

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**LEISURE, ARTS AND CULTURE
CABINET MEMBER**

NORMANBY HALL COUNTRY PARK ADMISSION CHARGES 2009-10

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

1.1 To consider the admission prices for Normanby Hall Country Park for the forthcoming 2009-10 season.

1.2 The key points of the report are as follows.

- Work needs to start in December 2008 to promote the park for the 2009-10 season.
- To do this effectively the admission prices need approval to include in promotional material that is prepared for print in December 2008.
- In making recommendations for the prices for next season, the performance against income targets for this year is taken into account as well as market intelligence from across the sector and the results of the marketing campaign carried out in 2008-09.
- A new season ticket for two people is proposed in response to customer feedback and the numbers for a group ticket increased from twelve to twenty.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The proposed prices for 2009-2010 are set out below:

Ticket Category	Proposed price for 2009-10
Individual Tickets	
Adult	£5.00
Child	£2.50
Over 60	£4.50
Adult Concession	£2.50
Child concession	£1.25
Over 60 concession	£2.25
Family Season Ticket	£19.00
2 person season ticket (new category)	£11.00

Group Season Ticket (up to 20 people)	£39.00
Group Visits per person	
Adult	£4.40
Child	£2.20
Over 60	£4.20
Group visit with guided tour per person	
Adult	£7.00
Child	£3.50
Over 60	£6.30
Car parking	£3.00

2.3 In making recommendations for the 2009-10 season the following issues were taken into account

- The Corporate charging Framework (CCF) and the need to exercise commercial judgement in setting the price levels
- Benchmarking with other similar attractions
- Customer feedback from current charges
- Maximising the income to the Business Unit
- Rounding of prices to fit within CCF
- Balancing the relative impact of effective marketing and price increases on income generation.

2.4 For the 2008-09 season a discount booklet of vouchers with a total value of £30 was offered with the season ticket. Analysis of the returned vouchers shows that over 55% of these were redeemed at Leisure Centres confirming the family focus of the offer, 18% for golf, mostly at Kingsway Golf Course and 25% at the various offers within the country park.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 The objective of the pricing strategy for next season is to meet the income targets for the park and optimising customer take up. There are two basic options for consideration.

3.2 Option 1 – keep the prices the same as the current year.

3.3 Option 2 – introduce the prices listed in section 2.1 above.

3.4 Option 3 – a decision is needed on whether or not to continue with the voucher booklet scheme or offering alternative incentives.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option 1 would not meet the income targets for the Normanby and does not reflect customer comments.

- 4.2 Option 2 coupled with the early bird discount on season tickets and a targeted marketing campaign offers a better opportunity to increase season ticket sales in order to achieve income targets. An early bird discount on season ticket sales has proven very attractive in the past. This option also reflects customer wishes for a season ticket for two people and an increase in numbers eligible to enter the park on a group season ticket.
- 4.3 We have received customer feedback on the marketing incentive offered with season tickets, that an early bird discount is valued. This feedback suggests that the early bird discount coupled with an additional incentive could prove effective. One suggestion under exploration is to have a prize draw for all season ticket holders who purchase before a certain date for a significant prize.
- 4.4 Longer term investment in product development is also required to improve the offer to our customers. Completion of the enhanced playground will occur in time for the new season. The old playground will become a designated picnic area in response to customer demand.
- 4.5 Which ever option is selected increased promotional activity is planned and the new season will be launched on a free open day on 29 March 2009.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

- 5.1 Financial – the financial imperative is to maximise the income from admissions. This is not always achieved by price rises which can prove a blunt instrument as customer resistance to purchasing tickets at an increased price could lead to a reduction in income.
- 5.2 There are no other resource implications.

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

- 6.1 Diversity – excessive price rises could have an impact on access to services for those least able to pay.
- 6.2 Keeping admission prices at an affordable level could have a positive impact in contributing to the Community Strategy shared ambition SI 3/4 *Improving wellbeing by promoting participation in Leisure and Culture* as well as performance against the National Indicator 10 *Visits to Museums*.

7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The comments from customer surveys were taken into account suggesting that small price rises are acceptable, and that a new category of season ticket for two people would be welcomed.
- 7.2 Feedback from customers suggests that they value the 'early bird' discount.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Member considers and approves the admission prices for the Normanby Hall Country Park for 2009-10.
- 8.2 That the Cabinet Member agrees an 'early bird' promotion for the Family Season Ticket offering a £1 reduction on all season tickets purchased before 1 June 2009. Details of the prize draw will be agreed at a future meeting.
- 8.3 That the new season is launched in free open day on 29 March 2009.

SERVICE DIRECTOR ASSET MANAGEMENT AND CULTURE

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Corporate Charging Framework