

Community Organisation Nomination of the Littlehampton Leisure Centre as an Asset of Community Value

This nomination is made 7th December 2012 jointly by the **East Beach Residents Association, 47/49 Western Road, Littlehampton, BN17 5PG** and the **Littlehampton Civic Society, 121 Bayford Road, Littlehampton, BN17 5HW** pursuant to the Localism Act (2011) and the Statute on Assets of Community Value (England) Regulation 2012, No. 2421.

1. Description of the nominated land including its boundaries

The buildings and land referred to as the Littlehampton Leisure Centre, also referred to as Swimming & Sports Centre, and run under the title 'Inspire Littlehampton', Sea Road, Littlehampton, BN16 2NA. Lands include those for buildings, appurtenances, parking and open spaces. Details of the boundaries are maintained with Arun District Council.

The Centre is run by Inspire Leisure, which is a Trust setup by Arun District Council to lease and run District leisure facilities. The Centre offers a comprehensive range of facilities for a variety of sports and fitness activities for local families and visitors. The nominated land includes facilities for the Swimming Pool, Fitness Centre, meeting rooms and a separate multiple use Sports Dome, all with associated parking and open land. Part of the land is leased to Arun Youth Aqua Centre, a sailing club for children and young adults, and related sea-sport instruction and classes.

2. Statement of information on the Land and Buildings

Arun District Council is the registered owner of the land and buildings. Arun District Council leases the land and building to Inspire Leisure, established in April 2006, to work with Arun District Council to manage the operation and development of culture, art and sport within the district. (see <http://www.inspireleisure.co.uk/about.html>).

3. Reason the land and building is of community value

The Littlehampton Leisure Centre conforms to the definition of "assets of community value" as provided in the Localism Act 2011 and the supporting statutes. The Centre was built in 1983 on the Littlehampton waterfront on the border of Littlehampton and Rustington. The building and facilities have been progressively upgraded over time. This is an ongoing requirement.

The seafront location was originally chosen because it provides convenient access by walking, bicycle or car, not only for Littlehampton residents, but also for families in Rustington, East Preston, Angmering and the wider community. The Centre is well placed to serve all these areas both now and in future, and offers excellent parking facilities for those living a distance away.

Apart from the Centre's intrinsic value in helping families and residents with health, fitness, well-being and quality of life through a comprehensive range of fitness and sport facilities, there are several other reasons why the Centre's land and buildings offer unique community value.

Firstly, the existing Centre poses no conflict over "dual use", which may limit current or future access by different age groups. This is important because the draft Leisure Strategy recommends selling all, or part of the land, and relocating to the Littlehampton Academy School site. Despite

arguments to the contrary, documented experience around England shows “dual use” locations involving a school do in fact restrict access to many users to evenings or weekends.

Secondly, the land the Leisure Centre occupies, as originally intended, offers ample room to expand leisure provision over time to match population growth in the area; as demand for fitness, sport and leisure grow and evolve, and as new funding becomes available.

Thirdly, the Centre generates considerable value in respect to synergy with other sport, fitness and recreation opportunities located immediately nearby the Centre. This synergy is now and potentially more so in the future, for example:

- The youth-oriented skate bowl in front of the water treatment plant adjacent to Leisure Centre parking can be expanded. There is room there to enhance recreation provision to that user group and demographic. Lessons, instructions and other organisational support may be extended from the nearby Centre in future, with the advantage also of linking users of the skate bowl to other youth Programmes run from the Centre.
- The Centre adjoins Mewsbrook and Norfolk Gardens Park, which offers synergy to expand and improve fitness and leisure provision over time across a range of demographics and user groups. For instance, mothers and parents can swim, while their children and toddlers attend crèches in the Sport Dome that also use Mewsbrook Park as a venue.
- Norfolk Gardens provides green space that is in keeping with the culture and conservation values of this distinctive area.
- At the same time, Norfolk Gardens together with the Leisure Centre and the sea itself form a local hub for area fitness, recreation and leisure provision. There is considerable scope for new links between the Centre and Norfolk Gardens to enhance and evolve sport and fitness provision. Norfolk Gardens itself now offers tennis, bowls, mini putt (adventure golf), pitch & putt; as well as walking and seating areas in the gardens and indoor and outdoor café facilities (e.g. for community events, e.g. craft fairs, poetry workshops);
- Similarly, the Centre is an ideal base for a variety of sea-related sport, recreation, culture, and learning exchanges that expand over time – if that potential to grow is kept intact.

Fourthly, the Centre in its present form, directly and indirectly delivers other values important to the local community and wider area. Among these include the protection of conservation values and the unique cultural character of the seafront area and green space.

A vibrant Leisure Centre features prominently in the community vision to maintain Littlehampton’s unique stretch of open seafront for use and benefit of all residents and visitors (in the manner noted above), especially future generations – and not for some people only. That unfortunately would happen, for example, if parts of the remaining open seafront are sold piecemeal for housing development for short-term financial concerns. Only a few people benefit, regardless of the mix of market priced and subsidised housing that is offered.

People attending the open Public Meeting 2nd October 2012 on the draft Leisure Strategy (LS) supported the preservation of the open seafront and community assets on them. Similarly, this vision was put forward in the Town Council decision on the LS in late September 2012.

Overall, the Leisure Centre offers tremendous community value as a key local asset for health, fitness and well-being; and as part of the strategy to maintain a viable seafront for area residents to enjoy now and in future, and attract seafront visitors who boost the local economy.

4. Eligibility of the nominator to make a community nomination.

Pursuant to Regulations 2012 No. 2421 under the Localism Act 2011 on the definition of voluntary community bodies both the **East beach Residents Association and the Littlehampton Civic Society** are qualified to make this nomination under Regulation 5 – (1) (c)(i)(ii).

The Constitutions of the nominating organisations indicate they individually and collectively provide a community voice in matters concerning the social and cultural wellbeing of the area, and local planning decisions that affect their Members and the wider community.

The joint nominators are voluntary community organisations. Each nominating organisation has a strong local connection in Littlehampton with memberships well in excess of the 21 members required under the terms of the statute. They form part of a network of community organisations with shared interest.

Signed:

East Beach Resident Association

Title: Chairman _____

Name: David Warne _____

Date: _____

Littlehampton Civic Society

Title: Chairman _____

Name: Diane Bayley _____

Date: _____