



Press Release

Active Trafford – Trafford’s Leisure pass gets a Face Lift

As from the first of April 2005, Trafford will have an exciting and radically new leisure pass scheme – Active Trafford. Unveiled earlier this year by Trafford Community Leisure Trust at Trafford’s Sports forum and Awards evening, the scheme is a pioneering model for leisure provision that leisure providers across the country could do no harm in learning from.

The revamp has followed a 2 year review of the existing leisure pass by Leisure Consultancy firm, Knight, Kavanagh Page of Manchester, which prompted the council and Trafford Community Leisure Trust to rethink the current scheme. The review highlighted that certain target populations were not getting involved in leisure and exercise and these groups were the ones who could benefit most from exercise. The recommendations produced by the review served as the basis for the Trust to develop the new Active Trafford scheme.

Bernie Jones, Chief Executive for Trafford Community Leisure Trust, outlines the new Active Trafford scheme saying, “We have split the Active Trafford scheme into two parts which makes it radically different to the old leisure pass. On one side we have taken the original pass and expanded it providing a new, more focused

Concessionary Pass, and on the other side we have created a New Referral pass that enables us to really tackle those areas that need to exercise most.”

Concessionary Pass

The new concessionary pass provides a far more extensive range of activities including swimming, gym, exercise classes, badminton, and squash. Further to this, access time to the facilities for concessionary pass holders has been extended with spaces being allocated for concessionary pass holders throughout the day. The overall effect is a pass that allows realistic exercise provision for all.

A whole range of groups can attain the concessionary pass including; unemployed, over 60's, people with disabilities, elite athletes and students. To receive one, people just need to contact their local centre and apply for the concessionary pass and they can then take advantage of the discounted rates available.

Referral Pass

The referral pass forms the exciting part of the new Active Trafford scheme. Throughout Trafford several referring agencies will be set up which will include schools, GP's, sports development and health centres. Over time it is expected that the number of referring agencies will expand so that people across the whole borough can be easily reached

These referral agencies will actively target certain individuals who need to exercise and will give them a free five session pass and refer them to the Trust's Active Trafford Co-ordinator. The Active Trafford Co-ordinator has an important role and

aside to attempting to encourage a more active lifestyle in the client, they will initially introduce them into the trust's facilities and monitor their progress. The five free sessions can be used on a variety of activities such as gym, swimming, bowls, athletics and exercise classes.

Following the trial period it is hoped that referred clients take on board the active lifestyle they have experienced and carry this behaviour on by incorporate exercise into a new positive way of life.

The benefits of the referral scheme are extensive. In addition to targeting those areas that are in real need of exercise such as diabetic patients and those that are overweight, a more preventative slant can will be taken by targeting children and healthy people by aiming to instil positive attitudes towards exercise before poor health sets in.

Health

Amongst other critical health problems in the UK obesity is worryingly receiving much attention. Statistics show that 46% of men in England and 32% of women are overweight and an additional 17% of men and 21% of women are obese. Additionally in 1996, around 13% of 8 year olds and 17% of 15 year olds in England were obese. The risk of contracting diabetes, cancer, heart disease and arthritis are greatly increased from being overweight. Individuals that are obese have a 50% - 100% increased risk of premature death from all causes, compared to individuals with a healthy weight.*

Bernie Jones highlights that, “Everyone is aware of the growing health and obesity problems in this country. For certain groups, exercising regularly and safely can be expensive and difficult. The Active Trafford scheme will enable the Trust and the council to provide a great opportunity for all individuals in need across Trafford to exercise regularly and enjoy the benefits of an active lifestyle.”

A recent study has shown Manchester has the dubious honour of being Britain's fattest city.** Researchers looked at the lifestyle of inhabitants of 22 British cities - taking into account factors such as consumption of fat and calories, drinking habits, incidence of heart disease, and number of fast-food outlets. They were balanced against gym membership, availability of open spaces and the consumption of fruit and vegetables. According to the figures released, Manchester men can expect to reach the age of 71, compared with the average male lifespan of 75.9. Women in the city fall short of the average of 80.6 years with a life expectancy of 77.3 years.

Professor John Ashton, regional director of public health in the north-west, believes Mancunians are not the only people with bad eating and exercise habits.

"The national diet is appalling," Prof Ashton said. "It's a disaster and a public health emergency in the making." He continues by saying that the consequences of obesity and inactivity could be devastating for the NHS. "It is better for the taxpayer and the NHS to deal with this now."

With Exercise and a healthy diet being key to overcoming obesity amongst other ailments, the revamped Active Trafford scheme is set to step up to the challenge of tackling Trafford's poor health as well as providing better opportunities for all to feasibly exercise safely and effectively.

Avril Saunders, Head of Service, Leisure, Sport and Parks Development for Trafford Council concludes that, “A scheme such as Active Trafford is long over due, the opportunities that it will generate for individuals across Trafford will be great. Active Trafford provides the Local Authority and the Trust with fundamental tools that allow us to tackle areas where inactivity is a major problem. It will allow us to effectively deliver the benefits of physical activity to those who need it most. This sort of strategy is needed nationally so that all people are able to access exercise and understand what a healthy lifestyle is. Only through such methods can we as a nation start to become healthier and fitter and start to overcome the obesity crisis we are experiencing.”

Avril Saunders continues by saying, “We have some fantastic facilities available, and the Trust has undertaken many developments to enhance these over the last two years, Active Trafford will provide a better opportunity for more people to experience these and take advantage of the facilities on their doorstep.”

Active Trafford passes are available for use at all Trafford Community Leisure Trust’s leisure centres (Altrincham, GH Carnall, Partington, Sale, Stretford and Urmston) and Golf courses (William Wroe and Altrincham). Additionally other activities are available through other Trafford Borough Council owned facilities such as bowls, fishing and canoeing.

For more information contact the Active Trafford Co-ordinator on 0161 912 3366 or log onto www.traffordleisure.co.uk.

END OF PRESS RELEASE

For further information contact;
Marketing
Simon Blair - simon.blair@tclt.co.uk
07919043125

Leisure Pass Coordinator
0161 912 3360

www.TraffordLeisure.co.uk

The official launch will be held on the 1st of April 2005

Editorial Notes

*Source; Trends in overweight and obesity (2004) Division of Public Health & Primary Health Care, University of Oxford

**Source; Annual Men's Fitness Report Men's Fitness (2005)