

Welcome to this news update from the campaign to re-open Arthur Hill swimming pool, with news about our next community evening and our plans for using the donations from our crowdfunding appeal.

Arthur Hill Community Evening, Thursday 5 October

Please come along and join us at our next Arthur Hill community evening on Thursday 5 October from 7.30 pm at the Warehouse Centre, Cumberland Road.

We will be organising a short business meeting to update everyone on the campaign, followed by a presentation of donation cheques to local schools (see below). The remainder of the evening will be a 'pub quiz' style social event (£2 per person to enter, teams of up to five people). Bring cake to share and come along to catch up with old friends from Arthur Hill. Don't worry if you can't come as part of a pub quiz group – you'll be able to team up with others on the night!

Crowdfunding appeal – donation to local schools

After careful deliberation, the Directors of the Arthur Hill – Save Our Swimming Community Interest Company (CIC) have decided to donate the money raised through last year's Christmas crowdfunding appeal to local schools.

We originally said that we would use the money to set up the new Community Interest Company up, prepare a business plan to raise the money we need to keep the pool open, and work with experienced fund-raisers to get the grant funding necessary for essential repair work. If the Council refused to co-operate with us and our plans fell through, we said we would give all the money we raise to local schools to help them pay for transport to swimming lessons at other pools.

Thanks largely to volunteer help, preparing a business plan and undertaking the necessary engineering assessment work cost much less than we had anticipated, and as the Council regrettably decided to turn down our bid to take over the pool we have not needed to raise further money for repair work. The Directors have therefore decided to donate the remaining money, totalling £11,351.26, to local primary schools, and so it will be divided equally between Newtown School, Redlands School, Alfred Sutton School, and St Johns and St Stephens School.

This was a difficult decision for the Directors to make, as many of those who donated to the online crowdfunding appeal did so anonymously, and others gave cash donations which we are unable to trace back to the individuals who gave us the money, making it impossible to consult with donors. As those who donated may have had different views on what to do with the money under the current circumstances, the Directors felt that the most principled and transparent path to take was to donate the remaining money to local primary schools in line with the initial pledge.

We have posted accounts for the crowdfunding appeal on our website here (<http://arthur-hill.us15.list-manage2.com/track/click?u=e28821199d37283a3e1494f6d&id=50baa057ba&e=cabc45b74c>) , together with an explanation of how the decision was taken to donate the money to local schools.

We have invited representatives from the four primary schools to come along to our community evening on Thursday 5 October to be presented with cheques for the money, and we very much hope that all our donors and supporters will be able to join us for the evening.

Council plans for selling Arthur Hill Pool

Reading Borough Council have now announced that they intend to dispose of the Arthur Hill site. Arthur Hill Pool is listed as an Asset of Community Value, which means that the Council has to inform the organisation which nominated the site (Wycliffe Baptist Church) of their intention to sell the site, and provide a six week period for the organisation to indicate whether it intends to bid for the site.

Wycliffe Baptist Church will consider whether or not to inform the Council that it is interested in bidding for the site by mid October, although the Church has made it clear to us that it does not have the funds available to purchase the site at the market rate which the Council is likely to be expecting.

In May the Council published its new draft Local Plan, which listed the Arthur Hill site as a proposed location for housing development. The Arthur Hill Save Our Swimming CIC has submitted a formal objection to this proposal, and a petition of over 600 signatures stating that the site should be retained for community use has been presented to the Council. The Council is now obliged to consider

these objections in preparing the final draft of the Local Plan and the CIC will be able to make further input in future stages of the local planning process.

First anniversary of the decision to close Arthur Hill Pool

Reading Borough Council voted to close Arthur Hill Pool at a Council meeting on 18 October 2017, and a few weeks later 29 November sees the anniversary of the date when the pool was first opened in 2011. We will be organising an event in late October / early November to mark these dates and remind the Council that the Arthur Hill campaign remains alive and strong, despite the hopes of councillors and officers that we will fade away and forget about their decision to close the pool. More information about this event soon. Representatives of the campaign will also be attending the Council meeting on Tuesday 17 October to ask questions about the Arthur Hill pool and the Council's failure, so far, to deliver on their promise to build a replacement pool in the area.

Help needed – Reading Town Meal, 30 September 2017

Over the summer we organised two very successful Arthur Hill 'Fitness Challenge' stalls at the East Reading Festival and the Reading Waterfest, aimed at helping people to assess their fitness and providing advice about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. We will be organising the third and final stall of the season at the Reading Town Meal which will take place in the Forbury Gardens on Saturday 30 September.

We need volunteers to help us staff the stall and transport equipment to the Forbury, so if you are able to help out for a couple of hours please get in touch at info@arthur-hill.co.uk. You don't need any special knowledge or training and we will provide a full briefing before the event. If you're coming along to the Town Meal, do please drop in to our stall to say hello and take the Fitness Challenge!

How to support the Arthur Hill campaign

We need new members and donations to help keep the Arthur Hill campaign active. Anyone is welcome to join the Arthur Hill Save Our Swimming CIC – it only costs £1 for life membership, entitling you to take part in our activities and have your say on how the company is run. We also need money to support our

activities, and any donation, no matter how small or large, is welcome. Please visit our website here (<http://arthur-hill.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e28821199d37283a3e1494f6d&id=99211f9da3&e=cabc45b74c>) to join and donate.

Get in touch with us

You can contact Arthur Hill – Save Our Swimming Community Interest Company in the following ways:

Web: arthur-hill.co.uk

Email: @arthur-hill.co.uk

Facebook: [facebook.com/savearthurhill](https://www.facebook.com/savearthurhill)

Twitter: [@arthurhillpool](https://twitter.com/arthurhillpool)

Mail: Arthur Hill Save Our Swimming CIC, 35-39 London Street, Reading, RG1 4PS

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to hearing from you.