

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 29 June 2015

Member Questions to Julie Sargent, Business Executive of the Sandford Lido Ltd (5)

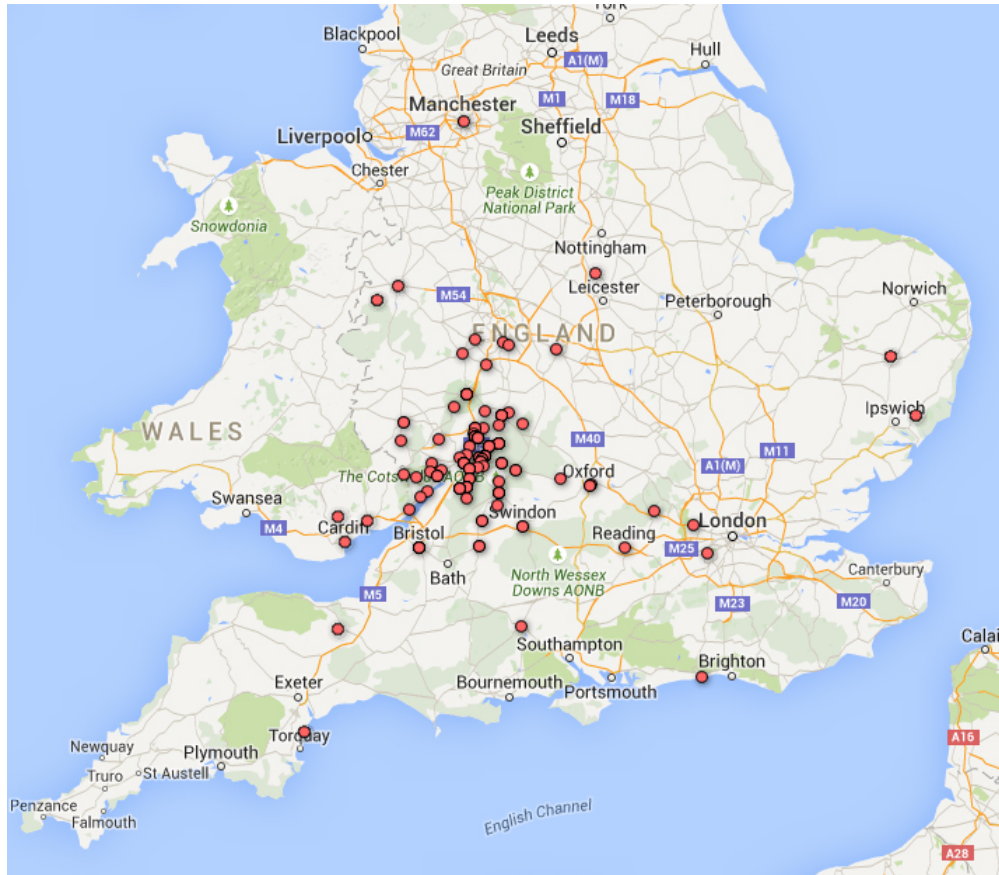
1.	Question from Councillor Harman
	The Lido is one of Cheltenham's gems. Can you outline your plans for the future in order that it continues to serve as a valued recreational facility?
	Response
	<p>We have strived to ensure Sandford Parks Lido remains a much loved and valued community asset and national treasure. It is recognised by the Heritage Lottery Fund as being nationally significant and the most complete lido of its type in the Country.</p> <p>We understand the need to maximise its potential whilst not compromising its heritage.</p> <p>We have significant plans for the future, finances permitting, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a twenty year rolling maintenance plan providing a detailed and structured approach to maintenance and capital projects. • We recognise the need to update our changing facilities to ensure excellent provision, access for all and to be more family friendly. The changing rooms were one of the first improvements we made back in 1997/98, but they are now in need of further updating to meet the needs of all our customers in 2015 and beyond. • We are exploring various options to reduce our carbon footprint and energy costs. We are currently in dialog with Cheltenham General Hospital to discuss a joint venture to utilise their excess heat generated to heat our swimming pool water. Furthermore we have been working closely with Unify Energy via Sporta to investigate additional capital investment projects to improve energy efficiency. • We are currently looking at lengthening our lido season. We are open for 21 weeks and we shall be crowdfunding to finance an additional 4 weeks to run at the end of our 2015 season. • We are working with a local company at the possibility of hosting a winter event at the lido, which if successful could become an annual event. This event could happen as early as 2015. • We are well positioned to offer a design thinking approach towards optimising every facet of the organisation to develop as a sustainable business. • We are constantly looking to increase our stakeholders and diversify our core offering. <p>We need to extend our current business lease to enable us to sign up to long term contracts such as green energy schemes and to secure essential grant</p>

	<p>assistance to enable these plans to come to fruition.</p> <p>We have aspirations and targets which are reflected in our vision for the future where we continue to operate as a self-sustaining business. This is based on our business continuing to grow commercially whilst providing health, fitness and wellbeing for our community.</p> <p>We shall discuss our plans for the future of the lido in more detail during our presentation on the 29th June.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Payne
	<p>Looking at the website, the management show some very inventive ways to draw in the crowds. The events do however look to be focused on Cheltenham residents. I would be interested to know the breakdown of local resident users to tourists.</p>
	Response
	<p>Our priority has been to ensure that all members of our community are able to enjoy our unique historic facility and that we meet the needs of our community.</p> <p>Events have evolved over the years and range in audience appeal thus adding to the rich arts culture available in Cheltenham.</p> <p>Our events and general admission pricing structures are set at a level to ensure value for money whilst meeting the needs of our community/tourists.</p> <p>We directly target tourists to raise our profile via social media, leaflet distribution via organisations such as tourist information centres and websites such as Explore Gloucestershire and Soglos and encourage them to visit Sandford Parks Lido for a day out or to come along and enjoy a live performance.</p> <p>Our lido is also featured on a regular basis on national TV, radio and newspapers.</p> <p>Whilst we do not have a breakdown of general visitor profiles regarding the number of tourists that utilise the lido, we do have data regarding the geographical spread of participants for events and those purchasing season tickets.</p> <p>The first map details the residential address for those participating in our annual triathlon. This event has been running now for eighteen years and attracts 760 participants from across the Country. This event also helps raise money for LinC who are based in Cheltenham General Hospital.</p>

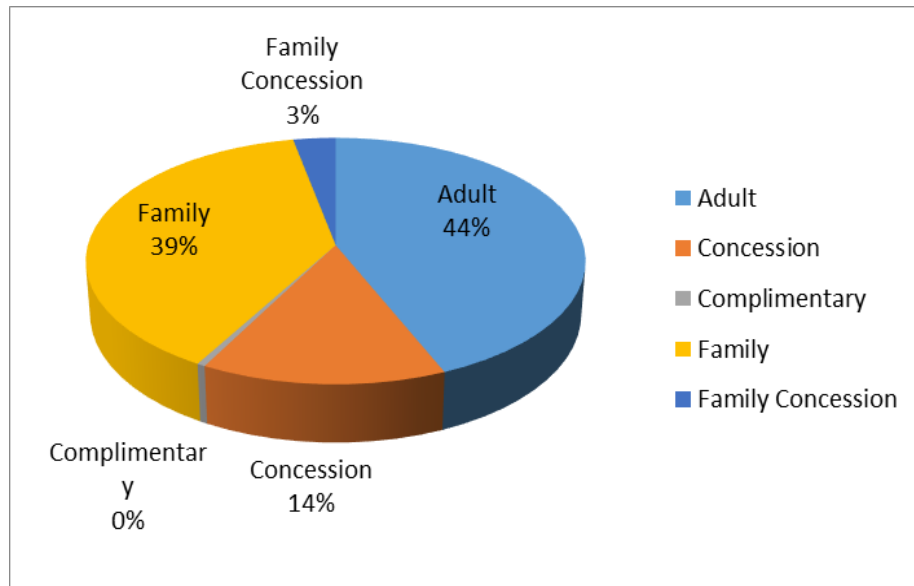
September Triathlon



This map shows the residential addresses for our current season ticket holders.



Season Ticket holders are broken down into the following categories:



	<p>Our season ticket sales have continued to increase year on year, to highlight the difference, in 1996 season ticket income totalled £15,580, subsequently there has been exponential growth reaching £128,518 in 2014.</p> <p>In the future we will continue to provide a range of events to attract both residents and tourists. We are currently looking to host an event which could take place during the winter months in 2015. This event will be of great interest to the residents of Cheltenham, but will also attract visitors to Cheltenham, specifically to the lido.</p>
3.	Question from Councillor Payne
	The Lido offers what I would describe as a very British experience; do you feel this is a sustainable format going forward?
	Response
	<p>The Lido was built at a time when there was an urgent need to improve the nation's health. This need remains, many people are now realising that they need to live a more active life and engage more as a family unit.</p> <p>Our lido is a significant attribute to Cheltenham, since 1996 we have received 2,812,230 visitors and we hope to break the 3 million this year. This is an average of 148,012 visitors per year, prior to 1996 it received an average of 97,261 visitors per year. However it's important that we continue to diversify and utilise the lido to its full potential.</p> <p>In answer to your question, yes it is sustainable but we need to keep the facilities in line with modern expectations which requires a continual program of considered incremental investment.</p>
4.	Question from Councillor Payne
	There has been a modest level of investment since 1996. What developments, if any, do you anticipate in say the next 5 years?
	Response
	<p>When the Lido was taken over by The Trust in 1996 its general condition was poor and it required significant capital investment.</p> <p>Over the past 19 years a total of £2,148,353 has been invested in general maintenance and facility improvements to the amenity.</p> <p>In 2010 The Trust commissioned Alder King Property Consultants to carry out a 20 year rolling maintenance plan. This is a live document which provides a structured Facilities Management approach for investment.</p> <p>The Alder King Plan identifies a further investment of £2.2m required by the end of our lease term in 2021, however the short term nature of our current lease inhibits us from applying for grants to aid with this investment; with this considered our investment target will aim to be circa £1m on priority works by 2021. (The plan requires circa £4.7m from 2021 to 2034).</p> <p>We currently hold a designated reserve fund of £350,000 this has been held to</p>

	<p>assist with maintenance works to the main pool infrastructure including all circulation and filtration which is estimated to be £700,000.</p> <p>After significant investment in our below ground infrastructure and the refurbishment of our small pool area, our next short to medium term plan will see a significant investment in our changing facilities.</p> <p>As stated in question 1 another short to medium goal will be to negotiate an energy saving heating link with Cheltenham General Hospital. However this may not be possible due to the short term nature of our current business lease agreement with Cheltenham Borough Council.</p> <p>For a Trust whose income relies so heavily on seasonal good weather, we have taken a managed and prudent view to expenditure, without the need for council funds or investment.</p> <p>We are proud that The Trust has become a self-sustaining amenity which adds considerable value to Cheltenham.</p>
5.	Question from Councillor Payne
	<p>What do you see as the greatest threat to the Lido future?</p>
	Response
	<p>Under the current business lease Sandford Parks Lido and its car park are secure until 2021.</p> <p>The current short term nature of the lease will present difficulties when applying for grant assistance for future capital works.</p> <p>The most important way in which Cheltenham Borough Council could support the lido would be to extend our current business lease, retaining all current terms and conditions thereby removing this uncertainty and protecting Cheltenham's jewel.</p>