



March 2017



The **new** Dover Leisure Centre news

WELCOME to our first newsletter about the district's planned new leisure centre. We'll be providing regular updates on the exciting plans to deliver a new £26m leisure centre in early 2019.



In Spring 2016 we appointed consultants to look at options for either refurbishing the existing Dover Leisure Centre or building a completely new leisure centre. This involved looking at potential locations and considering the sort of facilities a new centre could offer. This work was informed by our Indoor Sports Facility Strategy which takes a long term view of the district's facilities and capacity.

In Summer 2016 we consulted extensively with the public about the plans to build a new leisure centre at Whitfield. Over 670 people responded to our consultation with 89% supporting plans for a new leisure centre.

Since then we've been working with a team of consultants to draw up the detailed designs for the planning application. We've also been working with Sport England to meet their requirements and to ensure that we deliver a leisure centre that is fit for purpose and accessible to all.

BAM Construction were awarded a contract in January 2017 and are working with the team on the pre-construction phase. The tendering process for the actual build is expected to be complete by July 2017 with construction due to start in October 2017. Construction is expected to take around 59 weeks with a planned opening early in 2019.

Land Deal

In March 2017 we agreed a deal to acquire 2.1 hectares of land at Honeywood Parkway in Whitfield. Extensive ground investigation was undertaken to confirm the suitability of the site and we are working with the utility companies on service requirements.

The site is opposite the recently approved new Lidl supermarket. As part of Lidl planning consent new bus shelters will be provided and we are working with partner organisations to ensure that there will be good bus services to the new centre.



Planning application

The planning application for the proposed new leisure centre was submitted in March 2017. This can be viewed online at www.dover.gov.uk/planning (DOV/17/00305). The application is expected to be considered at a meeting of Dover District Council's Planning Committee in June 2017.



Design

We've been working with GT3 Architects to create a vibrant new leisure centre that will make the most of the building's location and let the activities themselves provide the "shop front" with extensive glazing to give people a view of what's going on inside. Visitors will be greeted by a double height reception space overlooked by the fitness suite, a café with views into key spaces and spilling out onto an external terrace, and a two storey high clip and climb facility.

Vibrant colours to the interior of the building together with striking timber elements to the main entrance canopy, reception and pool areas will give the centre a fresh, contemporary feel.



Facilities

The new leisure centre will include an eight lane, 25 metre swimming pool which meets Sport England criteria as a competition standard pool, featuring starting blocks and timing pads. There will be spectator seating for up to 250 people. It will be the only eight lane county standard competition pool in Kent.

Access to the pool for people with disabilities will be via Poolpods, an innovative submersible and mobile pool platform enabling independent access and removing the need for a hoist or swing. There will be a pool-side sauna and steam room.

A 15m x 8.5m learner pool will feature a moveable floor so that the depth can be varied from a few centimetres to 1.4m depending on the programme of use.

The 690m² sports hall will have a timber sprung floor and be marked up to cater for a wide variety of sports. There will be two outdoor 3G five-a-side football pitches. The two squash courts will feature glass-back walls with spectator seating.

The fitness facilities will be on the first floor and will include a 120 station gym, a spinning studio, and two further studios to accommodate a wide range of classes and activities.

Operator procurement

An invitation to tender for an operator of the new Leisure Centre is being conducted under the EU Public Procurement Directives and has been advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union with a closing date of 12th May 2017. Your Leisure, the operator of the existing Dover Leisure Centre and Tides in Deal have been invited to submit a tender as part of this process. The appointed operator will begin the leisure management contract from 1 April 2018.

Following a detailed evaluation of the tenders a final decision on the operator will be made by Dover District Council's cabinet in September 2017 so they can be involved from the start of the construction phase and in the fit out of facilities.

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