

leisure opportunities

6 April - 14 April 2020 Issue 785

Your recruitment & training partner

Leisure Media launches news feeds

Leisure Media, publisher of *Leisure Opps* and its sister titles, including *HCM* and *Spa Business*, has announced the launch of dedicated news feeds to connect the industry during the coronavirus crisis

Launching today [6 April 2020], the live feeds will enable Leisure Media to post breaking news throughout the day to keep people in the industry in the loop about what's happening.

Liz Terry, CEO of Leisure Media, said: "We're passionate about the industries we work in and want to contribute and offer support throughout this crisis.

"Everyone is doing everything they can to help out and the spirit of camaraderie at this very challenging time is incredible.

"Our skills lie in communications and media, so these news feeds are one way for us to support and contribute, by keeping the flow of information going. The aim will be to share inspiring stories, to raise morale and to inform decision-making.

"We've been writing daily news online since 1997 – before Google



■ The feeds will keep news flowing

started – and our news service is a very popular part of our portfolio of media products," said Terry. "However, we're finding the appetite for news and the volumes we need to post have grown so much, due to the coronavirus crisis, we required new tools to enable us to deliver the amount of news demanded."

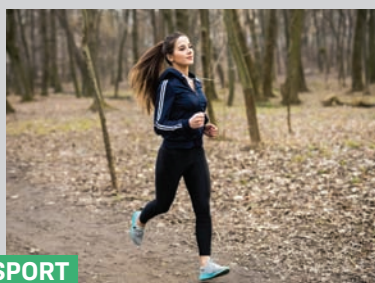
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The spirit of camaraderie at this challenging time is incredible

Liz Terry, CEO, Leisure Media

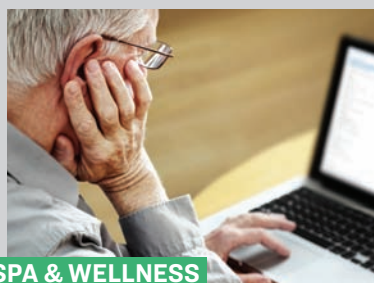


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Kurt Janson column: The value of domestic tourism

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Dallaglio RugbyWorks appoints fitness sector veteran **Jason Worthy** as CEO

Sports charity Dallaglio RugbyWorks has appointed Jason Worthy as its new CEO.

Worthy, who until July 2019 was president and CEO of fitness equipment giant Life Fitness, replaces Rachel Roxburgh, who is leaving the role after nine years.

Roxburgh has been CEO since the launch of RugbyWorks in 2011. During her tenure, she has overseen the growth of the organisation, including the development of a three-year skills-led programme which is now being delivered to more than 2,000 young people across eight regions in England and Wales.

The programme helps marginalised teenagers, at risk



■ Jason Worthy previously led Life Fitness' five wellness brands

"From the moment I learned more about the mission I was immediately compelled to get involved"

of being left behind by society, to aspire for a better future.

Worthy joined Life Fitness in 2012 and was promoted

to run all of Life Fitness' five wellness brands – Life Fitness, Hammer Strength, Cybex, Indoor Cycling Group and

SCIFIT – in 2018 under an independent, publicly-traded company called FitnessCo.

Before Life Fitness, Worthy led global procurement for the UK's then-largest fitness chain, Fitness First, where he co-created its budget club chain Klick Fitness.

"From the moment I learned more about the mission I was immediately compelled to get involved," Worthy said.

"I've been extremely impressed with the work the team has done to date under Rachel's leadership and I'm excited to start working with the Staff and Board of Trustees to continue the evolution of this fantastic charity."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

Industry pioneers launch new 'females in fitness' collective to support women in the sector



■ Elena Lapetra is part of the team behind the initiative

A new initiative has been launched to engage and empower women working in the UK fitness industry.

Called RISE, the collective will collaborate with industry organisations – such as CIMSPA, Sport England, IHRSA and ukactive – with a mission to help every woman in fitness to "rise to her fullest potential".

The team behind RISE is formed by eight industry professionals – Elena Lapetra, founder of Stronger Wellness;

"Our aim is to help enable career progression to allow everyone to reach their full potential"

Dr Lou Atkinson, a researcher at Aston University; Marg Mayne, CEO of MyTime Active; Jess Schuring, founder and CEO of Heartcore; Fran Presho, master educator, Stages Cycles; Caroline Richings, fitness consultant; Dawn Tuckwell, co-founder of Action PR; and Grace MacNamara.

"We have been overwhelmed by the support

we received from many leading organisations", said Elena Lapetra, RISE founder and chair.

"We're joining forces to achieve our shared goal of removing the obstacles faced by women – in particular at major points of career development. Our aim is to enable everyone to reach their full potential."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)



■ Kurran has spent 30 years in the spa and wellness industry

{ **"The individual skills of SDK Spa Developments offers a complete solution to clients"** }

Nicki Kurran partners with consultants to form SDK Spa Developments

Nicki Kurran Spa Consultancy has teamed up with interior designers Dennis Irvine Studio and leisure consultant SMC Leisure to form SDK Spa Developments, a firm that delivers a holistic approach to spa design, positioning and operations.

The trio worked together on the design, operational setup and opening of The Langley In Buckinghamshire, UK, featuring a 1,600sq m subterranean spa.

Kurran has spent 30 years in the spa industry, beginning as a therapist and progressing through corporate roles at destinations such as

Marriott Hanbury Manor and Champneys Health Resort.

Her experience in new builds and refurbishments range from leisure, fitness and medical facilities as well as bedrooms and F&B outlets.

"The individual skills of SDK Spa Developments offer a complete solution to clients combining our knowledge in business, strategy, design and operational expertise to deliver beautiful, functional and profitable spas," Kurran said. She added that combining their skills would offer clients a team approach to "delivering world-class spa projects".

READ MORE ONLINE

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Connecting the industry during the coronavirus crisis:

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■ Peel is a training specialist and previously led Rehab Jobfit

The Training Room appoints **Chris Peel** as chief executive

Training provider The Training Room has appointed Chris

Peel as its new CEO.

Peel will be responsible for leading the business through its "next phase of growth", which will see it tackle the existing skills shortages within the fitness and physical activity sector.

Peel is a training specialist and previously led Rehab Jobfit – which specialises in helping unemployed individuals move into work – between 2012 and 2014.

Peel will be responsible for leading the business through its "next phase of growth"

In 2015, he launched Interserve Learning & Employment and established it as one of the largest providers of apprenticeships and adult education, operating across the UK, before stepping down as MD in 2019.

Founded in 2006, The Training Room offers training and education across a number of sectors.

In 2018, it signed a deal with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) that resulted in the duo launching an international fitness training platform.

It is owned by a holding group, called Route2Work, which was set up following a management buy-out of The Training Room business in 2017.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

Sir Richard Branson launches Virgin's first cruise ship with on-board spa

Richard Branson has unveiled Virgin's first cruise ship – called Scarlet Lady – kicking off the launch of Virgin Voyages' fleet which will be known as the "Lady Ships".

Virgin Voyages' masterplan involves rolling out four ships in total, due for delivery in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The adults-only ship accommodates 2,770 guests and 1,150 crew on-board and includes the Redemption Spa designed by Knibb design, which Virgin labels 'a mermaid and merman hideaway'.

The spa is equipped with a hydrotherapy pool, mudroom, salt room, cold plunge pools and quartz beds and will offer



■ Sir Richard said the ship will accommodate 2,770 guests

"I've wanted to launch a cruise line since I was in my 20s and I'm so excited that it's finally happening with Virgin Voyages"

spa treatments by Elemis. Guests will also have access to hair and nail services, as well as relaxation spaces such as

The Dock – Virgin Voyages' outdoor lounge with a focus on relaxation and socialising surrounded by ocean views.

Facilities also include a wellbeing pool and large spa pool as well as two plunge pools.

"I've wanted to launch a cruise line since I was in my 20s and I'm so excited that it's finally happening with Virgin Voyages," Branson said.

Virgin Voyages has committed to becoming one of the cleanest fleets at sea. The company has banned single-use plastics on board and partnered with Sweden-based technology company Climeon, with a goal to significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions by converting engine waste heat into clean electricity.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

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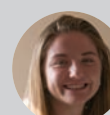
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■ Waldman will take up her new role full-time on 6 April

Jenny Waldman joins Art Fund as new director, replaces Stephen Deuchar

Jenny Waldman has been named the new director of Art Fund, succeeding Stephen Deuchar in the role. Waldman, the former director of the highly-successful 14-18 NOW campaign, is set to take up the position on 6 April.

14-18 NOW was the official art programme for the First World War Centenary and commissioned more than 100 works from world-renowned contemporary artists.

Waldman also acted as creative producer for the London 2012 Festival – the finale of the Cultural Olympiad for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

"It's a great honour and very exciting to join Art Fund at this point in its 117-year history," she said. "Art Fund plays a crucial role in supporting museums and galleries across the UK and the opportunity to build on the impressive work that Stephen Deuchar and his team have done over the past decade is inspiring."

The Art Fund – an independent membership-based charity – was founded in 1903 to aid the acquisition of artworks for British museums, galleries and historic houses.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

"Art Fund plays a crucial role in supporting museums and galleries across the UK and it's a great honour and very exciting to join at this point in its 117-year history"

CORONAVIRUS

Les Mills launches free digital workouts

Les Mills International (LMI) has unveiled a raft of free digital workout solutions to support health clubs and schools during the coronavirus pandemic.

As thousands of gyms and schools across the world are being forced to close, the group fitness giant is taking unprecedented steps to help adults and children worldwide stay active in their homes.

Les Mills is providing clubs, instructors and schools with access to its workouts through the Les Mills On Demand (LMOD) digital fitness platform, so they can support families and paying gym members with workout options to stay healthy and active.

"Big challenges call for bold solutions," says CEO Clive Ormerod, "so we're opening up LMOD to support our club partners and schools in keeping the world moving."

"We all know exercise is the cornerstone of a healthy immune system, so the fitness industry has a major role to play in helping to keep people fighting fit in the face of coronavirus," he said.

"With health now a top-tier priority for people of all ages, our sector needs to stand shoulder-to-shoulder to work through the challenges ahead and emerge as a stronger, more vital cog in society than ever before."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)



■ Les Mills on Demand is now available free for gym members



Big challenges call for bold solutions

Clive Ormerod

CORONAVIRUS

Joe Wicks' YouTube PE lessons go global



I want this to be an opportunity for us all to interact, connect, stay fit and have fun

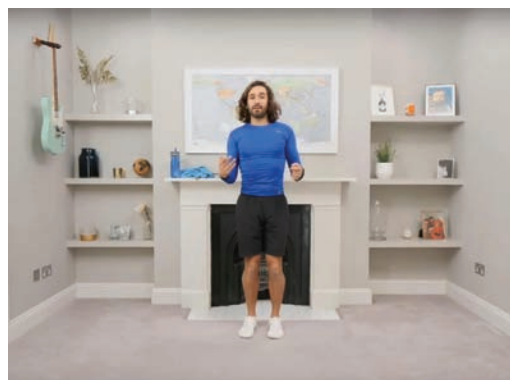
Joe Wicks

A live workout streamed on YouTube, which looks to help keep families active during the coronavirus outbreak, has gone global.

Hosted by personal trainer Joe Wicks, the first family-oriented Physical Education (PE) class on 23 March saw 800,000 families tune in and take part in the live class.

During its first week, the five videos have attracted more than 16 million views.

Using his The Body Coach TV Youtube channel, Wicks pledged to stream classes every day in order



■ Wicks' videos attracted 16 million views in five days

to "keep the nation fit and healthy", as schools across the UK shut in a bid to tackle the outbreak.

"I want this to be an opportunity for us all to interact, connect, stay fit and have fun," Wicks said. "I'm going to do this every day until our schools are open."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

CORONAVIRUS

How to retain customers – Paul Bedford releases tutorial



I decided to make a short video to help clubs retain customers

Paul Bedford

Retention specialist Paul Bedford has released a video tutorial advising health and fitness operators the best ways to retain customers during the coronavirus outbreak.

Bedford says there are up to three phases of change that need to be managed, depending on the degree of lockdown in place – the 'reducing the exercise' phase, the 'isolation phase' and the 'returning phase'.

In each phase, operators can take action to engage with customers and use science-based behavioural techniques and nudging to keep them



■ People want to exercise at the same time each day

committed and engaged in successful behaviours – and Bedford talks through the various stages, giving advice.

"Considering the current situation globally, I decided to make a short video for my clients, to help them understand what they need to do to retain customers at this time," said Bedford.

Among other advice, he highlights the importance of routine in maintaining this engagement.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

NEW SERVICE

Action PR launches fitness model agency for sector

Action PR has launched Action Fitness Models, a modelling firm tailored to the fitness industry, which represents models with genuine fitness ability.

Action Fitness Models is already used by several of the PR agency's existing clients, including Everyone Active, miha bodytec and Pulse Fitness.

Following the launch, the list of models is now open for booking.

"We noticed a gap in the market for models who not only look good but are actually able to move, perform and execute



■ The majority of the models are personal trainers



Our models are able to execute exercises in a technically correct way

Cheryl Hersey

exercises in a technically correct way," said Action PR director Cheryl Hersey.

"Before launching Action Fitness Models we would often book models from other agencies who looked fantastic, but weren't able to do what we needed them to."

The agency represents a selection of models with a variety of fitness abilities, the majority of whom are qualified personal trainers.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

Humphrey Cobbold on BBC about impact of coronavirus

Humphrey Cobbold, CEO of Pure Gym, appeared on BBC *Question Time* on 26 March, along with Richard Horton, editor of *The Lancet*, Emily Thornberry, shadow foreign secretary and housing minister Robert Jenrick.

Cobbold, who closed all of Pure Gym's 265 sites, told *Question Time* this had only taken 10 hours, saying: "A business that took us 10 years to build only took 10 hours to close down."

He praised his staff for their swift response: "I've got a tremendous amount of respect for my colleagues across our business."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

POWER OF FITNESS

Care home staff trained as activators

Staff at sheltered accommodation are being trained to organise and lead their own strength and balance sessions for residents, as part of a project to get those living in assisted housing more physically active.

Leisure trust Sport Aberdeen and Paths for All – a charity aiming to increase the number of people who choose to walk in Scotland – are running a training programme for Bon Accord Care staff working at housing complexes in Aberdeen, Scotland.

The First Steps programme will provide staff with the skills to promote and provide regular physical activity sessions for their residents.

Run by Sport Aberdeen's Healthy Communities team, with funding from Paths for All, the project aims to increase functional fitness and daily walking among people not currently able to take part in walking groups.

"The training sessions have already proved to be a powerful tool in enabling those living in sheltered housing to improve their mobility and access a better quality of life through regular activity," said Jill Franks, Sport Aberdeen director of performance and planning. "We're looking forward to helping bring this training to even more staff in the coming sessions."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)



■ First Steps will provide regular physical activity sessions



**“
This will allow those living in sheltered housing to improve their mobility**

Jill Franks

PUBLIC LEISURE

Trust invests £1.2m in 'first immersive studio'



**“
This will expand our relevance into new audiences**

Maureen Campbell

Falkirk Community Trust has launched an immersive indoor cycling studio as part of a £1.2m redevelopment of the Mariner Leisure Centre in the town.

The trust, which operates leisure services on behalf of Falkirk Council, appointed development specialist Alliance Leisure to deliver the project under the UK Leisure Framework.

The first floor of the centre has been redeveloped and now features what is said to be Scotland's first fully immersive workout environment, complete with a cinema-size screen measuring 10m in span.



■ The centre includes a fully immersive workout space

The space will offer riders the Les Mills TRIP cycling workout.

"Modernising and improving the quality of our services, including the introduction of a new immersive cycling studio, expands our relevance into new audiences," said Maureen Campbell, CEO of Falkirk Community Trust.

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LES MILLS

CORONAVIRUS

"Period of flexibility" for Sport England

Sport England has initiated a three-month period of "significant flexibility" as part of plans to offer targeted support to organisations struggling with the effects of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

As well as helping funded organisations, the grassroots body said it would do "everything it can" to encourage people to stay active, wherever possible, as keeping fit is now "more important than ever".

In a statement, Sport England said that previously-agreed KPIs, targets and conditions within the funding agreements it had signed off "may no longer be relevant, appropriate or proportionate" given the drastically changed

circumstances. Instead, it is switching its focus on supporting the sector and encouraging people to stay active, not on asking organisations to report on previously agreed conditions.

It also said that organisations that have received public funding might want to use the money they received in a different way, or on different things, to respond to the current situation – or to keep their organisation going.

"We know this is a hugely difficult time for all our partners and we're continuing to talk to as many of you as possible to get a fuller picture," said Sport England CEO Tim Hollingsworth.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)



■ Sport England said it will also help people to stay active



**We know this is a
hugely difficult time
for all our partners**

Tim Hollingsworth

REDEVELOPMENT

Manchester Arena could become 'largest in Europe'



**We are still in the
process of consulting
with our partners**

John Sharkey

ASM Global has revealed plans to increase the capacity at its Manchester Arena venue to 24,000.

As well as an increase to capacity, the initial proposals for a redesign of the arena – drawn up by architects HOK – include the creation of an additional concourse level to house VIP boxes and lounges, as well as F&B outlets.

The designs also feature a new "worker bee façade" – in honour of the city's symbol, the Manchester bee – and upgrades to the venue's access infrastructure, to improve the people flow between the arena and Victoria station.



■ The arena will have an increased capacity of 24,000

In a statement, John Sharkey, executive vice president European operations for ASM Global, said: "We are still in the process of consulting with Manchester City Council, our neighbours and landlord on the design – their involvement in this journey will be crucial."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

CORONAVIRUS

Sport gets stuck in with efforts to tackle coronavirus



Clubs have created phone and online care lines, which will provide those whose might otherwise slip through the usual safety nets when forced to live behind closed doors

The UK sport sector has launched initiatives to help ease the pressures on local communities and the National Health Service (NHS), created by the coronavirus pandemic.

A number of football clubs have also joined the relief effort.

League Two club Stevenage and Scottish club Stenhousemuir have introduced a number of measures, from players phoning fans, to volunteers doing shopping for those most vulnerable.

The clubs have created phone and online carelines, which will provide



■ Watford is among the clubs "doing their bit"

those whose might otherwise slip through the usual safety nets when forced to live behind closed doors.

Premier League club Watford's Hornets at Home initiative will also help elderly and disabled fans who are forced to stay at home.

Elsewhere, Crawley Town FC has created wellness information packs with exercise sheets, resistance bands and mental wellbeing tips.

Other clubs to have launched schemes include Aberdeen FC, Blackburn Rovers and Eastleigh FC.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

CORONAVIRUS

Welsh venues being converted to help NHS efforts

Leisure centres and stadiums in Wales are being transformed into emergency hospital wards, as part of measures to tackle the unprecedented challenges placed on the NHS.

Selwyn Samuel Centre in Llanelli, Carmarthen Leisure Centre and the Parc y Scarlets stadium in Llanelli are among those being used to create hundreds of additional hospital beds.

Parc y Scarlets is the home of Pro14 rugby union club Scarlets, which made the decision to hand over its venue to help relieve the strain on services after discussions with Carmarthen County



■ Parc y Scarlets, the home of rugby union club Scarlets



Delivering these additional beds will be essential to help us

Dr Phil Kloer

Council and the Hywel Dda University Health Board.

Dr Phil Kloer, medical director at Hywel Dda University Health Board, said: "Delivering these additional beds for patients will be essential to help us manage patient flow over the coming weeks."

In addition, the Welsh Rugby Union has made its Principality Stadium available to the government and the NHS.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

Visual data website offers 'live' monitoring of COVID-19

Technology firm Purple WiFi has launched a live data website, offering a real-time, visual representation of the effects of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic on sport and leisure sectors globally.

Utilising the company's billions of footfall data points, Purple's data scientist team has constructed the live charts to help visualise the impact felt in a number of sectors.

It shows that cancellations within the US sports market has led to an 87 per cent decrease in the number of visitors to stadiums.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

ORGANISATIONS

IOG proposing rebrand and a change of name



We found that groundskeeping is not seen as inclusive

Geoff Webb

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) has called an extraordinary general meeting, where members will vote on a resolution to change the organisation's name to Grounds Management Association.

All IOG members have been invited to cast their vote on the matter, with a final decision being based on the membership's vote.

According to IOG chief executive Geoff Webb, the proposed rebrand and renaming follows research around attitudes towards the existing IOG name and identity.



■ The proposed rebrand follows 'extensive research'

Webb said the research had revealed "real concerns".

"We found that the profession is not seen as inclusive – it is the domain of 'older white males'," he said.

"There is also a feeling that no one is standing up for our profession and the skilled nature of the work – and that grounds management is not seen as an important part of sport."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

NEW OPENING

£1m artistic facility launches at 'home of gymnastics'

Lilleshall National Sports Centre in Shropshire has opened the doors to a new artistic gym, following a £1m investment. The launch was part of a three-month refurbishment at the venue – dubbed the Home of British Gymnastics – designed to prepare athletes for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, which have since been moved to 2021.

British Gymnastics, Sport England, facility operator Serco and Gymnova worked in partnership to create the new facility, which will support an extensive programme of regional, club and wider community use.



■ The launch is part of a three-month refurbishment



We have one of the best training facilities in the world

Jane Allen

"Thanks to our performance teams and the input of our creative staff, we have one of the best training facilities in the world, which complements the standard of our World Class Programme," said Jane Allen, British Gymnastics CEO.

"British Gymnastics is extremely grateful for the invaluable support from Sport England, Serco and Gymnova for making this possible."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

Hornchurch Centre to open later this year

A topping-out ceremony has been held at the site of the new £25m Hornchurch Leisure Centre, scheduled to open later this year.

The centre is being delivered in partnership by Havering Council, Everyone Active – which will operate the venue – and Metnor Construction.

Facilities at the centre will include a 25m, eight-lane swimming pool, a 20m learning and diving pool with movable floor, a health and fitness suite with more than 100 stations, three group exercise studios and multi-use sports and activity halls.

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the national governing body for group exercise

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Spa & wellness news

CORONAVIRUS

ISPA to help sector navigate the storm

With businesses in the industry being forced to adapt quickly to the impact of the Coronavirus, ISPA has launched a survey to collect data relating to its impact.

Open to both ISPA members and non-members, the consultation initiative has been created to enable the organisation to better understand the impacts of the spread of the pandemic and to provide timely data that reflects the state of the industry.

Questions focus primarily on COVID-19 and the practices and policies implemented in response, as well as the current state of businesses and the expected impact of the pandemic.

All respondents to The Snapshot Survey will receive the full results of the questionnaire in the form of a report on 1 April.

ISPA president, Lynne McNees, told *Leisure Opportunities*: "ISPA recognises just how difficult and complex the decisions are that members are being faced with during these unprecedented times.

"The survey will help us better understand and more effectively respond to the needs of the global wellness industry. We're encouraging our members to adhere to the recommendations of their local and state health officials as they chart their course."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)



■ The survey will help respond to the needs of the industry



ISPA recognises just how difficult the decisions are for members

Lynne McNees

CORONAVIRUS

Vulnerable people offered free online emotional support



I think that now it's more important than ever to be connected

Ruth Chaloner

Therapists qualified in mental health interventions are being invited to get involved with a new, free therapy service to support vulnerable people during the coronavirus shutdown.

Website The Help Hub will launch free online mental wellbeing sessions for those struggling with self-isolation and social distancing and their knock-on effects such as anxiety and loneliness.

People will be able to book a 15 to 20 minute session, guided by a qualified therapist, who will assist in giving emotional or practical advice via Skype, Facebook Messenger or phone.



■ People can book 15 to 20 minute sessions

The service has been established by qualified psychotherapist, Ruth Chaloner.

"I started The Help Hub because I'm a big believer in community and I think that now it's more important than ever to be connected," Chaloner said.

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

HERITAGE

Drake's Island to reopen as museum

Drake's Island, a former prison located off the coast of Plymouth, reopened on 15 March (before the COVID-19 lockdown came into place) for a one-off tour after closing more than 30 years ago, with further plans to open a museum and heritage centre on-site.

Covering 24,000sq m (261,000sq ft), the island, named for renowned Elizabethan adventurer Sir Francis Drake, is home to a 16th-century barracks, a network of underground tunnels and a pier.

It boasts a rich history, with stories of brandy smuggling, as well as a 1957 hoax 'invasion' by a band of schoolboys. Closed to the public since

1989, Drake's Island was granted planning permission in 2017 for a luxury hotel and spa.

Current plans include a living museum and heritage centre, while a watersports centre is also under consideration.

The island was purchased in August 2019 by Plymouth businessman Morgan Phillips – a former Royal Navy engineer and founder of Guardian Industrial UK.

Following the one-off tour, Phillips plans to reopen the island fully, with the museum and heritage centre at the heart of those plans. In a statement, he said that he wanted to "restore it for the people of Plymouth and visitors".

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)



■ Drake's Island closed to the public in 1989



Closed to the public since 1989, Drake's Island has planning permission for a luxury hotel and spa, which was granted in 2017

CULTURE

Withdrawal from Creative Europe 'threatens UK arts'



By ending our participation, the UK government is erecting barriers to continued cultural exchange. Moreover, this decision makes no financial sense

Around 700 figures from arts and cultural organisations across the UK have raised objections to the UK government's decision to withdraw from Creative Europe (CE), an EU-funded scheme that provides investment to creative industries across Europe. Between 2014 and 2020, the scheme provided €1.46bn (£1.28bn, US\$1.66bn) in funding.

Concerns were raised in an open letter, addressed to Oliver Dowden, the culture secretary for the UK.

"This decision threatens an impoverished future for British



■ The current CE programme ends in December 2020

creativity and sends the message that the UK is closing itself off to our nearest neighbours," it read.

"By ending our participation, the UK government is erecting barriers to continued cultural exchange. Moreover, this decision makes no financial sense."

[READ MORE ONLINE](#)

The value of domestic tourism

These are unprecedented times for the UK tourism industry. In the space of a couple of months it has gone from a position where the 3.3m people in the sector were looking forward to a record breaking year generating £150bn for the UK economy, to the current situation where, to all intents and purposes, we don't have a tourism industry in the UK.

Staying home

With the UK's borders virtually sealed, the £25bn in export earnings derived from inbound tourism has come to a halt but it is in the domestic tourism sector where the closure will be felt most acutely.

Between overnight stays and day visits, domestic tourism accounts for around 2.7m jobs and generates £78bn for the economy. More importantly, a large percentage of this revenue is generated in rural and seaside areas where it is a significant and vital component of the local economy.

The recent view of government is that domestic tourism "just happens" and is of no net-benefit to the country. As such, it doesn't warrant government intervention and funding. The coronavirus outbreak is proving otherwise. Domestic tourism is an extremely important component of the UK economy and performs the vital task of redistributing wealth out from urban centres.

But there is a more important reason for government to now focus resources on domestic tourism. When the UK comes out of lockdown, the most pressing need will be to kick-start the UK economy. In terms of inbound tourism, this is going to be a difficult task. Not only

will numerous airlines and tour operators be out of business by then which will constrain supply, but not all countries will have travel restrictions removed at the same time and unrestricted movement between countries will only return in a piecemeal fashion over a length of time.

There are, however, no such problems on the domestic side. The other added advantage that domestic tourism has over a lot of other UK industries is that it has very short supply chains. Whereas sectors such as manufacturing and construction will suffer delays in restarting due to having to receive components and materials from suppliers who are, in turn, trying to restart their business, the hotels, attractions and the transport infrastructure needed for domestic tourism will be ready to go from day one.

So, the faster that we want the UK economy to recover, the more emphasis we need to place on restarting domestic tourism. ●



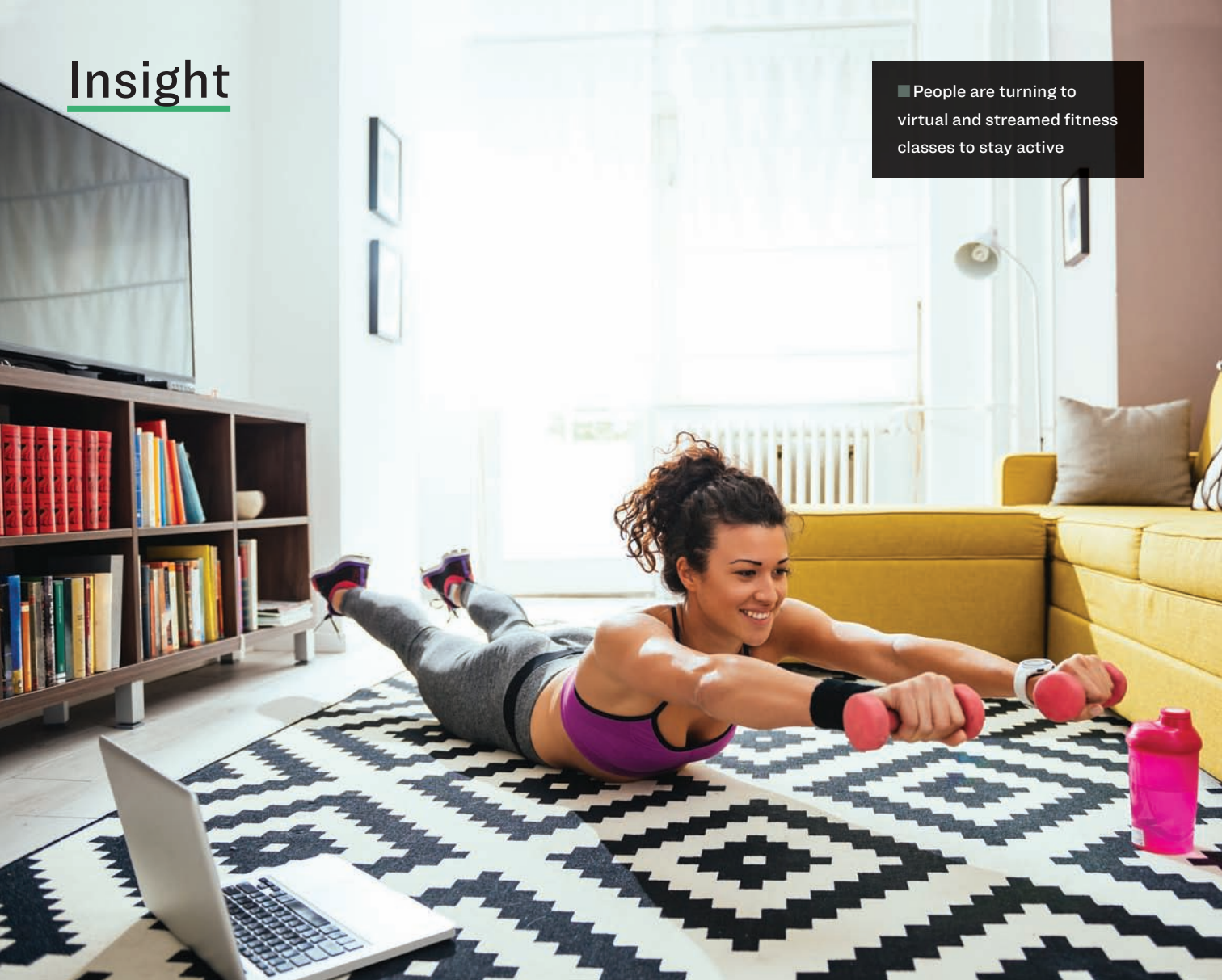
■ Kurt Janson is director of the Tourism Alliance



The faster that we want the UK economy to recover, the more emphasis we need to place on restarting domestic tourism.



■ Emphasis needs to be put on domestic tourism once the UK-wide lockdown ends

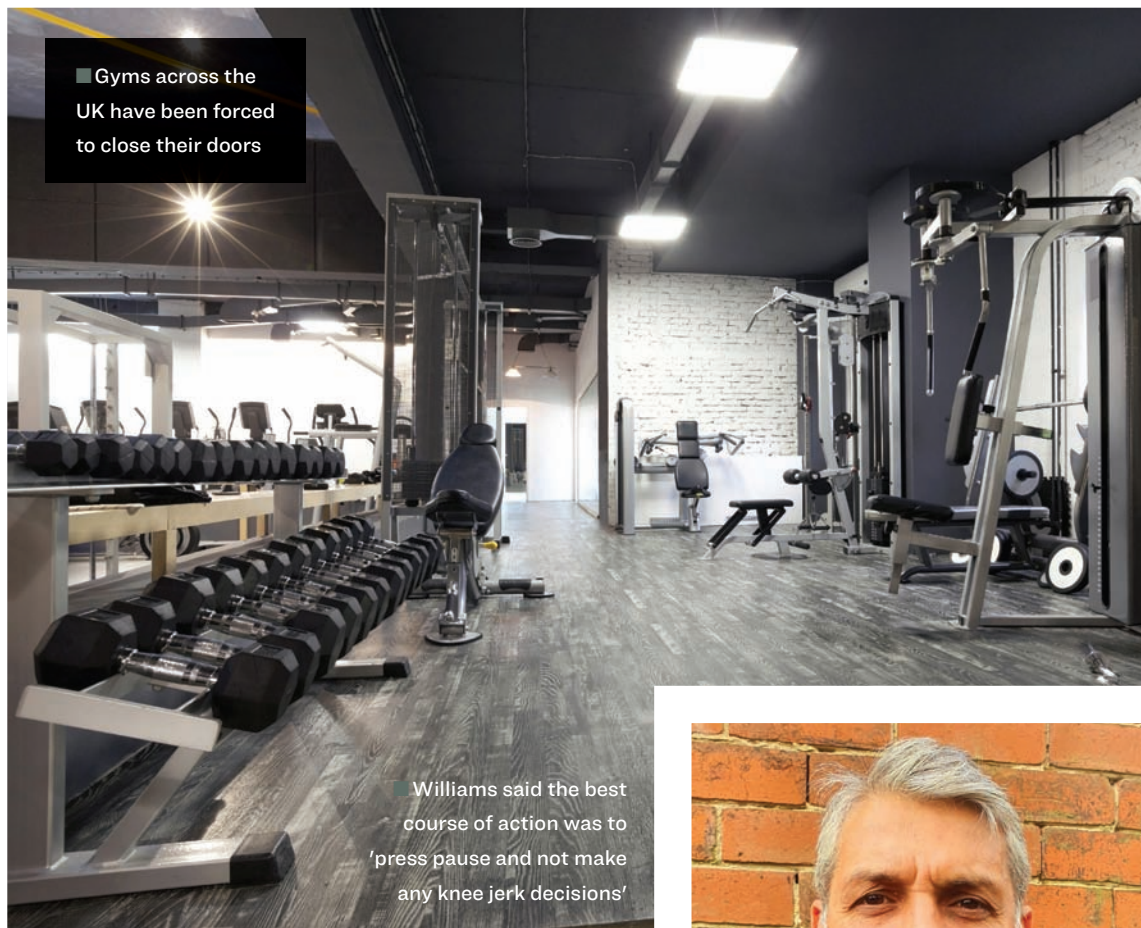


Tackling the outbreak

Gym operators concerned with the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on their businesses are being offered a free advice service

Unlactive's new strategic partner, QuikSwitch, has urged gym operators concerned about the impact of coronavirus on their business not to make any immediate decisions to pursue insolvency. Speaking to *Leisure Opportunities*, QuikSwitch co-founder Darren Williams said: "I'm reading a lot in the media about companies considering liquidation, with many seeing this as their only option to tackle the current business crisis.

"While we are in extremely uncertain times, our insolvency experts recommend that the best thing for all stakeholders is, in fact, to press pause and not make any knee-jerk decisions. We are all waiting to see



Operators should get themselves into the best possible position to move forward from this crisis



exactly what steps the government will take to remove pressure points on businesses. In the meantime, there is a series of protection and recovery measures that operators can put in place, all of which we can help with.

"QuikSwitch has put together a COVID-19 support group – a panel of experts in fields such as accountancy, insurance and employment law – who are on-hand to speak to any operators with concerns. This advice will be largely free, with further support available by agreement.

"As an immediate action, as at 12 noon today (Friday 20 March), there are still opportunities to protect income through Business Interruption Insurance and Income Protection policies. This is an incredibly fluid situation and these policies won't be around forever. They

are also, understandably, getting more expensive. However – in this small window where we may still be able to secure them – they may be of interest to owner-operators through to personal trainers. Our panel has access to the latest information on these policies.

"Second, we would encourage all operators to get themselves into the best possible position to move forward from this crisis. Our brokers and aggregators believe it will be a buyer's market in the short-term, which could mean considerable savings on everything from gas and electricity to merchant services and broadband; we believe all contracts up for renewal could be bettered in this current climate. If you have any contract renewal dates between now and March

2021, we can help you lock in favourable prices now. Now is the time to take stock of your fixed costs, so you can emerge from this crisis even stronger than before.

"Third, although we are still awaiting full details, the government has indicated that loans and grants will be made available to help UK businesses weather this storm. As soon as we have more clarity on these, our COVID-19 support group will be able to assess your eligibility for this funding and, where appropriate, guide you through the process."

Adie Meyer, UK sales manager at QuikSwitch, added: "QuikSwitch was set up as a one-stop-shop to save operators money. Across our portfolio of 27 expenditure lines – from utilities to telephony and tax planning – we have been able to present operators with an average saving of 11 per cent." ●



The mechanisms by which the comorbidities of obesity and ageing develop are very similar

Sylvia Santosa, Concordia University



Obesity - as bad as ageing

Obesity should be considered as 'premature ageing', according to new research by a Canadian university



■ Obese individuals are more susceptible to diseases closely associated with later-life onset, such as type 2 diabetes, Alzheimer's and various forms of cancer

Obesity should be classed as a form of premature ageing, due to it predisposing people to acquiring potentially life-altering diseases normally seen in older individuals.

That is the headline finding from a study called *Obesity and ageing: Two sides of the same coin* – by the Concordia University in Canada.

Published in the journal *Obesity Review*, the study reviewed more than 200 papers that looked at obesity's effects on human health. Using the data from the papers, researchers looked at the ways obesity ages the body from several different perspectives – from the immune system to shifts in tissue and body composition.

The study was led by Sylvia Santosa, associate professor of health, kinesiology and applied physiology in the



■ Obese people are at higher risk of sarcopenia – a progressive decline in muscle mass and strength

Obesity's effects on cognitive decline, mobility, hypertension and stress are all similar to those of ageing

Concordia University's Faculty of Arts and Science. Santosa and her colleagues looked at the processes of cell death and the maintenance of healthy cells that are usually associated with ageing.

At the genetic level, the researchers found that obesity influences a number of alterations associated with ageing. These include the shortening of protective caps found on the ends of chromosomes, called telomeres. Telomeres in patients with obesity can be more than 25 per cent shorter than those seen in control patients.

The study also suggests that obesity's effects on cognitive decline, mobility, hypertension and stress are all similar to those of ageing.

Pulling out from the cellular level, the researchers say obesity plays a significant role in the body's fight against age-related diseases.

"The mechanisms by which the comorbidities of obesity and ageing develop are very similar," Santosa said.

The researchers concluded that obesity speeds up the ageing of the immune system by targeting different immune cells, and that later weight reduction will not always reverse the process. The effects of obesity on the immune system, in turn, affect susceptibility to diseases like influenza, which often affects patients with obesity at a higher rate than normal-weight individuals.

Obese people are also at higher risk of sarcopenia – a progressive decline in muscle mass and strength usually associated with ageing. Finally, the paper spells out how individuals with obesity are more susceptible to diseases closely associated with later-life onset, such as type 2 diabetes, Alzheimer's and various forms of cancer. ●



■ The study suggests that obesity's effects on mobility are all similar to those of ageing

Technogym is looking for the stars of its new training videos

Technogym begins the selection of personal trainers who will be involved in the creation of new training content for the Technogym digital platform.



■ Technogym is inviting PTs and trainers to submit videos of themselves to be considered for these new roles

Are you a certified trainer and do you think you have the skills to become one of our presenters? We're looking for professionals with skill, ability to motivate and charisma.

The amazing trainers who will guide users through the monitor of our cardio machines or through our app.

The first castings are open for native English, Spanish and Italian trainers. These are the necessary steps to apply:

- Make a video presentation with your smartphone
- Film one minute of different free body movements (burpees, squats, skipping, etc...).
- Conduct a short workout on any cardio equipment
- Download the guidelines and fill in the form on the site in the dedicated section (<https://www.technogym.com/land/en-int/casting-personal-trainer/>)

Innovation has always been a distinctive element of Technogym's DNA, starting with the "Wellness on the go" strategy, launched in 2012, which saw the development of a seamless



■ If you want to be considered for a role as a Technogym presenter apply online now

Technogym is looking for trainers and presenters to be involved with creating new content for the Technogym digital platform

and integrated digital ecosystem consisting of smart equipment, mywellness cloud and applications, now present in 15,000 fitness and wellness centres around the world.

Technogym recently presented the Technogym Live platform, which is able to offer classes and individual training sessions directly on the console of equipment.

In continuing to pursue its mission of spreading wellness around the world, Technogym is looking for people with great talent and an international approach, eager to invest their energies, in tune with the culture promoted by the brand, made up of sport and a healthy lifestyle. ●

About Technogym

Founded in 1983, Technogym is an international supplier of technology- and design-driven products and services in the wellness and fitness industry.

Technogym provides a complete range of cardio, strength and functional equipment alongside a digital, cloud-based platform allowing consumers to connect with their personal wellness experience anywhere, both on the equipment and via mobile when outdoors.

With over 2,300 employees and 14



The Wellness Company

branches globally, Technogym is present in over 100 countries. More than 80,000 wellness centres and 300,000 private homes in the world are equipped with Technogym.

Technogym has been appointed Official Supplier to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics for the eighth time, after Sydney 2000, Athens 2004, Turin 2006, Beijing 2008, London 2012, Rio 2016 and Pyeongchang 2018.

Community Leisure UK

The voice for community leisure trusts across the UK

The community leisure trust collective has launched a new brand that seeks to support and develop our public leisure and culture services. **Community Leisure UK** – formerly Sporta – is the association that specialises in charitable leisure trusts across the UK, enabling networking and knowledge sharing with peers and external stakeholders.

Collectively, member community leisure trusts manage a **combined budget of more than £1.6bn, employ over 67,000 people**, and receive **233million visits per year**.

Charitable trusts are key community anchors who **reinvest every penny** into developing services focused on their local people across the life course. Trusts are working with more and more partners to develop supported routes to **mental and physical health improvement**, while reshaping services to meet local strategic objectives.

The ultimate aim of community leisure trusts is to **engage all people across the community**, whether that is having a health check, a coffee in a safe and warm space, going for a swim, taking a walk in the park, borrowing a library book or becoming a member of a gym.

Community Leisure UK are keen to help organisations who would like to know more about the public leisure landscape and / or the charitable trust model. Please do get in touch at:

www.communityleisureuk.org

@CommLeisureUK

cateatwater@communityleisureuk.org

Thank you for reading.

