

NOTICE OF MEETING

| | |
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| Meeting: | HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL |
| Date and Time: | WEDNESDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 6.00 PM |
| Place: | COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA |
| Enquiries to: | Email: karen.wardle@nfdc.gov.uk Karen Wardle Tel: 023 8028 5071 |

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Members of the public may watch this meeting live on the [Council's website](#).

Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme:

- (a) on items within the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to speak should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Friday, 15 September 2023.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
www.newforest.gov.uk

This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>).

It can also be made available on audio tape, in Braille and large print.

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2023 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any public participation in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme.

4. HEALTH AND LEISURE CENTRES AND DIBDEN GOLF COURSE ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 5 - 60)

To receive an annual report providing an update on the contracts for the Health and Leisure centres and Dibden Golf Course.

5. FOOD AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2023-2024 (Pages 61 - 72)

To consider the Food and Safety Service Plan.

6. HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACTION PLAN UPDATE (Pages 73 - 78)

To consider the progress and updates to the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.

7. TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (Pages 79 - 100)

To consider the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy.

8. GREENER HOUSING STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW (Pages 101 - 114)

To receive an annual update on the delivery of the Greener Housing Strategy.

9. HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

To receive an update on homelessness.

10. HOUSING STRATEGY / HRA PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION UPDATE

To receive an update on the progress of the Housing Strategy and HRA property development and acquisition.

11. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 115 - 116)

To agree the work programme to guide the Panel's activities over the coming months.

12. DATES OF MEETINGS 2024/25

To agree the following meeting dates (Wednesdays at 6.00pm):

19 June 2024
12 September 2024
16 January 2025
13 March 2025

13. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

To:

Councillors

Steve Clarke (Chairman)
Ian Murray (Vice-Chairman)
Kate Crisell
Sean Cullen
Patrick Mballa

Councillors

Neville Penman
Caroline Rackham
Janet Richards
Neil Tungate

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New Forest Leisure partnership report

July 2022 – June 2023

5

“ improving lives
through leisure ”



New Forest Partnership – Strategic Objectives and Purpose

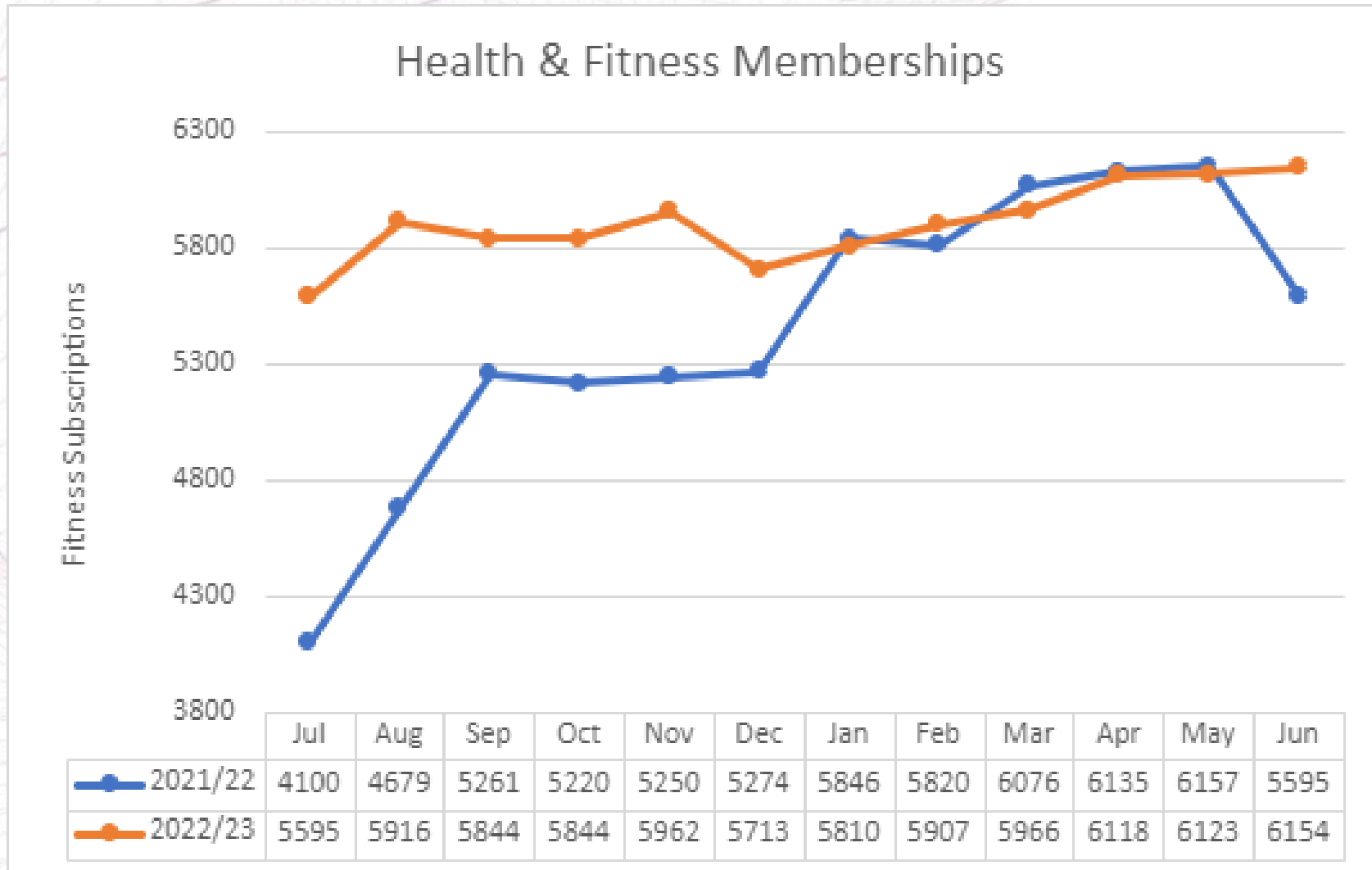
objectives and purpose



Our leisure trust status means it is not all about the finances – our focus is on:

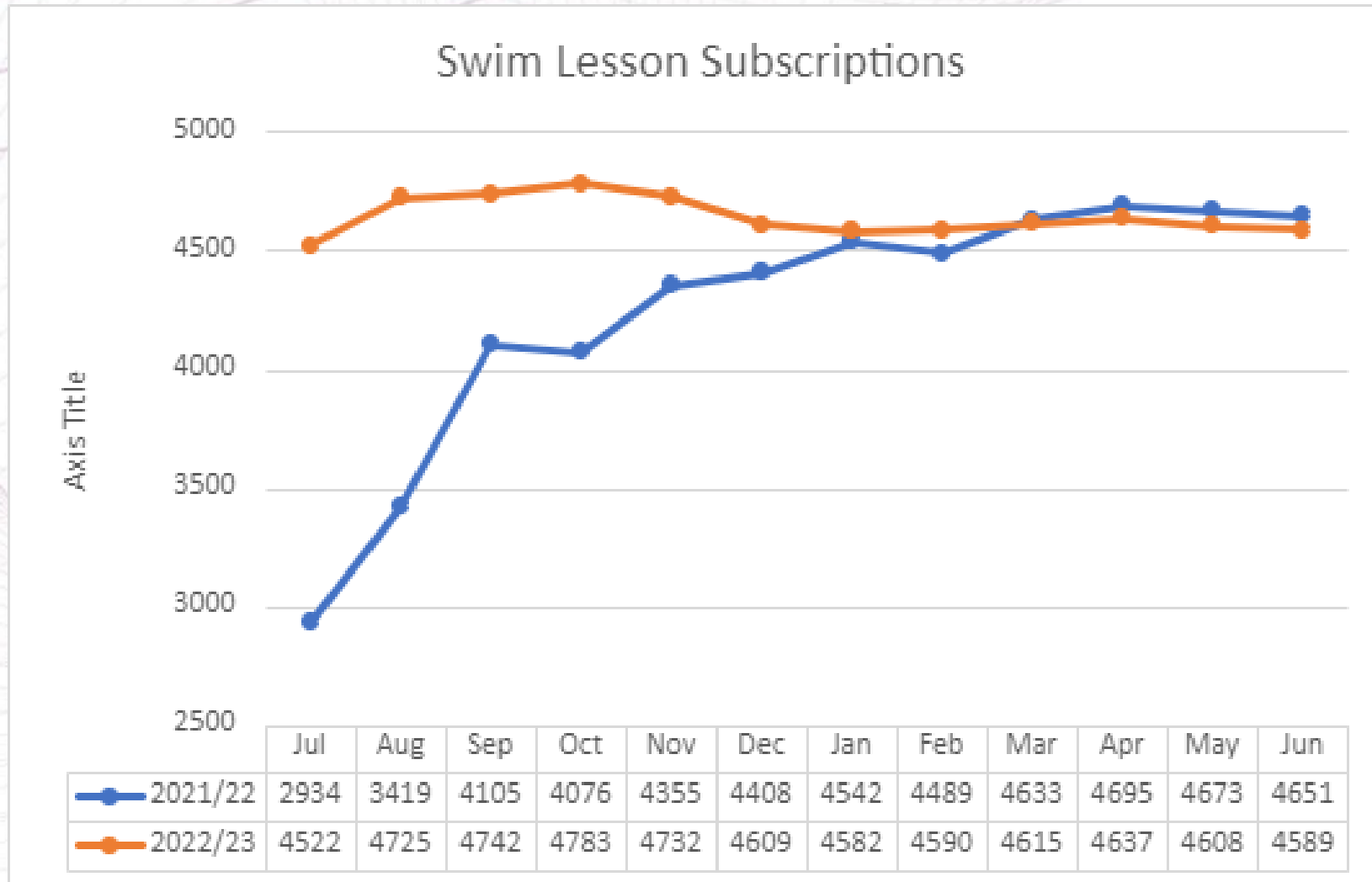
- Increasing participation
- Improving services
- Delivering quality services and experiences for our customers
- Supporting “Active Communities”
- Reducing negative environmental impact
- Delivering for clients and customers
- Developing and rewarding our people

**New Forest Partnership Key Performance
– Fitness Memberships**



**New Forest Partnership Key Performance
– LTS Memberships**

8



New Forest Partnership Capital Projects - Applemore

Key projects:

1. Soft Play unit/ Area
2. Front of House
3. Café
4. Spinning bikes

Total investment = £1,005,921



New Forest Partnership Capital Projects - Ringwood

Key projects:

1. Soft Play unit/ Area

2. Café

Total investment = £690,143

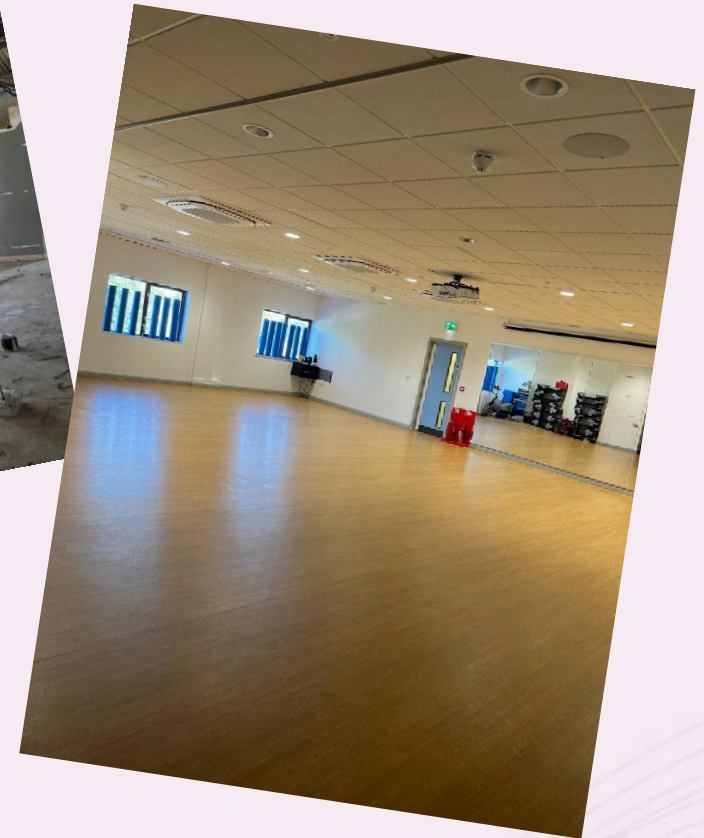


New Forest Partnership Capital Projects - Totton

Key projects:

1. Front of House
2. Dry side Changing Area
3. Spinning bikes and ICG connect

Total investment = £727,943



New Forest Partnership Capital Projects

**Total capital spend =
£2,971,736**

New Forest Partnership – Healthy Communities

Key info:

Our exercise referral programme includes the following:

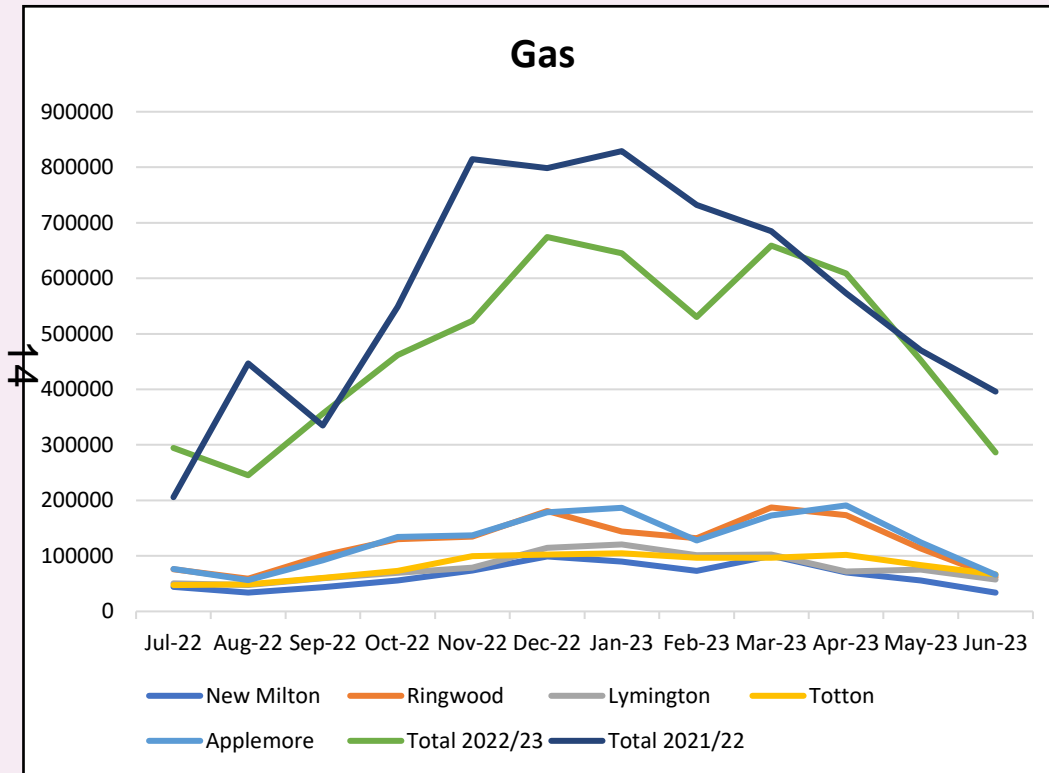
- 3x 1:1 'touch points' with instructors during initial 12 week period
- Additional 12 week 'graduate' membership option for those who complete the initial 12 weeks
- Phase 4 pulmonary rehabilitation classes
- Phase 4 cardiac rehabilitation classes
- Falls prevention classes
- Chair Yoga classes
- Health Circuit classes
- Level 4 Cancer qualified instructors

Total participation in 2022/ 23 = 12,627

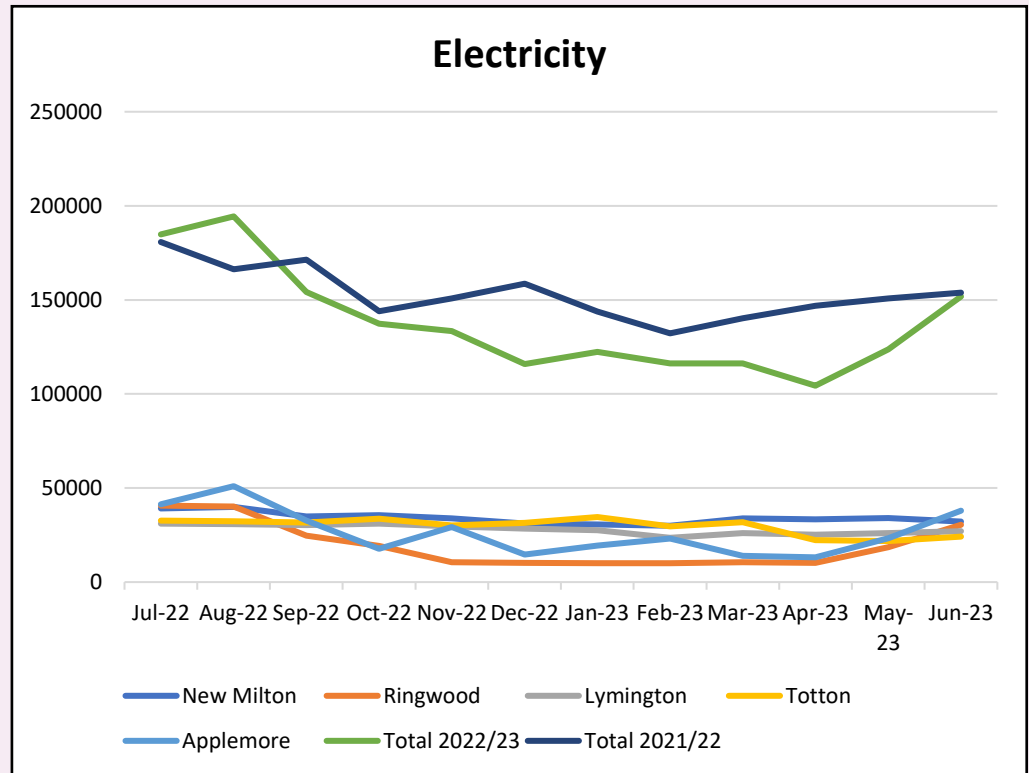


New Forest Partnership Utility – Successes and Impact

Gas



Electricity



Key successes:

1. Gas usage down YoY by 1,096,769 units
2. Electricity usage down YoY by 184,725 units

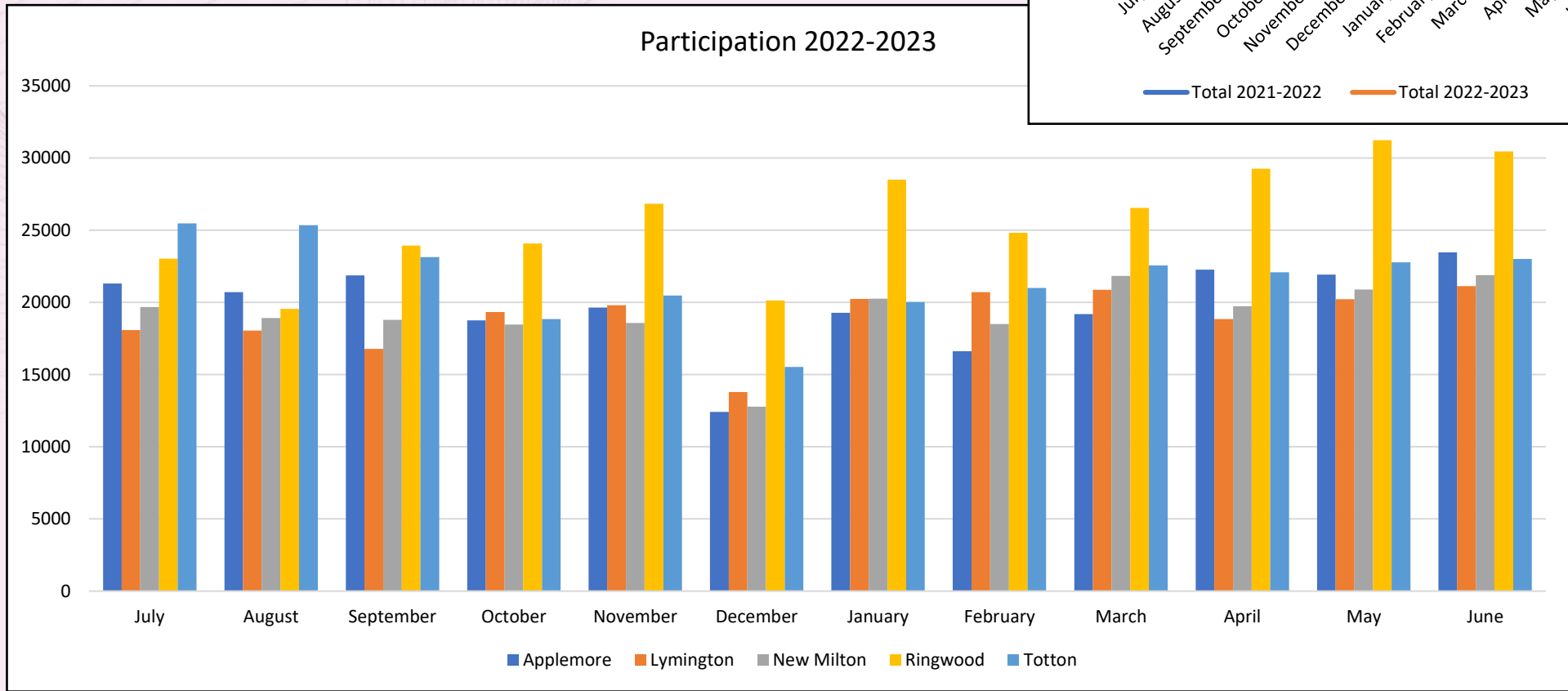
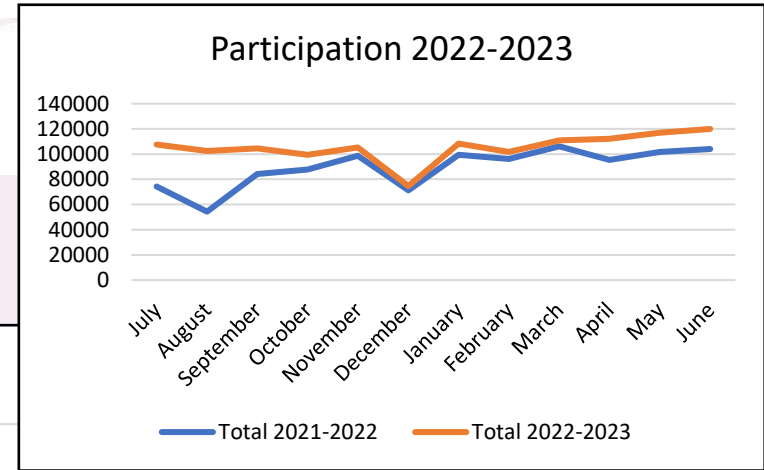
Impact (gas and electric only):

1. Actual cost = £1,275,504
2. Bid forecast = £489,642
3. Variance = **£785,862**

New Forest Partnership – Participation



Total participation



15

| | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June | Total |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Total 2022 - 2023 | 107573 | 102562 | 104510 | 99484 | 105303 | 74645 | 108301 | 101666 | 110993 | 112197 | 117031 | 117004 | 1261268 |
| Total 2021 - 2022 | 74375 | 54314 | 84154 | 87824 | 98758 | 71287 | 99325 | 96137 | 106157 | 95354 | 101776 | 103966 | 1073427 |

New Forest Partnership – Financial Performance

Freedom Leisure New Forest Contract Summary

| July 2022 to June 2023 | Actual | Bid |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| | 12m | 12m |
| Income | 6,620,220 | 7,605,064 |
| Expenditure | 8,102,772 | 7,605,064 |
| Total Surplus / (Deficit) | (1,482,553) | 0 |

New Forest Partnership – 2023/ 24 Key Objectives

Key Objectives for 2023/ 24

- 1. Gym refurbishments at Totton, Applemore and New Milton Leisure Centres. Circa £500,000 investment. Planned for November/ December 2023**
- 2. Grow participation by a minimum of 10% YoY**
- 3. Introduce Smoking cessation clinics**
- 4. Host NHS services such as physios and health checks**
- 5. Grow LTS programme to 5,000+ membership base**
- 6. Grow Fitness membership base to 7,500+**



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New Forest

DISTRICT COUNCIL

July 2022 – June 2023

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 / 2023

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 - 6.7 Area Manager conclusion

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The following report provides detail for the financial year 2022-2023 which was the second full year of Freedom Leisure operating leisure facilities: Applemore Health and Leisure, Lymington Health and Leisure, New Milton Health and Leisure, Ringwood Health and Leisure and Totton Health and Leisure on behalf of the New Forest District Council.

1.2 Strategic alignment

The utility/ cost of living crisis has greatly impacted the sport, fitness and leisure industries due to the additional utility costs coupled with CPI/ cost of living challenges for the local communities.

It is safe to say that almost immediately after COVID-19 for many it has led to less physical activity, with longer screen time, irregular sleep patterns, and potentially more stress, all resulting in poorer wellbeing. The cost of living and utility crisis has created uncertainty and challenge.

However, there is now a great opportunity to reset our thinking around our core products and approach, to engage more people on all levels and all abilities. Our mission has never been more significant, and we will continue in order to educate, support and inspire people to live a more active and healthier lifestyle.



objectives and purpose

Our leisure trust status means it is not all about the finances – our focus is on:

- Increasing participation
- Improving services
- Delivering quality services and experiences for our customers
- Supporting “Active Communities”
- Reducing negative environmental impact
- Delivering for clients and customers
- Developing and rewarding our people

As such, our strategic objectives cover five key areas, which as a local team we have broken down into four elements to ensure we approach this in the correct fashion for the New Forest community.



2. Summary and review of performance for 2022/2023

2.1 Applemore Health and Leisure Centre

Applemore Health and Leisure Centre's attendance increased significantly after the 'Covid period' and several activity areas saw over and above attendance figures compared to pre-Covid. With the introduction of the £100,000+ installation of the brand new soft play unit in the sports hall, childrens attendance significantly increased and the Venue has evolved into a family friendly destination.

Childrens parties were launched in 2023 and this has proved very popular, particularly in the soft play area.

The Healthy Communities activities have continued to grow in popularity and we launched a venue specific 'Forever Active' programme that targets physical activity in older adults.

The completion of the FOH refurbishment has modernised the entrance into the venue and improved the customer experience with technical advances in access control. The FOH improvements included a café area where customers can enjoy a variety of food and drinks including a range of Costa products. The Venue achieved a 5* hygiene rating and the café is becoming more popular each month.

With significant investment planned in the gym areas in 2023/ 24 we expect significant membership base growth in 2023/ 24.

2.2 Lymington Health and Leisure Centre

Lymington Health and Leisure Centre's attendance increased significantly after the 'Covid period' and several activity areas saw over and above attendance figures compared to pre-Covid. A continued positive working relationship with Priestlands School has seen ongoing usage of the swimming pool and after long negotiations a shared usage of the sports hall (mainly evening and weekend usage) should be agreed in 2023/ 24.

The Venues Duty Management team was increased from 2 to 3 full time staff members to cope with the demand of the venue and ensure service qualities were not adversely affected.

The Venues membership base has grown circa 200 members in the past 12 months and boasts the second largest membership base across the 5 Venues.

2.3 New Milton Health and Leisure Centre

New Milton Health and Leisure Centre's attendance increased significantly after the 'Covid period' and several activity areas saw over and above attendance figures compared to pre-Covid. Arnewood school continue to utilise the sports hall and swimming pool to deliver their school curriculum and we are actively communicating to maximise opportunities between the two parties.

The Venues Duty Management team was increased from 2 to 3 full time staff members to cope with the demand of the venue and ensure service qualities were not adversely affected.

The Venue boasts the largest Healthy Community programme across all 5 venues (more info can be found on page 15 and 16).

The Venues membership base has grown circa 150 members in the past 12 months and with significant investment into the gym areas in 2023/ 24 continued membership base growth is expected.

2.4 Ringwood Health and Leisure Centre

Ringwood Health and Leisure Centre's attendance increased significantly after the 'Covid period' and several activity areas saw over and above attendance figures compared to pre-Covid. With the introduction of the £100,000+ installation of an extended soft play area and café area, childrens attendance significantly increased and the Venue has evolved into a family friendly destination. The Venue achieved a 5* hygiene rating and the café is becoming more popular each month.

Childrens parties were launched in 2023 and this has proved very popular, particularly in the soft play area.

A change in our digital marketing strategy has resulted in membership growth from 753 in July 2022 to 904 in June 2023. Representing approx. 20% increase YoY. Further growth is expected in 2023/ 24 and by October 2023 we forecast 1,000+ members which has never been achieved at Ringwood Leisure Centre.

2.5 Totton Health and Leisure Centre

Totton Health and Leisure Centre's attendance increased significantly after the 'Covid period' and several activity areas saw over and above attendance figures compared to pre-Covid.

The Venues Duty Management team was increased from 2 to 3 full time staff members to cope with the demand of the venue and ensure service qualities were not adversely affected.

The completion of the FOH refurbishment has modernised the entrance into the venue and improved the customer experience with technical advances in access control. The FOH improvements included the offering of Costa drinks and catering options so customers can enjoy a variety of food and drinks. The Venue achieved a 5* hygiene rating and the catering options are becoming more popular each month.

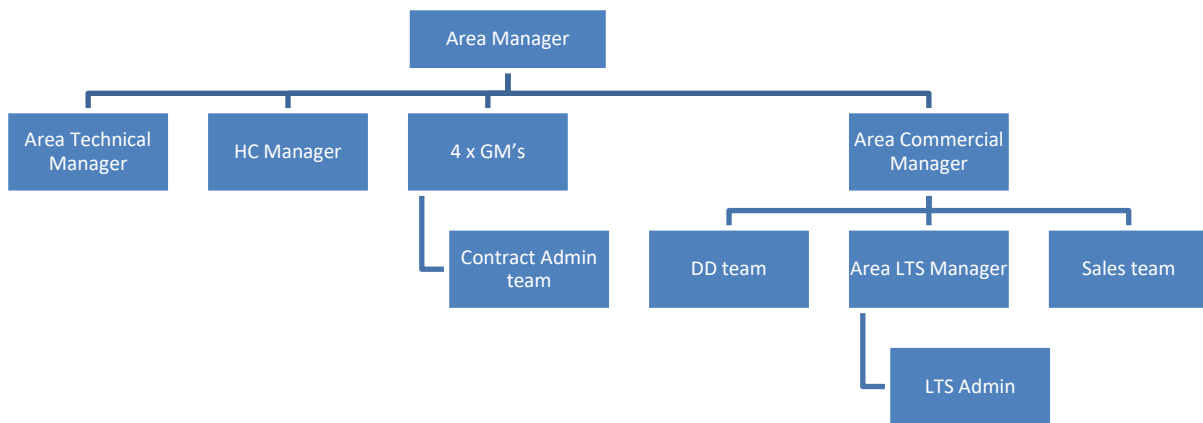
With significant investment planned in the gym areas in 2023/ 24 we expect significant membership base growth in 2023/ 24.

3 People, passionate, bespoke and local:

2022/23 has continued to be an extremely challenging year for the sport and leisure sector as a whole, but Freedom Leisure has worked closely with their local authority partners to provide the best service possible during this unprecedented time.

3.1 Human resources

The ongoing reviews resulted in a change in the Area Management, admin, sales and customer service teams that was focused on improving the operational and commercial aspects of the business with improved customer experience a key outcome (see below). This change was rolled out in full in April 2023 and the early observations and feedback have been very encouraging.



- The implementation of a full time Area Commercial Manager and a dedicated sales team was a key requirement for the partnership. These roles have supported the local teams to maximise commercial opportunities and ultimately increase footfall and participation into the venues.
- Staff turnover has been high this year and a steady recruitment process has been needed to ensure effect on service was kept to a minimum. Key areas have been Lifeguards and Swim teachers where there has been a national shortage

3.2 Staff pay and rewards – including pay review and training:

- Reviewed in March 2023, staff pay rewards were ‘paused’ due to the uncertain and challenging economic climate. This will be reviewed in September 2023.
- ihasco online courses and the freedom internal training programme are being utilised with staff given the ability to complete the training at their place of work or at home (online learning).
- Employees have continued to use discounts from My staff shop, the freedom benefit platform



4 Process, operational excellence/ environmentally responsible

4.1 Programming and service development:

Freedom Leisure have added/ changed the following:

Applemore Health and Leisure Centre

- Our first ‘FUN’ weekend was delivered/ Focusing on families and our new family fun and friendly facilities. The soft play and inflatazone were the key attractions
- Soft play SEN (Special Education Needs) sessions were launched in the soft play area
- ‘Forever Active’ programme launched. Offering pickleball, badminton and a number of class based activity sessions for those who are 50+ years of age
- Les Mills launch event held for all members and non-members showcasing our classes
- Additional lane swimming added to the programme
- Party offering re-launched (post covid) and proving very successful
- Re-opening of the Health Suite (steam room only)



Lymington Health and Leisure Centre

- Additional lane swimming added to the programme
- Les Mills launch event held for all members and non-members showcasing our classes
- Party offering re-launched (post covid)
- Re-opening of the Health Suite

New Milton Health and Leisure Centre

- Additional lane swimming added to the programme
- Les Mills launch event held for all members and non-members showcasing our classes
- ‘Little leapfrogs’ drop in sessions added to the programme
- Party offering re-launched (post covid)
- Re-opening of the Health Suite

Ringwood Health and Leisure Centre

- Additional lane swimming added to the programme
- SEN soft play sessions
- Les Mills launch event held for all members and non-members showcasing our classes
- Party offering re-launched (post covid)
- Re-opening of the Health Suite

Totton Health and Leisure Centre

- Additional lane swimming added to the programme
- 'Little leapfrogs' drop in sessions added to the programme
- Les Mills launch event held for all members and non-members showcasing our classes
- Party offering re-launched (post covid)
- Re-opening of the Health Suite

4.2 Summary of significant improvements to facilities or services:

There have been many improvements made to the facilities by Freedom Leisure and New Forest District Council, and these included:

Applemore Health and Leisure Centre

- Upgraded dry side changing rooms
- Refurbished reception and café area
- Upgraded turnstyle system installed
- Free weights room extension (works started in 2022/23 year but will be finalised in 2023/24)
- Pool inflatable
- Various areas decorated throughout the building
- Energy works – ASHP installation (works started in 2022/23 year but will be finalised in 2023/24)

Lymington Health and Leisure Centre

- Full hairdryer replacement
- Health suite upgrades to ensure smooth running of this product

New Milton Health and Leisure Centre

- Wet side AHU (air handling unit) replacement. Significant investment (works started in 2022/ 23 and completed in 2023/ 24)
- Full hairdryer replacement
- Fall arrest upgrade

Ringwood Health and Leisure Centre

- Soft play upgrade
- Café refurbishment

- Storage improvements
- New wetside showers
- Energy works – ASHP installation (works started in 2022/23 year but will be finalised in 2023/24)
- Structural steel works upgrades (works started in 2022/23 year but will be finalised in 2023/24)

Totton Health and Leisure Centre

- Studio upgrade/ extension
- Dry side changing room and toilet upgrade/ extension. Including new shower facilities
- Reception upgrades including turnstlye updates
- Full hairdryer replacement
- Roof repairs to address leaks

4.3 Incidents:

Below is a summary of 2022- 23 accident/incident performance. Headlines are;

| | Total visitors | Total accidents | Percentage of accidents |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Applemore health & Leisure Centre | 130944 | 17 | 0.01596% |
| Lymington Health & Leisure Centre | 125372 | 29 | 0.02313% |
| New Milton Health & Leisure Centre | 150729 | 30 | 0.0199% |
| Ringwood Health & Leisure Centre | 164601 | 68 | 0.04131% |
| Totton Health & Leisure Centre | 153760 | 23 | 0.01495% |

The percentage of total accidents were low across sites this year in line with the total number of visits.

4.6 Environmental Health Office:

The catering facilities across the partnership (Applemore, Totton and Ringwood) all achieved 5-star accreditation.

An accident at Applemore Leisure Centre in the soft play area resulted in a voluntary short term closure of the unit to safeguard all users and staff whilst investigations could take place to understand why the unit had failed. The investigation concluded that no failings could be found on the part of Freedom Leisure and following remedial works the unit was re-opened.

4.4 Fees and charges:

As part of our annual price review all prices were benchmarked against other leisure operations and inflation.

Secondary spend items were also reviewed in line with supplier and contractor inflation rates, any impact to the customer has been minimised.

Going forward Freedom Leisure will continue to review fees and charges to ensure the service remains excellent value for money while remaining competitive within the market it operates and sensitive to the Council's wishes.

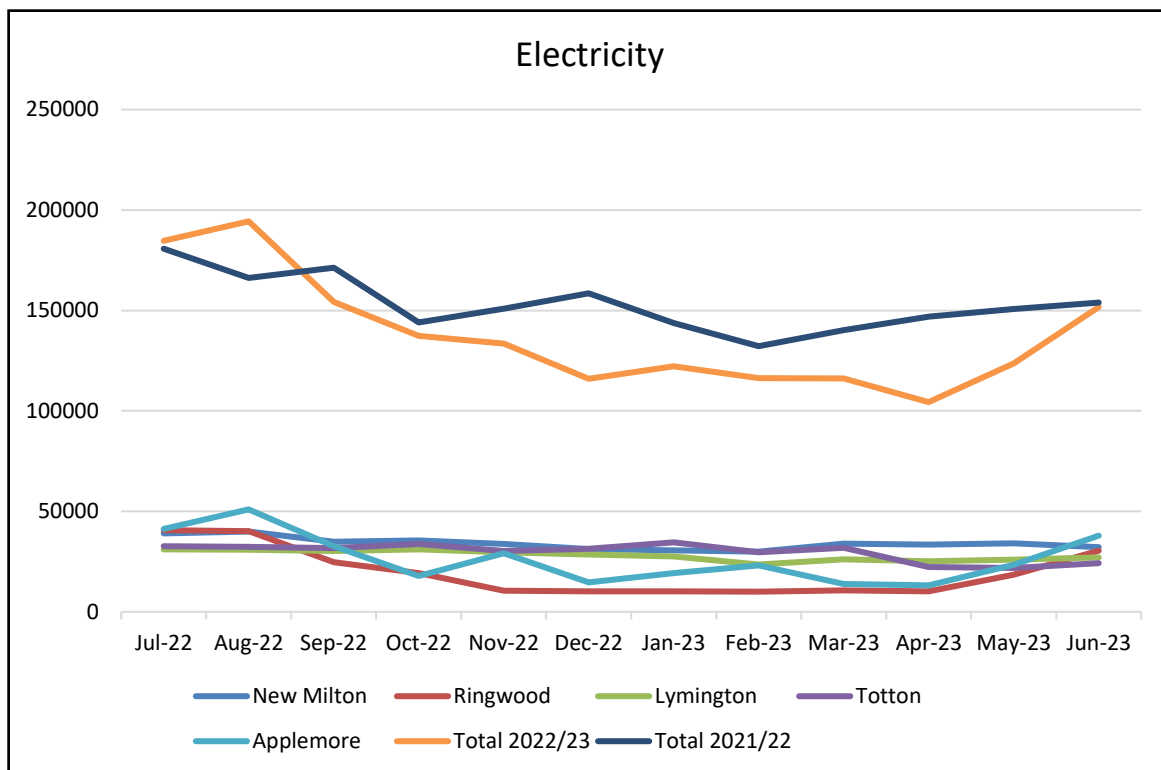
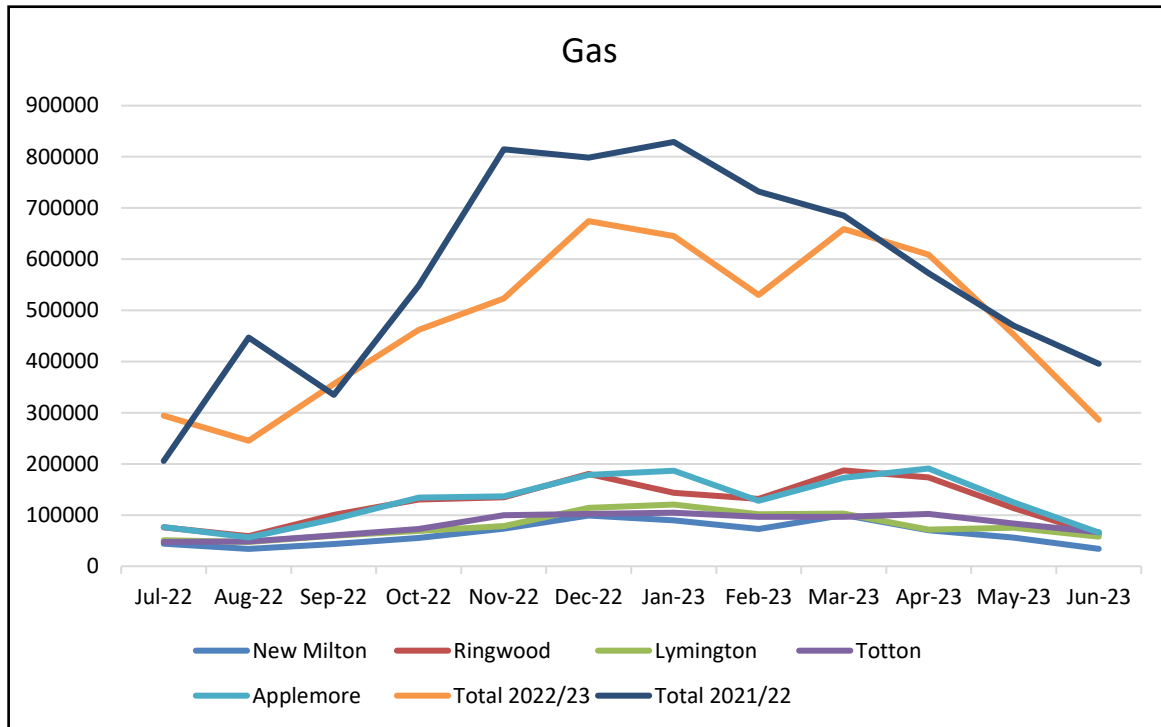
4.5 Environmental:

Freedom Leisure is committed to working with its local authority partners, customers and, crucially, its staff teams to achieve these ambitious targets. A robust sustainability culture is already embedded into the organisation, with the senior leadership team at the not-for-profit trust prioritising environmental management and sustainability as a core business objective in its medium-term plan.

With continuous improvement at the forefront of our minds, we always look for ways to develop, improve and invest in the facilities across the New Forest contract. With our focus being very much on environmental impact, we are also looking at ways to reduce our carbon footprint and continue our journey to net zero emissions.



Utility information:



Key points

- Gas usage down YoY by 1,096,769 units
- Electricity usage down YoY by 184,725 units
- Continued effort to reduce consumption via staff training and capital projects (ASHP's)

Financial impact (July 2022-June 2023)

| Total All Sites (gas and electric only) | Applemore | Lymington | New Milton | Ringwood | Totton | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|----------|------------|
| Utilities ACTUAL | £272,902 | £234,258 | £255,190 | £239,916 | £273,238 | £1,275,504 |
| Utilities BID (3% inflation adjusted) | £98,406 | £98,355 | £106,770 | £84,831 | £101,280 | £489,642 |
| Difference | £174,496 | £135,903 | £148,420 | £155,085 | £171,958 | £785,862 |

With the ongoing support from the New Forest District Council, Freedom Leisure have been able to reduce the possible impact of the utility crisis, but even with this support the additional utility costs are in excess of £785,000 vs the forecast made on acquisition of the partnership.

5 Customer, profession trusted partner

5.1 Customer satisfaction:

Freedom Leisure is committed to providing excellent customer service. Detail on satisfaction is obtained by the comment cards, email feedback, comments on social media, verbal and surveys. These provide a snapshot in time. Actions are captured using the Efocus system and dealt with as they arise.

5.2 Day to day customer feedback:

Freedom leisure is committed to providing excellent customer service. There are several ways in which it obtains detail on satisfaction. These provide a snapshot in time of current success and areas of improvement. These actions are captured using the Efocus programme and dealt with as they arise. The methods that we will collect feedback are as follows:-

- Online feedback through our website
- Online comments received through social media
- Verbal feedback at site, which is then logged by our colleagues
- Written feedback at site, which is then logged by our colleagues



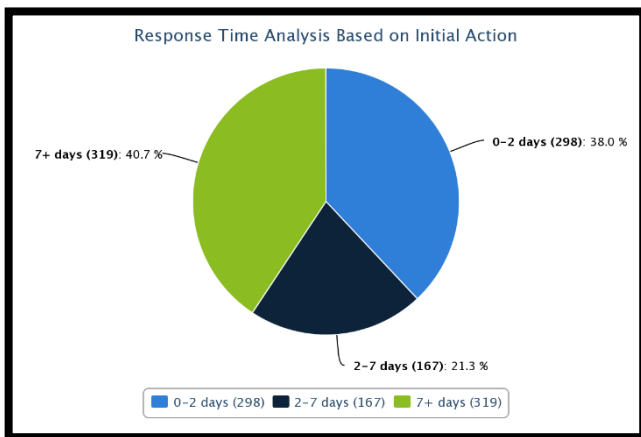
Positive feedback was received this year after significant investment in a number of Venues coupled with improved timetables and customer engagement to shape them.

Due to the national lifeguard and swim teacher shortage, we have had feedback on effected services. In response to this we have shared staff resources across sites, adjusted rotas to provide an even spread of staff and run several NPLQ and swim teachers courses across the venues.

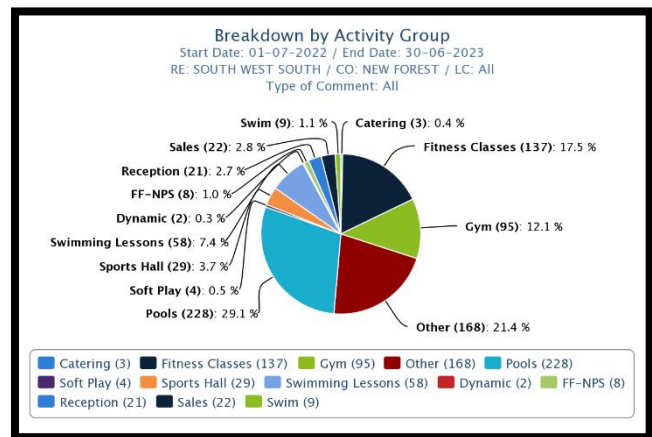
Please find summary of our Efocus feedback recieved and the timeframe in which we have responded, throughout the year below.

Partnership detail

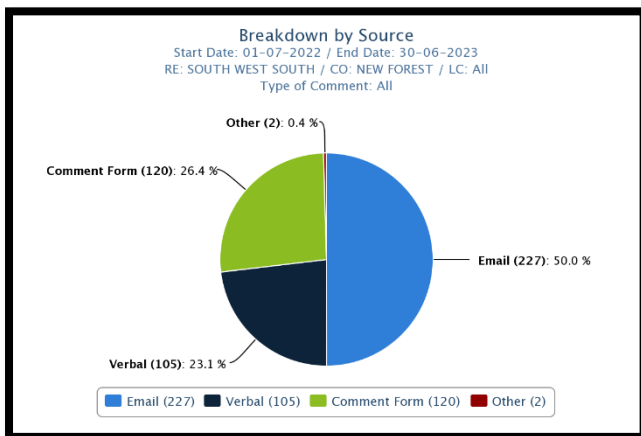
Response time



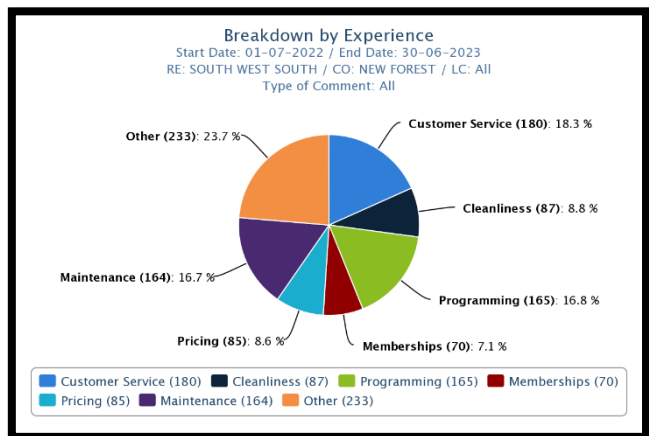
Breakdown by activity



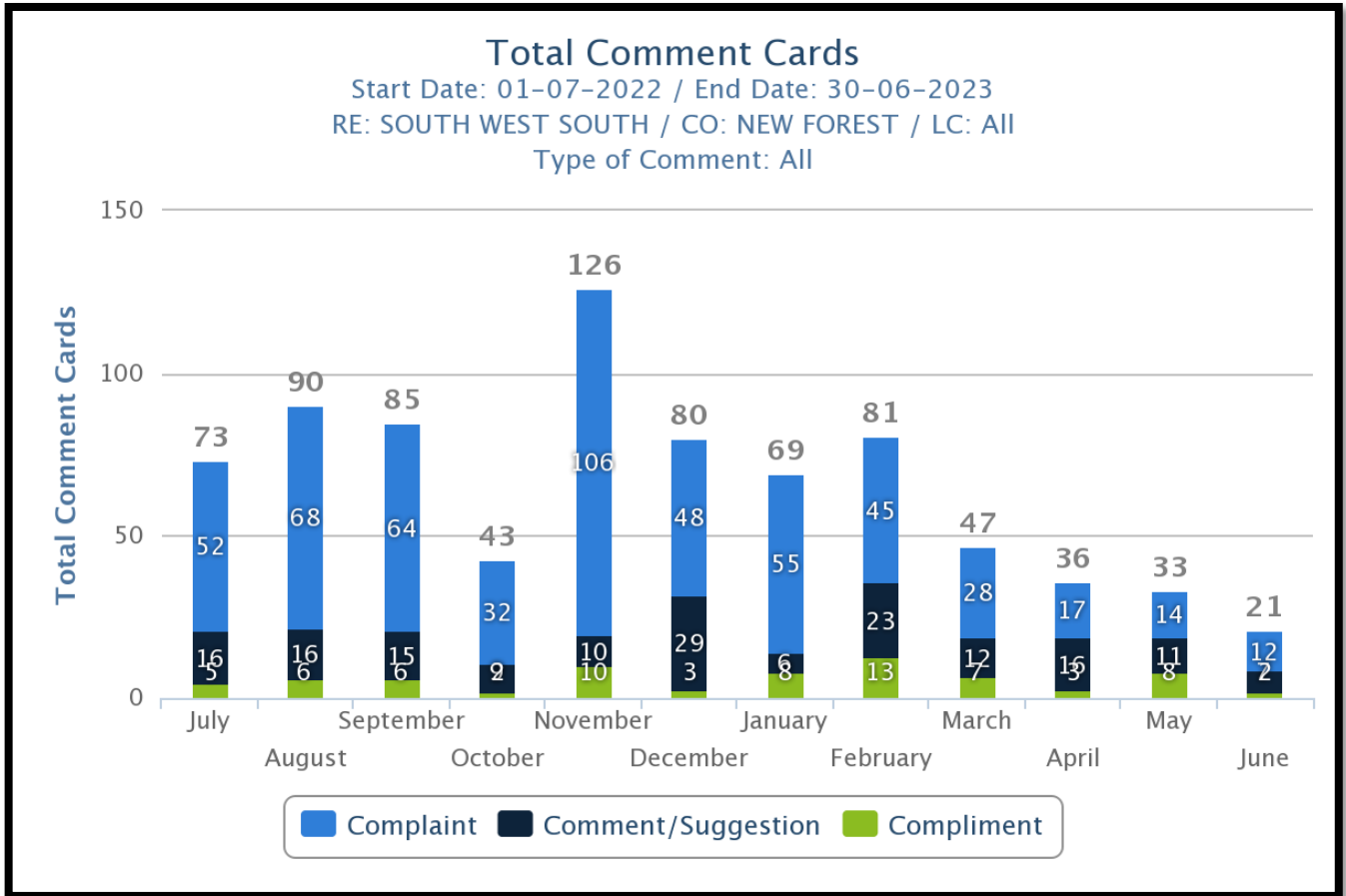
Breakdown of source:



Breakdown of experience:



Comments/ complaints/ compliments



6 Product, innovation and creativity

6.1 Healthy Communities/ sports development:

A Forever Active programme has been introduced at Applemore which offers a variety of activities including Pickleball, table tennis, short tennis, aerobics and chair yoga. Forever Active is a programme aimed at older adults and provides a relaxed casual session to encourage older adults to stay active, whilst also including a social element to tackle loneliness in the older generation. Forever Active programmes will be introduced at Totton and New Milton in September 2023.

Walking sports continue to be a popular choice for older adults with walking netball and football clubs based across our sites.



We continue to run successful gymnastics programmes at New Milton & Lymington with classes ranging from beginners to club gymnastics. Across the two sites we currently have 109 gymnasts enrolled in to sessions out of a possible 128 spaces showing a 85% class occupancy rate. In addition to this we have Gym Tots classes running at Applemore which currently have 37 children enrolled.

Our 3 month refugee membership has been highly valued by customers across the year. This membership options has allowed those who have had to flee their country to continue to stay active, which is of great benefit to their mental and physical health but has also allowed them the opportunity to integrate in to the community. This 3 month membership is completely free of charge to the customer and has resulted in some fantastic feedback from those who have been able to take advantage of the facilities on offer.

6.2 Holiday Activity & Food:

At Applemore and Ringwood Leisure Centres we have been providing free Holiday Camps spaces for children on Free School meals or from low-income families.

This has been possible working with New Forest District Council and the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) funding provided by the government.

This allows children to experience things they may not be able to day to day, be active and healthy with a balanced meal provided free of charge. The children that get involved in the program will have the opportunity to have many experiences like Swimming, Sports, Arts and Crafts, Inflatables and more that they may not be able to do normally.

Not only this but as part of the program we are educating children in healthy lifestyles and are able to point parents in the right direction to help with this. We hope to continue this great work with New Forest District Council and the HAF funding for years to come.



6.3 Wellness and GP referral:

Our program has continued to progress in the last year, especially with our NHS partnerships. We have built a strong partnership with University Hospital Southampton and their PREHAB scheme helping 13 patients in the local area to become fitter, stronger or lose weight in preparation for surgery. We attend Pulmonary Rehabilitation Phase 3 classes in Blackfield, Sway and Wellow at the end of their 12 week courses to offer continuity and remove barriers for patients continuing with Phase 4 classes in the community. In addition to this we have strong links with cardiac rehabilitation services in New Milton, Lymington and Applemore which ensures a smooth progression from nurse led phase 3 classes in to our community based phase 4 cardiac rehabilitation classes.

As of July 2023 we have 391 members on our GP referral scheme across the 5 sites, this number has increased consistently month on month since January 2023 at 279 members. Provision at Totton has recently been increased to reflect the increasing demand.

We have averaged 65 exercise referrals per month since January 2023

Our exercise referral programme includes the following:

- 3x 1:1 touch points with instructors during initial 12 week period
- Additional 12 week 'graduate' membership option for those who complete the initial 12 weeks
- Access to pool usage – including aqua aerobics
- Circuits
- Phase 4 pulmonary rehabilitation class
- Phase 4 cardiac rehabilitation class
- Falls prevention classes
- Chair Yoga
- Level 4 Cancer qualified instructors

| Health referral class | Participation 2022/2023 |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Health Circuit | 4106 |
| Pulmonary Rehabilitation | 1842 |
| Cardiac Rehabilitation | 1417 |
| Steady & Strong (Falls prevention) | 3941 |
| Chair Yoga | 1321 |

Our key projects and goals for 23/24 include

- Smoking cessation clinics
- Host NHS services such as physios and health checks
- Host social prescribers at site

6.4 Marketing and Information technology:

In 2022-23 we utilised the following channels to promote activities: websites, social media: Facebook, Instagram, Google, Brief Your Market email newsletters, text messaging plus internal video screens, banners, posters and leaflets. In line with the rest of Freedom Leisure, the Venues websites were completely rebuilt in 2022 with a new format, standardised layout and a clearer design more suited to use on mobiles and tablets as well as PCs.

Work was also carried out during 2022 to onboard the Freedom Leisure booking app. MyFit App provides access to the centres' online bookings, website and social media plus enhanced features such as news items and push notifications.

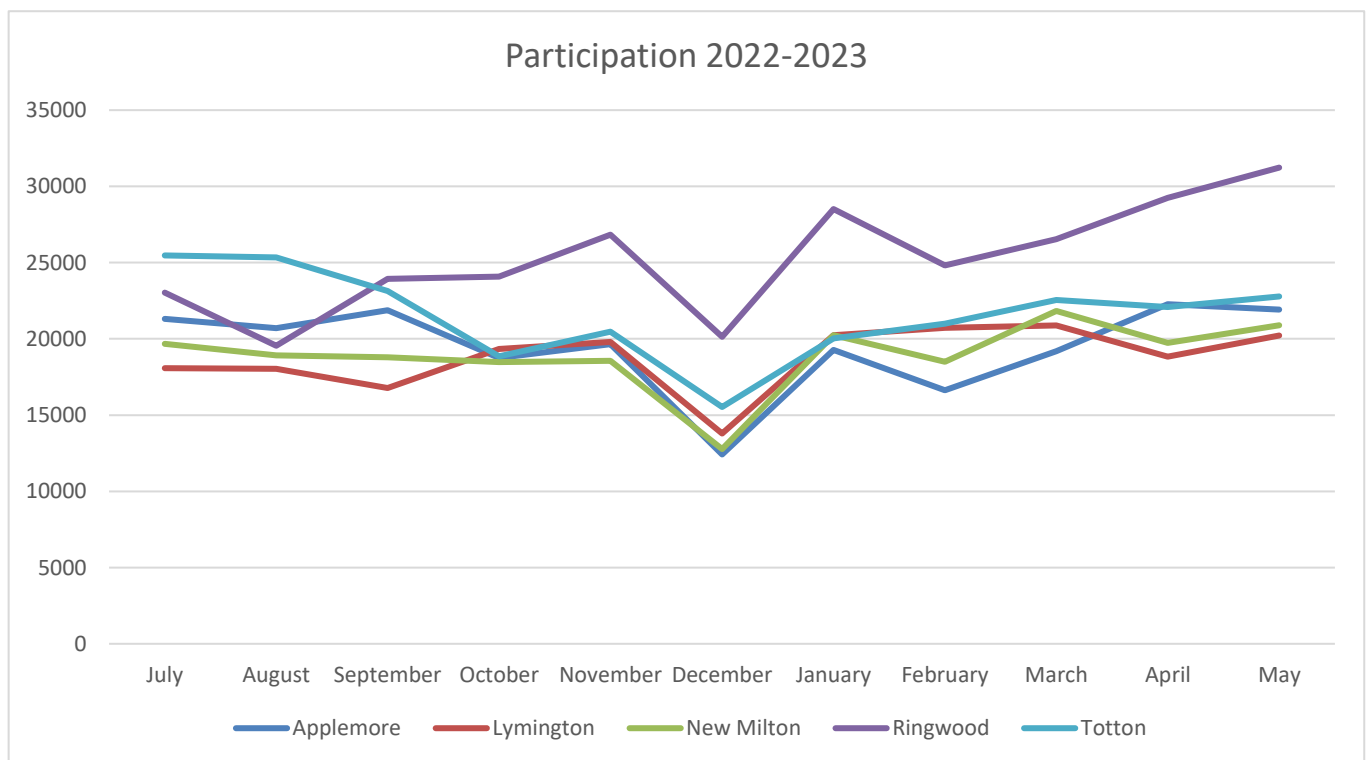
The ICT headline for 2023 is the introduction of DigiTickets, a third-party web based online booking solution which allows basket shopping rather than single activities. Digi Tickets will provide a simple-to-use modern interface for members and non-members to book soft play, Inflatazone sessions and birthday parties at Applemore and Ringwood Leisure Centre. It is hoped that other activities will be added included family swimming and there is also the opportunity to add bolt-on activities such as food and resale items.

6.5 Participation:

The graph below provides a summary of overall participation rates for activities.

Across the partnership, participation has been significantly higher than previous year due to the effect of Covid and restrictions that were in place.

Partnership participation 2022/ 23:



6.6 Financial

Year 2 of the contract was particularly difficult for Freedom Leisure financially, with a slower than expected post Covid recovery. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 also caused a significant and unforeseen spike in the cost of utilities, adding significant expenditure pressures to income recovery pressures. The sector is still finding it extremely challenging to cover the huge energy cost increases, whilst still operating in the context of a post pandemic recovery and a cost of living crisis. Unfortunately Freedom Leisure, like many others in the industry, are experiencing these same challenges which contributed to the overall deficit of £1,482,553.

| Freedom Leisure New Forest Contract Summary | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| July 2022 to June 2023 | Actual 12m | Bid 12m | Bid 12m | | | |
| Income | 6,620,220 | 7,605,064 | 7,605,064 | | | |
| Expenditure | 8,102,772 | 7,605,064 | 7,605,064 | | | |
| Total Surplus / (Deficit) | (1,482,553) | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total All Sites | Applemore | Lymington | New Milton | Ringwood | Totton | Total |
| Total Income | 1,635,609 | 1,209,943 | 1,207,073 | 1,346,574 | 1,221,020 | 6,620,219 |
| Total Expenditure | 2,018,551 | 1,422,459 | 1,383,537 | 1,731,928 | 1,546,297 | 8,102,772 |
| Surplus/Deficit | - 382,942 | - 212,516 | - 176,464 | - 385,354 | - 325,277 | - 1,482,553 |
| | | | | | | |
| Income Bid (YTD) | 1,821,455 | 1,407,273 | 1,324,256 | 1,505,914 | 1,546,166 | 7,605,064 |
| Expenditure Bid (YTD) | 1,821,455 | 1,407,273 | 1,324,256 | 1,505,914 | 1,546,166 | 7,605,064 |
| Surplus / (Deficit) Bid (YTD) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

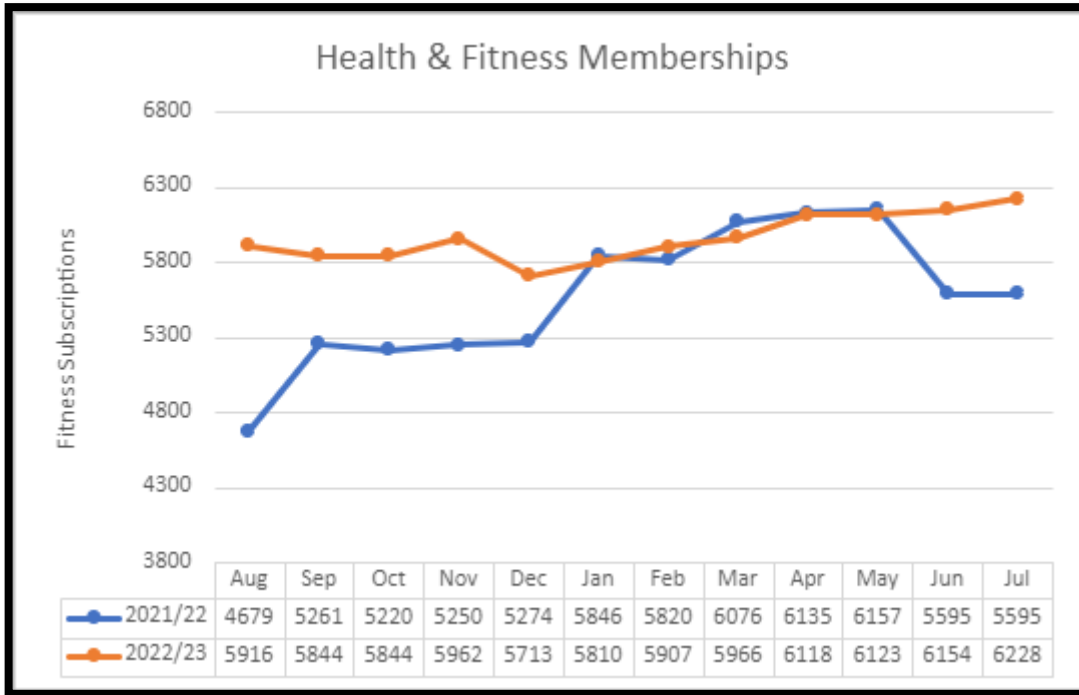
Area Manager Conclusion

2022 – 2023 proved a significantly challenging year for all leisure business including those run by Freedom Leisure in New Forest. The cost of living crisis couldn't have come at a worse time when you consider the huge impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the industry, and the country/ world as a whole.

Regardless of this there are a number of major positives to take away from the year. Those include the 'modernisation' of the Area Management, operations and commercial positions to include an Area Commercial Manager and a sales team to better promote the facilities and offerings. This has resulted in both service and commercial improvements across all 5 venues.

I am positive that the partnership is now in a stronger position due to the difficult decisions made at the start of the calendar year. This will allow for the partnership to be better placed to offer the very best service and standards going into 2023 – 2024 and capitalise on social proscrying, junior activity and fitness membership opportunities as a priority.

An example of this confidence can be demonstrated below:



Health and fitness memberships are now at an all time high and growing monthly in months where we would traditionally see either a small loss of members or maintaining the membership base we have. This is particularly promising as we enter September 2023 which is traditionally a bigger growth month.

To support further growth, in 2023 – 2024 the aim will be to deliver the gym refurbishments at Applemore, Totton and New Milton Leisure Centres (circa £500,000 investment) and drive the membership base of the partnership to over 7,500 members.

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Partnership Meeting Mytime Active (Annual Review)

2022/2023

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We make it simple
for people to
get more out of life

mytimeactive

Who We Are

We are a social enterprise on a mission to improve wellbeing. We make it simple for people to get more out of life by moving more, eating better, feeling positive and making new friends. We understand what it takes to make a positive impact on everyday wellbeing and we are here to make it simple, easy and more fun for everyone in our neighbourhoods to live longer, healthier and happier lives.

40 Across the generations, from children to grandparents and everyone in between, we help people to get to where they want to be, whatever their starting point. With swimming, gyms, golf, bowling, social and health programmes, our range of wellbeing services ensures we have something for everyone.

As an independent charity, we reinvest our profit back to where it matters – the long-term wellbeing of our local neighbourhoods.



GYM



SWIM



CLASSES



BOWLING



GOLF



DRIVIN
G
RANGE



GOLF
LESSONS



FOOTGOLF

Mytime Active Corporate Update

- **New Senior Leadership Team now in place:**

Chief Executive, Jason Stanton

Finance Director, Neil Whitehead

HR Director, Rhona Mason

Commercial Director, Kelly Stead

- **Corporate Plan 2023 and beyond**

1. Increase employee engagement from an average of 33 to 50 by March '24

2. Improve the Wellbeing of our Communities - our members Personal Wellbeing Factor (PWF) at least 5% greater than that of the total local community

3. Deliver a sustainable EBITDA

Dibden Performance Update - Income

| Key Income Headings | 2022-2023 Actuals | 2022/2023 Budget | 2019-2020 Actuals | 2019-2020 Budget | Variance Annually |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Membership | £252,978 | £283,581 | £295,456 | £266,167 | £42,478 |
| Green Fees & Societies | £415,066 | £416,182 | £262,210 | £265,763 | £152,856 |
| F&B | £331,312 | £324,301 | £356,263 | £410,626 | £24,951 |
| Driving Range | £62,879 | £52,457 | £42,759 | £45,358 | £20,120 |
| | | | | | £105,547 |

NB – 22/23 trading comparison based on full year pre covid 19/20

- Membership down compared to 2019/2020 due to a significant drop off during Covid. (Recovery shown in Monthly KPIs throughout the year)
- F&B down but seriously improved based on the loss of a 3rd 40-hour FTE chef due to necessary structure change during Covid. The amount of dwell time and usage up however compared to 2019/2020
- Green Fees & Societies up annually in comparison to 19/20 which in contrast offsets against the drop in membership.
- Driving Range income moving in an upward fashion due family & junior participation.

Dibden Performance Update - Expenditure

| Key Expenditure Headings | 2019/2020 Actuals | 2022/2023 Actuals | 2019/2020 Budget | 2022/2023 Budget | Variance 2022/2023 Comparison |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Staffing | £414,452 | £428,471 | £476,837 | £441,320 | £12,849 |
| R&M | £81,735 | £53,694 | £73,565 | £53,766 | £72 |
| Energy | £46,857 | £70,014 | £57,341 | £45,288 | £24,726 |

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- Staffing up due to National Minimum Wage Increase across the organisation (Remains in line with budget) Dibden continues to have a full FTE at site. Average staff to turnover percentage is £28%
- Energy costs up due to effects of Energy Crisis
- R&M increased spend in 1st Quarter of 2022/2023 was Driving Range LED Lighting Project.
- NB 14% of annual turnover contributed to central support costs.

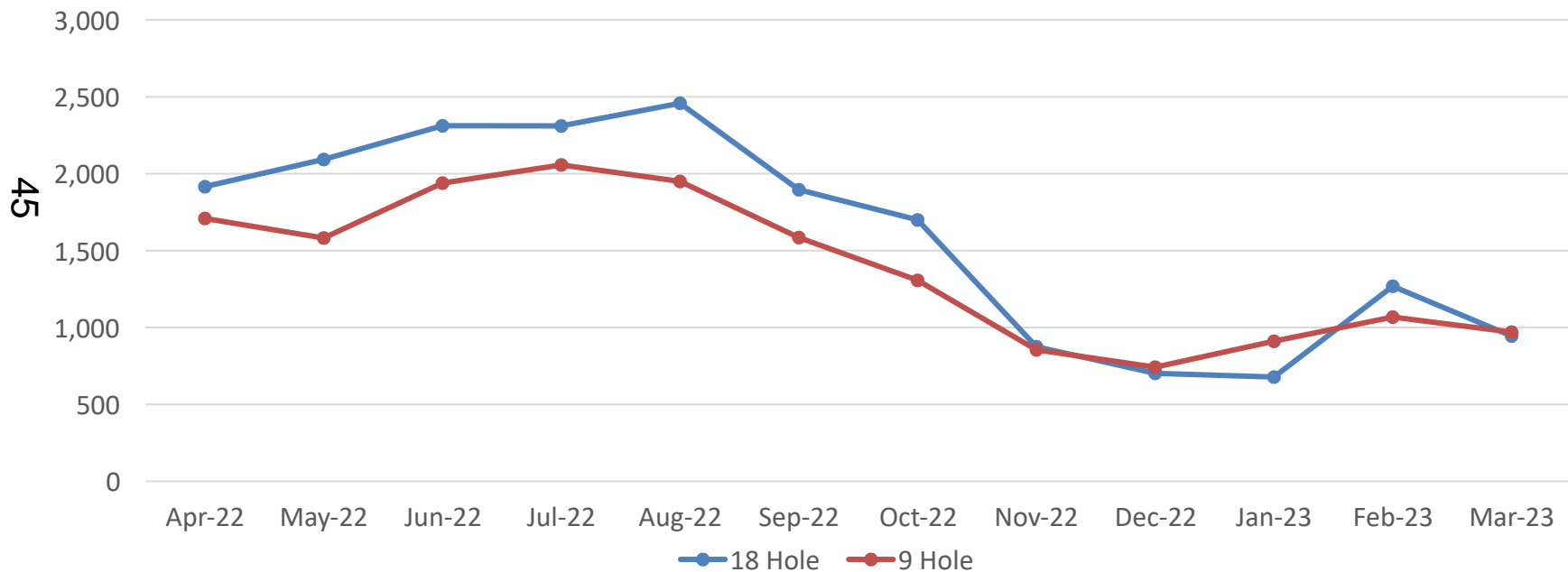
Dibden Performance Update - Overall

| | 2022-2023 Actual | 2022/2023 Budget | 2022/2023 Variance |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Income | £1,136,781 | £1,162,684 | £25,903 |
| Expenditure | £1,241,480 | £1,215,291 | £26,189 |
| Budgeted Loss | | | £52,607 |
| Net Loss | | | £52,092 |
| Total Loss | | | £104,699 |

Based on unaudited accounts and includes percentage of annual turnover contributed to central support – Audited accounts to be provided October 2023. Position reflects rent relief. Priority to delivery sustainability through increased income and static payroll costs.

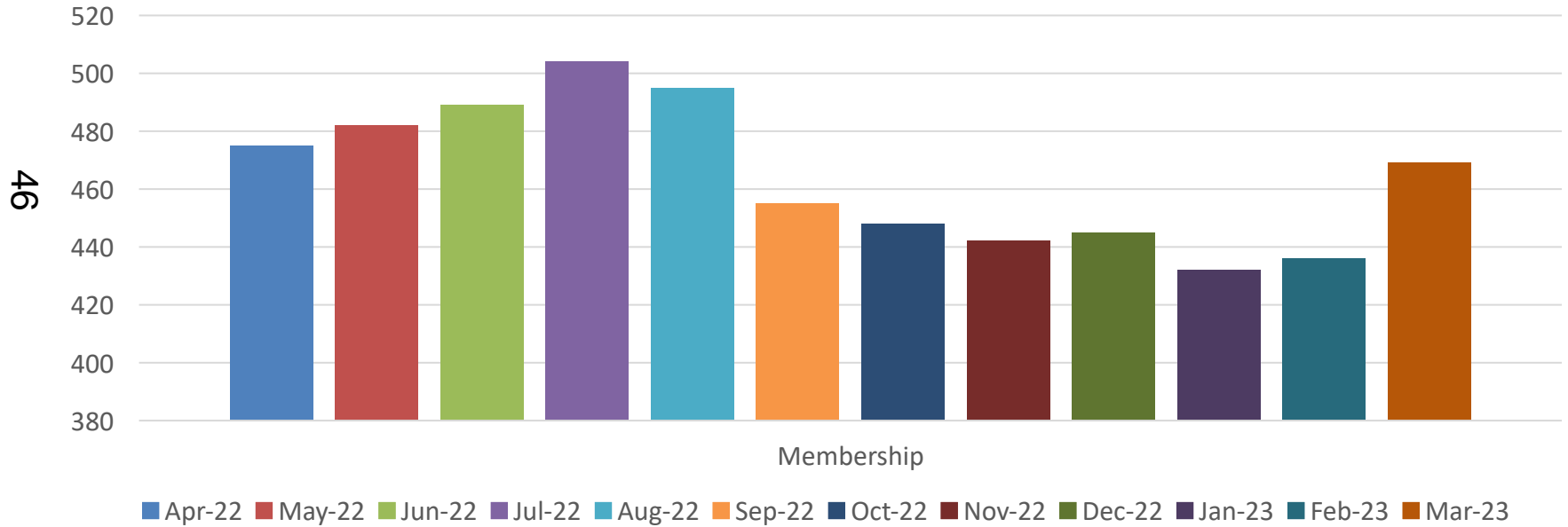
Dibden Participation Levels

Roundage 2022/2023



Golf Membership 22-23

Club Live



Completed Works April 22 – Mar 23

- LED Lighting upgrade to Driving Range
- Golf Course: Winter Mat Install
- Golf Course: Renovation to key bunkers on golf course
- Golf Course: Key works on the 3rd hole pond
- Replacement Microwave
- 47 Clubhouse: Upgrade of Gas Supply Pipework
- Lease of 6x geo fenced buggies
- Hand Dryers replaced throughout clubhouse – **Customer Feedback**
- Clubhouse: Bar Re-decoration
- Clubhouse: Function Room & Dance Floor deep cleans & varnish/reseal
- Golf Course: Purchase of Mole Plough (improve drainage of golf course)

Customer Feedback – Based on You said we Did Strategy.

Dibden Overview – Looking Ahead

Key Aspirational Goals - SWOT

Strengths – Reputation, Dwell time and vibrancy in clubhouse, range of facilities at site & Course condition during spring/summer months.

The team at Dibden won't rest on its strengths and continue to take advantage of the dwell time with Sky TV being installed. In addition, the management team show intent to enhance the range of facilities and have recently installed practice nets.

Weaknesses – Drainage during wetter months, site configuration/customer journey, Inreach/Outreach

The below opportunities reflect a desire to improve the clubs' weaknesses. AR to drive participation through wellbeing lead at NFDC and create an effective partnership.

Opportunities – Targeted engagement in local community to drive membership and facilities, Investment in course and key areas, drive participation in golf through social media & Inreach/Outreach.

Actions – Open ditch work on the 18-hole course in September 2023. AR to provide more detail through client meetings.

Pro shop return has been signed off at board level via Capex.

Junior Golf – A large drive to raise the numbers through effective outreach in schools.

Targets – Grow membership back to pre covid level and beyond)

Actions – Strong spring and summer campaign in situ with great benefits. AR working locally to grown membership.

mytimeactive

Mission Wellbeing

We make it simple to get more out of life

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Dibden Golf Centre Annual Report

1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023



Contents

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| Page | 7 | KPIs - Membership |
| Page | 8 | Completed Works |
| Page | 8 | Looking Ahead |

Introduction

We are a social enterprise on a mission to improve wellbeing within our communities. We make it simpler for people to get more out of life by moving more, eating better, feeling positive and making new friends. We understand what it takes to make a positive impact on everyday wellbeing, and we are here to make it simple, easy and more fun for everyone in our neighbourhoods to live longer, healthier and happy lives.

Across the generations, from children to grandparents and everyone in between, we help people get to where they want to be, whatever their starting point. With swimming, gyms, golf, bowling, social and health programmes, our range of wellbeing services ensures we have something for everyone.

As an independent charity, we reinvest our profit back to where it matters – the long-term wellbeing of our local neighbourhoods.

Mytime Active currently operate a thirty-year contract with The New Forest District Council (NFDC) for the management of Dibden Golf Centre (DGC), ending in 2042. A strong working relationship has been built between both parties in recent years and Mytime Active MTA has the intention to continue working as a good partner for NFDC for the length of the contract.

The partnership has just surpassed its first full year following the deed of variation.

Corporate Plan

1. Increase employee engagement from an average of 33 to 50 by March '24
2. Improve the Wellbeing of our Communities - our members Personal Wellbeing Factor (PWF) at least 5% greater than that of the total local community
3. Deliver a sustainable EBITDA

Financial - Income

After the recent Covid-19 pandemic the business had to make a number of changes. From being in a position of having significant reserves, these have been removed and the organisation was at real risk of insolvency. This meant that the organisation and DGC had to take steps to rationalise the business and protect its future. Actions taken include the reduction of the workforce, including central support, seeing an overall drop by thirty percent. With the reduction of staffing levels, the organisation has increased support to allow site teams to continue delivering excellent levels of customer service. These changes included the introduction of a contact centre to answer all incoming calls, implementation of an app to facilitate booking and paying for services online. This also included the ability for customers to subscribe to memberships online increasing convenience to the process.

During the Covid-19 period Golf participation boomed across the UK. Naturally, as other sport and leisure experiences remobilised it was expected that levels of trading would reduce as society returned to normal. As expected, income and roundage related to Golf did reduce and therefore it is important to compare pre-covid trade to understand how the business is evolving.

The below highlights this:

| Key Income Headings | 2022-2023 Actuals | 2022/2023 Budget | 2019-2020 Actuals | 2019-2020 Budget | Variance Annually |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Membership | £252,978 | £283,581 | £295,456 | £266,167 | £42,478 |
| Green Fees & Societies | £415,066 | £416,182 | £262,210 | £265,763 | £152,856 |
| F&B | £331,312 | £324,301 | £356,263 | £410,626 | £24,951 |
| Driving Range | £62,879 | £52,457 | £42,759 | £45,358 | £20,120 |

N.B - Have used 19-20 as a realistic comparison.

As per the table above you will note a large drop off in membership compared to 19/20. This was deemed in part to the aftermath of the pandemic. Although competitive, the price of a membership would have been a factor whilst the aftereffects of the pandemic were still lingering. That said the offset in green fees was hugely positive ensuring roundage and utilisation remained high at an average of 38% across the year.

On a positive note, membership continues to recover as shown in slide 8 during the peak times of summer before naturally dissipating due to the weather conditions.

DGC has always looked to offer more than just golf, with Food and Beverage being a key strength for the site. The Food & Beverage side of the business continues to flourish albeit in the absence of a third 40-hour FTE chef. This position was unfortunately removed due to a strategic change during Covid-19 whereby a number of redundancies were unavoidable. A large number of the membership base remain loyal and continue to dwell in the clubhouse which creates a positive revenue impact. The notion that DGC is compared to a pub always rings true upon reviewing the footfall within the clubhouse.

With day-to-day trade on an upward curve, it was important that as many events returned as possible. Dibden has always been fortunate with a respectable reputation within the local area to attract and sustain a reasonable level of events.

Dibden's 22-23 performance has a small F&B deficit to contend with against 19-20. That said, moving into 23-24 provides lots of encouragement for the ongoing recovery and the continuous improvement to flourish.

To overcome the challenges faced the site has identified two key targets linked to the Mytime Active's five-year strategy and the NFDC Community Matters Corporate Plan:

- Provide long term stability for the venue - giving confidence to both Mytime Active and NFDC. This will be achieved through generating a margin of twenty five percent EBITDA and an approved five-year rolling investment schedule agreed by both parties.
- Become a community hub and an integral part of the local community via driving partnerships with various parties including the new leisure operator and other local businesses and community groups, not just golfers. Thus, bringing opportunities to the local area, making it a vibrant local economy.

| Key Expenditure Headings | 2019/2020 Actuals | 2022/2023 Actuals | 2019/2020 Budget | 2022/2023 Budget | Variance 2022/2023 Comparison |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Staffing | £414,452 | £428,471 | £476,837 | £441,320 | £12,849 |
| R&M | £81,735 | £53,694 | £73,565 | £53,766 | £72 |
| Energy | £46,857 | £70,014 | £57,341 | £45,288 | £24,726 |

The challenges remain with most businesses suffering as part of the larger impact of the energy crisis. Dibden and other sites within the Mytime Active group are also subject to these issues as shown above in the energy column. The comparison to 19/20 paints a picture as to the reality of this effect.

Mytime Active will continue to look at fundamental ways of cutting down on the consumption of key utilities to not only save money but to reduce our carbon footprint. An Environmental Sustainable Management Plan is being created towards the back end of the 2023 financial year.

The site continues to use its R&M – Repair & Maintenance budget wisely. An asset management plan alongside a condition reports are used to formalise any actions deemed pro-active. Several areas have been uplifted and maintained during 22-23 financial year including an LED lighting project on the driving range, an uplift of redecoration schedule in the bar area and a brand-new dishwasher to name but a few.

The staffing of the facility remains a real positive. Dibden continues to have a full FTE at site with only two members of staff leaving the company in 2022 due to retirement. It also benefits from having an average staff to turnover percentage of £28%.

Dibden Performance Update - Overall

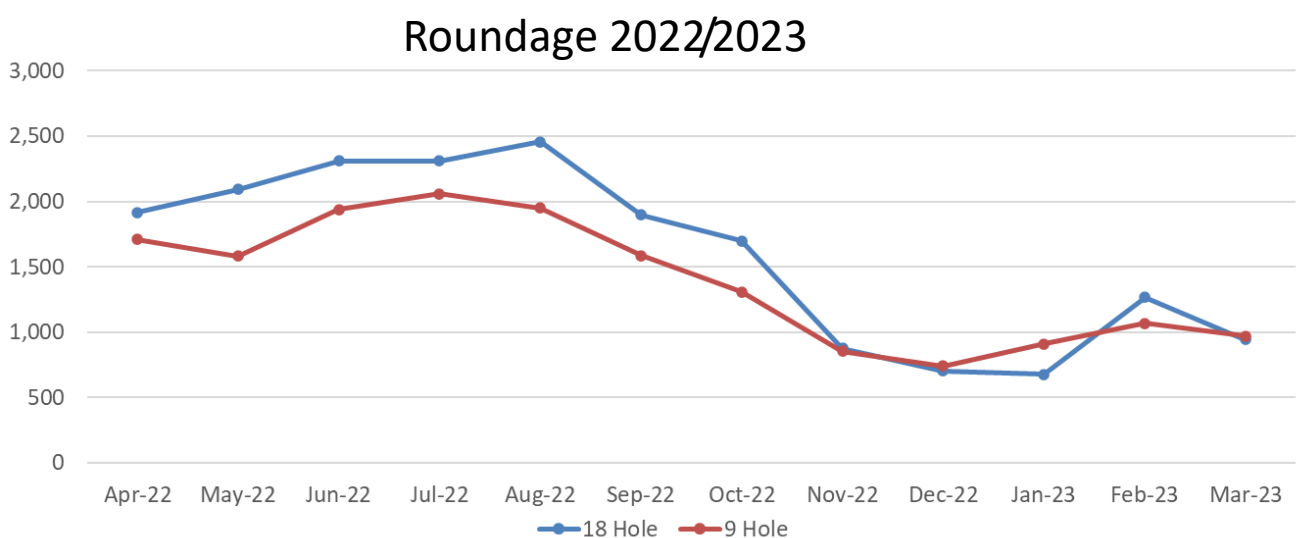
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| Budgeted Loss | | | £52,607 |
| Net Loss | | | £52,092 |
| Total Loss | | | £104,699 |

The above shows the final position of Dibden financial accounts for 2022-2023. As noted, the position reflects rent relief provided by NFDC. However, these are still unaudited accounts, and the final version will be shared with client in October 2023.

The position also reflects 14% of annual turnover contributed towards central support costs.

KPIs - Roundage

The below graph displays the levels of a roundage as a key KPI for the facility. As golf is a seasonal sport/business the below supports this with an ever-changing participation figure through the course of the financial year.



You will note from the graph above that throughout the summer months Dibden will peak at around 2,500 rounds a month. This equates to around a 42% utilisation across the golf courses in these months. The challenge remains to keep the courses dry and open for longer throughout the wetter months in order to

increase participation. That said with predicted hotter summers and wetter winters the predicted weather in coming years remains an obstacle.

Due to this ongoing challenge, Dibden continues to review and implement key components of a course plan which consists of fundamental cultural practices. This assists with recovery, growth and drainage.

KPIs - Membership

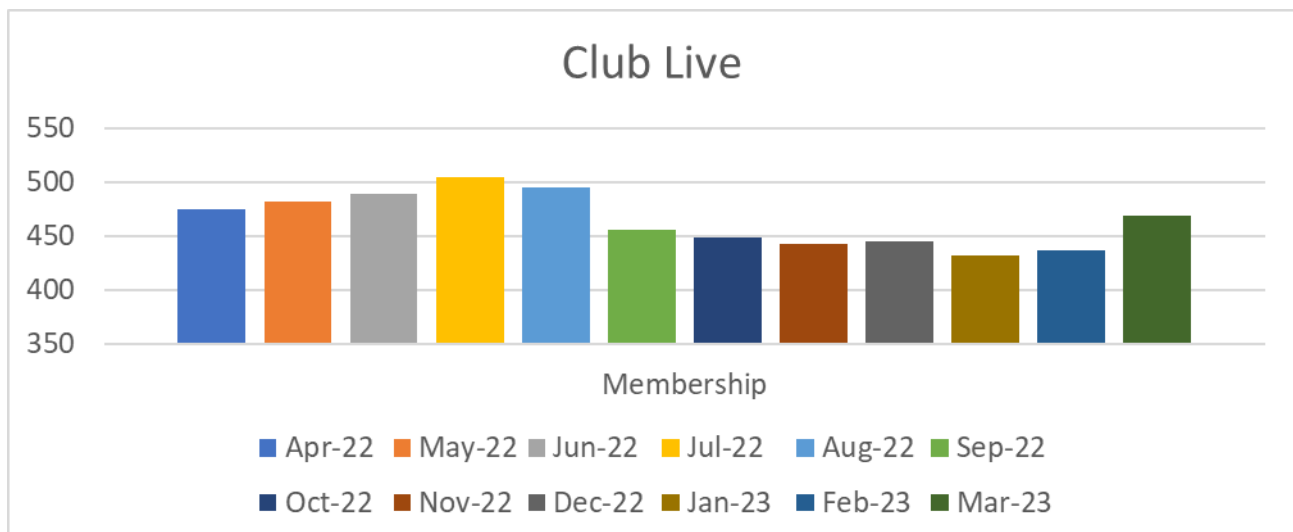
The ultimate key focus for the site is to grow its membership base to protect the revenue for the facility in the Winter months where golf participation drops significantly. The initial target has been to recover the membership total to pre Covid levels by June 2022. With this achieved the site has now targeted increasing on the previous five year high on membership of seven hundred and two, by achieving seven hundred and twenty-five members by March 2024.

To achieve this target, it is essential the site hits the monthly sales targets set and also keeps the sites attrition level below the budgeted two percent. To assist in monitoring progress a number of key performance indicators will be utilised to monitor progression against the targets set, with clear milestones that are shared with all team members. This allows the site to react with local action if actual numbers track below target. To ensure this is effective the site has a local marketing budget and various contacts and partnerships to ensure any spend generates the required ROI.

The site requires a strong central marketing campaign, that is disseminated down to the site team in sufficient time to ensure all parties are fully briefed and ready to deliver the required service to achieve the budgeted sales targets.

Although Dibden’s memberships levels suffered as a result of the pandemic, it has shown signs of recovery through 2022-2023. A central led membership marketing campaigns assisted with numbers returning to pre-covid levels peaking at 504.

Membership base graph below as per the presentation:



When setting targets for golf utilisation, this includes both members and non-members. As described in the section above, the key focus is to drive membership numbers. To increase membership numbers, it is recognised that the majority of the subscribed golfers will come from the registered database. Therefore,

the site will aim to maintain the level of registered golfers and increase the number of subscribed players. Combined the target for all golfers is to achieve a rolling twelve-month utilisation figure of thirty percent.

Completed Works – 2022/2023

As alluded to in the financial section Dibden have undertaken several key projects and asset-based works to ensure the environment is not only safe but a welcoming one also. Although some of these works are not front of house focused, they are essential to ensure the building and equipment remains compliant. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Driving Range Lighting – Essential in the re-development of the area and to ensure the lux levels were fit for purpose. Also enhances the amount of light and a lot more environmentally friendly. Project undertaken in May 22.
- Golf Course Bunker Renovation – 4x bunkers identified on the course by Head Green Keeper that needed re-edging, drainage re-stored and grass edging applied. At a reasonable cost to the facility, we benefited from extensive positive customer feedback. Project undertaken in August 2022.
- Mole Plough Purchase – A valuable piece of greenkeeping equipment that will provide channels in the fairways which act as small water ways leading to run offs. This will assist with any surface water. Purchased November 2022.
- Leasing of Geo Fenced Buggies – The importance of said buggies allows for the site to geo fence and protect the buggies path. This means they can be hired through the wetter months and income could be protected.

Looking Ahead

The sites long term vision remains the same, to be financially sustainable, generating an EBITDA of twenty five percent, with satisfied users ensuring the method for recording satisfaction is always above the benchmark set of the national average and to cement the site into the local community via creating local effective partnerships. These are the overarching benchmarks that will be utilised to review the success of the plan in five years' time.

To ensure the long-term goals will be achieved a number of shorter-term goals need to be determined, a total of five with eighteen-month deadlines. These goals are to be shared with all team members to ensure that all parties are working towards the same objectives and are passionate to succeed:

Membership Growth

Golf Utilisation

Food & Beverage Performance

Junior Golf Development

Investment Schedule

To ensure we hit these goals Our DNA, Values and behaviours must be adhered to - Show Passion, Own It and One Team are the 3 values which the team members at Dibden Golf Centre will demonstrate in everything they do. The Centre Manager will ensure that these values are reviewed during one to ones but importantly will proactively ensure that the excellent behaviours associated with the values are identified during Head of Department meetings.

It is clear that our focus needs be on making our service customer centric. This simply means that a customer's journey must be smooth, simple and informative. We must ensure that we offer the services that the local community require, ascertained through market research and speaking with our existing

members. Whether this be additional services or facility improvements. It may simply be driving awareness of what we already offer, ensuring all staff are aware of our products and services and feel comfortable talking through the options available, no matter which department they work in, a one team approach.

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITY, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2023 – 2024

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Panel supports the proposed Food Safety Service work plan for the forthcoming year.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The report and attached appendices provide Members of the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel with information on how the Food and Safety Team will deliver food law controls during this financial year.

2.2 The work plan is in line with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Food Law Code of Practice for England, dated June 2023 and takes a risk-based approach, that ensures our resources are targeted where they will have greatest value to protect and improve the health of residents and visitors to the New Forest.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 During and following the coronavirus pandemic, the Food and Safety Team followed the Food Standards Agency 'Local Authority Recovery Plan: guidance and advice to local authorities for the period from 1 July 2021 to 2023/24' which set out how local authorities should deliver an effective food service, particularly whilst recovering from the impact of the pandemic.

3.2 The team carried out a total of 472 inspections in 2022/23. They completed all the food safety work in line with the plan, and successfully brought interventions of the highest risk businesses back in line with the Food Law Code of Practice by 31 March 2023 when the recovery plan ended.

3.3 Food controls for 2023 – 2024, have now reverted to the FSA Food Law Code of Practice requirements. The revised Code of Practice published in June 2023 introduced a greater flexibility of approach to interventions, enabling further targeting of resources at areas of greatest risk whilst providing a lighter touch approach to lower risk businesses.

3.4 The national and more substantial changes to the delivery of food controls are proposed in 2025 with a new delivery model: Achieving Business Compliance programme. This will modernise the way in which food businesses are regulated in England and is currently being trialled with a few local authorities and evaluated to assess how it could improve business compliance.

4. PROGRESS DURING 2022 – 2023

4.1 During the past year, all due and overdue high and medium priority food hygiene inspections were undertaken (98 inspections). These included all poor performing

businesses, which are those with a food hygiene rating of 0, 1 or 2, as well as those businesses which undertake high risk activities, such as large food manufacturers.

4.2 In addition, all food businesses with a medium risk rating (C-rated) (148), and 50% of lower risk (D-rated) (226) food businesses were inspected. The inspections of these lower risk premises were over and above the requirements of the Food Standards Agency recovery plan.

4.3 New food business registrations (215) were prioritised via a triage questionnaire, to ensure that those undertaking high risk activities were inspected within 28 days of their commencement date. Those identified as low risk following triage were deferred, although the majority were inspected within 4 months of operating.

5. THE WORK PLAN FOR FOOD SAFETY IN 2023 – 2024.

5.1 The Food Safety Service Plan and priorities are detailed in Appendix 1 which aligns closely to the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice.

5.2 The work plan prioritises critical enforcement work according to risk, which will protect the consumer but also support trade and the export of goods.

5.3 All high risk, poor performing businesses and lower risk D rated overdue inspections will be inspected by the end of March 2024. The aim is to ensure over 50% of our lowest risk outstanding E rated food businesses are contacted and all other food businesses when due an inspection, will return to the proactive inspection programme.

5.4 Further detail on the types and category of food premises in the New Forest, the number of programmed inspections due for 2023/24 and the strategy for delivery is detailed in Appendix 2.

5.5 The national Achieving Business Compliance programme is planned to be implemented in 2025 however, if directed by the Food Standards Agency this year, the workplan could be subject to change before this date.

5.6 The FSA continues to monitor local authorities' delivery of food controls against expectations set out in the Code of Practice through quarterly temperature checks, annual returns and local authority audits.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The report and appendices explain the strategy that the service will take in delivery of food controls to safeguard the health of residents in the New Forest. This will be achieved by targeting resources to ensure that appropriate action is taken to support and control poor performing and higher risk food businesses, whilst making full use of flexibility provided in the Food Law Code of Practice to address lower risk food businesses.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Delivery of the Food Safety Service Plan will be met within the existing Service budget.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 In order to effectively deliver the Food Safety Service Plan, officers may carry out enforcement of the legal provisions, to ensure that the public are not put at risk and there is compliance with the law. This will range from provision of advice, support and guidance for businesses, through to formal enforcement notices and prosecutions.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The service plan and new delivery model is designed to modernise food standards delivery, using local intelligence, and making the system fit for purpose. The aim is to make it easier for businesses to provide safe and trusted food, targeting resources at areas where there is greatest risk in order to protect the health of all consumers.

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Appendix 1

Food and Safety Team Service Plan Summary 2023 – 2024

| Introduction | |
|--|--|
| <p>The food and safety team are responsible for a range of functions, including undertaking food safety regulation, the monitoring and enforcement of workplace health and safety and a range of licensing functions, including animal activities, caravan sites and skin piercing and for operating the event safety advisory group.</p> <p>This workplan is a summary of priorities within the team's overall service plan relating to the delivery of the food hygiene and safety service.</p> <p>The aim of the food service plan is to protect the public from potentially dangerous foods and poor food hygiene practices.</p> | |
| Priorities | |
| 1 | To inspect all newly registered food businesses. All businesses will be triaged to ensure that inspections are prioritised according to their risk. |
| 2 | To inspect all poor performing or high-risk food businesses – that is those businesses with a food hygiene rating of 0, 1 or 2 (i.e., not broadly compliant), or businesses with a risk rating of A or B due inspection, and all approved businesses. |
| 3 | For businesses due an inspection, with a risk category of C which are broadly compliant, to alternate between an inspection/audit or another defined action which takes less time and is less intrusive on the business. |
| 4 | To carry out an appropriate intervention on all due D rated food businesses, as well as completed all outstanding D rated food businesses inspections following the pandemic – this may be either inspection/audit, or another 'official control', or another action which may be undertaken by new or unqualified staff. |
| 5 | To continue to carry out alternative enforcement action on low-risk E rated establishments. This may be an inspection if there have been substantial changes to the business, but in many cases will consist of gathering information on the business. The aim is to contact 50% of these outstanding businesses during 2023/24. |
| 6 | To support the operation of the national food hygiene rating scheme by providing businesses with and publishing their rating following food hygiene inspections, and by offering businesses safeguards, including the opportunity to be re-inspected and provided with a new food hygiene rating. |
| 7 | To undertake the sampling of food and food business environmental sampling to support work locally and nationally. To investigate where unsatisfactory results are identified. |
| 8 | To investigate all GP notifications of notifiable food-borne infectious and suspected food poisoning outbreaks. Take any necessary actions arising from the investigation and to report outcomes to assist in national surveillance. |
| 9 | To undertake an urgent response to safeguard residents. This may include responding to 'Food Alerts' as directed by the Food Standards Agency, taking local action where it may be necessary to withdraw, seize or detain food, or through the closure of a food business where an imminent risk to health is identified. |
| 10 | To respond to and when appropriate to investigate complaints and requests for service such as food complaints and premises complaints. |

| | |
|----|---|
| 11 | To continue to offer support to businesses through the Primary Authority partnership scheme. |
| 12 | As directed and by agreement with Hampshire Trading Standards or the Food Standards Agency, to inspect some primary production businesses, particularly those for which enforcement may be shared. This may include fishing vessels, deer larders and fruit farms. |
| 13 | In all areas of work identified above, to act in accordance with our enforcement policy to select the most appropriate course of action for dealing with issues of non-compliance. This may range from the provision of advice to service of enforcement notices, and where appropriate the taking of enforcement action to deal with cases of blatant disregard for the law. |
| 14 | To engage in and support the Food Standards Agency's review of the delivery of food control in England and Wales. |

Appendix 2:

Work Plan 2023-2024

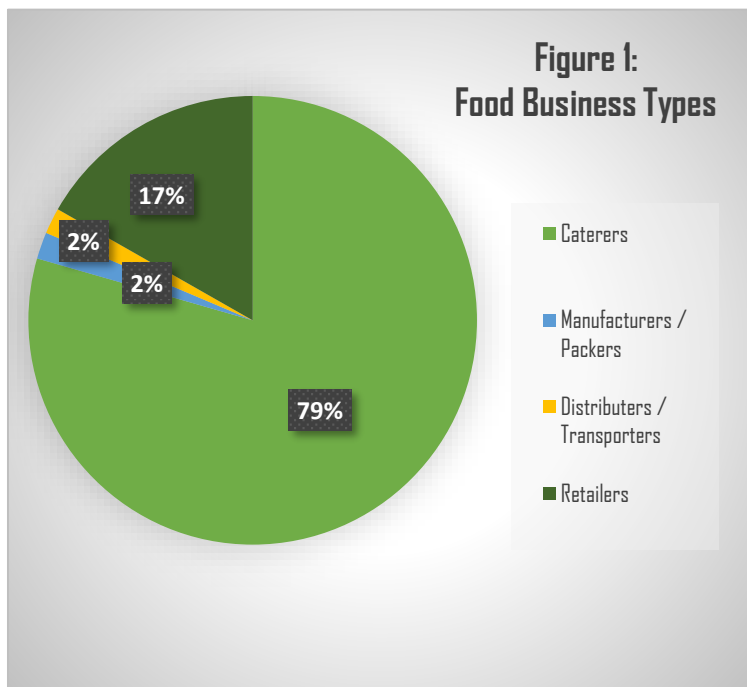
Environmental & Regulation: Food & Safety Team

This work plan explains the proposed delivery of food controls which will be carried out by the Food and Safety Team in the year 2023 – 2024. The role of the Food and Safety Team includes:

- The responsibility for enforcing food hygiene and food safety legislation in all food premises in the district.
- Carrying out proactive inspections and interventions of food businesses, investigating food and premises complaints, as well as cases of suspected food poisoning and water borne diseases.
- Programming the frequency of inspections of the 2000 food business in the New Forest area; this number remains relatively stable, despite new businesses opening, and some businesses ceasing trading.
- Undertaking workplace health and safety regulation, caravan site licensing, regulation of skin piercing and animal welfare licensing, however this report only relates to food safety work.

Food businesses in the New Forest

There are currently 2032 food businesses in the district, the majority of **1612**, are restaurants and other caterers such as takeaways and they range from national companies to sole traders. There are also **340** retailers, **39** manufacturers / packers, and **31** distributors / transporters. There are **13** approved premises which are subject to enhanced control as well as **22** businesses which are primary food producers, such as fishing vessels, fruit farms and deer larders. This is illustrated in Figure 1.



At the conclusion of a food hygiene inspection a business is given a risk rating which dictates when the next routine inspection will be due. This risk rating is based upon the scale of the business, the types of food handled, whether the business undertakes any specific high-risk processing or primarily serves vulnerable groups, and how well the business is performing.

The purpose of this risk rating is to ensure that local authority resources are effectively targeted towards businesses requiring assistance, whilst reducing the burden on low risk, compliant businesses.

The risk categories are A, B, C, D and E, where A and B are often larger or poor performing businesses, C and D are mainly caterers, and E rated are often very small-scale home-based businesses such as cake makers or retailers.

Figure 2 shows the current profile of businesses in the New Forest. Almost half of all businesses are low risk – often domestic cake makers, childminders, and small retailers, and these are contacted less frequently. Officers time is prioritised on those 20% of premises which are of higher and medium risk.

It should be noted that A and B rated businesses may not be a poor standard but could be high risk due to being large food manufacturers or serving vulnerable groups such as care homes.



Figure 2 – Risk rating of food businesses in the New Forest

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme



In addition to the risk rating generated following a food hygiene inspection, most businesses will also receive a food hygiene rating. This national scheme is designed to allow consumers to make informed choices on places where they eat out or shop for food whilst encouraging businesses to improve their hygiene standards. The ratings range from 5, (very good) to 0, (urgent improvement necessary). A business is given a window sticker which displays the rating and the score awarded. In England businesses are not obliged to display their rating, although it is available to view on the Food Standards Agency website.



Figure 3 – distribution of food hygiene ratings

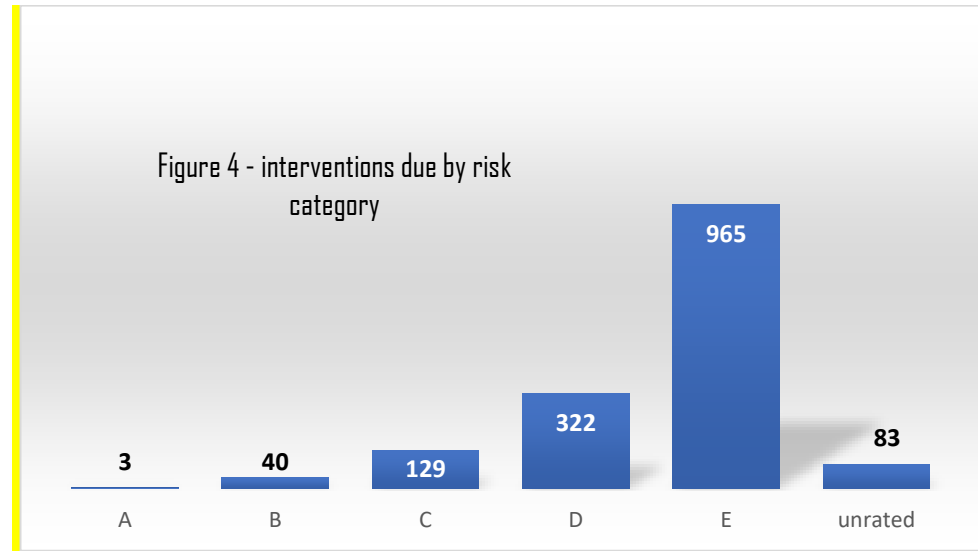
The majority of businesses in the New Forest have received a rating of 3 or above. A total of 98% of businesses have a rating of 5 - very good, 4- good or 3 - generally satisfactory. Only a 2% minority of businesses require improvement, urgent improvement or very urgent improvement. These businesses receive a rating of 2, 1, or 0. Overall consumers can have confidence in the food provided by businesses in the New Forest.

Once a rating has been provided it will normally remain until the next inspection is undertaken. However, businesses may apply and pay for a re-inspection, when they have carried out necessary works identified during the inspection and then a new rating will be issued.

There is a fee of £195 for a re-inspection, as this is a discretionary service, but many businesses recognise the importance of having a good rating and in 2022-2023, **21** businesses applied for a re-inspection. In addition to re-inspections, there is also the option for businesses to appeal their rating should they consider it to be incorrect.

Food Inspections and Interventions due in the coming year

Figure 4 shows the due interventions during the 2023-2024 year. It should be noted that the unrated column indicates newly registered food businesses which have not yet had an inspection. It is estimated that during the year an additional 60 registrations may be received requiring an inspection.



These interventions consist of both inspections due as part of the programme and those outstanding because of the pandemic which are approximately 100 of the D rated premises, 800 of the lowest E rated premises and 60 of the new unrated businesses.

Strategy for delivery of the food service

The food and safety service has remained agile since the pandemic due to a challenging recruitment market and has adopted the following strategy to ensure continued effective delivery of the food safety programme.

1. Recruiting two apprentices and training and supporting them through a 4-year university degree course to become qualified Environmental Health Officers.
2. Triaging newly registered food businesses, identifying those undertaking high risk activities and requiring immediate inspection, from those which are lower risk.
3. Flexible working for Environmental Health Officers to inspect businesses during their operating hours which includes evenings and weekends.
4. Reviewing our business systems to ensure that they are as efficient as possible, and that time taken to undertake individual inspections is optimised.
5. Ensuring that interventions are undertaken making full use of the flexibility in delivery of food controls outlined in the Food Law Code of Practice. This involves using a full range of interventions which are detailed below.

| Risk Category of premise | Frequency of intervention | Type of intervention |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| A | Every 6 months | Inspection or audit |
| B | At least every year | Inspection or audit |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| C | At least every 18 months | Alternate between inspection and another 'official control' where the business is broadly compliant. Official controls are normally verifying an aspect of the business or monitoring the business. |
| D | At least every 2 years | Alternate between inspection and another 'non-official control'. A non-official control could be information gathered not by qualified staff (apprentices) |
| E | At least every 3 years | Flexible strategy which may include an official or non-official control. |

Figure 5 – official and non-official controls

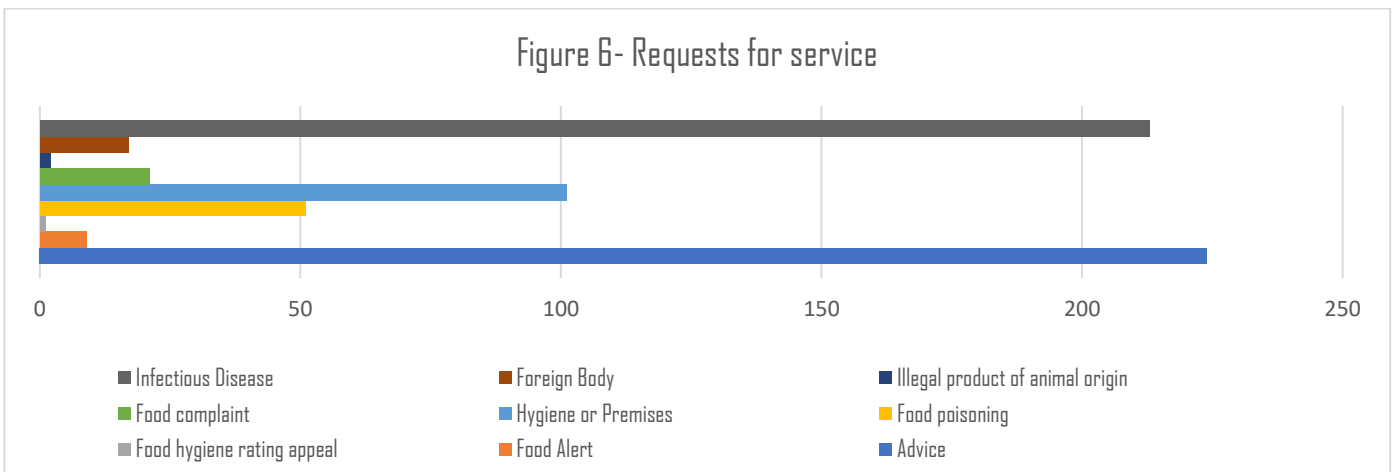
By applying this strategy, the Food and Safety Team aim to complete all due A, B, C and D rated inspections and a large proportion of the E rated interventions. Progress is reviewed on a quarterly basis, by the Service Manager, to ensure the key changes in the strategy deliver an effective, consistent and proportionate approach.

Investigations and Advice

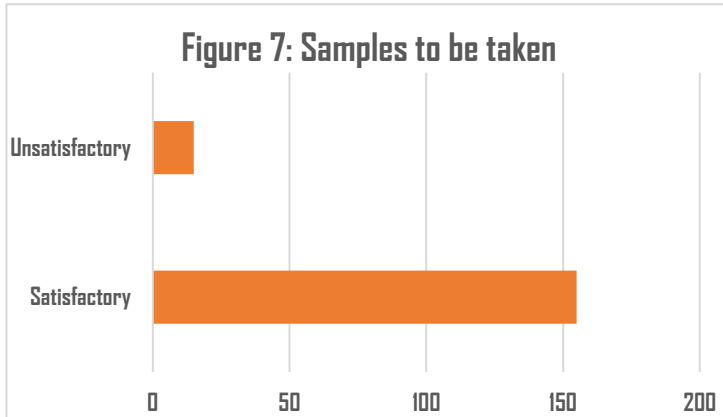
The Food and Safety Team receives a wide range of requests for service and during 2022/23 they responded to 1119 requests across all areas of their work. Over half of these service requests related specifically to food and infectious disease work. Since 1 April 2023, the team has received a total of 632 service requests, which indicates that at the current rate, they will receive a similar number to last year.

Moving forwards it is estimated that they will respond to over 600 service requests during the year, specifically relating to food, hygiene or cases of infectious disease. Generally, a third of these are complaints made by members of the public about food purchased or consumed, or standards of hygiene observed at a premise. They also receive complaints from people claiming that food they have eaten has made them ill and although difficult to investigate where there is no physical evidence, further investigations are carried out where more than one complaint is received. The team are notified of over 200 cases of infectious disease per year, most of which are as a result of food poisoning bacteria, such as salmonella and campylobacter. Their role with these cases, is to determine how the individual became unwell, whether a food business could be implicated and if it is a single isolated case or a potential outbreak.

Figure 6 illustrates the range of service requests which are likely to be received in 2023/24.



Food Sampling



The Food Standards Agency places considerable emphasis on the importance of sampling as part of the delivery of a local authority's food service. Sampling can be used as both a means to support business, to verify that they are producing safe food and also to emphasise when their food safety controls are inadequate. Local high-risk businesses are sampled, such as manufacturers, especially those carrying out specific processing, including sous-vide foods, butter manufacture, fermentation, or aseptic packaging.

The Food and Safety Team also participates in national and local Hampshire wide sampling projects which are identified by emerging issues and epidemiological data. In the coming year, the team will participate in studies of ready to eat salads, and hand contact surfaces in food businesses.

Last year 150 food samples were taken and sent for analysis and a similar number is planned to be taken this year. Whilst the majority of samples taken are satisfactory, last year 10% were found to not meet food safety requirements. In these cases, officers support the businesses in investigating what went wrong and will re-sample where necessary to demonstrate that any additional measures put in place by the business have been successful. The role of the team is to ensure that measures are taken to prevent unsafe food from being placed on the market.

Primary Authority

PRIMARY AUTHORITY

The Primary Authority (PA) scheme allows businesses to form a statutory partnership with a single local authority (or group of authorities) to access assured, robust and reliable advice at a reasonable cost. The advice can be on food hygiene and safety, health and safety or licensing and gives companies greater consistency particularly where they have outlets operating across several areas.

We currently have two Primary Authority Partnerships, one with a care home provider and the another with a fish products manufacturer.

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITY, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACTION PLAN UPDATE

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Panel consider the progress and updates to the Council's Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In October 2022, the Council adopted the first Health and Wellbeing Plan. This identified strategic priorities for the council, which included 'Working in partnership', 'Increasing Physical Activity', and 'Improving Mental Wellbeing'.
- 2.2 The Health and Wellbeing Plan covers the period from 2022 to 2025. It is based upon and supports the 'Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire 2019-2024' which is compiled on behalf of the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board. The Plan uses insight from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to set the relevant priorities for the district and our communities.
- 2.3 In June 2023, Hampshire County Council (HCC) published a Public Health Strategy for 2023-2026 with the commitment to improving the health of everyone living in Hampshire. The two ambitions in creating a healthier Hampshire of; increasing the number of years Hampshire residents can expect to live in good health and reducing the unfair gap in healthy life years between the most and least healthy, are supported by the Council's Plan.
- 2.4 In September 2023, the Government published a new sport strategy "Get Active: A Strategy for the future of sport and physical activity". It outlines the desire to help build a happier, healthier, more active nation by tackling high levels of inactivity and making sure sport and physical activity is accessible, inclusive and sustainable. The District Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan is aligned to these priorities and well placed to support the identified outcomes.
- 2.5 The Health and Wellbeing Plan is supported by an Action Plan which sets out the specific actions that are being undertaken across the Council to address the issues and inequalities that are identified in the Health and Wellbeing Plan. The Action Plan is a live document and will be updated regularly and should be read in relation to the Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- 2.6 This report provides a progress update on current projects, highlights those that have been completed and new projects which have begun.

3. INCLUSION ON THE ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 The Action Plan is a working document which captures projects and initiatives being carried out across Council services which have a positive impact on the health of our residents. All of the projects contribute to one of the three priorities and project output/outcomes have been identified as a measure of successful implementation.
- 3.2 The Action Plan includes a wide range of projects across several services and where the council plays a variety of roles from leader or deliverer of the project to facilitator, enabler or provider of support.
- 3.3 The Action Plan captures the status of the projects through a RAG rating. Completed projects are coded as blue and once evaluated are removed from the Action Plan. They may lead to further projects being developed based on the evaluation and learning. Projects which are on track are colour coded as green and those in development or behind on timescales are highlighted as amber for further oversight.
- 3.4 HCC's Public Health Strategy for 2023 – 2026 updates the previous Strategy for Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire 2019 –24. It gives a clear direction on how partners can work together to improve health and tackle inequalities. This identifies themes around the wider determinants of health including healthy places and community, healthy people and healthy lives and recognises the wide range of services delivered by partners (including district councils) and their impact on the health of our communities. Further work will be carried out over the next few months to identify and include additional projects and work which has an impact on health protection, community resilience and the health of our workforce.

4. HIGHLIGHTS ON THE ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 The largest challenge that many residents have faced in 2022/23 is the rise in the cost of living. Whilst this has affected most residents it has had a disproportionate effect on the most vulnerable members in our communities. This has compounded the increase in health inequalities caused by the covid pandemic which negatively impacted on the most deprived communities. In response to this, several of the projects have been aimed at supporting these communities which has included help to heat their homes during the winter months, ensuring that there is accessible provision of food and making sure that people are aware of the support available to reduce stress and anxiety at difficult times.
- 4.2.1 Projects have included:
- Working with partners at Fairshare, the Foodbanks and Citizens Advice to set up 6 Community Hubs. These are working with the Food Larders around the district, offering advice and face to face support for residents on a range of issues including housing and rent support.
 - Delivering the Warmer Homes Grants initiative to upgrade energy inefficient homes of low-income households. The Council supported 45 of the worst performing off gas grid homes at a total cost of £555,000 and 169 households of low-income households heated mainly by gas at a total cost of £886,000.
 - In response to a survey on the mental wellbeing of rural workers in Hampshire the Council held a Yarn in a Barn event which over 60 residents attended. This brought together agencies such as the Police, HCC and the Farming

Community Network, to highlight support for issues raised by rural workers and commoning community.

- The Council has distributed £129,000 Community Grants to organisations that support our communities including New Forest Disability Information Service, Community First, Youth and Families Matter, The Crossings and The Handy Trust.

4.3 The Council has set up a new Community Forum, bringing together Town and Parish Councils, the voluntary sector and faith-based groups and other statutory partners to share good practice and identify gaps in the provision of support and assistance to those experiencing hardship in the District. The first meeting of the Community Forum will take place on 18 October 2023.

5. MEASURING THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECTS

5.1 The Council continues to work with the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board and other partners to establish a shared approach to measuring the impact and outcomes of specific projects for our communities.

5.2 Public Health intelligence is used to examine the needs of our population and the evidence base for our interventions which have subsequently been used to identify the priorities in the Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan.

5.3 The Action Plan identifies possible outputs and outcomes which are currently being measured for each of the projects.

5.4 Discussions will also take place with officers across the Council who are leading on projects, to identify how the projects will be monitored and possible output/outcome data to collect, which will support the priorities in the Plan. The Plan will be updated on a quarterly basis.

5.5 The outcomes and their measurements may be based on those identified in strategic plans or within partnership agreements and projects may be based on available national or regional data which demonstrates the benefits and impact on human health. More local service outcomes will be based around service user impact and feedback, performance targets or aligned to service plan objectives.

5.6 All Services will have a future role in identifying projects and work that they are involved with that support the outcomes of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan.

6.0 NEW PROJECTS IN THE ACTION PLAN

6.1 The Action Plan contains several new projects and as highlighted earlier in the report, further projects will be included as they are identified and developed.

The new projects included in the action plan are:

- A Minding Every Gap programme, which creates a smooth process of support for housing issues and prevention of homelessness. Work between the ICB (Integrated Care Board) and NFDC.
- A Resettlement programme supporting ex-offenders to prevent homelessness
- Developing a Clean Air strategy for the district.

- Working with HCC to develop Community Pantries to compliment Food Banks and Food Larder provision.
- The establishment of a New Forest Youth Forum, to work with youth groups and identify areas of support and development.
- The development of the LCWIPs (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan).
- Working with AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust to develop opportunities to increase activity in targeted groups in Ringwood.
- Delivering Story Trails to encourage families to be more active.
- Developing new opportunities for targeted groups to become more active.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan identifies the needs and benefits of taking a whole system approach to tackling stubborn health inequalities in under-served communities. It outlines the evidence and insight for the approach taken and the areas and communities that we will look to support.
- 7.2 The Action Plan highlights the work being undertaken across the Council and through working with partners, which has a positive impact on the health of our communities. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to improving the health of everyone living, working and visiting the New Forest.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Delivery of the Action Plan will be met by existing resources, principally led by the Physical Activity and Partnerships Manager, drawing in other resources within the organisation, when required.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Crime levels have been linked to poorer social and physical functioning and lower levels of subjective wellbeing. The proposed Action Plan will play a positive role to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and in turn may have a beneficial impact crime and disorder issues in the district.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Increasing outdoor activities is a positive way to experience the tranquillity and special nature of the district, especially within the National Park. There will be times when residents need to limit disturbance to rare breeding birds which nest on the ground. There are numerous walking routes around the district to enable the community to enjoy the natural environment of the district.

11. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The proposed Action Plan has a positive effect on equality and diversity, enabling a route for all to access the benefits of a diverse and multi-programmed approach to enhance health and wellbeing, catering for all in the community who wish to partake or are referred by social prescribers. It will particularly focus on improving health inequalities.

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Background Papers:

Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022-
2025

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the panel note the Council's proposed new draft Tenant Engagement Strategy and provide comments and recommendations to Cabinet.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report presents the Council's draft Tenant Engagement Strategy. This is a new Strategy, produced in response to The Charter for Social Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper in 2020, and the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. Due regard has also been given to latest guidance and best practice, and it has been co-produced with housing practitioners and tenants. The proposed Strategy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The current draft Tenant Engagement Strategy has been reviewed by the Tenant Involvement Group, the Executive Management Team, and will be reviewed by Cabinet in October 2023, to seek approval to launch a formal four-week consultation process. It is expected that a final report will be brought back to Cabinet/Council in early 2024 to approve final adoption of the Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Charter for Social Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper published in 2020 set out the Government's clear expectations for social housing providers, with 7 clear priorities:
- i. To be safe in your home.
 - ii. To know how your landlord is performing.
 - iii. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.
 - iv. To be treated with respect.
 - v. To have your voice heard by your landlord.
 - vi. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.
 - vii. To be supported to take your first step to ownership.
- 3.2 The Regulator for Social Housing has received greater powers to ensure that the highest standards of social housing services are delivered. This is supplemented further by the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, including a revised set of Consumer Standards currently being consulted on, and anticipated to be finalised later in 2023, which sets out the detailed regulatory expectations of landlords. The Regulator of Social Housing has also been clear that landlords' focus should not only be on meeting prescribed standards, but also on doing the right thing for their tenants.
- 3.3 The Housing Ombudsman has highlighted the need to 'know your tenants' to truly provide and tailor services important to individuals and communities. To that end, the Council needs to ensure that it is reviewing the data it needs to collect and hold relating to its tenants and their household makeup. There is also a need to ensure that

information is relevant to the Council's tenants and services and is easily accessible to enable transparency and accountability.

- 3.4 The Council currently has a traditional model of tenant engagement, based around formal engagement with a central group of tenants making up the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG). This Group have been able to influence many aspects of what the Council do. They understand there is more to do to engage with the wider housing communities and enable a wider tenants' voice to influence and inform the Council's Housing Services. The Council need to make available a range of options for tenants to interact with the Council's housing services, in ways that suit them, and which recognises their diversity.
- 3.5 The Housing Service is committed to improving outward facing communication and provision of information, and ensuring engagement takes place in a way that represents the needs of all tenants, with a data collection exercise informing the design of the engagement approach and future service reviews.
- 3.6 It is clear in the current wider housing landscape, the Council can do more to ensure that tenants have a voice that is heard not only by all the Council's front-line housing services, but also across all levels, including within the governance structures of the Housing Service. That 'tenant voice' needs to be representative of the Council tenant population, and the communities in which they live.
- 3.7 The effectiveness of the Strategy will depend on good communication between tenants and the Council. There is a need to have a wide range of communication methods and the ability for tenants to hear about how housing services are performing and what is important to them. The Council needs to make it easy for tenants to feed into the key housing activities that affect their lives and feel genuinely involved in a partnership with the Council.

4. KEY COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGY

- 4.1 The Council are proposing to build a vision and strategy on 4 strategic priorities as follows:-
 - 4.1.1 **Priority One: Listening to our Tenants.** Tenants are best placed to tell the Council what is working well and what can be done better. A wide and diverse range of tenants must have opportunities to have their voices heard regarding the services they receive and any significant changes the Council wishes to implement, with a clear line of sight to the governance structures within the Council.
 - 4.1.2 **Priority Two: Putting Tenants First.** The Council will work with employees to reinforce accountability at all levels of the housing service. The Council wants to work in partnership with tenants to collectively improve services and outcomes for both tenants and teams working within the housing services.
 - 4.1.3 **Priority Three: Knowing our Tenants and supporting engagement.** Record keeping and data management is a crucial part of the Strategy and the Council's tenant engagement approach. The Council needs to know its tenants in order to provide services that are important to them and be able to respond based on the needs of those tenants. The Council also needs to ensure compliance with the requirements of the regulator and Housing Ombudsman expectations.
 - 4.1.4 **Priority Four: How we Communicate with Tenants.** Effective communication is key to the success, not only of the strategy, but for Tenant engagement and employee buy-in. The Council needs to make it easier for tenants to hold the

housing services to account and make the information they are looking for easy to find and transparent.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The proposed Tenant Engagement Strategy supports the Council to deliver on new regulatory requirements and expected consumer standards arising from the Social Housing Regulation Bill. This will place the tenant, their needs, and importantly their voice, at the heart of the Council's Housing Service.
- 5.2 It is proposed that the Strategy will be presented to Cabinet in October 2023, approving it for consultation purposes, with a final report coming back to Cabinet and Council in early 2024.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Budgets for the Tenant Satisfaction Surveys and the data collection survey have been approved previously by EMT and Cabinet/Council in 22/23.
- 6.2 There is a likelihood for future implications on existing budgets within the Housing Revenue Account due to an increase in tenant feedback. However, any changes, service redesign and introduction of new and additional processes will be actioned within existing budgets as natural efficiencies are created.

7. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Whilst there are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this Strategy, it is anticipated there will be potential indirect and positive impacts on the Council's tenants and neighbourhoods.
- 7.2 Through successful implementation of this Strategy, the Council will see an improvement in partnership working with Tenants and local partners, such as the Council's Community Safety Team and the Police in the reporting, investigation and resolution of Anti-Social Behaviour in local communities.
- 7.3 Increased feedback and communication mechanisms may also highlight new and emerging issues relating to crime and disorder which will allow the Council to plan and respond appropriately.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are limited implications and environmental impact arising from this strategy. However, employees will give due regard to positive impacts on the environment when conducting activities that require travel. The introduction of digital engagement methods will reduce travel, production of mail and other publications.
- 8.2 Environment and sustainability will be considered alongside any specific Tenant Engagement project or activity.
- 8.3 Improvements in neighbourhood and community appearance would also be expected as a result of this strategy. Increased engagement and understanding what is important to tenants should lead to estate improvement ideas being raised, considered and implemented – 'placemaking' and estate improvement being a tangible outcome that can be measured.

9. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are several actions in the strategy which relate to diversity. The Council is not currently in a fully informed position as to the personal characteristics of its tenants and their household members. Therefore, a key action is to undertake a full personal data survey of tenants to better understand who is occupying the Council's homes. This survey will also capture additional needs and support required by the Council's tenants.
- 9.2 This information will be used to better understand the needs of the Council's tenants and how services should be designed in future to meet these needs and to ensure services and engagement is fully accessible to all.
- 9.3 With full accessibility in mind the strategy supports establishing several methods of tenant communication and engagement. This will include an assessment of fully accessible methods of communication which are available to tenants with disabilities and other characteristics which require barriers to be removed to allow access.

10. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The collection, retention and deletion of Tenant data is governed by GDPR and associated guidance. The Housing Ombudsman has also given a clear direction on expectations for data collection and data handling. There are clear and legitimate reasons for the Council to hold and process data and sensitive data relating to tenants to enable delivery of the services that are provided. However, all data will be collected and maintained in line with the required legislation.

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Background Papers:

Published documents

Tenant Engagement Strategy

2024-2028

Draft

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Joint foreword by Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness, and Involved Tenants

Cllr Steve Davies, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness says.

I very much know from my own role as a New Forest District Councillor that the emphasis on engagement and co-creation of strategies, services and policy design with tenants has changed significantly over the last few years, quite rightly culminating with the Charter for Social Housing Residents 2022 and the subsequent Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.

I am very keen that this new legislation, not only bolsters our Tenant engagement Strategy, but renews the Council's commitment to delivering positive engagement, in all forms, with our tenants, leaseholders, staff and other stakeholders.

The housing sector has had to learn the hard way from both tragedy, and the feedback of tenants across the country. We have always been ambitious and passionate about a continuous journey of improvement for our housing service, so I am very supportive of a clear strategy that sets the tone of a renewed engagement approach and is a real driver for cultural change in delivering on our strategic promises, in partnership with our tenants.

This strategy aims to put our tenants at the very heart of our Housing Services, setting out how they will have a clear role in engaging with, shaping, and scrutinising our services – holding us to account and ensuring the best outcomes for our tenants, the communities in which they live, and for the Council's housing services.

I am pleased that our strategic actions have been co-produced with tenants, and our staff, to ensure everything we aim to achieve is supported by the tenants' voice, and those who will implement the actions.

In my role as Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness, I am excited to see how we encourage new tenants to get involved, what new feedback we receive and how we use that feedback to continually improve our service. An exciting journey lies ahead.

Cllr Steve Davies

Foreword from Alex Elliott & Alaine Willis – Members of the Tenant Involvement Group

Alex Elliott of Totton

“Staff at NFDC work day in, and day out to deliver good, high quality housing services to tenants who live within our district. However, in the past tenants haven't always had a big enough say in how the council delivered those services. I'm excited this published tenant engagement strategy shows how seriously NFDC takes what their tenants have to say and to put them on an equal footing alongside staff members. Social housing regulations are changing all the time, but tenants and their voice will continue to be needed to be heard, no matter what changes, so I would urge any of my fellow tenants to get involved.”

Alaine Willis of Holbury added:

“It's great to be part of the effort New Forest District Council makes to engage with their tenants in a respectful and caring manner. Whilst many things have changed over the years, this has always been for the better and I feel that now is another opportunity to continue our journey, with tenants being involved in implementing the changes. As we used to say.... We have a voice... and it is good to know that we have been heard.”

National Context

National Housing regulations and nationally responsible bodies such as the Regulator of Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman prescribe that a decent and safe home for tenants, receiving quality services that are important to them and their communities should be at the core of any social housing service. Yet, over the last few years national news headlines have prominently featured many tragic cases of those living in Social Housing experiencing apathy and, in the very worst cases, fatal consequences of poor housing conditions, or a failure to act on critically important feedback or a call to action from tenants.

As a result, there has been intense scrutiny and resulting government policy, guidance and legislation that are all relevant to this strategy and beyond. Fire safety, damp and mould, social housing stigma, inequality and racism, lack of engagement, skills and experience, and traditional and unhelpful views on what it means to be a 'social housing tenant' have all been called out in recent years, highlighting a need to change, to do better, and to evolve with a modern and diverse world.

Via the Regulator of Social Housing the Government took charge, publishing 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper' in 2020 which set out the Government's clear expectations for social housing providers.

In it they set out 7 clear priorities:

1. **To be safe in your home.** We will work with industry and landlords to ensure every home is safe and secure.
2. **To know how your landlord is performing,** including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money, so you can hold it to account.
3. **To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly,** with access to a strong ombudsman who will give you swift and fair redress when needed.
4. **To be treated with respect,** backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants.
5. **To have your voice heard by your landlord,** for example through regular meetings, scrutiny panels or being on its Board. The government will provide help, if you want it, to give you the tools to ensure your landlord listens.
6. **To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in,** with your landlord keeping your home in good repair.
7. **To be supported to take your first step to ownership,** so it is a ladder to other opportunities, should your circumstances allow.

The Regulator has received greater powers to ensure the highest standards of housing and services are delivered, which are further bolstered by the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, and a revised set of Consumer Standards to be finalised later in 2023 setting out the detailed regulatory expectations of landlords and revised electrical and Decent Homes Standards, along with the legal requirement to have senior decision-making officers qualified to designated levels.

The Housing Ombudsman Service has also strengthened their approach and now their responses to failings and best practice feature prominently. The stronger relationship they

have with the regulator closes feedback loops, with failings identified by the Ombudsman leading to real change expected by the Regulator.

The introduction of a new Tenant Satisfaction regime from April 2023 requires data collection against 10 management performance measures, and surveying of tenants for their views against 12 perception measures. Tenants will be asked about how well landlords engage, listen and respond to them.

Landlord performance data will be published in the Autumn of 2024 in national league tables allowing for meaningful comparisons to be made across the sector for the first time.

However, The Regulator of Social Housing has been clear, that our focus should not only be on meeting prescribed standards– it remains firm on landlords doing the right things for their tenants.

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Local Context

Our tenants and the communities they live are an ongoing priority for this council, which is supported by the themes in our new Corporate Plan 2024-2028. We are keen to promote opportunities to gather feedback from our tenants as we look to continually improve and evolve our services.

We have previously operated a very traditional model of tenant engagement, based around a formal engagement with a central group of tenants, which is in need of review and a refresh. Through a very narrowly focussed offer to become involved with the Council our tenants may be unaware of the possibilities and opportunities to get involved, so we need to ensure we make available, and publish, a range of options for tenants to interact with us, in ways that suit them and make them want to work with us.

The Housing Ombudsman has highlighted the need to 'know our tenants', to truly provide and tailor services important to individuals and communities.

Whilst we need to improve our outward facing communication and information, we also need to ensure we engage with tenants who represent the diversity of all of our tenant needs and backgrounds, with a data collection exercise informing the design of our engagement approach and future service reviews.

NFDC already have an engaged, enthusiastic and well represented Tenant Involvement Group (TIG). However, the members of the TIG have told us that there is more to do to engage with our wider housing communities and enable a wider tenants voice to influence and inform our Housing Services.

Alongside this, it is clear in the current wider housing landscape, we can do more to ensure that our tenants have a voice that is heard not only by all our front-line housing services, but also across all levels, including in the governance structures, of the Service. That 'tenant voice' must be representative of the NFDC tenant population, and the communities in which they live.

Both the Ombudsman and Regulator make it clear that one of our priorities needs to be focused on knowledge and information management. Not only do we need to review the data we need to collect and hold, concerning our tenants and their household makeup (to enable a true understanding of our tenants, and ensure services are accessible and meet their needs) - but we also need to ensure that information is relevant to our tenants and services, and is easily accessible to enable transparency and accountability. It is important to stress that NFDC do not need to hold information that is not relevant – however, data which can inform our community makeup, will help drive and build better services for our tenants, and will enable us to measure the success of engaging with those communities to ensure fair and transparent representation.

In turn, this will enable effective communication between our tenants and teams, acknowledging that times and expectations have changed. We need to have a wide range of communication methods and the ability for tenants to hear about how we're performing and what's important to them. We need to make it easy for tenants to tell us about those important subjects, feed into our key activities that affect their lives, and feel genuinely involved in a partnership with NFDC.

The following key priorities will influence our approach to tenant engagement over the next 4 years and will be measured for success based on the 'key measures of success' highlighted on page 15 – reviewed annually (and periodically during each year).

Our vision and strategy are built on 4 strategic priorities.

These priorities are aiming for real, meaningful impact for both tenants and NFDC services. Our priorities will be reviewed regularly/annually by both tenant and colleagues to make sure we're on the right track and can be dialled up and down depending on what our tenants tell us as we progress with implementation.

Every tenant will be enabled to have a voice – but not every tenant wants to be part of a focus group or give up their time. We'll make it easy for our tenants to work with us, whatever their circumstances or needs. Enabling tenants to shape and improve our services through effective implementation of our priorities.

Within this strategy references to 'Tenants' includes general rented and leaseholders. And for the avoidance of doubt, this strategy is specifically for the tenants of New Forest District Council, as a landlord, and their communities.

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Achievements to Date

The Social Housing Regulator made it very clear not to wait for the SHR Bill to become law before acting on the changes required. Equally the Council has not waited for the implementation of this strategy before embarking on the delivery of key actions, which have been:

- A renewed focus on Scrutiny of our services, with the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG) being able to challenge and review our services through a monthly Service Manager's update.
- The introduction of a new Tenant Engagement Manager role to continue to drive a focus on the tenant voice and support New Forest District Council to meet the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act.
- A Governance and Scrutiny Review completed by the TIG, feeding directly into the proposals within this strategy.
- Implementation of a new Housing Management system – allowing us to better record and report on our customer data.
- All housing teams given regular briefings on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures and new regulatory regime – to increase awareness and in preparation for renewed focus.
- The procurement of a digital platform that will allow digital participation and consultation on NFDCs project. Enabling and supporting co-production and to support listening to Tenants' views.
- A group of our involved tenants participated in the consultation on both the proposed Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Decent Homes Standard review.
- Tenants helped us review our Void Standards and policy, plus monitored our progress against the policy by carrying out spot checks of our empty homes.
- Tenants helped us review our new Mobility Scooter Policy.
- Established new surveys to obtain tenant satisfaction with the handover of properties and completion of repairs.
- Supported one of our TIG members join the national Social Housing Quality Residents' Panel
- Ensured leaseholders are consulted regarding the procurement of contractors ahead of maintenance schemes taking place in their respective buildings.
- Introduced 3 new Building Safety Officer roles to provide a renewed focus on the upkeep of blocks of flats, whilst allowing for tenant feedback on safety issues to be recorded.
- Developed a dissatisfaction and tenant feedback process using the new housing management process.
- Published our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Code.
- Developed a range of performance and budget information to be published in an annual report.
- Improved the level of safety information provided to tenants.
- Increased the use of social media and press releases to make our residents aware of housing service initiatives.
- Ensured tenants received effective engagement during major works projects, involving decanting to alternative accommodation at Compton House, Sarum House and Robertshaw House, as well as during the installation of 120 Air Source Heat Pumps.

Priority One: Listening to our Tenants

Our tenants are best placed to tell us what's working well and what we can do better. A wide and diverse range of Tenants must have opportunities to have their voices heard regarding the services they receive and any significant changes we wish to implement, with a clear line of sight to the Governance structures of the Council.

We will

- Establish a clear offer to tenants on how their voice can be heard, by establishing a menu of engagement opportunities to encourage a diverse set of feedback. This will include:
 - Establishing a structure for Individual tenants, groups, or tenant associations to feed into formal scrutiny and decision-making processes.
 - A review of the functions of our operational teams to ensure we have a presence in our communities and neighbourhoods
 - Neighbourhood, rural and community outreach sessions
 - Street and Village Meets
 - Activities that support breaking down barriers and provide community cohesion, whilst providing opportunities to capture tenant feedback as a secondary aspect to the event
 - Digital forums and surveys
 - Transactional surveys e.g. following a repair completion, or closure of an ASB case
- Establish a protocol for appointed tenants to work alongside the Portfolio Holder, appointed Members of the Housing & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel, and senior officers to support co-creation, scrutiny and feedback on performance.
- Ensure tenants are aware of their local Councillors and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities and their ability to raise issues with them regarding the services they receive.
- Implement a clear structure for active tenant accountability and feedback, with recruitment of specialised project groups to scrutinise and co-produce/co-create policies and strategies.
- Establish Tenant involvement in the procurement of housing services and contractors that affect tenants, and ensure the same principles of tenant engagement are embedded and monitored within those procured services.
- Encourage a diverse and well represented collective tenant voice.
- Ensure service feedback and dissatisfaction provided by tenants is recorded electronically and escalated appropriately for action and long-term change.
- Ensure information to support tenants to make corporate complaints and report repairs and ASB is easily accessible.

Priority Two: Putting Tenants First

We will work with our employees to reinforce accountability at all levels of our service. We want to work in partnership with tenants to collectively improve services and outcomes for both tenants and our teams.

We will:

- Encourage ownership and accountability of services and actions required by our employees - from the top down – ensuring this is a focus for Members and Directors/Service Managers through the design of strategies and policies, regular briefings and the inclusion of feedback in service design.
- Ensure that Tenant feedback is a standard agenda item for tenant facing services (through team meetings, toolbox talks and 1:1 meetings).
- Ensure the tenant engagement team are involved in projects and policy/service re-design that will affect tenants.
- Provide regular training, webinars and/or briefings to staff, to ensure good practice and relevant legislation is embedded within our Housing Services.
- Continue to drive a culture of equality and fairness through data driven feedback, policy design, staff inductions and training. We will challenge negative perceptions and prejudice through education and highlighting 'the lived experience' of engaged tenants.
- Establish a partnership approach with Tenants where we actively build relationships and empower tenants, our staff, and Council Members to work together and pro-actively challenge poor service.
- Build on a culture of collective accountability by encouraging cross-department working.
- Establish partnerships with key agencies in the district who will support us deliver key priorities and deliver on their own strategic priorities for the benefit of our tenants.

Priority Three: Knowing our Tenants and Supporting Engagement

Record keeping and data management is a crucial part of listening, understanding and responding to our tenants, whilst also informing service design. When we get this right, our tenants will receive a quality service that will be trusted. We need to know our tenants to provide services that are important to them and be able to respond based on the needs of those tenants. Without quality data, we can neither respond well, nor can we develop a truly tenant first approach – and at worst, risk being non-compliant with several regulatory expectations.

We will

- Undertake an initial review of our customer data, making sure it is both up to date and relevant - recording data on protected characteristics and housing needs.
- Undertake a survey of tenants and their households to collect information relevant to future service design, including personal characteristics and household needs.
- Only collect data that is meaningful, up to date, and relevant. To this end, we will periodically review the data we hold, and complete data cleansing exercises where needed.
- Embed a data integrity ethos with customer facing teams, which also follows data retention schedules.
- Ensure our performance framework adopts the ability for service and tenant feedback to help shape improvements and outcomes for tenants.
- Aim to focus engagement activities in community areas and on specific services where needed.
- Ensure that all customers have equal access to engagement opportunities and having their voice heard.
- Understand the needs of both our own tenants, and other residents in our neighbourhoods and communities to help shape improvements that matter to them and in the places where our tenants live.
- Embed how tenant characteristic data and performance data feeds back into service design and improvement.
- Make it easy for our teams to use, share and update data that is relevant to their roles, to support effective customer service.

Priority Four: How we Communicate with Tenants

We know that effective communication is key to the success of not only this strategy, but for tenant engagement and the effective delivery of our services and compliance against regulations. If we do not make it easy for tenants to hold us to account, or make the information they are looking for easy to find and transparent, or we make it difficult for our employees to close feedback loops – then we will be challenged to make any of our tenant engagement priorities work.

We will:

- Enable a range of communication methods that meet customer need including:
 - o Outreach in our communities, such as community hubs
 - o A digital platform to increase the number of consultation opportunities, project engagement and feedback.
 - o Online communication channels via social media/Digital communication
 - o Increased access to customer facing teams through an increased presence of staff in our communities, neighbourhoods and buildings.
 - o Invitations to feedback on services received, such as reactive repairs
 - o Annual surveys and Tenant Satisfaction Measure perception surveys
 - o Improved website information and self service
 - o Publications and subject related guides and leaflets
 - o This will include an assessment of fully accessible methods of communication which are available to tenants with disabilities and other characteristics which require barriers to be removed to allow access.
- Be consistent with our communication style/brand. This will be non-judgemental or 'stigma creating', that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Keep tenants updated on the services that are important to them, using channels that tenants have told us works for them.
- Promote positive outcomes and good practice, including positive tenant feedback – building trust with our tenants and teams.
- Agree customer standards for response times to phone calls, email and other feedback.
- Acknowledge complaints and tenant correspondence within specified targets and keep tenants informed on the progress of their enquiries.
- Communicate relevant Health and Safety information, tenant responsibility and building specific information to the residents that live there.
- Communicate effectively with new tenants before they become our tenants and early on in their tenancy to ensure expectations are understood and tenancy support identified.
- Ensure our services are responsive to communicating new and emerging issues e.g., Damp and Mould.

- Where issues arise or things go wrong e.g., communal boiler breakdowns, contact all affected tenants following a new agreed response and feedback plan.
- Ensure that all Leasehold Section 20 consultations are undertaken where required, and that these are effective and compliant both legislatively and following best practice.
- Communicate effectively with elected Members and/or other advocates working on behalf of tenants to help resolve matters raised. Where it is not possible to meet their expectations we will explore alternative options and be honest with what we can achieve or provide.

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Implementation and Delivery

To meet these four priorities, we will take a flexible approach to tenant engagement – with a range of options to engage that can flex based on customer need. We will outline our formal approach to meeting these priorities in our action plan in Annexe 1. We will implement this with a mix of proactive, responsive, and structured engagement to achieve ‘diversity of voice’, and we’ll make it easy to engage however and whenever suits our tenants.

Proactive engagement

- Outreach
- Surveys
- Online consultation
- Service reviews
- Day to day Housing activities

Responsive engagement

- Complaints
- Dissatisfaction
- Tenant or Community specific issues

Structured engagement

- Tenant Advisory Board/Tenant Gateway
- Panels
- Groups
- Performance reporting
- Partnerships with Communities and other agencies

Outcomes and actions

Our engagement activities and commitments in Priory 1 – Listening to Tenants will raise an increased level of feedback from tenants, leaseholders, residents, partner agencies, staff and Members. It will be important to collate this feedback and ensure this learning is used to continually evaluate services and the actions within this strategy.

As a landlord the Council will be held accountable for its positive contribution to local neighbourhoods. It is therefore important that this strategy not only commits to engagement with tenants, but also residents, other landlords and agencies with a responsibility in local communities, such as the Police, Community Safety and the County Council.

In line with our values, we aim to deliver the following outcomes against the Council’s values by the end of the strategy term:

We trust each other & reinforce this with mutual respect - our tenants will trust us and will work with us to inform and improve our services, and we will put things right when they go wrong. We know how important our tenants’ homes and communities are - we’re in this together and for a common goal of quality homes and services.

Communication is key & your voice will be heard - we will talk, listen and understand each other. We will make it easy to hear each other and respond to things that matter. Our aim is to ensure an equitable tenant voice, with no group or individual being underrepresented or excluded (no one's opinion/thoughts is amplified over others) - every tenant has a voice if you want or need to be heard.

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Monitoring and Governance - Key measurements of success

The outcomes of the strategy and the work programme will be under continual monitoring and review. Updates to Members and the Council's Executive Management Team will be provided at least annually.

The tenant perception surveys carried out each year will provide valuable insight in to how satisfied our tenants are. It is accepted that there are some quick wins that can be implemented, whilst other changes will take time. Annex 1 allows us to flex our approach and timescales, but the aim will always be to achieve the priorities in this strategy before the end of 2028. The priorities that our tenants tell us mean the most to them will be our focus.

Our key measures of success will be:

Quantitative

- Improved satisfaction performance year on year following on from the initial set of Tenant Satisfaction Survey Perception Surveys in 23/24
- Improved satisfaction performance from service surveys year in year
- Reduction in the number of stage 1 and 3 complaints received from tenants compared with the 23/24 financial year
- Reduction in the number of disrepair claims compared with the 23/34 financial year

Qualitative

- By December 2028 there will be a clear direct line of sight from tenants to the Portfolio Holder for Housing. Tenants will tell us that they are able to directly influence and scrutinise our services (measured by feedback from our Tenant Governance Structure and tenant surveys).
- Tenants will have access to/be provided with accessible meaningful data to judge our performance.
- Our teams and tenants will tell us our tenant data is up to date and accurate.
- Learning from complaints will be embedded into service design and re-design.
- Tenant Feedback will tell us where we are not getting things right. Our aim will always be to listen, understand and resolve complaints though to a mutually agreeable outcome.
- We will see and be able to demonstrate a diverse mix of proactively engaged tenants which represents our wider tenant makeup. If part of a formal group, we will be able to measure this via our tenant data and tenant population. However, we will also accept anecdotal feedback (for example if we are completing an online consultation and tenants are not required to provide specific personal data).
- Customer facing teams will tell us/be able to demonstrate improved services or tangible outcomes from tenant engagement activities – be that individual, or community based.
- We will be able to publish success stories and positive feedback from tenants (you said, we listened).
- Tenants will have access to digital portals to give and receive feedback. This may include our own website or a hosted site. The measurement of success will be take-up, engagement in projects, or website 'footfall'.
- Streamlined processes, reduced incoming queries – better operational quality will be demonstrable.

Annexe 1

| Priority | Action Required | Lead Officer | Target Date |
|------------|--|----------------------------|------------------|
| Priority 1 | Create our offer to tenants - our engagement structure | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer/TIG | Mar-25 |
| Priority 1 | Establish 'outreach' programme or face to face engagement | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer | Apr-24 |
| Priority 1 | Establish a protocol for appointment and terms of reference for tenants & governance | Joy Stainer | Mar-25 |
| Priority 1 | Recruitment of 'Involved Tenants' | Joy Stainer | Mar-25 |
| Priority 1 | Creation of Panels (procurement; complaints; ASB; neighbourhoods etc) | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer | Mar-25 |
| Priority 2 | Produce a programme of Managers & Cllrs Briefings – agree rollout | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer | Mar-24 |
| Priority 2 | Ongoing – Tenant Engagement Manager update at monthly meetings/toolbox talks | Dave Brown | Ongoing |
| Priority 2 | Consider and implement Engaged Tenant shadowing opportunities | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer | Mar-24 |
| Priority 2 | Plan and implement Tenant Engagement Roadshow opportunities with other partners/stakeholders | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer | Mar-25 |
| Priority 3 | Initial data review and data collection project – to ensure current tenant data is up to date and accurate | Dave Brown | Apr-24 |
| Priority 3 | Data review programme – ongoing programme for front line teams and services. | Dave Brown/Laura McIndoe | Apr-24 & ongoing |
| Priority 3 | Review and act on feedback - rolling programme | Joy Stainer | Ongoing |
| Priority 3 | Establish measures for success through feedback | Dave Brown | Dec-28 |
| Priority 4 | Promote our visibility on estates | Dave Brown/Bryan Byrne | Mar-25 |
| Priority 4 | Utilise and report on the success of Citizen Lab | Dave Brown/Sophie Tuffin | Apr-24 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Priority 4 | Review and create a Tenant Engagement page on our Website & consider increasing our social media presence | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer | Sep-23 & ongoing |
| Priority 4 | Review Hometalk - ensure relevant | Joy Stainer | Apr-24 |
| Priority 4 | Create feedback culture - set up pulse surveys for services | Dave Brown | Mar-25 |
| Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 4 | Tenant perception Surveys - Collection and reporting | Dave Brown/Sophie Tuffin | Apr-24 |
| Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 4 | Review new Consumer Standards & complete gap analysis | Dave Brown/Joy Stainer | Apr-24 |
| Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 4 | Ensuring scrutiny through involved tenants | Dave Brown/Heads of/Service Managers | Dec-28 |
| Priorities 1 & 4 | Organise an attractive and fun event (or events) to encourage tenants to participate alongside neighbours or fellow tenants, and celebrate being an NFDC Tenant | Tenant Engagement Team | Summer 2025 and potentially ongoing |

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

GREENER HOUSING STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Panel Members note the progress made to deliver the priorities and actions in the Greener Housing Strategy 2022-32.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Greener Housing Strategy details the 4 main priorities and actions the Housing Service will deliver on over the next 10 years. These are:
- i. Strategic Priority 1: Reduce Carbon Emissions in the Council Housing Stock
 - ii. Strategic Priority 2: Council Housing New Build Standards
 - iii. Strategic Priority 3: Private Sector Housing Decarbonisation
 - iv. Strategic Priority 4: Housing Service Operations
- 2.2 Through delivery of the strategy the Council seeks to improve the energy efficiency of existing council homes, develop new council homes which do not require future retrofit, take action to address decarbonisation of buildings and reduce the impact on the cost of living associated with cold inefficient homes. The strategy incorporates renewable energy generation and sustainable transport across the district.
- 2.3 This is the first annual report providing an update on progress toward achieving the aims of the Strategy. A table of agreed actions from the strategy, with progress reports can be viewed at Annexe 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The UK is particularly challenged as it looks to retrofit its existing buildings. As a nation England has some of the oldest housing stock in Europe, with an estimated 27 million homes requiring some level of retrofit to meet net zero by 2050. Therefore, improving the quality of existing homes through retrofit is essential.
- 3.2 In response to this, the Government's Clean Growth Strategy 2017 set new targets for the housing sector. Using Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) as the benchmark for domestic retrofit, the strategy requires all social housing to reach EPC band C by 2030.
- 3.3 A Task and Finish group was set up in 2021 to deliver a new 10-year Greener Housing Strategy, which was approved by Council in July 2022.
- 3.4 The first action was to appoint a Greener Housing Development Manager. This post was successfully recruited to in November 2022, with the appointment of Sophie Tuffin, who has been leading on the implementation of the strategy.

4. Strategic Priority 1 – Reduce Carbon Emissions in the Council Housing Stock

- 4.1 A key deliverable focussed on obtaining full and accurate condition data of the housing stock to establish a long-term plan of retrofit programmes to meet the two specific

Government targets. The first target is to improve the efficiency of the worst performing properties by raising the energy performance rating to a C by 2030. The second is for the stock of Council owned properties to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

- 4.2 In the first quarter of 2024 the full stock condition survey programme will be completed which captures condition data on all external and internal elements of the home. A new 10-year Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) will be provided for every home. This information will give the Council accurate information on the quality, condition, and energy performance of every home.
- 4.3 To inform the improvement plans to 2030 the Council has purchased a specialist software tool which is already being used to model the stock condition data captured to date, which will help inform the 30-year housing revenue account (HRA) business plan and Council’s medium-term financial strategy of 10 years.
- 4.4 In addition, the software identifies levels of district-wide fuel poverty, estimated carbon dioxide emissions and assesses the viability of solar photovoltaics (PV) to allow efficient targeting of resources and to support other Council initiatives such as cost of living schemes.
- 4.5 Figure 1 below displays the Council’s housing stock by EPC performance, type of residence and property age (A represents the oldest homes with L representing the newest).

Fig.1 Housing stock data



- 4.6 The total current carbon footprint of the Council’s social housing stock has now been calculated as 12,017 tonnes CO2/ year, with 49% homes having gas central heating. Full implementation of the retrofit packages required could see total carbon emissions reduced to 2,433 tonnes / year, representing a 79.5% reduction in emissions. This means that netting off the remaining emissions will require additional actions in due course.
- 4.7 A plan to improve energy efficiency of the whole house on a fabric first basis in every instance is currently being formulated which will combine planned, decent homes and cyclical replacement programmes. This will include increasing ventilation to improve air quality and reduce damp and mould, whilst repairing property defects and improving insulation to minimise heat loss. This will reduce heating related fuel consumption, keep homes cooler in summer and meet longer-term decarbonisation goals.

- 4.8 A range of technologies are being considered due to the Council's rural spread and age of homes. This includes solar PV, battery systems, infra-red heating, and thermal hot water stores. For communal buildings feasibility studies using ground source heat pumps are underway. The Greener Housing Manager is part of national and regional networks including the review of innovative pilot schemes.
- 4.9 Whole house monitoring has been established to allow the Council to remotely monitor the ventilation, heating, and moisture levels of a building, whilst at the same time collecting accurate measures in cost and energy reduction. This technology is being trialled at the Council's first Future Homes Standard development at the new Penman House development of 12 flats.
- 4.10 New hot water thermal stores to improve efficiency and reduce the cost of providing hot water are being piloted at Lime Tree House, Lymington. This work will be complemented by replacement windows and improved insulation. Work commenced on 11th September and will finish in October 2023.
- 4.11 Upskilling Council staff has been a key priority in the last 12 months. It is vital the Council can effectively maintain its buildings and service new technologies in the long term. Monthly surveyor training has taken place since December 2022. These sessions aim to increase surveyor knowledge of new technologies, changes in legislation and increase understanding of retrofit.
- 4.12 The Council has already been successful in obtaining funding for 3 members of the Housing team to study level 4 & 5 Diplomas in retrofit. These qualifications are necessary to undertake and manage retrofit programmes to the Government's standard PAS 2035. All grant funding is dependent on having qualified personnel working on and signing off retrofit schemes.
- 4.13 The Greener Housing Manager is exploring all external sources for potential grant funding. Properties with an EPC E and F are the most energy inefficient properties. They impose unnecessary energy costs on occupants and are most likely to present a poor health outcome. The OFGEM run ECO4 scheme requires utility companies with over 100,000 customers to offer funding to improve the energy efficiency of poor performing buildings and who are on low income. A menu of financing options is being established which includes carbon credits, long-term finance options now being offered by utility companies to spread the cost of district heating systems; and other methods for offsetting residual emissions.
- 4.14 Under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund 2.1 (SHDF 2.1), the Council was awarded £560,000 of funding, which was matched by the council to improve 70 homes within the district to EPC band C. Unlike other waves of funding, wave 2.1 focuses on multiple improvements in a whole house approach. Many of these 70 homes will have 3 or more different types of works completed to include cavity wall insulation, ventilation, new windows, loft insulation and ASHP. This scheme is expected to start imminently and complete in March 2024.
- 4.15 As the scale of works begins to increase it will be more cost and management efficient to partner with a single contractor, or small number of contractors. The Greener Housing Manager is working with Procurement colleagues to set up a framework or contract with the aim of having a long-term contractor in place by April 2024, ready for funding windows.
- 4.16 The Council has procured a new digital tenant engagement platform which assists officers manage maintenance projects, keeping customers informed at each stage of their retrofit works. In addition, Officers are working with technology manufacturers to increase the self-help available to residents. Easy to read user guides, videos and

advice will shortly be added to the Council's website for homes with renewable technology, remote monitoring and those having undergone a whole house retrofit.

5. Strategic Priority 2 - Council Housing New Build Standards

- 5.1 The Council procured the Testwood Social Club site in Totton (renamed Penman House) and committed to delivering new homes to the increased energy efficient Future Homes Standard. The 12 homes built will maximise energy efficiency for residents, demonstrating high levels of sustainability and climate resilience when they become occupied in October 2023. The Council will monitor domestic fuel usage and the use of technology alongside residents to inform future schemes.
- 5.2 The Future Homes Standard will come into effect more generally from 2025. As a successful early adopter of this standard the Council can work and share knowledge with local contractors to increase understanding and knowledge to benefit future development opportunities.
- 5.3 Electric Vehicle Charging points are also being installed at all new housing schemes for wider resident use.

6. Strategic Priority 3: Private Sector Housing Decarbonisation

- 6.1 The Council holds a unique position of responsibility to engage, not only with 5,200 council owned properties but with the wider district. The government has committed to upgrade as many private rented homes as possible to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030. The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations means that, subject to certain requirements and exemptions, all privately rented homes must hold an EPC of E or above. Those that don't meet this level of efficiency, cannot be let.
- 6.2 The Private Sector Housing Team is currently working with local landlords, lettings agents and partner landlords who lease their properties via the Council's Private Sector lease (PSL) scheme. Through the Landlord Forum and regular visits to Letting Agents officers are promoting opportunities to upgrade homes and access funding. The September Forum welcomed the National Residential Landlord Association (NRLA) and two key speakers with extensive retrofit and funding experience.
- 6.3 The council will also be launching 'Cosy Homes New Forest' in September which aims to help owner occupiers and landlords improve the thermal performance of their homes. This scheme allows customers with a New Forest postcode to start their retrofit journey via an interactive tool which simulates types of insulations, heating and other improvements to suit an occupier's home and budget. Letting agents will be able to sign post their landlords or prospective landlords where homes don't meet MEES standards.
- 6.4 The Council is a member of Retrofit Hub Steering Group run by Hampshire County Council and a member of the Retrofit Academy which aims to improve supply chains and support an increase in the numbers of locally qualified operatives, which helps boost the local economy.
- 6.5 The Council is working with local advice centers like Citizens Advice, local food banks and the Environment Center who offer help and advice to those on low incomes or struggling with fuel poverty. Where individuals meet a criterion, they are signposted to

the Warmer Homes Consortium led by Portsmouth City Council, and which the Council is a member, to receive funding through the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG).

Fig.2 The Number of private homes within the district which received energy improvements under HUG1 and Local Authority Decarbonisation (LAD) funding.

| Scheme | Properties completed | Funding |
|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| LAD | 200 | £1.1 million |
| HUG1 | 52 | £600,018 |

6.6 In January the consortium was successful in securing an additional £41.4m for the southern region. The council has received a further £4,500 funding to fund software and promote HUG funding within the community.

7. Strategic Priority 4 - Housing Service Operations

7.1 The Housing Service has complemented the approach to reducing the carbon emission impact of its operations by integrating actions with the corporate approach commenced by the declaration of a climate change & nature emergency. The service has already commenced several key initiatives outlined in the Greener Housing Strategy.

7.2 Sustainable procurement: A Housing Operational working group has been launched with the aim to review supply chains, specifications, and tender documents, including the carbon impacts of contracts and operatives involved in delivery.

7.3 Paperless operations and communication: In February 2023 the Housing Service completed a year-long project to launch a bespoke software package (Locata) to replace the legacy Orchard software that held tenant information. This package also combined tenancy management with homelessness, Homesearch and private sector housing systems in to one system.

7.4 This system provides digital contact methods for communication with tenants and electronic transfer of work to colleagues. Officers are reviewing the remaining standalone systems to further improve efficiencies and converting paper-based processes to digital.

7.5 Officers are to begin a procurement exercise soon to capture contact information for all tenants to improve the ability to communicate digitally and reduce the Housing Service's carbon footprint where appropriate.

7.6 Tenant Engagement Software: The Housing Service has procured a digital engagement tool to help gain useful tenant feedback on a range of other services like on street EV parking and other energy improvements.

7.7 Electrification of the vehicle fleet: Officers are working with vehicle fleet managers across the Council establish a scheme to replace the housing fleet of 61 vehicles with electric vehicle replacements and provide charging facilities by 2027.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The greener housing budget for 2022/23 is £1.1 million, made up of £560,000 of matched funding from the social housing decarbonisation fund. The budget setting process for 2024/25 will take account the number of homes requiring improvements by 2030, the available government funding opportunities and existing capital and revenue housing budgets, along with the Council's future commitments to development budgets and other financial burdens in the medium and long term.
- 8.2 The Housing Revenue Account Greener Housing Budget will need to take account of projected additional spend of £9,332,000 required to upgrade homes by 2030 and an additional £115m to decarbonise the stock ahead of 2050.
- 8.3 In addition, the delivery of decarbonisation will include internal staff time, procurement, health & safety, legal, planning and building regulations and customer facing roles adding additional cost due to the complex multi-measure whole house approach required. External Impartial retrofit roles, resident engagement and other compliances and specialist surveys and repairs will increase the cost associated to achieve 2030 and 2050 targets. These will be factored into budget setting at the appropriate time.

9. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None arising from this report.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Greener Housing Strategy and the delivery of the actions agreed within, are designed to complement the Council's climate change and nature emergency action plan, and have a positive impact on the environment, due to reduced carbon emissions.

11. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The measures associated with greener housing aim to have a positive impact on vulnerable residents of the district by helping to alleviate fuel poverty and make services greener and less polluting, benefiting both health and the environment.
- 11.2 Tenant and resident engagement remain a key component of delivery, to reduce any negative impact on residents through development schemes or significant change to their homes or the local environment or neighbourhood. Therefore, Offers will seek views and concerns through specific engagement exercises and equality impact assessments.

12. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Data protection implications are evaluated on an ongoing basis, utilising the Corporate Information Governance and ICT Security Teams for each new scheme or project. Data sharing agreements and privacy notices have already been implemented where appropriate.

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Background Papers:

[Greener Housing Strategy 2022-32](#)

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ANNEXE 1

GREENER HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2023

| Priority | Action Required | Progress Achieved | Target Completion Date |
|--|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Strategic Priority 1 – Reduce Carbon Emissions in the Council Housing Stock | Produce a business case to seek approval for a Greener Housing Project Manager to lead and manage the Council's approach to net zero in Housing Services. | Greener Housing Delivery Manager commenced employment on 27 November 2022 | November 2022 COMPLETE |
| | Complete 100% Stock Condition Surveys of the Council Housing stock by January 2024. | An external contractor was appointed to undertake both stock condition and energy performance certificates (EPC) to 100% of the stock. | January 2024 ON TRACK |
| | By April 2024 establish the model of retrofit packages to install in all property archetypes and dwelling types to meet net zero 2050, particularly regarding the criterion for the installation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo Voltaic (PV) panels on individual house roofs • Heating and hot water | Stock condition and EPC was modelled in August 2023. A range of archetypes and technologies are considered. | April 2024 ON TRACK |
| | Commission an internal working group to establish an appropriate alternative heating source(s) to off gas heating systems by April 2024, ahead of the EPC C target date of 2030. Agree an action plan by April 2024 to retrain the gas servicing operatives on new and replacement technologies | Work underway with gas & electrical teams. First commissioning of thermal stores taking place in September 2023. Monthly manufacture and new technology training now offered to improve knowledge. Undertaking market engagement to establish the corrected courses, costs and phasing of training. Using funding where available. | April 2024 ON-GOING |
| | Target all Council Housing Stock with an EPC of lower than C with individual plans to improve energy efficiency to achieve EPC Band C by 2030: | EPCs E, F & G identified for improvements. Working with external contractor to identify funding under ECO4. Budget request for April 2024. Aims to remove | Sub Action November 2023 |

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| <p>Programme retrofit actions to 2030 by November 2023</p> <p>Review the new Greener Housing budget annually to ensure it meets cost projections to 2030.</p> | <p>E, F & G homes from stock. Retrofit plan to achieve 2030 target in place.</p> <p>2024-2025 budget planning underway and ongoing yearly.</p> | <p>31 December 2029</p> <p>ON TRACK</p> |
| <p>Establish a cost ceiling level where existing stock may be classed as unviable to retrofit.</p> <p>Establish an options appraisal for stock meeting these criteria.</p> <p>Combine this with natural depreciation costs and future maintenance/replacement projections to produce a report to Cabinet seeking approval for disposal, if required</p> | <p>Underway, meeting with internal and external stakeholders to establish homes which fit these criteria. This will enable a considered long-term plan to be considered.</p> | <p>November 2023</p> <p>ON TRACK</p> |
| <p>Combine Asset Management strategy/replacement programmes with the total retrofit requirements to ensure property works are planned efficiently by April 2026</p> <p>Combine replacement years and plan geographically to provide value for money and limit carbon emissions.</p> | <p>Work commenced. Consideration of wider impacts to teams to include increases in resident engagement, budget, and other regulatory requirements. Workshops underway with teams effected.</p> | <p>April 2026</p> <p>ON TRACK</p> |
| <p>Align Asset Management Strategy with HRA Business Plan and Development Strategy by November 2023.</p> | <p>Currently underway</p> | <p>November 2023</p> <p>ON TRACK</p> |
| <p>Continue to canvas the Government for national and regional funding to support retrofit schemes toward net zero.</p> | <p>Actively taking part in District Council Network (DCN) discussions.</p> <p>Members of HCOG Retrofit hub steering group – Looking at skills shortage.</p> <p>Attended several events over the summer. Members of the Retrofit Academy attending industry leading events throughout the year.</p> | <p>ONGOING</p> |

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| | | Retrofit hub – run by Turner & Townsend. These working groups give a voice to those in positions able to make change. Involving other district councils, MP's, manufacturers, consultations etc. | |
| | Explore consortium approaches to funding on all Government funding schemes | Continuing to explore all funding being released and expected dates to engage with others. Officers are currently talking to local HAs with housing stock in the areas. Attending regular consortium meetings to continue to build relationships locally. | ONGOING |
| | Affordable Warmth Programmes – Educate and promote energy efficiency to tenants and residents to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions. Link with local partners – Citizens Advice/HCC Promote initiatives and measures in each Hometalk magazine. | Established a small working group to enable more self-serving from the council's web pages. Creating a resident page giving advice on retrofitting of homes. Hometalk being utilised along with new resident engagement platform Citizens Lab. | ONGOING |
| | Assess the Housing Services' wider carbon footprint by April 2026 Embodied carbon in retrofit and demolition activities Material production, delivery, and installation. | Innovative solutions are being investigated. Carbon credit release for retrofit programme and using latent heat from data centres. We are exploring the benefits of procuring a long term retrofit partner which will enable the delivery of lower carbon intensive materials and address whole life cycles, with the added benefits of using local teams to increase jobs and skills locally. These partnerships would invest in residents to increase social value. | April 2026 ON TRACK |
| | Commission an internal working group to establish an appropriate | Working with internal stakeholders looking at a range | April 2027 |

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| | alternative heating source(s) to gas fired boilers by April 2027, ahead of the 2035 installation cut off. | of delivery options and financing models: Ground Source heating for communal buildings. Using waste heating from data centres. Along with a range of suitable electric solutions for single occupancy. Linking heating with alternative hot water solutions and wider implications of upskilling the workforce, availability of products on the ability to undertake repairs and expected lifecycle implications for financing. | ON TRACK |
| Strategic Priority 2 – Council Housing New Build Standards | Complete the Future Homes Standard 2025 pilot scheme (Penman House) by 2023. | Project is well underway, due to complete in October 2023. | October 2023 ON TRACK |
| Strategic Priority 3 – Private Sector Housing Decarbonisation | Fully support the Warmer Homes Consortium led by PCC to promote LAD 3 and HUG funding in the district through to March 2023 with a joint communications and marketing plan. | Consortium was fully supported within the council until its end date in March. HUG2 has now been released with a new opportunity to gain funding to promote retrofit across the district. | March 2023 COMPLETE |
| | Train Housing Standards Officers on energy efficiency measures, alternative methods of heating and energy provider switching services by October 2022, to provide advice and assistance to landlords and residents as part of ongoing activities. | The Council were successful receiving 3 x 70% funded places to train 2 x retrofit coordinators and 1 x Retrofit Assessor Further training will be requested to train other colleagues in key areas to increase knowledge and customer support from April 2024. | October 2022 ON TRACK |

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| | <p>Promote Affordable Warmth Programmes and activities.</p> <p>Educate and promote energy efficiency to tenants and residents to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions from July 2022</p> <p>Link with local partners – Citizens Advice/HCC/NFDIS and foodbanks</p> <p>Establish a communication campaign alongside the Council's new Climate change Manager by August 2022 and refresh annually.</p> | <p>Shortly releasing Cosy homes New Forest. Initially, a tool that will help new forest residents with their retrofit journey. Longer term this area will be a way to communicate help and advice, develop future campaigns.</p> <p>Engaging with local partners to help promote available funding.</p> | <p>August 2022 ONGOING</p> |
| | <p>Continually identify, where available, and bid for funds to promote energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty for private owners and landlords.</p> | <p>Procured software to help model homes within the district that are eligible for the available funding streams to allow the council to take a targeted approach linking with the cosy homes tool to increase the take up of retrofit and maximise funding.</p> | <p>ONGOING</p> |
| | <p>Attend, support and enhance the existing New Forest Partnership Forum of Voluntary agencies.</p> <p>Target fuel and food poverty</p> <p>Provide specialist training and integrate the new Local Campaigns Manager with Council workstreams where appropriate by March 2023.</p> | <p>Work underway with private sector housing teams.</p> <p>Funding awarded under HUG3 will enable further targeting of food banks and other public buildings and services.</p> | <p>March 2023 ONGOING</p> |
| | <p>Attend, support and enhance initiatives and activities of the Home Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP – including HCC and other Hampshire Local Authorities) to develop regional initiatives which benefit residents of the New Forest.</p> <p>Consider an initiative to create a 'Safe' Contractors list of appropriately certified local installers and support them link with residents.</p> | <p>Attendance to the HEEP group continues.</p> <p>The introduction of Safe contractors list has not been established. Although the Council will assess contractors under ECOflex. Instead, the cosy homes trial will begin shortly, where successful the tool can link suitably qualified contractors and quotes to create a one stop shop for customers. General advice will be given at this time.</p> | <p>March 2023 ON TRACK</p> |

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| | Through Housing Standards work continue to ensure landlords are compliant with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) regulations, reviewing performance annually. | January 2023 Reviewed homes with F and G rating, those rented homes received a letter from the council, giving advice on funding and MEESE regulations. | ONGOING |
| | Hold a standing Greener Housing agenda item at each Landlord Forum | Greener housing was introduced at the April forum. September's forum will focus on current funding, Cosy Homes tool and Key speakers talking about the challenges of retrofit. | ONGOING |
| Strategic Priority 4 – Housing Service Operations | Quantify the operational carbon footprint of key activities by April 2026. | Work underway to be completed by 2026. | ON TRACK |
| | Through 2022 monitor the energy usage of communal areas across the social housing stock to assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Peak demands ○ Average usage ○ Reason for use ○ Alternative provision which reduces costs and carbon emissions. and set service charges for 23/24 | Underway. Officers understand the energy usage for NFDC communal blocks for gas and electric and the split between personal and communal usage. This will form the basis of consultation to set future charges. This information will in turn influences future renewable technology and changes to heating sources. | November 2022 ON TRACK |

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024

| ITEM | OBJECTIVE | METHOD | LEAD OFFICER |
|--|---|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 17 JANUARY 2024 | | | |
| Housing Revenue Account Budget and the Housing Public Sector Capital Expenditure Programme for 2024/25 | To consider the HRA budget and the housing public sector capital expenditure programme for 2024/25 | Report to Panel | Kevin Green |
| Tenant Satisfaction Measures | To receive details of the work progressing relation the Tenant Satisfaction Measures | Report to Panel | Richard Knott |
| Safer New Forest Partnership Plan / Strategic Assessment | To agree the plan and to receive an update from outcomes from actions in the current plan | Report to Panel | Brian Byrne/ Nikki Swift |
| Community Grants | To consider the recommendations for Community Grant allocation for 2024/25 from the Task and Finish Group | Report to Panel | Ryan Stevens/ Jamie Burton |
| 20 MARCH 2024 | | | |
| Housing Strategy/ HRA Property development and acquisition update | To receive an update on the progress of the Housing Strategy and HRA property development and acquisition | Update to Panel | Tim Davis |
| Homelessness Update | To receive an update on homelessness | Update to Panel | Chris Pope |
| Housing Maintenance Compliance Update | To receive an update on the progress made against the Council's compliance policies | Report to Panel | Ritchie Thomson |

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