

Wotton Pool Under Threat



Concerned Wotton folk assembled outside the pool in December to show their support for the pool

As part of Stroud District Council's cost cutting measures a number of sports facilities are facing an uncertain future. One of these is Wotton Pool. The pool is owned by the Town Council and operated as a public facility by SDC.

SDC are seriously considering withdrawing their financial, technical and administrative support for the pool.

This would be a great pity as the pool was built in the early 60s by town residents and is regarded with great affection by many residents and users. It was run as a school facility for many years, but in the eighties/nineties the education authority decided it was difficult to operate as an educational facility. It was then that the Town Council bought the site to preserve it as a local facility and SDC took over running it as it is in their leisure area.

Throughout this period there was a thriving local support group, Wotton Swimming Club. They currently run about half the public sessions with SDC running the others. There are about 45 people who put in real effort each year, so the council gets a lot of 'leverage' from the volunteers for the annual investment they make to run the pool.

As a facility it is highly valuable for the town:

- Swimming is a wholesome energetic activity for young people within easy walking distance in the town, and doesn't require parental supervision.
- The pool is used by the local primary schools, and learning to swim is essential.
- Older people appreciate the benefit of impact-free exercise and mums with young children find it a great wet weather activity.
- Importantly, there are many Wotton residents who were the volunteer school children that helped to build the pool in the early 60s. **You can see the construction pictures on the website (www.wottonpool.co.uk) and relish the optimistic, self-reliant atmosphere of the times.**

So, it is a valuable facility that is seen with tremendous affection, and there is a thriving voluntary group supporting it. It would be such a pity to lose all this and we all hope SDC reconsider this proposal.

If you want to help save the facility please contact the Stroud Councillors and express your concern.

**Alan George
Wotton Swimming Club Chairman**