

*Petition to stop the Development on the Downs Leisure Centre site. Save our Recreation Grounds, keep Doctors in Seaford Town.*

**Hardcopy Signature List**

***Title: Petition to stop the development on the Downs Leisure Centre site.***

Statement:

We, the undersigned, **DO NOT** want a new health hub, retail store or housing to be built on the grounds of the Downs Leisure Centre, Sutton Road, Seaford. This proposal by Lewes District council would:

- Relocate both NHS doctor's surgeries away from the town centre without promise of additional medical services
- Build on a well-used recreation ground gifted to the people of Seaford
- Increase traffic, pollution and the risk of accidents
- Reduce footfall and damage business in Seaford town centre

We **DO** want to keep the existing recreation grounds at the Downs Leisure Centre, and GP services kept and improved in the Seaford town centre.

Have your say. To sign our **online petition**, or give our group practical support, email [DownsDNV@gmail.com](mailto:DownsDNV@gmail.com) Please follow us on Facebook at **Downs Development Neighbourhood Voice**.

To oppose this development, please sign below.

**38 Degree Online**

**<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/keep-the-doctors-in-town-save-our-recreation-ground>**

***Title: Save our Recreation Grounds, keep Doctors in Seaford Town***

Statement:

1. Save our Recreation Grounds
2. Keep Doctors in Seaford Town

Why is this important?

**Save our Recreation Grounds:**

Seaford in East Sussex has a serious, and recognised, lack of outdoor recreation and sports facilities for its growing population. Our grounds at the Downs Leisure Centre include: playing field, garden and an over 60s club. All at risk of being permanently lost and tarmacked over.

It's accepted by doctors and common knowledge that fresh air and open, green spaces are vital for mental and physical health for all ages. Our green spaces at the Downs site are in constant use by young and old.

They're also vital habitats to a host of birds, insects and other creatures in the trees, hedges, plants, grass and soil. As we face a worldwide climate crisis, green space isn't a 'nice to have', it's an essential part of supporting pollinators and a whole delicate, interconnected ecosystem.

These grounds are the last remnants of open space in this part of Seaford. Documents reveal that historic buildings thought to pre-date 1624 are still on what was once rural and common land.

In fact, these public recreation grounds were gifted to the people of Seaford for health and leisure since 1964, until now. It's a space where we can come together, kick a ball, picnic, walk and play together. We absolutely do not want to lose this right.

**Keep Doctors in Seaford town:**

Currently people from all over Seaford can reach the two doctors' surgeries in the town. Seaford is a one-stop centre for everyone. Patients who visit the surgeries in Seaford also go shopping and catch up with friends in the town's many cafes.

This vibrant town community, and vital trade, could easily be lost if both surgeries are moved to the Downs Leisure Centre site. At a time when the UK's high streets are under serious threat, we need to be investing in the town centre and keeping it thriving, rather than driving footfall away from the area.

Relocating both surgeries to the Downs Leisure Centre and building a supermarket on site will encourage more car use, leading to traffic congestion and pollution which will change the local area beyond recognition. Plus, the development will significantly increase parking demand – and the planned parking is woefully insufficient.

There are empty and underused premises in the town centre. No clear reasons have been given about why the NHS doesn't invest in its existing premises which occupy a large space in the town centre. It is not our Council's legal or core responsibility to fund NHS facilities. The seizure of green recreational space to build a supermarket and £18 million doctor's surgery is unprecedented. No other council has proposed this before.

As residents of Seaford, we value the fresh sea air, outdoors green space, beautiful natural environment, active lifestyle, vibrant town centre, and sense of community. But if the council gets the go ahead with this development, it will use an £18 million public works loan to finance an NHS project - with no new medical services on offer.

We do NOT want a development that builds a supermarket, housing, car parking and medical centre over our green space. The development will degrade the natural environment, increase congestion, pollution and the likelihood of accidents. It will further social isolation, reduce ways of keeping active and seriously affect trade in the town centre.

To stop this development, please sign our petition.

Links:

'Town Centres could become ghost towns', BBC, July 2018

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-44695269>

'NHS battle plan to save millions of lives: Lifestyle changes to solve health', The Express, April 2019

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1116288/nhs-health-crisis-exercise-britain-matt-hancock>

'Evidence showed that concrete gardens had no effect at all, so you had to have green gardens.' 'Top doctor backs green gym idea.' BBC news 2014

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-26871970>

'UK parks save NHS more than £111m a year, study suggests. Fields in Trust charity say regular users are likely to be healthier and visit GPs less often'.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/07/uk-parks-save-nhs-111m-year-study-suggests>

'Doctor's new prescription: "Don't just exercise, do it outside" '.

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/feb/10/health-prescriptions-doctors-healthcare-fitness-exercise-parks>

'One of our key areas of expertise is the interface between green space and health from programmes on the ground to strategic work at national level'. <https://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/what-we-do/green-space-and-health>

A host of research at <https://nhsforest.org/evidence-benefits> points to the health of patients, staff and local communities can be dramatically improved by providing opportunities to exercise outdoors and access green space.