

Report to: Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum
Subject: Facilities and Activities Report
From: Operational Delivery Team
Date: 13th January 2026



Overview

Over the past three months, memberships have continued to be challenged due to significant increases in competition across East Devon. We have carried out a number of targeted new member acquisition and retention campaigns in an attempt to mitigate the impact however, membership numbers have declined. At the end of November the EDDC contract sat at 8,858 which is a drop of 199 members when compared to the previous month. The start of December is unfortunately, not looking any more optimistic. Modelling from the last few months has shown that Pure Gym has had a c.5% negative impact on the two Exmouth leisure sites with Honiton also suffering from the result of increased local competition. We have however, seen a slight increase in our membership yield which has increased by £0.10 to £35.43.

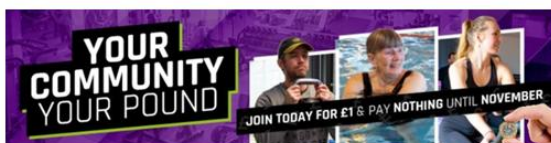
Highlights:

- **Exmouth Tennis Centre** has been recognised as the Southwest Training Academy by the LTA, with training taking place from 2026. Collaboration with the LTA is ongoing to strengthen partnerships and foster tennis growth in the region.
- The **Learn to Swim** programme experienced a slight downturn; however, a targeted lead campaign attracted 600 new participants. In January, the team will actively follow up with these leads to boost swim school enrolment.
- Following challenges with the online swim timetables, the team swiftly implemented a temporary solution to ensure customers could access up-to-date information.
- **Exmouth Leisure Centre** introduced a new Saturday Gymnastics session in response to increased demand. Studio spaces have been reorganised to better accommodate the specific needs of each activity.
- The launch of **Hyrox** at Exmouth Leisure Centre supported by the Prosperity Fund has been a resounding success, drawing 327 attendees in its first month. Additionally, the introduction of Les Mills on Demand has encouraged group exercise, with 45 bookings in the opening month.
- There have been ongoing issues with cold showers at peak times at Exmouth Leisure Centre. Work is underway with EDDC to identify and implement a permanent solution. This is becoming a significant cause of complaints from customers, which, with the increased competition in the area, means it needs to be a priority.
- New gates have been installed at **Coburg (Sidmouth)**, which has already resulted in increased usage of the tennis courts by the community.
- Productive discussions have taken place with Devon County Council to explore joint initiatives, particularly around supporting services such as weight management and smoking cessation, positioning LED as the preferred exercise pathway.

- A new partnership with **Healthkey** has been established, offering all members complimentary three-month access to online physiotherapy, medical consultations, and coaching. We are now exploring opportunities to extend this provision as part of our membership offering.
- Work is underway to enhance party offerings across the group, ensuring a consistent and improved experience. Parties have successfully launched at Exmouth Tennis Centre.
- Internal training programmes for swimming and first aid have been further developed, with a view to opening these courses to external participants in the future.
- Staffing has been a challenge, particularly due to high levels of sickness across East Devon. Recruitment efforts are ongoing, and most vacancies have now been filled.

Marketing:

- Over the past three months, our team has rolled out four dynamic campaigns to energise and engage our community: September saw the launch of “Your Community, Your Pound”, followed by the “Conqueror Challenge” in October, designed to boost interaction and participation. In November, we introduced a special No Joining Fee offer exclusively for Exmouth Tennis Centre, alongside an exciting Black Friday promotion to encourage new sign-ups and reward our loyal members.
- We are committed to delivering a clear and vibrant message across all our social media platforms, reinforcing a strong and unified brand presence. By introducing Canva throughout our organisation, we have empowered our teams to create and manage eye-catching content directly from each site, helping us connect with members in a more personal and engaging way.



Recommendations and Future Focus

- Continue to monitor membership trends and implement strategies to enhance member retention.
- Upgrade of our membership management system due to take place in the Spring to ensure that full integration with our other ancillary systems remains achievable. This will also improve the customer experience and our reporting ability.
- Further evaluate and optimise access-control investments to maximise facility utilisation, with Honiton planned for January.
- Develop customer-engaging programs and review systems and processes to help drive member engagement.
- Continue facility upgrades across all sites with support from EDDC.

Active Communities Activities Update

This report provides an overview of our activities and achievements from September through December 2025, highlighting new school partnerships, ongoing programmes, community initiatives, and partnership working in the East Devon area.

School Partnerships and Activities

In September, we welcomed two new schools: Beacon Primary in Exmouth, and Littleton Primary in Honiton. Both schools have had an excellent start, with children enthusiastically participating and teachers offering strong support. We are delivering two sessions of engaging, fun-filled activities to each school, focusing on a varied age range and prioritising children most in need.

As part of the final week before the Christmas holidays, Beacon Primary pupils enjoyed trying out the climbing wall at Exmouth, an activity that was very well received. Meanwhile, Littleton Primary concluded their sessions with a special visit to Honiton Leisure Centre, where they experienced a tour and a dedicated studio session.

Regular sessions continue at Cranbrook Education Campus and Littleham in Exmouth, ensuring ongoing engagement and support for pupils within these communities.

External Support and Specialist Programmes

We continue our collaboration with Heads Up, the Exmouth-based mental health charity. Their input has been invaluable, offering additional support to children attending our sessions who are struggling, and helping them develop crucial social and emotional skills.

Additionally, we partnered with Kings School in Ottery to deliver a six-week programme for SENCO students working towards their sports module as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Seaton Primary School also completed a six-week programme, culminating last week with a visit to LED's 'The Grove' Health & Fitness Centre in the town.

New Initiatives and Projects

We have been developing the Menopause Project, 'Pause Power', which we will trial at Ottery Leisure Centre starting in February for six weeks. Two instructors have completed menopause training, and we plan to train four more to expand the programme and integrate it into weekly timetables at the centres.

Community Engagement and Volunteer Support

We supported the Sidmouth Memory Café wellbeing launch at Sidford Byes and provided training for local volunteers to establish a new wildlife walk in Lymptone, with 23 participants attending the inaugural event.

In October, we held our annual Volunteer Walk Leader celebration at Otter Estuary Nature Reserve, with 55 volunteers from across the district, including those from dementia walk and carers groups. The event featured a group walk, awards, and served as a thank you for their invaluable contributions to district health and wellbeing.

Our community instructors continue to deliver physical activity sessions for the Exmouth Stroke Survivors Club. The Gymnastics Volunteer Programme in Exmouth and Sidmouth has expanded, resulting in three volunteers obtaining industry qualifications and progressing into paid employment.

Programme Developments and Impact

The launch of Hyrox in Exmouth has been a notable success, with bespoke community sessions delivered to groups such as the ECC Football Academy and Exmouth Rugby Club.

Funding has also enabled us to increase family engagement in physical activity, as demonstrated by 117 participants taking up the family climbing offer at ELC.

Partnership Working

We maintained strong partnership links through attendance at the Eastern Healthy Ageing Partnership (hosted by the NHS and Age UK Exeter), WEB Health Meeting, and the CLUK Volunteering Special Interest Group, fostering collaboration and sharing best practice across the region.

Active Communities Conclusion

This period has seen significant growth in our school programmes, innovative new projects, and increased community engagement. Our ongoing partnerships and commitment to volunteer support continue to positively impact the health and wellbeing of individuals and families across the district.

