# Public Consultation for Hartham Leisure Centre redevelopment

**Tamara Jarvis:** Hello, I’m Tamara Jarvis, the East Herts Major Projects Manager and I’m here to introduce the Hartham Leisure Centre development project.

Three years ago, East Herts District Council approved funding for the redevelopment of the Centre to respond to the needs of our customers and residents by providing enhanced leisure and fitness opportunities and ensuring it is fit for the future.

Sport and physical activity is a vital part of physical and mental wellbeing and this project demonstrates our commitment to contribute to health and wellbeing in a meaningful and sustainable way.

This bold and ambitious project will see a circa £9 million investment to transform the Centre.

Amongst other improvements a new two storey extension will see a large increase in fitness studio provision and gym space, a new soft play facility for younger residents, and a new café interlinking the park, creating a leisure hub for the local community.

This new extension will be putting sustainability at its heart and will be seeking to achieve BREEAM Excellent sustainability accreditation.

This project not only shows the Council’s commitment to health and wellbeing offer for local residents, but also the Council’s commitment to truly investing in local residents and local places.

This is a building that will serve our residents now and for future generations, and we’re excited to bring you along on this journey to learn more about it.

**Martin Lindus:** I’m Martin Lindus from Saunders Boston Architects, we’re designing the new Hartham Leisure Centre for East Herts District Council.
The new Centre will not only meet the growing needs of the local community here in Hertford and the surrounding area, but will be a building of civic status – something the community can be really proud of.

The design has a mono-pitch roof and also has a very large glazed area that views out across Hartham Common, rather like an eye looking across the green areas of the common itself.

On the opposite side where we have the parking, we have integrated a new living wall, and that’s something that forms an integration between the hard and the soft landscape and the building.

The materials are a combination of aluminium for the roof and one of the walls, and then we have a series of timber style plank materials.

We’re looking to design the landscape as an integrated part of the Common. We have a very fixed perimeter to our building, which the circle that runs round the building forms, and that’s made up of a series of existing features in the landscape and new features that will be added.

So the existing tree belt is part of that circumference of the circle. There’ll be a series of paths, new surfaces, lighting, new native species trees that will be added, and of course the café itself will run round on three sides of the building.

Part of the existing Hartham Leisure Centre will be demolished. We’re going to use the masonry elements of this and recycle them within the new scheme, so they’ll form part of the materials that will be used in the gabion cage benches around the building and integrated into the landscape.

Whilst new leisure buildings, generally, are very well insulated and are built to very high standards, we realise that for the community here in Hertford, sustainability is a primary issue and what we want to do is make sure that not only are we putting elements into the building that are sustainable, but we can actually identify it and explain to everyone how that’s achieved. Therefore we’re going to use BREEAM, that is a sustainability accreditation system, and we’re aiming to achieve an ‘excellent’ accreditation, which is a particularly high standard.

The existing Reception area is the administrative function of the building, as you can see behind me.

In the new design we’ll have a social hub - and that hub will have a soft play area, and a new café, and of course all the normal reception functions that you would expect.

The soft play will be a two storey structure that will have vistas across the common.

It means that parents will be able to sit in a really nice environment with the café, watching their children in the soft play area.

The café will have views out across Hartham Common on the shady side of the building, and also a new urban café at the front where we have the sunny side of the building too.

I’m in the existing fitness suite now. As you can see, it’s a space that has evolved over time. It’s been generated by the spaces that are around the existing swimming pool and as a result is very long and thin.

What we’re going to do with our proposal is provide a fitness suite that is rectangular, all on a single level, and it’s going to have a capacity for around 130 stations of equipment. That’s cardiovascular, resistance, free weights, and a whole host of facilities, and all within a really good environment with views out across the common.

Part of the existing fitness suite will be refurbished to form a dedicated spin studio. The space behind me will be able to accommodate up to twenty cycles.

Here I am in the existing studio. The studio has stood the test of time well, but the demands are much greater these days. So rather than just having a single studio that is an odd shape, what we’re looking to do is create two brand-new rectangular studios. One will be able to accommodate in the region of 25 people, and the other will be able to accommodate around 30, for a whole variety of different exercises and uses.

I’m in the existing village change at Hartham Leisure Centre now. And as you can see, it’s been evolved over a period of time, has had a number of changes and refurbishments. What we’re looking to do is change everything you see in here, everything you touch and feel – so all of the cubicles, the lockers, the floor finishes, the wall finishes – all of those will be brand new. The environment will also be very different as well; we’re putting new systems in that will change it; make it cooler where it needs to be, and warmer where we need that further assistance.

I’m now in the main pool hall. The pool configurations here work really well, so we’re looking to retain them in their current form. But what we do want to do is improve the overall environment, so we’re going to relay the pool surrounds, we’re going to add new decoration to the walls, which will lighten the whole environment up, and we’re also going to expand the spectator accommodation so that we’ve got much greater capacity.

**Paul Lindsey:** Hi, my name’s Paul Lindsey, and I’m the General Manager here at Hartham Leisure Centre. We are delighted to see the Council investing in this leisure facility. A larger fitness suite, more studio space and additional facilities including a café and a soft play will help us get more people in East Herts active. We can’t wait to deliver a new and more extensive programme when the new Centre opens.

**Tamara Jarvis:** This is your opportunity as local residents to provide your feedback on this exciting investment. Please do take the time to review the proposals on the Council’s website and submit a survey with your feedback.

**CLOSING CREDITS**

Give your feedback by 9am Monday 7 September at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/harthamdevelopment](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/harthamdevelopment)

Construction of the extension is planned to commence Spring 2021, with the majority of the Centre’s current facilities including the pool, and gym remaining open and operational throughout.

Once the new building is complete and in use, the swimming pool will temporarily close whilst the pool hall and changing rooms are refurbished.