

Leicester Leisure Centre Investment Programme

Phase 3 Consultation (September 2026)



Public summary

Leicester City Council is asking residents, leisure centre users, clubs, user groups and schools for their views on proposals relating to: Potential investment and improvements at Leicester Leys Leisure Centre and co-locating Beaumont Leys Library into the upgraded Leisure Centre.

The future of New Parks Leisure Centre

No decisions have been made. This consultation is being carried out before any recommendations are considered, so that people have an opportunity to understand the evidence, consider the options and share their views.

The council recognises that leisure centres provide important opportunities for people to improve their health and wellbeing, learn to swim, take part in sport, meet friends and family, and stay active throughout their lives. The consultation seeks to understand how any future changes may affect residents and whether there are alternative ideas that should be considered.

Why is the Council consulting?

Over the past two years the council has completed a comprehensive review and assessment into its leisure centre provision. This work has included:

- A Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment, examining participation levels, demographics, accessibility, building condition, finances, usage patterns and future demand
- Independent condition surveys of leisure centre buildings and infrastructure
- A citywide customer and resident survey, which received feedback from 1,636 residents and leisure centre users
- Analysis of how people currently use leisure facilities across Leicester.

The assessment confirms that Leicester's leisure centres are highly valued, but it also highlights several long-term challenges that the council must consider.

Active Leicester has grown and improved

Active Leicester has undergone significant transformation over the last decade and continues to support hundreds of thousands of residents each year. The council has successfully completed Phases 1 and 2 of its Leisure Centre Investment Programme by

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upgrading fitness facilities at Cossington, Evington and Aylestone and, as part of Phase 2, expanding fitness facilities at Spence Street and Braunstone.

Phase 1 and Phase 2 have delivered significant improvements, increasing fitness usage from 3,500 regular users to 12,000 and, for the first time, resulting in over 2 million annual visits to our leisure facilities across the city.

We are now developing plans and proposals for Phase 3 and would like to hear your views before any final decisions are made. The review shows that:

- Annual income has increased from approximately £4.8 million to £8.3 million
- Gym membership has grown from around 3,500 to almost 12,000 members
- The Learn to Swim programme has increased from around 4,800 to more than 8,000 children participating each week
- Council leisure centres now receive more than 2 million visits annually.

The research and customer survey demonstrate that leisure centres play an important role in supporting physical activity, health improvement, social connection and community wellbeing across the city.

Challenges facing the council's leisure centre provision

Although leisure centre usage has increased, many of Leicester's leisure centres are now ageing buildings. Most facilities were originally built during the 1970s and 1980s, with the average leisure centre now around 42 years old. Condition surveys identified significant future investment requirements across the leisure estate, including essential works needed to maintain safe and reliable operation.

Like many local authorities across the country, Leicester City Council continues to face financial pressures. Leisure centres require substantial ongoing investment to operate, including staffing, energy, maintenance and specialist equipment costs. Although income has increased, operating costs have also risen significantly.

As a result, the council must consider how it can continue to provide sustainable leisure services in the future while making best use of available resources.

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Why is Leicester Leys being considered for investment?

The evidence identified Leicester Leys Leisure Centre as one of the council's strongest-performing facilities including;

- The centre continues to attract high visitor numbers despite no major investment.
- Serves a wide catchment area across Leicester and surrounding communities
- Has one of the lowest subsidy costs per visit within the Active Leicester centres
- Contains facilities that cannot be found elsewhere in the council's leisure estate, including the leisure water facility and climbing centre
- Is located close to areas where future housing growth is expected
- An independent assessment identifies that expanding the fitness facilities will meet existing unmet demand and support future growth needs
- Opportunity to consider co locating a new library and creating a wider leisure, learning and wellness facility.

The consultation therefore asks whether residents support the principle of investing in and modernising Leicester Leys to create a leisure, learning and wellness facility, and whether there are improvements that should be considered to help meet future demand.

Why is the future of New Parks being considered?

The evidence from the review identified a different set of circumstances at New Parks Leisure Centre. Compared with other council leisure centres, New Parks currently:

- Has the lowest membership numbers
- Has the lowest visitor numbers
- Generates the lowest income
- Requires the highest subsidy per visit
- Has approximately £4 million of maintenance requirements, including around £2.8 million of works identified as essential.

The review also indicated that a significant proportion of residents living within the New Parks catchment who use council leisure facilities choose to use Braunstone Leisure Centre or Leicester Leys Leisure Centre as their main site. The assessment found overlap between the catchment areas served by New Parks, Braunstone and Leicester Leys, with many users already travelling between facilities.

The evidence suggests that the council should consider whether the current approach remains the most sustainable option in the longer term and whether alternative

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approaches could better meet future needs. For this reason, the council is seeking views before any decisions are made.

What are we asking you?

We would like to understand:

- How the proposals may affect you, your family or your organisation
- Whether you support investment at Leicester Leys Leisure Centre
- Your views on the future of New Parks Leisure Centre
- Your views on replacing the New Parks group-based exercise programmes such as Pilates, yoga utilising local New Parks community buildings and venues
- Any alternative options or ideas the council should consider
- How access to sport, physical activity and leisure opportunities can best be protected and enhanced in the future.

What happens after the consultation?

No final decisions have been taken. All responses received during the consultation will be carefully reviewed alongside the financial, technical, operational and strategic evidence. The council will consider the consultation findings before deciding whether any recommendations should be made. We encourage everyone with an interest to take part and share their views.

Your feedback will help inform future decisions about leisure provision in the city.