Cockermouth Leisure Centre improvements

Cockermouth Leisure Centre is a small but very well used facility close to the town centre and originally consisted of a 25m swimming pool joined to a small sports hall. The Council owns the leisure facility which is operated, managed and developed by Carlisle Leisure Limited through a 15 year partnership agreement.

The Leisure Partnership between Allerdale Borough Council and Carlisle Leisure Limited has recently carried out a £1,000,000 investment into the leisure centre to increase the range of activities available to the community through the provision of new activity spaces.

The swimming pool shown here was built in 1978 and despite the relatively small size of the pool (4 lanes, 25m) the centre hosts an extremely successful swimming club which has produced many regional and national standard swimmers.

The original pool changing rooms which featured bare brick walls, dark wood furniture and small lockers were refurbished by the Leisure Partnership in 2006 and now provide a much more up to date and comfortable environment for customers.

The original reception area was built soon after the pool opened in 1978 and was cramped for customers due to its low ceiling and lack of circulation space. The bare brick walls and dark fittings did not create a welcoming environment.

At peak time the reception area could not cope with the number of customers using the leisure centre.
The sports hall was built in 1886 and used as an Army Drill Hall before being converted into a sports hall. As a result the sports hall is an unconventional size (3 badminton courts) and was lacking in terms of activity and storage space.

In the early 1990's the sports hall was extended with new changing rooms and a climbing wall added and more recently the fitness suite was refurbished by the Leisure Partnership and relocated to the ground floor.

The complex of buildings was lacking in visual appeal with two buildings built 100 years apart linked together by a single storey reception/foyer which struggled to cope with the number of users.

The low ceilings and bare brick walls were similar to those found in the pool changing rooms and highlighted the lack of space for customers to circulate and wait between activities.

It was clear that while the leisure centre was well used, it was in need of a major refurbishment to:

- Improve the appearance of the facility
- Improve customer circulation areas
- Provide new activity spaces
- Increase storage space
- Improve car parking provision.

Funding was secured for an improvement scheme and construction commenced in July 2007.

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