

(DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION)

# LEISURE STRATEGY

MORE PEOPLE

MORE ACTIVE

MORE OFTEN



**WELCOME TO ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY  
BOROUGH COUNCIL'S LEISURE STRATEGY**

# CONTENTS

MORE PEOPLE

MORE ACTIVE

MORE OFTEN

**4** FOREWORD

**6** STRATEGY IN CONTEXT

**8** FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR LEISURE

**10** OUR VISION

**12** OUR PRIORITIES



**MORE PEOPLE**

**MORE ACTIVE**

**MORE OFTEN**



**TO ENSURE THAT LEISURE FACILITIES AND SERVICES WE PROVIDE HELP PEOPLE TO BECOME HEALTHIER AND FITTER**

# FOREWORD

## WELCOME TO ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S LEISURE STRATEGY.

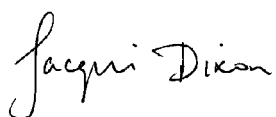
The aim of our strategy is to ensure that leisure facilities and services we provide help the people in our Borough to become healthier and fitter. It sets out the 'big picture' for how we will approach the provision and delivery of leisure over the next thirteen years to meet our Council priorities.

As a Council we want to align the services we deliver to the needs of our residents and increase access opportunities regardless of age or income. Underlining all of this are Council's Corporate and Community Plans.

We recognise the valuable social, health and economic benefits that the provision of leisure facilities and opportunities can create for our communities, alongside an improved quality of life.

Whilst the Leisure Strategy identifies a clear route forward for Council's delivery of the Leisure Service it is also important to recognise the financial and environmental pressures which require continuous review of how we deliver our services.

We will maximise the impact that leisure has in the Borough by working collaboratively, ambitiously and determinedly towards clear, defined and inspiring goals.



**Jacqui Dixon** BSC MBA

Chief Executive of Antrim and Newtownabbey  
Borough Council



# THE STRATEGY IN CONTEXT

The Leisure Service is delivered in the context of a number of key regional strategies, policies and initiatives. Ensuring that this Strategy strategically fits with and delivers on these is crucial to ensuring it can have a meaningful impact.

The demographic profile, employment status, health, income levels and current participation rates all provide opportunities and challenges for engagement in leisure opportunities. Some of the key facts to be considered in future planning and delivery of leisure opportunities are summarised below:

- Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough has a high proportion of older adults. We have 27,523 people living over the age of 60. By 2030, we expect to have 5,313 adults aged over 85 plus years. A key challenge moving forward revolves around how to provide tailored and accessible opportunities for this section of the population. Provision that helps older people remain active and healthy is a key priority Council.
- A total of 19% of usual residents in Antrim and Newtownabbey report a long term limiting illness, health problem or disability. This ranges from 11% in Mallusk to 34% in Whitehouse. This is likely to limit opportunities that will appeal or be accessible to some people.
- The most commonly recorded diseases/long term conditions are hypertension, obesity, asthma, diabetes mellitus and coronary heart disease. Leisure has an important role to play in combatting these but services and programmes will need to link with a range of health led initiatives and be targeted appropriately.

- Unemployment rates across the Borough are lower than the Northern Ireland average but there are pockets of higher levels in some areas. Research tells us that those who are unemployed generally do not participate as much as those in regular employment in leisure opportunities.
- There are pockets of deprivation in the Borough. National research indicates that those living in deprived communities often experience poorer levels of health and are less likely to participate in leisure opportunities.
- The urban and rural make-up of the Borough and public transport arrangements present a challenge to the service. This does not necessarily require more facilities to be located in rural areas but does require maximising the opportunities available within these communities, whatever they may be.
- The Council's commitment to engaging with children and young people in meaningful activities at an early age.



**MORE PEOPLE**

**MORE ACTIVE**

**MORE OFTEN**



**ENSURING THAT THIS STRATEGY STRATEGICALLY FITS WITH AND DELIVERS ON THESE IS CRUCIAL**

# FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR LEISURE

## **PROVIDING EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE BOROUGH**

Providing equitable opportunities across communities. The Borough is home to approximately 140,000 people, residing in a variety of different urban and rural communities with their own discrete characteristics and challenges. The demography of the Borough is changing and in particular the proportion of older people. Young people are also a priority in line with central government's priority to engage them in meaningful activities at an early age. With all age groups and capabilities there is a key challenge in providing 'something for everyone' and designing and delivering services that are going to be attractive and accessible to as many people as possible.

## **INCREASING ROLE FOR LEISURE IN DELIVERING ACROSS DIFFERENT AGENDAS**

The contribution to the delivery of Council's wider corporate objectives is a priority for the leisure service. Wider strategies and plans such as the Community Planning Framework and the strategic and economic landscape of the Borough are increasingly important. Ensuring that leisure can make a difference and 'play

its part' will involve effective co-ordination and partnership working with a range of stakeholders.

## **MEETING GROWING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS**

As the leisure opportunities on offer across the Borough are improved, customer tastes and preferences continue to change. Quality facilities and more choice inevitably lead to higher customer expectations. There is therefore a challenge moving forward in ensuring that the opportunities in the Borough remain attractive and appealing to residents and visitors. Ensuring that residents are involved in helping to plan service improvements is important.

## **INCREASING PARTICIPATION RATES**

A key challenge is to increase the number of people engaged in leisure activities and also the frequency of participation; to encourage those who are inactive to become active and to encourage those who already are to do more. Targeting known low participating groups such as older and hard to reach younger people to create opportunities to maximise participation levels requires some creativity and removal of barriers where possible.

## **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN A CHALLENGING ECONOMIC CLIMATE**

Many of the challenges identified above involve increasing participation in leisure, creating more targeted opportunities and increasing the impact of leisure. The Council has already demonstrated its commitment to leisure through significant investment in the service. The changing economic climate mean budgetary and funding (external) challenges need to be overcome whilst maintaining and improving services to meet rising customer expectations.







**MORE PEOPLE**

**MORE ACTIVE**

**MORE OFTEN**

**THE DEMOGRAPHY OF THE BOROUGH IS CHANGING AND IN PARTICULAR THE GROWTH IN THE PROPORTION OF OLDER PEOPLE**

# OUR VISION

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the Council's general direction and priorities for leisure over the next thirteen years.

This builds on a significant leisure offer already available to residents and visitors across the Borough.

## THE VISION GUIDING OUR DELIVERY IS:

**MORE PEOPLE**

**MORE ACTIVE**

**MORE OFTEN**

Leisure has a significant role to play in improving health and wellbeing in the Borough. A number of themes have been developed as priorities to transform leisure across the Borough.

**> PROGRAMMING AND PARTICIPATION**

**> PRICING**

**> PARTNERSHIPS**

**> PEOPLE**

**> PERFORMANCE**

**MORE PEOPLE**

**MORE ACTIVE**

**MORE OFTEN**



**BUILDING ON QUALITY**

# OUR PRIORITIES

Our priorities for action are set out below.

## PRICING

- 1 Review the pricing model to ensure greater participation in leisure activities.

## PROGRAMMING & PARTICIPATION

- 1 Increase regular and sustainable participation through innovative programming which maximises attendances and improves equality of access to sport and physical activity.
- 2 Work in partnership to expand the range of health related programmes and interventions for all sectors of our communities targeting those at greatest risk.
- 3 Ensure that activities and programmes are provided, as far as possible, across the spectrum of participation levels from armchair exercises to elite athletes and everything in between.
- 4 Develop programmes which increase the use of natural and open space for leisure activities.

## PEOPLE

- 1 More volunteers, leaders, coaches and officials are trained and involved in the provision of sport and leisure.
- 2 Develop clubs, organisations and community groups which promote the range of leisure activities and provide support to ensure that they are stronger, more sustainable and enabled to provide increased opportunities for residents.
- 3 More people from the most vulnerable, inactive and disadvantages groups participate in sport and leisure activities.
- 4 Increase the use of leisure programmes to reduce antisocial and offending behaviour and increase employability skills.



**MORE PEOPLE**

**MORE ACTIVE**

**MORE OFTEN**

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

- 1** Develop strong partnerships and networks, on both a local and regional level to deliver a sustainable community sport and leisure offering.
- 2** Extend and grow sports development opportunities across the Borough
- 3** Develop effective partnerships between schools, clubs, communities and agencies to develop performance pathways and increase participation in sport and leisure.

## **PERFORMANCE**

- 1** Review the leisure operating model to ensure the most prudent use of resources and maximise and develop facilities and services.
- 2** Ensure regular benchmarking through performance networks.
- 3** Reduce the level of carbon emission resulting from sport and leisure facilities.
- 4** Increase community satisfaction across all leisure activities.
- 5** Promote and raise the profile of leisure activities through an innovative marketing campaign.
- 6** Manage the business through people and performance management processes.
- 7** Ensure quality Council facilities provide optimum opportunities for individuals to participate in leisure activities.





[www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)

  @ANBorough