

Parish Clerk
Mrs. Margaret Forster

Parish Council Office
(Please send all correspondence to Clerk at
Beechfield Rise address)

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Also 4th Wednesday's 6pm – 6.30pm prior to Council Monthly Meeting at 6.45pm in Landsdowne House.

Mr. S. Howell
Head of Sport and Leisure
Durham County Council
Sport and Leisure Services
Northumbria House
Aykley Heads
Durham
DH1 5TS

Thursday 12th May 2011

Dear Mr. Howell,

Sport and Leisure Facility Review Consultation

I refer to the County Council's consultation on the proposed closure of Leisure Centres in County Durham.

The matter was considered at the Parish Council's meeting on 27th April 2011. Coxhoe Parish Council strongly opposes closure of the Leisure Centres and in particular that of Coxhoe and District Leisure Centre. The reasons for this are fully set out in this letter and in the attached consultation questionnaire.

Coxhoe Parish Council strongly opposes the closure of Coxhoe Leisure Centre and the social impact of such a decision on Coxhoe and the surrounding villages. Coxhoe Leisure Centre is part of a significant leisure facility centred on Coxhoe Park which has previously been a Green Flag Award winner. The Leisure Centre provides a range of health, fitness and social activities for all ages, but particularly the young and the elderly.

In terms of young people, the Leisure Centre not only runs special activities for young people, it houses the only Youth Room in the area which makes a major contribution to the enrichment of young peoples' lives and their engagement in the community. In addition, Coxhoe United, for example, a football club for young people, established about five years ago depends not only on the playing pitches that are adjacent to the building but depends on the building itself for changing facilities and for three key fundraising events every year. It costs the club something in the region of £20,000 per year to operate and it raises this money itself. The club provides sporting activity for about 150 young people of a range of ages and of both sexes.

In terms of older people, the Leisure Centre provides fitness facilities for our most vulnerable residents, most of which need the facility as a result of their medical conditions. Such residents are less able to travel into Durham City or Spennymoor to access alternative facilities and this is well outside the County Council's ten minute travelling time for all residents.

The Leisure Centre, therefore, provides not only a fantastic range of leisure and health activities for a significant number of people in Coxhoe and adjoining villages; the organisations that depend on it help build confidence in young people while providing diversionary activity which has a positive impact on community safety.

The loss of the Leisure Centre could have a significant impact on the value and use of Coxhoe Park and the facilities within it. There are a range of play facilities, a MUGA, cricket pitch, bowls facility, a Cyclone cycling amenity, a Skidzone, BMX and skateboarding facility, and a Sensory Garden. Many of these have been developed, not just by the County Council, but by local community partnerships which have drawn down £1 million in the past 10 years to provide for facilities for children and young people and to address anti-social behaviour. The Leisure Centre is the hub for CCTV and discussions are still taking place with the County Council, the Police, the Leisure Centre and the Parish Council to extend CCTV to Coxhoe Front Street. An unused building (or derelict site), and the loss of CCTV, could lead to the overall decline of this important and well used open space. The loss of the centre and any potential and likely impact on the investment the community has made into Coxhoe, in particular, would be a massive blow to those who have worked so hard voluntarily to improve the village. It would seriously undermine the work the community has achieved at some significant, and possibly irreparable, social and community cost. Closure would have a serious and detrimental impact in community spirit and as a result, community cohesion.

In this context the Leisure Centre contributes significantly to the *Altogether Healthier, Altogether Better for Children and Young People, Altogether Greener* and *Altogether Safer* priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy. In addition, any closure would be contrary to and seriously undermine two of this year's East Durham Rural Corridor AAP priorities, *support for the community sector, community spirit and aspirations and activities for children and young people*. The proposals are inconsistent with the County Council's Draft Sport and Leisure Strategy which is more about creating opportunity.

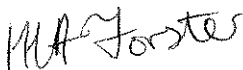
The Parish Council feels that, with better marketing and management in the past, Coxhoe Leisure Centre would not have been at risk and it feels that it is not too late for Durham County Council to address this and put it right.

Coxhoe Parish Council fully supports the proposals being developed by Future Leisure in Coxhoe (FLiC) to retain and enhance Coxhoe and District Leisure Centre.

The Parish Council would request that this letter and enclosures are fully taken into account in any subsequent decisions on this issue by the County Council and that its views are clearly and effectively summarised in any report to Cabinet, Full Council, or other decision making body.

Please could you advise of the date and time of the meeting when the matter is further to be considered as the Parish Council will wish to consider registering its right to make verbal representations.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Forster
Clerk to the Council

Have Your Say....

Review of Indoor Sport and Leisure Facilities

What's happening?

In order to get more people active in County Durham, our new sport and leisure strategy aims to deliver modern well equipped sports centres offering wider activity options, investment in and better support for grassroots sports clubs and associations and better value for money. We have therefore undertaken a review of our indoor facility provision to address the number of under used facilities and to meet the challenge of a 25 per cent reduction in the sport and leisure budget, following major reductions in Government grants. For the council's leisure services this equates to a saving of £3.5m over the next four years with nearly £1.5m of that within the next financial year (2011/12)

We must find a way forward which meets the need to save money but also, and more importantly, offers fair and relevant access to a broader range of sports and activities to residents of all ages and abilities.

What has the review considered?

All 19 leisure centres owned and/or operated by Durham County Council have been included in this review. In identifying the number and location of facilities recommended for closure, a number of factors have been taken into account. These include:

- The county's high level of leisure centres per head of population and the high proportion of leisure spend compared with other local authorities.
- The location of leisure centres in relation to the county's principal towns.
- Financial implications including the cost to the council per user at each site and the amount of investment required at each centre for the upkeep of buildings, equipment and facilities.
- Ensuring our residents have fair access to facilities which offer the following: swimming pool, health and fitness facility, sports hall and aerobics/dance studio.
- Travel time. Currently 97.3% of residents live within 10 minutes driving time of a facility – these proposals reduce this by less than 3% to 94.7%.
- Using Sport England criteria for the geographical spread of leisure facilities has determined that the county has too many sports halls and a poor distribution of swimming pools.

This review will save the Council £1.1 million.

Which centres are affected?

Durham County Council has therefore agreed to support consultation on the potential closure of the following 6 leisure centres:

Abbey Leisure Centre, Pity Me
Coxhoe Leisure Centre
Deerness Leisure Centre, Ushaw Moor
Ferryhill Leisure Centre
Glenholme Leisure Centre, Crook
Sherburn Leisure Centre

We are now therefore commencing a three month period of consultation which will seek viable alternatives for the future operation of these facilities.

What will the future provision look like?

If it is determined that these centres will no longer be run by the Council then this would leave the County with the following indoor facilities :

Woodhouse Close LC, Bishop Auckland
Meadowfield L/C
Seaham L/C
Teesdale L/C
Louisa Centre, Stanley
Freeman's Quay
Belle Vue Leisure and Swim, Consett
Spennymoor LC
Chester le Street LC
Newton Aycliffe LC
Peterlee LC
Shildon LC

Of these, 9 will have swimming provision. It is our intention to maintain these facilities to a higher standard whilst we will be providing a new £14.7m wet and dry facility in Consett as part of our plans. We will continue to work hard to engage more with other providers to ensure access to sport and leisure facilities is maximised - this includes providing opportunities to expand activities for all ages, such as community legacy gyms, walks, cycle routes and sportsability clubs. We will also ensure the use of mobile resources to reach neighbourhoods with specific challenges, using a team of specialist staff to target those with health conditions.

We will also focus on delivering the ambitions of the Sport and Leisure strategy. This aims to increase participation by making better use of outside space and community based programmes, supporting and expanding club activity, linking school participation to community settings and working more closely with the voluntary sector. This consultation will also help us gather residents' views and ideas which will help inform proposals for future investment in the service.

This consultation has two key aspects part one explores business proposals for future operation and part two explores your views.

Part One

Business proposals and/or ideas for future operation

The consultation is seeking proposals from third party operators to retain and run facilities at these sites either in their existing formats or in new ways. Every effort will be made to identify and develop any viable proposals. Discussions where appropriate, will take place with town and parish councils, voluntary organisations, sports clubs or any others who express an interest.

If you are interested in putting forward or discussing a potential business proposal for the future operation of any of the sites, please provide us with some brief details of your proposal and contact details by filling in and returning the form below. Please send to **Indoor Facilities Review Consultation, Durham County Council, Sport and Leisure Services, Northumbria House, Aykley Heads, Durham DH1 5TS**. Once received, we will contact you to arrange a suitable time to discuss your proposal in more detail.

Although the consultation is open until the 26 May 2011, we would strongly encourage you to contact us at the earliest opportunity.

Name: MARGARET FORSTER

Organisation you represent: COXHOE PARISH COUNCIL

Telephone Number: 07988 283287

Email address: clerk@coxhoe.parish.council.gov.uk

Short description of your proposal (if necessary, continue separately)

The Parish Council formally support the proposals being developed by Future Leisure in Coxhoe (FLIC) to retain and enhance Coxhoe Leisure Centre.

Part Two

Tell us what you think

We understand that these facilities are valued by customers and local communities and that you may have concerns about the gap in leisure provision left by any future closure of these facilities. We would therefore like your comments on what you would like to see in the local area to reduce the impact of potential closure. **Closing date for comments 26 May 2011.**

1. Which leisure centre do your comments relate to: (please tick ✓)

Abbey Coxhoe Deerness Ferryhill Glenholme Sherburn
 Other (please specify)..... All

2. In what capacity are you responding to the questionnaire? Are you a:

Leisure centre member Casual user
 Local resident Local club (please specify).....
 Local business (please specify)..... Other (please specify) **COXHOE PARISH COUNCIL**

3. We'd like to know what your concerns are, should this or other leisure centres close. Please consider each of the following statements and rate them using the following criteria:

	Very concerned	Fairly concerned	Not very concerned	Not concerned at all
Closure would:				
● impact on the quality of the remaining sport and leisure provision in the local area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● impact on the variety of the remaining sport and leisure provision in the local area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● affect the distance I would have to travel to another similar facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● result in the loss of specialist activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● result in the loss of a venue for other social activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● reduce access for schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● reduce access for sports and recreational clubs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● lead to an increase in health problems related to inactivity (either as an individual or whole community)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● impact on opportunities for out of school activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Other (please specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Impact on anti-social behaviour</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<i>Impact on community cohesion</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

4. We will do our best to manage the impact of any closures by developing a range of alternative sport and leisure provision in the area. We'd like to know what's important to you. Please rate each option below.

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not important at all
● Availability of sport and leisure activities in other community venues such as community centres, schools, church halls	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Access to outdoor recreational activity eg cycling, running and walking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Outdoor play equipment for children and young people	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Parks and open spaces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Outdoor pitches, courts and multi-use games areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Activities for children and young people eg holiday programmes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continued

Very important Fairly important Not very important Not important at all

- Gym/weights facility
- Exercise classes eg aerobics, yoga
- Dance
- Organised sports coaching
- Recreational sports eg badminton, 5-a-side
- Specialist health programmes eg GP referral, weight management
- Investment in local sports clubs
- Disability sport
- Other (please specify)

5. What do you currently use the centre for?

(please tick ✓)

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Fitness suite/gym use | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Table Tennis | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Exercise classes eg aerobics, yoga, aquafit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Martial Arts | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5-a-side football | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Team sports eg netball/basketball/football coaching | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Racquet sports: badminton/squash/tennis | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Lifestyle classes eg GP referrals | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Swimming (general) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Children and young people's activities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Swimming Lessons | <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 50's activities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Gymnastics/Trampolining | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Disabilities activities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Dance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify) <u>MEETINGS</u>
<u>SOCIAL EVENTS</u> | |

6. How likely are you to continue this activity/s if your centre was to close? If they were:

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Very likely | Fairly likely | Fairly unlikely | Don't know |
| Delivered within your local community | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delivered at another leisure centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. Given the need to make £3.5 million savings in sports and leisure across the county and the efforts being made to maintain or provide alternative provision, do you support the closure of the six centres?

Yes No Don't know

Please provide your reasons below

Full details are provided in the attached cover letter and summarised as follows:-

- Detrimental impact on young people activity within Cothoe and surrounding villages; resulting in adverse impact on their engagement and resulting increase in anti social behaviour
- Detrimental impact on existing clubs such as Cothoe United who depend on the Centre for their existence, adversely affecting the lives of the children and young people who are part of the club
- Detrimental impact on the elderly from a health and fitness perspective particularly those who depend on the facilities as a result of their medical conditions and who are referred there by their GP's
- Detrimental impact on the sustainability of the facilities that form the community hub around the leisure centre.
- Detrimental impact on community CCTV which would have been located within the leisure centre with resultant adverse impact on community safety
- Detrimental impact on community spirit and community cohesion as a result of the above
- The proposals are contrary to the SCS and AAP Priorities.

We'd also like some information about you.

We want to make it easy for everyone to tell us what they think. Our aim is to be fair and your answers to the following questions will help us find out the views from a wide range of people and understand any differences in the answers of particular groups. Your answers will be confidential and used for this consultation only.

You only need to answer if you feel happy to do so.

1. Are you: Male Female

2. How old are you?

3. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person? Yes No

(This may include any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity which has a substantial effect on your day to day life. Long-standing means that it has lasted, or is likely to last, for over a year.)

4. What is your religion or belief?

Christian Muslim Hindu Sikh Jewish Buddhist None
Other (✓ and write in below)

5. How do you describe your sexuality?

Heterosexual/Straight Gay Woman/Lesbian Gay Man Bisexual
Other (✓ and write in below)

6. Ethnic Origin

What do you do with your completed questionnaire?

Please put your completed questionnaire into the customer comments box at any of our leisure centres, or customer access points or return to the address below as soon as possible but **by no later than 26 May 2011**. All your comments, together with any business proposals, will be considered. A report on the future of all six leisure centres will be put together which will be considered by the council's Cabinet. Once a final decision has been agreed, it will be displayed on our website, in leisure centres and communicated via the local press.

Thank you for your input.

Durham County Council,
Sport and Leisure Services,
Northumbria House,
Aykley Heads,
Durham
DH1 5TS

www.durham.gov.uk/sport

Full copies of the Review of Indoor Sport & Leisure Facilities cabinet report and the Sport and Leisure Strategy 2011 - 2014 are available on the council's website or a hard copy is available to read at all our leisure centres and 12 customer access points. Alternatively, contact us on 0191 372 9181 or email: sportandleisure@durham.gov.uk

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

sportandleisure@durham.gov.uk
0191 372 9181