

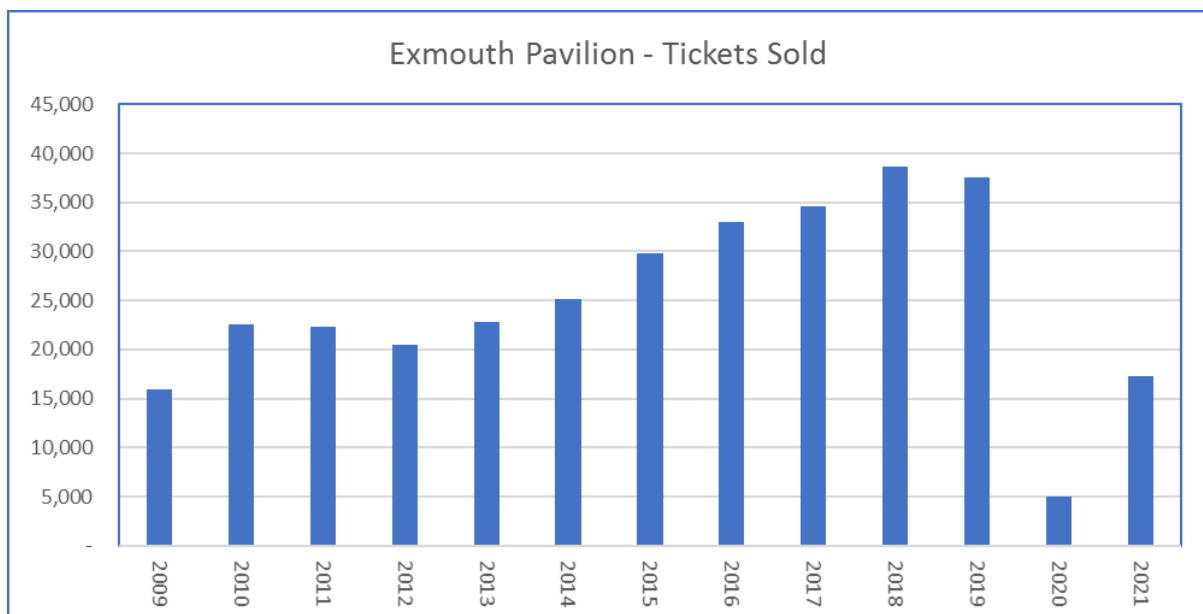
Report to: EDDC Monitoring Forum January 2022
Subject: Facilities and Activities Update to December 2021
From: Jamie Bryant, Director of Delivery, LED Community Leisure
Date: 13th January 2022

Re-opening Progress

Unfortunately, the rise in the spread of the COVID Omicron variant was felt across the leisure contract during November and December with a number of colleagues across the business either testing positive or having to self-isolate. Some team members were unwell, whilst others were asymptomatic.

This also saw a decrease in patronage and customer usage due to the uncertainty and anxiety surrounding the “Plan B” Government COVID announcement. The Exmouth Pavilion was particularly badly hit with a number of shows cancelling or postponing, and those that did go ahead saw significantly reduced attendances. The site has also suffered with high numbers of positive covid tests for team members, although service was maintained through good leadership, colleagues returning from leave early and redeploying office colleagues to support the front-line operation.

The following graph demonstrates how the Pavilion has been badly hit by the pandemic, following a period of steady growth.



For the large part the leisure centre-based service was maintained, although a reduced service was offered over the Christmas and New Year Period, partly due to covid absences, but also to support colleagues in getting some rest and recovery ahead of what is expected (and hoped) to be a very busy January.

Support from all levels of the business kept the service running with some Head Office managers basing themselves at sites to support the operational delivery teams. I am pleased to say that the time of writing (13th January) we only have 1 team member off with a positive test.

Customers and team members are still being strongly encouraged to follow COVID measures, albeit it is now personal preference. Strong communications and management plans remain in place to support all sites should COVID issues arise again. For the moment, Plan B remains in place.

Resourcing across the contract is improving with a flurry of recruitment activity in the build up to and during the festive period. Credit must be given again to the operational team who along with all the COVID issues have supported colleagues taking some much-needed leave and maintaining a level of service for our customers.

A change to the delivery structure in December at Exmouth Leisure Centre has seen the promotion of a long-standing Duty Manager to a Senior Duty Manager role, and the appointment of the new General Manager for Exmouth Leisure Centre is imminent, following the Area Manager's move to a new job in Dorset. Both new team members are local Exmouth people.

A new head coach has been appointed at Exmouth Tennis Centre to support the growing programme following the success of the recent LTA supported grass roots tennis development weekend.

Swimming lessons across all 3 pools finished the year with just under 2,200 children learning to swim every week, showing continued growth.

Membership numbers have grown throughout 2021, to 75% of pre-pandemic levels by the end of December 2021. Membership dropped in March 2020 from just under 10,000 to around 1,500, so a steady growth back over the last 18 months has been realised. A membership pricing review in early 2021, a change to the people structure that supports membership, and a focused marketing approach all supported this growth. Further growth is predicted and targeted for 2022, subject to no return to lockdowns or material COVID restrictions.

Membership attrition continues to be higher than in previous years, running at around 5% month on month. This is in line with what the industry is seeing across the UK; the team is working to reduce this number.

Community

'Walking for Health' is becoming 'Wellbeing Walks' following the change by the Primary Health Care network, as reported previously, and is currently moving across by April 2022 to the new national brand. This is requiring lots of work with new systems, marketing and training.

A new relationship with First Response Physio across East Devon and the Mental Wellbeing Team are now being developed.

The free leisure access scheme for the Afghan refugees housed in Exmouth has continued into 2022. Whilst take up continues to be lower than we would like, it is improving. The team working on this project are planning to meet in January with some further sporting opportunities being discussed.

Fitness and Group Exercise

Attendance across all activities was down in December against previous months. In December numbers do always drop off and with the Government's 'Plan B' announcement this effected numbers pre-Christmas. Nevertheless, 999 indoor classes (including 60 virtual) were offered in December with an average 44% uptake, considerably higher during peak times, and "Virtual group exercise" classes are being launched across a number EDDC leisure sites to support the expected growing demand.

Good feedback has been received for both the virtual classes and the LED “at home” App option, both working hand in hand to support customers who may not be able to attend the leisure centres for any reason.

All gyms across the EDDC contract received over 8,000 visits in December, lower than previous months, for the same reasons as the group exercise classes, namely the seasonal and Plan B effects.

Following customer feedback, a couple of pieces of new equipment were installed in both Sidmouth and Exmouth Leisure Centres to support customers health and fitness programmes.

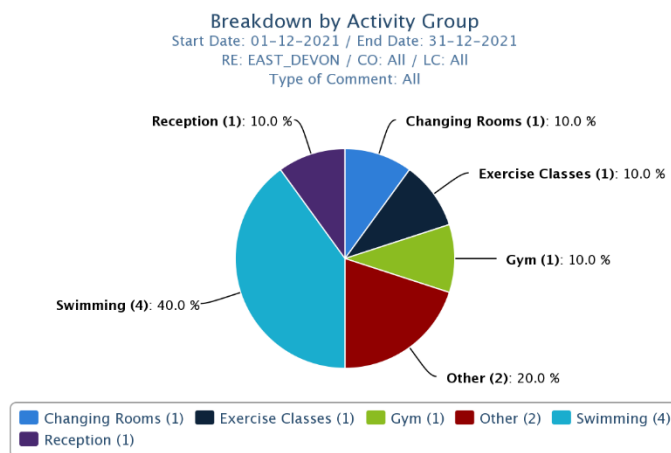
We continue to offer a hybrid model of booking in advance or simply just turning up for the activity programme, based on customer feedback, although this is constantly being reviewed.

Get Active Gym (junior offering) has developed its offering to allow 11+ year olds to come into our sites with a supervised adult (was previously 14). This decision was taken following appropriate advice from governing bodies and relevant experts and supports LED getting an even wider section of the community to get more active. This will be promoted as we move further into the New Year. We continue to offer challenges to our members and in 2022 are planning the ‘LED Mover Challenge’.

LED ran its first ever swim gala just before Christmas at Exmouth Leisure Centre, supporting hundreds of young swimmers (and parents). LED works with local swim clubs to support a talent pathway, ensuring that talented swimmers have the opportunity to move through to competitive swimming in local clubs.

Customer Feedback / Service

During December we recorded 10 comments in total: 8 complaints, 2 suggestions. The majority of complaints concern the condition and availability of the pool changing at Honiton and Sidmouth pools.



The key measure for our customer satisfaction is through NPS (Net Promoter Score). The results from December were 52 from relational surveys sent out, and a score of 62 for all other surveys (the industry benchmark is a score above 46).

We used the NPS survey when we launched our first Swim Gala at Exmouth Leisure Centre with an exceptional NPS score of 87.

There were 187 surveys returned out of 1015 sent out (18% return, historically returns would be around 14%-15%). Really great positive feedback from customers about the teams and the COVID procedures we have in place.

The 'Mystery Visit' programme continued during December with mixed results based on online enquiries; all data and insight from the programme is used to support continuous improvement.

Facilities

A Health & Safety audit schedule is now in place and will commence in February 2022, using an independent specialist leisure-based H&S consultancy.

There were 20 recorded incidents / accidents in November / December, with the majority being slips, trips and falls in wet areas.

There were no reportable (RIDDOR) incidents in November / December.

Projects Update

The refurbishment project for Honiton Swimming Pool changing rooms is now on site running through to mid-February 2022. Honiton Pool will remain open throughout with a temporary solution for changing and access. An LED / EDDC / contractor project Team is established with good communications in place.

The COVID Booster clinic operating out of Exmouth Leisure Centre finished in December, although dialogue is ongoing with various parties as to how LED can support future initiatives such as this.

There is ongoing dialogue with EDDC colleagues around building lifecycle / H&S works over the next 24 months following submission of the capital bid from EDDC officers (see separate agenda item).

Summary

A quieter period for the team, allowing for some much-needed rest for many members of the team who have consistently delivered a valuable, and to many a vital front line service providing leisure facilities over what has been a challenging 9 months since re-opening after the most recent lockdown.

Whilst recovery continues to be fragile, and somewhat stop-start due to the ever changing COVID environment, the key business drivers for the contract are starting to move in the right direction. The team are now full into January and helping hundreds of residents on their journey to a healthier lifestyle. January has started well with new membership numbers tracking ahead of target currently, long may this continue....!

Jamie Bryant, Director of Delivery, LED