



Reviving Lidos

the future of Britain's lidos and open air swimming pools

Conference Proceedings

Thursday March 16th 2006

held at

The Gallery
77 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EL





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Executive summary

Reviving Lidos was a one day conference held on March 16th 2006 to consider the future of Britain's lidos and open air swimming pools.

Speakers addressed campaigning, funding, conservation, design and management strategy issues concerning one of the most popular forms of recreational architecture.

Delegates, who numbered around 100, included architects, pool operators from the private, public and charitable sectors; representatives from local authority leisure, culture and sports departments; heritage professionals; lido users and campaigners.

Speakers included Janet Smith, author of *Liquid Assets*, the lidos and open air swimming pools of Britain, part of English Heritage's *Played in Britain* series, designed to celebrate and increase awareness of the nation's sporting heritage.

Case studies were presented on Tinside Lido, Plymouth; Sandford Parks Lido, Cheltenham; and Brockwell Lido and Parliament Hill Fields Lido, both in London.

A *Pool Ideas* discussion resulted in the following key outcomes:

- **petition the Department for Culture Media and Sport and Sport England to re-classify open air pools as sports venues**
- **establish a national lidos association and website to lobby, disseminate information, share best practice and increase awareness of the health, environmental and community benefits of open air pools**
- **establish a series of outreach events to promote outdoor swimming to the general public, for example, a National Lido Day, linked to the Heritage Open Days scheme, when entry to lidos and open air swimming pools would be free of charge or at a reduced rate**

The conference was chaired by Simon Inglis, architectural historian and series editor of *Played in Britain*.

The conference and accompanying photographic exhibition were sponsored by Cosmur Construction, Alliance Leisure, Urban Practitioners, Invarmex (UK) and Mediashore.

Reviving Lidos was organised by Malavan Media, creators of *Played in Britain*, and Pollard Thomas Edwards architects (PTEa), a leading architectural practice currently working on the extension and refurbishment of Brockwell Lido. PTEa's Whitechapel Community Sports Centre received the Reds award for Best Public Sports and Leisure Centre/Pool in 2002.

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What delegates said:

'Unlike some conferences I've been to (and I've been to a few) it was brisk and entertaining and I think will be seen as a defining moment for lidos because it has started the process of creating an overarching vision and potential organisation to drive things forward.'

'I thought the point about Sport England's refusal to support lidos as seasonal and yet support cricket was very pertinent.'

'I hope we can find a way of harnessing the good work of your conference to further the setting up of some kind of national pool campaigners network.'

'Well done, such an excellent event, all part of the groundswell that in the end will really change things'

'The common passion for pools was inspiring'

'The sense that one's private passions were shared and part of a much bigger vision for lidos, as a movement towards re-inventing public spaces as creative, inspiring places where the love of swimming is the main focus but where there are many secondary spinoffs such as the environment, health etc'

'I found all the speakers extremely interesting without exception – constructive, practical, inspiring.'

'Would have been great to have had someone from DCMS or Sport England to be there to hear it all (I know they were asked).'

'A splendid, really informative conference, and so lovely to meet new campaigners'

'Very touching to hear people's immense efforts to keep pools open and viable. Is there any national register of pools - open/closing/under threat held by the government? Do they even know what the current situation is?'

'A really useful day and excellent organisation. A good mixture of passion and realism.'

'Let's hope the conference jump starts a movement that gives lido users a united and concerted voice to lobby for their continued survival.'





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Britain's lidos and open air pools

Janet Smith

author, *Liquid Assets*, the lidos and open air swimming pools of Britain

In March 2006, there are 97 lidos and open air pools in Britain still operating. More than 300 have closed, many of them demolished.

Thanks to the intervention of English Heritage and the work of campaigning groups such as the 20th Century Society and Save Britain's Heritage, 14 pools now have an architectural listing: eight of these are open, six are closed.

The total number of listings represents a growing establishment awareness of the importance of lidos as part of our sporting heritage: when the Thirties Society (now the 20th Century Society) published *Farewell My Lido* in 1991, just two outdoor pools had a listing: Worthing (1985) and Saltdean (1987).

Although a listing does not preserve a pool indefinitely, it does at least provide a breathing space and the opportunity to apply for funding from, say, the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Historically, the most important decade for building lidos was the 1930s: at least 168 were opened in that decade alone – three times as many as in the six following decades put together. Most, however, are now lost to us: only 31 1930s lidos are still open today.

Perhaps the most shocking loss was at New Brighton, on the Wirral, where the magnificent Art Deco lido was demolished in 1990. Where it once stood is now wasteland. But there are proposals to build an open air pool nearby as part of a bigger leisure complex.

This is one of many heartening signs. The outdoor pools built since the Second World War appear to be holding their own better than some of their illustrious forebears:

	pools built	still open
1960s	21	15
1970s	17	16
1980s	9	5
1990s	3	3

The campaign to re-open Droitwich Spa Lido has moved a step nearer with approval for a refurbished, albeit smaller, pool being granted recently by Wychavon District Council.

This and other refurbishments – of the Jubilee Pool (Penzance), Saltdean (Brighton), Tinside (Plymouth), Parliament Hill Fields (London) and Arundel (West Sussex) – show that pools can be successfully saved and re-opened to the public.

There are also proposals to refurbish Brockwell Lido in south London and to rebuild Uxbridge Lido in west London. And work is actually taking place at London Fields Lido, east London, which is due to re-open in summer 2006 – after a closure of nearly 20 years.

Some pools that are currently closed have very active campaigns to re-open them: the Clifton Pool, Bristol (Grade II* listed); Broomhill Pool, Ipswich; Cleveland Baths, Bath; King's Meadow, Reading (all Grade II listed); and the smaller Hendy Pool, near Swansea. All should take heart from a renewed interest in lidos which suggests that they are not just a relic of the 1930s but a much valued amenity in 21st century Britain.



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Campaign issues and the launch of Golden Goggles 2006

Sue Hudson
London Pools Campaign

My name is Sue Hudson and I am a very angry swimmer. I used not to be. I used to be like so many people in this country who didn't notice the chronic shortage of pools or the number of pools closing. That is, until my pool closed.

I have always swum. I thought I could swim even before I learnt how and consequently had to be rescued a couple of times! My earliest swimming was all outdoors, as I lived in warmer climes and it came as quite a shock when I went to my first school's swimming gala in an outdoor pool in Plymouth – Mount Wise – it was so cold and not an experience I wanted to repeat in a hurry. But that was a long time ago and I am sure that things have improved since!

Then for years I swam in a beautiful 1930s pool in central London, Marshall Street, but it was closed for refurbishment in August 1997 and is currently still closed. So I went to Swiss Cottage pool next and that was then closed and currently I seem to only swim in my dreams.

To my mind the first question that needs to be asked is 'why campaign?' I think I may be preaching to the converted but it is important to be clear. We need to campaign because no-one else is prepared to save Britain's swimming stock. Most politicians do not care. They do not have the will to find the money. We have to shame them into finding it.

The next question is how to campaign - apologies to those of you who run successful campaigns of your own.

- try to establish a users group before a pool or centre is closed down
- have a clear mission statement and stick to it
- don't try to do too much
- enlist the help of well-known figures as patron
- build good working relations with the local newspapers and radio
- have a website
- be tenacious!
- write letters
- don't be abusive

One of the most important things that we at the Friends of Marshall Street did, as a local campaign, was to link up with other campaigns. This led to the establishment of the London Pools Campaign.

The main credit must go to Liz Hughes who not only campaigns for Haggerston but also runs the London Pools Campaign and to Greg who does an amazing job on the website and to a dedicated, professional steering committee, Mike, Lee, Tom, Max, Lucy, Brenda and Hilary.

Local press has always been sympathetic to the Marshall Street story but London wide or even nationals have not been so, saying that one local campaign is too small to warrant coverage. However, when you join the dots together of different campaigns you get a very different picture; you see one pool a year closing, you see a picture of chronic failure of successive governments, both local and national, to invest in swimming.

Because swimming does not get the same coverage as other sports, like football, cricket or rugby.

Because swimming is perceived as being expensive.

Because politicians do not have the political will to spend public money on pools.



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It is left to us, the users, to try to save pools and put pressure to bear to increase pool stock.

As we are here for a lido conference I would just like to say how important I think it is for us to be campaigning not only to save pools, to increase the number of pools and their accessibility, but also to campaign for quality swimming. Lidos and the so-called historic pools are crucial for providing this.

However, I think it is essential not to lose track of the fact that these fantastic places are beautiful as swimming pools, as places to swim. I think it is tragic to see councils thinking that just to save the building and turn it into a library for example, as being good enough. This is not acceptable. These architecturally remarkable places should be kept open as pools.

Now for the advertising. At London Pools Campaign, we try to do one major media campaign a year (remember never to try to do too many things) and last year we established the Golden Goggle Awards. We recruited 90 swimming detectives who took it upon themselves to swim in as many pools as possible around London and to mark them on their standards. It was the first time that this had ever been tried and it proved to be a huge success. We achieved the double goal of appealing to the media – in fact the results were broadcast live on BBC - while being able to collect data, always useful in these campaigns.

This year we are focusing on lidos. Anyone can volunteer to be a swimming detective and we hope that many of our detectives will try all 13 open air pools in London. We will then be announcing our winners and losers in July. I hope you will take part and certainly you will find information on the event in your pack or on the website.

See www.londonpoolscampaign.com

It is a really worthwhile programme to get involved with and will hopefully produce interesting results. I would also like to just point out that this beautiful brochure is sponsored by Speedo.

If you like swimming outdoors you should read *Waterlog* by one of our patrons Roger Deakin, and *Liquid Assets* by Janet Smith.

If you are a politician – take us seriously, invest in pool stock and do not tell us lies such as including private pools in your statistics. We are only interested in public pool numbers.

If you are a journalist give us coverage.

When is the BBC or Channel 4 going to get around to a themed swimming night on television?

And if you are a swimmer – get angry – for all displaced swimmers and for all the future generations who might never know the pleasures of swimming.



The London Pools Campaign announces its Golden Goggles Award for outdoor pools in 2006



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An overview of funding options

Jo Edwards
Pollard Thomas Edwards architects

I am the project architect for Brockwell Lido. For me, the inspiration for organising the *Reviving Lidos* conference was meeting so many campaigners who put so much enthusiasm and time into saving their particular pool. It seemed to me that there is no lack of passion for the task, but that more knowledge on how pools can be revived would be useful. The idea of *Reviving Lidos* is to bring together people from different disciplines and different pools to share knowledge and to bring the issues to the attention of the media and government. One of the key areas of knowledge for reviving a lido is understanding funding.

The two main areas that pools need funding for are **capital costs** and **revenue (or ongoing) costs**.

Capital costs or major works can be split into:

- feasibility study and business plan
- planning applications and detailed design
- construction

If the pool has been closed for a while or needs large scale refurbishment, you may need to carry out a feasibility study and make a business plan. Broomhill Pool in Ipswich, closed in 2002, is currently having a feasibility study carried out into works needed to reopen it and a business plan to see how the pool could be financially self sufficient. To give you an idea of costs, Broomhill's feasibility study is costing about £75,000.

If major changes are proposed, or if it is a listed building, the designs in the feasibility study will need to be worked up into a planning application. Once planning and listed building consent have been achieved, a more detailed stage of design is drawn and described in order to be able to tender and then carry out the construction.

The fees for a design team of architects, engineers, quantity surveyors and so on, can be about 15% of the cost of the construction work, but this varies depending on the complexity of the works.

The costs of construction work obviously vary enormously depending on how bad the condition of the existing structure is (do you have concrete cancer or do you just need a bit of brick stitching?), the type of construction used (solid masonry walls or a steel frame that can be put up quickly), the amount of new build and the type of finishes required (are you aiming to create a high spec private club, a local leisure centre or a restoration of 1930s painted concrete, plain tiles and timber changing cubicles?). Costs can, of course be affected by issues beyond your control. For example a massive water main, discovered by Brockwell Lido, which, according to Thames Water supplies much of south London, has delayed construction for the last year and added well over £100,000 to our client's construction costs.

Revenue (or ongoing) costs include lifeguards, cleaners, managers, pool chemicals and filtration as well as maintenance of the buildings, pool plant and the pool itself. Ideally a pool will be financially self-sustaining and cover its own revenue costs. However, this is no small challenge. Janet Smith quotes the managers of Saltdean in Brighton as saying that they can break even in a good summer, but have made average losses of £40,000 in the last few years.

Revenue costs can be managed by pool owners (who are mostly local councils) leasing out the pool management to a leisure provider. The leisure provider could be:

- a private company, such as DC Leisure or Leisure Connexions
- a registered charity
- a not-for-profit trust, such as Aquaterra or Fusion
- a specially set up charity, such as at Sandford Park in Cheltenham



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Julie Sargent is going to talk about how their charity works in Cheltenham and Rob Pagano, from Fusion, our client at Brockwell Lido, aka Brixton Beach, is going to talk about how a not-for-profit trust can manage a pool.

At Brockwell Lido the costs of running the pool are being cross subsidised by yoga studios, gym, saunas, spa and kids clubs which will run all day and all year. In Bristol Arne Ringner will use a restaurant, saunas and treatment rooms to cross subsidise Clifton Pool.

Sources of funding

- local council
- funds set up by central government
- European Union funds
- charitable funds
- private funds

Local council

It can be extremely difficult to persuade councils to invest in existing swimming pools because spending on leisure, like parks, museums and galleries, is defined by the government as discretionary spending. These services have to compete for the same limited pot of additional funding left over after the council has met its statutory obligations to provide services like education and social services.

There are, however, some examples of councils funding major works, such as the London Borough of Hackney. Simon Lee from the Corporation of London will tell us about Phase One of the works that have been carried out at Parliament Hill Fields Lido. Alison Bradley will be talking about how Plymouth City Council has refurbished and runs Tinside Lido.

Funds set up by central government

The Heritage Lottery Fund

Urban Practitioners (UP) secured funding of £0.5 million for Brockwell Lido through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). They report that a lot of work was involved. UP's advice for anyone considering applying to the HLF is:

- Check the current HLF priorities and read all their guidance. Look at recent HLF funded projects, find out as much as you can from the people who organised them. A good example of successful HLF funding is the Horniman Museum, in Forest Hill, south London, in part due to its innovative architecture which includes a 'green' roof, but also very importantly a strong education programme run by the museum.
- Develop a project concept that responds to the HLF's requirements. Before even contemplating a bid test the concept at one of the regular regional HLF workshop sessions. Then test and refine the concept by checking it in further HLF workshop sessions.
- For Brockwell we felt we had a very powerful project in terms of social, economic, employment, historical, architectural and wider community issues and the strong backing of English Heritage, and yet it was still very difficult to secure funding.

UP have undertaken research for a publication called *New Life* which gives examples of good HLF projects which may act as precedents.



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Sport England

Sport England seems to have a rather difficult relationship with outdoor pools. This could be summed up by this email from the MP, Vincent Cable:

'I campaigned several years ago to get rid of a blanket prohibition on Sport England funding for open air pools. This ruling was preventing my local community (Hampton) pool obtaining money for badly needed restoration work. It is a heated pool and used around the year but ran into objections on principle. I went to see the Minister (then Kate Hoey) and Trevor Brooking (Sport England) after which there was some indication of greater flexibility. On reapplication they were turned down again and the group gave up at this point settling for a smaller project backed by the local council and local charities.

'My recent question sought to revive the issue and you will have seen that the Minister expressed a personal interest in lidos. I have never got to the bottom of Sport England's obstructionism and I hope you have better luck than me.'

Sport England did not send a delegate to the *Reviving Lidos* conference, but did email the following statement:

'We recognise the strong local loyalties which attach to many lidos, but their value can only be assessed as community facilities. We assess applications to fund lidos regionally according to specific criteria. Increasing participation is one of the criteria and so facilities that are only seasonably available for use may not fulfil the criteria. The local authority must assess what facilities will best increase participation. The Regional Sports Board supports with funding those that go furthest in achieving these and other objectives in the regional sports plan.'

English Heritage

English Heritage has conservation grant schemes aimed at the repair and conservation of historic buildings and monuments. £40 million is on offer each year. See www.english-heritage.org.uk. English Heritage priorities are:

- significant elements of the historic environment at risk
- projects where there is a lack of alternative sources of funding
- proposals that seek to strengthen the ability of the sector to manage the historic environment

Sportsmatch

Will match private sponsorship with government money. They will only fund capital works up to £5,000, so would be more useful for schemes concerned with the ongoing use of a pool. See www.sportsmatch.co.uk

Community Champions

Funded by the Department for Education and Skills and, as such, focuses on the development of key individuals' skills and learning to make an impact on community regeneration. The fund is worth £3m per year with grants to individuals usually up to £2,000 and averaging £1,250. The fund is only available in England. Funds may be awarded to help with printing costs, hire of venue, and refreshments. See www.dfes.gov.uk/communitychampions

European funds

Objective One

This is a programme set up to help reduce differences in social and economic conditions within the European Union. Regions of the UK currently designated as Objective One areas are Northern Ireland, the Highlands & Islands of Scotland, Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly, West Wales & The Valleys, South Yorkshire and Merseyside.

All Objective One money comes from Structural Funds, set up to provide grant aid to member countries. The two main components of Objective One funds are European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).



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Charitable funds

Foundation for Sport and the Arts

This was set up originally by the football pools companies. The maximum grant is £40,000. See www.thefsa.net

The Architectural Heritage Fund

The AHF offers grants for feasibility studies and fixed interest loans for refurbishment works. Only charities are eligible and they must own or have a long lease on the building. The building must be listed, or in a conservation area and be of acknowledged historic or architectural importance.

Feasibility study grants are divided into grants of up to about £5,000 for an initial options appraisal, and of up to £15,000 for specific professional work (such as measured drawings, specifications, costings and conservation or business plans) to help charities develop the project to meet the application requirements of the AHF and other funders. The AHF have pledged £3,000 towards Broomhill's feasibility study, payable when the study is completed.

Loans for refurbishment work are usually up to £500,000 with 4% interest, payable at the end of the loan period of two years. See www.ahfund.org.uk and www.ffhb.org.uk

The Directory of Social Change publishes other useful guides on fundraising for charities. See www.dsc.org.uk

Private funds

Banks

Fusion are funding the works to Brockwell Lido by borrowing from banks. Duncan Black of funding facilitators Alliance Leisure will talk about how this can work in a later presentation.

Private investors

At Clifton in Bristol Arne Ringner is raising private investment from individuals.

Sponsorship

The previous managers of Brockwell Lido, Paddy Castledine and Casey McGlue, famously managed to get sponsorship from Evian. The following publications may help if you are trying to go down this route:

- *Company Sponsors for Good Causes: the Guide to UK Company Giving* published by the Directory of Social Change
- *Hollis Sponsorship and Donations Yearbook*

Sale

A number of lidos have been sold by local councils to private companies, for example Saltdean in Brighton and Clifton in Bristol.

Arranging funding

If the management of the pool is leased out, the pool owner can make the raising of funding a condition of the lease. This is a way for councils to get investment into their pools without having to dip into their own budget. At Brockwell Lido one of the terms of Fusion's 25 year lease from Lambeth is that Fusion fund and carry out the works for which we obtained listed building consent.

A professional fundraiser could be employed.

Conclusion

The following advice is from Urban Practitioners and applies to securing any kind of funding:

- Establish a relationship with the potential funding partner very early in the process – set up meetings, present your projects and ideas and ask lots of questions about the priorities and criteria of the organisation. Establish a single point of contact in the organisation who knows about your project. Don't expect to get funding by filling out a form and sending it off cold.
- Understand the criteria, priorities and aims and objectives of the organisation(s) from which you are seeking funding. These will usually be set out very clearly and, depending on the body in question, will be determined by political direction, Act of Parliament, charitable aims and so on. Funding bodies are only able to grant funding within these terms, so it can save time and effort if you research the organisations most likely to be interested in your own specific project and narrow down your quest to those which have a good fit.
- Make sure that your application clearly sets out exactly how your project helps to fulfill the aims and objectives of the organisation from which you are seeking funding. It might be a great project, but if the organisation is tasked with promoting education and your project is about leisure, then it won't get funding from this source.

Further information: jo.edwards@ptea.co.uk / 020 7336 7777



Two historic open air pools currently awaiting redevelopment – **Clifton Pool** in Bristol, opened in 1850 and the only open air pool in Britain to be listed Grade II* (above), and **Broomhill Lido**, Ipswich, opened in 1938 and listed Grade II (right). The latter is the only 50m pool in East Angia and Essex. It closed in 2002.



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Supporting lido redevelopment through the private sector

Duncan Black
operations director, Alliance Leisure

Alliance Leisure was established in 1998.

The company has worked with the following: Hull City Council, Borough of Crewe & Nantwich, City of York, Metropolitan Borough of Bury, NE Derbyshire District Council, Doncaster City Council, Sheffield City Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Stafford Borough Council, Bladerunner Ltd, Milton Keynes Leisure Trust, Celtic Community Leisure, Salford Community Leisure, North Wiltshire Leisure Trust, Dearne Valley Leisure Trust, Pendle Leisure Trust, Hyndburn Leisure Trust, Basingstoke Sports Trust, Slough Community Leisure, Community Leisure Services, Active Life Leisure, Finesse Leisure, Stockport Sports Trust.

Live projects:

- Preferred partner: Fusion Leisure/Brockwell Lido; Energy Fitness Professionals; Coleg Glen Hafren; Gosling Sports Trust
- Projects in progress: Falkirk Stadium; Crewkerne; Surbiton; Stevenage Leisure Trust

There is a range of funding options:

- 'free' money – grants and bequests, Sport England, Welsh Assembly Government, Sports Council for Wales, New Opportunities Fund, Community Fund, trust funds, regeneration funds (eg. New Deal for Communities), European Union
- own money – self funding, annual borrowing allocation, capital receipts, Prudential Code.
- other – PPP, PFI.

Alliance Leisure's contractual arrangement provides a complete facility for a specified term at a fixed monthly fee.

Included within a project are:

- activity areas – fitness, studios, children's play, pitches
- interdependent areas – changing, car parking, reception
- specialist equipment – CCTV, audio, IT, lockers, fitness equipment
- affiliated services – feasibility, business planning, design, building survey

Projects move through three stages:

- initial conceptual phase (speculative – no fee)
- detailed design (abort costs agreed)
- agree contract

Delivery moves through six stages:

- project manage (legal, financial, technical & architectural)
- award building contract
- construction risk
- stage payments
- maintain schedule
- fit out

Risk is managed by Alliance Leisure.



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Lido developments – the commercial view:

- important heritage facilities
- very short season
- need to consider commercially sustainable support facilities and services
- year round focus of these additional facilities
- look to the long term
- Brockwell Lido is a classic case of combining redevelopment of a heritage site supported by commercially viable additional services

Why choose Alliance?

- For trusts and local authorities raising the necessary capital to improve the calibre of their leisure facilities can be the heart of the problem. At Alliance it is the heart of the solution.
- Facility development is our core competency. It is all we do.
- We have a proven track record of delivery.



Case Study One: Tinside Lido, Plymouth

Alison Bradley
leisure facilities manager, Plymouth City Council

Tinside is the finest listed sea front lido in the country. A recent consultant's report is clear about the pool's cultural significance, describing it as:

- one of the most architecturally impressive and the most superbly sited lidos in the UK
- one element of a group of structures along the foreshore which present a complete 'archaeology' of public sea bathing
- the culmination of a major open space, featuring vistas of great beauty and historic interest
- memories of generations of local people
- a symbol for the city of Plymouth

The area known as Tinside has been used for public bathing since the 1800s when genteel folk bathed fully clad in their bathing machines. Over the years, developments have taken place with the city enclosing rock pools, building dressing houses, making the foreshore more accessible, culminating in the building of the lido in 1935. The pool is in the shape of a semi circle with fountains. A set of wide steps leads into the shallow end encouraging even small children to play in the water. The pool then gradually slopes down to the deep end. Submarine lighting is a special feature and there is a large terrace above the pool for spectators. The changing block is in Art Deco style with a magnificent central staircase and a feature window overlooking the pool etched with a female diver.

Like most of the other lidos in the country, the pool was well used until the 1970s. Almost all older generation Plymothians learnt to swim in the lido (and have certificates to prove it). It finally closed in 1992 attracting just 12,000 paying users. It then fell victim to time and tide while endless discussions and public debates were held on its possible future. In 1998 the Tinside Action Group attained Grade II listing for the pool and at around the same time the Conservative opposition to the Labour controlled council made the lido's refurbishment its main manifesto pledge.

In 2000 the people of Plymouth voted the Conservatives into power and the fate of Tinside was sealed. Construction started on the refurbishment in 2002 with a budget of £3.5 million, almost all funded from the council's capital programme. The contract was awarded to Interserve and the council's architects oversaw the work, working closely with English Heritage, to ensure that the pool was restored faithfully to its former Art Deco glory.

The pool was opened with a fanfare of publicity on August 15 2003 (by this time Labour were back in power) with all Plymouth residents being given free entry to the pool for the rest of the season.

Since that time, over 60,000 people have visited the pool. Architectural and construction awards have been won, and the pool has featured as a shining role model on the BBC's *Restoration* programme.

The pool is managed by the council and is run on a seasonal basis along with the council's other outdoor pool, Mount Wise. The net cost is about £160,000, depending on the weather.

Future developments that are needed but for which funding has so far not been identified are:

- the installation of heating
- compliance with the DDA (disabled access is currently via a temporary scaffolding ramp)
- completion of works to ancillary buildings to provide proper catering facilities

The pool is often described as the jewel in Plymouth's crown and on a sunny, hot day in the summer it is easy to see why. Standing on the poolside, looking out over the vast sparkling expanse of water known as the Sound is a special experience indeed.



The conference heard from the operators of two successful lidos: **Tinside Lido**, run by Plymouth City Council (*above*) and **Sandford Parks Lido**, Cheltenham (*left*) run by a charitable trust.



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Case Study Two: Sandford Parks Lido, Cheltenham

Julie Sargent
chief executive, Sandford Lido Ltd

The lido opened in 1935 and soon became a popular family day out. Major repairs were carried out in 1989 but serious structural failures were found in 1994. For many years, Cheltenham Borough Council struggled to justify the level of expenditure required to operate the facility. In one of their last reports prior to the formation of the charity it claimed the lido was operating at a loss of £51,000 a year.

Following earlier structural reports and a feasibility study it was announced that repairs would cost over £250,000 just to give the main pool a ten year life expectancy.

In 1996, following huge support within the community the local authority agreed to support the option of a charitable trust – Sandford Lido Ltd.

The council offered graduated financial assistance, as follows:

- Year 1 - £40,000 grant + £44,000
- Year 2 - £40,000 grant
- Year 3 - £40,000 grant
- Year 4 - £30,000 grant
- Year 5 - £20,000 grant
- Year 6 - £10,000 grant

We are now self financing.

What can make the difference?

- passion
- dedicated employees
- local authority support
- community involvement
- media support
- grant opportunities
- discounted rates

By diversifying our core product we can reduce our dependency on the British climate.

Additional income is generated as follows:

- we have sublet a small section of our land for use as a private members gym
- we licence out the catering facility for a set fee
- we charge non lido customers for use of the lido car park

Our success can be measured as follows:

- season ticket sales are up from £15,000 to £35,000
- average number of visitors is 120,000 a season
- operational hours are at capacity, 90.5 hours a week
- companies, voluntary organisations, education centres and government services want to be associated with our organisation in order to heighten their own awareness within our community and to achieve their own objectives



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Improvements since 1996:

- new chemical dosing equipment
- new outdoor play equipment
- additional activities
- lighting around the main arena
- repairs to the main pool
- restoration of the original filtration equipment
- installation of CCTV
- installation of cycle racks
- furniture for the grounds
- catering equipment
- repairs to the fountain/aerator
- refurbishment of all the toilet and shower areas
- introduction of heated changing rooms with extensive locker provision
- progressive step entrance to the main pool
- improved promotional tools such as our website
- in addition to all this we carry out planned annual maintenance at the start of each season to ensure the lido looks stunning every year

Through successful grant applications we have achieved:

- heat retention covers for all three pools
- a disabled access hoist
- refurbishment of the children's pool and surrounding area
- grant funding towards the main pool refurbishment project - another grant is still pending

Conclusions:

We have excellent local media support and take every opportunity to generate coverage.

Our heritage provides a unique environment, inspiring us to secure the lido's future.

Our charitable status allows us the freedom and independence to seize every opportunity.



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Case Study Three: Brockwell Lido, Lambeth, London

Rob Pagano
business manager, Fusion Lifestyle

Formed in 2000, Fusion Lifestyle is a registered charity operating sport and leisure centres accessible to everyone. Any financial surplus Fusion makes from activities are re-invested to improve and extend services and facilities. The charity currently operates 13 sites in south London including:

- Peckham Pulse
- Dulwich Leisure Centre
- Elephant and Castle Leisure Centre
- Seven Islands Leisure Centre
- Ferndale Community Sports Centre
- Brockwell Lido

Brockwell Lido – the story so far

Brockwell Lido was opened in 1937 and is a much loved amenity. In 1990 Brockwell Lido was closed as part of cost saving measures forced upon Lambeth Borough Council. As a result, the Brockwell Lido Users Group (BLU) formed and maintained pressure on Lambeth to re-open the lido in 1995.

In June 2002, faced with increasing operating, repair and maintenance costs, Lambeth Council invited tenders for the redevelopment of Brockwell Lido. In January 2003, Fusion submitted a tender proposing an investment of approximately £2.5m to secure the lido's future. The investment would be used to:

- refurbish and renovate the site
- address the maintenance backlog
- increase internal floor space
- develop a range of complementary facilities and activities in order to provide more secure revenue streams to support the principal activity of open air swimming
- to operate throughout the year and reduce the reliance on good weather for success

Fusion's refurbishment plan included:

- extending inwards into shady poolside
- adding a glazed cloister along elevation
- adding a new fitness suite, therapy pool, spa suite, additional studio, new reception and changing rooms

In March 2003, Fusion was selected as the preferred bidder to redevelop the lido and operate it for 25 years. Five months later, in August 2003, the lido was listed Grade II. As a result, Fusion was asked to amend the original redevelopment plan. PTEa were brought in at this stage and asked to produce design options. Following extensive consultation a new design was proposed and subsequently approved. The new design included demolishing the south facing wall, extending into the park by 6.5 metres and then rebuilding the wall. To maintain the building's listed status the extension will match the original building design and style.

In December 2004, a grant of £400 000 was secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund to assist with the cost of the redevelopment. In March 2005, a 36 inch water main was discovered directly underneath the proposed extension. Following investigations and negotiations with Thames Water it has been decided that the water main will need to be diverted to accommodate the extension, at a cost of approximately £120,000.

Work is due to start on redevelopment in the first quarter of 2006.

Further information: rob.pagano@fusion-lifestyle.com / 020 7740 7507



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Case Study Four: Parliament Hill Fields Lido, London

Simon Lee
superintendent, Hampstead Heath

City of London

The City of London provides local government services for the financial and commercial heart of Britain. Its responsibilities extend beyond the City boundaries in that it also provides a host of additional facilities for the benefit of the nation, many funded from the City's own investment at no cost to the public. This includes the management of over 10,000 acres of public open space, including Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches. It also includes the Barbican Arts Centre, Guildhall School of Music and Port of London Health Authority.

Parliament Hill Fields Lido

The Parliament Hill Fields Lido, on Hampstead Heath, is listed Grade II and is, according to the list description, 'the most sophisticated of the thirteen lidos constructed by the London County Council between 1909 and 1939'. The lido was completed in 1938 to the designs of HA Rowbotham and TL Smithson, both architects in the LCC parks department, and exemplifies the economical modernist house style of LCC parks department architecture in the 1930s. Despite a number of post war alterations the building is remarkably unchanged.

The challenges

Following technical investigations, the following structural and fabric deterioration problems were identified:

- **Pool design and water leakage** - the original glazed brick faced concrete pool structure was flawed. There was little reinforcement in the concrete, which had cracked in many places, either due to ground movement (clay heave) or to increased lateral pressure when the pool is emptied.
- There was an ongoing problem of **water loss** from the pool attributable to the faults in the original design. Measurements have shown the leakage rate to be high, with an apparent yearly loss of approximately twice its filled volume. To seek to minimise this problem an annual repair programme was required. However, ground water seepage on drain down severely hampered maintenance operations.
- To continue to repair the **pool lining** in its original fashion was no longer considered the best option. A permanent solution in the form of a substantial new lining within the pool which addresses current structural problems was proposed. A major factor in achieving a high standard of pool water quality at the lido was improving the present water draw off and distribution system within the pool. The pool relining option provided the opportunity to redesign this element and to achieve that aim.
- **Poor water circulation/filtration and treatment** - the turnover rate (the time taken for a volume of water equivalent to the entire pool water volume to pass through the filters and treatment plant and back to the pool) was in excess of 13 hours, which is wholly inadequate to cleanse the pool during peak periods. Current guidelines suggest that a rate of approximately five hours should be the aim. Water clarity suffered at the height of the season, leading to safety concerns regarding proper supervision of bathers by the lifeguards. On occasions, during peak season, morning openings of the facility have had to be delayed until adequate water clarity was achieved and on several occasions the pool had to be closed all day.
- One of the problems of open air swimming pools is the amount of **sun protection creams and oils** deposited in the water. Another aspect is airborne particles settling on the surface of the water. The disposition of water inlets and outlets within the pool itself was not as effective in dealing with these problems as a modern system.
- The **pool and building drainage system** was found to be in poor condition in a number of areas and required extensive repair and replacement.



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- The original **aerator fountain** was connected to the water circulation pipework. At the time of the construction it was believed that passing the water over the cascade improved its quality. This is no longer considered the case and the aerator has been disconnected from the pool water distribution system. However, the aerator is a significant feature of the original design in listed building terms, and consequently was retained as a working fountain. The opportunity was taken to replace the safety screen surrounding the aerator with a replacement clear glass safety screen for greater visibility.
- There was no **disabled access** to the front entrance, poolside or terracing. Open floor channels, steps to showers and small cubicles made the use of the changing facility difficult. In addition there were no properly accessible toilets. The Disability Discrimination Act places a duty on the Corporation to ensure that the lido, as a public facility, is accessible to people with disabilities.
- Areas of the **external walls** to the lido buildings are in a poor state as evidenced by numerous cracks in the brickwork. Windows, roof areas and elements such as lintels, sills and parapet copings, not repaired under previous revenue works, will require replacement as they are reaching the end of their useful life. Repair work required includes local underpinning, reconstruction of the concrete floor to the male changing room and large store adjoining to the north, crack repairs to brickwork and the insertion of expansion joints, replacement of windows, lintels and sills and roof repairs.
- The **concrete terracing** on the north side of the pool is in a poor state and shows evidence of numerous previous patch repairs. Surface and groundwater seepage through the terracing has caused salt and black algae staining and has led to the fracturing of the concrete through frost action and a general deterioration in appearance. Complete reconstruction of the terracing is required, allied with undertaking measures to control the surcharging effect of the high groundwater table and surface water run-off.
- The **paved areas** surrounding the pool were in poor condition. They required frequent localised repairs and have, reportedly, been the cause of minor trips and injuries. The bedding and jointing of the paving is not compatible with the hosing regime necessary to maintain hygiene for the pool surrounds.
- The enhancement of **changing room accommodation** is an integral part of the overall refurbishment. The current facilities are basic and utilitarian, falling far short of the standards expected of modern leisure facilities. Provision of dedicated disabled and family changing facilities, together with improved toilets/showers and lockers are not merely cosmetic, but fundamental if the lido is to attract more users.
- The existing **metal perimeter fencing** and associated security features are old and unsightly. These somewhat brutal elements create an unwelcoming impression which is at odds with the lido as a public leisure facility and need to be replaced.
- The existing **paddling pool** is a later addition to the original 1930s facilities. Its raised construction was not in accordance with current design practice of a sunken configuration with sloping pool bottom.

Consultation

During the summer of 2001 a consultation exercise was undertaken to ascertain the views of swimmers about the refurbishment project. A total of 261 completed questionnaires were received.

92% of respondents supported the view that the pool should remain at its current size.

When asked the question 'Should the pool be divided into a larger pool and a smaller pool?' of the 253 people that responded, 85% felt that the existing pool should remain as a single body of water.

These two responses were to influence many subsequent technical decisions about the options for the pool.



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Throughout the consultation people expressed the need to retain the 'unique lido spirit and open air aspect' of the facility. This view was to some extent confirmed by 66% of respondents who were opposed to the pool being covered.

83% of respondents said that they would use the pool outside of the summer season if part of it were heated.

The condition and ambience of the cafeteria was another area of concern, with people expressing the need for such a facility to sell healthier snacks/drinks, regularise opening times and provide better seating. When asked about the potential to adapt the cafeteria to provide refreshments for Heath users, outside the lido, 66% of respondents felt that this proposal should be explored.

Respondents raised the possibility of using sustainable forms of energy to assist with heating the water, including solar panels. Other comments included the possible use of thermal covers to conserve the water temperature overnight.

Over half of respondents supported the conversion of parts of the lido for other uses (such as a gym or training area) so long as these did not adversely affect the use of the lido as a swimming facility. Other comments included the provision of a steam room, yoga and massage rooms, family changing facilities and a jacuzzi to replace the small paddling pool.

Long term plan

In 2001 £2.1m had been allocated to the project. This was insufficient to undertake all the works and a phased approach to the restoration of the lido was adopted. This approach would also enable the refurbishment work to be completed during the autumn/winter periods, enabling public access during the summer.

Phase One

The initial phase of works had to concentrate on ensuring provision of a pool for future generations to enjoy. Both relining the pool and improving turnover rates were essential in meeting this objective.

To meet our statutory obligations under the DDA, improvements were also required to improve access into and around the facility.

The enhancement of the existing paddling pool was considered a priority.

Staffing accommodation also needed improving to provide segregated male and female changing areas.

Phase Two

Phase Two works will concentrate on ensuring the integrity of the buildings. The scale of works and costs may also necessitate a two stage approach. All the works identified above to buildings and terracing would be undertaken as well as improvements to the changing accommodation and shower areas. In addition the internal arrangements of the building would be altered to provide spaces where complementary activities to outdoor swimming could be undertaken.

Phase Three

This stage would encompass a number of projects aimed at maximising the use of the facility throughout the year, utilising the new spaces generated by Phase Two. This might include an enhanced cafeteria with interpretation and historical displays, provision of a gym and increased areas for education services.

The issue of heating the pool was also thoroughly evaluated. Given the desire to retain one large pool there were technical issues associated with heating such a large body of water. A number of environmentally sustainable heat sources were investigated for use to raise the temperature of the pool water and possibly to extend the swimming season. Set out below are brief details of the various alternative options considered on the basis of raising the temperature of the pool water volume by a notional 5°C above normal unheated temperature:

- **ground source heat pumps** – to extract heat from the ground via up to 90 boreholes with a depth of 60-70 metres. An external area of 45 x 40m is required together with significant plant space within the building. A budget cost of £406,000 was identified for the installation of this system.



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- **hybrid system** – to extract heat using air and ground source heat pumps. An external area of 30 x 35m is required for boreholes together with plant space within the building greater than the above. Operational costs and maintenance are also greater but the budget installation is somewhat less at £251,000.

Due to high capital costs, lack of provision for capital outlay payback, excessive external area requirements for boreholes and significant plant space requirements internally – all for arguably fairly limited benefits – it has not been possible to pursue these options to date.

Design considerations

Two pool relining options were considered: tiled reinforced concrete and stainless steel lining. The **stainless steel lining** option had the advantage of prefabrication and a shorter on site period for erection, lasting water tightness and low maintenance requirements throughout its life. The construction period for a **tiled concrete lining** would have been longer due to relatively lengthy waiting periods between pouring the concrete and applying render/screed and between the latter operation and fixing tiles and grouting. There is a further waiting period before the pool can be filled with water.

The operations involved in the construction of a tiled concrete lining were also weather sensitive and, given the extended period for construction, were at increased risk of delays, particularly as the contract would span the winter period.

Over the longer term, due to its inherent flexibility, the stainless steel lining would better accommodate small movements in the original pool along the existing crack lines. The rigid reinforced concrete lining, on the other hand, would have had a tendency to crack reflectively over the moving crack lines in the existing structure.

The existing plan dimensions of the pool (61 x 27m) would have been reduced to a greater or lesser extent by relining. In the case of the concrete lining the length and width would each be reduced by 600mm. As the stainless steel lining is composed of sheet material the reduction in dimensions was extremely small.

Both indoor and outdoor stainless steel swimming pools were visited. These pools had a crisp and clean appearance. One outdoor pool visited was 25 years old but gave the impression that it had been only recently constructed. Contrary to expectation as regards the effect of the stainless steel on the perception of pool water colour, this outdoor pool was blue in appearance, though tending slightly towards green. It is to be noted, however, that the appearance of the lido pool is influenced not only by the original blue glazed bricks but also by the blue coating, which is not original, applied annually in recent years to the pool bottom.

The stainless steel outdoor pool was visited on a bright and sunny day in order to establish whether the metal surface introduced additional glare which might hamper the proper supervision of the pool by lifeguards. It was concluded that there were no significant problems in this respect.

In accordance with best current practice the new pool was designed with a **level deck overflow perimeter channel**. The surface of the water being at the level of the pool surround would weir over the overflow channel grating, unlike the previous system where the water level was approximately 250mm below the edge. The surface of the pool water, where the greatest proportion of pollutants is concentrated, would be far more effectively cleansed than if a traditional scum channel or skimmer arrangement were adopted.

Water quality

The decision to retain a single body of water and the demanding requirements for turnover rates posed a challenge. The only viable option was to **reduce the volume of water**, thereby enabling the filtration plant, with increased pumps, to process the water at a significantly faster rate. It was proposed to reduce the pool water volume by approximately 30% from 3,040m³ to 2,200m³. The reduced water volume, allied to a scheme to completely replace and resize circulation pipework, would allow a design turnover period in the range of approximately 4-5 hours to be contemplated.

If the upgrading of the pipework was undertaken without the pool water volume being reduced, the turnover period would be commensurately higher, which would have been outside the more demanding figures of the current guidelines.



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Another design aspiration was to try and extend the length of the shallow end of the pool. This would have a negligible impact on reducing the total volume of water as the majority of this came from reductions in depth at the deep end of the pool. It does however provide a much greater capacity for young people to utilise the facility at peak times. The compromise solution was to extend the depth down to 1m by just a 5m length.

Phase One Construction

Invarmex (UK) Ltd was appointed to prepare the detailed designs installation of the steel liner. Neilcott Special Works Ltd was appointed as main contractor and works commenced on site in September 2004.

The first element of work was to cut off the top layers of glazed bricks to receive the channel for the deck level pool. The levels were made up using a no-fines concrete mix. This was drilled to allow drainage and the stainless steel liner was welded into position by specialist contractors.

The new ramps to the front of the building and up to the café were installed, together with new disabled toilets. The existing plant and pipework for the filtration system was installed and new paving laid around the whole of the pool surrounds. The project was completed in mid May 2005 and the pool opened at the Whitsun Bank Holiday weekend.

The total cost for the first phase was £2.8m.

Summer 2005

The refurbishment of the lido has received a positive response, demonstrated by an increase in usage and positive results from consultation. Despite opening a month later than usual, over 45,300 visits were made from the beginning of June until mid September. This compares to just over 39,000 visits for the whole of the 2004 season.

The introduction of the new season tickets arrangements has proved very popular with users. In 2004, 210 season tickets were sold. In 2005, 270 summer season tickets and 100 all year season tickets were sold.

For several years there have been requests from swimmers to extend the opening times at the lido to enable late evening swimming sessions. In 2005 late evening sessions on Thursday evenings during August were introduced on a trial basis. Initially only 20 swimmers attended, but this soon increased and on the last late night session over 200 swimmers made use of the lido. We hope to increase evening sessions in 2006.



Parliament Hill Fields Lido viewed from the east (*above*), with the new deck level perimeter channel and stainless steel lining (*right*)

Design and conservation issues at Brockwell Lido

Stephen Chance
director, Pollard Thomas Edwards architects

I am in charge of the Brockwell Lido project, working with the project architect, Jo Edwards. This is my favourite picture of Brockwell Lido. Something about the eery orange glow of the hand tinting suggests an eternal sunrise – like everyone is in heaven. And every day in heaven is always July 14 1937. It is suffused with nostalgia and the more you look, the more interesting it gets, from the highly mannered wrapover back straps of the man in the mid foreground, to the diver on the high board: eternally frozen in mid air.



Lidos are great places to meet. At Brixton Beach, as the locals know Brockwell Lido, the whole vibrant mix of Brixton and Herne Hill society, the cosmopolitan, multi-racial kids and grannies, gender-flexible crowd, from the winter swim diehards to the summer Bar-B-Q'ers, all pile into the lido and get their kit off on a hot summer's day.

So let's take a chilly dip into the difficult reality of lidos. Many lidos have suffered from deterioration and neglect. Brockwell has been threatened many times, as have so many other abandoned outdoor pools, such as Broomhill, Ipswich and Clifton, Bristol (see [page 11](#)). Both are pools with tremendous potential, positioned between the direction of revival or demolition.

Cold water pools do not pay their way. To secure the long term viability of Brockwell Lido, Fusion therefore proposes to expand the existing all year round activities, which currently take place in less than perfect accommodation.

Brockwell Lido is close to Dulwich Road on its north side. The south side faces onto Brockwell Park. Essentially its concept is like a low castle, or fort, defending and protecting a private inner world. Its walls are thickened in places to accommodate changing rooms, pool plant, café and a few other thin, elongated rooms used for yoga, crèches etc.

The fort concept was realised in a simple 1930s modernist aesthetic of brick walls and metal windows. Of most importance is the setting of the pool itself. Our intention is to modify this as little as possible.

Our basic idea was to thicken the south wall, by taking down the park side façade and moving it six metres further into the park, thereby creating a 10 metre wide wing, able to accommodate, in sensibly proportioned spaces, a lifestyle centre with fitness machines, a spa, treatment rooms, juice bar etc, studios for dance classes and yoga, and a crèche.

The second measure was to move the entrance – originally on the park side – to the east side, near the car park. In winter most activities will take place in the early evenings. To make a well lit route to the entrance direct from the road or car park is therefore essential to ensure people feel safe going to and from their classes and sessions.

The overall feel and appearance of the lido will be maintained, with matching materials and detailing, with subtle improvements to light and views. The façade consists of clerestory strip windows, and blank doors which lead to either changing rooms or plant rooms. Our intention is to introduce some clear glazing into the doors so that in the lifestyle centre there is a visible connection with the pool. In the gym area and in the studios it will be possible to control privacy using screens and blinds. The overall intention is to maintain the enclosing wall for bathers using the pool.



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Another intention of moving the entrance is to improve the flow of pool users and those going to the other activities. Turn right for the pool, left for the yoga class. Each has its own toilets and showers. The pool will have additional entrances and exits which can be opened up in high season to manage increased attendance levels.

There are a number of issues which anyone dealing with reviving a lido will need to address such as:

- regulations issues: security, child welfare, disabled access,
- safety issues: means of escape, crowd management
- leisure issues: different needs of users and changes in attitude, insulation to reduce running costs
- community issues: different users, involving the community
- conservation issues: the careful balance of old and new. Historic pools had segregated changing. Now there is a preference for 'changing villages'. Yet we need to be aware of different cultural needs for some segregated changing. Also, members of the health clubs and pilates classes might like a bit more luxury and warmth than the damp concrete aesthetic of some early lidos.

We also need to be aware that the leisure facilities are going to be electronically monitored with such things as:

- membership of different 'clubs'
- ticketing
- environmental controls
- CCTV security and alarms
- centralised music or TV
- seasonally adjusted administration, staffing, accounts etc

For repair work at Brockwell Lido we intend to use authentic materials. Some of these were bog standard materials in 1930 but are now very expensive. There are problems with concrete deterioration. Wherever it is possible to repair something and give it reasonable life expectancy we will. All the usual issues of making changes to a building with history apply: do you make new look original, or make it clear that you are adding a new layer?

Brockwell had a problem with graffiti on the park elevation, so the former operators adopted a kind of homeopathic cure, by getting local artists to paint a graffiti style mural on the whole wall. When we demolish, this mural will be lost, and the façade rebuilt in brick. So a certain layer of history will be lost (unless the malady, and its cure, both return).

Flat roofs are a characteristic of Brockwell Lido. But they are problematic. They leak, they allow access over the top, people can break in through rooflights and it is a huge exposed area to maintain.

Single glazed Crittall windows are another defining feature of the lido's aesthetic. They rust, they create cold-bridging, heat loss, and condensation. Many of them need renewing. For the comfort of users, the future durability of the building and global warming, should we put back modern single glazing, or put in double glazing instead?

Last year we held a poolside meeting. On one side of the pool swimwear models were posing for an advertising shoot. On the other side a skinny male octogenarian was sitting in the lotus position. This was a perfect illustration of how different groups – ranging from toddlers and school kids to body builders and contemporary dancers – need to co-exist in a building which was designed for one simple, single purpose activity: taking a dip in a cold pond. It has therefore been essential to consult widely with the local community, and we're grateful for all the help, guidance and expertise of BLU, the Brockwell Lido users group, the Friends of Brockwell Park, the previous managers Paddy and Casey, and everyone who has given up time to help campaign for the continued existence of the lido. Also English Heritage, Lambeth consultation office, the 20th Century Society, crèche managers and yoga teachers. I hope we've spoken at least once to everyone with something to contribute to keeping the project alive.

It has been a long haul and we've learnt a great deal ourselves on this project so far. Currently a large water main is being moved on the site, and soon after that we hope to start in earnest, and get this thing ready for future generations of users. I hope this project will inspire other lovers of jeopardised or defunct pools to keep going.

Brockwell Lido extension and refurbishment

Areas of model in pale pink represent original 1937 buildings

Areas in darker pink show proposed extension to southern range of buildings

The internal design will include the following components to complement the lido

- children's activity area
- wet and dry side toilets and changing rooms
- healthy lifestyle suite, including, sauna, steam room, therapy pool, fitness equipment area and treatment rooms
- three studios / multi-activity rooms
- new entrance on east side of lido

Artist impressions of the refurbishment and extension of the new east side entrance (*below*) and southern poolside buildings (*below right*).





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Pool Ideas discussion

Delegates formed small groups to brainstorm ideas. The results are summarised as follows:

Petition the DCMS and Sport England to re-classify open air pools as sports venues

- The refusal of DCMS and Sport England to classify open air pools as sports venues restricts the ability to raise funds for restoration and upgrading, thereby making them vulnerable to closure and sale by cash-strapped local authorities.
- Re-classification should include full cost recovery and exemption from VAT.
- Lidos and open air pools can deliver many of the health, social and environmental policies set by government.
- They form an important focus for a local community, providing a safe, and relatively cheap environment for all ages and social classes to swim and socialise.
- Added value and year-round usage can be achieved in a number of ways: heating the water, installing a retractable roof, hiring out the pool for scuba diving training, setting up a gym, creating space for exercise classes, running youth clubs and social events, turning the pool into an ice rink in winter and so on.
- Lidos and open air pools – which are in effect urban beaches – encourage people to ‘holiday at home’, thereby helping to counter the environmental effects of air travel.
- Statistics on the number of open air pools in existence, and under threat, should be centralised by DCMS.

Establish a national lidos association, and a website, to lobby, disseminate information, share best practice and increase awareness of the health, environmental and community benefits of open air pools

- A national association with a dedicated website would strengthen the efforts of campaigning and users' groups; help attract media attention and gain political and celebrity support.
- The sharing of information on successful restoration, marketing, funding and particularly of strategies employed during consultation periods with local authorities, would create a body of knowledge to prevent the need to ‘re-invent the wheel’ each time a pool comes under threat or needs refurbishment.
- An association could effect savings – for instance on the bulk buying of equipment.
- An association could organise events and seminars on subjects such as funding, running media campaigns, design and conservation issues.
- An email database of lido supporters would be part of the website, accessible to members only. This could build on the existing database of the Lidos Yahoo Group, at <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/lidos>
- The association and website would be funded by subscription. Membership could include the benefit of discounted entry to pools in the association.

Establish a series of outreach events to promote outdoor swimming to the general public

- Efforts should be made to establish a National Lido Day, with free or reduced entry to encourage visitors to swim and learn about the heritage and ethos of outdoor swimming.
- Lido operators could recreate the experience of pools in their heyday – for instance the 1930s, complete with knitted swimming costumes, contemporary refreshments, music, film shows and so on.
- The day could be linked to art or photographic competitions for schools run in conjunction with local newspapers.
- Local celebrities could be encouraged to lend their support.
- Schools could be offered the opportunity to bring pupils in for one day a year, free of charge.
- Lidos should be encouraged to participate in Heritage Open Day schemes.
- The National Lidos Association (or equivalent) should conduct surveys of non-users, to find out how lidos may extend their appeal.
- Extending the work of the London Pools Campaign, the Golden Goggles awards scheme should be rolled out nationally, to rate outdoor pools, encourage high standards and generate publicity.
- Lido supporters should lobby GPs to prescribe outdoor swimming as a means of improving health and countering obesity.



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Appendix One

Open letter to recipients of Conference Proceedings

Copies of the following letter have been sent as part of the conference proceedings to the individuals and organisations listed at the foot of the page.

Dear

Please find enclosed the proceedings of the **Reviving Lidos** conference, held on March 16th 2006 in central London. Reviving Lidos was attended by around 100 delegates including pool campaigners and swimmers from all over the country, pool managers, representatives from local authorities and architects. It was a great success with much lively debate and enthusiasm for reviving these treasured buildings.

It was agreed by conference delegates that you should be informed of the proceedings, and that your responses be circulated to interested parties.

The main findings of the conference were as follows:

- From a peak of over 300 lidos and open air pools in Britain, only 97 remain. Cities such as Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool, which until the 1950s each had several public open air facilities, now have none. London's total of 68 is now reduced to 8.
- Lidos and open air pools can deliver significant benefits in various areas of public policy, not least promoting health and fitness, social inclusion in safe public spaces, community action and identity, and by protecting the environment (by promoting regional tourism and 'holidays at home').
- Sport England's current policies for funding swimming pools do not take into account the wider benefits of lidos and open air pools, nor their potential to operate as all year round facilities. We would welcome the opportunity to re-state the case.

We hope you find this report of interest and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Spreckley (Played in Britain) and Jo Edwards (PTEa)
Organisers of the *Reviving Lidos* conference

Letter and proceedings sent to:

The Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport
The Minister for Sport
The Department for Culture Media and Sport
Sport England
Local Government Association
English Heritage
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
Business in Sport and Leisure
Amateur Swimming Association



Reviving Lidos

the future of Britain's lidos and open air swimming pools



Appendix Two

Speaker biographies

Duncan Black, operations director, Alliance Leisure

Duncan has worked in the leisure industry for over twenty years in a range of roles from life guard to his current position with the industry's leading facility development company. Following a degree in sports science he opened the first Post House Hotels (now part of Holiday Inns) leisure facility in 1982. He became group club manager for a small hotel chain and then moved into fitness equipment sales, ending up as sales director for Life Fitness UK Ltd. Duncan joined Alliance Leisure in 2004 - a privately owned company whose sole focus is working with local authority and education based leisure services operations to improve their facility and service delivery through design, build and fund or design and build services. Having been a successful middle distance runner, coach, wannabe triathlete and now golfer, Duncan follows most sports closely and firmly believes in the success the leisure industry can bring to the country as a whole if more people of all ages can be encouraged to increase their activity levels.

Alison Bradley, leisure facilities manager, Plymouth City Council

Alison was responsible for the refurbishment and re-opening of Tinside Lido in May 2003. Her responsibilities also include Mount Wise Outdoor Pool and three indoor pools. Alison has worked in the leisure industry for the past twenty years and is a qualified swimming teacher, a keen swimmer and given the choice of being on land or in the water, would always choose the latter. Alison also lectures part time at the University of Plymouth and runs her own life and business coaching practice.

Stephen Chance, director, Pollard Thomas Edwards architects (PTEa)

Steve is the director in charge of the extension and refurbishment of Brockwell Lido within PTEa. Many of the projects Steve has worked on since he joined the practice in 1985, and was made a director in 1992, have involved a high level of community participation and consultation. Of the fifty plus design awards won by PTEa in thirty years of practice, seven have been for Steve's projects. Steve is also a regular reviewer for the architectural press.

Jo Edwards, architect, Pollard Thomas Edwards architects (PTEa)

Jo is the project architect for the extension and refurbishment of Brockwell Lido, also known as 'Brixton Beach'. Recently, she has been liaising with the Friends of Broomhill Pool in Ipswich on their feasibility study and has led the organisation of the Reviving Lidos conference within PTEa. In 1995-97 Jo worked in Holland for internationally renowned architects and is the winner of an external lighting competition in Rotterdam. She graduated in 1999 with a first class honours degree and the Glasgow Institute of Architects year prizes for 1993 and 1998. She qualified as an architect in 2001 with a distinction in Professional Practice and Management from UCL. The projects Jo finds most fascinating are those that involve working with people who will use a building – who care about it because they relax, work, swim, live or play in or around it. Jo regularly swims 1km in the morning before work.

Sue Hudson, founder member, London Pools Campaign

Until Westminster Council decided to close Marshall Street Baths in 1997, Sue was a slim and happy swimmer. Now, she says, things are different! Sue has been heavily involved with the establishment of the Friends of Marshall Street and the subsequent campaign to reopen the pool which has been hugely time consuming and frustrating but a steep learning curve. When a pool is available, users don't always think about what swimming means, both to themselves and to the community. Without one, its relevance comes into sharp focus. A meeting with Liz Hughes from the Haggerston Pool Campaign at an Open House day for Marshall Street Baths led to the establishment of the London Pools Campaign. Sue is talking at the conference as a campaigner for Marshall Street Baths but, more importantly, as a member of the London Pools Campaign and to launch this year's Golden Goggles award.



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Simon Inglis, author and series editor, Played in Britain

Simon is the creator and series editor of *Played in Britain*, English Heritage's acclaimed new series on sporting heritage and has written three of the first four titles - *Played in Manchester* (2004), *Engineering Archie* (2005) and *A Load of Old Balls* (2005). As an architectural historian, media commentator and lecturer on sporting heritage, Simon is best known for his books on stadiums and football history. His seminal *Football Grounds of Britain* was described by Frank Keating of *The Guardian* as the best sports book of the 20th century. His other titles include *Soccer in the Dock* (1985), *League Football and The Men Who Made It* (1988), *The Football Grounds of Europe* (1990), *Villa Park - 100 Years* (1997) and *Sightlines - a Stadium Odyssey* (2000).

Simon Lee, superintendent, Hampstead Heath

Simon has been involved in open space and recreation management for over twenty years, starting at Guildford Borough Council, where his duties involved tending the gardens at the Stoke Park Lido. During the 1990s he worked for Cheltenham Borough Council and became head of parks and landscape responsible for all aspects of green space. At various times he was also involved in the management of the Sandford Park Lido and assisted with the transfer arrangements from local authority custodianship to a trust. In 2001 he took up the position of superintendent of Hampstead Heath responsible for the management of these unique 790 acres of land. The extensive sports and recreation facilities include the lido and outdoor swimming ponds. Hampstead Heath is a registered charity and the cost of managing the site is met from the City of London's own private finance at no cost to local taxpayers.

Rob Pagano, business manager, Fusion Lifestyle

Rob has worked in the leisure industry, more specifically in facility management, in Australia and the UK for over fifteen years. He has worked in senior management roles for a variety of leisure operators, including local authority operators, not for profit organisations and private leisure management companies. Rob is currently employed by Fusion Lifestyle, a leisure trust that manages thirteen leisure facilities in south east London. Rob's main responsibility is to manage the redevelopment of Brockwell Lido. Rob has a degree in leisure studies and a masters of management in leisure management.

Julie Sargent, chief executive, Sandford Lido Ltd

Julie's career began in 1985 at Gloucester Leisure Centre, where she enjoyed the variety of working at grass roots level, particularly meeting customers and coaching different sports. By 1991, she had become one of the duty managers and relished the level of responsibility that came with a managerial role, so jumped at the opportunity to become part of the management team running Pools On The Park in Richmond, on behalf of Whitewater Leisure Management Ltd. In 1992 the centre was closed for refurbishment so she went to Leisure World in Bridlington to set up, write and train employees on new company procedures before returning to the refurbished centre at Pools On The Park. Over the next four years she gained promotion to general manager. But she started to look for a new challenge and in April 1996 became the manager at Sandford Parks Lido where she is now, ten years later, chief executive.

Janet Smith, author, Liquid Assets

When Janet moved to Tooting in south London in the late 1980s she discovered one of Britain's largest open air pools on her doorstep. Like many others before and since, she became hooked on Tooting Bec Lido, and in 1996 published a history of the pool. Since then she has embarked upon an extensive tour of Britain's hundred or so other open air pools, the result of which is *Liquid Assets*, the third book in English Heritage's *Played in Britain* series. Janet trained as a journalist with the BBC in 1984 and spent most of her career in radio news and at Westminster. She now works as a freelance journalist and is also a Blue Badge guide for London.



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www.playedinbritain.co.uk

www.ptea.co.uk

Appendix Three

Lido links

www.lidos.org.uk – the non-profit directory website on all lidos and other outdoor swimming pools in the UK still in public use. Also includes tidal seawater pools and those recently closed which could be reopened, as well as published references and background information. Compiled by Oliver Merrington & Andy Hoines.

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/lidos> – an email list with 70 members, moderated by Oliver Merrington. It is called the 'Lidos History Society', but has never physically met as a group. Members also share their photographs and other documents. You do not need to be a member to read messages.

www.flickr.com/groups/lidos – a new Flickr group containing photographs of lidos worldwide, submitted by members.

www.tootinglidocentenary.co.uk – details of events celebrating the centenary year of Tooting Bec Lido.

www.droitwichsaltlido.info – Save A Lido Today (SALT) one of two groups in Droitwich Spa campaigning to retain the town's open air salt pool.

www.savedroitwichlido.org – The Friends of Droitwich Spa Lido and its Park.

www.savebroomhillpool.org – The Broomhill Pool Trust campaigning for the only Olympic sized open air pool in Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex.

www.kingsmeadowbaths.org.uk – King's Meadow Campaign working to save the baths in Reading.

www.brockwelllido.com – run by Brockwell Lido Users (BLU), a pressure group set up to ensure the lido and services within the lido complex are maintained and extended.

www.londonpoolscampaign.com – the London Pools Campaign was formed to reverse the decline in public swimming pools in London and bring together individual campaigns for local swimming facilities.

www.so-dive-in.co.uk – lost lidos and 'aqua nostalgia' compiled by Anne Jessel.

www.prstubbs.btinternet.co.uk/lidos.htm – lidos and outdoor swimming pools in the UK.

www.river-swimming.co.uk – the River and Lake Swimming Association.

www.ruthcorney.com – Parliament Hill Fields Lido photographs.

www.davidchurchill.co.uk – Brockwell Lido and Saltdean Lido photographs.

www.toni.mcgreachan.name – Toni McGrechan, an artist inspired by water and formerly artist in residence at Tooting Bec Lido.

www.pastscape.org – Heritage Data, English Heritage National Monuments Record. Working from the directory in *Liquid Assets*, individual site records are being created for the national historic environment database containing a brief summary and index of architectural features. These records will eventually be available on Pastscape, NMR's online database and, where possible, linked to images drawn from the Images of England and Viewfinder databases.

www.sporta.org – the Sports and Recreation Trust Association. Membership is open to non-profit distributing organisations which manage sport and leisure centres open to the general public.