

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Investing in Leisure**

In February 2007 Southwark Council agreed to allocate £12.3 million for the refurbishment of its leisure centres. This is a greater sum than has ever been provided for this purpose and more than any other London borough is currently spending on such a project.

Although brand new state-of-the-art centres will be provided at Canada Water and Elephant & Castle the Council will be upgrading the current centres in the interim. Details of the new centres and upgrades to the current facilities at Elephant & Castle and Seven Islands will be added to this web page in the near future.

### **Investing in Leisure**

#### **• Which leisure centres are involved in the programme?**

Of the total £12.3 million allocation of leisure investment the first phase involves the complete refurbishment of Dulwich Leisure Centre (£5 million) and Surrey Docks Watersports Centre (£2.3 million).

The council has allocated £1.5 million towards a sustainable investment solution for Camberwell Leisure Centre and is spending additional funds here to ensure that the centre remains open whilst this is being sought.

Funds are also being spent on Elephant & Castle Leisure Centre and Seven Islands Leisure Centre to ensure that the current buildings are enhanced and remain operational to the public until they are replaced by state-of-the-art new leisure centres.

#### **• How is Southwark Council paying for this investment?**

The council has paid for this investment entirely from its own funds, and will also be seeking any external funding we that can be added to this budget to make things even better.

#### **• Will leisure centre charges increase as a result of this investment?**

No. The purpose of this investment is to provide you with a better service, not to increase charges. The Council is committed to providing a service which is accessible for everyone and wished to increase number of people using the centres as a result of this investment.

#### **• Why is Southwark Council investing in the leisure centres in this order?**

The first phase of the leisure centre investment scheme of £12.3 million aims to be fully underway in late spring/early summer of 2008. It is our objective is to provide all Southwark residents with the quality of leisure centres they want and deserve. Obviously we cannot upgrade all of our leisure centres at once; the programme has to be phased so that customers have a convenient leisure centre to visit whilst their local one is being refurbished.

#### **• What is Southwark Council doing about disabled access?**

All of Southwark Council's fully refurbished leisure centres will meet with the standards set by the Disability Discrimination Act, as will the new centres which will replace Elephant & Castle and Seven Islands. Until the new centre come on line we will also continue to make changes at the existing centres to improve access for people with disabilities.

#### **• How will the refurbishment affect me as a user?**

You will end up with a modern, well-designed leisure centre that you will want to use. We'll keep disruption to a minimum whilst the building is going on, keep you fully informed and offer you an alternative whilst we are refurbishing your local centre.

Information will be generally available and if you want to keep up-to-date with the progress of the project, then just let us know by completing your details [online](#)

- **How will the refurbishment affect me as a resident?**

For the duration of the reinvestment project, please be reassured that we will keep all construction noise to a minimum and will endeavour to conduct the work during normal working hours.

Information will be generally available and if you want to keep up-to-date with the progress of the project, then just let us know by completing your details [online](#)

## **Surrey Docks Watersports Centre**

- **When is the refurbishment work scheduled to begin and how long will it last?**

Work will commence on this project in the late spring of 2008 and it is scheduled to last approximately nine months.

- **Will I still be able to sail and do other watersports during the refurbishment?**

Yes. We plan to provide temporary changing facilities so that you can continue to use the centre whilst the refurbishment is underway.

- **What will the main function of the Centre be?**

The sole purpose of this investment is to make the centre a top-quality, thriving watersports centre – we want the place to buzz with existing and new customers. Our aim is to ensure that current sailors, canoeists and others have better facilities and that people who have never even considered taking part in watersports feel welcome and able to join in and become regular visitors. We will ensure that all the refurbishment is complementary to this aim and are talking with the governing bodies of watersports to obtain their advice on the project.

- **What has the council done to involve residents and users in relation to how the refurbishment money is spent?**

On August 17 the council began the four-week consultation period with residents of Surrey Docks and Rotherhithe wards by posting **10,500** letters and reply cards to them. At the same time the council posted **1,500** letters and cards to regular users of the Centre and invited all clubs that use the facilities to email their members to ensure they were also included.

The consultation report provides you with results of the consultation as well as giving you responses to questions raised by the respondents about the different types of service to be made available from the Centre. See this link to read the results of the [Consultation Report](#) published on October 9 on the Southwark Council web site.

Paper copies of the Consultation Report are available at the reception area for you to read.

- **Even though the initial consultation has passed, how can I be kept informed?**

Although we have held the initial consultation, the council still wants to hear from all residents and users if they have an opinion to voice or even if they just want to be kept informed.

To register your interest in this project please visit the Southwark Council web site at [www.southwark.gov.uk](http://www.southwark.gov.uk) – and click on '**Sports and Leisure**', then '**Investing in Leisure**' on the left hand side – here you will see an [online form](#) to complete which only takes a couple of minutes to complete.

On the web site you will also learn more about all three of the on-going leisure centre projects with responses to frequently asked questions for Dulwich Leisure Centre, Camberwell Leisure Centre and of course [Surrey Docks Watersports Centre](#).

Details will be posted on the web site as more information becomes available regarding further consultations or notice of key dates and special events as part of the refurbishment programme. If, however, you register your interest then we will notify you directly via your chosen method of communication – post or email.

- **What type of facilities will the new Watersports Centre be able to offer?**

In addition the new Centre being DDA compliant, it will definitely have a better and greater range of Watersports facilities with increased opportunities for more people to join in, and anything else provided will be complementary to these.

- **What facilities currently exist at Surrey Docks Watersports Centre and how can I get involved now?**

For over 20 years Surrey Docks Watersports Centre has trained thousands of people in sailing and other watersports either as individuals, or as part of an organised group or club.

You can call the centre on 020 7237 4009 to book or just come along and visit the Centre and talk with staff and current users. There are opportunities for you to get involved throughout the year in RYA sailing courses and BCU canoeing courses as well as other activities.

- **When will there be a draft plan so we can see what the new watersports facilities might look like?**

As a result of the consultation report and meetings the council hosted an exhibition at Surrey Docks Watersports Centre on Saturday November 24 from 10am to 12 noon.

From **November 2007** until the building works begin you will be able to see conceptual designs of the new refurbishment along with outlines of equipment to be installed in the Centre.

If you are in the Surrey Docks Watersports Centre area then please go along and take a look. It is situated in an attractive waterside location and holds something special for everyone that uses it, either as individuals or for public and corporate events. The planned improvements will ensure that it will be a thriving and vibrant resource for everyone in Southwark to enjoy.

**Please note – the Centre will not close during the refurbishment!**

Read on for a Summary of the Consultation report – [the full report](#)

## Summary Consultation Report for Surrey Docks Watersports Centre

- In February £12.3 million was allocated for the refurbishment of its current leisure centres
- £2.3 million has been allocated to Surrey Docks Watersports Centre
- August 17 Southwark Council sent 10,500 letters to residents and 1,500 letters to users
- Important to note:
  - 284 replies were from people that DO NOT use the centre
  - 90 people replied that were users of the centre / 103 didn't tick a box
  - 35 people replied that did not want to be kept informed
- We received 512 replies – 4.3%. Of the replies people expressed an interest in these top 4 requirements of the centre:

Gym	387 /	Watersports Tuition	383
Sailing	358 /	Exercise Classes	345

### Summary of suggestions made in the Consultation Report:

- **Disability Discrimination Act (Click link to review [DDA guidelines](#))** - The refurbished Centre will comply with DDA regulations. Prior to the consultation taking place the council was in discussion with the [Royal Yachting Association](#), [Tideway](#) and Splash users of the Centre. The council is confident that the priority requirements of both disabled and able-bodied users of the Centre will be met.
- **SCUBA diving and open water swimming** - Due to current health and safety regulations and Port of London Authority bylaws Surrey Docks cannot permit either Scuba diving or swimming. For SCUBA diving a minimum of 40 feet is required and even in the deepest part of the dock there is seven to eight feet of silt, it simply isn't clear enough to see through a mask. Swimming in Surrey Docks is prohibited by current local bylaws, mainly for safety reasons.
- **Windsurfing** - SDWC is pleased to be able to introduce Windsurfing courses in the summer season of 2008 – May to October – when residents and users of all ages will be able to join in courses and become engaged in this exciting sport.
- **Space to eat outside** - It also envisaged that a seating area could be created along side the dock for people, along with awnings to allow the exterior of the centre to be used for recreation in spring and autumn
- **Room Hire** - The centre features a function room and the studios will be adaptable spaces which can be used for other purposes such as a classroom, and hired for corporate and entertaining functions.
- **Exercise machines** - Residents and users showed a strong desire for a gym to be included in the new Centre and specific exercise machines to complement the Watersports Centre itself – high performance rowing machines. Along with all of the equipment that you would expect to find in a gym, rowing machines are integral to developing a fitness regime to be used both on and off the water.
- **Senior Citizens** - We were asked for classes for the over 60's and for those individuals with disabilities. The centre will become DDA compliant and skilled staff will manage the Centre with qualified instructors to take additional classes.
- **CCTV** - Safety of customers and security of the centre are integral to the re-design. CCTV has been included in the plans.
- **Refreshments** - The reception will include a "juice bar" selling healthy drinks and snacks as well as coffee and tea.
- **On-going facilities** - During the building works, it is our intention to continue providing facilities for watersports with temporary accommodation.
- **Watersports Membership**

From the moment that your RYA course has been completed to the following levels you can venture out on the water – ask at reception about prices for family, adult individual, couple and young persons

  - **Sailing** – for recreational sailing – RYA Adult Level 1 certification / RYA Junior Stage 2
  - **Kayaking** – BCU1 certification
  - **Windsurfing** – RYA Start Windsurfing certification

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