

The Lenton Centre, Nottingham

Community venture in the Lenton area of Nottingham, owned by the people for the people. Money to buy the building was raised by local community groups after the centre was closed by the city council in 2005. The building was quickly returned to use but the swimming pool needed work and was reopened in 2008.



People Power Revives Community Centre



The Lenton Centre aims to be a hub of activity for the entire local community and offers a variety of health, well-being, educational and social activities and facilities.

Facilities and classes at the Lenton Centre include swimming classes; pilates; yoga, self defence; youth club; local councillors' surgery; a fresh food sale and a Punjabi community luncheon open to all.



Staffed by volunteers, there are a range of opportunities for people who want to get involved including fundraisers; children and youth workers; graphic and web designers; administrative support; maintenance; lifeguards; and community project leaders

“A circular email was sent round at the University where I work,” says Dr Peter Milligan. “I wanted to get involved in a community project and this really focuses on health-related issues – we have a gym, exercise classes and, most importantly, a swimming pool.



“I sit on the board of trustees and help the Chief Executive with the business plan. We want to develop the Lenton Centre further as a social enterprise and involve the community more and so the business plan needs to support that aim.

“A year ago the swimming pool reopened, four years to the day after the Council had closed it. That was very important because it was something the local community was always asking about. We’re all very proud that it’s happened and it’s always very busy with children, families and school groups.

“Personally, I’ve found it very interesting to get involved. It’s a very diverse community but the Lenton Centre is now a real hub for the whole area. It’s great for me because it’s a very active project because I can use the skills I’ve learnt at work while I’m here and vice versa.

“The next step will be quite a challenge. With the pool completed we need to go back to the community and find out what local people want next. I go out and meet people face-to-face at community events because the best way to get involved is at the cliff face, sorting problems.

“One of my students at the University heard about the Lenton Centre and approached me about getting involved – now she’s doing just that, hands-on is the best way.”

The
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