

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**24 September 2025**

### **COUNCILLOR WITHINGTON - CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND OUTREACH.**

For the period July to September 2025

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Leisure Contract**

Participation figures for the year so far remain strong across the 5 facilities despite the summer months – which often see a slight decline in participation:

July – 45758

August - 45925

At the end of August memberships across the contract sat at 3783, with 1014 children on the swim lesson programme (Victory and Reef only).

Usage of the new 3G facility at Cromer Sports Centre has been strong and is expected to grow even further as we enter the main football season. This facility has been received extremely positively by the community.

##### **Countryside**

The Green Futures Youth Project continues and has now attracted around 220 visits from eligible young people. The project is currently due to conclude at the end of the year but we still have a number of sessions to be delivered in the final few months. These include a guided bat walk, more 'Muddy Boots' conservation sessions, a Get to Know Trees session and a two project groups where the team will work alongside groups from local schools and youth groups to deliver new trails to our Green Flag Sites.

Sadlers Wood in North Walsham has recently benefitted from an upgrade to the play area utilising funds secured from S106. Further improvements are due this winter with new activity trail waymarking posts being introduced. The team had also planned to install further woodcarvings at this site but this has been put on hold for the time being due to an owl carving being stolen over the summer.



Work is due to begin imminently on the installation of a new Eco-Learning space at Holt Country Park. Match funded by the Hornsea 3 Legacy Fund. This space will include an indoor and outdoor learning space for visitors & the wider community to utilise. It is hoped that this project will be completed by March 26.

The team held one larger event this summer, as opposed to lots of smaller ones, which was well received by the community and partner organisations. The Pretty Corner Woodland Fair attracted 258 attendees who were able to take part in a variety of nature based activities, enjoy refreshments from local vendors and peruse a number of stalls including charities, partners and local crafters. The team will be seeking to grow the event in the coming years.



### **Beaches/RNLI**

The lifeguard season finished on September 14th. Early feedback is that it has been a busy summer on the beaches with a full debrief with the RNLI due in October.

Over the summer the Council worked closely with the RNLI on their Float to Live

campaign by collaboratively filming a video on Sea Palling beach to help share this key safety message. The RNLI were also part of the Pretty Corner Woodland Fair promoting Float to live and water safety.

The beach wheelchair has been operational over the summer months at Cromer thanks to a collaboration with Openwide who now handle the bookings and hiring for this. Openwide are reporting that *the feedback from everyone using the wheelchair has been incredible.*

### **Pier Pavilion Theatre**

With three weeks to go of the summer show the number of tickets sold was down by around 8% when compared to the same time last year. Whilst our beaches and country parks have seen extra visitors thanks to the hot & dry summer the Pier Theatre has been affected as people choose to spend more time outdoors.

Sales for the Christmas Show remain positive, currently sitting at nearly 11% up on the same time last year. Openwide have made an extra effort around group bookings this year and are seeing the rewards for this as group bookings for Christmas are up considerably.

The Friday night music sessions on the Pier have proven popular with locals and visitors alike and are a good example of attracting a different audience to enjoy the pier.

### **Markets**

The Sheringham Markets have enjoyed a successful summer season with several new traders joining one or both of the markets. As usual the Wednesday market will stop at the end of September.

When all traders are in attendance at Cromer Market it is now operating at capacity.

### **Physical Activity Development**

The Reef Triathlon is due to take on October 5<sup>th</sup> and is sold out, with 125 entrants.

It has been confirmed that the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun will continue for a further three years. The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is a free, government-funded initiative that has been running since 2021. In Norfolk, it is known as the *Big Norfolk Holiday Fun (BNHF)* programme, and has supported over 20,000 children across the county since its inception. Our Leisure Team will continue to work closely with providers to ensure that this offer continues to remain very strong in our district.

The Locality Officer is continuing to support on projects in partnership with Mundesley Golf Club (access), About with Friends (Fitness Suite) and North Walsham Rugby Club (women & girls rugby), seeking funds to help deliver each project.

Funds secured for physical activity projects in the district this year to date = £156,574

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

<b>3 Meetings attended</b>
Volunteer Wellbeing Champions Training Everyone Active Dementia support Group Sheringham Wayfinding Scheme and UKSPF meetings x5 Flash x2 Family Woodland Festival Pretty Corner Sheringham Sports Association Active Norfolk Cooper Road Play Park Forget me not Golf at Sheringham Golf Club – dementia accessible golf sessions on the first Thursday of the month 2pm