



# LEISURE IN BELFAST



Belfast  
City Council

**GLL**  
better for everyone

**BETTER**

GLL operate Belfast City Council owned leisure centres under the Better Brand

# INTRODUCTION

GLL is a charitable social enterprise operating under the Better brand. We work to provide the best leisure services available. Our mission is to get more people, more active, more often, in our 16 leisure centres and gyms across Belfast.

GLL is proud to continue its work with Belfast City Council, helping transform leisure facilities across the city. To ensure our growth, we deliver a successful social business focusing on our customer's needs. As a Not for Profit organisation, we reinvest all our surplus back into the community by developing staff, investing in our centres, supporting young athletes and increasing junior and senior participation.

GLL manager 16 leisure facilities across Belfast.



This document highlights our key successes and challenges in 2022 focusing on the four guiding principles that sit at the heart of our business.

- [Better People](#)
- [Better Service](#)
- [Better Communities](#)
- [Better Business](#)

# DID YOU KNOW WE HAVE...

WAVE MACHINE

6  
GROUP CYCLE  
STUDIOS

INDOOR  
INFLATABLE

SOFT PLAY  
AREA

9  
SWIMMING  
POOLS

3  
HIGH SPEED  
WATERSLIDES

41  
BADMINTON COURTS

CLIMBING WALL

5  
STEAM ROOMS

LASER  
QUEST

8  
3G PITCHES

3  
CAFES

OVER  
1,000  
GYM STATIONS

4  
AUSTRALIAN OPEN STANDARD  
TENNIS COURTS

SURF  
SIMULATOR

CONFERENCE  
FACILITIES

9  
SAUNAS

WATER BASED  
INFLATABLE

14  
5-A-SIDE PITCHES

17  
GROUP EXERCISE STUDIOS

1  
7-A-SIDE PITCH

# BETTER SERVICE

- Putting the customer at the heart of our business helped us increase our memberships to 34,897.
- Prepaid membership increased by 3,454 in 2022 which represents a 20% improvement as prepaid membership broke beyond 20,000 for the first time in Belfast.
- Concessionary membership options across all centres offered more affordable access to leisure for all sectors of the community.
- Spa Experience, our award winning day spa is accessible and affordable for the whole community.
- Over 17,000 customers participated in our UK annual user survey giving us a 4.0 satisfaction rate out of 5, which we will continue to work to increase.
- 11 centres achieved Quest – The UK Quality Accreditation for Sport and Leisure and is a tool to help us offer 5 star service every time.
- Girdwood Community Hub hosted a range of conference, theatrical and sporting events. It now completes with established and versatile venues across the region.
- Top Team Life Guard competition was hosted at Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre and included participants from two other local government authorities as well as partnerships from England.
- Over 5,000 children take part in swimming lessons every week learning a key life skill. This represents a 23% increase from the previous year.
- Supported 125 GSF athletes to enable them to compete at national or international level in their respective sports. Three athletes brought home Commonwealth Gold in August 2022.

**20%**  
**INCREASE IN PRE  
PAID MEMBERS**

**23%**  
**INCREASE IN  
SWIM SCHOOL  
MEMBERS**

**11**  
**CENTRES  
ACHIEVED QUEST**

**4.0**  
**SATISFICATION  
RATE**



GLL Customer Service Centre located in the heart of the city and servicing the UK



GLL Communications Day Prizes



Making a splash at the waterslides at Andersonstown Leisure Centre



Team Olympia competing at the Top Team Lifeguard event



GSF Athlete and Ambassador Aidan Walsh with his Commonwealth Gold Medal



Children take part in a Junior Exercise Class delivered by specialist instructors

# BETTER PEOPLE

- We employ 701 staff with over 85% living in the Belfast area.
- We have worked to create an environment where our staff understand the importance of our social enterprise message.
- We continue to invest in our staff with a comprehensive internal and external training and development programme delivering various courses from National Pool Lifeguarding Qualification, Pool Plant Operator to Coaching & Mentoring Leadership programmes. We also have an array of online training courses available to all staff across the business.
- A coaching and mentoring programme was created to support team work and motivation among staff across the city.
- We recruited 45 Children's Activity staff to deliver Holiday Schemes to 1,454 children at 10 centres.
- Our 2 year Trainee Manager Development Programme is in its 28<sup>th</sup> year, with 4 new recruits joining us each year to gain experience across all areas of the business.
- We recruited 2 student coach placements to work within our Community Sport team, delivering a variety of young and senior sport and physical activity programmes.
- Absentee rates remained a focal point and whilst sitting slightly above the Company average we are actively working with management teams to reduce high sickness levels.
- We made improvements to our self-service Human Resources management and payroll system continuing to give staff more control and access to their personal information.
- Staff to income ratio continued to reduce from 193% in 2016 to 94.7% in 2022, with an ongoing focus on the management of absence levels.
- We have been shortlisted in various awards in 2022 with Jacqui Pope winning Emerging Leader at the Social Enterprise NI Awards and Customer Service centre winning Customer Service Excellence in the Belfast Business Awards.
- The importance of providing fully qualified staff was again championed at the Top Team Lifeguard event with participation from 40 staff from across Northern Ireland and England.
- We recognised the contribution of our teams at the GLL Communications Day with over 150 nominations for local staff awards. Held in the Clayton Hotel this year we had a record 370 in attendance.

# BETTER COMMUNITIES

- We continued to offer our services to all user groups and actively promoted people getting involved in physical activity.
- Our GLL Sports Foundation supported 125 local athletes with over £70,000 bursaries, injury rehabilitation, education assistance and free memberships to all 16 centres.
- 1,454 children from across the city enjoyed our Summer Schemes, taking part in activities such as football, swimming, dodge ball, tennis, basketball and arts and crafts.
- Our 12 week Healthwise exercise referral programme helped 923 people referred through their GP to increase physical activity and rehabilitate from cardia, cancer, coronary, obesity and other health related issues.
- The return of Club Games saw 62 participants from 6 teams of over 55s competing in a range of sports and activities including pickleball, table tennis, athletics, badminton, bowls, boccia and a collection of physical challenges.
- Girdwood Community Hub continues to service as a disability sports hub in partnership with Belfast City Council and Disability Sports NI.
- Our Move More programme in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support worked with 150 people who survived or are living with cancer.
- We deliver a number of active aging mornings across the city which include activities such as danderball, pickleball, table tennis, boccia and water polo.
- Developed a partnership with Liverpool Football Club Foundation to deliver a holiday camps with community relations messages and coach education CPD workshops for local volunteer coaches.
- Warm Places and Winter Wellness programmes delivered in 6 centres and engaging with over 100 residents aged 40 and over.



Meeting room at the new Avoniel



Health Referral Manager Victoria Irving working with a Healthwise participant



Participants play a game of Pickleball at the Club Games at Girdwood Community Hub



Belfast Lord Mayor takes part in a boxing session at the Olympia Summer Scheme



Aqua Splash inflatable at Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre



Better employees take part in the Belfast City Marathon

# BETTER BUSINESS

- Our continued social impact is only possible through sound business practice. We grew our memberships and usage while continuing to offer a variety of concessionary options for everyone.
- £215,000 investment in a new reception area, changing rooms and replacements flooring in the Indoor Tennis Centre and Ozone Complex.
- £21,000 investment in new social areas at Falls Leisure Centre and Whiterock Leisure Centre.
- £130,000 investment in LED lighting at Whiterock Leisure Centre, Grove Wellbeing Centre, Belvoir Activity Centre and Ballysillan Leisure Centre ensuring facilities become more energy efficient.
- £102,000 investment in new gym equipment at Olympia Leisure Centre, Girdwood Community Hub, Brook Leisure Centre and Better Gym Connswater.
- Digital innovation helped attract new customers and compete with other operators in leisure with 93% of bookings being made online and 89% of members joining online.
- 46,300 people engaged with the Better brand across social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
- Increased professional profile through memberships and award applications of business networks including Social Enterprise NI, Women in Business, Belfast Chamber of Commerce and Chief Executive Officers of the Third Sector.



5-a-side Tournament at Avoniel



Young person catches a wave at Andersonstown Leisure Centre



Working with Social Enterprise Orchardville to deliver café service across the city



Bouncing fun at Brook Leisure Centre on Air Venture



Reception refurbishments at Indoor Tennis Centre at Ozone Complex



Belfast Head of Service Jacqui Pope at the Aisling Bursaries

# LOOKING FORWARD IN 2023

- **Better People** – We will ensure that our staff are well trained and customer focused, while continuing to better themselves. We will continue to offer staff exciting pathways to develop within the company and build a career. We will continue to expand our team and expertise as we prepare for the opening of Templemore Baths in 2023.
- **Better Communities** – Our focus remains on encouraging those in our community who are less active to become involved in physical activity. These initiatives will target juniors, over 55s, women and people with a disability. Our GLL Sports Foundation continues to grow and we will support over 125 local athletes. We will develop a wide variety of holiday schemes to encourage more children to try new sports and activities.
- **Better Service** – We continue to offer clean, friendly and modern facilities, using technology and innovation to benefit our customers. We will continue to expand our group exercise programme bringing a wider range of activities to suit everyone from juniors to senior participants.
- **Better Business** – We will continue to operate high quality facilities that embrace technology and meet our customer's needs. We will continue to invest in centres outside the Leisure Transformation Programme ensuring they continue to cater for the needs of the local community. We look forward to launching another new centre in Templemore Baths and will celebrate the next phase of completion within the Leisure Transformation Programme. We will continue to offer a range of membership options suitable for all members of our community to help them become involved in physical activity.