

Aldershot Lido Review

1. Information

- 1.1 This report updates Cabinet on the work of the Members Lido Review Task & Finish Group, since their last report to Panel on the 18 September, and Cabinet on 26 September 2006.
- 1.2 The report recognises the feedback from consultation, which shows the importance of the Lido to the local community. It recommends short-term measures to promote increased usage and the development of proposals over the medium term to improve the facility and make it more cost effective. The report also recommends removal of the closure/alternative use option from the review.

2. Background

- 2.1 This review of the Aldershot Pools and Lido was approved in February 2006 as part of the service review process with the main aim to:
 - a) Reduce spending
 - b) Improve delivery
 - c) Find better ways of doing things
- 2.2 The first stage of the review demonstrated that the Aldershot Indoor Pool contributed to the Council's strategic objectives and key priorities, with attendance figures and financial information indicating the facility performs well.
- 2.3 This element of the review was therefore completed and recommendations made to the Contracts Team to set more stretching performance targets to ensure continuous improvement in the facility.
- 2.4 The Task and Finish group agreed to continue to look at options to address the issues of performance, efficiency and value for money of the Aldershot Lido and moved to stage two of the review.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Stage two of the review involved a consultation exercise to explore three options identified:
 - Finding an alternative use for the site
 - Investing in the provision of an improved outdoor water facility
 - Investing in the provision of an improved outdoor water facility and extra/supporting facilities

3.2 With the aid of the Corporate Communications Manager, four firms were invited to submit proposals for consultation in response to a detailed brief of the Council's objectives to establish how the Lido could be developed in future to make better use of the site, increase local usage of the site and reduce our subsidy.

3.3 Based on a sound process/methodology and cost, ABA Research Ltd was chosen to carry out the consultation exercise on behalf of the Council.

4. Methodology

4.1 The consultation was split into three stages, firstly involving local opinion formers who were selected by the Council, secondly a residents' phase and finally consultation through the Citizens Panel following the first two phases.

4.2 The opinion formers involved in-depth telephone and face-to-face interviews with seventeen nominated individuals, who were known to have strong connections or associations with the Aldershot Lido or the area.

4.3 The residents stage was split into four groups:

- a) Local residents to the Lido (Heron Wood) - held at Rushmoor Gymnastics Academy
 - users
 - non users
- b) Rushmoor Citizen's Panel - held at the Council offices
 - users
 - non users

5. Key Findings

5.1 The consultation exercise worked very well, and all of those consulted provided us with very positive, and passionate comments and have made a very constructive contribution to formulate the way forward.

5.2 Non-users either knew little about the facility, or had a very different perception of it to the users.

5.3 ABA's report is attached at Appendix 1, but a brief summary is:

- The users of the Lido loved the facility and didn't really want much to change, they were concerned that putting in extra amenities would increase the cost of the day out
- Those who didn't use the facility anymore, had fond memories of visiting the Lido as a child
- Longer opening times and a longer season were wanted
- Refurbishment is needed in the following areas:
 - Children's paddling pool
 - Lockers for personal belongings
 - The grounds landscaping (with shaded area)

- Changing rooms
- Catering facilities
- Some residents didn't know the Lido existed which indicated that marketing could be improved
- There was overwhelming support for retention of the facility and some residents indicated they would actively oppose any 'closure' option

6. Way Forward

6.1 The Task and Finish group considered the key findings and are proposing short and medium term actions.

Short term

- Director of Resources and Director of Community and Environment to meet with D C Leisure to discuss their marketing strategy and the long term plans for the Lido
- A post code survey will be conducted of users
- Consultation using the Citizen's Panel
- Enhancement of the catering
- Improvement to marketing of the facility
- Strategy to engage local residents, including young people
- Cabinet be asked to agree the way forward outlined and the deletion of the closure/alternative use option

Medium Term

- A survey of the plant, machinery and facilities to be completed
- Proposals for refurbishment to be worked up including:
 - Children's paddling pool
 - Lockers for personal belongings
 - The grounds landscaping, with shaded area
 - Changing rooms
 - Catering facilities
- Provide a secure bike area
- Proposals for additional facilities and enhancement of existing facilities
- Improvement to the catering facilities
- Investigate lottery funding (although this has not proven successful in the past as the Lido is only open for a limited time each year)

6.2 Based on the consultation, the Task and Finish group believe there are strong links established with the Council's strategic objectives, especially around the 'safe' theme. The Lido offers an opportunity to engage residents, including young people and families with children with an enhanced, affordable leisure facility in the local area.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The Task and Finish Group noted that any action would require potential additional investment and involve acceptance of risks.

7.2 Until the outcome of the review is concluded we will not be able to confirm exactly what costs are involved.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The consultation has proved particularly useful and the involvement from residents has contributed directly to the way forward outlined in this report.
- 8.2 The Lido has the potential to contribute even more to the Council's parks and open space service area (one of the areas where the Council is seen as performing particularly well).
- 8.3 There is still a lot of work to be done on this review, and the Task & Finish Group plan to meet again in the new municipal year to develop further the short and medium term actions based on the planned additional consultation.
- 8.4 The Task and Finish group reviewed the original terms of reference and believe it unrealistic that in the short term the Lido can contribute to the Council's savings and efficiency programme. On this basis, we propose that the objective should be amended to read:

"To develop and improve the Lido facility to contribute to the Council's strategic objectives.

To develop the business case for improvements to facilities in partnership with D C Leisure."

9 Recommendations

- 9.1 Cabinet are requested to:
- a) Note the consultation report from ABA Research - Appendix 1
 - b) Endorse the next stage as set out in 6.1
 - c) Note the proposals being developed will require additional investment and acceptance of risks
 - d) Endorse the removal of the closure/alternative use option from the Task & Finish Group's programme in para 6.1
 - e) Endorse the revised terms of reference in para 8.4

Councillor Neil Watkin, Chairman
Councillor Diane Bedford
Councillor Don Cappleman
Councillor Shaun Murphy
Councillor Ken Muschamp
LIDO REVIEW TASK & FINISH GROUP

Report for Aldershot Lido Consultation On Behalf of Rushmoor Borough Council

“It needs to change, keeping it as it is, is not an option we should consider.”

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“It might look like Benidorm for all I know, a trip to the Lido is mine and my children’s holiday.”

Methodology

The research was split into two stages, the first involving local opinion formers, who were selected by the Council and secondly a residents' phase. The resident's phase was also split into two stages, the first involved running a series of four focus groups with local residents, the second to quantify the main findings via a future survey with the Citizens' Panel.

In the Opinion Formers stage of the consultation project depth telephone and face-to-face interviews were conducted with seventeen nominated opinion formers who were known to have strong connections or associations with the Aldershot Lido. These included the local Councillors for Heron Wood as well as the Council Group Leaders. For some of these interviews we needed to overcome an immediate reaction of "you are not going to close it are you?" in order to get to a point where we could have an open debate about the subject. In every case we were able to do this and the respondent were fairly measured in their views.

For the residents stage we conducted four groups. The first set of groups included residents who live in Heron Wood and who therefore lived very close to the Lido. We recruited these respondents using a road list and by knocking on doors asking people to attend. We paid an incentive for people to come to the group. There was a good mix of ages and family type represented in the two groups. One group included people who use the Lido, the other a group of non-users.

For the second night of groups we used the Rushmoor Citizen's Panel. One group comprised of residents who did not use the Lido. These people were much easier to recruit than the second group from the panel who were those who had used the Lido, or had someone in their household who had used the Lido. However we successfully recruited both groups, achieving a good mix of ages and family stages.

"I can picture it on a sunny day full of people enjoying themselves, but I can also picture it on a sunny day which happens to fall in the wrong month, and lots of people being turned away."

Key Findings

“Our house flooded in August, our ground floor was covered in sewage. Thank goodness for the Lido, we went there everyday and we had a holiday.”

- We met lots of very positive people who live in Rushmoor, and they tended to be the ones who go to the Lido. The Lido creates a ‘feel good’ factor out of all proportion to the amount of time people spend there; just thinking about the Lido seems to cheer users of the Lido up.
- We also met people who complain about many of the issues, which they see about the area. The lack of shopping centres, the young people and the reputation of Aldershot in particular. These people tended not to go to the Lido.
- The distinction between the two groups was fairly clear. This distinction may seem a coincidence but when we dug deeper it was less so. Those who go to the Lido have lower expectations of what should be provided and are grateful for the things, which are available in the area. Those who don’t use the Lido have a clear idea of what the Council “should” be providing and feel aggrieved that it is not happening.
- How this translates into actions is interesting. Only one person in all four groups thought the Lido should be closed. Everyone else thought it should be tidied up, marketed better and kept open, preferably with some facility for year round access to the grounds at least. Most people in the non-user groups said they were going to go to the Lido and take another look.
- What the groups told us is that the Lido could be one of the strongest USP’s the Borough, but like all strengths, if it is not used well or people feel it is under utilised or costs too much it can quickly turn into a potential weakness. When we asked the non-user group, of panel members what they would feel if the Council spent a million pounds on it, that created a fairly strong reaction too. Non-users wanted to know exactly what they would be getting for their money, in pounds as well as in terms of social benefits.
- If the Lido could be open as a facility in some form all year round, with residents used to using it and visiting it, either for a coffee, for their children to play, or for some form of water activity then this could make a huge difference to the perception of both Heron Wood and the Lido itself. It is a forgotten treasure for nine months of the year, rather untidy and unloved, then for three months of the year it is expected to make up for this, either helped or hindered by the British weather. This is a big ask, and it needs some help to move forward, if it was given this help it might just make a more lasting contribution than all the work which has been done to get the town centres regenerated.

“The Lido was part of my childhood; I want it to be part of my children’s childhood. It doesn’t need much, not loads of grand stuff, just a tidy up and to still be there.”

Opinion Formers Stage

“It’s a very big space, well it’s a very big space when it is empty, when it is hot and sunny, the space seems to vanish and be covered by bodies.”

Key Points

- Everyone we talked to spoke about the huge potential they see for Aldershot Lido. People want it to survive and thrive again, as it has been an important part of their lives but it is difficult to tell whether this level of optimism is being driven more by an attachment to its heritage than by a commitment to Aldershot and the local area the Lido is situated in.
- There is a general consensus that any changes in the future will have to be dramatic rather than cosmetic if this potential is to be realised. There may need to be a step change upgrade in the standard of the infrastructure as well as the range of activities on offer at the Lido to ensure its future. There was broad agreement that retaining the “status quo” is not an option.
- The Lido is seen as a symbol of the past but also represents many of the qualities and attributes the people we spoke to feel are important for the future. These include providing an inclusive community facility, encouraging family life and promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. However, most people we spoke to agreed that with current opening hours and levels of service it is not fulfilling this requirement. As one councillor said

“In my day we could go in there whenever we liked, now you can only go in there when the weather is good, and if it starts to rain you are kicked out and not refunded.”

- People also mentioned how ironic it would be losing an outdoor facility just when people are talking about the effects of climate change on our summer temperatures. If one of the solutions for the future could be to encompass ‘green’ technologies so much the better.
- Changing the shape of the lido to reduce the number of lifeguards was seen as a sensible idea, as was using some of the space around it to finance changes.
- Everyone agreed that the place needs a facelift. None of the people we spoke to in this stage of the project worried about the financial aspects of giving it a facelift, but they worried about the message, which it would give to local people if it shut down. Whether there would be a strong and positive response from local people if it gained its facelift was also not mentioned.

Overall

There is an overwhelming affection for the Lido amongst the opinion formers we talked to. Many of those we interviewed had spent happy childhood days there and some were now repeating these experiences with their own children and grand children. People described it as being part of the heritage of the area; in a lovely position and was a great example of the art deco architectural period that should be protected for the benefit of future generations.

“The Lido is a huge asset to the area. It is a unique facility”

A number of the people we interviewed considered the Lido to be an Aldershot facility first and foremost and a Rushmoor Borough facility secondly. It was something that Aldershot had that Farnborough didn't and we have heard similar competitive comments on a whole range of subjects in the past. To some extent this feeling was driven by those who knew the full history of the Lido as they mentioned it had been given to the people of Aldershot by the family who owned the original Manor House.

The Lido is seen as a facility that is available to people of all ages and especially it is something that appeals to the whole family. One comment made by many people was that the Lido represented an opportunity for families to spend a day out together, whereas the usage of most other leisure facilities tended to be in terms of a number of hours or benefiting individuals rather than family life.

None of the people we spoke to believed there was any large-scale negativity towards the Lido from either local Heron Wood residents or people elsewhere in the Borough. Yes, there were parking issues on very busy days and some anti social behaviour had been evident in the past, but the general feeling was that this was improving. On the contrary there was a feeling that the Lido was a resource that was potentially one of the few local amenities that was inclusive of all community groups no matter what their age or economic or social background.

“To take something out of an area, which is already considered to be a ‘deprived’ area would be a mistake”

There was some surprise from people when we reflected back the percentage of people who use the Lido from outside the Borough. Some of the opinion formers saw the Lido as very much a local facility with people using local buses or walking to the venue as well as using their cars. On the other hand we were told about lots of Lido aficionados who will travel for miles to visit one.

Some people compared Aldershot Lido with the Lido in Guildford. The Guildford example is heated and well maintained (as the Guildford Borough Council website proudly states), however to many people the Guildford example was not in the same Lido league. The Aldershot Lido had a more interesting shape, varying depths of water and as such these differences made it a far more interesting place to go to. Where the Guildford Lido was praised was in terms of its level of upkeep and maintenance and the manner in which it seemed to be professionally run. In Guildford, for example, you could get season tickets for the summer with special events such as BBQ's run for season ticket members.

A number of people commented that they perceived the Aldershot Lido to be run solely by students during the summer and you couldn't expect them to have the same commitment to looking after a place. A few people said Aldershot wasn't always open when it should have been. You couldn't always rely on when it would be open; there was a judgement to be made before going, if the sun wasn't shining on a summer's day. There were also some positive comments from people about how DC Leisure had

improved the general upkeep of the grounds of the Lido since they had become involved in the 1990's.

The Aldershot Pools area is seen by some as a sporting 'complex' albeit not under the same roof with the Lido being an important component part of this complex. This is something people would like to see being protected and developed. I am not sure how the crematorium fitted in with this sporting theme!

"It's much more of an event than going to a swimming pool. It's like a day out by the seaside for many people"

Many of the people we interviewed saw the Lido as playing a huge social service role within the community. It allowed families to spend family time together and for the legions of teenagers who spent their summer days there, it gave them an outlet for their energies, which might be spent in less positive ways if the Lido wasn't there.

"We are good at drifting. We are not so good at getting ahead of ourselves and developing a vision for the future and then making sure we deliver this vision"

A number of people mentioned the possibility of 'climate change' with increasing temperatures during the summer period and found it strange that a water based facility like the Lido could be under threat in this environment. People also mentioned that in an age when we are trying to encourage people to become more active and lead healthier lifestyles the Lido was an excellent facility that did just that. Other comments related to the 'green' agenda mentioned the possibility of using some kind of heat exchanger that could transfer the heat from the Crematorium to heating the water in the Lido. Another suggestion asked whether it was possible to utilise solar heating panels located on top of Aldershot Gymnasium to heat the water.

Everyone we spoke to saw great potential for the Lido. There was an opportunity to develop something that the area could be proud of and a facility, which could have far greater revenue earning potential for the Council. They understood however that some of the changes to achieve this might have to be dramatic and potentially expensive. Just tinkering with the existing infrastructure and doing the minimum to keep things running was not considered to be a practical option for most people.

"It's not too far, it's accessible, it's not too expensive and it's on our doorstep"

There was a need to increase the annual opening hours either through heating the water or using the space for other water and non-water based activities throughout the year. For many people the Lido grounds were considered to be as important a resource to be developed as the Lido pool itself. Some people talked about the Council needing to think 'outside the box' to develop ideas that would encourage greater usage by more people for more of the year.

We heard from one respondent how important developing these types of tangential activities could be. At the Aldershot ski slope 'donutting' is a huge revenue earner, it brings people of all ages to the slope at all times of the year. Many of these people may never come back to the slope and try skiing but some will. For the ski slope the

'donuts' really make the difference and it could be the same for the Lido if you can find the right activity.

It was also recognised that heating the water even if it were only a few degrees should be one of the priorities subject to technical advice. There was a need for a major upgrade to be made to the toilets/changing rooms and in particular the catering facilities, which were widely criticised as being inadequate and of a poor standard.

“I would like to see the Lido have some energy about it, which it doesn't have at present”

The people we spoke to in this part of the consultation are absolute fans and supporters of the Lido and what it stands for and what it could be. They are not people who have to make budget calls about its viability and some represent parts of the community who are smaller contributors to the Council's purse. Some of the things people said are based on what the Lido was, and they may not have not been to the Lido for quite a while. However their views were stated as being very much “for” the community around the Lido and of representing their views.

“The Lido is popular in people's hearts but not necessarily popular enough for them to go there with their wallets”

Users of the Lido

“It needs a superb café, serving good quality food, deck chairs for hire and some shade.”

- The groups we ran of users of the Lido were overwhelmingly positive and cheerful groups. Just thinking about the Lido seems to lift the spirits of the people who came and they really set about coming up with schemes and plans about how to improve it and make it better. To call the users of the Lido raving fans would not be an overstatement.
- The Lido looks tired, there is too much concrete, the changing rooms aren't very nice, there are not enough lockers for valuables and it has a poor reputation for attracting bad behaviour. All that said, it is a great place to go on a sunny day and there is plenty that is right about it, and it is an excellent place to have in the local area.
- The Lido has the potential to be something truly superb. The energy and enthusiasm, which it ignited in the group was contagious, and they had so many excellent ideas it was hard to keep up.
- If the Council closed the Lido there would be uproar. The affection with which it is held is enormous. There is a real passion for it, and this needs to be unleashed and utilised.
- The Lido is something, which Rushmoor owns, and therefore could be seen to be doing something positive with; it would go a very long way to mitigating the town centre issues.

“Can we get the ‘Wombling’ scheme back, where teenagers help to clear up litter at the end of the day in return for a free pass the next day?”

Overview

“What about getting the local radio station to publicise it when it is open, even do a themed day down there?”

All that users of the Lido can see is possibility. It is a facility, which the current users value enormously. It is their escape, the thing they use to keep their children optimistic by giving them a day to look forward to during the summer holidays. They don't want lots done to it, or masses of new facilities added to it that makes it a more expensive day out. The fact that it runs out of refreshments by 2pm is sometimes a help as it means they are not being asked to buy ice creams. The lack of things to do allows parents to sit back and let their children get on with playing, and there are just not enough, if any, other opportunities for that locally and parents and children love the Lido for this chance.

This group don't even entertain the idea that the Lido may close. They say they will get involved to give it a good chance of survival. Some will help with clean ups and

refurbishments, especially if it means a free pass for a day or so during the summer. When the idea was mentioned about having it open for more of the year, or at the very least longer hours during term time users leapt at the thought. Anything which could extend their use of it was welcomed.

Lido users do not focus on the historical significance of it in the way we heard from some opinion formers, it is what it means to them now, which is important. And what it means to them now is as an oasis in a built up area where they can be outside and carefree, enjoying the sunshine, and be around others doing the same.

“When you walk past it in winter and you see what it looks like, it does rather put you off going in the summer, as you can still remember the green sludge and grey concrete.”

Non Users of the Lido

“You get more of life living in Aldershot, things are done at a slower pace and I really like it, I much prefer it to West London where I used to live.”

- There is a stigma attached to the Lido and the non-users buy in to the stories they hear about the trouble that may or may not take place there when it is open.
- None of the local Heron Wood residents wanted to see the Lido closed, but many don't use it either. From the wider Rushmoor community as well as the local residents people think it looks tired and they worry about losing their children or their possessions. Some of this may be to do with where the Lido is, and the stigma attached to its location. This fact alone possibly gives one of the main reasons why something needs to be done to improve the Lido and by doing so would improve the credibility of Heron Wood.
- All non-users had only a hazy understanding that the Lido is something of national importance, and almost consternation that people come from some distance come to visit the Lido. The low levels of self-esteem of very local people to the Lido mean that there is a sneaking suspicion that no one would want to visit the area. They also doubt why they live there, not all but more than half the group felt like this to some extent.
- What everyone agreed with is the Lido takes up a great deal of space and that for the vast majority of the year looks a bit tatty. This does concern people and the idea of having it look good all year round was well supported.
- A lack of good publicity and will to do much with the Lido also worried this group. They see the reason that they have forgotten about it, as in part the fault of the Council and the people running it. If more was done to promote it, then they think they might be more disposed to give it a try.

“Lidos are just such a good thing. There was one in Wales where I grew up. My brothers and I spent many days there during the summer. When I found out there was one here I realised how lucky we are. The one where I used to go has closed and been built on. We need to get this one sorted out, publicised and used. Our children need these places.”

Overview

“The secret to making it successful is for people to have fun there, and know they can, I just worry about the dangers.”

When we asked what people thought of the idea of spending significant sums of money on the Lido there tended to be a sharp intake of breath. We saved this question for the Citizens' Panel group as they lived in higher charge band properties and were geographically and emotionally further removed from the Lido. Some of the respondents started to do sums and worked out notional numbers about how much it would cost per user if big sums were spent. The people who focussed on the money

dominated the conversation for a while then the less forceful, but persistent voices started talking about the human and social benefits one could get from spending the money and making it a better facility. What became apparent with this debate was that the residents who felt it was worth spending the money far exceeded those who felt it should be closed and the money saved or spent on something else.

There appeared to be consensus that improving the Lido and having it run to be of benefit to more Rushmoor residents might be a very sound way to spend money. This was especially the case if it meant that less people having to drive to the coast, or seeing fewer teenagers with nothing to do. The thought that it was some people's only "holiday" also swayed people. Just hearing that people who live so close to them geographically could have such a different life surprised many in the group.

The group thought that if the Lido was there to serve such a wide social purpose then perhaps it was not sensible to have a commercial company managing it. Most thought the two things were incompatible, and if Council money was to go into improving the Lido then the Council ought to run it too.

One other point that was made in the group was that if their money was to go into improving the Lido they would want to know what they were getting for that money. This was on two levels. Firstly from a practical point of view, was it to be new pump room equipment and some landscaping, and some of the improvements to access and opening hours. Secondly from a human point of view, how many teenagers come and spend evening water fighting rather than hanging around the streets? Do local people come and pick up litter and help with annual refurbishments? These things are important to charge paying residents, they don't mind money being spent but they want to see a return.

When we asked everyone at the end of each non-user group to say what their vision would be for the Lido in five years time, only one person said they would like to see it closed. He said this on the basis of cost. His view was it was an old structure and was therefore going to cost too much money to refurbish and maintain. No one else in the group agreed that was a good enough reason to close the Lido.

"It is an asset to the area, but at the moment is not being used as one, and that has to change."

Improvements and Changes

“If its’ role is social welfare, which it sounds it probably should be seen as, then perhaps it should be brought in-house rather than having it run by a commercial company whose first priority is making money.”

Throughout each group there were many suggestions and ideas put forward for improvements to the Lido. What we have done is group them into must do’s, nice to have and don’t do. There was also a list of suggestions, which had a seasonal flavour so the grid on the next page lists those ideas too.

What must happen

- Refurbished changing rooms
- Much better café and eating area
- Better landscaping, including areas of shade
- Better and more visible discipline from the staff with the users
- Much better facilities for children/toddlers, including improving the paddling pool
- More lockers for phones and valuables
- A secure store for bicycles

What would be good

- Better facilities for teenagers, including longer opening hours and designated times for teenagers. By facilities this could include a climbing wall, beach volleyball and a time for water gun fights in the pool.
- Better facilities for families, including an improved children’s paddling pool
- For the café to be open all year round, and through it to have access to the other non water facilities, like the climbing wall, volleyball, basketball net and whatever other things could be included.
- Tidy up the entrance and make it look more inviting.
- Take up the concrete and give it a complete makeover.
- More comfortable seating, either fixed or probably better, for hire.
- Use the space for other things, like canoeing, pedaloos, windsurfing, trampoline, crazy golf, basketball.
- Introduce a children’s party including an activity and a theme.
- A mobile “host” type person, like they have at holiday camps, who could also organise games for different age groups.
- Offering reasonably priced courses for things like canoeing, windsurfing and possibly beach volleyball.
- A fountain type play area for children.
- Better advertising, perhaps an email / SMS messaging service to let people know when it is open.
- Late opening to go after school and work.
- Special young children and family times, either because of the time it is opens or designated.
- A clean up scheme where local residents can take part in return for a free pass for a day during the summer.
- A season ticket system.
- For the pool to be managed by Rushmoor Borough Council

What is not needed or wanted

- Heating
- Enclosing it and making it more “Spectrum Like”
- More housing on the site
- Closing it

Summary of seasonal and all weather suggestions

Summer	Winter	Year round
Canoeing	Dinghy sailing	Good quality café
Diving	Sail boarding	Children’s fountain area like the one in Stoke Park / Legoland
Swimming groups, particularly to include the local schools	Ice-skating	Climbing walls
Lazy River	Catering for families after cremations	Crazy golf/putting
Themed events, like a beach volley ball week, or Eagle radio		Children’s play area
Barbeque event run by the Scouts or community groups, possibly even in the evening		Netball/basketball
Teenager two hours from 1800 – 2000 where they can have water fights		Holiday camps for children
After school time for accompanied children only, possibly with a special rate for childminders. This could start at after lunch with toddlers before 1500		Car Boots & Craft fairs
Season ticket option for the whole summer		Children’s parties with a themed, like the donutting at the Ski slope
Clean up and litter picking for local residents with the offer of a free pass for those who help		

Conclusions

“I knew nothing about the Lido, well only from when I was growing up round here; if someone had told me it had shut three years ago I wouldn’t have been surprised or sorry.”

The Lido needs a revamp and a relaunch. Too many people knew very little about it, its opening hours and were misinformed about the type of day which could be had from a day spent at the Lido. The non-users either know virtually nothing about it, or have a very different perception of it the users. The users of the Lido are a passionate and enthusiastic bunch. If the Lido is full of people like them on a warm sunny day then it must be a fun place to be.

In many ways for the current users many of the problems, which non-users complain about, are perceived as part of its charm by the users. There is an element of users wanting to keep it a bit of a secret, although if that meant it closed through lack of use they may quickly change this view. What users don’t really understand is how it can be losing so much money as when they go it tends to be full. When the opening periods are studied everyone thinks they have the solution, which is longer opening hours and greater utilisation.

In the Citizen’s Panel group there was a greater appreciation of the economics of the Lido in money terms, but after discussion they were very clear that it needed to be kept open and improved. Both non-user groups had far more complaints in general about Rushmoor and the area they lived in, and the panel group were most vociferous about the lack of town centres. The expectations of the non-user group, especially the Panel members were very high and this does appear to be something of an inhibitor for them enjoying aspects of the area.

The turning point for non-users when talking about spending money on the Lido is to appeal to their social conscience but tie it up with the gains they may enjoy as a result of improved facilities. The historic nature of the Lido tends to mean too much maintenance and therefore cost. Giving teenagers something to do and having a year round facility is positive and they can see the benefits.

These groups were hugely enjoyable. The people who use the Lido are excellent communicators and creative in their thinking. Those who don’t use it often have happy memories of days spent at the Lido and need no persuasion to think that they may still go there again. Having it as an all weather, open facility would be a huge bonus to the residents of Heron Wood, and to many from Rushmoor overall.

“My children don’t even bother to ask me for things when we are at the Lido, because there is nothing to want. They just play and have a good time, and I sit on my chair and read books.”