



## CATHERINE WEST MP

*Member of Parliament for Hornsey and Wood Green*

Cllr Claire Kober OBE  
5th Floor  
River Park House  
225 High Road  
London  
N22 8HQ

10 April 2017

Dear Claire and Joe,

We are writing to you to express our support for Haringey Aquatics' proposal for a new swimming and leisure centre to be included within the Wood Green Area Action (WGAAP), to address both the current deficit in provision and the projected future demand.

The requirement for an additional pool and leisure centre to meet growth has been acknowledged and recorded by Haringey Council in its policies and infrastructure assessments since 2008. Indeed, in 2010, Haringey Council noted that: the borough had the largest deficit of pool space in North London; Haringey residents had access to a third less pool space than the average Londoner; and Haringey was a net exporter of swimmers to other boroughs. Our position as a borough, both regionally and nationally, will have worsened in the intervening period as other boroughs have forged public/private partnerships to expand their provision.

The Council's infrastructure assessment, published in 2013, clearly identified the need for a third major leisure centre and pool to meet demand due to population growth, and considered Wood Green to be a prime site for its location. Given that Wood Green has been without any public swimming pool since Western Road baths shut in 1997, we support Haringey Council's assessment in this regard. The updated 'infrastructure delivery plan' does record the need but describes it as a 'potential need' and it barely surfaces in the most recent draft of the Area Action Plan and on which the current phase of public consultation is based.

Low levels of participation in sports and physical activities in Wood Green combined with very high prevalence of childhood obesity makes the case for a new leisure centre in Wood Green crystal clear. When youth issues, social exclusion and shortage of training and employment opportunities are factored in, the case becomes even more compelling.

Across London we are seeing the proliferation of private gyms and clubs, many of which have membership fees that are beyond the budgets families on restricted incomes, as well as having pools that are small and too shallow to allow for the pathways into competitive swimming.

Given the many obvious benefits of local leisure facilities with public pools for improving outcomes for residents of all ages and abilities, and the corresponding issues and deficits in Wood Green, it is a serious concern that Wood Green has been without this basic amenity for two decades. Even more alarming, is the potential for the *status quo* to persist for the foreseeable future.



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Haringey has made a firm commitment to investing in Wood Green. As such we urge the Cabinet to consider the inclusion of a new leisure centre, with facilities for competitive swimming within the WGAAP.

We look forward to hearing from you.

With warmest regards,

Catherine West MP  
Member of Parliament for Hornsey & Wood Green

Rt Hon David Lammy MP  
Member of Parliament for Tottenham