

LIDO REVIVAL AND VIABILITY

Tendring District Council

Over the last fifteen years or so there has been a distinct and well documented movement towards the restoration and maintenance of Britain's open air pools and lidos. There has also been a parallel resurgence and interest in "Wild Swimming" which includes lidos.

(H2Open – Wild Swimming magazine June/July has article on lido revival)

<http://h2openmagazine.com/news/latest-issue>

The revival has been marked by:-

- **Council support** eg Uxbridge Lido re-opened and now part of the new Hillingdon Leisure Complex; London Fields Lido re-opened by Hackney Borough Council (50 metre pool open all the year round)
- **Private enterprise** eg Bristol Lido formerly the Clifton Lido
- **Long term campaigning** eg Broomhill Pool in Ipswich
- **Community effort** eg Portishead in Somerset, Sandford Parks Lido in Cheltenham and Beccles Lido in north Suffolk
- **HLF funding and recognition** eg Brockwell Park Lido, Broomhill Pool, Sandford Parks, Uxbridge Lido etc
- **Authorship:** Janet Smith's "Liquid Assets" English Heritage 2005
- **Dedicated Friends Groups** eg FOIL (Friends of Ilkley Lido), FOGL (Friends of Guildford Lido)
- **Leisure company dedication to lidos** (particularly Fusion Lifestyle)
- **Liaison with interested groups** Triathlon athletes, CrossFit groups, sub aqua clubs, water polo, canoeing etc (see below)
- **Diversifying activities on the lido site for cultural pursuits** eg film evenings, music
- **Running training courses: lifeguards, lifesaving**
- **Different opening hours (see below)**
- **A range of ticketing including season tickets (see below)**
- **Hiring out the pool site as a film location**

KEY POINTS TO GREATER SUCCESS

- 1. Opening hours, particularly early morning opening.** This will attract those that want to train seriously several times a week, including the triathlon athletes, swimming clubs, and business people that want to swim before work. (6am – 9am) Combine with early morning “coffee/croissant” stall so that swimmers can train, shower and eat before the working day begins. You have a wonderful 50 metre pool – serious athletes will use this if the opening times are right.
- 2. Liaising with a whole cross-section of interested parties, particularly triathlon, sub-aqua and swimming clubs.** This approach can be used either to increase revenue through pool hire or simply to bring more users in because they will then come back to use the pool at other times. Wild swimmers will usually have wetsuits and will not care if the weather is rainy or cloudy. (See OSS Facebook Page for example which has 19,000 members) Consider longer opening hours in the evening for specialist groups, as they will usually have their own lifeguard provision.
- 3. A range of tickets, particularly season tickets;** loyalty discounts etc. I can see from the reviews that people have been very appreciative of the £10 family ticket. Season tickets will bring people back again and again, particularly for short swims rather than a day out and that should encourage secondary marketing (use of cafe, pool shop or other facilities)
- 4. A strong Friends Group (doesn't have to be a formal Trust) who can research and liaise with other lido groups.** These are the people who will help organise additional events or attractions: poolside yoga, film evenings, music groups. There is a nationwide lido community of people sharing information through Facebook Pages , email newsletters etc. Pool maintenance costs can also be reduced with willing helpers.

5. Publicity and Promotion All too often an open air pool is described as a town's "best kept secret". Make sure everybody knows about the pool, how to access it, where to park etc. Use of social media including Twitter, Facebook, dedicated website. Use of traditional outlets, local papers, posters in all related leisure outlets and centres, local radio etc

6. Consideration of the pool site as a whole particularly in regard to facilities that are less "weather dependent": cafe/restaurant, Wi-Fi provision, health and beauty facilities (consider prefab if there are no on-site buildings), indoor gym/spa, multi-use meeting rooms for youth groups etc.

All the above need to be co-ordinated together and have been at a remarkable number of other pools. Please contact me if you would like further detail on any of the above.

Recommendation: this pool has been part of your portfolio for a long time and Option 4 only gives the Town Council 28 days to respond. Consider research into ways of making Brightlingsea more viable and substantially reducing the "subsidy" per swimmer before making a final decision.

(I can offer 14 years experience of research and campaigning free of charge to either Tendring District Council or the Town Council)

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