

Postbag

They don't count; they don't vote

SEVERAL of the members of the Plympton and Plymstock Mencap Society are also members of the Pisces Swimming Club and I am writing this letter on their behalf.

This swimming club (a club for both physically and mentally handicapped people) has been using the facilities of the Mayflower swimming pool for almost 20 years from 11am to 1pm on a Sunday. This time is now being changed to 4pm to 5pm to accommodate the swimmers from the soon-to-be-closed Seaton Pool. This is a very inconvenient time and 81 per cent of the members have stated they will leave the club, and therefore it will fold if the council insists on the change of time.

Once again the handicapped people of this city are being given no thought and are being treated as third-class citizens. Why should they have to give up their time at the pool after all these years, and why could not the afternoon slot be given to the Seaton Pool swimmers? Well, we know the answer, don't we? They, the handicapped do not count for anything; they don't vote. Shame on you, Plymouth City Council.

MAUREEN BLAKENEY

Secretary, Plympton and Plymstock
Mencap Society

PLYMOUTH City Council should be ashamed of the seemingly unstoppable decision it now appears to have unanimously reached.

Based on the assumption that Seaton is going to close its doors for the final time on April 10, the city council should have done far more than it attempted to in order to keep the pool open, at the very least until one of similar standing is built elsewhere, such as what is being proposed at Central Park.

Whatever is said and done between now and April 10, Seaton Pool appears to be doomed, despite some Plymouth MPs and the majority of the public's valiant attempts in opposing this ridiculous and totally needless closure.

What message does the action of closing down a facility vital to health send to the general public and to an ever-increasing obese nation of children, particularly in this area; all for the sake of saving a paltry £160,000 per annum?

This sum would pale into insignificance many times over when compared to the rising cost of the NHS bill in the years to come in order to treat what will surely become an increasing list of obese patients in the future.

As echoed time and again in these columns, a city the size of Plymouth, with its huge catchment area, should have long since had superior swimming facilities to what it has in place at present.

GUY PETERSEN
The Barbican

EVENING HERALD 29-3-06

EVENING HERALD 29-3-06