

NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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Issued by: Andrea Jenkins

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HAVE YOUR SAY ON WBC'S DRAFT LEISURE STRATEGY

Wokingham Borough Council has launched a consultation on its draft Leisure Strategy for 2021-2025, and wants to hear residents' views on its proposals.

The strategy sets out plans to support residents physical and emotional wellbeing through the council's own leisure offering and through effective partnerships with a wide range of other organisations. This includes proposals to establish a new 'Active Wokingham' Partnership to support collective efforts to ensure that high quality facilities and opportunities remain affordable, accessible, and sustainable.

The strategy also support the council's community vision for Wokingham Borough to 'be a great place to live, learn, work, and grow and a great place to do business.' Physical activity and sports play a fundamental role in this vision and supports the health and emotional well-being of the borough's residents.

The significant health benefits of physical activity are universal, from the very young to the elderly - helping to raise achievement in schools, enabling self-care for those with long-term conditions and helping to prevent mental and physical illness across all age-groups. This is why increasing levels of participation in sports and active leisure pursuits, and reducing the numbers of people who are inactive, is so important.

The strategy outlines four key priorities:

- Promoting health and wellbeing to residents
- Raising participation and reducing levels of inactivity
- Maintain and extend accessibility to indoor leisure facilities
- Maintain and extend accessibility to outdoor spaces

Residents are being encouraged to share their thoughts and views on the draft strategy with the council's sport and leisure team at the following engagement events:

-MORE-

Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1BN

Tel: (0118) 974 6200

Email: GEM@wokingham.gov.uk

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council

- Thursday 20 May, 8am to 7pm, at Ryeish Green Leisure Centre
- Saturday 22 May, 8am to 4pm, Peach Place, Wokingham Town Centre
- Tuesday 25 May, 8am to 8pm, at Bulmershe Leisure Centre
- Saturday 5 June, 8am to 4pm, Woodley Town Centre
- Wednesday 9 June, 8am to 8pm, at St Crispin's Leisure Centre
- Saturday 12 June, 8am to 4pm, Peach Place, Wokingham Town Centre
- Wednesday 16 June, 8am to 7pm at Arborfield Green Leisure Centre
- Saturday 19 June, 8am to 4pm, Woodley Town Centre

The sport and leisure team will also be providing an update on the council's multi-million Carnival Hub – a flagship leisure centre, library and cultural space being built on the site of the former Carnival Pool and fitness centre.

The survey is available online, and can be accessed at: www.wokingham.gov.uk (and search for 'current consultations') until 20 June, 2021.

Cllr Parry Batth, executive member for environment and leisure said: "Please help us understand if we are on the right track with our draft Leisure Strategy by taking part in this short survey or by dropping into one of our engagements events during the next few weeks. We'd love to see you and hear your views.

"We're committed to supporting and improving the health and wellbeing of our residents. The draft leisure strategy is a clear demonstration of our dedication to provide the best leisure provisions and outdoor spaces for all of our residents, ensuring that Wokingham Borough continues to be not only be a great place to live but also be one of the healthiest in the UK.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has showcased just how important access to health and leisure facilities is to the public, including residents across our borough. We look forward to listening to our residents about what services would best support their wellbeing and building that into our strategy."

This strategy builds on existing leisure projects across the local area, which has seen the borough council invest more than £50million into sport and leisure facilities.

- ENDS -

More from Cllr Parry Batth, executive member for environment and leisure at parry.batth@wokingham.gov.uk or 07969 683595