

Winchester Fit for the Future

Campaign Summary

Winchester Fit for the Future is a new campaign, which aims to secure high-quality, sustainable sports and leisure facilities that can meet the needs of our growing city and the broader district.

With the London Olympics fast approaching, the value of sport to communities, and to our nation as a whole, has never been more apparent. Sport brings people together, improving health and well-being, strengthening community identity, and inspiring young and old alike through competitive success. It also yields economic value.

As things stand, however, Winchester is not well placed to draw on the Olympic legacy to improve sports participation or generate economic benefits, due to gaps in local provision and a public sports and leisure facility that is well past its prime.

If we are to make the most of opportunities presented by the Olympics, we must plan now for the development of a new sports and leisure facility in the city, combining a competition standard swimming pool with excellent facilities for a diverse range of sports.

Winchester needs a place to play and a place to compete – a place that will inspire the whole community to engage in sport and experience the many benefits it can offer.

Winchester needs a new sports and leisure centre.

We are urging Winchester City Council to work with local partners now, to plan for the construction and operation of a new centre, and to make the most of the 2012 Olympic legacy.

Where we are now:

- Winchester's current sports provision is sub-optimal. Local facilities for training and competition are inadequate, even for the most popular sports – such as swimming, netball and gymnastics.
- Specifically, River Park Leisure Centre (RPLC) is well past its prime. It is energy inefficient, with a large carbon footprint. Capital investment of at least £4m is needed for repairs and refurbishment, to keep the facility going beyond the next couple of years.
- A new sports and leisure centre is needed, to expand sports participation, support health and well-being, and develop local talent.

- Through Winchester Fit for the Future, top local sports clubs are working with the University of Winchester and other local stakeholders to develop proposals for a new facility.

Where we want to be:

- Winchester is an active community. Any new facility should foster broad participation in sports while also nurturing talent and promoting excellence.
- The new centre should be accessible to the full range of potential users, within the City and beyond. Bar End, for example, would be an ideal location, as it is close to the City centre yet also to M3 Junction 10, and is served by Park and Ride buses and car parks. It is already home to the athletics stadium and sports pitches.
- Facility design and construction should incorporate maximum flexibility, to serve as wide a population and as many sports and leisure interests as possible. For example, a 50m aqua-zone with variable depth and partitions could support learn-to-swim classes, training, competitive swimming, diving, water polo, aqua aerobics, hydrotherapy and more.
- The new centre should also be energy efficient and sustainable, using the best in green technology. This will minimize running costs and ensure longevity.
- Spending millions patching RPLC means pouring good money after bad. Winchester City Council's capital would be better invested in a new, sustainable facility.
- Major developments – including any major house-building programmes – could also generate funds for a new sports and leisure facility, if WCC constructed a development levy along these lines.
- Further funding could come from: fundraising by local sports clubs and other institutions; capital receipts from redeveloping the RPLC site; sponsorship from local businesses, national companies and philanthropists; grants linked to the Olympic 2012 legacy.

Winchester should aim high – and the time to do so is now.

Follow: Winchester Fit for the Future on Twitter [@WinchesterFit](#)

*Contact: Emma Back, Campaign Director – emma@working-mother.co.uk
or Sue Falconer, Chair, Winchester City Penguins SC*

Can you help?

Winchester Fit for the Future is a rapidly growing and busy campaign. The campaign group is run by volunteers engaged in research, writing, networking and communications – but additional skills and knowledge will be needed as we take campaigning to the next level.

If you have any of the following skills and experience, and are willing to share them in support of specific campaign activities, please tick here:

- Website design and build
- Logo design
- Marketing
- Fundraising
- Campaign stalls/events

Please leave us your contact details:

Name:

Email address:

We will keep Winchester City Penguins Swimming Club members updated about the campaign via club newsletters. Which other media would you find useful?

- Twitter
- Campaign website
- Facebook group
- Email updates
- Presentations (e.g. at the AGM)

Please tick if you would be willing to engage in follow-up surveys (for example, re sports participation, facility design, etc):

Any other comments, or skills/ideas/contacts to offer?

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*Please return completed questionnaire to Emma Back at WCPSC
emma@working-mother.co.uk*