

Eastern Daily Press

SERVING THE COMMUNITY
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We need to be more active – and protect our centres for sport

For years, we have known that being active is a key part of a healthy lifestyle, but a lot of us would also admit, in private at least, that although we know what is good for us, we do not always put it into action.

So today's figures, which show that almost half of adults in Norfolk do not do any exercise, are disturbing, but not completely surprising.

It is only fair to point out that when comparing our region with other parts of the country, there are factors such as rural isolation and an older population which offer part of the explanation.

On the other hand, our wonderful countryside offers much more appealing opportunities for a pleasant walk than many an urban setting.

The release of these statistics about the general population coincide with disappointing news about elite sport in our region.

Norwich City Girls Centre of Excellence, which helps about 70 of our most promising young female football players to develop their skills, is under threat. This has sparked a vocal online campaign in support of the centre.

Although these stories are about different ends of the sporting spectrum, they both serve to emphasise how important sport and physical activity are.

We join the supporters of the Centre of Excellence in asking the FA to think again about their proposals, which can only have a negative impact locally on a growing sport.

And we remind ourselves, as well as our readers, that we should all try to exercise regularly – even if we do not exert ourselves quite as much as our young football stars.

A city rich in culture

A resounding tribute to Norwich and its arts scene has been paid by Pasco-Q Kevlin, director of Norwich Arts Centre.

Describing the role as his dream job, he speaks with enthusiasm about the city where he has made his home, describing it as relaxed and confident.

The pride Norwich people have in their city rubs off on newcomers – perhaps encouraging them to stay put when they would otherwise have moved on.

Mr Kevlin's insight into the arts is important. The city's many artistic venues are not in competition with each other, he says, but work together to bring the best to the city in their varied fields.

That approach will enable Norwich to maintain its reputation as a city in the forefront of Britain's cultural world.

The battle of the heroes

Sir Thomas Erpingham was commander of Henry V's longbow archers at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, when their skill led to England's victory, against all the odds.

His village of Erpingham is doing all it can this year to celebrate the 600th anniversary of the battle.

So could Horatio Nelson have a rival to the title of Norfolk's favourite military hero? We're sure this particular battle could be declared an honourable draw.

READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY

iwitness24



■ This picture of a reed bunting was taken at Waxham by Neil Marks. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

It's what you know and what you say, not how you say it

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Social commentators sometimes write about "everyday sexism" and "casual racism". By this they mean situations where people who do not want to be – and do not believe they are – sexist or racist still behave in ways that are.

The commentators are thinking about situations such as where the office manager unthinkingly always asks one of the female staff to get the coffee; or where someone naively expresses surprise that an Afro-Caribbean friend is not good at dancing.

This same sort of heedlessness can also be seen in the case of linguisticism, when people are unthinkingly stereotyped or discriminated against on the grounds of their accent, dialect or language.

Casual, everyday linguisticism appears in many guises.

For example, the casual use of the term "well-spoken" in this country to refer only to the small minority of English speakers who have public-school accents implies that the rest of us, the vast majority, do not "speak well", which of course is not true.

There is also often an unthinking assumption that people with certain local accents are stupid or uncivilised, or not fit



■ Steph McGovern (centre in red) pictured with her fellow presenters, has unfairly come under fire for her accent.

to hold positions of responsibility and authority or to make public announcements. We don't have to look far to see examples of this in Norfolk.

The BBC TV Breakfast's presenter Steph McGovern has also recently suffered from this same kind of attitude.

No matter that she is an award-winning journalist; that as a teenager she won the Young Engineer for Britain award; that she has a degree in science communication and policy; or that she has had 10 years of experience in top-level financial journalism.

None of this seems to be of any signifi-

cance to the people who have complained about her Middlesbrough accent. One gentleman even sent her £20 to put towards what he astonishingly called "correction therapy" for her accent; he said it was a terrible affliction.

I can see only one thing which needs correction here, and that is this gentleman's attitude.

And I can see only one person who is suffering from a terrible affliction: him. He is the one who is very badly afflicted – by a form of linguisticism which in this case, come to think of it, is so deliberate that it isn't even casual.

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Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.

tlc

Proverbs 16:3 tlcnorwich.com