

# Southwark Healthier Vending

## Healthy Eating Offers in Leisure Centres

Health Improvement Team

Southwark Public Health

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# Southwark leisure centres are contractually obligated to provide healthy options for users

## BACKGROUND

**The service provider Everyone Active was awarded the contract for leisure centres through June 2023**

- The aim was to provide healthy options for customers and parents whilst having a balance of sports drinks for people carrying out high-intensity workouts

**A specification around healthy vending was incorporated into the contract:**

- *The Contractor shall provide a vending service suitable for its Users. There shall be an agreed range of vended snacks and beverages available at specified times, with items well stocked and within sell-by date. At least 50% of these items shall be healthy options. This will be reviewed annually with the Authority.*

**To achieve this our Environment & Leisure team worked with the provider and in collaboration with the Public Health team to achieve the Healthier Catering Commitment**

- Regular meetings were held to jointly develop the products on site and improve the options available in both the vending machines and at the local cafes (where applicable)

# All Southwark leisure centres are HCC accredited and feature healthy food options

## IMPACT

**The vending machines and leisure centre cafes have strict policies around the on site food offer:**

- All snack products in the vending machines are under 250 calories with a selection under 99 calories
- 80% of drinks are sugar free and the rest are low/no added sugar\*
- No non-healthy promotions
- The healthiest offers are positioned in prime area of vendor for both adults and children
- Healthy branding is used to notify customers of the range of healthy options
- Marketing of drinks focuses on zero calorie and sugar-free drinks
- The drinks offer for children all feature no added sugar
- EA are; 'Sugar Smart' for all our kids range; Sugar Free, even our kids Slush was developed just for us and is 'Sugar Free', also school compliant Juices and Low sugar such as Ribena minis
- The display counter has been dressed and using the traffic light system, showing our customer the healthy drinks, which are green, this is over 85%
- The only red drinks are Lucozade Sport & Energy which are a 'need state' drink but all under the sugar tax
- Our coffee Syrups are Sugar Free
- Our kids ice cream range are 110 calories or under
- Our Nestle vendors are all under 250 calorie for single bars, with 1 row of health goods and kids crisps of 99 calories
- Nestle have also removed 30% sugar in a few kids lines, and the new Wowsomes Per serving 18g bar, 96 cal, 6.6g sugar which is 30% less due to a manufacturing process where we evaporate/reduce the sugar but don't compromise the taste.
- This new concept of manufacturing has been patented, and will be rolled out to other lines over the next few years.
- Working with our cake company over the last year, we now have the; 'Honest' brand, which are all under 250 calories.
- Baked, vegetable and Snack a Jacks are available as well as standard crisps.

\* An energy drinks range is in place, but these are specifically marketed at customers who are doing intense workouts of over 60 minutes

# Challenges around standards of healthy food, resource capacity and impact complicated the process

## CHALLENGES

### **Everyone Active had already earned the Eat Out Eat Well accreditation**

- Because the Eat Out Eat Well accreditation required a higher standard of food offer, the additional accreditation of the HCC seemed to have little impact for this service provider

### **Everyone Active have also earned the Healthy Catering Commitment for London award for Southwark, but the process was challenging**

- Limited resource capacity with the Environmental Health team at the local authority along with a lack of clarity around the scheme ultimately caused delays in HCC accreditation

### **There was uncertainty around the impact measurement of the scheme**

- Demonstrating impact to lead members was challenging without a baseline or a strong body of local evidence, however future sales data may allow for analysis

### **Everyone Active had already earned the 'Sugar Smart' accreditation in councils that participate in this scheme**

# Incorporating healthy eating into service specifications drove action around the vending offer

## TIPS

### **Working healthy food options into contracts at the start was extremely helpful in pushing the healthy weight agenda forward**

- Include in planning for your new leisure management contracts on what your approach will be to vending in your contract.
- Profit from vending is not that high so consider either going fully 100% healthy products or a high proportion. If you don't do it at planning/tender stage you will find it difficult to change due to the financial impact on the contract.

### **Planning 'extra' service needs into the contract has been beneficial in other contexts**

- Marketing of a bespoke service
- Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme
- Plastic reduction, event re-usable plastic glasses with a deposit, removal of plastic straws (using up current stocks at site but removed from the counters) soon to sell re-usable hot drink flasks with 10% off when used to reduce disposables.

**For more information please contact:**  
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