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## Media Release

### **Home Secretary, Theresa May; and British rower and Olympic gold medalist, Greg Searle, MBE launch New Training Centre at Longridge**

The Home Secretary and MP for Maidenhead Theresa May; and British rower and Olympic gold medalist, Greg Searle, MBE today launched the new Training Centre at Longridge by the Thames outdoor activity centre in Marlow.

The new training centre at Longridge has been paid for by fund-raising activity and donations from sponsors, including a £1.1million grant from Sport England, as well as grants from The Michael Shanly Trust, Buckinghamshire County Council and The Percy Bilton Trust. The Training Centre - which has been designed by Blue Forest, one of the country's specialist environmental architects - is built using locally sourced, renewable resources. It is at the cutting edge of environmental design and build and it couldn't be greener! The new centre will be much more than new changing facilities; it will be an innovative and inspirational amenity for all of Longridge's 80,000 annual visitors.

The shell of the new training centre is finished and much of the interior is well on its way – it looks fantastic. The launch will show off the centre in the form of a 'live' progress report and offer sponsors from the local business and corporate community the opportunity to get more involved.

The key stakeholders Comment on the event below:

Amanda Foister, Longridge Centre Director:

"We really needed this! Having up to date and modern facilities makes all the difference to our users. We've seen thousands of teenagers benefit from our activities and we want to see thousands more get the most out of the new facilities. We can only do that if we get the funding that we badly need and the kids richly deserve."

Rt. Hon Theresa May, MP:

“Facilities like Longridge, that are at the centre of community engagement are vital to a healthy society. This project is delivering on what we are striving to achieve on a local and national level.”

Greg Searle, MBE:

“Longridge broadens the availability of water sports, including rowing, to kids from all walks of life. This is essential for moving rowing forward and giving youngsters the chance to enjoy sports that wouldn’t be available otherwise. It could even be helping to build future Olympians!”

John Cove, Sport England's South East Champion for Community Sport, said:

"Longridge received one of the largest National Lottery funding awards Sport England has made in the south east in recent years. It's fantastic to see first hand the difference this investment is making for the local community."

"There is so much on offer at Longridge, making the centre a great place for families and people of all abilities and interests. Whether it's water sports, adventure activities or the chance to develop your sports leadership and coaching skills, there really is something for everyone."

Steven Adams, Buckinghamshire County Council, Cabinet Member for Education:

“Longridge is one of the county’s most inspirational community resources, providing Buckinghamshire’s teenagers with training and direction in sporting, activity and general personal development skills. We are very happy to have been involved in the regeneration of Longridge.”

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Notes to Editors:

1. Sponsors of the Training centre include:

- Sport England
- The Michael Shanly Trust
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- The Percy Bilton Trust

2. About Longridge:

- In a unique riverside location near Marlow, Buckinghamshire, Longridge provides a range of exciting water sports and land-based activities for young people of all abilities.
- As well as 12 acres of beautiful water meadows we have our own island for the ultimate swallows and amazons experience.

- Every year 80,000 young people visit our world-class facilities.
- We boast a proud 50 year history and an excellent safety record.
- Longridge helps young people from all walks of life and abilities to develop water skills as well as leadership, self-discipline, confidence and respect.
- **[www.longridge.org.uk/about-longridge](http://www.longridge.org.uk/about-longridge)**

For more information, please contact:

Rebecca Cockman  
Sidecar Communications

Tel: 07771 548 999  
[rebecca.cockman@sidecarcommunications.co.uk](mailto:rebecca.cockman@sidecarcommunications.co.uk)

Charlotte Freeman  
Sidecar Communications

Tel: 07771 544 999  
[charlotte.freeman@sidecarcommunications.co.uk](mailto:charlotte.freeman@sidecarcommunications.co.uk)