



# Pool Update

[www.hapi.org.uk](http://www.hapi.org.uk)

October 2004

This is the first opportunity we've had to let you have a progress report and to say thank you for all the help and support we've had during the past few months.

Published overleaf are the full texts of the responses to questions put to both our local authorities at the time of the petition presentations during the summer.

The approach to East Sussex County Council was through the lead Cabinet Member for Education whose response neatly side stepped the crux of our question, which asked about help for an indoor swimming facility for the area to benefit all our local school children. In his answer much emphasis was placed on the need for each primary school to make its own individual bid for funds for its own facilities, when a collective approach from all twelve local primary schools together with Heathfield Community College would seem to be what is required.

A more helpful and constructive response has come from Wealden District Council, who now recognise the desire for an indoor pool in our area and have committed themselves to providing support, guidance and assistance to us in helping face the task ahead.

It is encouraging that neither authority has chosen to completely close the door on the project and we shall be carefully considering each of their responses at our next committee meeting.

We plan to hold a pool supporters open meeting during the autumn – details soon. If **you** want a public indoor pool in the area and you've not yet joined the pool supporters group, then check out our website at [www.hapi.org.uk](http://www.hapi.org.uk) or pick up a leaflet at the Co-op, Trading 4U or the Parish Council offices. In the meantime we're counting on your continuing support to help get the Heathfield area in the swim!

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### **Shoppers at the Co-op are busy raising funds for HAPI!**

The joint Co-op/HAPI dividend fund raising scheme was launched in May to help finance a pool feasibility study. We're now well into the six months that the scheme was set to run and the final result of our efforts will be known in November. There's still time to take part! Joining is easy – simply pick up a leaflet at the Co-op store, or visit our website at [www.hapi.org.uk](http://www.hapi.org.uk), to see how **you** can help without actually handing over any cash. We really do need **everyone's** continuing support.

### **HAPI Summer Jumble Sale success brings in almost £500!**

Saturday 12th June saw the Union Church Hall stacked to the rafters with a wonderful array of items of all kinds. There was a terrific effort by several willing members of our support group led splendidly by Chris Caudron who masterminded this amazingly successful first HAPI event. We had over 200 people through the door and they helped raise almost £500 for the pool support group.

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#### **We also appreciate the help and support of:**

Analytical and Technical Services, Brown and Nuttall, Classic Dream Machines, Freeman Forman, Gibbons Mannington, E. J. Hamper and Son, Heathfield Funeral Services, Heathfield Windows, Jarvis Technologies Ltd, Melina Joy, Lampons, Hugh Page, Richard Place & Co and Trading 4U.

And we welcome the involvement of: Heathfield Co-op, Kent and Sussex Courier and Sussex Express.

## HAPI questions East Sussex County Council

The text of our question to the council together with their answer to it is given below.

**Meeting of full Council 27<sup>th</sup> July 2004 - Swimming facility for school children in the Heathfield area**

### QUESTION

In what ways is East Sussex County Council prepared to help in providing a year-round public swimming pool facility for the benefit of all the primary and secondary school children in the Heathfield area and, in doing so, also benefiting the community as a whole?

### ANSWER by Lead Cabinet Member for Education

Under the local management scheme for East Sussex, and provided national curriculum requirements are met, it is for each school to determine the emphasis it wishes to give to swimming from a range of options to fulfil a balanced PE and Sports curriculum. Each school is also responsible for identifying priorities for improving or providing new facilities. If funding for these priorities is not available from allocations given to the school by Central Government or the revenue budget from the County Council, the school may make a bid to the Council for further support from the Council's capital

programme. As swimming is only one option within the PE and sports curriculum, and an enclosed swimming facility has a high build and running cost, in terms of meeting educational requirements provision of a swimming pool tends to be a lower priority for schools and for the County Council.

To be a viable facility in today's economic climate, the major user group for a swimming pool needs to be the community, hence it would normally be for Wealden District Council, which has non-statutory responsibility to consider provision of leisure facilities to its community, to lead for this type of development. In most cases a net annual revenue subsidy would also be required to keep such a facility open.

No formal bid has been presented for consideration from a school or the District Council for a pool in the Heathfield area. If one were to be submitted, however, it would be assessed against other bids in terms of its curriculum benefit and its value for money. All appropriate non-financial support would be made available to the District Council or a school for any submitted bid.

## Wealden District Council provide a helpful response!

The following questions put to WDC were discussed at the Council's cabinet meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2004:

- Does Wealden District Council support the wish of the people in the Heathfield area to have a public indoor swimming pool?
- If so, in what ways is it prepared to help to ensure that this wish can eventually be realised?

### Wealden District Council position:

- The Council recognises the desire for an indoor pool in the Heathfield area and acknowledges the petition presented. Whilst this clearly demonstrates public support for an indoor pool this alone would not be sufficient to demonstrate need.
- The Council acknowledges the wish of the people in the Heathfield area and supports the pro-active approach from the HAPI members in planning to build the case for an indoor facility.

- The Council is aware that HAPI intend to also present the petition and questions to East Sussex County Council as the landowner of the current pool site, and have returned the petition to HAPI as requested.
- The Council's role in provision, management and development of sports and leisure has altered over the last two years, from one of direct provision, to one of strategic planning, support, advocacy and enablement.
- In this context the Council can make a commitment to assisting HAPI in formulating their plans, fostering partnership with, for example our leisure provider, and neighbouring authorities represented in the petition. The Council can also offer guidance and support on National and Regional Policy, the development of our local needs analysis for the Local Plan Review and any subsequent funding application that may be made to external bodies.

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## Local Olympians back the pool campaign!

**Olympic gold medallist Jayne Torvill** who has supported the campaign from the start, believes that "The Heathfield area has long needed this public indoor pool, and it would be a tremendous benefit to the health, fitness and wellbeing of thousands of people of all ages and abilities throughout our widespread community!"

**Another local Olympian, Diana DGLISH**, who represented Britain in the diving team at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, said "I'm passionate about getting this pool for the young people of the district, it should be mandatory for everyone to learn to swim, not only for their safety, but also for the health benefits!"