

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

13 October 2008

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 2008 SUMMER ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Summary

This report updates Members on activities for young people and children that took place over the summer holidays including the Summer Playscheme, Activate, Y2 Crew and the Summer Active Scheme.

1.1 Summer Playscheme

- 1.1.1 In 2008 the Summer Playscheme was operated between 9am-1pm at 14 venues across the Borough, offering organised activities for the 4-11 year age range.
- 1.1.2 This year six partnership schemes were operated. The Council directly operated and staffed eight venues. Attached at **[Annex 1]** is a list of Summer Playscheme venues operated in 2008. Members will be pleased to note that there were no significant problems with the Summer Playscheme accommodation. A new centre was registered by Ofsted at Borough Green Primary School as Potters Mede was unavailable.
- 1.1.3 The newly re-designed brochure was distributed extensively across the Borough including all primary schools and libraries. Numbers of registrations, including standby places, remained good with 1,476 children registered in 2008. **[Annex 2]** provides a breakdown of the places for each Summer Playscheme venue, including a comparison with last year.
- 1.1.4 It is encouraging to note that 16% of children registered benefitted financially from the Council's Leisure Pass scheme (£7.00 per family per week compared to the full rate of £22.00 per child per week). This illustrates the important role played by the Summer Playscheme in reaching all social groups within the community, and meeting the Council's objective of fair access for all. Members may wish to be reassured that in addition to the concessionary rates on offer, the Council is responsive to individual requests based on specific needs, for example, the introduction of an incremental payment scheme upon request.
- 1.1.5 Since 2004, the Council has offered Playscheme Plus, which is available to children with additional needs or learning disabilities who have 1:1 support at

school. A total of 21 children took part in the scheme in 2008. In addition to Playscheme Plus, a further 64 children took part in the Summer Playscheme this year through referrals from Kent County Council's Children and Families Unit. This reflects the inclusive nature of the Summer Playscheme for all residents of the Borough.

- 1.1.6 Applications were processed efficiently, and it is hoped that an on-line payment system will be developed in advance of the 2009 Summer Playscheme, reflecting this Council's commitment to e-government.
- 1.1.7 Parents were asked to complete a survey at the end of the Summer Playscheme. The results have been analysed and will be considered in the operational arrangements for 2009. The analysis shows high levels of satisfaction, with 96% rating the scheme as very good/good. 94% of those responding found the charges to be about right.
- 1.1.8 Buses ran from Kings Hill to the West Malling and Leybourne centres and from Wrotham to Borough Green.
- 1.1.9 Members will be aware that Ofsted apply 14 national standards for out-of-school care as a legal requirement, all of which must be complied with by the Council. In 2008, Ofsted inspected two of the Summer Playscheme venues. Both reports are awaited following which an action plan will be drawn up to ensure all recommendations made by Ofsted are implemented in advance of 2009.
- 1.1.10 The Mayor formally visited three Summer Playscheme venues on 14 August 2008, judging competitions and meeting children. The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts and the Chairman of this Board also visited a number of venues and may wish to comment at the meeting.
- 1.1.11 84 staff were required to operate the 2008 Summer Playscheme. Each member of staff was asked to complete a survey at the end of the Summer Playscheme. The results will be considered in advance of next year's scheme.
- 1.1.12 Members will be aware that this Council funds the first three weeks of the Summer Playscheme in full, with the fourth week funded in partnership with local parish/town councils. The parish/town council contribution is a one-off payment to support the fourth week of the scheme, and is not based on attendance levels.

1.2 Activate

- 1.2.1 The 2008 summer holiday Activate programme operated to meet the needs of the 8–16 year age group, and was developed in partnership with local schools, colleges, coaches and instructors. Activities were provided at venues across the borough, including the Council's own indoor and outdoor leisure facilities. The programme continued to focus on specialist sports and arts activities in an effort to move away from more traditional courses, that are already provided by other organisations and agencies throughout the borough. The activities included

windsurfing, tree jumpers, first aid, Bollywood dance, history off the page, drama and fencing.

1.2.2 The summer programme was successful, and many positive comments were received from both parents and children. A number of courses reached full capacity in a matter of days of the brochures being distributed, with the outward bound courses at Carrot Wood in Tonbridge proving to be particularly popular. 301 children registered on Activate this year with 629 attendances. Members will be interested to note that 7% of the children registered were Leisure Pass holders, indicating the inclusive nature of the programme.

1.2.3 Parents' views were sought through a questionnaire. Listed below are the key issues arising from the responses:

- 85% of respondents were satisfied with the Activate programme overall.
- 96% of respondents felt there was an adequate range of choices.
- 69% of respondents were satisfied with the cost of activities.
- 84% found the courses very enjoyable.

1.2.4 It is considered that the Activate programme continues to be both popular and successful, and should be retained and improved in the future. Taking into account lessons learnt from the 2008 programme, and feedback from parents, it is suggested that:

- Consideration be given to extending the duration of some activities and offering discounts for multiple bookings;
- The programmes continue to focus on less traditional sports and arts activities; and
- The range of activities on offer be reviewed in light of attendance levels and customer feedback.

1.3 Y2 Crew

1.3.1 Members may recall that this year responsibility for the management and delivery of Y2 Crew transferred from Central Services to Leisure Services to sit alongside the Summer Playscheme and Activate.

1.3.2 The objective of the Y2 Crew summer scheme is to "provide a programme of diversionary and educational activities for vulnerable young people aged 11-18 years in areas of the borough where crime and disorder issues have been experienced within this age group". Due to historically poor attendance in both the areas of Snodland and East Malling, a review of the areas in which the scheme was focused was undertaken and the scheme extended to cover the areas in which Kent County Council Youth Service is actively involved. In 2008 Y2 Crew

was targeted in the areas of Tonbridge, Hadlow, East Malling, Snodland, Ditton, Aylesford, Burham, Eccles and Wouldham.

- 1.3.3 The scheme runs for the first four weeks of the school summer holidays providing trips, courses and activity days. The trips and courses are run at a subsidised rate for the young people. The activity days are run free of charge to ensure that as many young people as possible are able to attend.
- 1.3.4 The scheme is funded by a range of partnership organisations with the largest contribution received from the Community Safety Partnership.
- 1.3.5 The 2008 scheme operated from Monday 28 July to Friday 22 August. A total of 142 young people were allocated spaces on the scheme, an increase of 11% compared to 2007. A total of nine referrals from Social Services and the Adolescent Resource Centre were received, with the cost of the referred spaces being met by the referring agency. In addition to the referrals, 19 young people were Leisure Pass holders and took advantage of the concessionary rates on offer.
- 1.3.6 Trips were run on Mondays and Fridays to activities and venues such as ten pin bowling, tree jumpers, London Eye, Chatham Ski Centre, theatres and Thorpe Park. The aim of the trips was to provide the young people with new skills and experiences, as well as giving them a chance to visit new places and expand their horizons. **[Annex 3]** shows the attendance figures for 2008.
- 1.3.7 Activity days were run on Wednesdays. Activity days were theme based and transport provided to increase the number of young people attending. A number of key agencies provided support to each of the activity days, providing workshops and informal sessions. **[Annex 3]** outlines the activity day programme and the attendance figures in comparison to 2007, which highlights a marked improvement in the number of young people who took advantage of these days. Feedback received from the key agencies has also been positive.
- 1.3.8 Courses were run in conjunction with the Council's Summer Activate scheme. Attendance on these courses was disappointing, which is due in part to a different payment system being operated by Activate, causing some confusion. This is an issue which will be resolved in advance of the 2009 scheme.
- 1.3.9 A glossy A5 brochure was introduced in 2008, highlighting the scheme and also the key agencies. Young people have commented that they preferred the new look brochure and the additional information that it provided. It is suggested that this format remain in 2009 and a wider distribution be put into place.
- 1.3.10 In overall terms the 2008 Y2 Crew Summer programme was successful, and many positive comments were received from both parents and young people. The Chairman of this Board visited a number of the activity days and may wish to comment at the meeting.

1.3.11 An initial meeting of all the key agencies involved has already taken place to agree the way forward and bring forward proposed changes. A number of the proposed changes will be implemented in advance of 2009, subject to partnership funding being available and these are outlined below.

- A review of the targeted areas be undertaken and extended to new areas including Borough Green, subject to funding being available.
- An extension of the 'free' activity days be considered and run in conjunction with the ongoing youth projects in the evening, as this has been highlighted by the key agencies as a time when instances of anti-social behaviour increase.
- A review of the payment and booking systems to increase efficiency and maximise the number of actual attendances.
- The current brand and marketing material be increased and distributed alongside Activate.

1.4 Summer Active Scheme

1.4.1 The newly launched Summer Active Scheme aimed to encourage 4-15 year olds to keep fit and active during the summer holiday period. The scheme was promoted through local primary schools. Participants registered free of charge and were provided with four activity diaries and when each diary (or 8 activities were completed) visited one of the Council's indoor leisure facilities to receive a free activity reward voucher.

1.4.2 A total of 667 children signed up to the scheme across the three leisure centres and completed a range of healthy activities from dog walking to rock climbing either under parental supervision or at one of the Council's organised summer holiday activity sessions. Collectively, Summer Active Scheme participants recorded over 4,000 activities in their diaries and made a total of 1,524 recorded visits to the centres during the summer holiday.

1.5 Legal Implications

1.5.1 The Council has powers to undertake this activity by virtue of Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972. Under the requirement of the Children's Act (1999) and in accordance with the Council's Child Protection Policy all staff will be subject to an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check no older than 12 months.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.6.1 The cost of the activities will be met from the existing 2008/09 Leisure Development revenue budgets and through fundraising for the Y2Crew.

1.6.2 Brochures for this year's activities were reduced to A5 size to account for the change in postal charges and to give greater value for money. The size is also easier for display purposes.

1.7 Risk Assessment

1.7.1 A risk assessment of all the activities and venues is undertaken in liaison with the Council's Health & Safety and Insurance Officers. Each of the facilities used will be requested to produce adequate insurance certificates and risk assessments. The Summer Playscheme venues are all registered with Ofsted and comply with the 14 National Standards for Childcare.

1.8 Policy Considerations

1.8.1 Healthy Lifestyles, Young People, Community, Crime & Disorder Reduction.

Background papers:

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Nil

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