

Pooling ideas for getting more city residents in the swim

PRESS RELEASE – 25th November 2009

Developing Plymouth as a centre of excellence for swimming, diving and other water sports is the aim of a new aquatics strategy for the city.

The City Council strategy is designed to boost the number of Plymothians taking the plunge into a wide range of water sports including water polo, water hockey (octopush), life saving and outdoor activities. It aims to raise fitness levels of city residents while establishing Plymouth as one of the best swimming and diving centres in the UK. One of the strategy's key goals is to ensure the city has enough high quality pools which are easily accessible at all times for residents to enjoy swimming – identified in recent research as the city's favourite sport. A three-month consultation on the draft strategy started this week and members of the public are urged to make their views known before 8 February 2010.

The strategy provides guidance on how the city's swimming and diving pools, including those in the new Life Centre, should be developed in the future to best meet the needs of the public, schools, clubs and other groups. Research shows the city is short of "pool water" in relation to the size of its population. It also shows that existing swimming and diving facilities at Central Park Pools are outdated and unable to meet the city's sporting needs. The strategy aims to develop learn-to-swim programmes for adults and children, provide a better swimming programme for schools and promote other water sports such as octopush and water polo. It includes:

- New water sports facilities at the Life Centre which will boast the only public 50-metre pool in the South West
- The refurbishment of the existing pool at UCP Marjon, increasing opportunities for more water sports
- Plans for a new pool in the east of the city

The Life Centre will be at the heart of future pool provision in the city, catering for recreational swimming to help improve general health and fitness, learn-to-swim programmes, school and club swimming, delivery of the university curriculum and high performance training for diving and swimming. The layout and flexibility of its pools, with moveable floors and submersible 'booms', mean there will essentially be four 25-metre pools, providing public swimming space at any time of the day.

Councillor Glenn Jordan, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Sport, said: "Swimming and other water sports are hugely popular here in Plymouth and of course the Tom Daley magic has inspired a whole new generation to take to the water.

"We want to ensure that our pool facilities not only cater for this demand but boost pool sports and activities even further. We want to hear people's views whether they are experienced in water sports, swim for a club, want to find out what's on offer for their children or want to learn to swim themselves."

There are several ways you can respond:

1. Send your comments by post to Culture, Sport and Leisure, FREEPOST (PY1415), Plymouth PL1 1BR
2. Fill in your comments on our [consultation portal](#)
3. Email your comments to aquaticsstrategy@plymouth.gov.uk