

Kensington Academy and Leisure Centre

NEWSLETTER

February 2015

- ▶ HRH The Duchess of Cambridge officially opens new academy and leisure centre



Last month Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cambridge officially opened the new Kensington Aldridge Academy and Kensington Leisure Centre.

These flagship new buildings stand in the heart of Notting Dale ward and represent a £57.4m investment in the area and are part of the Council's ongoing commitment to regenerating the north of the borough.

Read more about HRH's visit overleaf.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

► Royal visit to North Kensington

On a crisp, sunny January morning Her Royal Highness visited North Kensington to see the recently opened Kensington Aldridge Academy and to tour the soon to be completed Kensington Leisure Centre.

Principal David Benson showed The Duchess around and she met students and staff, and sat in on a geography and an RE lesson. The Duchess spoke to Year 7 students during a reading session in the library. Afterwards student Mehdi Abid, said: *"I've been looking forward to her visit all week and so I was really happy that she came into the library."*

The Duchess then enjoyed a short presentation from students in the theatre before unveiling a plaque to commemorate her visit. Before leaving HRH visited the academy's Creates Hub for young entrepreneurs, and met students who are designing items for sale at Portobello Road Market. Ambitious student Sarah Abi Osman said after the visit: *"The Duchess said the jewellery we made in Creates looked really nice and I told her that I want to be the boss of a company when I leave school."*





Work on the £28m academy began in December 2012 and has created a striking new academy serving the local community with all of the students living less than a mile away. The site was gifted by the Royal Borough which is the academy's co-sponsor and contributed £10.4m towards the construction costs.

Her Royal Highness then took a short walk to the leisure centre, due to open to the public in March, to tour the state-of-the-art facilities and watch sporting displays from local primary schoolchildren and other community groups. The Duchess then attended a reception to meet those involved in the projects and was presented with life membership for all the family, along with a duck-shaped rubber ring for Prince George and his own personalised kit bag for swimming lessons. The academy and leisure centre stand on the site of the former Kensington Leisure Centre where, during their time at Wetherby School, both Their Royal Highnesses The Duke of Cambridge and Prince Harry had swimming lessons.





“We were thrilled that Her Royal Highness did us the great honour of officially opening the new academy and leisure centre. The Duchess was warm and friendly to everyone she met making it memorable day for students, staff and all those involved in the project.

“It is hard to believe that it was only back in 2011 that we seized the opportunity of redeveloping Kensington Leisure Centre’s sprawling site to build both a new leisure facility and also a much-needed secondary school – the first in North Kensington for a generation,” said Councillor Nick Paget-Brown, Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

“With the improvements to Grenfell Tower due to be completed later this year, the area around the site will have been transformed in a relatively short space of time.”

▶ Watch the film of HRH’s visit

Watch a short film of The Duchess of Cambridge’s visit at www.rbkc.gov.uk/kalc





► Kensington Leisure Centre opens Monday 2 March 2015

Kensington Leisure Centre will open to the public on Monday 2 March 2015 and is a result of a £29.4m investment from the Council.

Work began back in December 2012 and the new centre replaces one built in the mid 1970s, which itself replaced the Victorian Lancaster Road baths. Despite a major refurbishment in 2001 the facilities were simply not tailored to the health needs and pastimes of local people.

The new centre is one of the finest in the Capital with a state-of-the-art 120 station gym boasting the latest cardio and resistance machines, free weights and functional fitness kit from Technogym and D2F.

Residents will be able to take advantage of a wide range of classes on offer, including power pump, group cycle, aerobics, abs blast, step and sculpt, bums tums and thighs, box-fit, water workout, Brazilian dance, yoga and Pilates.

Kensington Leisure Centre opening times and contact information

From Monday 2 March the centre's opening hours will be:

Monday to Friday – 6.30am to 10pm
Saturday to Sunday – 8am to 8pm

Address

Kensington Leisure Centre
Silchester Road
W10 6EX

For more information and to check swim times please visit: www.better.org.uk/kensington

► Highlights of the new leisure centre

Other highlights of the new fully accessible leisure centre include:

- a 25-metre, eight-lane swimming pool for teaching and swimming at all levels
- 250-seat spectator gallery
- 20-metre teaching pool with mobile floor
- eight-court multi-use hall
- two fitness studios
- and sauna/steam facilities with treatment rooms.

► The design and layout of the leisure centre

The leisure centre is spread across three floors:

- **the basement floor** will include an eight court/ multi-purpose hall, squash courts, changing areas and lockers
- **the ground floor** will house the centre's reception, café and meeting area, three pools, changing areas, lockers and a multi-purpose room
- **the first floor** will include a large fitness suite, fitness studios, sauna/steam facilities and treatment rooms within a spa suite, changing areas, spinning studio, staff restrooms and lockers.



Councillor Tim Ahern, Cabinet Member for Leisure, said:

“Physical exercise is one of the most important things we can do to stay healthy and we are committed to ensuring that all of our residents can access state-of-the-art sports facilities.

“Our substantial investment will ensure that this new centre has the best public sports facilities in the capital and meets the needs of local people for years to come.”

► The journey to a new academy and leisure centre

October 2011 – Architects Studio E appointed

December 2011 – Cabinet agree to fund a new academy and leisure centre

May 2012 – Planning application for new academy and leisure centre submitted

September 2012 – Planning permission granted for new school and leisure centre

December 2012 – Construction started

September 2014 – Kensington Aldridge Academy opens

March 2015 – Kensington Leisure Centre opens to the public



► Wider estate regeneration

Towering above the two new buildings is nearby Grenfell Tower, on the Lancaster West estate.

Improvement works started last summer and include new heating and hot water systems, new cladding and double glazing. Nine much-needed new homes will also be created from what were unused spaces and new facilities will be provided for a nursery and the Dale Boxing Club.

The tower block is managed by the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation on behalf of the Council and contains 120 homes. The Council is funding the work as part of the wider regeneration of the area, which will see it transformed by autumn 2015.



► Find out more

Find out more about the Kensington Academy and Leisure Centre scheme by visiting www.rbkc.gov.uk/kalc