

Life Centre Opening

The Plymouth Life Centre, as many of you will have heard has, finally been opened to the public following a day of impressive displays and celebrations. At a cost of £46.5 million, it is one of the biggest investments the council has ever made to improve the welfare and fitness of the general public. To this end, no expense was spared to officially open the new building. Fireworks, tours, and demonstrations were just some of the things on offer to those lucky enough to be invited to the opening ceremony. Over 700 primary and secondary school children from across Plymouth were given the opportunity to come along and sample what the centre had to offer for themselves. They were able to try their hand at a vast range of sports; from squash and basketball to rock-climbing and diving. However, volunteers were needed to help demonstrate the new facilities and for this, promising and talented young athletes from across Plymouth were invited to be among the first to use the state of the art sports centre.

A group of Squash Players were selected from across the year groups here at Plymstock School were given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities to the next generation in their chosen sports. Those lucky enough to have been among of the first to play on the squash courts were:

- Chloe Sumner Year 13
- Will Mepstead Year 9
- Matt Baxster Year 7
- Austen Clench Year 9
- Peter Tongue Year 7
- Will Blatchford Year 10
- Tom Walter Year 11
- Martin Tongue Year 12
- Kai Gilbert Year 13
- Francis Saunders-Smith Year 13
- Dan Shillibeer Year 12
- Matt Saunders Year 12
- Ben Shorland Year 13

I was also given the opportunity to help out in the opening dive display. This consisted of a synchronised dive featuring over 40 divers all taking off one after another from the 10m and 5m boards. All this was during a fireworks and pyrotechnics display going off around us to create a fairly impressive but scary display.

Shortly after this, myself and some of the other divers from the competitive squad were given the chance to demonstrate our abilities in the brand new dive gym as various important guests including the Mayor and Mayoress, and even our own Head Teacher were shown in to view the brand new facilities. This is a purpose built gymnasium for the competitive divers and features trampolines, tumble tracks, weights, dry boards and even a foam pit.

However, this is barely a fraction of what the Life centre has to offer. Other facilities include:

- Family leisure pool with flumes, 'beach entry' and bubble pool
- Innovative climbing zone with 15-metre wall, aerial assault course, bouldering and abseiling
- Eight-lane indoor bowls rink
- 12-court multi-use sports hall suitable for badminton, five-a-side football, basketball, netball, trampolining and other sports
- 150-station fitness suite
- 10-lane, 50-metre swimming pool with moveable floors and 'booms' allowing flexible use
- Olympic standard diving pool with moveable floor
- Dryside training facility for competitive divers and other sportspeople, with trampolines, springboards, harnesses, crash mats and other specialist equipment
- Oasis with sauna, steam rooms and showers
- Multi-purpose areas for dance and martial arts, which can also be used for a crèche and soft play
- Youth gym, squash, training and studio spaces
- Public cafe open to everyone visiting the park

The standard of these facilities makes the Life Centre one of the most advanced and exciting leisure centres in the UK, and its sports facilities are said to even better the recently finished Olympic stadiums in London! This makes it a thrilling addition to Plymouth, and is set to bring even more attention to our city, especially with the upcoming Olympic Games. But most importantly, it is an amazing opportunity for everyone to try out and get into a new and interesting sport, in a world class facility. We have been blessed with the Leisure Centre and I highly recommend going along and giving it a try. I assure you, it's worth it.

By Connor Figg