

# Work experience and follow up placement

With the first residents settling into their new homes and the weather warming up, Waterbeach celebrated the summer by hosting a series of events to pilot ways to open up the development's 23 acre lake.

The team explored a number of opportunities and partners to work with, and appointed Cambridge Sports Lake Trust (CSLT), based at Milton Country Park, to operate wild swimming and paddleboarding taster sessions on the lake on selected days, with the team providing equipment, supervision, training and coaching. Part of selecting CSLT was to ensure what came forward did not compete with but complemented them as a local business and popular provider.

This is the first phase of the strategy to open the lake for community use, which is being brought forward earlier than originally planned in response to enthusiasm from the new community and neighbouring villagers. Feedback from these open days is helping the team develop permanent approaches and facilities to support the right activities on the lake, happening in a safe way for all. Cambridge charity New Meaning Foundation, which offers training and employment opportunities to individuals living in poverty or otherwise disadvantaged, was commissioned by the Waterbeach team to design and build three colourful beach huts for the lakeside. The three beach huts painted in Waterbeach colours, have been installed with benches and hooks to provide convenient and comfortable spaces for visitors to change before embarking on their swimming and paddle boarding sessions, as well as acting as storage for lakeside activities.

The beach huts were built by a team of three from local charity, New Meaning Foundation, with six learners on various constructions skills courses helping out to gain practical experience.

The beach huts are not the only link the charity has to the Waterbeach development. New Meaning Foundation has a workshop on site for building SPACE Micro-Homes for ex-homeless people and has undertaken other commissions for the development. This includes six bespoke planters that form part of the traffic management system at the Denny End Road entrance that add a splash of colour in front of the old Guard House.

**Nikki Henrywood from CSLT, said: "Waterbeach lake is a hidden gem offering a different experience to Milton Country Park, with different wildlife and more to explore. We're delighted residents and the local community came along to enjoy time in and on the lake during our exclusive sessions."**

**John Evans, CEO of New Meaning Foundation, said: "Having a workshop at the Waterbeach development, it's great to be able to use local projects to give our learners practical experience of construction projects of varying sizes. The beach huts were a great project to work on. They look amazing and we've had really positive feedback from everyone who has seen and used them."**

