

Leisure Centre Evidence Report

2021

INTRODUCTION

Stroud District Council officers undertook various discussions with leisure centres across the country. The aim was to provide a learning opportunity about different management options and funding opportunities for the development of centres within the Stroud District.

Understanding how other leisure centres have approached a redevelopment, is an important part of determining the best option for the Stroud District.

A range of leisure centres were selected that covered different types of operation with different targets and demographics. This was to provide a rounded view of the current demand for leisure facilities.

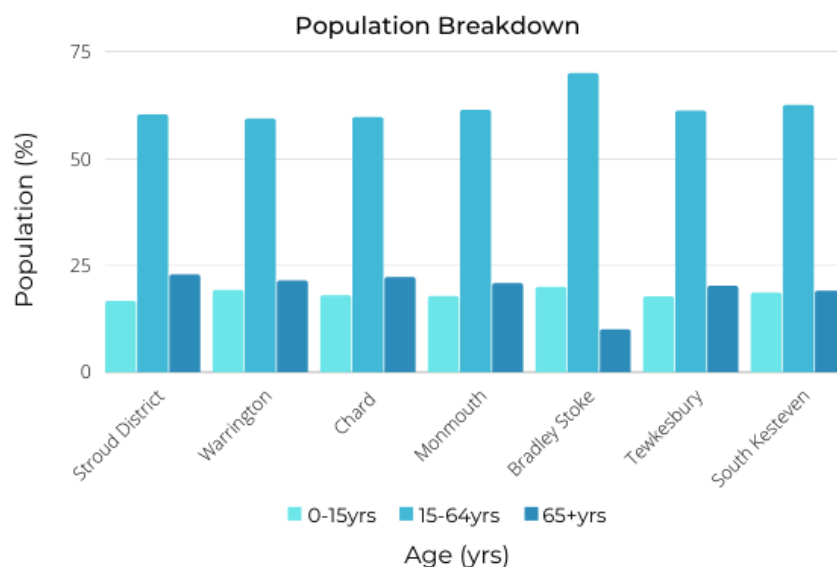
Below is an overview of the locations of proposed sites to visit.



POPULATION BREAKDOWNS

Determining overall data and statistics

Of the sites initially chosen, the data surrounding population was collated. This gave an overall picture of the areas that were being reviewed. From this information, it was easier to determine which sites would be serving a similar demand to the Stroud District.



*Information gathered from the Office of National statistics via Nomis

Of the areas above, Chard and Monmouth are most similar to the Stroud District. In comparison, Chard has a higher population than Monmouth, with Chard housing a population of 13,074; 7.75% of South Somerset's population of 168,696. The total population of Monmouth is 91,323.

The population of the Stroud District in 2020 was 120,685

WHAT DO WE WANT TO KNOW?

Determining overall data and statistics

The following questions were chosen to ask of leisure centres before the meetings took place

- 01 How is the centre managed?
- 02 Who is your operator and how was the redevelopment funded?
- 03 What is your footfall?
- 04 What is your current subsidy per user
- 05 What is your largest income generator?
- 06 What are your user statistics

KEY COMPARISONS

In order to directly compare leisure centres, those most similar to Stroud District were selected to contact for discussion.

Table A

	Monmouth	South Kesteven	South Glos.
Gym	✓	✓	✓
Swimming Pool	✓	✓	✓
Learner/Teaching Pool		✓	✓
Studio/s	✓	✓	✓
Spin Studio	✓		
Toning Suite	✓		✓
Wellbeing (beauty,sauna, steam room)	✓		✓
Sports Hall			✓
Courts		✓	
Meeting Rooms	✓	✓	✓
Soft play/ play area	✓	✓	✓
Creche			
Café	✓		✓
Physio/ rehabilitation			✓
Outdoor facilities			✓

Table A details a comparison between the facilities at each of the chosen sites.

Table B compares the details of centre operation.

Full details of all the options are in the following document - Management Options Appraisal: Appendix 16

Table B

Operator	Monmouth	South Kesteven	South Glos.
Type of operation	MonLife in house	Leisure SK LATC (newly formed)	Active Lifestyles - Circadian trust Trust
Development Costs	£700k for management decision	500k set up the LATC - most of this money was spent on equipment	
How was it funded?	Monmouthshire County Council	South Kesteven District Council	South Glos Council
Operational Defect	1 m		
Subsidy per User		info not available	
Partners			
Tax relief	Neighbouring schools, GPs Ealing rule	none - newly formed business yes	Public health, South Glos council, GPs, Soho coffee franchise covid grants
Council influence over operation		Board of directors employed by council as directors/members/one independent with leisure experience	
Council influence over development	Council run centre		Trust run centre
Delivery of Council objectives	Council run centre	yes	Trust run centre
	yes	yes	HLS taken over from council
Number of Members	Abergavenny - 1191, Caldicot - 1121, Chepstow - 1281, Monmouth - 2115 (as of Sept 21)	fitness: Grantham - 1291, Bourne - 830, Stamford - 447	Gym: 18,500 across all sites pre-covid, 12,500 post covid
Number on L25 programme	Abergavenny - 558, Caldicot - 442, Chepstow - 428, Monmouth - 563	Grantham - 1107, Bourne - 591, Stamford - 600	8.5 thousand across all sites
Number of fitness classes in programme		Grantham - 29 + 56 Virtual, Bourne - 15, Stamford - 4	
Health and wellbeing Projects (inc. funding)		Just appointed a health and wellbeing manager.	

South Kesteven

South Kesteven District Council deliver a range of sport and leisure activities as part of their community support. This includes the GP Exercise Referral Scheme, Health Walks as part of the Walk for Life Scheme and FitKids. This was delivered in conjunction with Lincolnshire County Council.



LeisureSK

South Kesteven currently run four leisure centres across the district, one of which is currently closed. These are managed by the Local Authority Trading Company LeisureSK.

LeisureSK was set up in early 2021 after the contract with 1Life ended. The LATC is one of three trading companies set up by the council, the others being DeliverSK and InvestSK, that work on the development and delivery of the leisure facility development.



Setting up LeisureSK cost £500,000
Most of this was spent on equipment



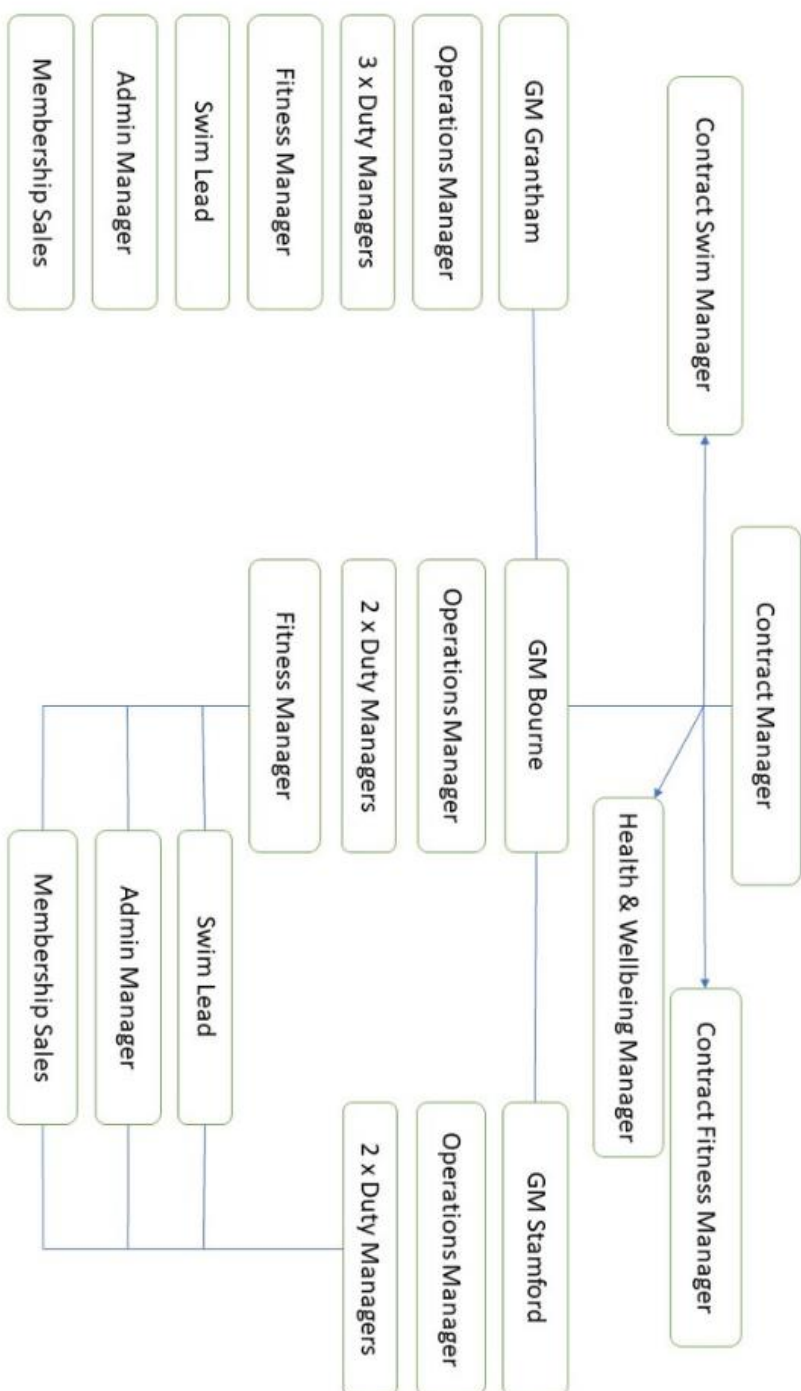
There are 2298 swimmers across the Learn to Swim programme



There are 2568 fitness members across all sites with 48 in-person fitness classes and 56 virtual classes.

As South Kesteven Council has some control over the operation of their leisure centres, LeisureSK is able to successfully deliver council objectives. The board of directors for the LATC are employed by the council and consists the CEO of South Kesteven Council (with leisure experience), one director, The Leader of the Council, three members and one independent director with leisure experience. They have recently appointed a health and wellbeing manager to oversee and deliver their Health and Wellbeing plan. The staffing structure of LeisureSK is detailed in Appendix A below.

Appendix A



South Kesteven

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Monmouth

Monmouth Leisure Centre is a **council run** centre, that forms part of the MonLife structure. Operating in five services, MonLife delivers leisure, youth and outdoor education, green infrastructure and countryside access.



MonLife - Monmouthshire CC

MonLife, launched January 6th 2020, operates in the following five services:



MonLife Active runs four Leisure sites across the county - Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, **Monmouth**.

- The management options appraisal cost the council £700,00 before a decision was made
- The council were initially in favour of a Local Authority Trading Company, going as far as setting up and registering a shadow company and electing a board of directors. Shortly before the company was set to trade, the council changed their decision, deciding to being everything in-house. The 'Ealing rule' was a factor in this decision.



MonLife had an annual direct turnover in 2019/20 of £8.5m with an income of £6.42m...



...136 FTE staff and circa 197 active volunteers.



There is a total of 1971 swimmers on the learn to swim programme



MonLife Active has a total 5708 memberships

Monmouth's toning suite has 250 memberships, separate from other fitness memberships.

They have 100 people per month on referral across all four sites who are supplied with a 'fit for life' membership upon completion

South Glos

South Gloucestershire Council operate their leisure centres under the **Circadian Trust**. The trust, initially set up and branded as South Glos Leisure as an NPDO. Active Lifestyles Centres (Circadian Brand) operates five leisure centres across the county. These include Bradley Stoke, Longwell Green, Kingswood, Yate and Thornbury.



Circadian Trust

The leisure trust was originally formed in 2005. It has a twenty five year contract with the council across all centres.

Centre redevelopment was managed by Alliance Leisure (development partner) with Max Associates (leisure consultants) putting the business plan together, alongside FMG consultants who led the procurement process. Circadian inputted on the centre design as the incoming operator.



Working as a trust means that surplus money is reinvested into the trust.

Because of this, the equipment can be changed every 5 years.

Circadian are also looking at the redevelopment of Kingswood Leisure Centre as it is estimated it is within the last 10 years of life. Funding would be borrowed through prudential borrowing for this project, and this is expected to come to fruition within the next 5 years.

INITIAL FINDINGS REPORT

The initial research into each of the centres determined which site would be most useful in the options appraisal.

Chard

Chard was chosen as a key centre to review because of its similarity to Stroud. It is a developmental partner design and build project. As it is a really new build, it explores the prospect of a new centre along the M5 corridor.

The redevelopment of the leisure centre was part of the Chard regeneration project, aiming to attract people to the town centre and improve pedestrian links to and from the Boden Mill site and other facilities. The redevelopment was managed by Alliance Leisure. Plans to open the new leisure centre are between January and March 2022.



The centre itself will be operated by Freedom Leisure and funded by South Somerset District Council. Freedom Leisure operate many sites across the country, with Goldenstones Leisure Centre in Yeovil and Westlands Sport and Fitness Centre in Yeovil being the closest to Chard. Freedom Leisure is a not-for-profit leisure trust that took over the management of Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton leisure centres in April 2021, taking on a 15-year contract with SSDC. They run 106 facilities across the country, 24 of which are in partnership with councils, schools or academies. South Somerset District Council offer a 'Passport to Leisure' Card. This helps those on low incomes 'enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle by giving them discounted access to leisure activities.' Access to transport is also provided by South Somerset Association for Voluntary and Community Action.

Wyre Forest

Also operated by Places Leisure, Wyre Forest runs a Health and Wellness programme that supports recovery, rehabilitation and overall wellbeing. As part of the scheme they offer a 'Passport to Leisure' scheme which allows residents access to facilities that meet certain criteria.



Eastleigh and Camberley



Eastleigh and Camberley Leisure Centres are both operated by Places Leisure.

The redevelopment of Camberley was opened on the 1st of July 2021 and was a £22 million investment

Tewkesbury

The redevelopment was managed by Willmott Dixon, and worked in partnership with The Swimming Bath trust. It was estimated that the build would cost in excess of £3.8 million.

The centre is operated by Places Leisure the leisure management arm of the Places for People Group. During the redevelopment of the centre, developers Willmott Dixon had 240 school and college students visit the site. They ran educational workshops for 120 students with 34 weeks of work experiences for 18+ year olds. Their 109 weeks of apprenticeship work has led to 100% of apprentices progressing into employment.



Warrington

Centres in Warrington are operated by LiveWire, a CIC, and so any profit generated is reinvested.

Their five leisure facilities are located in Broomfields, Birchwood Birchwood Leisure and Tennis Complex, Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub, Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub, and Woolston Neighbourhood Hub. A community hub in Bewsey and Dallam is due to open in 2021. Leisure Facilities Include: Gyms, Teaching Pool, Training Pool with moveable floors, Tennis Courts, Creche (Orford Hub Only)

At the Bewsey and Dallam Hub facilities will include: Reception and social areas, library facilities, WiFi enabled devices, Multi-use learner/hydrotherapy pool, community rooms, Community storage space, Lifestyles services



Monmouth

MonLife Heritage operates six museums and attractions (Shire hall, Caldicot Castle, Old Station Tintern, Abergavenny Museum, Chepstow Museum, Monmouth Museum)

MonLife Outdoor offers: 1.Outdoor Adventure – activities including canoeing, caving, orienteering, climbing. It is also a D of E Approved Activity Provider

2.Outdoor Countryside – access to public rights of way
3.Outdoor Green Infrastructure

MonLife Creative supports learning for schools, families and adults. Their 'Night Out' scheme helps volunteer groups bring the arts to their communities.

MonLife Connect supports MCC's youth services and play areas. It also manages Volunteering opportunities and destination management.

Monmouthshire Sports Development Team promotes participation in physical activity and sporting initiatives within schools and the wider community. Volunteer opportunities start from 13 yrs. and 85% of their current paid casual workforce have come through the volunteer programmes. The 'Positive Futures' provision engages many young people on the Anti-Social Behaviour list.



Bradley Stoke

Bradley Stoke is one of five centres operated by Active Lifestyles Centres across South Gloucestershire (Bradley Stoke, Kingswood, Longwell Green, Thornbury, Yate). All centres, except the smaller Longwell Green, have Meeting facilities and support venue hire. The redevelopment costed £3.6 million.



Longwell Green underwent a £1.5 million redevelopment in 2017, improving the fitness studio, changing rooms, fitness suit, entranceway and lobby and poolside showers.

One You South Gloucestershire is a healthy lifestyles and wellbeing service for adults registered at a GP practice in South Gloucestershire and partner with Active Lifestyles to run this service. They provide services that support mental and physical wellbeing, whilst also providing resources and information for practitioners.

South Kesteven

InvestSK, the council's economic growth and regeneration Teckal company, have appointed a sports development officer to oversee public consultation. InvestSK and DeliverSK will work on the delivery of the leisure facility development.

South Kesteven District Council deliver a range of sport and leisure activities as part of their community support. This includes the GP Exercise Referral Scheme, Healthy Walks as part of the Walk for Life Scheme and FitKids. This was delivered in conjunction with Lincolnshire County Council. They have connections with Arthritis Action as part of these schemes.

The district council have connection with Active Lincolnshire, who manage and coordinate programmes and events which encourage people to keep active. They are a charity that receive funding from Sport England and have evolved from a County Sports Partnership through to an emerging active partnership.

Plans for the buildings are to be more than simply leisure centres.

The aim for each is to become 'community hubs with something for everyone, and a focus on overall health and wellbeing. That includes providing activities in rural communities'.

Currently, the leisure centres at Bourne and the Deepings are shared with the local schools. Deepings is currently Closed 'South Kesteven District Council voted in favour of improvement works, proposing funds of £6.3 million for redevelopment over the next 25 years. SKDC want to replace this facility with a purpose-built modern leisure centre with both wet and dry facilities.'

