

# Leisure Centre 1

## Positive

### Space / Ambience

Generally light and airy

Ceiling height in the entrance hall, open space at reception

Nice open, but controlled, reception area with a welcoming feel and secure access to get into the building

Main entrance space with double height ceiling, visibility to activities and managers office

Entrance was light and airy, but a little crowded.

Many facilities were accessible directly from the entrance area

Stairwells with glass and light from windows

There was a very good retail display and it was interesting to note that the same supplier was featured in all three centres

Wooden beams on the pool ceiling

Ambience of the main pool area

Ambience and feeling of light and space in the swimming pool area, use of beams and colour and interest

I liked the design of the changing rooms and the decor.

Not bad in a difficult position.

### Management

Enthusiastic staff

The staff were very helpful and also felt that they were very passionate and enthusiastic in their roles, it also had a good atmosphere significant community feel and willingness to change programmes and encourage community groups

Focus on sport provision, e.g. willingness to give up the café and meeting room in favour of spin etc

Contract operators respond to customer consultation

### Sustainability

Lots of sustainable features

Use of solar / ground source to support running costs

Flexible use of the sports halls to generate additional revenue

I think the PVC flooring is a good choice of material for a sports hall and will not need much maintenance meaning lower maintenance costs

£10M budget – good use of a small site with reasonable level of service provision and reasonable level of contribution to the Council

### Miscellaneous

Fitness studios are very pleasant

Studios a good size with plenty of light.

Changing rooms adequate and plenty of cubicles.

# Leisure Centre 1

## Negative

### Climbing wall

The climbing wall was not at all suitable for the site - space was wasted, this was poorly designed and could have been put to better use.

I'm not convinced about climbing walls in general and this one was particularly badly sited  
Climbing wall wedged in middle of centre seen through glass as you walking and on 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

Tucked away climbing facility

Climbing wall position below the main area is not viable

Climbing wall accessibility and lack of revenue generation

Climbing wall in the wrong place.

### Fitness suite

The gym area was very crowded

The gym was cramped

The fitness suite felt slightly overcrowded within the available space

Fitness suite floor surface, wall colour and lighting made the space feel dark

Narrow feel to the gym facility which did not make use of the views out – equipment packed in and solid walls made it oppressive.

Fitness suite felt compressed with unpleasant carpet tiles

Gym felt very cramped.

### Size

The lack of spectator facility at the pool was regrettable

The learner pool is too small

Teaching pool seemed cramped

The main pool is too small and affected by light coming through windows

Poor orientation of the main pool so that the permanently closed blinds let down an otherwise good space

Lower level changing facilities due to location, not utilised as they should be

Overall I felt that a quart had been squeezed into a pint pot

It was sadly too small and with very little car parking space.

Entrance Hall too small

Lack of dedicated parking for the centre

### Miscellaneous

Expensive running and maintenance costs of lighting throughout

Only one studio (although that was very good)

## **Leisure Centre 2**

### **Positive**

#### **Overall impression / materials / ambience**

Wow, what a centre, everything about it was fantastic.

Stunning building in a beautiful location opposite a park

Landscaping around the building

Public realm and quality of the environment created a positive impression immediately

Wow factor when you walk into the main reception; stunning lighting & glass showing gym suites

Light and airy

Good ceiling height in the entrance

Light and airy entrance, with good cafe facilities with gave upmarket feel.

Quality of the space, generous height in the gym, views, corridors, circulation & main space

General use of materials to elevate the building to a superior finish – glass lockers and glazing worked particularly well and enhanced the building both internally and externally

Colour schemes and materials in particular the natural looking stone and tiling

Use of glass for light and transparency between activity areas to connect them

Views from the windows

I felt the centre had lots of room in all areas & plenty of light had been thought about in the design.

#### **Swimming pools**

I particularly liked the Swimming Pool area, so well thought out and it catered for all ages.

I like the idea of three pools - confidence, teaching and main swimming

Liked the learner pool and small leisure splash pool

The three separate pool areas definitely enhanced the centre.

Big pool

Glass finish in the lockers and cubicles in dry side changing

Finish of the changing areas, as well as looking nice appeared to be practical from a cleaning and maintenance perspective.

Wide range of facilities made it feel like a location worth a family travelling to from some distance – e.g. the splash area,

#### **Fitness suite**

The gym area was spacious and well planned

The finish in the changing areas was good

Stunning views from fitness studios, amazing gym and spa

Views from gym areas and use of views in the design

Good changing facilities with plenty of space.

#### **Café**

The cafeteria was excellent with a varied menu

Excellent food facility

#### **Miscellaneous**

The Spa was to die for

Good management arrangements

£1.3M favourable revenue position and profit share arrangement

Although the price for members reflected in the facility, you got what you paid for.

I really hope we could have something for the young at Dover, like they had.

## **Leisure Centre 2**

### **Negative**

#### **Cost**

I struggle to see it making financial sense

Budget inappropriate for Dover District Council

£25M budget

The whole operation was outstanding, both in facilities offered and standard of finish, and we know that realistically we cannot aspire to this

Some of the circulation space is over generous and un-necessary particularly at significant cost

#### **Spa**

As for the Spar area, well we are never going to have that ??

Is a spa necessary for Dover?

Spa should have had separate entrance when it was building built

Spa was pretentious

The spa is not making money

#### **Swimming pools**

Although they had made an error with spectator visibility on the inside lane this was a minor blemish.

Stained wooden beams

Stains on the ceilings

Leaks and staining to the beams in swimming pool lets down the overall space

#### **Climbing wall**

Climbing wall for me a waste of money centres seems to use for a Wow factor! I personally think a big walled aquarium would wow more people

Revenue position of climbing wall

Not a fan of the climbing wall.

Climbing wall was better placed but still in wrong place

#### **Fitness suite / Youth Gym**

Gym area was large but felt muddled.

Fitness suite felt slightly overcrowded

Junior gym a bad idea - youngsters do not want to be separated from full gym

Youth gym did not work

#### **Miscellaneous**

Only negative point was that I felt the manager lacked enthusiasm, having a centre like that is something you would be proud of.

Not keen on the types of seats in the cafe.

Too much wasted space in corridors.

## **Leisure Centre 3**

### **Positive**

#### **Overall impression**

The third centre was the one that I felt would be the most suitable for Dover; I liked most things.

The art of the possible.

Welcoming reception with secure access to enter the centre

Light and airy

Well-designed corridors (spacious)

Good connections: gym views the sports hall, views of gym & swimming when you enter the building

#### **Artificial Grass Pitches**

Outdoor artificial grass football pitches for 5 a side very good idea made useable all year as Flood lit.

Five a side provision was good

Outdoor 3G 5-a-side pitches

Good outdoor facilities

Outdoor football pitches

I particularly liked the external six a side pitches which took pressure off the indoor sports halls and if we could do this I think four of the latter would be enough

Very much liked the 3 G Football pitches but have mixed feelings regarding the changing rooms.

Outside 3G pitches

#### **Swimming pools**

Nice ceiling in the swimming pool changing room

Spacious wet side changing facilities

Quality of pool space, beams, glazing, adjustable floor

Glass finish to the wet-side changing cubicles was good

Good design in the Swimming Pool changing rooms

#### **Fitness suite**

Layout of the gym was excellent and I liked the idea of putting the 'heavy grunting' area round the corner from the main stations. Good feeling of space and I would worry about any tightening of this  
Spacious gym

Fitness suite felt the best lay out of all sites visited

The gym felt spacious, the floor materials were good

Gym was intelligently laid out with defined areas of use and felt spacious.

#### **Sports hall**

The sports hall colour scheme and floor were good

Excellent changing rooms along with a good size sports hall.

Very good sports hall, best floor.

#### **Dance studios / flexible space**

Three dance studios – good provision

Good rooms for other activities.

#### **Miscellaneous**

Sensible £13M budget, associated with improved revenue for council with profit share

Plenty of car parking spaces.

## **Leisure Centre 3**

### **Negative**

#### **Overall appearance / ambience**

Does not look like a leisure centre from outside

There was too much space in this centre which was wasted.

Location was less accessible – the bumpy road and caravans detract from the approach

Poor use of colour

#### **Swimming pools**

After seeing the seating area in the other sites for swimming I felt this was disappointing.

Pity about the spectator area in the pool and they had wasted the third pool by running out of the funds needed to create the confidence pool and had ended up with a paddling pool.

Glare was an issue in the pool

Swimming area had good large 8 lane pool but other two pools felt squashed.

#### **Cafe**

Unusual café arrangement, which functioned OK but didn't look good

Catering area looked fine although I felt the seating area was a bit small - could have more seats.

Not sure franchising the catering is the best option.

Poor cafe area

#### **Climbing Wall**

Yet another climbing wall made for impact for me a waste of money

Climbing wall feature was made of cheap materials and was already marked

Climbing wall too basic and unconvincing in appearance

Cheap looking climbing wall

Climbing wall made entrance feel small

#### **Dance studios / flexible space**

Spin room tiny as was changed from meeting room too cramped again.

Not sure about divider system for the studios, it could be difficult to use

Moveable wall in studio not providing to give a revenue benefit for additional capital cost

Moveable wall between studios, with its poor sound insulation

Studio separator – time to remove this

Poor insulation between studios – could hear noise from above

Transmission of sound from studio to studio – feeling of reduced quality

#### **Changing rooms for the APGs**

Unnecessary football changing rooms as a requirement from Sports England for funding

Outdoor changing rooms were a waste of space

Waste of space on additional changing areas

#### **Management**

Management agreement similar to the Dover District, except that they pay the LA a fee.

Management agreement with repairs at a certain level of spend being the Council's responsibility rather than a specific equipment / structure ownership

#### **Miscellaneous**

Sound barriers in the sports hall would require maintenance  
Very cramped gym; too little space, too much equipment.