



The new facility is accommodated within a two-storey steel frame.

Landmark leisure scheme

Residents in the Kent coastal town of Deal will get a significant leisure and wellbeing boost when the brand-new Deal Leisure Centre opens in 2027.

As many of the nation's leisure centres were built more than 40 years ago, a gradual redevelopment process to replace old and tired facilities is taking place across the country.

An example of this work is currently being undertaken for Dover District Council in Deal, Kent, where a £20.4 million [leisure centre](#) is being delivered by a team led by Alliance Leisure.

Replacing a 1980s-built swimming pool hall and reception area, the new two-storey centre will deliver modern facilities that inspire active living and bring the community together. Energy efficiency is at the forefront of the design, including air source heat pumps, roof-mounted solar panels and energy-saving LED lighting throughout.

Taking inspiration from its location, the interior of the completed building will feature plenty of timber panelling (referencing Deal's pier) and finishes that symbolise a connection to the town's

historic castle.

Procured through the UK Leisure Framework, owned and managed by Denbighshire Leisure, the new-build will have a six-lane swimming pool, splash pad, a fully equipped gym, two multi-use studios, a group cycling studio and a café overlooking the pool.

Adding to the Deal Leisure Centre's overall offering, the completed centre will be linked to an existing sports hall and will sit adjacent to a retained indoor tennis centre.

Steve Winter-Rose, Business Development Manager at Alliance Leisure, says: "Over the last 25 years, Alliance has worked with councils across the UK to deliver hundreds of leisure projects, from community pump tracks and 3G pitches to major new-build facilities. Every project benefits from the learnings of the past, helping us to deliver unique environments that are resilient, efficient and designed to meet the specific needs of the communities they serve.

"Leisure centres are the heartbeat of any community. When Deal's new centre opens in 2027, it will give local people a place to be proud of, a place that inspires movement, connection and wellbeing for generations to come."

Main contractor for the steel-framed centre is Pellikaan Construction, a company that specialises in sport and leisure facilities, and recently celebrated 40 years of working in the UK.

Its design and build ethos for such projects invariably involves the use of steel, in order to achieve the [speed of construction](#) and the long [column-free spans](#) leisure and sports clubs require.

For this job, steelwork contractor Adstone Construction has fabricated, supplied and erected 350t of steel. Using a single 60t-capacity mobile



For speed of construction, the first floor and roof are both formed with metal decking.

crane, the entire steel frame was up in under four weeks. Along with the steelwork, Adstone also installed the building's precast lift shaft and staircases.

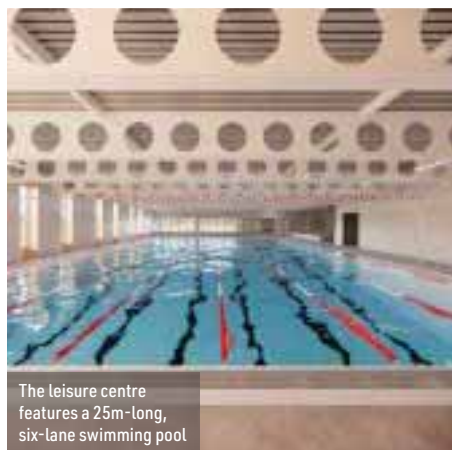
The steelwork wraps around the precast elements, but gains no stability from the structurally independent units. The main frame's stability is derived from cross bracing, strategically located around the perimeter (forming braced bays) where there are no windows or doors.

"In preparation for the steelwork erection, we initially demolished the old pool building, crushed and reused (onsite) the structure's concrete material, and installed over 500 vibro piles for the new build's foundations," explains Pellikaan Construction Project Manager Andrew Laslett.

The company also excavated and formed the new 25m-long swimming pool's substructure before the steel frame was begun.

The new build is based around a regular perimeter (7m) column spacing, with the underside of the first floor featuring a series of 20m-long x 1m-deep Westok beams that span over the main pool.

The Westok cellular beams provide an efficient and lightweight solution to form the pool's column-free space. The 1m-deep beams boast



The leisure centre features a 25m-long, six-lane swimming pool

FACT FILE**Deal Leisure Centre**Main client: **Dover District Council**Architect: **GT3 Architects**Main contractor: **Pellikaan Construction**Structural engineer: **Engenuiti**Steelwork contractor: **Adstone Construction**Steel tonnage: **125t**

"It's fantastic to see another of our leisure centre schemes on site. Once again, the Westoks will be left exposed, helping to create an aesthetically-pleasing environment."

700mm-diameter cells and have been pre-cambered to eliminate the risk of excessive dead load deflection.

John Callanan, Westok's Design Team Manager comments: "It's fantastic to see another of our leisure centre schemes on site. Once again, the Westoks will be left exposed, helping to create an aesthetically-pleasing environment."

In order to protect the steelwork from the pool hall's corrosive environment, the cellular beams along with their supporting columns (as well as the steel frame in the wet changing rooms) have all been hot-dipped galvanized.

Alongside the entrance lobby, café and pool hall, the remainder of the ground floor accommodates offices, wet changing rooms and toilets, and plant rooms.

The first floor of the building follows a similar column grid pattern as the lowest level. The area directly above the main pool accommodates a fitness suite and spin studio, within another column-free zone.

"Vibration could have been an issue for the gym, but the choice of 1m-deep beams over the pool hall creates a sufficiently stiff floor," explains Engenuiti Associate Director Steve Peet.

The rest of the upper floor is occupied by two

studios, dry changing facilities and a plant room.

The first floor and roof of the building have been compositely formed with steel beams supporting metal decking and a concrete topping. This method was chosen as it offered a quicker installation than alternative flooring solutions.

Summing up, Matt McCreith, Senior Architect at GT3, says: "We're delighted to be working with Alliance Leisure on another key community project. Inspired by the much-loved existing centre, we've worked closely with stakeholders

to carry forward its warmth and character, while creating a modern, welcoming space for everyone to enjoy.

"We want the new building to be the cornerstone that ties the existing tennis centre and sports hall elements together; our clear circulation journey knits new and existing, with a strong focus on providing accessible facilities and flexible areas for fitness, social activity and wellbeing. The new Deal Leisure Centre will provide a state of the art, broader offer to the community." ■



Visualisation of the completed landmark Deal Leisure Centre.