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Our press release with the latest news about Plymouth Life Centre

CITY NETBALL PLAYERS SAVOUR PLYMOUTH LIFE CENTRE FACILITIES

Keen netball players from across the city have paid a visit to the Plymouth Life Centre and stood on the court they will play on when the new leisure facility opens its doors for the first time next year.

Eight players and coaches from the Plymouth and District Netball League Committee (also known as Plymouth Netball) were taken around the construction site to see the progress being made on the areas dedicated to their sport.

The tour, hosted by Plymouth City Council and main contractor Balfour Beatty, was an opportunity for committee members to see their future home.

Founded over 30 years ago, Plymouth Netball has grown to become one of the largest and most successful netball leagues in the country. It has around 600 senior and 300 junior members, all playing competitive netball in the city each week.

It is now putting plans into place to move its whole league, made up of six divisions including 60 senior teams and a junior section, to the Plymouth Life Centre when it opens to the public.

Council Leader Vivien Pengelly, who was herself a keen netball player, said: "Increasing awareness of the sport and encouraging involvement is really important. The work that Plymouth Netball is doing to raise its profile, not just in the city, but across the region and on a national level is fantastic. Netball is a game that is enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities and we want the Plymouth Life Centre to be a facility that is regarded as one of the best in the whole of the UK."

Last year England Netball, the governing body for England's biggest female team sport, announced that it would invest £200,000 in the new Plymouth Life Centre. The organisation is providing financial support for the project, as part of its four-year capital investment programme – the grant represents a quarter of its overall spend in the UK.

Sharron Robbie, Chair of Plymouth and District Netball League, added: "Everyone is so very excited that this is coming. It is absolutely fabulous to see the progress being made and after many years of planning and looking forward to this moment, we were able to actually stand on the court that we will be playing on. The current facilities at the Mayflower Centre are very dated and don't provide the necessary run-off space, spectator seating or player experience needed by the sport today. For netball to grow

and be sustainable in the city, we need this facility so the sport can be played and enjoyed at all levels. The Plymouth Life Centre will have a massive impact in a very positive way.”

Karen Jones, Chair of Netball South West, said: “These are state-of-the-art facilities that will help us to showcase the sport at its very best. Netball offers a great way of getting fit, making friends and competing from grassroots to performance levels and the Plymouth Life Centre will be an excellent venue from which to do all of these.”

Last year **Paul Clark, Chief Executive of England Netball**, said: “Buying into major projects makes very good sense for netball – the Plymouth Life Centre supports Sport England and England Netball’s strategic objectives. Choosing this project was deliberately targeted, and it was critical the team at Plymouth City Council convinced us they would deliver against Sport England’s ‘grow, sustain, excel’ outcomes and meet our objectives.

“It’s about increasing the number of people playing netball, and significantly improving the experience of people playing netball in this area. Our aspiration is to provide a high-quality netball centre within the Plymouth Life Centre servicing all levels of our game – regionally, across the county and in the community.”

The Plymouth Life Centre will provide some of the best leisure facilities of their kind in the South West and will be one of the first centres in the country to meet the latest national specifications for netball court ‘run-off’ space. More information can be found at www.plymouth.gov.uk/lifecentre.

Ends

Notes for editors:

Plymouth Life Centre facilities will include:

- A family leisure pool with flumes, 'beach entry' and bubble pool
- A 10-lane, 50-metre swimming pool with moveable floors and submersible 'booms' allowing flexible use
- One of the top four diving pools in the country, also offering a moveable floor so it can be used as a standard pool
- A dry side training facility for competitive divers
- An innovative climbing zone with 15-metre wall, aerial assault course, bouldering and abseiling
- A bowling rink which will be one of the best in the region
- A 12-court multi-use sports hall
- One of the largest fitness suites in the city, with 150 stations
- Multi-purpose areas for dance, drama and martial arts, which can also be used for a crèche and soft play
- A relaxing oasis with sauna, steam rooms and showers
- And a youth gym, squash, training and studio spaces

The Plymouth Life Centre will be accessible for all users, with dedicated disabled parking, level access throughout the building and disabled bowls buggies, as well as special provision for people with profound disabilities. It will be located in Pellow's Field, in front of the Mayflower Centre (which will be demolished when the Plymouth Life Centre opens).

For further information on the Plymouth Life Centre:

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