

the ashford freedom flyer!



AUGUST 2025

PEOPLE!

Marshall Smashes Course Record!

FLAIR athlete Marshall Smith has once again shown incredible form, taking 1st place at the Bewl 15 Miler and setting a brand new course record! This outstanding performance adds to Marshall's growing list of achievements and reflects the dedication and drive that make him such an inspiration to our community. We're proud to support Marshall through our FLAIR programme and can't wait to see what he achieves next.



Making a Splash at the Stour Centre!

Olivia and Monty have been loving their swimming lessons at the Stour Centre, and their mum had some lovely words to share about their experience. She told us, "Olivia absolutely loves her lessons she's had with you guys and Monty has had fun too," and added, "We really have very much enjoyed our time swimming with you all. Your teachers have been wonderful and made long term memories. Thank you." It's always a joy to hear how much children enjoy learning to swim with our friendly and supportive teachers.



A Big Well Done to Josh!

A massive congratulations to Josh at Tenterden Leisure Centre, who has successfully completed his apprenticeship with a Distinction! Our General Manager Joe proudly presented him with his Certificate of Completion after months of hard work and dedication. Josh's apprenticeship included both the Swim England Level 2 Swim Teacher qualification and the Level 2 Fitness Instructor award. We're all incredibly proud of Josh's achievement!



Boccia and BBC Make A Difference Awards!

Boccia was launched at the Stour Centre as part of their inclusive sports offering this month. It was a fantastic addition to the centre and we look forward to building the sport more. Our Healthy Communities Manager has been recognised for her dedication and contribution to inclusion and has been nominated and shortlisted as one of the four finalists for the BBC Make a Difference Awards.



FLAIR Athlete Successes!

Congratulations to 13-year-old Laura of Skybound Trampoline Club, who recently became the 2025 English Champion in the Age 13 silver category; to Hermione, who had a fantastic race in the Triathlon, placing 3rd in Great Britain and earning selection to represent GB at the World Championships in South Africa; and to Ava Chappell, who recently competed in the 2025 European Pentathlon Under 17s Championships in Barcelona, qualifying for the final and finishing 12th out of 36 competitors.



COMMUNITY!

Outdoor Theatre at Julie Rose!

Join us on 3rd August for The House of Lear, a fashion-filled twist on Shakespeare's classic. Set in a high-end British fashion house, this bold outdoor production blends drama with style, offering a fresh take that's more The Devil Wears Prada than traditional theatre.



Join the 2 Minute Litter Pick at Julie Rose!

We're proud to support the 2 Minute Litter Pick with Ashford Borough Council, a quick and easy way to help keep our community clean. Grab a litter picker and bag from outside our doors, take two minutes to tidy up, recycle what you can, bin the rest and return the grabber when you're done. Small actions make a big difference.



Award Wins Across the Board!

We're proud to operate our Ashford sites in partnership with Ashford Borough Council, and we're thrilled that this partnership was recognised at the Freedom Leisure Awards. The Stour Centre won Most Improved Site, and together we received Most Improved Partnership. Tenterden Leisure Centre also celebrated success with LTS Performance of the Year, while Inspirational Leader went to Chris, and Healthy Communities Project of the Year was awarded to Strength in Mind. A huge well done to all involved!



Unite Summer Party – SEN Disco for Children!

We're thrilled to be partnering with Unite to host the Unite Summer Party on 31st August at the Stour Centre. A fun-filled disco designed especially for children with learning and communication difficulties. This inclusive event promises music, dancing, and a safe, welcoming space for every child to feel celebrated and free to be themselves. It's another step in our ongoing commitment to creating joyful, accessible experiences for all families in our community.



Track Marathon Medal Released!

We're excited to reveal the official medal for this year's Track Marathon, taking place this September at the Julie Rose Stadium! Whether you're chasing a personal best or simply love a unique medal for your collection, this one's not to be missed. Want to add it to your collection? Scan the QR code and book your space now.



Folkestone Club Champs Swimming Gala!

Over two weekends, the Stour Centre were proud to host the Folkestone Club Champs Swimming Gala, a major event that brought together many swimmers from Folkestone White Cliffs and Canterbury Swimming Clubs. The gala showcased some of the county's top young talent and provided a fantastic opportunity for swimmers of all abilities to compete in a supportive and professional environment.



FREEDOM LIFE STORIES!

Meet Tom, one of our FLAIR athletes!

Tom, aged 66, is a passionate athlete who competes in Aqua Bike, Masters Swimming and Time Trial cycling. With national rankings and international experience under his belt, he proves that age is no barrier when it comes to chasing your goals.



What sport(s) do you compete in and how did you first get involved?

I compete in Aqua Bike racing, Masters Swimming competitions and Time Trial races on the bike. I first started to compete in Masters Swimming after joining Hythe Swimming Club, then after sustaining a shoulder injury swimming, I introduced Cycling into my training, which led me to compete in Aqua Bike.

What is your current national ranking?

My current National Ranking for 1500 meters long course swimming is number 5, in Aqua Bike I am lower, but that is purely down to the number of events competed in the last 12 months.

What has been your proudest achievement in your sporting career so far?

I have had many proud achievements in my sporting career (Kent swimming record holder for 1500 metres, Kent record holder for 15 miles on a cycle, both age group related). But my proudest so far has to be coming seventh at the European Aqua Bike Championships, in Coimbra Portugal last year, representing Team GB, two years to the day from when I entered my first ever event!

Who inspires you most in your sport and why?

I am inspired by everybody who lines up to compete at a sporting event, proving age is no barrier to chase your goals.

What advice would you give to young people who want to follow in your footsteps?

To anybody competing in sport my advice would be, "aim high, you can always adjust your targets as you progress".

Where do you see yourself in five years' time within your sporting career?

In five years time I still see myself competing in sport. Hopefully, if my body holds out, I would like to be on an Aqua Bike event podium or failing that, winning a Veterans national title for cycle Time Trial.

If you could compete anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?

The place where I would most like to compete is Abu Dhabi for Team GB next year, and with my results so far this year I stand a good chance of going!

What does being part of the FLAIR membership mean to you?

Having a FLAIR membership increases my chances of doing well on the international stage and if it only inspires one other person to keep active, it would have achieved a great deal.

DISCOVER!



Join for a Fiver this August!

Join for just £5 and enjoy full access to the gym, swimming sessions and group exercise classes at your local community leisure centre. This limited time offer is a great way to start or restart your fitness journey in a welcoming and inclusive environment, whatever your age or ability. Scan the QR code to get started!

Member Testimonials



“What an incredible space with exceptional staff. I took my grandchildren to the climbing wall and Max was such an amazing instructor. His was superb in the way he knew how to relate to the kids. Building confidence and stretching their skills without making them feel overwhelmed and out of place, he was very patient and extremely personable. I would highly recommend this place for families with children aged 8 to 12.”

- Rod, Stour Centre



“Great venue. Lovely track, indoors and out good facilities.”

- Richard, Julie Rose Stadium



“I go regularly. Excellent facilities with friendly helpful staff.”

- David, Stour Centre



“Lovely place”

- Pauline, Tenterden Leisure Centre



- Entony, Stour Centre



BE A PART OF THE ASHFORD FREEDOM FLYER!

If you have an idea for an article, an update from your area or a story to share, please email dannii.woodward@freedom-leisure.co.uk