



Cllr Annette Crowe  
Town Mayor  
Ledbury Town Council Offices  
Church Street  
Ledbury  
Herefordshire  
HR8 1DH

18 May 2016

Dear Cllr Crowe

### Refurbishment of Ledbury Swimming Pool

Thank you for your recent letter outlining your concerns regarding the refurbishment proposals at Ledbury Swimming Pool.

I can confirm that Sport England does not advocate village-style over single-sex changing provision – both options have distinct advantages and disadvantages that are set out within our Swimming Pools Design Guidance Note (2013), which was published in partnership with the Amateur Swimming Association. It can be viewed on the Sport England website here: <http://www.sportengland.org/media/4187/swimming-pools-dgn-2013.pdf>

Village changing is now the preferred option for the vast majority of new pools and a number of existing pools have now converted from single-sex changing to village changing. This is due to the flexibility and accessibility benefits of allowing helpers to accompany disabled people of the opposite sex, being more suitable for large groups (e.g. schools), and allowing families to change together. It also has operational advantages in that staff of either sex can supervise, clean and manage the entire changing area.

However, Sport England can support either changing option. To date Officers have been providing design advice on the applicants (Herefordshire Council) and the operators (Halo Leisure) preferred design – the village-style changing. Our understanding of the Open Day consultation event is that 10-15 of the 101 participants were against the current changing proposals. Whilst this is therefore the minority view, it is important that the rationale for their dissatisfaction is fully understood, so mitigating action can be considered. In that respect, I am pleased to learn that both Council officers and Halo Leisure will be making contact with Ledbury Town Council in the near future to explore in further detail.

The funding application was amongst the strongest we received and the overall package to secure sustainable leisure provision in the Ledbury community is one we will continue to support.

Thank you for bringing this matter to Sport England's attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Bitel', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.

Nick Bitel  
Chair