme of activities which the Arts Development Team and their partnerships have delivered.

North Lodge Park: Summer Arts Activities, August 2005

40. Transforming Your Space and Friends of North Lodge Park held a series of free activities in North Lodge Park during August. Although the event was open to all members of the community, a particular aim was to engage with young people, families, and residents around the North Lodge Park area.

South Park

41. The majority of the work included within Phase 1 is now complete. The only exception is the installation of the east entrance gates, which will now be completed at the end of Phase 2. With a completion date of mid to late October envisaged.
42. Work on the Skateboard Park has now commenced and is programmed to be completed by the end of August 2005.
43. The month of August should see the following elements of the project being completed:
 - Rose Garden
 - Rockery
 - Skateboard Park
 - Teaching Block
 - New Toilet Facilities

Darlington Railway Centre and Museum

Events

44. The major event during this period was the “Thomas the Tank Engine” Extravaganza on 9 and 10 July. The sun shone, record numbers of visitors came (4,157 over two days) and expenditure was covered by income. It has been agreed to hold the event again in 2006. For the first time, postcodes were collected from visitors, and will be used to assess the effectiveness of event advertising.
45. August is “Steaming Marvellous” month. Every weekend, Darlington Railway Preservation Society steams a locomotive and provides brake van rides. On 13 and 14 August, we held our “Picture Postcard Family Weekend” where a storyteller and an artist working with the children present supplemented the site’s normal visitor offer.

Education Activity

46. A grant of £1000 from Northern Film and Media has been secured to pay for a creative writing project featuring poet Maureen Almond and film-maker Tony Glover. The project will run over four consecutive Fridays in September. The writers will work with Year 6 pupils from Corporation Road School. The finished work will then be able to apply for further funding, which if granted would finance the production of a poetry film.

47. On Friday 12 August, the Museum staged “We’ll Meet Again”, two concerts to celebrate the end of the Second World War, within the context of the BBC Peoples War project. Every available seat was taken up, and over 150 people thoroughly enjoyed the event. The project has been run in partnership with Jeannie Bishop of the Library Service, who will now be working with the museum on the publication of a booklet recording the wartime memories of local people.
48. The Bollywood film will be the main project in September, and it has already created many positive responses. Darlington residents and people from further a field are keen to become involved in the project. The museum was featured on national radio and local television.

Collections Activity

Renaissance in the Regions – ICT Hub

49. Darlington Museum now has 1384 items on the MODES collection database, which have been fully updated and made ‘web ready’. These items will be updated onto the Single Point of Access (SPA) server for a period of evaluation in the near future.

Railway Exhibition – Bishop Auckland

50. The Museum has supplied interpretation boards including promotional material, for a railway exhibition being held at the Discovery Centre, Bishop Auckland during August. It is hoped that this will help to advertise the Museum and its activities within the Bishop Auckland area.

**Councillor Lee Vasey
Cabinet Member with Leisure Portfolio**