



This edition is made available to the people of Epping Town with the assistance of Epping Town Council

Fitness equipment boost for leisure centres

A MAJOR investment is to be made in new fitness equipment at Epping Leisure Centre.

Epping Forest District Council has announced that a total of £192,000 will be invested in new equipment at Epping and Ongar in exchange for reduced management costs of £53,000 per year.

District council finance portfolio holder Chris Whitbread noted the annual return for the council of 12 per cent on the deal, far better than any conventional investment the council could make at the current time.

However proposals to develop additional sporting facilities at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool have been postponed because of the current financial climate.

Leisure and wellbeing portfolio holder Brian Rolfe put forward the proposal to delay with great reluctance but noted that sports facilities continued to be provided at the sports centre in Broomstick Hall Road, Waltham Abbey.

The district council cabinet agreed a range of measures to fund capital investment in other council-owned sports facilities in exchange for reduced management costs from centre manager SLM Ltd.

Extending the management contract with SLM, Epping Forest District Council will invest almost £800,000 in improved health and fitness facilities for Loughton Leisure Centre, Traps Hill, with annual management cost savings of £100,000, and invest the £192,000 into the new fitness equipment at the Epping and Ongar centres.

District council chief executive retires

EPPING Forest District Council chief executive Peter Haywood is to retire after 32 years working for the authority and 42 years in local government.

Mr Haywood joined the council in 1978 in the finance department.

During his time at the council he held positions including chief accountant, finance director and joint chief executive.

He became chief executive in August 2007.

Mr Haywood has been involved in all of the major decisions made by the council over many years.

Working mainly behind the scenes, it was in large part his financial stewardship of the council that provided the money for better services.

Under his guidance the council became debt-free and developed the process of creating investment income used by councillors to support services and keep the council tax down.

Housing projects such as the regeneration of the Limes Farm Estate in Chigwell, leisure projects such as the construction of Loughton Leisure Centre and a range of town centre enhancements including Ongar, Buckhurst Hill, Loughton and most recently The Broadway would never have been possible without the sound financial foundations set down by Mr Haywood, the council said.

A council spokesman said that while all councils face a very difficult economic future, Mr Haywood leaves Epping Forest District Council financially far stronger and better able to protect services than most others.

District council leader Di Collins said: "We are grateful for Mr Haywood's many years of service.

"Over the years both the council and the wider world have seen significant changes.

"Mr Haywood has played a major role in making sure the council has adapted and delivers the services that local people want and need.

"He leaves the council in a strong position to meet the difficult challenges of the next few years."

Services charity talk to Probus club

THE speaker at the July meeting of the Epping Probus Club was Lt Col Colin Baker from the Essex branch of the A TALK on the SSAFA Forces Help charity was given to the last meeting of Epping Probus Club.

Lt Col Colin Baker of the Essex branch served 25 years in the Army being commissioned initially in an infantry regiment. He served in Germany, Cyprus, Aden and Hong Kong, has been to university twice and finally served in the Army Education Corps.

On retirement he became secretary of the SSAFA Essex branch. He was in theory now retired from this office but was still very much involved with the charity. SSAFA is the oldest of the service charities formed in 1885 in memory of General Gordon, who was murdered in Khartoum during the Sudanese troubles, to provide financial support for the families of soldiers, sailors and later airmen, hence SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Association). In comparison, the Royal British Legion was founded in 1921 and Help For Heroes was formed in 2007.

Youth council backs internet safety initiative

PROMOTING ways in which to use the internet safely is a top priority for the Epping Forest Youth Council.

Following their peer conference event earlier this year, youth councillors pledged to raise awareness of issues such as cyber bullying and internet safety, and to publicise helpful advice or resources on the subject to local young people and their families.

The 'Know IT All' CD Rom is a unique interactive guide produced by Childnet International and includes a guide demonstrating how to report any concerns online, along with interactive quizzes and activities.

The youth council is arranging to distribute the majority of the 500 C ROMs it secured through the district's primary schools.

Extra copies are also available on a first come, first served basis.

For more information, or to ask about having one of the CD ROMs, ring the youth council office on 01992 564365 or email efyc@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

ADVERT

Rob and Sons - Professional Painting Service and Property Maintenance. Local decorator, based in Epping - with over 23 years experience. Fully insured and with excellent references.

For more details, call Rob on 07703 977168 or 01992 579189.

Woman cut free from wreckage

A WOMAN was freed by firefighters after being trapped in her car following a crash in Theydon Bois.

Crews from Epping, Loughton and Harlow were called to Piercing Hill at 4.20pm on Thursday.

They took about 15 minutes to free the woman who was left in the care of paramedics.

A fire service spokesman said no other vehicle was involved in the incident.

Traders back underage sales campaign

THE majority of retailers in the district have shown their commitment to preventing underage sales of age-restricted products, by signing up for the Challenge 25 initiative.

Over the past five months Essex County Council Trading Standards, working in partnership with Epping Forest District Council, Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership and Essex Police, has been helping retailers implement a Challenge 25 policy, to help prevent underage sales and crack down on anti-social behaviour.

Challenge 25 aims to reduce some of the uncertainty that staff face when selling age-restricted items (including alcohol, tobacco, knives, solvents, aerosol paints, fireworks, DVDs and video games).

Anyone who looks under 25 will be asked for a valid form of ID.

Trading standards will be carrying out a series of test purchases in over the coming months and will be visiting premises that have not signed up for Challenge 25 to ensure they have the necessary procedures in place to prevent underage sales.

There is still time for retailers to

to join the scheme and they will be given guidance by Trading Standards on how to adopt the policy. All premises that sign up receive posters and leaflets about Challenge 25, and staff are given advice on how to spot a fake ID, avoiding proxy sales and refusing a sale.

County councillor Tracey Chapman, cabinet member with responsibility for trading standards said: "I am pleased to see the majority of premises in Epping Forest have adopted the Challenge 25 policy to stop age-restricted products from being sold to children.

"Using Challenge 25 can really help staff prevent underage sales, so I encourage all retailers to sign up if they have not already done so."

Restaurant holds fun End of School day

AN End of School Fun Day was held at the Old Orleans restaurant, Epping, on Friday.

Visitors enjoyed activities, including an inflatable penalty shoot-out and basketball. There was also face painting, waffle decorating and competitions with various prizes.

'BREAKING NEWS' TEXT ALERTS

Register for Everything Epping Forest's free 'breaking news' text alerts.

To get the latest news on your mobile phone just text your name to 07710 447868.

Free swimming for over-60s scrapped

GOVERNMENT-funded free swimming for the over-60s ends on August 1.

The scheme was one of the first to be stopped by the Coalition Government as it seeks public sector savings.

User of council-owned pools in the district will find charges reintroduced at a concessionary rate for anyone aged over 60.

All councils that took up the funding offer for free swimming launched by the Government in April last year will see the grants end as the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) seeks to find national savings of £73 million.

According to research carried out on behalf of DCMS, the scheme had not delivered value for money.

Figures published recently showed the majority of those participating in the scheme would have gone swimming anyway, even if they had to pay, and that the scheme had not significantly increased physical activity.

Analysis showed that the cost of the scheme outweighed the health benefits.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, Jeremy Hunt, said: "We are facing an unprecedented financial situation in this country, and it is essential that we act now to reduce the country's debt.

"As part of my department's contribution, we have examined a number of schemes to determine whether they remain a Government priority, value for money, and affordable in the current economic climate."

Commenting on the decision, Sport and Olympics Minister Hugh Robertson said: "This is not a decision that gives me any pleasure. However, the research shows that the great majority of free swimmers were swimming already, and would have paid to swim anyway.

"With a crippling deficit to tackle and tough decisions to take, this has become a luxury we can no longer afford."

Epping Forest District Council would have to find an additional £80,000 a year to continue funding the scheme from its own resources.

From 1 August over-60s swimming will be charged concessionary prices of £2.10 (non-members) and £1.90 (members).

Leisure and wellbeing portfolio holder Brian Rolfe said: "The Government has made it clear that there will be many cuts across public services.

"The end of free swimming for the over-60s is disappointing but not completely unexpected.

"The government and every local authority will need to look very hard at its priorities in coming months.

"Sadly, free swimming is a service the country can no longer afford."

Street lights across county to be turned off

STREET lights across Essex will be turned off overnight in a new scheme which will be rolled out over five years.

The move was confirmed by Essex County Council highways and transportation cabinet member Norman at County Hall, Chelmsford.

A pilot scheme in 2006 in

Maldon and Uttlesford saw most street lights turned off from midnight to 5am.

However advances in technology mean a central management system will be used which can control individual street lights.

Lights in a particular area could be quickly switched on at the request of the police.

The new system will be rolled out district by district over five years following consultation with town and parish councils.

There were some exceptions where lights were kept on in the pilot scheme including transport interchanges.

However, this would not cover our the district's London Underground stations.

Janet Whitehouse, Liberal Democrat county councillor for Epping and Theydon Bois, said: "Many people return to Epping and other Central Line stations after midnight when they have had a night out in London.

"I am pleased my request for the later lighting of pedestrian routes from stations which have trains arriving after midnight was accepted.

"Now people won't have to walk home in the dark - except in Theydon Bois.

"The county won't be providing lighting where it doesn't currently exist."

**What do you think?
Email your views on the county council's decision to switch off street lights to everythingeppingforest@googlemail.com or text brief comments to 07710 447868.**

Tell us your news. Advertise your business. Publicise your event. For more details about the Epping Town News news sheet, email everythingeppingforest@googlemail.com or ring David Jackman on 07710 447868

WHAT'S ON

TUESDAY, JULY 27 to SATURDAY, JULY 31

* Illusions Dance Academy presents a fun and exciting week of dancing, singing and acting workshops at the Jack Silley Pavilion, Epping (10am -3pm), ending in a show-stopping performance. Featuring favourite musicals including High School Musical, Oliver and Hairspray. Boys and girls aged 7+ welcome. Only £70 (sibling discount applies). Book now to reserve places. Contact Stephanie or Amy on 07784 449231 / 07849 946193 or email illusionsdanceacademy@yahoo.co.uk

SATURDAY, JULY 31 and SUNDAY, AUGUST 1

* First World War Event at the Royal Gunpowder Mills, Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey. Ninety-six years on from the start of the Great War (1914-1918) re-enactors and living historians will be taking part in this year's event with a display of WWI memorabilia, drill displays and battlefield archaeology. On Sunday there will be a dogfight with Sopwith and Fokker tri-planes (weather permitting). For more

information, visit www.royalgunpowdermills.com

MONDAY, AUGUST 2 to FRIDAY AUGUST 6

* Academy Arts Summer Workshops (Week 1) at The Bridge, 29 Princes Road, Buckhurst Hill. The workshops are held by professionals in all aspects of performing arts. Monday - musical theatre - West End performer teaches numbers from current West End shows. Tuesday - TV acting - TV and film acting technique and audition sight reading taught by an established TV actor. Wednesday - Commercial dance - a workshop including warm-up and routine taught by a professional dancer. Thursday - West End singing - audition technique and harmony work taught by a West End musical director. Friday - Drama Workshop - drama technique role play and improvisation. For more details ring 020 8539 1151 or visit www.academyarts.co.uk

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5

* The English-Speaking Union has its monthly meeting at the Murray Hall, Borders Lane, Loughton (10.15am) with a talk by Helen Leonard entitled Life in the Tower of London.

Admission £4, including tea/coffee. For more details ring 01992 815840 or 01992 561470.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7

* Community Saturday at Epping Library, St John's Road, Epping (2pm-4pm). Holistic Healing: Free ten-minute sessions of Reiki and Metamorphic Technique. Alexander Technique - free ten-minute sessions. Please book for these sessions by contacting the library.

* Toot Hill and District Horticultural Society Show, Bridge Farm, Stanford Rivers (noon to 5pm). Various categories for showing, sideshows, stalls and entertainment.

DO YOU WANT TO PUBLICISE A LOCAL EVENT?

To publicise an event on the Epping Town News news sheet and Everything Epping Forest website, email the details to everythingeppingforest@googlemail.com or ring David Jackman on 07710 447868.