

Sowerby Sports Village

Work is well underway at Sowerby Sports Village – all the land has now been remediated, a sustainable drainage system installed and a 1km fitness track built. Between now and the end of March will see the development of 18 allotments, plus substantial landscaping works. Cabinet has also given approval to complete the phase 2 element of creating 8 grass pitches within the perimeter of the fitness track.

Sports Awards 2018

This year's Sports Awards were another resounding success celebrating the wealth of sporting achievement in Hambleton – a record 57 nominations were received this year. 9 awards were presented on the night, including a joint sports person of the year award for the international cycling sensations, Charlie and Harry Tanfield, from Great Ayton.

Commemorating World War 1

As you will have seen the Council has commemorated the 100 year anniversary of the end of World War 1 with a public art display at the Civic Centre. Three wicker planes, based on those used in the war were suspended from the ceiling with a trail of poppies supporting them. And to engage with the wider community and local businesses a popular soldier trail was created – 20 decorated soldiers were displayed in shop windows in each of the five market towns. Each soldier had its own letter that contributed to the formation of a world war related anagram – winning entries were then put into a draw for prizes that had been donated by the local businesses that took part.

Winter Health Messages

Now that winter is upon us a series of winter health related messages are being posted on social media. The messages include tips on how to be prepared for cold snaps and on how you can support those more vulnerable members of the community. These messages will help the council contribute to the North Yorkshire Winter Health Strategy that has been developed to reduce the number of winter deaths across the county.

The Big Weekend Promotion and Leisure Centre Memberships

The annual Big Weekend promotion at the centres got a whole lot bigger this year, with free gym trials, fitness class tasters, guided tours and pirate themed entertainment in the swimming pools. Over 200 people joined one of their local leisure centres over the weekend, 400 people claimed their free swims with swim visits up 30% compared to previous weekends over the last 6 months. There was a real buzz in all of the leisure centres and the feedback from customers was fantastic. This has led to our highest ever level of Freedom memberships at 3,392. In addition we are currently teaching 2,500 children a week to "Learn2" swim, with 95% of lesson income coming via direct debit.

GovRadio

All 4 of the leisure centres will be adding a little extra to the facilities in the New Year in the way of their own commercial radio station. Through a partnership with GovRadio the sites will have their sound systems upgraded and will be able to play music and run their own advertisements for the service, as well as for commercial partners, in all communal areas. It is hoped this will increase awareness of the leisure offer to visitors and provide a more pleasant ambience whilst using the facilities.

Swimming Pool Accessible Steps

Accessible steps have been installed at Thirsk and Sowerby Leisure Centre. Aimed at our less mobile customers, the new steps make it easier and safer to get in and out the pool. Since being installed, the centre has received lots of positive feedback from customers and improved their safety. We now plan to install accessible steps at our Stokesley and Bedale centres, whilst also researching improved pool hoist systems to further enable better access for disabled swimmers.

Councillor Mrs Bridget Fortune
Portfolio Holder for Leisure