



**Award Category:** Most Sustainable Construction sponsored by the University of Hertfordshire

**Project:** Westminster Lodge, St Albans

**Client:** St Albans City & District Council

**Project Team:** S&P Architects, Deloitte Project Management, Willmott Dixon Construction



Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre is located in Verulamium Park, St Albans. It was rebuilt in 2012 and includes a 25x10m main pool with 50% movable floor, 17x10m training pool with 100% movable floor, children's water area, four court sports hall, 200 station fitness gym and youth gym, two exercise/multi-purpose studios, group cycling studio, climbing wall, crèche, children's soft play area and café. The centrepiece of the building is the Verulamium Spa, which takes the original Roman concept of different temperature rooms and specifies high quality and robust materials.

Extensive public consultation helped to capture the needs of the local community. Sustainability was central to the design concept. The result is a state of the art building that is accessible to all, provides facilities that complement each recreational activity, and creates a 'visual impact' by the use of large open spaces and full height glazing.

Impacts on the local environment have been minimised through various solutions. The drainage system harvests, stores and recycles water to support all main areas of the facility. A combined heat and power system heats the pool and is key to achieving a sustainable

## BuildingFutures Awards | Case Study

building with low running costs over the short and long term. Backwash water from the pools is also used to feed the toilets.

Building material selection was based on reviewing similar materials in comparison with each other using key criteria such as whole-life cost and sustainability. PV's generate energy for the centre and feeds extra energy back to the grid. Glulam beams used in the pool roof are both sustainable and renewable materials.

Westminster Lodge has been awarded BREEAM Very Good and was constructed under the Considerate Construction Scheme. Whole-Life aspects of building design ensure that the future running costs of the site remain affordable, with building component longevity key in selecting finishes and fixtures.

Cllr Mike Wakely, Portfolio Holder for Sports, Leisure and Heritage, St Albans City and District Council, said: "The Council is delighted that Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre has been recognised as a highly sustainable building. Our aim was for the leisure centre to contribute to the local area through a wide range of facilities and attractive visual appearance without impacting adversely on the environment. The project team have worked exceptionally well in collaboration with the local community to make this happen. It's a real testament to local architecture, sustainable engineering and construction!"

### Judges comments:

"The attention to detail in the design and construction of Westminster Lodge is self-evident. The project is a great example of the benefits which can accrue from adopting an integrative approach to design. Integrative design requires an exceptionally high level of collaboration between the client, architect, builder and technical specialists. Of particular note is the great use of daylight in the two main pool-halls and the pragmatic and sensible approach to the design of the building services (e.g. the use of an earth-duct for climbing-wall ventilation air, combined heat & power, ventilation heat recovery, re-use of filter backwash water, etc.). Overall the team has created a stunningly beautiful sustainable building, which will be of benefit to the residents of St Albans for decades to come."