

Climate Change Strategy.



Success Story: Stafford Leisure Centre

Key outcomes:

1. Reduced annual CO₂ emissions by 65 tonnes through efficiency improvements
2. Installed solar panels enabling fully solar-powered operation during summer
3. Cut electricity use by 140,000 kWh, saving around £35,000 annually
4. Reduced gas consumption by 140,000 kWh through eco-shower installation
5. Saved nearly 4 million litres of water annually through eco-shower installation

A series of sustainability projects are helping the team at Stafford Leisure Centre to provide healthy living opportunities for residents in the long term.

By embedding sustainability into day-to-day operations, Stafford Leisure Centre, which is operated by Freedom Leisure in partnership with Stafford Borough Council has reduced its CO₂ footprint by 65 tonnes

a year, equivalent to 52,000 flights between Stafford Borough and the town of Stafford in the USA.

The installation of solar panels on the rooftop of the building mean operating costs are reduced, with the centre operating at times, fully off grid, whilst the addition of 69kW of storage batteries brings further efficiencies to the system.



Steve Jefferies is Area Facilities Manager for Freedom Leisure.

He said: “At Stafford Leisure Centre we have implemented a series of projects to make us far more efficient with how we run our plant and make us more sustainable.

“There has been a lot of strain on the leisure sector in recent years with Covid and then rising energy costs.

“We’ve taken a positive approach to environmental challenges with projects including solar PV installs which has made a huge difference to our electricity consumption.

“We have a lot of plant installed to operate our pool, ensuring the environment is kept to optimum conditions, which includes running pool circulation pumps and air-handling units 24/7.

“All of this consumes a significant amount of energy. The solar PV, particularly through the summertime, means our energy is, at times, off grid with reduced costs.”

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Electricity consumption has been reduced by 140,000kW a year at the centre, equating to a financial saving of £35,000 per year.

A suite of 21 air-powered eco-showers has further reduced the centre's CO2 footprint by 30 tonnes, reduced gas consumption by 140,000 kW and cut water usage by 3.8 million litres a year, contributing to an annual saving of £15,000.

Steve added: "We've also installed some air powered eco showers in our swimming pool facilities as well which has made a huge difference to our customer experience and also reduced our gas and water usage at the same time."

Funding for the projects was secured as a joint bid by Stafford Borough Council and Freedom Leisure to Sport England's Swimming Pool Support Funds (UKSPSF).

As well as the 25m swimming pool and teaching pool, Stafford Leisure Centre also has a gym, indoor cycling studio, squash courts and multi-purpose sports hall. The centre hosts SLC Gymnastics Club and Stafford Apex Swimming Club among others, along with a variety of fitness classes.

With a range of memberships available, there is a wealth of options for residents across Stafford Borough to enjoy active healthy lifestyles.

Steve said: "By being more sustainable as an organisation, we can ensure we remain open for the public so that people can continue to come here to train, swim and feel good about themselves.

"Freedom Leisure and Stafford Borough Council are working really hard behind the scenes to keep ourselves highly sustainable for the future, to ensure we're around for the long term and to continue benefitting the local community."

Our Climate Action team is here to help you achieve your sustainability goals. Get in with us to start your journey to a greener future.

