

Haverhill Leisure Centre Improvements 2018: Frequently asked questions

What are the plans?

The plans aim to increase sporting capacity and activities in Haverhill for current and future users of leisure facilities, with a £1.5m investment by St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

The increased capacity is being delivered through a community use agreement with Samuel Ward Academy which upgrades the surface of half their eight-court sports hall, making it available for additional activities for the school community during the day, and for community use in the evenings and holidays.

Extra activities are also being delivered by re-purposing existing space at the leisure centre. This introduces Parkour, Click-and-Climb and a wellness suite; upgrades the soft play equipment, gym and café but does not affect the swimming pool.

Who are Abbeycroft Leisure?

St Edmundsbury Borough Council owns Haverhill Leisure Centre. It invests in and maintains the facilities there for the benefit of residents and visitors, but has contracted day to day management to a specialist registered charity. Abbeycroft Leisure operates as a social enterprise, which means it re-invests all of its surplus back into improving facilities, services and developing community initiatives.

The partners share the aim of providing high quality, accessible facilities available to the whole community while reducing the running costs subsidised by council tax payers with revenue earned by widening the range of activities.

When is the work taking place?

Work is being undertaken in two phases:

Phase 1 May to September

The ground floor of the leisure centre will remain in its current state. No user groups using this floor will be impacted.

The café and the soft play area will close on the first floor, there will be a limited offer beverages via vending machines, and no alternative provision for soft play.

The first floor studios will also close to allow for refurbishment. Users affected by this have been offered alternative provision either within the leisure centre or at Samuel Ward Academy or Castle Manor sites.

During the school summer holidays the floor will be replaced in the Samuel Ward sports hall

Phase 2 September to December

The café and soft play will remain closed.

Use of the Sports hall will be lost, however users will have access to the new first floor studios, that can be opened in to one large area and / or make use of the Samuel Ward Sports hall.

Will any current facilities close completely?

The current health suite (sauna, steam room and sunbed) will close and be replaced by a new wellbeing facility.

Will any groups need to end as a result of this work?

No. We ask groups to work with us in the short term, as there will be some changes while building work is underway, but once it is completed (at the leisure centre and at Samuel Ward Academy), all current users of the centre will have a location to continue their activities.

Which groups will need to move as a result of these changes?

The project is being delivered with the minimum possible disruption but while the work is going on, some groups will need to move within the leisure centre. In addition, in September, some groups will be need to move from inside the leisure centre:

- Indoor football will move to Samuel Ward Academy to the improved courts there, and be able to have 1 hour sessions rather than the current 45 minutes;
- Daytime Short Tennis will move locations within the leisure centre; timings of sessions may need to be reviewed; Evening short tennis and badminton will move to Castle Manor and Samuel Ward schools.
- Roller skating will move to Samuel Ward Academy.
- Suffolk Community Health will move to the Park Road School facility
- Astro-hockey will lose their changing rooms
- Line Dancing, various martial arts groups; junior dance, walking football, swim club land training will all move to school facilities.
- Walking football (daytime) will move to the Astroturf pitch outside.

Which groups will be affected temporarily while the work is being carried out and how?

From May to December, the soft play area and café will be out of action, but there will be vending machines available.

From May to September, there will be some loss of studio space while work is going on that will mean:

- Loss of a couple of classes for freelance instructors;
- Some studio classes will need to use different rooms in the centre;

- Squash courts availability will be reduced whilst these are being refurbished.

How were the plans developed?

A wide range local and national information and data was considered in producing the plans, including information from an independent consultant on types of activities that would increase physical activity and encourage more people to be active.

The plans are built on the principles of cross-government strategy (Active Nation 2015), the Sport England Active Nation Strategy 2016 – 2026, and the Public Health Matters 2016 report.

What consultation took place?

In 2016 the views of Haverhill Leisure Centre users on the current offer were sought in an informal survey, through interviews in the centre and on social media. Abbeycroft Leisure seeks regular monthly customer feedback and liaises with key local stakeholders through its Trustee Stakeholder Committee. This significant user engagement all fed into the design proposals and continues to inform the ongoing project.