£31m West London leisure complex opens

21/03/2010

The Hillingdon Sports & Leisure Complex in the London Borough of Hillingdon is a brand new facility for the borough and sits alongside a refurbished Grade II listed open-air pool, which remains the last example of a 12-sided ‘star’ outdoor swimming pool in the country.

Hillingdon Council’s multi-million pound complex has been developed to provide excellent local sports facilities for all and training opportunities for aspiring athletes.

The Mayor said: “I’m thrilled to welcome the first Olympic sized swimming pool in London for nearly half a century. This outstanding accessible sports complex is a real boost for everyone in the area whether you’re striving to be the next Mark Spitz or just trying to shift a few pounds and get healthier before the sun arrives. With such amazing facilities it’s sure to play a crucial role in the future success of the British swimming team and the fact that it’s open to everyone - young, old, abled and disabled – is something Hillingdon Council should rightly be proud of.”

Hillingdon Council invested £26m to build the complex, which includes an indoor sports centre, restored 1930’s outdoor pool and athletics stadium. The council’s own £26m investment was enhanced by funding of £2.025m from the London Development Agency, £1.5m of National Lottery funding from Sport England and £1m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Leader of Hillingdon Council, Cllr Ray Puddifoot, said: “The complex is about providing top class facilities for people of ages and abilities. We’ve taken the opportunity to develop a unique complex that gives people access to excellent, modern leisure facilities, as well as securing the long term future of one our historical assets.

Our £26m investment in this complex and £45m in sport for Hillingdon is part of making this happen. We would like to thank the London Development Agency, Sport England and the Heritage Lottery Fund for their support in our determined commitment to achieve the best possible facilities for our borough. We hope it will be a legacy for both current and future generations.”

Construction and restoration works on the site in Uxbridge began in 2006. Amongst the facilities bringing the site firmly into the 21st century are the new 50m Olympic-sized indoor pool, shallow pools, a 100 station gym, a multi use sports hall, spin and dance studios, as well as a crèche, sauna and steam rooms, classroom facilities for courses and training, and a café serving healthy food.

Shaun Dawson, Sport England's London Champion for Community Sport, said: "If community sports facilities are going to be successful in attracting more people into sport and increasing participation levels, they need to be able to offer the very best sporting opportunities for everybody. People for miles around Hillingdon now have access to an excellent Olympic-standard pool, a state of the art gym and new sports hall - meaning there has never been a better time to get out there and find the sport that's right for you."

The outdoor grandstands, cascades and entrance building have been completely restored to bring the 1930’s outdoor pool back in to use as an integrated part of the main complex. Hillingdon Council worked with the Heritage Lottery Fund to ensure that all of the pool’s unique features have been retained.

Sue Bowers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for London, said: “We are delighted to see this unique example of 1930’s architecture restored to its former glory. A true treasure for London residents and visitors to the city alike which we are sure will be well used and loved both now and into the future.”

The Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex opened to Hillingdon residents last month and officially opens to all on 24 March. The outdoor pool will be in use from May.

Notes to editors

There is currently only one other Olympic-sized 50m pool in London at Crystal Palace, opened in 1964. There is also a non-Olympic sized 50m pool in Ealing and there are 7 other open air 50 metre pools which are not Olympic-sized

Funding breakdown:

- £26m from Hillingdon Council for entire sports and leisure complex
- £2.025M from LDA towards indoor 50m pool
- £1.5m of National Lottery funding from Sport England towards indoor 50m pool
- £1m from Heritage Lottery Fund towards the refurbishment of the 1930’s outdoor pool.

Funding towards the all weather football pitch was provided by the Football Foundation.

Timeline:

- Autumn 2005: Planning permission granted
- 2006: Building and refurbishment work begins by contractors Leadbitter
- May 2006: Hillingdon Athletics track and pavilion opened by the Queen
- Dec 2009/ January 2010: Completion of the complex
- February 2010: Complex open to Hillingdon residents, run by Fusion Ltd
- March 2010: Official opening of complex by Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

Further information

Emma Marsh, Hillingdon Council Press Office on 01895 556064 or out of office hours mobile on 07930 320460 or corporatecommunications@hillingdon.gov.uk

Rebecca Miller, Mayor of London Press Office on 020 7983 4754 or strategydesk@london.gov.uk

Andrew St Ledger, Sport England Press Office on 020 7273 1593 or andrew.stledger@sportengland.org

Vicky Wilford, HLF Press Office on 020 7591 6046 or vickyw@hlf.org.uk