

Appendix A: Council-owned Leisure Facilities Survey results

Background

The Council's Community Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy, outline the ambitions of the Council and its partners to improve the health of residents. This includes the recognition of the importance that physical activity has in supporting an individual's overall health and mental wellbeing, as well as the positive impact on supporting wider health inequalities. The district's leisure facilities play a vital part in supporting these ambitions.

Everyone Active conducted an online and paper copy Leisure Facilities Survey to understand community activity levels, reasons and barriers to physical activity, perception on existing centres and whether the operator could do more to encourage participation. The survey was open between January to March 2024. Details of the questions asked and the quantitative responses can be found in Appendix C.

Everyone Active, the current leisure operator, undertook the survey, noting that their experience of this type of survey is that they are more likely to be completed by residents with a stronger view on local provision/service, who are also more active and/or have an interest in local provision, such as sports centres, sports clubs etc. The results should therefore be analysed in this context.

The survey was advertised by Everyone Active to leisure centre users and local residents through a variety of means:

- Everyone Active social media channels
- Posters in Leisure Centres and Golf Course
- Advertised on Everyone Active's App
- Details sent to all local partners including the Local Strategic Partnership, Community Safety Partnership and Voluntary Sector Forum.
- Details circulated to all ward councillors and town and parish councillors.
- Information sent to local schools and the Local Children's Partnership Group.

Summary of findings

A summary of key findings follows. For the purpose of the report, the top three answers per question are shown (where possible). There was a total of 531 responses across all four sites, Edenbridge, Sevenoaks and White Oak leisure centres and Lullingstone Park Golf Course.

The largest number of responses were received from users of the leisure centres with a higher proportion of responses from individuals and women.

Residents told us that they enjoy taking part in sport and physical activity, understand the health benefits and would like to do more. Key drivers for participating in sport and physical activity include improving physical and mental wellbeing, improving and

maintaining tone, maintaining or losing weight and for the enjoyment and feel good factor.

Swimming, using the gym and attending a group exercise class were highlighted as the most popular activities within the leisure centre with most people travelling up to 20 minutes to access the facility they use.

Cost, lack of time / other commitments were the top reasons cited for people not participating in sport. Feedback also suggests that the age and appearance of the facilities are inhibiting factors to participation and resident feel that they would be more active if their local facility was improved.

Leisure facility usage

- Edenbridge Leisure Centre is used by 196 respondents (37%).
- Sevenoaks Leisure Centre is used by 194 respondents (37%).
- White Oak Leisure Centre is used by 120 respondents (22%).
- 13 respondents do not use any leisure facilities (2%).

Physical activity

- 178 respondents always undertake 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week.
- 216 respondents usually undertake 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week.
- 78 respondents sometimes undertake 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week.
- 39 respondents do not often undertake 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week.
- 20 respondents never undertake 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week.

Reasons for participating in sport or physical activity

- 461 respondents participate to improve/maintain their physical health.
- 342 respondents participate to improve their mental health/self-esteem.
- 289 respondents participate to maintain/lose weight.

Barriers to sport or physical activity

- 229 respondents did not face any of the suggested barriers.
- Lack of time (work/education) is a barrier for 175 respondents.
- Lack of time (home commitments) is a barrier for 109 respondents.

Most common activities at leisure facilities

- Swimming pool usage is the most common activity with 240 respondents.
- Gym usage is popular with 197 respondents.
- Group exercise classes are attended by 193 respondents.

Mode of travel to leisure facilities

- 418 respondents travel by car.
- 202 respondents walk.

Journey time to leisure facilities

- 297 respondents have a journey time of 0-10 minutes.
- 176 respondents have a journey time of 11-20 minutes.

Impact of facility improvements on usage

- 363 respondents would be more likely to use their local leisure facility if the facilities were improved.
- 106 respondents are unsure if they would be more likely to use the facility.
- 62 respondents would not be more likely to use the facility.

Finding out what's on at a leisure facility

- 321 respondents use Everyone Active's app.
- 146 respondents visit in person.
- 127 respondents use Everyone Active's website.

Perception of Edenbridge Leisure Centre

- 121 respondents believe it offers a good range of facilities/activities.
- 37 respondents believe it does not offer a good range of facilities/activities.

Perception of Sevenoaks Leisure Centre

- 155 respondents believe it offers a good range of facilities/activities.
- 35 respondents believe it does not offer a good range of facilities/activities.

Perception of White Oak Leisure Centre

- 88 respondents believe it offers a good range of facilities/activities.
- 24 respondents believe it does not offer a good range of facilities/activities.

Additional feedback on facilities

- At Edenbridge Leisure Centre there is a high demand for an increase in group exercise classes with a desire for class timings to be expanded.
- At Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, whilst increases in the group exercise class offering would be welcomed, the key improvements that are desired are to the wetside offering (i.e. improved consistency with the water temperature / improved changing facilities), new and improved equipment including both in the fitness suite and an improved soft play offering.
- A smaller proportion of the respondents use White Oak Leisure Centre, however, suggested improvements from users at this centre indicate that whilst the building and equipment is new there could be improvements to the programming and timetabling.
- On the back of a very wet winter, unsurprisingly, the small number of responses received regarding Lullingstone Park Golf Course highlight the issues around drainage and the condition of the course. The desire to bring back the driving range and practise areas was also noted.

Demographic information

- 455 respondents answered as individuals, 105 as families, seven as club or group leaders, four as Everyone Active staff, two as parish or town councillors, and one as a member of Sevenoaks District Council.

- 361 respondents identify as female, 146 as male, one as non-binary, and 19 prefer not to say.
- Age groups range from 17 or under to 75 years and over.
- 40 respondents have a disability.

Next steps

The insight gathered from the consultation Everyone Active and the Council to build a clearer picture of needs, helping us to understand the motivations, attitudes and barriers to being active.

The findings will support Everyone Active's business and engagement plans, as part of its longer-term operator contract at White Oak and in its final year of the interim contract. It can also help shape the future of leisure services and physical activity in the district as part of the longer-term contract.