

REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

5th September 2024

AGENDA ITEM 8.8 Mental Health Swims request to use the IROS for an event

1. The Council has received the following Request from Mental Health Swims concerning hosting events on the Council's Private land at Pickmere Lake,

1.1 Mental Health Swims CIC would like to formally apply for permission for our Pickmere group to meet at the lake to host mental health peer support sessions. These sessions are hosted by our trained volunteer to help support people with mental health challenges. We'd like to take this opportunity to express our apologies again that we have not previously applied and only recently became aware of the formal process.

Our group only meet once or twice a month, early on a Saturday morning, with the group size capped at 5 participants, plus our Swim Host volunteer. This is primarily so people attending the group do not feel overwhelmed or anxious about there being too many people, but also to ensure the group is as safe as possible. Sessions are designed to just be a dip, rather than a serious swim and we encourage people stay within their depth and stay close to shore – our motto is dips and not distance. These dips are followed by a litter pick to leave the area cleaner than we found it. The group meet for no longer than an hour.

We know parking is a huge concern in the area and therefore we will ensure people who book onto one of our peer support sessions park responsibly and legally.

I have attached copies of our insurance certificates as well as the risk assessment carried out by Sarah M-S who is our volunteer Swim Host who would be hosting the swims at Pickmere.

We understand that a lot of distress has been caused by antisocial behaviour by some of the people that visit the lake and that many residents have had to face extremely challenging situations because of this. Sarah is passionate about protecting Pickmere and its surroundings and she also lives in the local area and is unsettled by the antisocial behaviour of visitors.

You can find out more about Mental Health Swims CIC here: <https://www.mentalhealthswims.co.uk/>

If there is any further information you need, please let us know

2. Proposed Action

2.1 Recommend that the council consider the application.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The decision of the Council is communicated to the requestor after the meeting.

Ewan Campbell

Chair of Pickmere Parish Council