

DRAFT LETTER TO MARK ASHWELL, FORWARD PLANNING
For advice and consultation

The Planning Officer
NNDC

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you as the Co-ordinator of Fakenham Area Partnership and Chairman of a steering group which is working to build support and progress the potential future development of a swimming pool in Fakenham. We have completed a widespread community survey and logged 1200 positive responses to our fairly comprehensive questionnaire. According to our Sport England consultant we have provided a body of well documented positive evidence demonstrating significant support for such a project within the Fakenham area.

We are acutely aware of the difficulties which accompany such ambitious plans as these, but we are determined to keep moving forward even if progress is in very small steps over an extended period. Consequently we invited Mark Ashwell as the NNDC Forward Planning Officer to come and help us understand how we might hope to build a proposal which could possibly be included for consideration in the Local Development Framework and the housing development plans in Fakenham.

If Fakenham is a growth town we would argue that it needs such amenities as a swimming pool to maintain the quality of life and healthy lifestyle prerogatives of a modern, low crime, healthy, well integrated community. We realise this may well be a long term plan but are convinced we will be able to build the support, sponsors, partners and eventual funding to make this possible one day. In the meantime we are writing to you to inform the Planning Department officially of our hopes, and to request that our interest may be formally registered, if possible, in any future planning processes. We are thinking in particular of the housing development plans on the land to the north of Fakenham along the by-pass and wonder if any part of that land set aside as community area may be considered for a swimming pool site. May we also register a request for consideration of any potential section 106 monies which may arise from the development of the northern boundary site? Historically Fakenham has felt not too well favoured by earlier planning gain benefits and this would be a wonderful opportunity to dispel that myth!

We acknowledge that even if a large percentage of the total population was in fact in favour of such a facility it would still only constitute a 'want', not a 'need', and that this criterion is a significant factor in assessing development priorities. However we feel that over time, the increasing pressure on our health services with an ageing population and the health issues related to the increasing obesity in young people, the siting of a health and fitness amenity within easy reach of 15,000 or more residents will eventually become not even a 'need' but more of a 'must'?

We would welcome your comments and advice.

Yours....

Janet Holdom
Fakenham Area Partnership