



Alliance Leisure



Full Site Refurbishment



January 2023



8 months

The Northcroft lido has been part of the community's landscape for more than a century. The original outdoor pool at Northcroft dates back to the late 19th century and is included on the First Edition Ordnance Survey mapping of 1880-1881. Enlarged in 1914 and completely rebuilt and converted to a Lido in 1937, the pool was purportedly "the largest in the south of England". Further works in 1967 transformed it into a Lido complex with adjacent 'baby pool'.

Universal Civils & Build were approached in late 2020 by Alliance Leisure to put together an outline proposal to refurbish and enhance the Lido as part of their Leisure Framework programme.

This created a number of challenges with respect to the permanent works designs taking appreciable cognisance to sustainability and also the future financial proposition. By shortening the pool from 72 metres to 50m and reducing the depth from a maximum 2.8 metres to a profile of 0.9m to 1.58 metres this not only had a direct effect on sustainability but also would reduce the pressures on the existing structure.

Utilising the existing pool structure inherently creates a number of challenges and natural unknowns and was exasperated by an artificially high water table and years of erosion and voids under the existing structure.



Universal Group

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Universal Group utilised the expertise of our in-house ground solution and piling division to support the project through early contractor involvement to ensure the solution was both robust and cost effective.

This was a technical project that required a high level of expertise in a number of disciplines from around Europe; including pool and slide manufacture from Italy and Turkey respectively. Universal Group were able to engage expertise at all levels with our extensive supply chain and feed this back through a single point of contact. This helped to mitigate any potential commercial impact or elongate the already constraining programme of works.

The new facility included a 50 metre Olympic swimming pool supported by a splash pad and multi-slide, beach hut style changing rooms, a sun terrace all of which are fully accessible. The new pool benefits from precision engineered chromium-rich steel technology, which will futureproof the lido for decades to come, both in terms of maintenance and sustainability.

The £5.7 million investment project, funded by West Berkshire Council, is projected to increase visitor numbers from 15-20,000 per annum to over 50,000 over the increased outdoor swim season. Now operated by Everyone Active, the lido season will now run from Easter to September, and will offer a wider range of water-based activities.



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