

PE2018/S: Recognise the value of swimming pools and provide financial relief to help keep pools open

Beatrice Wishart MSP written submission, 21 January 2026

I would be most grateful if you would consider this as a further submission to support Petition PE2018: Recognise the value of swimming pools and provide financial relief to help keep pools open.

I spoke in support of this petition in the Chamber debate held on 6 January 2026. I spoke about the national loss of public swimming pools and that learning to swim should be available to all children.

Shortly afterwards the news broke of Shetland Recreational Trust's decision to permanently close the Scalloway swimming pool in my constituency.

The swimming pools in Shetland are run by Shetland Recreational Trust which receives financial support from the Shetland Charitable Trust. The recreational trust has had financial challenges for some time, and it is right that it has taken action to ensure the sustainability of all the leisure centres and swimming pools across its network.

While recognising the financial pressures on Shetland Recreational Trust, this decision is a great blow and disappointment to many in and around the village of Scalloway. I understand the community's shock and frustration about the decision and concerns about the lack of any community engagement on the loss of an important amenity.

I fear the closure may have a negative impact on school swimming and I strongly advocate for swimming, an important life skill, to be taught as part of the curriculum.

I understand from Scottish Swimming that Scalloway pool is one of seven in the country threatened with the prospect of closure.

It is particularly disappointing that this is the case, as the Scottish Government's budget recent announcement, in its promotion of a Summer of Sport for Scotland's children, includes provision for universal free swimming lessons for every primary school child.

Yours sincerely,

Beatrice