



Ilkley Pool and Lido Community Group
By Email

9th April 2026

Dear Cllr Ferriby

Thank you for your response on the 4th April to our concerns

We welcome the recognition that **"The Lido will require and receive special consideration as a district-wide and nationally significant attraction"** as part of the Sports Facilities Strategy Review, and that **"the level of community involvement is a real strength of the Ilkley facility"**.

By way of context we wrote to you because we have been having these conversations now for over two years with no resulting action. Forgive us for being frustrated, but whilst we recognise the good intent in your response, your messages are the same ones that we have had time and time again, with no resulting action.

For instance we were told repeatedly in 2025 by officers at meetings and by email that the pool cover was imminent including that a supplier had been found and the cover would be installed before the end of 2025. We first raised this 2 years ago, and still there is no pool cover, with the impact that energy to heat the pool is being wasted. So when we hear yet again that the pool cover is imminent without a date it tells us nothing that we haven't heard over the last 2 years. The fact is there has been no pool cover for over 2 years and there is still no date for a pool cover.

Funds Raised

In relation to funds raised, we are keen to give the money to BMDC to spend on the Lido and Pool, but want guarantees that the money given will be spent on the Ilkley Pool and Lido only. We asked for an agreement to that end. After 2 years of trying to find a way to spend the funds raised for the Pool and Lido we may have finally identified a way to gift items bought with these funds. It's unclear still whether that is a process we can use for money, and as yet BMDC has only identified a few low cost items for us to contribute. We have circa £11K to donate. We just want to:

1. Give you the money we raised
2. For that money to be spent on items we agree between us for the benefit of Ilkley Pool and Lido and
3. To be assured that the money is used for that purpose only.

We don't understand why this has become so complicated or has taken so long.



Operational Group

It is good to hear that an operational group is going to be convened. Again we have had no communication about this and no dates offered. We hear on the grapevine about the planned lido opening this year, with no direct communication to us.

Please note that whilst you stated at the Bradford Council meeting that there were meetings with IPLCG, in reality we had one meeting just before the BMCD council, and it was about the Full Moon Swims this year only. That is the only meeting this year. There are no more scheduled.

Strategy

In terms of the strategy, again we have had no contact at all with Review. We are repeatedly told that deadlines are being extended. If you remember the first deadline was October 2024. Here we are 18 months later with no involvement.

Fundraising

Sadly we were keen to progress the agreed Full Moon Swims but the new BMDC charging policy makes this far too risky. Given the new risk of running at a loss (which we can't do within our constitution) if we have less than 400 people registered, we will have to cancel these. The FMS events, alongside providing some gardening support for the flower beds, are the only activities the Ilkley Pool and Lido Group are contributing to the Lido and Pool this year.

We hear your support for our engagement, but sadly in reality there still is none.

Unfortunately our experience continues to be that the Council, whilst purporting to want to engage with us, in reality does not welcome our involvement, our suggestions, or our willingness to raise money to support our pool and lido.

We continue to make little progress on spending the funds we have already raised, and we see no evidence of improved communications.

Given this we will be informing our members that despite confirmation from BMDC that officers are keen to work collaboratively with the community there has been no progress on actions agreed from meetings in 2025, and no operational or strategic meetings have been offered for 2026. For the immediate future we will focus our efforts on campaigning for changes and improvements to the pool and lido, and will cease fundraising.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Becky Malby". Below the signature, there is a faint, illegible line of text, possibly a name or title.

Prof Becky Malby, Chair , Ilkley Pool and Lido Community Group



Appendix : Correspondence related to this letter

Cllr Ferriby Response 4th April 2026

On 04/04/2026 09:07, Cllr Sarah Ferriby wrote:

Good morning, Paul,

Thank you for your detailed and carefully considered email on behalf of the Ilkley Pool and Lido Community Group. I fully recognise the time, commitment and goodwill that sits behind it, and I appreciate your patience while these issues have been considered.

I want to begin by reiterating that the Council is genuinely grateful for the fundraising undertaken by the Community Group and for your continued commitment to supporting the Pool and Lido. The level of community involvement is a real strength of the Ilkley facility.

Spending of Funds Raised

Council officers are currently working through the legal and procurement considerations involved in accepting donated funds or equipment. This work is necessary to ensure transparency, proper governance and assurance that funds are used for the purposes agreed.

In terms of specific items:

- Pool cover and solar panels: I can confirm that installation is now imminent.
- Inflatables: I am aware this has been discussed previously and that there is community support for this activity. Officers are continuing to explore a range of ideas, including inflatables, but operational capacity, safety and sustainability considerations will need to be factored into any final decision.
- Gym equipment for outdoor circuits, pool cleaning equipment, and festoon lighting: These are recognised as sensible and beneficial investments. Subject to the agreement being finalised, these remain actively under consideration.

Working Arrangements and Communication in 2026



I am pleased to confirm that, now the Lido has a more established staff resource in place, officers are keen to establish the operational group that was previously discussed. This group would focus on:

- Events and community activities at the Lido
- Coordination between site staff and the Community Group
- Progressing agreed funded items

Future meetings will involve the Ilkley site team directly, which should help move from discussion into delivery.

Strategic Context

The proposed priorities identified for future investment are:

- Improvements to the changing rooms
- Enhancements to the café
- Potential repurposing of the pavilion

While this cannot be taken forward formally at present, that work is valuable context and should not be lost as discussions progress.

More broadly, the Council has identified over £600,000 in the current financial year for essential repairs and improvements across four swimming facilities. While Council finances remain constrained, further funding opportunities are being explored and will be considered alongside the **Sports** Facilities Strategy Review, which is being undertaken in line with Sport England guidance. The Lido will require and receive special consideration as a district-wide and nationally significant attraction.

The draft Strategy is expected to be available later in the summer. I will continue to press for community input, including from the IPLCG, to be embedded as this work progresses.

Next Steps

I appreciate that you need to update your members shortly. I hope the following provide some reassurance:

- The pool cover installation is imminent
- Work is underway to resolve a compliant process to release community funds
- An operational group is now intended to be established
- Officers remain keen to work collaboratively with the Community Group

Thank you again for the continued commitment and constructive approach taken by the Ilkley Pool & Lido Community Group.



Yours sincerely,

Sarah

Cllr Sarah Ferriby

Portfolio Holder for Healthy People and Places

As an elected Member of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, I am a data controller as defined in the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to personal data processed by me when I'm representing the residents in my Ward. I will handle any personal data about you in accordance with Bradford Council's Data Protection Policy. A copy of my privacy notice can be found [here](#) . If you would like more information about this, please contact me. Contact details for all elected members can be found [here](#)



Our Original EMail 18th March 2020

Dear Cllr Ferriby,

Ilkley Pool and Lido

We are writing to ask for your help with two key issues

1. The funds raised by the Ilkley Pool and Lido Community Group
2. Communicating with our members on how the IPLG is going to be working with Bradford Council this year

1. Spending Funds Raised

The Ilkley Pool and Lido Community group currently has in excess of £11,000 gifted to support improvements at the Ilkley Pool and Lido. We have previously raised this with you, and it has been the subject of discussions at our Partnership Group. The funds are for equipment and activities that it would be hard to finance from within CBMDC. This is money we have held for several years now awaiting a process to spend it. As we discussed with you previously, it is ethically very difficult for us to raise funds and then just sit on them.

There are two issues now holding up spending



1. The agreement form. This is an agreement between CBMDC and IPLCG which sets out the items to be purchased, the funds required and assures IPLCG that funds will be used for the purposes identified. This agreement was drafted between the members of the partnership group and has been with CBMDC for over 4 months now for clearance.
2. Process for agreeing what we are going to fund. As you know previously we discussed funding:
 - a. The Pool Cover. The Ilkley Pool has been without a cover for 2 years now. We understand CBMDC is funding the cover but as yet we do not know when it will be in place. At a previous Town Council Meeting we were told November 2025.
 - b. Inflatables. The Inflatable Session on a weekday afternoon was previously a success, and only stopped because the equipment was faulty. We proposed re-starting the inflatables session at the pool, and we would buy the new inflatable, and this was supported by previous staff and by the community. We had agreed a trial return (for childrens' parties) as this secures good and predictable income. Other pools locally are making a success of inflatable sessions. However, we now understand that the pool management team do not want to pursue this.

We do have agreement to fund;

- c. Gym equipment for outdoor circuits. This has been agreed but without the Agreement to sign (see above) we can't buy the equipment.
- d. Other items - we have been asked to buy a pool cleaner and some festoon lights - again awaiting the Agreement to sign

As you know the Partnership Group has stopped meeting awaiting the Strategy, and there are no operational meetings. There is no process now for agreeing how funds are spent.

2. Communicating how IPLG is going to be working with CBMDC this year

At the end of last year we agreed (CBMDC and IPLCG) to pause the Partnership Group, given the lack of progress that has been made against the Partnership Group's jointly agreed objectives in our the Group's terms of reference, and what we were told about the challenges the Council faces and the limited progress to date on the strategic review of sports facilities across the district. The plan had been to wait whilst the Strategy was in development. We heard at Ilkley Town Council that the draft Strategy is now likely to be ready in the Summer.

At the same time we were clear that we were keen to continue to work with the Council on events around the Lido, and on specific projects/initiatives in support of the Pool and Lido



and which we have been raising money for. One action from the Partnership Group was to form a more operational group for events and coordination of activities, as well as spending the funds raised. This has not been set up, and so working on any events/ activities has not proved easy.

As part of our collaboration last year, and in agreement with John Coulton, we secured pro-bono design input from experienced designers to explore improvements to areas staff and the community had previously identified as needing attention, including the changing rooms, café and potential repurposing of the pavilion. These ideas were intended to support the longer-term development of the site, and the CBMDC strategy for the Pool and Lido. Again we have been told this work is now not to be considered at present, and at the Ilkley Town Council meeting last year it was not clear that CBMDC was aware of this work.

Despite repeated statements from the council that community consultation is important in developing the Strategy we have not yet had the opportunity to contribute and there seems to be nothing in the pipeline.

We currently have a membership of over 220 all of whom are committed to the Lido as a wonderful local and national facility, and who want to support and help. Currently our activities this year are restricted, fundraising is pared down and we have no vehicle for communicating user feedback with CBMDC, or to collaborate to develop utilisation or income.

We will shortly need to update our members on the current position both on the funds and on our collaboration with MBDC, having told them the partnership group was paused. We have delayed doing so while trying to resolve matters, but expect to communicate with members in the week commencing 20 April.

It would be very helpful if we could share some more positive progress or a clear way forward.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,

Paul

Paul Stephens, Joint Secretary

Ilkley Pool & Lido Community Group



secretary@ilkleypoolandlido.co.uk