

## Connections Centre Writhlington, Radstock – Hydrotherapy pool statement

Until January 2013 the Connections Centre at Radstock offered hydrotherapy sessions for disabled people, this affects people across NES.

There are several service users with Learning Disabilities and very high physical mobility needs that attend the day service and who need hydro therapy as a method of creating supported movement of limbs.

This was provided with the support of a physiotherapist and support staff with excellent results. These service users are now having to travel, accompanied by staff to the RUH in order to access hydro therapy. This is the nearest available facility and this is not an efficient use of funding or of staff time.

The building is owned by B&NES and leased to Sirona Care and Health.

The current pool was built in the 1960's as a swimming pool, consequently heating the water for hydrotherapy use has resulted in condensation and bacteria which caused Sirona to close it on health and safety grounds.

A quote was given of £125k to put a proper roof on, improve the ventilation and filtration systems and repair the condensation damage. However B&NES have quoted £500k for this work. Consequently the pool has remained closed.

There is no EIA of the decision not to refurbish the pool and B&NES could be looking at costs in excess of £500k if a legal case is taken for failure to provide a service to disabled people as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

I am told that there is a meeting at the end of April to look at this but I am also told that the facility will remain closed, irrespective of this and with no consultation.

It appears that this was swept under the carpet as no one seemed to know about this service. Although I understand that hydrotherapy was not commissioned I struggle with the time it has taken to make a decision – or not as the case may be regarding the upgrade of this pool.

Meanwhile the usual counter argument has been put that it is not well used. So what has been done to increase the demand for the service?

What a shame to let this go – another service lost in Radstock. Another facility thrown away.

Why can't the pool be refurbished and used for hydrotherapy which I am sure Writhlington residents would also like to use and gain much benefit from? It could also be used as a swimming pool at weekends