

EVENING HERALD 18/10/06

Pool's now under heavy pressure

I READ with great interest the Herald's story on the state of the city's health.

Of particular interest to me is the growing statistical rate of obesity within Plymouth. Last year you ran a front-page article on me losing 11 stone within nine months.

Like any successful story of natural weight loss, regular exercise is almost always a major contributory factor. During my campaign to shed the pounds, I found a combination of harsh exercise, like running mixed with pursuits such as walking, cycling and swimming, helped me enormously. Swimming, in particular, was always an enjoyable pursuit, and Seaton Pool, being firstly a full-length pool and secondly within walking distance of my home, was always a good natural form of maintaining fitness levels in between runs without the impact stress on my legs, ankles and joints etc, which running causes. Indeed, when I was at my heaviest, swimming was about the only exercise I could do; I certainly couldn't run at 22-plus stone and I wouldn't dare get on a bike for fear of crushing it!

Sadly, now Seaton Pool in no more, I have had to trundle down to Central Park, where I have noticed in recent months (as I am sure have many others) how overcrowded it is. Last week in particular I visited the afternoon public swimming sessions, only the place is absolutely packed - including the two fitness lanes. The evening sessions are just as busy these days as well!

With Central Park's just commitments to schools, and the host of other classes they run, I feel that the pool is simply becoming overwhelmed.

I can only hope that Plymouth gets another full-length pool in the near future to help lift the burden off Central Park and contribute to tackling the state of the city's health which, I am sure (as many in the NHS believe), is only going to get worse.

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Seaton monument

WITH the final destruction of Seaton swimming pool, gone is any reminder of any military presence in the area.

From the 'Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders' to Royal Marines, several decades have passed where the military once lived and trained.

Even the main road running through the area is now called William Prance Road, with reference to an old and wealthy Plymouth family with a medical background.

I'm wondering what happened to the monument that stood proud at the old Seaton Barrack gates of 'Lord Seaton' astride his 'steed'.

Behind the new hotel, Future Inn, is a roundabout with no art work. Could the old monument of Lord Seaton be placed there, roughly where the parade ground would have been? The cost could be off-set by the profits made from the sale of land where the pool stood. Remembering the pool was given 'free' to Plymouth City Council.

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