

## **Mythbusting the Harleston Recreation and Leisure Facilities Management Opportunity**

09.03.2026

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council is committed to ensuring that the future management and operation of the town's recreation and leisure facilities deliver high-quality, sustainable services for the community.

In January 2026, the Council launched an opportunity for organisations to express interest in managing the Harleston Recreation and Leisure Facilities.

This document aims to answer frequently asked questions and bust any myths circulating about why the Council is undergoing this process and what the objectives are.

For further information about the management opportunity, visit [www.harleston-tc.gov.uk](http://www.harleston-tc.gov.uk)

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### **Myth:**

#### **The Leisure Centre is being knocked down**

### **Fact:**

Harleston Memorial Leisure Centre is not being knocked down! The Council is undergoing a process to see if there are any organisations willing to take on the building, the facilities and its operations.

Over the decades since the Leisure Centre was built, it has seen many extensions and upgrades. But as with many buildings of its age and those used so heavily, it's suffered extensive wear and tear and is in need of modernisation. The building's layout, shaped by successive extensions over the years, is not always conducive to easy use, with some areas awkwardly connected and circulation between spaces less intuitive than in a purpose-built modern facility.

Therefore businesses who have expressed an interest in the management and operation of the facility may choose to make layout changes and renovations or maintenance works.

### **Myth:**

#### **The Leisure Centre is being sold / is closing**

### **Fact:**

The Leisure Centre is not being sold or closing down. The Town Council is exploring options to have another organisation manage the facilities and operations.

**Myth:**

**With new owners, gym membership is going to be more expensive**

**Fact:**

At this stage, while we don't know if a new manager will be appointed, or who they will be, we don't know if member prices will increase. However, we certainly will be asking this question during our assessments and will be taking this in account.

**Myth:**

**The Leisure Centre staff are being sacked**

**Fact:**

Any business that expresses an interest will be expected to take-on all contracted employees as part of the agreement and we will request that all staff will be given the opportunity to work for any new managing organisation.

**Myth:**

**The bowling green is being turned into a swimming pool or padel courts**

**Fact:**

The Council regularly engages with the Bowls Club to ensure they feel looked after. No swimming pool is envisaged and is highly unlikely due to the running costs involved.

At this stage, until and if new managers of the facilities have been appointed, we don't know if anything will change with the Bowling green.

**Myth:**

**There's going to be a café in the Leisure Centre**

**Fact:**

At this stage, we don't know what the plans of any of the organisations interested in the management opportunity will be.

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**In Conclusion**

At this stage there are many questions without answers. The Council will keep residents informed via our website and social media as this process moves forward.

Several businesses responded to the initial opportunity by completing the Pre-Qualification Core Questionnaire. Their answers have been analysed. However, the next stage — the formal issue of the tender documentation — has been delayed. Preparatory work has continued, and the Council is now focused on establishing whether any of the respondents present an outstanding offer that would justify proceeding directly to the next stage.

Should such an offer be recognised, the Council may choose to move forward accordingly. The formal tender documentation is complete and ready to be issued; we would still expect any preferred organisation to submit a comprehensive formal proposal. This proposal would be carefully reviewed by the Council. A public consultation meeting will be arranged to provide residents with an opportunity to hear directly from the organisation before any final decision is made by the Council.