

# Crackdown could hit local clubs

PLANS to scrap the National Sports Centre at Bisham Abbey have been shelved but the decision could still spell disaster for the hundreds of local sportsmen and women who use the complex.

The Sports Council decided not to sell off the centre but instead insisted that Bisham, like the five other centres throughout the country, should concentrate more on its role as a centre of excellence.

In the future this could lead to local people effectively being eased out of using the pitches and artificial surfaces which have become a lifeline to those struggling to meet fixture commitments during the winter months.

"The council decided that Bisham should continue as a centre of excellence but its long term role will be decided after discussions with the users' governing bodies," said a spokeswoman for the Sports Council this week.

"Councillors are concerned that the centre is inactive during the daytime and they want to see facilities used to the full.

Overall the Sports Council has earmarked £7.5 million to fund the six centres over the next five years.

The Director of the Bisham centre and chairman of Wycombe Wanderers Brian Lee slammed the selling-off proposition.

"It's ludicrous to think of selling Bisham," he said. "It is a gem and if it goes we will never get it back."

But Lee refuses to believe that just because Bisham would become more of a centre of excellence it would not necessarily rule out local participation.

"Centre of excellence would also cover concentrating on developing county and regional squads," added Lee.



**Brian Lee . . .**

**"Ludicrous"**