



## Operational Report March 2010- April 2011

### General

Our Annual General Meeting gives a wonderful opportunity to look back on a year which has seen many successes. We have seen changes to our management structure which have allowed our Managers to focus on specific areas of their expertise, increasing our customer base whilst reducing our operating costs. Stability at Director level has also provided the support to make the necessary changes leading to a better organisation and good relations with both Staff and Customers alike. Procedures and Policies were identified as an area of concern in 2010 and we are pleased to advise that many of these are now complete and available to our staff via our Intranet. Our Website provides our customers with a wealth of information, but we want to make this better. We will be updating our website this year to make it more user friendly and easier to find the information you need.

Working parties continue to provide us with support on essential projects, these range from organising fundraising events to developing plans and other volunteer work. There are many areas where the Community can help us to take forward our plans and also contribute to them. Some of our plans require funding and we look to the Community, Parish Council, Mid Suffolk District Council & Suffolk County Council to continue with the financial support they have kindly provided over the past years. If you want to get involved please ask.

Whilst it is always pleasing to report on our progress we must remain focused on our future funding and reinvestment. Some of our facilities are looking tired and are in need of refurbishment. We try to prioritise our income to ensure these facilities remain fit for purpose, but are unable, due to very tight margins, to undertake some of this essential work. We are looking at new and innovative ways to attract more funding and hope to report further progress next year. The following sections provide an overview of Services we have provided over the reporting period. Many Services have been retained and others added.

### Sports

On behalf of the Community we provide a great venue offering a wide variety of sports for all ages and abilities. We continue to host several County and Inter-league matches in Football, Badminton & Bowls and are regularly complimented on our fine facilities and level of hospitality by our visitors.

Our aim is to provide access to all, whilst focusing on supporting all Debenham based clubs. We remain the home venue of Debenham Badminton Club, Debenham Bowls Club, Debenham Bridge Club, Debenham Squash Club, Debenham Family and Veteran Hockey, Debenham Adult Football Club and Debenham Youth Football Club.

Other clubs using our venue are Deben Vale Badminton, Jo Hughes Badminton, Kick Boxing, Karate, Judo, many five-a-side football teams as well as running an extensive programme of Exercise, Dance, Pilates & Yoga classes for adults, along with an Art Club, Bridge Club, Scottish Country Dancing and Ballroom.

We offer regular coaching sessions for children in Football, Tennis, Squash, Racketball, Basketball, Kick-Boxing, Judo, Trampolining, Dance, Badminton, Netball and Karate.

The Debenham LC Football Club based at the centre currently runs 2 adult teams, with the first team playing in the Ridgeons Premier Division and the 2<sup>nd</sup> eleven playing in the Reserves Section

Working with Project D we are pleased to announce that agreement has been reached to locate a new Skatepark on this land. Project D will be working hard to establish the new Skatepark whilst we will provide support where necessary. Further information can be found at [www.debenhamskatepark.onesuffolk.net](http://www.debenhamskatepark.onesuffolk.net)



## Leisure

The Community Centre is the hub of the Community and continues to flourish with more bookings being taken and new customers booking regular nights. It is booked most weekends for events and every weeknight for clubs and other activities. Over the past 12 months we have had a variety of users, from private bookings for weddings and parties to corporate events and conferences. We are pleased to be the home of The Forge Community Church (FCC) who bring together over 350 visitors every Sunday morning for celebration. The Forge also support us in other ways through their acts of kindness. One of their many contributions sees them spending one or two days undertaking a major project which may be related to carrying out repairs, building works or decorating and cleaning.

The Community Centre has provided a venue for many Debenham groups, amongst its regular users are Debenham Young Farmers, the Women's Institute, Dance East, Suffolk Farm Machinery Club, East Suffolk Flower club, Carpet, Slimming World (new), Splat, Debenham Players, Bury Theatre Royal, Suffolk Primary Care, Blood Donors, Stowmarket Lions, Mid Suffolk District and Suffolk County Councils and our MPs surgery. New for 2011 is the return of the Debenham Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. We will provide more on this in our next annual report.

Our 12<sup>th</sup> Bonfire and Fireworks Spectacular attracted a record amount of people. Some 1250 visitors attended the event, which was made possible due to the generous donations by local companies and organisations and in particular the voluntary efforts of a number of villagers.

Debenham Sports and Leisure enjoys an average 2600 visitors per week who take advantage of the facilities and the Deben Lounge is still a favourite social meeting place for many people.

Debenham High School (DHS) continues to use our facilities on a regular basis. Our partnership arrangements with the DHS helps us in maintaining our equipment and property. We are also the venue of choice for many other schools in our area - Sir Robert Hitchum, Bedfield, Occold, Worlingworth, Helmingham and Wetheringsett (Primary Schools) and Hartismere, Stowmarket and Stradbroke (High Schools), have all benefited from our facilities in Sport and the Arts.

The Multi-Use-Games-Area (MUGA) is owned by DHS and used by them during term time. Outside of these times the MUGA is managed by Debenham Sports and Leisure who make it available to clubs or individuals to undertake their chosen sport.

The Stowmarket Lions Boxing and Sportsman dinners were a great success. The team once again did us proud to ensure the smooth running of these high profile events.

One of the major Debenham Sports and Leisure events is the Country Music Festival and Caravan Rally. This is scheduled for July this year and is fully booked (it brought in around 450 people to the village for 5 days last year) - this not only supports Debenham Sports & Leisure economically but in addition supports all the other businesses in the village.

Our staff and volunteers work very hard to provide a service to meet your expectations at an affordable rate. Unlike most other leisure centres in the county, we have minimal financial support from the authorities, which leaves us in a challenging situation. Fortunately, due to our dedicated workforce and improved procedures, we are gradually making very promising progress.