

# 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



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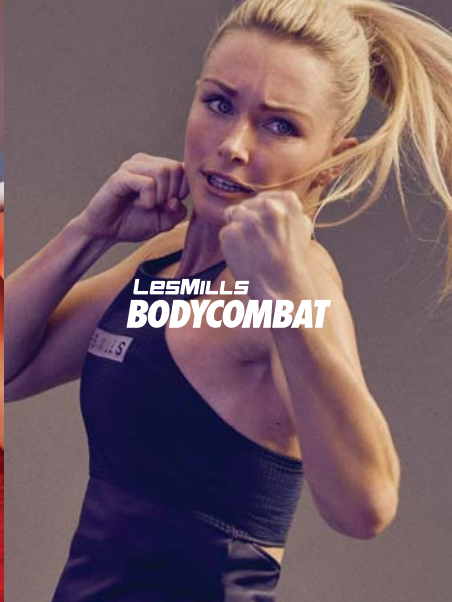
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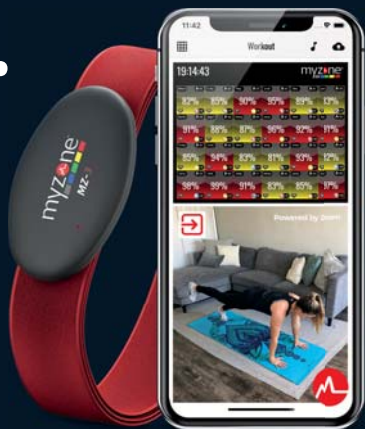


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## A year to remember

**We've stepped off the path this month to bring you a special 2020 review edition of *HCM* and to propose emerging priorities going forward, as we gird our loins to tackle 2021**

**A**s we draw to the end of this year of 'unexpected challenges', we wanted to take a moment to look back, with a special edition of *HCM* that records key moments in this journey we're all on together.

Inside, instead of our usual formats, you'll find a curated *2020 Timeline* of news from across the year, along with a chapter called *2020 Vision*, developed as a tribute and huge thank you to our clients, who are standing by us at every twist and turn in the road.

This special edition celebrates the sheer guts, determination, resolve, comradeship, resilience and energy this sector is showing in taking blow after blow and coming back fighting every time.

I'm sure next year will be just as tough, if not tougher, but as the scientists bring us vaccines, the end must surely be in sight and we can take great heart from that.

2020 has been a year when the fitness industry has found new clarity of purpose, forged a powerful identity, matured and emerged as an extraordinary force.

There are no words to thank ukactive for its extraordinary leadership and also CIMSPA, CLUK, Sport England and the many governing bodies who've stepped up.

Few other sectors have responded to the challenge of COVID-19 with the same degree of passion and unity.

The work we've done in 2020 has elevated our industry in the eyes of governments, investors, potential partners and – most importantly – our customers and I truly believe the physical activity sector will emerge from this crisis as one of the key industries of the future.

We've been right on the front line this year and it's been incredibly tough for everyone, yet our sector has been dynamic, determined and creative in finding solutions, adapting, innovating and surviving. Well done to one and all.

In terms of future priorities, we must ensure this unity we've forged is enshrined in some kind of custom or practice, so it can be sustained and not fade away when more normal times return; engage with our customers and recognise them as true stakeholders and advocates, with the creation – and universal adoption – of robust



PHOTO: DAVID LLOYD LESURE

**The physical activity sector is emerging as a key industry**

**“The fitness industry has found new clarity of purpose, forged a powerful identity, matured and emerged as an extraordinary force”**

consumer standards; create a structure and interface for medicalising the sector, so we can become a true partner to the caring professions; widely fund a powerful lobby, so we can continue to influence government and finally; work to establish more sustainable career paths for great people – with special energy focused on creating better working lives for our freelancers, who've been having an exceptionally tough time during the pandemic.

Signing off now for 2020 and wishing you and your loved ones a peaceful, joyful Christmas from everyone here at *HCM* and looking forward to roaring back in 2021.

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**4,854,881**

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**6,609,208**

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news reads  
**1,508,553**

WORLD EXCLUSIVE  
*'Groundbreaking  
research indicates gyms  
pose no additional risk  
of catching COVID-19'*

Reads to date  
**193,754**

Social  
traffic  
**226,992**

HCMmag.com

# **HCM** 2020

## a year in numbers

Interviews  
& features  
**215**

BIGGEST UK STORY  
Gyms can stay open  
in tier 3 areas

Reads to date  
**156,894**

News  
stories  
**565**

Search  
traffic  
**280,973**

Cups of  
tea drunk  
**1,390**

Zoom  
calls  
**102**



# HCM

# 2020 timeline

This has been a year like no other and in recognition of the amazing work done by the health and fitness sector, we've curated the key stories from our reporting this year to tell the story of 2020

## p10 / December 2019

### Flying along

We start our review in December 2019, when the industry is hurtling along, with mergers and acquisitions, record investments and record numbers of customers.

## p12 / January 2020

### Best start ever

January sees the global fitness industry reporting record results in terms of new sign-ups, attendances and investment.

## p14 / February 2020

### Disruption begins

With gyms in Asia closed or closing, Europe gets a hint of things to come, with the cancellation of FIBO and operators starting to imagine the impossible – gyms closing across the continent.

## p16 / March 2020

### Lockdown

Gyms in Italy close, followed by the Nordic countries. The UK locks down on 20 March, pivoting to digital and fighting to stay engaged with customers. HCM launches its COVIDhub.

## p20 / April 2020

### A world without gyms

Two thirds of the world's gyms are closed. In the UK, the industry creates COVID-19 operating protocols. HCM publishes research showing exercise can help people survive COVID-19.

## p24 / May 2020

### The first reopenings

ukactive lobbies for financial support for the sector. One-to-one PT restarts. The global industry starts to reopen.

## p28 / June 2020

### Pubs before gyms debacle

Pubs open before gyms. The industry backlash sees the sector united as never before. An HCM scoop reveals research showing gyms pose no additional risk for COVID-19.

## p32 / July 2020

### Industry lobbying bears fruit

ukactive takes government representatives on a tour of gyms to show they're safe. Jubilation as the industry is given a date of 25th July for reopening. Concerns emerge that local lockdowns could scupper reopenings in some areas.

## p36 / August 2020

### Second lockdown looming

ukactive challenges the government to show evidence to justify closing gyms during local lockdowns. Public sector and trusts are feeling the pain and lobbying ramps up to get them support.

## p40 / September 2020

### Becoming essential

The activity sector builds a case for being at the heart of national COVID-recovery plans. Research finds consumers believe exercising is the best way to support the NHS. HCM challenges the UK government's COVID-19 strategy.

## p44 / October 2020

### Members join the fight

The industry is open everywhere but Liverpool, due to a glitch in legislation. The city's gyms refuse to close and take the fines. The industry backs Liverpool. Glitch is resolved and gyms reopen.

## p48 / November 2020

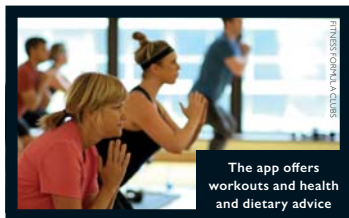
### Parliamentary debate

Second lockdown hits. Research reveals closing facilities during November meant two-thirds of cancer prehab/rehab services are out of action. Long awaited parliamentary debate sees MPs saying it's 'unthinkable' gyms will ever close again.

## p52 / December 2020

### Tier 4

Members flock to gyms at midnight as they reopen. The fitness industry flights a government decision to ban group exercise in tier 3 areas. The EU and WHO publish reports showing physical activity will be central to their policies going forward. Some gyms close again as tier 4 is introduced.



## 04 December 2019

### US operator muscles in on crowded on-demand home fitness market

An operator with 11 clubs in Chicago, US, is joining the on-demand, at-home fitness market by launching its own offering.

Fitness Formula Clubs has set up the FFC On Demand mobile and website app, in partnership with its technology partner Virtual Health Partners, at US\$14.95 a month.

The service integrates with Myzone and fitness trackers.

More: [http://lei.sr/F5f8C\\_H](http://lei.sr/F5f8C_H)

## 05 December 2019

### Active Lives study: children's activity levels are on the rise in England

Almost half of children and young people in England are doing the recommended average of 60 or more minutes of physical activity a day according to the second annual *Active Lives Children and Young People Survey*. There has been a rise of 3.6 per cent in the number of active children over the last year.

More: [http://lei.sr/D8N3X\\_H](http://lei.sr/D8N3X_H)



## 06 December 2019

### Leisure trust Life Leisure launches new boutique brand – H1VE

Scheduled to open in early January 2020, H1VE will offer group classes led by fitness coaches and combine cardio, functional, strength and conditioning training.

The first H1VE will launch at the Stockport Sports Village (SSV) in 2020 with non contract fees of £60/month.

More: [http://lei.sr/t6F6z\\_H](http://lei.sr/t6F6z_H)



## 06 December 2020

### New NHS scheme to offer cancer patients 'prehab' fitness plans

NHS patients diagnosed with cancer will be offered exercise and gym sessions before they start chemotherapy.

The prehabilitation programmes will be implemented in the hope that increasing patients' physical activity levels will boost their ability to tolerate and recover from treatment.

See the prehabilitation guidelines at: [http://lei.sr/a9w4d\\_H](http://lei.sr/a9w4d_H)

## 09 December 2019

### The Gym Group reveals plans to open up to eight small box gyms in 2020

The format is a scaled-down version of The Gym concept, designed to open up opportunities to enter new markets.

The first site opened in Newark on 11 November 2019 and the low-cost chain has set itself a target of opening between five and eight small box gyms during 2020.

More: [http://lei.sr/h9u5Y\\_H](http://lei.sr/h9u5Y_H)



## 09 December 2019

### Physical activity hustings: cross-party support for exercise as prevention

Representatives from the three main political parties have backed the view that physical activity has a major role to play in the nation's health by reducing the burden on the NHS. The trio made the pledge during a physical activity hustings in London.

More: [http://lei.sr/t3K3E\\_H](http://lei.sr/t3K3E_H)



## 12 December 2019

### PureGym to acquire European operator Fitness World

With 230 gyms and 600,000 members, Fitness World, is the largest operator in Denmark and also has operations in Switzerland and Poland. The deal will give PureGym significant scale in Europe and rapidly accelerate its international expansion, which includes plans for trial sites in the US.

More: [http://lei.sr/M6a6N\\_H](http://lei.sr/M6a6N_H)

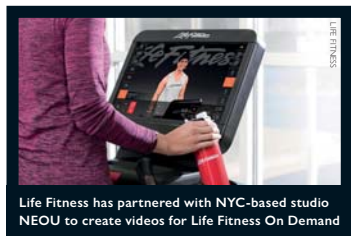
## 13 December 2019

### Total Fitness acquires Pro-Fit Personal Training

The deal follows a five-year partnership between the two companies and will result in 150 self-employed personal trainers being transferred to Total Fitness.

The operator says the move will provide its members with easier access to specialist personal training services

More: [http://lei.sr/H2J2H\\_H](http://lei.sr/H2J2H_H)



## 16 December 2019

### Life Fitness adds on-demand workout classes to CV equipment

The new service will see digital classes being made available exclusively on the touchscreens of Life Fitness cardio products.

Classes are designed to reach exercisers of all fitness levels, range between 10 and 40 minutes and offer a wide variety of difficulty levels, coaching styles, and music genres.

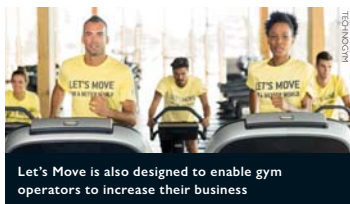
More: [http://lei.sr/T8c3K\\_H](http://lei.sr/T8c3K_H)

## 16 December 2019

### ukactive urges incoming Johnson government to invest in physical activity

In an open letter, ukactive CEO Huw Edwards, called on PM, Boris Johnson to correct the "lack of attention" from previous governments towards exercise and to use physical activity to tackle health issues – lack of exercise is the fourth greatest cause of disease and disability in the UK.

More: [http://lei.sr/9S7Y2\\_H](http://lei.sr/9S7Y2_H)



## 16 December 2019

### Technogym kicks off Let's Move for a Better World campaign

The social campaign provides young people with donated fitness equipment – and educate them on the importance of physical activity – in order to help them avoid sedentary lifestyles.

Those taking part will "donate their movement" through the Technogym Ecosystem.

More: [http://lei.sr/d3w4T\\_H](http://lei.sr/d3w4T_H)



## 24 December 2019

### 1Rebel signs deal to open studios across Middle East

The UK-based boutique operator has signed an agreement with Armah Sports, which will see the development of the 1Rebel brand across seven countries: Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan, and Egypt.

Armah was set up to grow the boutique segment across the Middle East and the collaboration offers the potential to also expand Armah's boutique brand, MAVERX internationally.

More: [http://lei.sr/M9Q7R\\_H](http://lei.sr/M9Q7R_H)



ClassPass has recently extended its presence into 28 countries and is now worth US\$1bn

## 09 January 2020

**ClassPass raises US\$285m to accelerate growth – firm now valued at US\$1bn**

The Series E investment package was led by L Catterton and Apax Digital, along with existing investor Temasek.

Marc Magliacano, managing partner at L Catterton's Flagship Fund, and Daniel O'Keefe, managing partner at Apax Digital, will join the ClassPass board of directors.

ClassPass said the investment will enable it to "rapidly scale" its proprietary reservation and booking technology.

More: [http://lei.sr/h6A8P\\_H](http://lei.sr/h6A8P_H)

## 13 January 2020

**Mintel study: more than six million Brits now members of private health clubs**

According to research by Mintel, the number of people with a private gym membership has risen by 15 per cent over the past five years – from 5.3 million in 2014 to 6.1 million in 2019.

The increase in memberships helped grow the total revenue registered by private health and fitness clubs to nearly £3.4bn during 2019 – an increase of 4.1 per cent on 2018 levels.

Mintel analyst Lauren Ryan attributes this to: "the rise of lower-cost options and increased locations".

More: [http://lei.sr/x9W4R\\_H](http://lei.sr/x9W4R_H)

## 15 January 2020

**Research project to chart physical activity needs of families with disabled children**

The ukactive Research Institute has teamed up with national disability charity Sense for the three-year project, which will explore the barriers and motivations of families with disability needs.

It will look at access to physical activity provision, the challenges of families being active together, the impact on siblings with no disability and whether there are differences between community and education provision.

More: [http://lei.sr/W5d5S\\_H](http://lei.sr/W5d5S_H)



Gym Group CEO, Richard Darwin – planning growth

## 17 January 2020

**The Gym Group plans further expansion as revenues hit £150m mark**

The Gym Group plans to open – on average – around two new sites per month during 2020.

The company said it is on track to open between 15 and 20 standard gyms and up to eight small box sites during the year. In 2019 revenues jumped by nearly a quarter.

More: [http://lei.sr/j3P3u\\_H](http://lei.sr/j3P3u_H)

## 22 January 2020

**Gold's Gym reports 'strongest year of growth in company history'**

Gold's Gym completed 22 US franchise agreements and a total of 35 new openings worldwide during 2019 – the most in a single year in the company's history.

The franchised fitness giant's growth during the year focused on emerging markets, with nine new sites opening in Japan, eight in India, five in Saudi Arabia and four in Egypt.

More: [http://lei.sr/g5f7U\\_H](http://lei.sr/g5f7U_H)



GO fit will fund a rolling PhD programme and a series of stand-alone test-bed innovation projects

## 23 January 2020

**Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre opens – signs partnership deal with GO fit**

Sheffield Hallam University's Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre (AWRC), which forms the centrepiece of the Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park, has been dubbed the most advanced research centre in the world for developing innovations that increase physical activity.

More: [http://lei.sr/v9c5A\\_H](http://lei.sr/v9c5A_H)



Partner gyms must offer apps with stats tracking

**23 January 2020**

### New Apple Watch Connected programme rewards gym members

Launched this month (January 2020), the service will be built around an "Earn with Watch" incentive programme, allowing users to receive rewards by being active.

Apple partnered with four chains – Orangetheory, Basecamp Fitness, YMCA and Crunch Fitness.

More: [http://lei.sr/m2Y9E\\_H](http://lei.sr/m2Y9E_H)



The menu focuses on both brain and gut health

**27 January 2020**

### David Lloyd Clubs opens restaurant promoting positive mental health

The operator has teamed up with nutritional therapists and interior designs to create The Good Plates, a pop-up restaurant in which every aspect has been designed with positive mental wellbeing in mind – the food, the tableware, the décor and colour scheme to the lighting and music.

More: [http://lei.sr/G2e6W\\_H](http://lei.sr/G2e6W_H)

**28 January 2020**

### Leisure trust 1610 introduces DNA profiling for fitness members

The DNA profiles, obtained through saliva samples, will allow 1610 health coaches to devise personalised nutrition and exercise programmes for members, including advice on vitamins and supplements, psychology and lifestyle changes.

1610 has partnered with DNA testing specialist Muhdo.

More: [http://lei.sr/r8G7f\\_H](http://lei.sr/r8G7f_H)



Two thousand gymgoers were surveyed by Better

**29 January 2020**

### Wearing a fitness tracker 'makes gym sessions more enjoyable'

A study conducted by UK leisure centre operator Better found that those who use fitness trackers are twice as likely to enjoy their gym workout (61 per cent), when compared to those who don't (30 per cent).

More: [http://lei.sr/7x7G5\\_H](http://lei.sr/7x7G5_H)

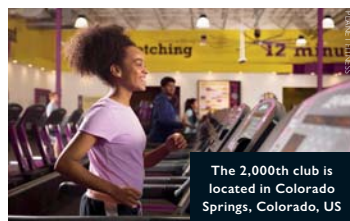
**29 January 2020**

### People from BAME backgrounds 'far less likely' to be physically active

The issue has been laid bare in a new report, which also shows that BAME groups are also far less likely to volunteer in sport and enjoy the benefits associated with it.

The report, Sport for all, has been drawn from the survey responses of more than 100,000 people.

More: [http://lei.sr/F4G5B\\_H](http://lei.sr/F4G5B_H)



The 2,000th club is located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, US

**30 January 2020**

### Planet Fitness reaches 2,000 club milestone

The fitness franchise reached the milestone following a record year of growth – 261 new Planet Fitness sites opened during 2019.

The company now has a presence in every US state, as well as sites in Puerto Rico, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Panama and Mexico. In November 2019, it revealed plans to expand its footprint into Australia.

More: [http://lei.sr/8N5z4\\_H](http://lei.sr/8N5z4_H)

**07 February 2020****Ukactive submits budget representation on behalf of physical activity sector**

Ukactive has called on HM Treasury to help the physical activity sector increase its impact across the UK.

Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, said: "Physical activity is the golden thread running through our society, with the potential to create healthy and thriving communities."

More: [http://lei.sr/t3r5m\\_H](http://lei.sr/t3r5m_H)



The report makes recommendations to achieve fairness for disabled people in sport and activity

ACTIVITY ALLIANCE

**11 February 2020****Four in five disabled people want to be more physically active**

Less than half of disabled people (40 per cent) feel they are given the opportunities they need to be active and less than a third of disabled people (32 per cent) agree that sport is for someone like them, according to the latest Annual Disability and Activity Survey, published by the Activity Alliance.

More: [http://lei.sr/S6C3c\\_H](http://lei.sr/S6C3c_H)



The network could increase journeys on foot or by bike by 2.5m a day and save the NHS £6.73bn

**12 February 2020****Manchester's cycling and walking network 'could become national blueprint'**

The Bee Network initiative could provide a blueprint for improving the nation's health, according to a report outlining the benefits of the revolutionary network, which would create 1,800 miles of protected space for cycling and walking throughout Manchester and its surrounding areas.

More: [http://lei.sr/s3t6C\\_H](http://lei.sr/s3t6C_H)

**14 February 2020****Sweat 2020: new report to offer fresh insight into impact of multi-operator gym memberships**

The Member Choice report will provide new evidence exploring the difference in membership length, visit frequency and retention of members of single and multiple operators.

Based on a study by the ukactive Research Institute and partners, the report examines how key membership metrics differ between two data sets: individuals with a standard membership who use one operator (but could visit different sites within that operator group), and those with a multi-operator membership who can access a range of operators and activity types.

More: [http://lei.sr/T3J4K\\_H](http://lei.sr/T3J4K_H)



Exercise led to improvements in executive functioning

SHUTTERSTOCK

**17 February 2020****Aerobic exercise linked to enhanced brain function among those at risk for Alzheimer's**

A study by a team at the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC), University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, looked at the effects of exercise on individuals at risk for Alzheimer's.

Individuals assigned to the active training programme improved cardiorespiratory fitness, spent less time sedentary after the programme ended, and performed better on cognitive tests of executive functioning.

More: [http://lei.sr/A4d4z\\_H](http://lei.sr/A4d4z_H)

**18 February 2020****Corporate Wellness 2.0 report: wearable fitness gadgets among most popular rewards**

Rising workplace stress among employees has led companies to increase their investment in incentives as rewards – with wearable fitness gadgets among the most popular perks.

The new report by CR Worldwide shows that corporate spending on rewards and incentives is rising year-on-year, with gadgets such as fitness trackers, wearable tech and tablets are among the most popular rewards chosen by employees.

More: [http://lei.sr/E3T5U\\_H](http://lei.sr/E3T5U_H)





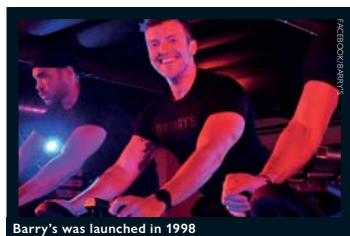
Individuals will take part in a 12-week programme

## 21 February 2020

### Leisure trust partners with NHS to get those with long-term conditions more physically active

The partnership will see five Active Lifestyle Centres work with South Gloucestershire Council and local GP surgeries to provide individuals with a health and wellbeing consultation and on-going support.

More: [http://lei.sr/m6y8j\\_H](http://lei.sr/m6y8j_H)



Barry's was launched in 1998

## 21 February 2020

### Barry's rides into indoor cycling market with launch of new concept

The two first Barry's Ride studios will be located in New York and Los Angeles, within or adjacent to existing Barry's studios.

Described as a "lower impact Barry's experience", the 50-minute Ride classes will offer HIIT-style indoor cycling paired with traditional Barry's floor work.

More: [http://lei.sr/z9Q2z\\_H](http://lei.sr/z9Q2z_H)

## 26 February 2020

### One in five Americans now a member of a health club

The number of people in the US with a health club membership has increased by 28 per cent since 2010.

The figure comes from a study conducted by the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) and the Physical Activity Council.

More: [http://lei.sr/c3E7R\\_H](http://lei.sr/c3E7R_H)

## 27 February 2020

### CIMSPA strikes REPs deal to create a single directory for fitness professionals

CIMSPA and UK Coaching have signed a deal to combine the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) with the CIMSPA Exercise and Fitness Directory.

The announcement was made by Sport England CEO, Tim Hollingsworth, at the CIMSPA & QUEST NBS Conference this afternoon (27 February).

More: [http://lei.sr/c5q7w\\_H](http://lei.sr/c5q7w_H)



FIBO Cologne normally attracts 145,000 visitors

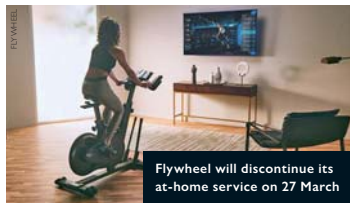
## 28 February 2020

### FIBO Cologne postponed to second half of 2020

The world's largest trade show for fitness, wellness and health has been postponed to the second half of 2020, due to concerns around the coronavirus.

The European Health and Fitness Forum (EHFF) conference, scheduled to run the day before FIBO, will also be postponed.

More: [http://lei.sr/M3d5P\\_H](http://lei.sr/M3d5P_H)



Flywheel will discontinue its at-home service on 27 March

## 28 February 2020

### Flywheel to shut down subscription service after settling Peloton lawsuit

The cycling brand is to discontinue its Flywheel At Home subscription service after settling a legal case with Peloton.

A 2018 lawsuit by Peloton alleged that Flywheel had copied aspects of Peloton's technology. In a statement filed at the United States District Court, Jeffery Naumowitz, Flywheel's chief financial officer, admitted that the complaint was "valid".

More: [http://lei.sr/M5s3t\\_H](http://lei.sr/M5s3t_H)





GymNation already opened two new clubs in 2020

## 2 March 2020

### GymNation becomes the latest chain to target booming UAE market with eight new clubs

Affordable fitness chain GymNation has revealed plans to open eight new sites across the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The chain, which opened its first site in Dubai in late 2018, will open six more in Mirdiff, Downtown, Silicon Oasis, Abu Dhabi, Al-Ain and Sharjah.

More: [http://lei.sr/t8M3X\\_H](http://lei.sr/t8M3X_H)

## 2 March 2020

### Park fitness initiative Our Parks secures funding for coaching network

Outdoor activity provider Our Parks, which offers people across England free outdoor exercise and fitness sessions, has secured a £245,000 National Lottery award.

Our Parks will use the funding – distributed by Sport England – to encourage more people to get physically active.

More: [http://lei.sr/r6D9g\\_H](http://lei.sr/r6D9g_H)



Flooks said the new brand would debut this year

## 2 March 2020

### Fitness First Middle East reveals plans to launch a low-cost brand

CEO George Flocks said the company had looked at the budget sector "for a number of years".

According to Flocks, the chain will open 10 new clubs – eight in the UAE and two in Bahrain – to cater to a "growing demand for holistic fitness solutions" across the region.

More: [http://lei.sr/A9n3K\\_H](http://lei.sr/A9n3K_H)

## 4 March 2020

### Obesity 'should be considered as premature ageing' finds new research

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

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

More: [http://lei.sr/B2K5z\\_H](http://lei.sr/B2K5z_H)



Italian clubs are initially closed for three weeks

## 9 March 2020

### Coronavirus: Italian health clubs face three-week closure

Gyms, health clubs, sports facilities and swimming pools across Italy have been forced to close their doors until 3 April, as the country battles to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Some operators are offering members the chance to extend their membership to compensate, while some have organised home workouts to keep staff employed and members active. The at-home options offered by gyms include programming from Les Mills on Demand, VAAH and Virtuagym.

More: [http://lei.sr/T6F3Y\\_H](http://lei.sr/T6F3Y_H)

## 10 March 2020

### Care home staff are being trained as physical activators in Scotland

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.

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

More: [http://lei.sr/M7y8b\\_H](http://lei.sr/M7y8b_H)



IHRSA was criticised for leaving the cancellation to the last minute

## 12 March 2020

### Coronavirus: IHRSA 2020 cancelled – will not be rescheduled

In a statement, IHRSA said it had made the “difficult decision” following “official declarations” on the threat posed by the outbreak of COVID-19 (coronavirus), adding that the event would not be rescheduled for later in the year.

Earlier in the day, US President Donald Trump issued a ban on all flights from mainland Europe to the US for 30 days.

A raft of leading equipment suppliers – including Life Fitness, Precor, Keiser, Stages Cycling and Freemotion – had already withdrawn from exhibiting at the event.

More: [http://lei.sr/q4Z8s\\_H](http://lei.sr/q4Z8s_H)

## 12 March 2020

### Coronavirus: Nordic fitness chains close hundreds of clubs

Three leading Nordic fitness chains have closed their clubs as a precautionary measure against the spread of coronavirus, effective from noon on 12 March.

Among them is the region's largest operator SATS, which has around 250 clubs and 700,000 members across Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. SATS said the shutdown would initially last for 14 days and would affect all of its clubs.

On 11 March, the Swedish government confirmed the first fatality linked to the COVID-19 strain in the Nordics.

More: [http://lei.sr/g4Z7n\\_H](http://lei.sr/g4Z7n_H)

## 16 March 2020

### Coronavirus: ukactive issues guidance for health and fitness sector

Physical activity body ukactive has issued recommendations for how UK fitness operators and facilities should deal with a suspected case of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

It outlines how, in the event that a staff member or customer tests positive for COVID-19, Public Health England (PHE) will contact the operator to determine the risk to customers and staff, as well as to seek guidance.

More: [http://lei.sr/D7N5u\\_H](http://lei.sr/D7N5u_H)

## 17 March 2020

### ukactive: fitness sector adapting quickly – will remain open until directed otherwise

That is the message from ukactive CEO Huw Edwards, who added that the sector has reacted quickly to – and will continue to monitor – guidance from the Prime Minister's daily COVID-19 (coronavirus) briefings.

“Following the government's announcement last night, gyms and leisure facilities across the UK are adapting quickly to increase physical distancing between customers – to at least two metres – and spacing equipment apart,” Edwards said.

More: [http://lei.sr/j3F8P\\_H](http://lei.sr/j3F8P_H)

## 18 March 2020

### Coronavirus: US fitness chains close clubs

Leading fitness chains in the US are closing their clubs and studios. LA Fitness, 24 Hour Fitness, Life Time, Blink Fitness, SoulCycle, YMCA and Equinox have all announced closures.

Franchise-based Gold's Gym and Orangetheory have also said they will shut all corporate-owned locations.

The move comes after authorities in a number of US states ordered the closure of gyms, restaurants, bars and cinemas.

“This is not a business decision but a humanity decision,” said Gold's Gym CEO and President Adam Zeitsiff.

More: [http://lei.sr/2Q8A9\\_H](http://lei.sr/2Q8A9_H)



Sport England said conditions within signed off funding agreements may no longer be relevant

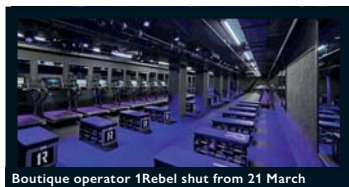
## 18 March 2020

### Sport England begins period of ‘significant flexibility’ to support physical activity sector

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”.

Sport England said 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.

More: [http://lei.sr/k6X5h\\_H](http://lei.sr/k6X5h_H)



Boutique operator 1Rebel shut from 21 March

**19 March 2020****Coronavirus: UK physical activity operators begin closures**

Fitness and physical activity operators in the UK have begun closing facilities and cancelling events, ahead of the predicted peak in the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak.

Boutique operator 1Rebel is among the private operators which will close all of its studios in London until further notice.

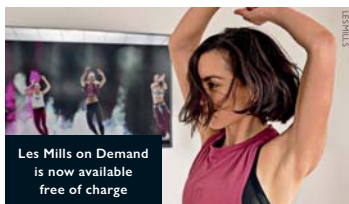
More: [http://lei.sr/a4j7F\\_H](http://lei.sr/a4j7F_H)

**19 March 2020****The Gym Group reports record revenues – plans to tackle the impact of COVID-19**

The Gym Group saw revenues and profit increase during 2019, a year in which it opened 20 new gyms, taking the number of sites in its portfolio to 175.

Despite the strong results, CEO Richard Darwin said the company was preparing for the negative effects of COVID-19.

More: [http://lei.sr/R6Y8M\\_H](http://lei.sr/R6Y8M_H)



Les Mills on Demand is now available free of charge

**19 March 2020****Les Mills unleashes the power of its digital platforms free of charge for home workouts**

As thousands of gyms and schools across the world are being forced to close, 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.

More: [http://lei.sr/w3b6g\\_H](http://lei.sr/w3b6g_H)

**20 March 2020****James Balfour says 1Rebel is ready to 'hand the keys to its clubs' to the NHS**

Speaking to Health Club Management, Balfour explained: "London is currently the area of the UK most heavily affected by the coronavirus and we're hearing stark warnings about impending shortages of hospital beds.

"We made an announcement that, effective from 21 March, we will be closing our studios until further notice in the interest of staff and member wellbeing.

"We estimate that, across our seven studios in central London, we could make space for 300–400 beds."

More: [http://lei.sr/r9H3E\\_H](http://lei.sr/r9H3E_H)

**20 March 2020****UK government orders gyms, leisure centres, pubs and restaurants to close**

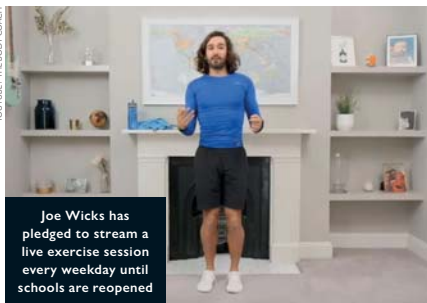
Prime Minister Boris Johnson has ordered all UK gyms, health clubs, leisure centres and restaurants to close.

Speaking at his daily press conference, Johnson also said that cinemas, nightclubs, cafes, pubs and bars will be asked to close "as soon as they reasonably can – and not reopen tomorrow".

Johnson said the "extreme measures" will help save lives.

"These actions will help take the strain off the NHS and we will be able to save literally thousands of lives," he said.

More: [http://lei.sr/Q5B9w\\_H](http://lei.sr/Q5B9w_H)



Joe Wicks has pledged to stream a live exercise session every weekday until schools are reopened

**23 March 2020****Joe Wicks' Youtube PE lesson goes global – attracts 2.3m views in first nine hours**

Hosted by UK-based 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.

Since its broadcast at 9.00am GMT, it has been viewed more than 2.3m times – and the number is growing rapidly.

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

More: [http://lei.sr/d7c8D\\_H](http://lei.sr/d7c8D_H)

## 24 March 2020

### Sport England to launch national campaign encouraging people to stay active during lockdown

The grassroots body has already compiled a number of tips, advice and suggestions for people to stay active, tailored around the official advice to stay at home and to only go outside for one form of exercise a day.

The advice includes outdoor activity tips, gym-free workouts for the home and fun exercises designed for families with children – such as Disney dance-alongs.

More: [http://lei.sr/t8z4k\\_H](http://lei.sr/t8z4k_H)



Staff are being trained to deliver remote workouts

## 25 March 2020

### How to deliver remote workouts – ACE launches free webinars

The move comes as the coronavirus is driving health and fitness operators to pivot to digital in a rush to maintain connections with customers.

A panel of online-exercise experts will share best practice in creating engaging virtual workouts:

The first webinar – Expert insights on how to deliver an online exercise session: one-to-one and group – will take place from 9.00am - 9.45am PST (4.00pm - 4.45pm GMT) on Wednesday 25 March 2020.

More: [http://lei.sr/f8s7C\\_H](http://lei.sr/f8s7C_H)

## 26 March 2020

### Technogym's Mywellness Cloud to offer at-home workouts to keep members engaged and active

Aiming to keep members engaged and motivated while gyms are temporarily shut, the Mywellness app will offer a workout of the day challenge, with three new workouts added daily to keep users active.

It will also enable trainers to deliver personalised fitness programming, that has been tailored to the individual, which will help members to achieve their goals even when they are unable to attend the gym.

More: [http://lei.sr/p7N6m\\_H](http://lei.sr/p7N6m_H)



The sector has 60,000 self employed workers

## 26 March 2020

### Physical activity sector leaders urge chancellor to support self-employed workforce

The heads of the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA), ukactive, and Community Leisure UK – along with Clive Ormerod, CEO of Les Mills International – have written an open letter to the chancellor, asking for support for the 60,000 workers self employed in the sector.

More: [http://lei.sr/t8s6j\\_H](http://lei.sr/t8s6j_H)

## 27 March 2020

### Humphrey Cobbold tells BBC Question Time about the impact of coronavirus on Pure Gym

Cobbold, who closed Pure Gym's 265 sites on Friday 20th, addressed the Question Time audience, praising his staff for their swift response and explaining his concern for the fate of the 3,000 plus self-employed personal trainers who were working at Pure Gym at the time of the closure.

More: [http://lei.sr/Y7S8J\\_H](http://lei.sr/Y7S8J_H)

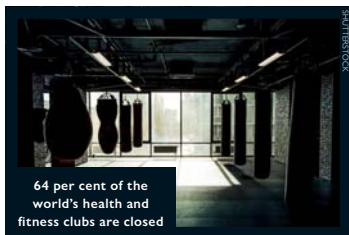
## 30 March 2020

### Huw Edwards: physical activity sector adapting to closures, but reports of eviction threats are shameful

Speaking on the BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Edwards said there had been some "saddening" reports of operators being put under pressure due to rents and bills.

"There are some really disappointing stories of our members being threatened with eviction," he said.

More: [http://lei.sr/6e4r5\\_H](http://lei.sr/6e4r5_H)



## 02 April 2020

### Two-thirds of world's gyms currently closed – 230 million members unable to attend

The figures have been released by new global fitness data platform fitNdata, launched in March 2020 by David Minton, the founding director of The Leisure Database Company.

As health club closures began to sweep across the world last month, 'fitNdata' began monitoring the effects of the pandemic on the fitness industry.

fitNdata has pledged to issue regular updates by monitoring the global fitness industry during the lockdown in real-time.

More: [http://lei.sr/e652d\\_H](http://lei.sr/e652d_H)



## 02 April 2020

### European Health & Fitness Market Report 2020 will serve as post-COVID-19 benchmark

Although the facts may seem less relevant now due to the coronavirus pandemic, new numbers published by EuropeActive and Deloitte show the European fitness industry experienced another year of growth during 2019.

The report will be a useful benchmark for analysts when evaluating the impact of the pandemic on the market over the next year. Total revenues at clubs across the continent reaching €28.2bn in 2019 – up 3.1 per cent on the year before.

The surge in income was driven by an increase in the number of sites and healthy growth in memberships.

More: [http://lei.sr/s3Z8t\\_H](http://lei.sr/s3Z8t_H)



## 06 April 2020

### US gym operators facing lawsuits over membership fee collections during lockdown

Town Sports International, 24 Hour Fitness and LA Fitness are among health and fitness operators facing class action lawsuits, after members said they had been charged for memberships despite their clubs being closed.

New York-based law practice Wigdor said it had filed a class action against Town Sports International (TSI) on 26 March on behalf of member Mary Namorato.

More: [http://lei.sr/j2r8s\\_H](http://lei.sr/j2r8s_H)



## 08 April 2020

### Bannatyne says impact of COVID-19 could be £30m

Speaking to Sky News on 7 April 2020, Duncan Bannatyne, CEO of Bannatyne Group said Bannatyne's bank – Royal Bank of Scotland – is supporting the business and that it will take on more borrowing under the government scheme to get through the crisis.

The company has furloughed 2,600 staff and has 400 still working. Bannatyne said it made up wages to 100 per cent in March, but that these would drop to 80 per cent thereafter. The senior team has taken a substantial pay cut. He was not asked about the impact of the shutdown on freelance staff.

Bannatyne said the company will reopen all profitable sites once the shutdown is over, but will permanently shutter loss-making locations – he said he expected other operators to do the same, meaning the industry will inevitably see a shrinkage.

More: [http://lei.sr/S5t8H\\_H](http://lei.sr/S5t8H_H)

**08 April 2020**

## ukactive says thousands of fitness facilities and 100,000 jobs could disappear without government support

There's mounting evidence that organisations are struggling to access loan support and are being crippled by ongoing utility fees, delayed furloughing funds and failed insurance claims. Some operators also face threats of eviction.

The evidence, obtained by ukactive in consultation with leaders from the nation's major operators, show that – without immediate relief – an estimated 2,800 facilities could cease trading by the middle of June 2020.

More: [http://lei.sr/u3D7v\\_H](http://lei.sr/u3D7v_H)

**09 April 2020**

## CIMSPA creates digital hub to support the physical activity sector

The hub offers advice for those who have been impacted by the pandemic and is free to anyone working in the sector.

Content has been divided into three categories for individual workers, businesses and the sector as a whole, with the aim of providing a single destination for information.

Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA said: "We're a resourceful sector and I know that, by working together, we can help each other to emerge from this crisis in a strong position."

More: [http://lei.sr/k8j3u\\_H](http://lei.sr/k8j3u_H)



Harvard's Science of Wellbeing course has seen record enrolments since the start of the pandemic

**09 April 2020**

## Two million people enrol on free online Yale 'happiness' course

Named "The Science of Well-Being", the course was already a popular class choice before the pandemic. However, the arrival of coronavirus has seen a vast resurgence in interest, causing the university to make enrollment open to the public for free.

Before the pandemic, annual enrollment stood at 539,000, however 1,934,400 people have signed up in the last 24 hours.

Participants 'engage in a series of challenges to increase happiness and build more productive habits'.

More: [http://lei.sr/R5s2j\\_H](http://lei.sr/R5s2j_H)



More than a third of those doing home-based Exercise do it with the children in their household

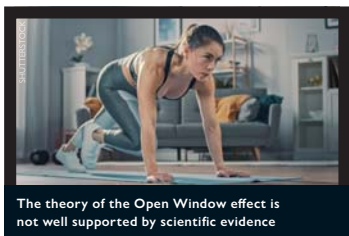
**15 April 2020**

## Coronavirus lockdown transforming people's exercise habits

Lockdown is transforming the UK's exercise habits, with home workouts, cycling and walking now the most popular methods of exercise, according to a Savanta ComRes study commissioned by Sport England.

A quarter of people now regularly undertake home workouts – far above the UK's gym membership level of 15.6 per cent.

More: [http://lei.sr/v7c3g\\_H](http://lei.sr/v7c3g_H)



The theory of the Open Window effect is not well supported by scientific evidence

**16 April 2020**

## All exercise beneficial to the immune system – especially during lockdown

The public should be encouraged to exercise and work out regularly, according to a study from the University of Bath.

There has been a view held by some that arduous exercise suppresses immune function, leading to an 'open-window' of heightened infection risk, but the new study has found this theory is not well supported by scientific evidence.

More: [http://lei.sr/W5M7h\\_H](http://lei.sr/W5M7h_H)

**17 April 2020**

## The Gym Group raises £41m through new shares to weather impact of lockdown

The company has placed 274m new ordinary shares at 150p each, saying: "The proceeds will be used to strengthen our balance sheet and provide liquidity whilst gyms are closed during this period of unprecedented COVID-19 disruption. It will also enable us to take advantage of growth opportunities."

More: [http://lei.sr/7h5k5\\_H](http://lei.sr/7h5k5_H)





## 17 April 2020

### Chief Medical Adviser Chris Whitty: exercise 'the best thing you can do' during lockdown

Whitty – who is also England's Chief Medical Officer – said being physically active is "very important to long-term health" and crucial for keeping people fighting fit during the pandemic.

"There is no situation, there is no age and no condition where exercise is not a good thing," he said.

More: [http://lei.sr/V9u7M\\_H](http://lei.sr/V9u7M_H)

## 17 April 2020

### Global pandemic – research shows how the fitness sector is responding

The study, *The Fitness Industry's Response to COVID-19*, by ClubIntel, found 46 per cent of responding clubs were closed, with 75 per cent offering streaming/on-demand, (top platforms, Virtuagym – 39 per cent and Les Mills – 31 per cent), with 44 per cent offering to freeze membership.

More: [http://lei.sr/x2H7Y\\_H](http://lei.sr/x2H7Y_H)



## 20 April 2020

### New research shows exercise could help people survive COVID-19

Professor Zhen Yan at the University of Virginia found exercise reduces the risk of complications in people with COVID-19 by releasing extracellular superoxide dismutase (EcsOD), a protein that binds to organs, protects tissue and reduces the risk and severity of Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome.

More: [http://lei.sr/k9G5M\\_H](http://lei.sr/k9G5M_H)

## 23 April 2020

### Reopening gyms: four-stage strategy revealed for UK fitness sector

Plans have been revealed for a four-stage strategy to reopen the UK's physical activity sector: 1. Undertaking research on business modelling; 2. Creating a framework for operators; 3. Launching a public information campaign; 4. Focusing on engaging with government in areas of policy support.

More: [http://lei.sr/h9z3R\\_H](http://lei.sr/h9z3R_H)



## 23 April 2020

### Physical activity levels in England were at 'record high' before pandemic

The *Active Lives Adult Survey* found an increase of 404,600 adults being classed as physically active in the 12 months to November 2019, when compared with 2018. This means that, prior to the pandemic, 28.6 million British adults – or 63.3 per cent – were doing at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week – the highest number ever recorded.

More: [http://lei.sr/v5m9R\\_H](http://lei.sr/v5m9R_H)



## 27 April 2020

### European fitness associations expecting phased reopening 'within two months'

In a survey by EuropeActive, 95 per cent of associations say their "best estimate" is that gyms, clubs and leisure centres will re-open within two months. Nearly half say they think COVID-19-related restrictions to last for up to six months, with 10 per cent fearing they could be in place for more than a year.

More: [http://lei.sr/b4B7d\\_H](http://lei.sr/b4B7d_H)



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"Everything we do in terms of physical fitness starts and ends in our minds"



Steve Franks was a much-loved industry veteran

**1 May 2020****Leisure industry mourns the death of Steve Franks, CEO of Water Babies**

The physical activity sector has been left in shock by news that Steve Franks, the CEO of Water Babies, has died. Tweeting her condolences, Jane Nickerson, CEO of Swim England, said Franks' death was due to complications related to COVID-19.

Franks spent six years as operations director at the Swimming Teachers' Association (STA), before being appointed CEO of Water Babies in 2009, he had been involved in the industry in senior management roles for more than 25 years.

More: [http://lei.sr/T5n6X\\_H](http://lei.sr/T5n6X_H)



ukactive has identified the steps needed to get gyms open

**4 May 2020****Revealed: the key policies needed to reopen UK gyms and health clubs**

VAT rebates, rent protection and an extension to the COVID-19 furlough scheme are among the list of policies the government needs to adopt in order for the UK's physical activity sector to open in a safe, economically sustainable way.

The policies – drawn up by ukactive following consultations with its members – cover five major areas in which help will be needed: the workforce, rent, children's activity providers, local authority leisure providers and support to rebuild.

Consultation revealed these as "crucial" issues, ukactive said.

More: [http://lei.sr/e9z7k\\_H](http://lei.sr/e9z7k_H)

**5 May 2020****Councils told to support leisure operators which are 'falling between the cracks'**

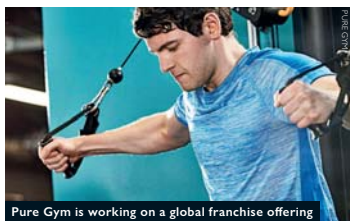
Local authorities have been told to consider deferring rents and offering interest-free loans to operators struggling with COVID-19 shutdowns – the Local Government Association (LGA) is advising councils to help their leisure partners during the pandemic, to avoid "long-term damage" to services.

More: [http://lei.sr/U6h3y\\_H](http://lei.sr/U6h3y_H)

**5 May 2020****Gold's Gym files for bankruptcy protection**

CEO, Adam Zeitsiff, said the move was part of a restructuring process which would see at least 30 company-owned gyms close permanently. He added that the company was "absolutely not going anywhere" and that it planned to emerge from bankruptcy protection within three months.

More: [http://lei.sr/U7a5R\\_H](http://lei.sr/U7a5R_H)



Pure Gym is working on a global franchise offering

**6 May 2020****Pure Gym reveals trial of global franchise model**

Speaking at the Fit Summit, Pure's chief strategy officer, Francine Davis, said the company is looking for master franchise partners in countries such as China, India, and Japan as part of its global growth strategy. She said Pure was testing the model and the first couple of deals had been agreed.

More: [http://lei.sr/G8v3N\\_H](http://lei.sr/G8v3N_H)

**7 May 2020****Customer attitude survey aims to gauge what gym customers want after lockdown**

Leisure-net Solutions, Max Associates and 4Global's Datahub have launched a customer attitude survey to help operators understand customers' exercise habits after lockdown, as well as how they feel about using gyms and leisure facilities.

"We want to help operators understand how customers will respond after lockdown, said Leisure-net's Dave Monkhouse.

More: [http://lei.sr/Y5g4b\\_H](http://lei.sr/Y5g4b_H)



HCM rounds up gym reopening dates globally

SHUTTERSTOCK/THAIKORNER

## 11 May 2020

### Global gym market – who's reopening and when?

Governments have begun easing their COVID-19 lockdown measures. In Australia, gyms will be permitted to begin trading by July; New Zealand by 14 May; the US will vary by state. This story lists all known dates globally by nation at this point in time.  
**More:** [http://lei.sr/H9U7e\\_H](http://lei.sr/H9U7e_H)

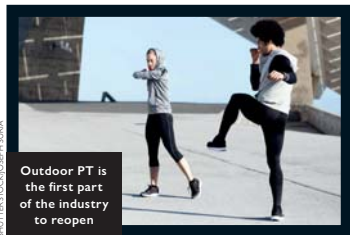
## 11 May 2020

### Europe Active publishes COVID-19 operating standards

Called *Summary of current recommended practices for operating under Covid-19 restrictions*, the document is designed to be used in conjunction with local laws and guidelines.

Europe Active says: "This is general guidance only for consideration by operators when re-opening their facility... national conditions may apply and alter this guidance."

**More:** [http://lei.sr/3V3c9\\_H](http://lei.sr/3V3c9_H)



Outdoor PT is the first part of the industry to reopen

SHUTTERSTOCK/JOSEPH SLIVA

## 11 May 2020

### One-to-one outdoor personal training given the green light in England

The UK government has given the go-ahead for one-to-one personal training outdoors, as part of the first stage of plans to ease COVID-19 lockdown measures.

Details are given in a 50-page document, called *Our plan to rebuild: the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy*.  
**More:** [http://lei.sr/n7q5E\\_H](http://lei.sr/n7q5E_H)

## 12 May 2020

### COVID-19 exit strategy:

#### Ukactive questions government's 'lack of clarity' on fitness

Our plan to rebuild: the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy, provides details on a three-step road map to ease restrictions, but in response, Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, said: "The government's COVID-19 recovery strategy regrettably does not provide the clarity we are seeking – omitting both a clear window for reopening and the guarantee of financial support essential for the viability of the sector."  
**More:** [http://lei.sr/s2E7a\\_H](http://lei.sr/s2E7a_H)

## 13 May 2020

### Exclusive: Xercise4Less tells HCM it's up for sale

Budget fitness chain, Xercise4Less, is being sold off by its investors, directors and shareholders, which include the BGF investment fund and Proventus Capital Partners.

The chain, which operates 51 gyms across the UK, has been hit by the COVID-19 lockdown and the owners have brought in restructuring specialist Alan Fort to review its position.

A spokesperson said: "The decision has been taken to seek additional funds, with the best way being to begin a sale process."  
**More:** [http://lei.sr/6x5d9\\_H](http://lei.sr/6x5d9_H)



Having good levels of vitamin D protects against complications from COVID-19

WOLFGANG ZWANG/GETTY IMAGES

## 14 May 2020

### Exercise outside: Vitamin D could halve death rates from COVID-19

People with severe vitamin D deficiency are twice as likely to experience complications – including death – from COVID-19 according to a study from Northwestern University in the US.

The team – led by professor Vadim Backman – discovered a strong correlation between severe vitamin D deficiency and mortality rates, with patients from countries with high COVID-19 mortality rates, such as Italy, Spain and the UK, having lower levels of vitamin D when compared to patients in countries that were not as severely affected.

**More:** [http://lei.sr/R8E6a\\_H](http://lei.sr/R8E6a_H)

## 16 May 2020

## David Lloyd starts reopening clubs for tennis

Glenn Earlam, CEO of David Lloyd Leisure (DLL), says the operator is reopening 26 UK clubs this weekend for tennis.

No charge will be made for members with packages that allow access to racquet facilities and their memberships will remain frozen. Speaking to the *Guardian*, Earlam said he is lobbying for consent to run outdoor classes and reopen outdoor pools, saying: "I'm struggling to see how opening outdoor areas isn't safer than going into an indoor shopping centre."

More: [http://lei.sr/j5s6j\\_H](http://lei.sr/j5s6j_H)



CIMSPA consulted with Sport England, EMD UK, UK Coaching, ukactive and Active Partnerships

## 19 May 2020

## Consultation kicks off to develop guidelines for delivering exercise online

CIMSPA, has opened a consultation on the safe delivery of sport and physical activity online, to engage the industry in fine-tuning its new policy and supporting guidance in this area.

The institute says 50 per cent of fitness businesses have moved their products and services online and this has driven a need for clear professional guidance to "ensure both the workforce and participants can engage online in a safe way."

The policy, supported by Sport England, has been created with EMD UK, UK Coaching, ukactive and Active Partnerships.

More: [http://lei.sr/2f4z\\_H](http://lei.sr/2f4z_H)

## 20 May 2020

## Gyms are reopening in the US – some running at reduced capacity

Gyms and health clubs in the US have begun reopening, with HCM creating a list of who's opening where, under what restrictions and how members are responding.

Among the first to reopen were Tennessee, Georgia and Oklahoma, (1 May), Arkansas (4 May) and Montana (15 May).

"We're reaching out to state administrators so they appreciate that health clubs are integral to the health of their communities and that operators are prepared to operate safely," said Joe Moore, president of IHRSA.

More: [http://lei.sr/P7P7E\\_H](http://lei.sr/P7P7E_H)

## 20 May 2020

## 87 per cent of gym members in England likely to return after lockdown

A survey by Savanta ComRes, in partnership with Sport England, has studied the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on attitudes and behaviours towards physical activity.

Findings included that 87 per cent of current gym members said they are likely to resume their membership on reopening.

Encouragingly, 27 per cent of people who are not currently members at a health club say they are also likely to join.

More: [http://lei.sr/y9A5Q\\_H](http://lei.sr/y9A5Q_H)

## 21 May 2020

## Gyms in England could reopen in July

The government had initially indicated gyms would be unlikely to reopen before October, however, Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, told the *Guardian* talks are ongoing around reopening sooner, saying "The government has said to us 'nothing before the fourth of July'. Our plan is to take officials to sites to reassure them gyms can implement social distancing. I'm cautiously optimistic the industry could be back on its feet by the summer."

More: [http://lei.sr/r4R7A\\_H](http://lei.sr/r4R7A_H)



Group exercise is expected to be one of the first areas to recover

## 28 May 2020

## Bounceback – new research shows 88 per cent of gym members will return and group ex will be fastest to recover

The COVID-19 Impact Report: The fitness and leisure sector's path to recovery, produced by the ukactive Research Institute and 4global, provides a comprehensive snapshot of the sector in 2020, showing that 'lost visits' could number up to 700m. The research scopes out a wide range of scenarios for bounceback, categorised by activity, timescale and capacity.

More: [http://lei.sr/c4v7z\\_H](http://lei.sr/c4v7z_H)





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**Louise Day**

Fitness & Wellbeing Director – Champneys

  
**fibodo**

[www.fibodo.com/hcm](http://www.fibodo.com/hcm)



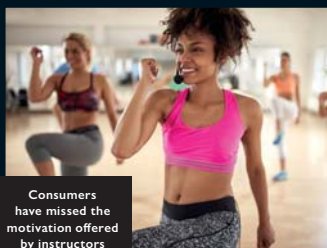
## 01 June 2020

### ukactive: government's one size fits all changes to furlough scheme a 'guarantee of redundancies'

ukactive has questioned the government's decision to make employers start paying towards the wages of furloughed staff.

Huw Edwards, ukactive CEO said: "Asking businesses who have had no income for five months to contribute to wages is a guarantee of redundancies. If gyms and leisure centres are not allowed to reopen, before having to make contributions on 1 August, tens of thousands of jobs will be lost, with the potential for thousands of facilities to go out of business."

More: [http://lei.sr/q6P3r\\_H](http://lei.sr/q6P3r_H)



Consumers have missed the motivation offered by instructors

## 02 June 2020

### Research: Nearly 90 per cent of Brits will spend the same or more on being active after lockdown. Motivation from instructors a major factor

Researchers found 82.3 per cent of people in the UK are prepared to spend the same on being active and 7.5 per cent prepared to spend more after lockdown, making a positive total of 89.8 per cent. Only 10.2 per cent intend to spend less.

These are some of the headline numbers from new research by Leisure-net, which gathered one of the largest consumer samples ever constructed to tap the mood of the nation.

More: [http://lei.sr/H9d3M\\_H](http://lei.sr/H9d3M_H)

## 04 June 2020

### David Lloyd Leisure launches outdoor classes and reveals enhanced Battlebox concept

David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) has reopened 50 clubs for socially distanced outdoor exercise. The move comes as the operator reveals the first iteration of its new blended offer, which combines club-based classes and activities with virtual content delivered via DL@Home. The new outdoor classes include Blaze and HIIT workouts, cycle and mind-body classes.

More: [http://lei.sr/s3k7R\\_H](http://lei.sr/s3k7R_H)

## 07 June 2020

### 'Low-aerosol' classes are part of safety focus for Holmes Place Germany

Ian Turley, COO of Holmes Place Germany, says it was important the operator "took a hard line on safety" during reopening, respecting German government guidelines on reduced capacities and the delivery of 'low-aerosol' classes.

'Low-aerosol' classes limit intensity, so members don't get above a rate of perceived exertion of around 70-75 per cent.

More: [http://lei.sr/5T5a4\\_H](http://lei.sr/5T5a4_H)



Gyms and studios are under threat from rent demands

## 08 June 2020

### Thousands of UK gyms face 'rent timebomb' at the end of June

In April, ukactive successfully lobbied the government to amend the Coronavirus Act to restrict tactics being adopted by landlords who were insisting gyms pay rent that had been withheld as a result of COVID-19. However, these protective measures expire at the end of June, with urgent action needed.

More: [http://lei.sr/R7V7D\\_H](http://lei.sr/R7V7D_H)

## 09 June 2020

### CrossFit CEO resigns as George Floyd tweet rocks the company

Greg Glassman has resigned following a backlash over his controversial tweet relating to the murder of George Floyd.

Glassman responded to a tweet by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation which read: "Racism and discrimination are critical public health issues that demand an urgent response." Glassman replied with: "It's Floyd-19."

More: [http://lei.sr/w5b9C\\_H](http://lei.sr/w5b9C_H)



Basic Fit is a €1bn business

## 09 June 2020

### Basic-Fit launches €135m share issue to capitalise on market opportunities

Basic-Fit has launched a new share issue as it restarts its growth plans for the European fitness market.

The Netherlands-based budget chain is using an accelerated bookbuild offering to issue up to 5.33 million new ordinary shares. At its current share price of €25, this will amount to a raise of around €135m – or 9.8 per cent of market cap, valuing the company at around €1.334bn (market capitalisation). This makes it one of the first billion Euro operators.

Analysts said the raise was 'unquestionably reassuring.'

More: [http://lei.sr/R7V7D\\_H](http://lei.sr/R7V7D_H)

## 10 June 2020

### Fit Together campaign aims to convince public it's safe to return to the gym

The campaign, led by ukactive, will offer practical tools, advice and guidance based on the sector's recommended framework for reopening. Developed by ukactive, shaped through consultation with operators and approved by independent scientific advisors, the framework will focus on convincing the public that returning to gyms and leisure facilities will be safe.

At the heart of the campaign is a Fit Together toolkit, which provides fitness operators with the tools they need to align with the framework and support customers to maintain the social distancing measures recommended by the government.

More: [http://lei.sr/5T5a4\\_H](http://lei.sr/5T5a4_H)

## 11 June 2020

### US gym market: research finds two-thirds plan to return, but Millennials and Gen Z may be hit by financial constraints

The *What members say matters when it comes to getting them back* report from ClubIntel shows that around a fifth (19 per cent) of members are undecided, while 16 per cent say they're 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely' to return to the gym after lockdown.

The study surveyed 2k adult gym members, exploring the behaviours of fitness consumers at different age stages.

More: [http://lei.sr/A4z6b\\_H](http://lei.sr/A4z6b_H)

## 15 June 2020

### 24 Hour Fitness files for Chapter 11 – closes 'more than 100' gyms

There have been rumours the company might be forced to make this move for some weeks. "If it were not for COVID-19, we would not be filing for Chapter 11," said CEO Tony Ueber.

"We intend to use the process to strengthen the future of 24 Hour Fitness for our team and club members, as well as our stakeholders," he continued.

As part of the process, the operator will close up to a quarter of its existing gyms and said it also expects to secure around US\$250m in debtor-in-possession (DIP) financing.

More: [http://lei.sr/K7Z5j\\_H](http://lei.sr/K7Z5j_H)

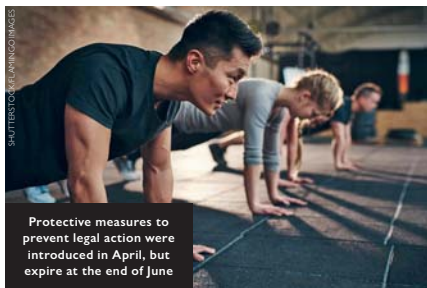
## 17 June 2020

### Places Leisure membership survey: 89 per cent of gym members ready to return when facilities reopen

The survey attracted more than 30,000 responses from Places Leisure members and offers insight into things such as when members want to come back, which activities they are most likely to take part in and their feelings about re-opening.

More than half of gym members (52 per cent), regular swimmers (59 per cent) and those attending exercise classes (52 per cent) are planning on an immediate return.

More: [http://lei.sr/B6F5g\\_H](http://lei.sr/B6F5g_H)



Protective measures to prevent legal action were introduced in April, but expire at the end of June

## 17 June 2020

### Time is 'running out' to save gyms from landlord legal actions

Thousands of gyms, restaurants and retail outlets in the UK will be going out of business if the government fails to extend protection from rent enforcement activity.

ukactive, British Independent Retailers Association (BIRA) and UK Hospitality have joined forces to call for the government to immediately extend the Moratorium of Forfeiture until at least October 2020, to offer protection from landlords taking legal action against unpaid rent.

More: [http://lei.sr/N5p7T\\_H](http://lei.sr/N5p7T_H)





Sturgeon: challenged by the fitness industry

## 18 June 2020

### ukactive invites Nicola Sturgeon to visit a gym after 'hotspot for transmission' comment

ukactive has invited the Scottish first minister to visit a gym to see first-hand the measures the facilities are putting in place to protect customers and staff from COVID-19, after Sturgeon said leisure facilities in Scotland were remaining closed because she believed they were "hotbeds" for coronavirus.

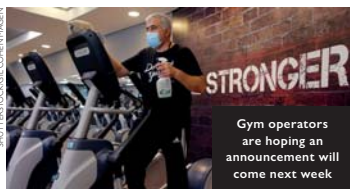
More: [http://lei.sr/u9u6X\\_H](http://lei.sr/u9u6X_H)

## 19 June 2020

### Government extends rent protection for gyms and leisure facilities

The government has announced that it will keep the Moratorium of Forfeiture, which protects businesses from rent enforcement activity, in place until the end of September, providing relief for gyms and leisure centres which were facing the next quarterly rent payments on 24 June.

More: [http://lei.sr/s7y9E\\_H](http://lei.sr/s7y9E_H)



Gym operators are hoping an announcement will come next week

## 20 June 2020

### Leaked document shows how government is planning 4 July reopening for gyms and spas in England

Journalists on *The Times* are reporting today that they've seen a leaked document confirming how the UK government will allow a range of leisure businesses in England, including gyms and spas, pubs and restaurants, to reopen on 4 July with social distancing and hygiene controls in place.

More: [http://lei.sr/3M9r4\\_H](http://lei.sr/3M9r4_H)

## 23 June 2020

### Pubs will reopen before gyms. Johnson backs away from 4 July reopening

Pubs will open before gyms, to the bitter disappointment of the health and fitness sector, following a week of leaks and briefings, which indicated gyms and spas would be included in the list of businesses allowed to reopen on 4 July. Boris Johnson told the House of Commons today they would be omitted.

There were already signs the government was rowing back on reopening the sector, as leaks and briefings which – days earlier – had mentioned gyms and spas, began to have these removed from around mid-day yesterday.

More: [http://lei.sr/X2b5u\\_H](http://lei.sr/X2b5u_H)

## 23 June 2020

### Exclusive: Xercise4Less finds new owner – deal to be completed when gyms open

Budget fitness chain, Xercise4Less, will have a new ownership structure and financing set-up by the time the UK's gyms are allowed to open their doors to customers.

The chain, which operates 51 gyms in the UK, was put up for sale in May by its investors, directors and shareholders, which include the BGF Investment Fund and Proventus Capital.

More: [http://lei.sr/b2U5m\\_H](http://lei.sr/b2U5m_H)



Oliver Dowden has moved to stem anger over the pubs before gyms announcement

## 23 June 2020

### Gyms could reopen by mid-July says Dowden. Culture secretary intervenes to temper anger at "pubs before gyms" debacle

Gyms in the UK could reopen by mid-July, according to a tweet, just posted by culture minister, Oliver Dowden.

In a bid to contain the immediate outcry from the public and the fitness industry, Dowden has tweeted: "...keeping Britain fit is key in COVID battle. Subject to public health, our aspiration is to reopen gyms and leisure facilities in mid-July."

More: [http://lei.sr/Y9P5Z\\_H](http://lei.sr/Y9P5Z_H)



Cobbold and Grey-Thompson on the BBC's 5.00 o'clock news, fight for the gym sector

## 24 June 2020

### Gym industry heavyweights, Tanni Grey-Thompson, Humphrey Cobbold and Huw Edwards hit primetime TV to fight for gym reopening

The three challenged the government's "pubs before gyms" decision, with the appearance following Grey-Thompson's open letter to prime minister, Boris Johnson, yesterday, which called on him to justify his decision with science.

More: [http://lei.sr/t6r4c\\_H](http://lei.sr/t6r4c_H)



Study shows no additional COVID-19 risk in gyms

## 25 June 2020

### Exclusive: Norwegian study finds gyms pose no additional risk of catching COVID-19

A large-scale academic study has concluded that there is "no threat of increased COVID-19 spread" at fitness facilities, even when intensive training takes place.

A team at the University of Oslo, led by professor Michael Brethauer, investigated SARS-CoV-2 transmission and whether it was attributable to gyms. "Our trial showed no virus transmission or increase in COVID-19 disease that was related to the opening of gym facilities," said Brethauer.

The research studied 3,764 members of the public, aged 18-to-64, who had no COVID-19 comorbidities.

Roughly half (1,896) were given access to visit the gyms, while the other half (1,868) – a control group – were not.

"Our trial sought to test if the closure of gyms is needed, or if open facilities can provide enough hygiene and social distancing to prevent virus spread," Brethauer explained.

"As our results show, there was no increase in COVID-related disease due to the opening of gyms."

More: [http://lei.sr/k9V4f\\_H](http://lei.sr/k9V4f_H)

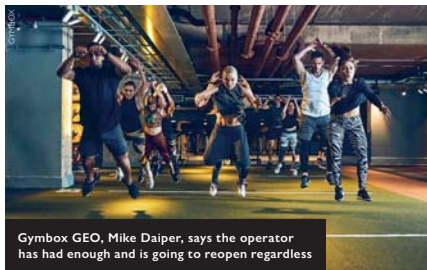
## 26 June 2020

### Gyms in Northern Ireland given go-ahead to open on 10 July

"Today we've reached the next rung in the ladder of our recovery journey, as we have been able to confirm the reopening schedule for significant sections of our economy," said First Minister Arlene Foster.

"It's important that all sectors have as much time as possible to plan ahead and prepare for safe reopening, which is why we have brought forward today a timetable with indicative dates for future relaxations." Leisure centres, however, won't be allowed to reopen until 7 August at the earliest.

More: [http://lei.sr/b9h6M\\_H](http://lei.sr/b9h6M_H)



Gymbox CEO, Mike Daiper, says the operator has had enough and is going to reopen regardless

## 26 June 2020

### Gymbox says it will open on 4 July, without consent if necessary

Gymbox has announced it will reopen all its gyms on 4 July, unless the UK government explains why it should not.

Daiper says the sector was led to believe members could be welcomed back on the 4th July and is yet to be given an explanation as to why this is not being allowed.

"Pubs opening before gyms is outrageous given the huge health benefits exercise brings," he said. "Perhaps if we change our name from Gymbox to Ginbox, Boris will let us open?" The company has published extensive reopening protocols.

More: [http://lei.sr/6H7v4\\_H](http://lei.sr/6H7v4_H)

## 30 June 2020

### Fears emerge over lockdown's effect on physical activity levels

Physical activity levels in England have continued to fall from those recorded in lockdown – partly due to schools, shops and workplaces reopening, giving people less time to exercise.

The latest figures from Savanta ComRes for Sport England – based on data collected from 2,000 adults between 19 and 22 June – show that less than a third (30 per cent) of adults achieved the recommended level of 150 minutes of exercise a week, with children aged 16 and under even more inactive.

More: [http://lei.sr/H2q8Q\\_H](http://lei.sr/H2q8Q_H)



The delegation included deputy chief medical officer Jonathan Van-Tam

## 01 July 2020

### Ukactive takes government delegation on gym visits to push rethink on reopening

The delegation, which included deputy chief medical officer, Jonathan Van-Tam and representatives of Sport England, saw firsthand how the sector is setting up facilities safely, in accordance with government regulations on social distancing and aligned to the ukactive framework.

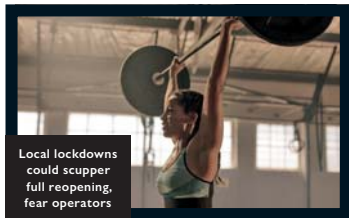
More: [http://lei.sr/T2p4r\\_H](http://lei.sr/T2p4r_H)

## 03 July 2020

### Gyms could reopen 'in a couple of weeks', says Boris Johnson

Boris Johnson has announced gyms may be able to reopen in a 'couple of weeks', during an interview with radio station LBC. "We're going to reopen gyms as soon as we can do it in a COVID-19-secure way," he said, "and I think the date for reopening gyms is in just a couple of weeks' time".

More: [http://lei.sr/9B6v8\\_H](http://lei.sr/9B6v8_H)



Local lockdowns could scupper full reopening, fear operators

## 03 July 2020

### Industry fears local lockdowns could scupper reopening

Gym operators are concerned local lockdowns could come into effect in some areas before gyms reopen, further delaying the full restarting of the industry – especially in major urban areas. Leicester is already in lockdown, with locations such as Bradford, Barnsley, Rochdale and Oldham under observation.

More: [http://lei.sr/J2G5f\\_H](http://lei.sr/J2G5f_H)

## 07 July 2020

### New training initiative to help physical activity sector workforce return to business

A free-to-access training platform has launched to help the sport and fitness workforce confidently return to work, as lockdown measures are eased.

The £250,000 ReActivate initiative has been funded by Sport England, commissioned by CIMSPA and delivered by a consortium of online training partners.

More: [http://lei.sr/r5Z5m\\_H](http://lei.sr/r5Z5m_H)



The public will be able to return to gyms for the first time since 20 March – nearly four months

## 9 July 2020

### Back to the gym! Fitness facilities can reopen on Saturday 25 July

Culture minister, Oliver Dowden, made the announcement at a government press conference today, saying he was "confident that by 25 July, we will be in a position where we can reopen gyms. "If there is any evidence of an escalation of COVID-19 leading up to this point, we would not hesitate to take action, including local lockdowns," he said in closing.

A raft of other operators have also been given permission to reopen, including outdoor team sport and outdoor pools.

More: [http://lei.sr/t8d9T\\_H](http://lei.sr/t8d9T_H)

## 13 July 2020

### PureGym's European operations are "buying time" for the operator, as lockdown leads to losses of £4m a week

In an interview with the BBC, Pure Gym CEO Humphrey Cobbold said revenues from the company's Fitness World chain have helped it survive the effects of the UK lockdown by generating significant levels of cash.

"During the period we've been closed in the UK, we've been able to bring in £20m-£30m from our Fitness World operations in Switzerland and Denmark," he explained.

More: [http://lei.sr/S4V2F\\_H](http://lei.sr/S4V2F_H)

**13 July 2020**

## The Gym Group expects to be in profit on reopening

The Gym Group (TGG) says it's retained 80 per cent of its members during lockdown, while internal research shows it expects 92 per cent to return when gyms reopen.

Memberships were frozen on 20 March and TGG says initial cancellation rates slowed, leaving 692,000 members at 9 July, vs 870,000 on 18 March. TGG only requires 60 per cent of members to be active to achieve 'cash neutrality'.

More: [http://lei.sr/C9y3Z\\_H](http://lei.sr/C9y3Z_H)



**14 July 2020**

## Studio manager highjacks government NHS posters to promote exercise

Posters created by a fitness studio manager, mimicking the government's COVID-19 NHS messaging, have gone viral on LinkedIn. Carrying the message "Exercise – Protect the NHS" the posters were created by Daniel Ward from F45.

More: [http://lei.sr/d9z9U\\_H](http://lei.sr/d9z9U_H)



**14 July 2020**

## Get fit and lose weight now says deputy chief medical officer

The UK's deputy chief medical officer, Dr Jenny Harries, has called on Brits to get fit and lose weight this summer, in preparation for the return of COVID-19 in the winter. Dr Harries says obesity is a 'risk the UK can do something about'.

Research from the University of Liverpool has shown being obese increases the risk of dying from COVID-19 by 38 per cent.

More: [http://lei.sr/Z4W6n\\_H](http://lei.sr/Z4W6n_H)



**14 July 2020**

## Rainer Schaller's RSG Group to acquire Gold's Gym for US\$100m

RSG was selected as the winning bidder for Gold's Gym in a court-approved auction process held yesterday (13 July).

Following the acquisition, the RSG Group – which has mainly been active in Europe up to this point – has become a global player in fitness overnight, with more than 900 locations across six continents.

More: [http://lei.sr/K8W7a\\_H](http://lei.sr/K8W7a_H)



**17 July 2020**

## Fitness professionals work with NHS on COVID-19 rehab programme for patients who have been on ventilators

The initiative was established by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board in partnership with The Royal Gwent Hospital's (RGH) Respiratory Team, with the programme being delivered by the Geraint Thomas National Velodrome of Wales – a venue operated by trust, Newport Live.

More: [http://lei.sr/p6R3P\\_H](http://lei.sr/p6R3P_H)

**22 July 2020**

## Tax breaks and 'Workout from Work' scheme would help gym sector rebound

The UK's industry's leading trade associations have united to call for a major review of taxation and regulation to help gym operators rebound from the lockdown, after the Chancellor's "mini-budget" statement earlier this month did not include any specific measures to help the sector.

More: [http://lei.sr/d6z9g\\_H](http://lei.sr/d6z9g_H)



## 23 July 2020

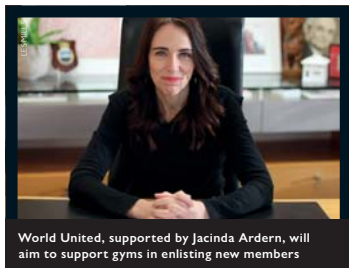
### Joe Wicks hosts final youtube PE session – donates £580,000 to NHS charities

Fitness sessions with Joe Wicks, that defined lockdown mornings for many families, have finally come to an end. After 18 weeks, the trainer has hosted his last "PE with Joe" workout on Youtube.

The trainer began his daily livestream sessions on 23 March, hours before Boris Johnson ordered the country into lockdown.

Wicks streamed 78 workouts, achieving views of more than 80 million views – unprecedented for fitness content on any platform. He donated all advertising income to the NHS.

More: [http://lei.sr/F4E6v\\_H](http://lei.sr/F4E6v_H)



## 27 July 2020

### Les Mills' launches World United, backed by New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern

Les Mills will launch a new global campaign in September, celebrating the return of fitness and designed to help operators grow their memberships. The campaign will be free of Les Mills branding, so operators can make it their own.

Called World United, the campaign will promote the importance of exercise to physical and mental health and is aimed at helping the global industry reactivate paused members.

More: [http://lei.sr/A4m6B\\_H](http://lei.sr/A4m6B_H)

## 27 July 2020

### Gyms, pools and leisure centres reopen – collective responsibility 'crucial' for safe operations

Health clubs, swimming pools, leisure centres and indoor sports facilities have reopened for the first time since March.

In order to reopen legally, gyms and leisure facilities must meet the requirements set out by the government's official guidance, which includes a focus on social distancing and cleanliness. Some operators opened their doors at midnight.

More: [http://lei.sr/C4U4y\\_H](http://lei.sr/C4U4y_H)

## 27 July 2020

### New obesity strategy revealed – but where's the bit about exercise?

Stricter rules on food advertising and printing calorie contents on menus are among measures introduced in the UK government's strategy – *Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives* – but there's little mention of exercise. In its response, ukactive said physical activity must be put on an "equal footing" with diet.

More: [http://lei.sr/H4a9J\\_H](http://lei.sr/H4a9J_H)



## 29 July 2020

### Xercise4Less calls in administrators – JD Gyms picks up 50 gym estate

Up until late June, the company was hopeful a deal could be struck to allow it to continue operations under the Xercise4Less brand. However, parent company Wright Leisure Topco called in administrators PwC who confirmed the sale.

More: [http://lei.sr/C6h3T\\_H](http://lei.sr/C6h3T_H)

## 31 July 2020

### Scotland's decision to keep gyms shut until September branded 'ridiculous'

Gyms, health clubs and swimming pools in Scotland have finally been given an "indicative" time for a possible re-opening – but the 14 September date has angered the sector.

The decision was branded "ridiculous" by industry stakeholders – including entrepreneur Duncan Bannatyne.

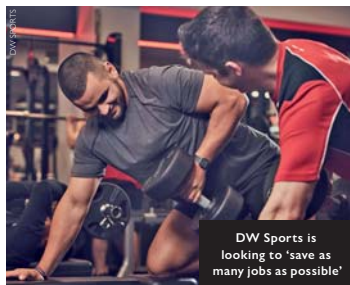
More: [http://lei.sr/J5Q5J\\_H](http://lei.sr/J5Q5J_H)



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DW Sports is looking to 'save as many jobs as possible'

### 03 August 2020

#### DW Sports calls in the administrators – Fitness First unaffected

The company says it's looking to protect as many gyms as possible, but that it's inevitable some of these will also close.

"The decision to appoint administrators has not been taken lightly, but will give us the best chance to protect viable parts of the business, return them to profitability, and secure as many jobs as possible," said CEO, Martin Long.

"Having exhausted all other available options, we firmly believe this process can be a platform to restructure the business and preserve many of our gyms for our members."

More: [http://lei.sr/54a6w\\_H](http://lei.sr/54a6w_H)

### 03 August 2020

#### Rene Moos: Basic-Fit's recovery "very strong" following lockdown. Long term plans still viable

Europe's largest gym chain, Basic-Fit, has provided the European fitness sector with some optimism, after recording high membership growth in the months following lockdown.

Reporting its first-half year results, the operator said it had seen higher membership growth in June and July than it did in 2019, despite continued lockdown-related club closures.

More: [http://lei.sr/q3k9w\\_H](http://lei.sr/q3k9w_H)

### 03 August 2020

#### Therme Group announces development plans to roll out wellbeing resorts across UK

Following approval to build a £250mn wellbeing resort in Manchester, Therme Group has revealed plans to develop and expand its concept in other major UK cities.

"Our aim is to ensure a Therme Group wellbeing resort is within easy reach of 90 per cent of the UK population," commented Therme UK COO, James Mark.

The plan includes projects – with a similar concept to Therme Manchester – in London, Wales, and Scotland.

More: [http://lei.sr/B2B2P\\_H](http://lei.sr/B2B2P_H)



Michie: pubs and gyms may have to close

### 03 August 2020

#### Gyms and pubs should shut to allow schools to reopen, says SAGE advisor

A member of SAGE, the government's independent scientific advisers, has said gyms, pubs and other leisure venues may have to close for schools to reopen if we are to eliminate COVID-19. There is no indication this is government policy.

Susan Michie said indoor venues – including gyms – should shut in an effort to reach "zero COVID".

More: [http://lei.sr/B5g7c\\_H](http://lei.sr/B5g7c_H)

### 04 August 2020

#### Planet Fitness and Life Time chains make face masks mandatory at all times, apart from when working out

The operators have announced members will be required to wear face masks when entering, exiting and walking around the gym. Mask wearing will not be required while working out.

More: [http://lei.sr/c9u9y\\_H](http://lei.sr/c9u9y_H)



Planet Fitness' revenues in Q2 fell to US\$40.2m – a drop of 77.9 per cent on the same period in 2019

### 06 August 2020

#### Markets react positively to Planet Fitness results despite chain reporting big quarterly losses

Planet Fitness' share price remained steady at between US\$49 and US\$52 as the markets reacted well to the posting of quarterly earnings, despite the gym chain reporting big drops in both revenue and profit during Q2 2020.

More: [http://lei.sr/A2B2D\\_H](http://lei.sr/A2B2D_H)

## 07 August 2020

### PROVE IT. ukactive challenges government to provide the evidence it uses to justify gym closures during local lockdowns

ukactive, has questioned the decision to close gyms and health clubs as part of some localised lockdowns, saying: "We have the utmost respect for the work of the respective national governments, but unfortunately, the sector is the victim of recent decision making that seems to be based neither on scientific evidence, nor factual accuracy.

More: [http://lei.sr/f8b6c\\_H](http://lei.sr/f8b6c_H)



Johnson visited The Gym Group, saying he is committed to helping the UK battle obesity

## 07 August 2020

### Boris Johnson pays secret visit to The Gym Group South Ruislip

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has paid a surprise visit to a branch of The Gym Group (TGG) in his constituency.

The company has been inviting Johnson to come and see its clubs for some weeks. The invitation was finally clinched by TGG manager, Nate McCann and hosted by The Gym Group's chief commercial officer, Barney Harrison.

Johnson was given a tour of the facility and was talked through how staff are keeping members and themselves safe.

More: [http://lei.sr/a8Y6m\\_H](http://lei.sr/a8Y6m_H)

## 09 August 2020

### A third of leisure trusts 'unviable' in the next six months without a bail-out

HCM has been given a preview of figures from the *Community Leisure UK COVID-19 Impact Report*, to be published later this month (August), which is based on the latest survey data gathered by CLUK, which representing charitable trusts delivering public leisure services across the UK.

Other key headline figures indicate that nearly 7,000 jobs have already been lost in the trusts sector – and thousands more are set to follow without financial support.

More: [http://lei.sr/x5w6S\\_H](http://lei.sr/x5w6S_H)



Gyms in Catalonia have won a legal case to reopen

## 11 August 2020

### Spanish gyms win legal fight to reopen after second lockdown

Spanish gyms were given the go-ahead to open following the first lockdown, but on 17 July, the Catalan government ruled that gyms in Barcelona and its metropolitan area should close.

Gym and indoor sports facility operators brought a legal challenge against the ruling in the Superior Court of Justice of Catalonia (SCJC) – which has backed their claim.

More: [http://lei.sr/P5W3a\\_H](http://lei.sr/P5W3a_H)

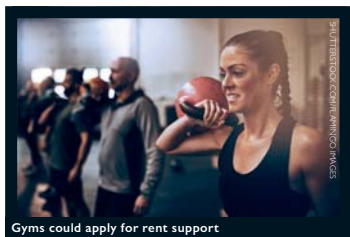
## 11 August 2020

### Wales is back in business – gyms, pools and leisure centres reopen their doors

The latest easing of regulations in Wales came into force today (10 August), a week after the country's pubs and restaurants were able to throw open their doors to customers.

ukactive CEO Huw Edwards said: "This is a health crisis, so we now look forward to playing our central role – using our facilities and staff to help combat COVID-19.

More: [http://lei.sr/Z5Z9r\\_H](http://lei.sr/Z5Z9r_H)



Gyms could apply for rent support

## 12 August 2020

### Property Bounceback Grant 'would save 375,000 jobs' across physical activity, hospitality and retail sectors

A government investment of £1.75bn to pay 50 per cent of rents across the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors for six months would save 375,000 jobs and offer an ROI of nearly £7bn.

That is the claim made by ukactive, UKHospitality, Revo, the British Property Federation and British Retail Consortium.

More: [http://lei.sr/r6u2b\\_H](http://lei.sr/r6u2b_H)



Fitness Australia said it wants to challenge 'misinformation and uninformed sources'

## 17 August 2020

### Study shows gyms are not spreading COVID-19 in Australia

Gyms in New South Wales (NSW), Australia are staying COVID-free, according to a new report, just published by industry body, Fitness Australia.

Over the past two months there have been more than 6.26 million check-ins across 423 gyms in NSW, with no recorded transmission of COVID-19.

More: [http://lei.sr/V6V8X\\_H](http://lei.sr/V6V8X_H)

## 18 August 2020

### Apple hints at virtual fitness launch

Apple is rumoured to be gearing up for the launch of a subscription-based virtual fitness offer.

Bloomberg said the tech giant is looking to join the virtual exercise revolution with a service delivered through an app for iPhone, iPad and Apple TV and it's believed the new fitness element will be part of a range of products made available.

More: [http://lei.sr/54u8z\\_H](http://lei.sr/54u8z_H)



Exercise must be included in pandemic planning

## 18 August 2020

### Study: fitness 'must be included' in future pandemic planning

Ensuring physical activity levels don't fall significantly should be treated as a "public health priority" in response to future pandemics – as well as during crisis planning for a second wave of a COVID-19, according to a study, which shows a decrease in physical activity due to COVID-19 and offers insight into how crucial it is for exercise to be included in pandemic guidelines.

More: [http://lei.sr/3H6r4\\_H](http://lei.sr/3H6r4_H)

## 20 August 2020

### Joe Moore stands down as president of IHRSA amid crisis over trade show refunds

IHRSA has announced that Joe Moore is standing down as president and CEO effective immediately, with the IHRSA board immediately beginning the process of identifying Moore's replacement and appointing an interim.

The organisation has been grappling with issues relating to a lack of refunds on trade show booths for its cancelled 2020 trade show and convention and complaints from exhibitors.

More: [http://lei.sr/x9X2h\\_H](http://lei.sr/x9X2h_H)



Gym reopening in Scotland has been brought forward

## 21 August 2020

### Gyms, leisure centres and swimming pools in Scotland to reopen on 31 August

Speaking at her daily news conference today (20 August), First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said she was bringing forward the reopening of the facilities which were previously expected to open on 14 September.

The decision to allow reopenings comes just days after the Scottish Government published its guidance for the reopening of physical activity facilities and is subject to review at any time.

More: [http://lei.sr/5g4W6\\_H](http://lei.sr/5g4W6_H)

## 22 August 2020

### Facebook ups the ante in fitness streaming war – adds new payment functionality

Facebook for Business has introduced a new service enabling users to create their own event, such as a group workout or yoga class, host it and collect payment, all in one place.

The new "Paid Online Events" solution builds on the existing Facebook Live option, which allows users to stream live classes to followers and has been much used this year.

Using the new functionality could prove useful for personal trainers and small gyms looking to expand their customer base.

More: [http://lei.sr/n5a5S\\_H](http://lei.sr/n5a5S_H)



## 24 August 2020

### Mike Ashley picks up DW Sports' fitness assets from administrators for £37m – will operate under the Everlast brand

Mike Ashley's Frasers Group has acquired the fitness assets of DW Sports for £37m. The gyms have been acquired by Frasers Group, whose other assets include gym chain, Everlast, SportsDirect and Premier League club Newcastle United.

More: [http://lei.sr/5e8e3\\_H](http://lei.sr/5e8e3_H)



## 24 August 2020

### Nearly a quarter of public pools are still closed, says Swim England

Research from Swim England shows that while 767 of the 1,002 public pools have reopened in some form – or have published an imminent reopening date – 223 remain closed indefinitely. The majority (193) have no confirmed date for reopening, while 15 have already been mothballed or confirmed as permanently closed. A further 25 are shut for maintenance.

More: [http://lei.sr/Z9NSY\\_H](http://lei.sr/Z9NSY_H)

## 25 August 2020

### New research shows gyms in England are successfully controlling COVID-19

New research from industry body, ukactive, has found gyms are almost risk-free environments for COVID-19, with an estimated 0.020 positive cases per 10,000 gym visits – results that are statistically insignificant. ukactive collated data from more than 1,300 gyms, health clubs and leisure centres to analyse the prevalence of the virus within the sector's facilities.

More: [http://lei.sr/f5d8z\\_H](http://lei.sr/f5d8z_H)

## 27 August 2020

### COVID-19 impact report: public leisure sector facing 'catastrophic job losses'

Over 22,000 jobs are at risk across the UK's public leisure sector; out of a total of 46,000, according to a new report, out today, from Community Leisure UK (CLUK), with 26 per cent of the contracted workforce – 6,975 jobs – and 50 per cent of the casual workforce – 9,218 jobs – at risk.

More: [http://lei.sr/R7Z2K\\_H](http://lei.sr/R7Z2K_H)



## 27 August 2020

### Pure Gym's overseas clubs back in profit within month of reopening – UK operations remain 'robust'

Pure Gym's overseas clubs returned to pre-COVID-19 profit levels in the first month of trading after reopening, according to the company's Q2 2020 financial results, out today.

Europe-wide closures saw revenues in the three months to 30 June drop by 87 per cent, from £112m in 2019 to £14m.

More: [http://lei.sr/D2D2h\\_H](http://lei.sr/D2D2h_H)



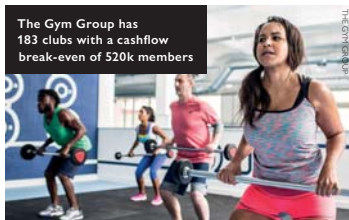
## 31 August

### Boris Johnson appoints PT to help him get fit following COVID-19 scare

UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has hired a personal trainer to help him get fit and lose weight, after acknowledging that he was 'too fat' when he caught COVID-19 earlier this year.

Johnson has appointed Harry Jameson, a coach who has a regular shot on a BBC radio show, to work on his fitness levels.

More: [http://lei.sr/t7Z8d\\_H](http://lei.sr/t7Z8d_H)



The Gym Group has 183 clubs with a cashflow break-even of 520k members

THE GYM GROUP

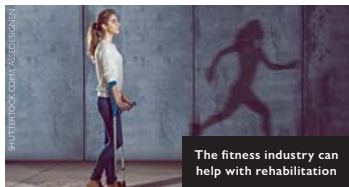
## 02 September 2020

### Gym Group gets through first lockdown in good shape

Announcing half-year results today, Richard Darwin, CEO of The Gym Group (TGG), said the company was cashflow positive in the first month of trading when gyms reopened and it was able to turn on its direct debit pipeline.

Darwin said TGG has a cashflow break-even of 520k members.

More: [http://lei.sr/b2f9P\\_H](http://lei.sr/b2f9P_H)



SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ASCOLENN

The fitness industry can help with rehabilitation

## 04 September 2020

### Fitness industry's role in rehabilitating COVID-19 sufferers 'cannot be over-estimated'

The fitness sector is well placed to help people recovering from COVID-19, according to a thought leadership analysis in *HCM* magazine. Medics are reporting high incidences of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in post-COVID patients, as well as a wide range of issues with organ damage and lung scarring.

More: [http://lei.sr/D9S6k\\_H](http://lei.sr/D9S6k_H)

## 04 September 2020

### EuropeActive report: digital skills 'crucial' in upskilling fitness workforce of the future

EuropeActive has released its latest paper, focusing on how digital solutions are transforming the European fitness and physical activity sector. Titled *Innovation and digitalisation in Europe*, the paper offers an outline of the current EU strategy on digitalisation and how it might impact the fitness sector.

More: [http://lei.sr/e3s2C\\_H](http://lei.sr/e3s2C_H)



LES MILLS

Phillip Mills makes the case for gyms and exercise

## 07 September 2020

### Phillip Mills: Gyms are a cornerstone of global recovery from COVID-19

Gyms and health clubs should be given the necessary backing by governments to fight COVID, according to Phillip Mills, founder and executive director of Les Mills. Writing exclusively in *HCM*, Mills cited a number of studies which highlight the importance of exercise in the fight against the pandemic.

More: [http://lei.sr/G9m9w\\_H](http://lei.sr/G9m9w_H)

## 08 September 2020

### Wattbike secures £11.5m investment following lockdown sales boom

The indoor bike specialist said the investment will help it drive growth in the UK and further penetrate the US and Asian markets, as it looks to capitalise on the global increase in demand for connected, at-home fitness solutions.

More: [http://lei.sr/4a5S9\\_H](http://lei.sr/4a5S9_H)



SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/MASTROCHIANTINI

Exercise gives savings of £5.2bn in healthcare

## 09 September 2020

### Every £1 spent on physical activity generates around £4 for the economy

A wide-ranging study by the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University shows how investment in exercise creates a return across health and social care – and also helps build stronger communities and develop skills.

The report found the benefits are worth £85.5bn a year.

More: [http://lei.sr/g6c6b\\_H](http://lei.sr/g6c6b_H)



## 09 September 2020

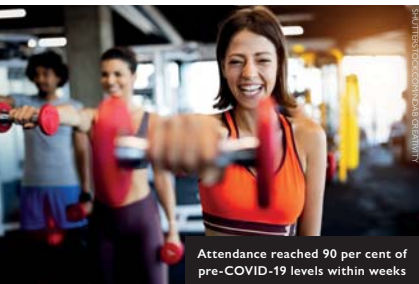
### US gyms are beating COVID-19

A study of gym visit data from the US suggests that health clubs and fitness facilities are not contributing to the spread of COVID-19.

An analysis of 49.4 million member check-ins across 2,873 gyms in the US over three months studied the "visit-to-virus" ratio data from health and fitness clubs.

It showed that, out of the nearly 50 million visits, only 0.0023 per cent had tested positive for COVID-19 – a result deemed statistically irrelevant.

More: [http://lei.sr/M3V6T\\_H](http://lei.sr/M3V6T_H)



Attendance reached 90 per cent of pre-COVID-19 levels within weeks

## 09 September 2020

### Most gyms in New Zealand and Australia have reopened – what are the learnings?

Key operators have been sharing their learnings with HCM magazine – overall, the picture has been positive for gyms in the two countries, with some operators seeing attendances reach 90 per cent of pre-COVID-19 levels within weeks.

Snap Fitness, which operates 220 clubs in Australia and 56 in New Zealand has seen attendances grow rapidly, while Les Mills Clubs in New Zealand reports growth in new joiners.

More: [http://lei.sr/E2v6z\\_H](http://lei.sr/E2v6z_H)

## 09 September 2020

### £1.5m of free training will retool the physical activity workforce

Funded by Sport England, the £1.5m ReTrain scheme has been set up to support employers by providing free training for staff, enabling them to work in new roles.

Delivered in phases, the training provided through ReTrain will be delivered by training companies accredited by CIMSPA.

During Phase 1, the focus will be on courses that lead to new CIMSPA-endorsed qualifications in areas such as group exercise, gym instructors, personal trainers, swimming teachers, lifeguards, sports coaches and pool plant operators.

More: [http://lei.sr/r7B5W\\_H](http://lei.sr/r7B5W_H)



The Rule of Six, does not apply to gyms and pools

## 10 September 2020

### Government confirms: fitness, sport and swimming 'not affected' by new Rule of Six restrictions

Organised fitness, sports and other leisure activities (including swimming) can continue despite the introduction of the new "Rule of Six" on 14 September – providing that the activities have been through COVID-19-secure protocols.

It means that people can continue to use leisure facilities, such as health clubs, gyms and pools – and exercise classes held within the venues.

More: [http://lei.sr/T5X4p\\_H](http://lei.sr/T5X4p_H)



Pure Gym now has £297m of liquidity

## 11 September 2020

### Pure Gym negotiates additional £150m liquidity

PureGym has secured a £100m cash injection from shareholders to help deal with both the opportunities and threats posed by COVID-19. The move takes its borrowings to around £480m.

The operator said the cash – mainly from Leonard Green Partners – will be used to bolster its balance sheet so it can continue to develop new gyms when opportunities arise.

More: [http://lei.sr/z2h2P\\_H](http://lei.sr/z2h2P_H)

## 15 September 2020

### This Girl Can returns with campaign focusing on challenges of the pandemic

Sport England has launched the latest edition of the popular This Girl Can campaign, celebrating the inventive ways women have been staying active during the pandemic.

The refreshed advertising features women from the original 'Me Again' campaign (launched earlier in 2020), showing them fitting activity into their lives in the changed circumstances of COVID-19.

More: [http://lei.sr/t4e9a\\_H](http://lei.sr/t4e9a_H)



**17 September 2020****Investors, led by Tacit Capital, are working to buy Town Sports International out of Chapter 11**

Town Sports International – which operates a brands including the New York Sports Club – is looking to secure a takeover deal, following its recent move into Chapter 11.

On 14 September, Town Sports became the latest US fitness operator to file for bankruptcy protection, following Gold's Gym International (in May) and 24 Hour Fitness (June). The company is looking to sell itself out of bankruptcy by securing a deal with lenders, led by Tacit Capital.

More: [http://lei.sr/G7C5k\\_H](http://lei.sr/G7C5k_H)



Thousands of gyms and leisure centres were threatened with rent enforcement activity

**18 September 2020****Government's extension of commercial rent protections a 'lifeline' for gyms**

The government has extended protection from rent enforcement until the end of the year. The measure, in force for England and Wales, provides relief for gyms and leisure centres and had been set to expire at the end of September.

According to industry body, ukactive, many of its members were facing evictions, winding-up orders and other enforcement activity as the protection was coming to an end.

It is the second time the protection has been extended since it was first announced as part of lockdown measures in March.

More: [http://lei.sr/k6X3A\\_H](http://lei.sr/k6X3A_H)

**18 September 2020****Boutiques back to 91 per cent of pre-COVID levels in some world regions**

Boutique gym attendance and class bookings in some world regions have bounced back to 91 per cent of pre-COVID levels.

The figure comes from research by gym management software provider, Glofox, which collated and analysed data from gym attendance and class bookings globally – including online classes – to draw insights into how the fitness industry has changed amid the pandemic. The report is based on analysis of activity across a sample of 2k businesses in the US, UK, Ireland, Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

More: [http://lei.sr/U9R2n\\_H](http://lei.sr/U9R2n_H)



Thousands of gym operators could make claims

**18 September 2020****Gyms could get payouts on business interruption insurance following high court ruling**

Hundreds of thousands of small companies in the UK – including those operating in fitness and leisure – are set to receive payouts on interruption insurance policies, following a high court judgment in a test case brought by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

More: [http://lei.sr/n8J6e\\_H](http://lei.sr/n8J6e_H)



Exercise is the best way to support the NHS in the UK

**21 September 2020****People believe exercising is the best way to support the NHS**

Exercise has been voted the number one way the public can help the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK – ahead of paying taxes and cutting down on smoking and drinking.

A study of 2,123 UK adults by Savanta ComRes found they believe being active will reduce pressure on NHS services.

More: [http://lei.sr/z3f9m\\_H](http://lei.sr/z3f9m_H)

**24 September 2020****CAWS unveils programme to help PTs working with people recovering from COVID-19**

CAWS, has launched a series of new programme to help educate PTs in how to support members recovering from COVID-19. There are three programmes in total – Rebuild, Rebound and Fortitude, all delivered via online learning.

More: [http://lei.sr/\\_H](http://lei.sr/_H)

## 21 September 2020

### Gyms in the UK are continuing to control COVID-19 – research

Gyms in the UK are continuing to successfully control COVID-19 transmission, according to the latest figures released by industry body, ukactive.

There were 22 million visits to fitness facilities during the two months following reopening, with the number of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 visits logged as 0.34, with no community transmission occurring.

Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, says the data shows protocols are helping to control the virus.

More: [http://lei.sr/d6W7w\\_H](http://lei.sr/d6W7w_H)

## 21 September 2020

### Letter to Boris: give us a central role in COVID-19 recovery, says activity sector

More than 100 physical activity bodies have sent a letter to UK prime minister, Boris Johnson, urging him to give the sector a central role in the nation's COVID-19 recovery work.

The coalition requests an urgent support package from the government – similar to the one provided to the arts and hospitality sectors, saying the funding is needed to enable the sector to provide programmes and facilities that address health inequalities highlighted by the pandemic.

More: [http://lei.sr/H5d2V\\_H](http://lei.sr/H5d2V_H)



Bear Grylls broadcasts live from Battersea, London

## 23 September 2020

### Bear Grylls leads activities on another successful National Fitness Day

The UK's physical activity sector has come together to get millions of people active during National Fitness Day 2020.

Gyms, leisure facilities and activity providers have hosted thousands of free events, helping to make it the most physically active day of the year.

The day was kicked off by global adventurer and Be Military Fit (BMF) ambassador, Bear Grylls, who called for the nation to get active as he hosted a UK-wide group workout session.

More: [http://lei.sr/X7P6T\\_H](http://lei.sr/X7P6T_H)

## 25 September 2020

### Activity sector unites to push back over UK Chancellor's Winter Economy Plan

Chancellor Rishi Sunak's proposals to support the economy through the next six months of the pandemic "are not enough" to secure the future of the physical activity sector.

"The measures announced by the Chancellor will provide some relief," said Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, "However, we must now see urgent tailored support for our sector."

More: [http://lei.sr/H2H3A\\_H](http://lei.sr/H2H3A_H)



EuropeActive says tech is 'existentially important'

## 29 September 2020

### EuropeActive publishes *Horizon 2025* – sectoral manifesto for European fitness

EuropeActive has published a sectoral manifesto which outlines the aims and objectives of the "entire ecosystem of the European fitness and physical activity sector" for the next five years. Called *Horizon 2025*, the manifesto lays out priorities in four categories: health, community, digital and standards.

More: [http://lei.sr/f4E9E\\_H](http://lei.sr/f4E9E_H)



Herman Rutgers: Deloitte report is optimistic

## 30 September 2020

### Deloitte report: impact of COVID-19 on the European fitness market

European fitness operators will face increased consolidation, accelerated digitalisation and the new reality of creating hybrid models due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a large-scale report, *The Covid-19 Impact Study*, by Deloitte, published today at the European Health & Fitness Forum.

More: [http://lei.sr/H3y2U\\_H](http://lei.sr/H3y2U_H)

**01 October 2020****Sky enters the fitness market via deal with Fiit**

Digital fitness brand Fiit has secured a groundbreaking deal with satellite TV giant, Sky, to make its virtual workout platform available through the subscription-based Sky Q service. As a result of the deal, consumers will be able to stream Fiit content direct to their TVs, accessing a wide range of classes, including HIIT, combat, strength training and yoga.

More: [http://lei.sr/A9V9t\\_H](http://lei.sr/A9V9t_H)

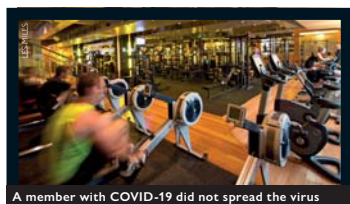


Tara Dillon: the sector needs urgent support

**02 October 2020****Public sector leisure forecasting 300,000 job losses in the next three months without government intervention**

Up to 48 per cent of public leisure facilities could close by the end of 2020, resulting in the loss of 300,000 jobs, according to the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) and ukactive, who are urging the government to provide the sector with immediate financial support.

More: [http://lei.sr/x8v9C\\_H](http://lei.sr/x8v9C_H)



A member with COVID-19 did not spread the virus

**02 October 2020****COVID-positive gym member did NOT spread the virus at Les Mills New Zealand club due to robust operating protocols**

The member attended three group exercise classes at Les Mills Takapuna in Auckland, New Zealand over two days and subsequently tested positive for COVID-19 – 231 test were done on staff and members and no transmission had occurred.

More: [http://lei.sr/S5q3X\\_H](http://lei.sr/S5q3X_H)



The industry in the US has lost US\$13.9bn of revenue

**05 October 2020****\$30bn recovery fund proposed for US fitness sector**

The battle to save the hard-hit US health and fitness industry continue, with US congressmen Mike Quigley and Brian Fitzpatrick, introducing a new *Health and Fitness Recovery Act of 2020* to help the fitness industry in the US shield itself from the 'devastating effects' of the pandemic.

Unlike areas of the world, where the industry is bouncing back, the US has struggled with a lack of government support.

More: [http://lei.sr/f4j8w\\_H](http://lei.sr/f4j8w_H)

**06 October 2020****Governments urged to classify gyms as 'essential services' to avoid lockdown closures, plus £500m sector aid package rumoured**

The UK and Scottish governments should classify gyms, health clubs, swimming pools and leisure centres as essential services to enable them to stay open during any further lockdowns.

The classification would put these facilities in the same bracket as things such as supermarkets, chemists, banks and doctors surgeries, says industry body, ukactive.

More: [http://lei.sr/G6Z6w\\_H](http://lei.sr/G6Z6w_H)

**07 October 2020****ukactive launches Active Ageing Consultation to improve sector offer for over-55s**

A new consultation will seek to explore how the activity can better support people over the age of 55 – and those with long-term health conditions – to lead active lifestyles.

The UK-wide consultation is being led by ukactive, in partnership with fitness equipment specialist EGYM.

ukactive is calling for submissions to help showcase the sector's current work which meet consumer needs, as well as to identify areas for improvement and where offerings can be scaled.

More: [http://lei.sr/h9A6Y\\_H](http://lei.sr/h9A6Y_H)

**12 October 2020**

## Vast majority of UK fitness industry stays open in tier 2, ukactive will fight Liverpool lockdown

Fitness leaders in the UK have welcomed news that everywhere but Liverpool is allowed to remain open under the government's new three-tier COVID-19 control system.

However, Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, has slammed the inclusion of gyms in tier 3, saying this move is unjustified.

Edwards said restrictions should be imposed based on "facts and data", with these showing that gyms are safe.

More: [http://lei.sr/c5Z8Q\\_H](http://lei.sr/c5Z8Q_H)

**13 October 2020**

## HCM challenges UK government's COVID-19 strategy

The UK government should encourage people to spend more time in regulated environments to curb the second wave of the pandemic, rather than shutting them down as part of local lockdowns, according to HCM editor, Liz Terry.

In an open letter to prime minister, Boris Johnson, Terry said regulated businesses with high levels of COVID-19 controls in place, such as gyms, are much safer than unregulated environments and so it was logical to keep them open.

More: [http://lei.sr/K6z8Y\\_H](http://lei.sr/K6z8Y_H)



The campaign will feature online and offline events

**13 October 2020**

## Technogym reveals new format for Let's Move For A Better World

Technogym's Let's Move For A Better World campaign is back this year, with a new format developed for gyms and health clubs operating against the backdrop of the pandemic.

The worldwide campaign, designed to promote wellness and fight sedentary lifestyles, will take place from 9 to 15 November and will feature both online and offline fitness events, challenges and activities for the first time.

Clubs can take part by creating their own events.

More: [http://lei.sr/A8f4k\\_H](http://lei.sr/A8f4k_H)

**14 October 2020**

## PureGym considers legal action as UK fitness industry fights back against forced closures in Liverpool

Gym and health club operators with sites in Liverpool, UK, have been left "astounded" at the government's "retrograde step" in ordering gyms to close in the city, as part of its controversial new three-tier COVID-19 control system.

The decision has been met with universal anger among gym operators – with the sector vowing to fight the ruling.

More: [http://lei.sr/b4R5c\\_H](http://lei.sr/b4R5c_H)



It's all going a bit Dad's Army. Boris Johnson contradicted himself within hours

**14 October 2020**

## Government's "Dad's Army" shambles could result in legal action over gym closures

The UK government is likely to face legal challenges from gym operators following the revelation that laws drafted to enforce the three-tier COVID-19 alert system will automatically force gyms and leisure centres to close in tier 3 areas. This contradicts the government's own guidance, given earlier this week, when officials – including Boris Johnson – said closures in tier 3 areas would be undertaken "in consultation with the industry".

More: [http://lei.sr/d3P4e\\_H](http://lei.sr/d3P4e_H)

**15 October 2020**

## Liverpool gyms take fight to the government as police officers issue fines to operators who don't comply with closure notices

"Dozens" of gyms in Liverpool, UK, have defied the government and stayed open for business, despite being ordered to shut their doors, with one operator visited by eight police officers and slapped with a £1,000 fine. They say the government has "got it wrong" by going against scientific evidence.

More: [http://lei.sr/b5c4z\\_H](http://lei.sr/b5c4z_H)



Andy Burnham has negotiated with the government for gyms and leisure centres to remain open

## 16 October 2020

### Gyms WILL stay open in Lancashire as it goes into tier 3 lockdown

A UK government U-turn – just announced – will see gyms and leisure centres staying open in Lancashire as the county goes into tier 3 lockdown. CEO of ukactive, Huw Edwards, has told *HCM*: "We welcome the decision for gyms and leisure facilities in Lancashire to remain open as the region enters tier 3 in the new system of restrictions."

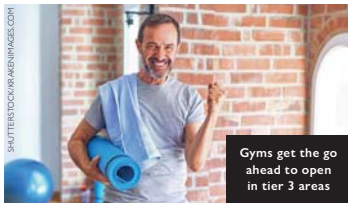
More: [http://lei.sr/7P6h5\\_H](http://lei.sr/7P6h5_H)

## 19 October 2020

### Globally, nearly 70 per cent of gym members have returned so far

Globally, gyms have, on average, seen nearly 70 per cent of their pre-lockdown members return to their facilities since re-opening their doors. The figure comes from a report by brand and consumer insight firm ClubIntel, titled *The Fitness Industry's Re-Awakening Post-COVID -19*.

More: [http://lei.sr/8r9z4\\_H](http://lei.sr/8r9z4_H)



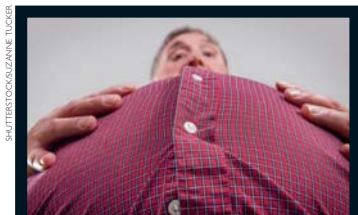
Gyms get the go ahead to open in tier 3 areas

## 19 October 2020

### Breaking: Gyms can stay open in tier 3 areas

In breaking news, *HCM* understands the UK government has removed gyms and fitness facilities from the baseline measures for future tier 3 closures. This means they will no longer be forced to automatically close in areas deemed "very high risk" (or tier 3) in the government's three-tier COVID-19 alert system.

More: [http://lei.sr/C4b3S\\_H](http://lei.sr/C4b3S_H)



Governments need to tackle inequality to beat COVID

## 20 October 2020

### Preventable lifestyle diseases are driving COVID-19 and we need a radical change of direction to deal with it, says *The Lancet*

Persistent and rising levels of lifestyle disease across the world have exacerbated the effects of COVID-19, according to Richard Horton, editor-in-chief of *The Lancet*, who has called on governments to change tack in fighting the pandemic.

More: [http://lei.sr/Y3z5r\\_H](http://lei.sr/Y3z5r_H)



Nick Whitcombe took the decision to stay open

## 21 October 2020

### Gyms in Liverpool win fight to reopen after tense standoff

Gyms in Liverpool, UK, have been given the go-ahead to reopen, following a dramatic week of negotiations, with Body Tech Fitness owner, Nick Whitcombe, leading the charge in taking fitness to stay open in protest at lockdown orders.

More: [http://lei.sr/Z7K9X\\_H](http://lei.sr/Z7K9X_H)

## 22 October 2020

### UK leisure centres can bid for £100m of government support

The government has pledged to invest £100m supporting public leisure centres this winter, as part of a £1bn additional support package for local councils. Culture secretary, Oliver Dowden said: "It's vital we keep ourselves fighting fit through the winter months and local authority leisure centres are crucial to this."

More: [http://lei.sr/k2H3e\\_H](http://lei.sr/k2H3e_H)

## 23 October 2020

### Cash boost for Northern Ireland in landmark VAT case

Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC) in Northern Ireland has won a landmark VAT case, which could see councils in the country receive a multi-million pound payout.

The case centred on whether VAT should be payable on charges paid by members of the public for access to gyms, sports, recreation and leisure facilities provided by councils.

A tribunal agreed that charges paid since 2006 were outside the scope of the VAT regime and VAT should be repaid.

More: [http://lei.sr/U7V9S\\_H](http://lei.sr/U7V9S_H)

## 26 October 2020

### Lockdown's full impact on participation revealed by Sport England's new Active Lives results

Gains made getting people more physically active over the last few years were all but cancelled out during the first seven weeks of lockdown, according to Sport England.

In publishing its latest Active Lives survey, the sports body said activity levels in England were on course to reach record highs before the pandemic hit, however, figures show that more than 3 million people were less active between mid-March and mid-May, compared to the same period in 2019.

More: [http://lei.sr/u9Q9Y\\_H](http://lei.sr/u9Q9Y_H)



The survey looked at 62 million gym visits in 14 European countries

## 28 October 2020

### Europe-wide SafeACTiVE study adds to growing evidence that regulated gyms are safe spaces

The latest study into the infection rates recorded at gyms has shown that the average infection rate at gyms and health clubs across Europe sits at just 0.78 per 100,000 visits.

An analysis of data from 62 million visits to European gyms in the past month – conducted by the King Juan Carlos University in Spain and Sheffield Hallam University – showed that there were just 487 positive cases of Covid-19.

More: [http://lei.sr/x6V8C\\_H](http://lei.sr/x6V8C_H)

## 29 October 2020

### Gyms won't automatically shut confirms UK government, in response to Parliamentary petition

The UK government has provided a lengthy response to a petition which demanded that gyms stay open in England, even if there's a new spike in COVID-19 cases.

The petition asked for confirmation that gyms won't automatically have to close as part of lockdown measures and for gyms not to be put in the same risk group as pubs.

More: [http://lei.sr/W3n4y\\_H](http://lei.sr/W3n4y_H)



Fit people are less likely to be hospitalised

## 31 October 2020

### HCM calls on Boris Johnson to keep gyms open during second lockdown

As England counts down to lockdown this Thursday, HCM editor, Liz Terry, has penned an open letter to the UK government, laying out the case for gyms to remain open and asking prime minister, Boris Johnson, to strike out and take a different path in prioritising fitness and having a focus on health. Terry said not doing so could see the nation and the industry under unbearable pressure during the winter of 2020.

More: [http://lei.sr/b2g2B\\_H](http://lei.sr/b2g2B_H)

## 31 October 2020

### Confusion as gyms asked to close for one month in England. Family workouts, personal training and dual-use may still be allowed

The UK government will ask gyms and leisure centres in England to close between 5 November and 2 December as part of an emergency lockdown, leaving the industry five days to prepare. After 5 November, people will be allowed to exercise for unlimited periods of time outside, either with people from their own household or on a one to one basis with one person from another household.

More: [http://lei.sr/w6c3w\\_H](http://lei.sr/w6c3w_H)





The campaign will inspire mothers and daughters

## 03 November 2020

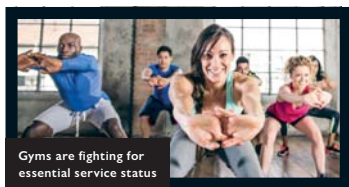
### New TimeTogether campaign to get teenage girls and mums physically active

Launched by Women in Sport, #TimeTogether looks to help daughters and mums discover new ways of spending time together by inspiring them to dance, walk, climb, swim and play sport together. Currently, only 42 per cent of teenage girls meet activity guidelines and just under a third are inactive. More: [http://lei.sr/d5f7c\\_H](http://lei.sr/d5f7c_H)

## 03 November 2020

### Physical activity fights back. Organisations challenge lockdown and suggest "Get fit to fight COVID" campaign as an alternative

The sport and physical activity sector is mounting a challenge to government plans to shut down the sector during "Lockdown 2", with ukactive calling for gyms and leisure centres to be classed as an "essential service". More: [http://lei.sr/P7P2G\\_H](http://lei.sr/P7P2G_H)

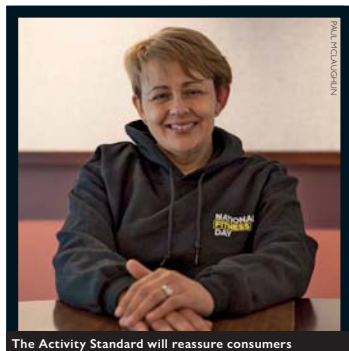


Gyms are fighting for essential service status

## 03 November 2020

### Move to classify fitness as essential – send a letter to your MP to keep gyms open

Industry body, ukactive, is encouraging all fitness operators in England to contact their local MP and to request them to join the campaign to keep gyms, health clubs and leisure centres open during the upcoming "Lockdown 2". MPs are set to vote on the lockdown measures tomorrow. More: [http://lei.sr/n8R5r\\_H](http://lei.sr/n8R5r_H)



The Activity Standard will reassure consumers

## 04 November 2020

### ukactive reveals details of new Active Standard, launching in 2021

ukactive, has revealed plans to create a sector standard for active leisure, to act as a product and service quality trademark. Speaking at the ukactive Summit today, chair, Tanni Grey-Thompson, said: "This standard will cover the full scale of our sector – from operators, suppliers and children's activity providers and will be developed with key partners, More: [http://lei.sr/B8V8R\\_H](http://lei.sr/B8V8R_H)

## 05 November 2020

### HCM investigation finds countries with lower obesity rates are the ones keeping gyms open

Investigations by HCM have revealed a correlation between countries with lower obesity rates and those where governments have kept gyms open during lockdowns.

HCM found European countries with an obesity rate of 22 per cent or above are more likely to be closing gyms, while countries with lower obesity rates – under 22 per cent – are more likely to keep them open.

More: [http://lei.sr/s6D8Y\\_H](http://lei.sr/s6D8Y_H)

## 06 November 2020

### PureGym 'burning £4m a week' during lockdown, will continue to lobby for gyms to be classed as essential service

PureGym CEO Humphrey Cobbold said he expects the figure to come down slightly, as easing measures are implemented.

"This will come down to about £2.5m to £3m a week with the mitigation activity and contributions from the government, such as the furlough scheme and a rates holiday – which, I have to say, we are very grateful for," he continued.

More: [http://lei.sr/r5A2d\\_H](http://lei.sr/r5A2d_H)



A total of 19.1 million people were inspired to be physically active

## 07 November 2020

### National Fitness Day 2020 breaks all records - 19.1 million people get active

Results, recorded using ComRes polling, showed that a total of 19.1 million people were inspired to be physically active on the day (23 September), smashing the campaign's 10 million target and making it the most successful NFD to date. The event formed part of the inaugural Great British Week of Sport.

More: [http://lei.sr/p9t4f\\_H](http://lei.sr/p9t4f_H)



Whitcombe's campaign to keep gyms open has resulted in making multiple media appearances

## 09 November 2020

### Rebel gym owner, Nick Whitcombe, appears on Panorama

Nick Whitcombe, the independent gym owner who became a fitness industry campaigner by refusing to shut his Liverpool gym as part of tier 3 restrictions, appeared on the BBC Panorama programme last night (9 November) as part of a Panorama special called Liverpool: Fighting COVID.

More: [http://lei.sr/n9t6U\\_H](http://lei.sr/n9t6U_H)

## 11 November 2020

### Parliament to debate gyms and COVID-19 on 23 November

The Parliament will hold a debate on COVID-19 restrictions in relation to gyms and sport on Monday 23 November.

The debate is the result of a successful Parliamentary petition which now has 604,000 signatures and counting. There are 12 petitions running, calling for gyms to stay open.

More: [http://lei.sr/8b9q3\\_H](http://lei.sr/8b9q3_H)



Plans include an expansion of a holiday activities programme

## 11 November 2020

### Government's £400m winter grant scheme to support vulnerable children and their families

The government has been forced to make a U-turn and to spend more than £400m to support vulnerable children and their families in England.

Following a high-profile campaign led by footballer Marcus Rashford, the government announced plans for a winter grant scheme, to be run by councils and local authorities. Plans include an expansion of a holiday food and activities programme.

More: [http://lei.sr/F2g3s\\_H](http://lei.sr/F2g3s_H)

## 12 November 2020

### Nuffield introduces rehab scheme for Covid sufferers – exercise placed at heart of programme

Nuffield Health is launching a 12-week rehab programme in Manchester to support COVID-19 patients in their recovery.

The programme blends together physical therapy, exercise and mental health support and will be run in partnership with Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, before being developed into a national programme. Patients will be referred onto the programme by the NHS Trust and triaged by Nuffield.

More: [http://lei.sr/z6Y2N\\_H](http://lei.sr/z6Y2N_H)

## 13 November 2020

### Closing gyms and leisure centres, means two-thirds of cancer prehab and rehab services have been out of action

The UK's physical activity sector is lobbying to have gyms and leisure centres classed as essential services in order for them to be able to operate during lockdowns. There is, however, plenty of evidence to suggest that the sector already is an essential service.

This is the view of Greg Whyte, chair of UKactive's, Scientific Advisory Board and professor of Sport and Exercise Science at Liverpool John Moores University, who says 66 per cent of cancer prehab and rehab is delivered at leisure centres.

More: [http://lei.sr/f2g2b\\_H](http://lei.sr/f2g2b_H)

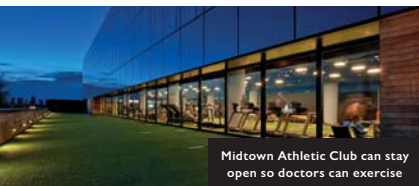
## 17 November 2020

### PureGym confirms closure of operations in Poland

Humphrey Cobbold, CEO of PureGym, has confirmed to HCM that the company's operations in Poland have been placed into bankruptcy following a strategic review. The 19 gyms will not reopen once lockdown in Poland is lifted.

PureGym initially supported the clubs, but a decision was taken that capital would be better deployed elsewhere.

More: [http://lei.sr/E6K7v\\_H](http://lei.sr/E6K7v_H)



Midtown Athletic Club can stay open so doctors can exercise

MIDTOWN ATHLETIC CLUB

## 17 November 2020

### Doctors fight to keep gyms open so they can exercise

The Chicago Medical Society, a body representing more than 17k physicians and licensed healthcare professionals has sent a letter to the city's Mayor urging him to keep health clubs and fitness centres open for additional time each day, to enable those working in the medical sector to have time to exercise.

More: [http://lei.sr/w2b7k\\_H](http://lei.sr/w2b7k_H)



Deaths could have been prevented, said Davies

## 18 November 2020

### Blame obesity for high level of COVID deaths, says former chief medical officer, Sally Davies

Thousands of COVID-related deaths could be prevented if successive governments had tackled the country's obesity crisis, according to Dame Sally Davies. The former chief medical officer said there is a "direct correlation".

More: [http://lei.sr/n8Z6W\\_H](http://lei.sr/n8Z6W_H)



The gym sector has won a Parliamentary debate

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE  
REPRESENTATION OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

## 19 November 2020

### Parliamentary debate will happen on Monday 23 November, as UK gyms are threatened with January lockdown

UK Parliament will debate COVID-19 restrictions on gyms and leisure centres on Monday 23 November. The debate comes as off-the-record briefings from government indicate that gyms may be hit with a third lockdown in January.

More: [http://lei.sr/c4d6q\\_H](http://lei.sr/c4d6q_H)



The SafeACTIVE study has been organised by EuropeActive

SAFEACTIVE STUDY  
COMPARISON

## 20 November 2020

### Independent assessment to measure COVID-19 risk in gyms across Europe

A new, Europe-wide initiative will chart COVID-19 infection in people who have visited gyms and leisure centres across the continent, the SafeACTIVE Study will assess the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases among people who have used fitness facilities and compare them to the number of visits.

More: [http://lei.sr/Q853k\\_H](http://lei.sr/Q853k_H)

## 22 November 2020

### Good news for gyms in analysis of NHS Track and Trace data

Gyms are near the bottom of the list in terms of places people have visited before a positive COVID-19 test, according to data from users of the government's Track and Trace app. This shows that gyms are one of the places least implicated in cases, according to a report by Sky News.

More: [http://lei.sr/S8b7p\\_H](http://lei.sr/S8b7p_H)

### 23 November 2020

**Parliamentary debate: it's 'unthinkable' gyms could be forced to close during future lockdowns, say MPs, but minister is non-committal**

Closing gyms and leisure facilities during any possible future lockdown would be "unthinkable", said Catherine McKinnell, MP for Newcastle upon Tyne North, in her role as chair of the petitions committee. McKinnell was speaking at today's Parliamentary debate on closures in gyms and leisure centres.

More: [http://lei.sr/c6j7V\\_H](http://lei.sr/c6j7V_H)

### 23 November 2020

**100k people to get free gym sessions as fitness industry strengthens its position as an essential service**

Up to 100k people will benefit from the free gym and physical activity sessions, thanks to a partnership between ukactive, NHS England and Improvement (NHSE/I), Sport England and the National Academy for Social Prescribing.

The scheme will see 500k hours of activity made available.

More: [http://lei.sr/U3f8p\\_H](http://lei.sr/U3f8p_H)



Gyms can stay open under all three tiers of the alert system

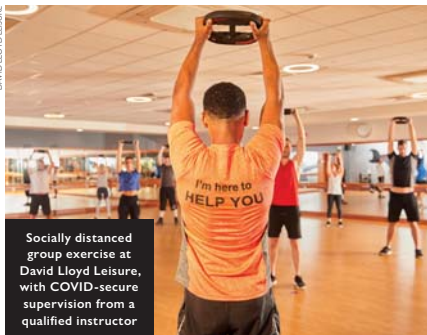
### 23 November 2020

**Gyms in England to reopen when lockdown ends – and remain open, even in Tier 3 areas. Group exercise singled out for restrictions**

Gyms and leisure centres will be able to open their doors when the lockdown measures in England come to an end on 2 December. Although group exercise will be hit, fitness and physical activity facilities will be able to remain open under all three tiers of the government's new COVID-19 alert system.

More: [http://lei.sr/w8h2K\\_H](http://lei.sr/w8h2K_H)

DAVID LLOYD LEISURE



Socially distanced group exercise at David Lloyd Leisure, with COVID-secure supervision from a qualified instructor

### 24 November 2020

**UK fitness sector facing fight to keep group exercise open in tier 3 areas**

To the relief of the sector, the UK government confirmed yesterday (23 November) that gyms, health clubs and leisure centres will be allowed to open under all three tiers of the new COVID-19 alert system from 2 December.

There was bad news for those depending on group exercise, however, as this will be banned in tier 3 areas, adding huge uncertainty for operators – especially boutiques.

Liz Terry, editor of HCM said: "The industry will fight this irrational decision – group exercise is vital and safe."

More: [http://lei.sr/S6u9M\\_H](http://lei.sr/S6u9M_H)

### 26 November 2020

**The fitness industry can drive the UK's economic recovery from the pandemic, says Huw Edwards**

This year's UK government Spending Review, announced in Parliament by chancellor Rishi Sunak on 25 November, offers the physical activity sector opportunities to "transform communities". Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, said "Our sector can support the transformation of communities' physical, social and economic health."

More: [http://lei.sr/W6P6t\\_H](http://lei.sr/W6P6t_H)

### 30 November 2020

**Chris Whitty: physical activity must play key role in nation's recovery**

Professor Chris Whitty, the chief medical officer for England, has said exercise and physical activity should play a key role in the UK's recovery from the pandemic – as well as the way the nation shapes its future health care plans.

"There is no point in life where doing more exercise does not improve health in multiple ways," said Whitty.

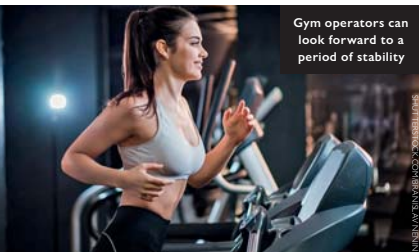
More: [http://lei.sr/U8w6h\\_H](http://lei.sr/U8w6h_H)

**01 December 2020****COVID-19 impact report: gyms 'prioritised' in all three tiers due to fear of falling physical activity levels**

The UK government has published its impact report for the three-tier COVID-19 alert system, which will be introduced in England tomorrow, when the one-month lockdown ends.

Called *Analysis of the health, economic and social effects of COVID-19 and the approach to tiering*, the 48-page reveals that the fear that physical activity levels would fall further during the tiered approach has featured heavily in the government's thinking behind excluding gyms and physical activity facilities from any baseline measures of the three tiers.

More: [http://lei.sr/M2n3R\\_H](http://lei.sr/M2n3R_H)



Gym operators can look forward to a period of stability

**02 December 2020****Members flock to gyms at midnight as the industry reopens**

Gyms leisure centres and fitness studios in England are back in business today as the one-month lockdown ends.

Many opened their doors at 00.01 this morning, with thousands of exercisers across the country rushing back to the gym floor as soon as they were allowed.

Operators not relying on group exercise can look forward to a certain amount of stability for the next few weeks, as fitness and physical activity facilities are able to remain open under all three tiers of the government's new COVID-19 alert system.

More: [http://lei.sr/B3Q8c\\_H](http://lei.sr/B3Q8c_H)

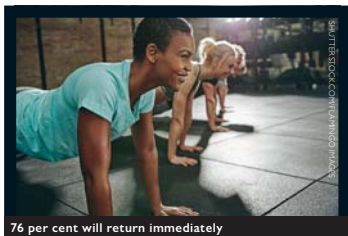
**03 December 2020****PureGym enters Saudi market through franchise deal with Ektimal**

PureGym will take its budget fitness concept to Saudi Arabia, after securing a franchise partnership with Ektimal – a company specialising in fitness investments in the country.

PureGym KSA will look to make fitness accessible to a large, currently unserved proportion of the population.

Gym membership in Saudi Arabia generally requires a three-, six- or 12-month commitment – which PureGym looks to change with the option to pay membership fees monthly.

More: [http://lei.sr/J8r2C\\_H](http://lei.sr/J8r2C_H)



76 per cent will return immediately

**04 December 2020****Gym members more confident to return after second lockdown**

A study by Leisure-net suggests consumers have more confidence in returning to fitness facilities than they had following the first lockdown, with well over three quarters (76.34 per cent) saying they are confident to return on opening.

More: [http://lei.sr/U9W9v\\_H](http://lei.sr/U9W9v_H)

**07 December 2020****Promoting physical activity to be a key priority in EU's five-year strategy**

The EU Work Plan for Sport (2021-2024), published this month, lists three priorities for the EU's work, with one being "promotion of participation in health-enhancing physical activity". To achieve this, the plan calls for cross-sectoral cooperation with relevant institutions.

More: [http://lei.sr/2v3x7\\_H](http://lei.sr/2v3x7_H)



Increasing exercise levels would transform the global economy, according to the WHO

**08 December 2020****WHO: increasing exercise levels globally would prevent 5 million deaths and save US\$68bn each year**

WHO statistics show that one in four adults, and four out of five adolescents, do not get enough physical activity. The organisation estimates that physical inactivity costs US\$54bn pa in direct health care and US\$14bn in lost productivity.

More: [http://lei.sr/a3Y2n\\_H](http://lei.sr/a3Y2n_H)



The company has ambitious expansion plans

## 09 December 2020

### Saudi Arabia's Fitness Time plans 70 new openings in next five years, with Justin Musgrove at the helm

Fitness Time is embarking on an expansion drive which will see it open at least 70 new sites over the next five years. The group currently has 138 active clubs and 2,600 employees across its portfolio in Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

More: [http://lei.sr/d8T4k\\_H](http://lei.sr/d8T4k_H)

## 09 December 2020

### Technogym opens retail store in Los Angeles

Technogym has opened the latest of its consumer-facing retail store concepts in Los Angeles, US.

The two-floor store, covering 3,500sq ft, is located in the heart of the West Hollywood Design District and will showcase the full range of Technogym's equipment.

More: [http://lei.sr/M6a8Q\\_H](http://lei.sr/M6a8Q_H)



Socially distanced group exercise at DLL. According to EMD UK figures, 78 per cent of group exercise participants are female

## 09 December 2020

### Fitness industry fights government's 'baffling' and discriminatory group exercise decision

The fitness sector, led by ukactive, is mounting a challenge to overturn the government's decision to ban group exercise in tier 3 areas in England, calling the ruling "baffling" and one which "defies belief".

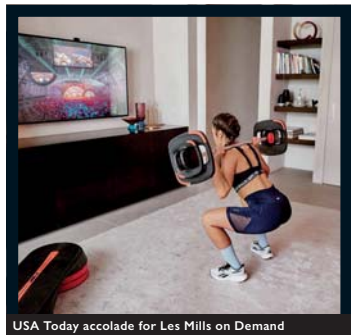
More: [http://lei.sr/X6p8K\\_H](http://lei.sr/X6p8K_H)

## 09 December 2020

### House of Lords committee to scrutinise UK government's record on increasing participation in physical activity

The House of Lords' National Plan for Sport and Recreation committee has invited sporting organisations and members of the public to provide their views on tackling barriers which prevent people from taking part in physical activity, as part of an inquiry into the government's performance in relation to participation.

More: [http://lei.sr/8e5k4\\_H](http://lei.sr/8e5k4_H)



USA Today accolade for Les Mills on Demand

## 10 December 2020

### Les Mills On Demand wins USA Today's 'Best at-home Workout' award for 2020

Les Mills On Demand has been named winner of the "Best At-home Workout" award for 2020 by USA Today, the internationally distributed daily newspaper.

The at-home fitness sector was one of the categories featured in the newspaper's annual "10Best" awards.

Initial nominees were chosen by a panel of experts and 10Best editors. The winners were determined by reader vote.

More: [http://lei.sr/z6P7X\\_H](http://lei.sr/z6P7X_H)

## 15 December 2020

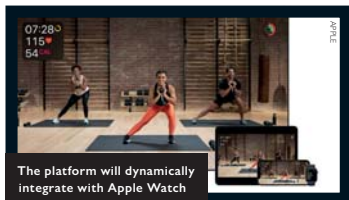
### Singapore Fitness Alliance to launch in 2021

The city-state of Singapore will have an official fitness industry association from 2021 after a group of industry professionals teamed up to form the Singapore Fitness Alliance (SFA).

Tasked with promoting the sector and supporting those working within it, SFA will look to bring the industry together, highlight the benefits of exercise in improving public health and "create value for all". Sean Tan, director of the True Group, has been named president for the first two year period.

More: [http://lei.sr/D7k4t\\_H](http://lei.sr/D7k4t_H)



**15 December 2020****Apple launches its 'game changer' Fitness+ platform – includes 200 on-demand workouts**

Called Apple Fitness+, the new service will deliver studio-style workouts to iPhone, iPad, and Apple TV products, while incorporating workout metrics from Apple Watch.

Apple says by dynamically integrating metrics from Apple Watches, Fitness+ will offer a more immersive experience.

More: [http://lei.sr/G5j4U\\_H](http://lei.sr/G5j4U_H)

**15 December 2020****ukactive keeps the heat on government over group exercise ban, as more regions enter Tier 3**

CEO Huw Edwards said the sector understood the difficult decisions faced by the government as COVID-19 rates increase, but is questioning the rationale for the ban on indoor group exercise. "We want the ban on group exercise to be reviewed and changed," Edwards said.

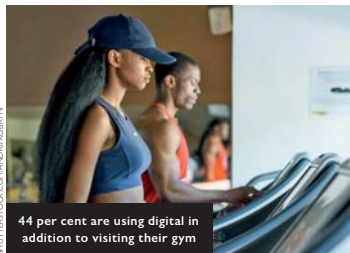
More: [http://lei.sr/Z4a3T\\_H](http://lei.sr/Z4a3T_H)

**16 December 2020****FIBO 2021 moves to June**

FIBO has announced its 2021 show will be postponed due to increasing concerns in Germany about the scale of COVID-19 infections, with new dates of 24 - 27 June 2021 replacing the current slot from 8 - 11 April 2021.

The organisers have said the postponed date 'improves planning certainty for exhibitors and visitors.'

More: [http://lei.sr/x3p6N\\_H](http://lei.sr/x3p6N_H)

**16 December 2020****A third of US health club members still can't return to the gym**

The figure comes from a recurring study of 2,000 US club members, conducted by research specialist ClubIntel.

The US Member Journey in the Era of COVID-19, shows that a third (34 per cent) of members have returned, a third intend to when they can and 20 per cent have stopped exercising

More: [http://lei.sr/t6y5z\\_H](http://lei.sr/t6y5z_H)

**19 December 2020****Gyms close in south-east England for an initial ten days as new 'tier 4' is created**

Gyms and leisure facilities in south-east England are to close from midnight tonight as part of new restrictions announced during an emergency press this evening by prime minister, Boris Johnson. Facilities in the rest of the UK remain open.

More: [http://lei.sr/Q7u9d\\_H](http://lei.sr/Q7u9d_H)

**21 December 2020****ukactive: gyms and leisure centres must be allowed to operate in tier 4**

ukactive CEO, Huw Edwards, said the physical activity sector is already working with government on getting tier 4 restrictions lifted for the sector "The start of each year is a crucial period where demand is at its highest as people look to improve their health and wellbeing," he said.

More: [http://lei.sr/X6A5x\\_H](http://lei.sr/X6A5x_H)



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Drive growth



# It's streaming **YOUR WAY**



**Technogym introduced live and on-demand functionality to Mywellness in July. Here we find out more about operators who have adopted this solution**

**M**ywellness Live and On-Demand was launched post the first national lockdown to offer all health and fitness operators the flexibility to add value to existing customers and connect with their community, anywhere, anytime.

The aim is to provide unparalleled training experiences and create a sustainable pathway for customers to engage, creating a key benefit.

#### Live classes

Engage your community by connecting your customers and instructors through live classes and create a social environment before and after classes, to build loyalty and community. Deliver consistent class experiences in the facility and on the go.

#### On-demand classes

Provide your community with variety and flexibility: they can perform their favourite classes, with the instructors they already know, anywhere.

It's seamless: just drag and drop the videos created by your instructors and make them available in the Mywellness app.

#### Technogym Training Library

Increase the training options available to your customers: in addition to your own classes, you have a library of ready-to-use, high-quality virtual classes at your fingertips.

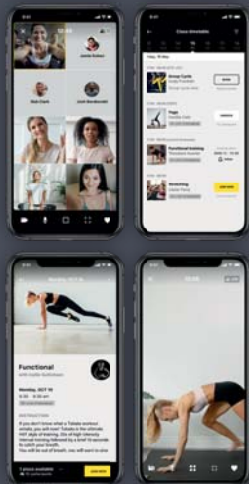
Created by Technogym and their partners, there's content for the entire family, from pilates to yoga, cardio to dance-based workouts and so much more.

#### Monetise your class experiences

Introduce new membership options, add value to existing ones and reach new prospects and communities directly from the Mywellness app.

Use the app to sell the experiences that can be enjoyed at your facility and on the go with live and on-demand streaming.  
<https://www.technogym.com/hcm2>

COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK



### Top tips for adopting live and on-demand

#### Target

Think about your target markets and audience profile to ensure all content and communication matches

#### Variety

Provide lots of choice and offering to keep the interest high and attraction ongoing

#### Talent

Having the right instructors for the content and audience

#### Adaptability

Be flexible with your timetable week to week, especially in the ever-changing current climate

## EMBRACING STREAMING

**Operators in a wide range of fields have chosen to lead from the front with Technogym's new live and on-demand streaming options**

### Hyndburn Leisure

#### ADOPTING A HYBRID MODEL

Hyndburn Leisure has introduced a hybrid model with live and on-demand for members and a two-tier payment structured to entice them and engage them with the new virtual classes.

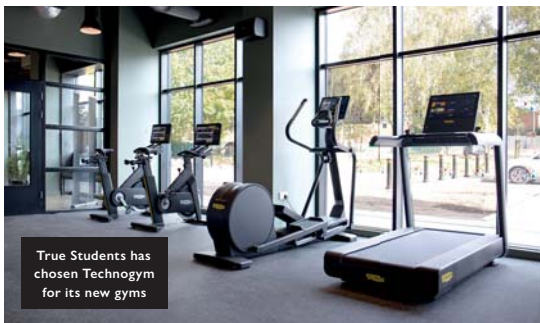
"This new hybrid model means we can now offer something to everyone," explains Linda Horsfield, head of health and wellbeing.

"With over 100 on-demand, ready-made Technogym workouts, plus 10 live classes per week on offer, members have plenty of choice.

"Mywellness enables us to group members, so we've been able to offer personalised live and on-demand fitness content and health advice.

"We decided to offer a two-tiered approach to the digital membership: level one, (silver), is free and includes a sample of what Mywellness offers. The second tier – diamond – is £5.99 a month, with unlimited access to live and on-demand classes and includes a wider variety and more advanced challenges."

"This tiered approach drives engagement, by giving members the option to access more features and a variety of digital content to support their fitness goals, when they upgrade," said Horsfield.



True Students has chosen Technogym for its new gyms

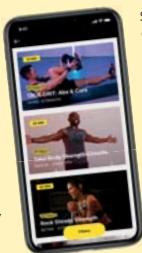
*Mywellness Live and On-Demand helps us deliver against our wellness mission and provides a unique selling point*

### True Students

#### ENHANCING STUDENTS WELLNESS

The innovative and multi award-winning student accommodation enhances the offering and creates a USP with live and on-demand.

"Since launching live and on-demand in September 2020, the virtual classes and on-demand features have truly been fantastic," says Holly Rodgers, general manager of True Students. "They allow our students to still take time out of the day to participate in fitness classes. The fact that BOX and HIIT are usually group classes – we were able to connect our students so they can still work-out together virtually.



Streaming classes has allowed us to create that aspect of togetherness.

"Having Mywellness Live and On-Demand helps us deliver against our wellness mission and provides a unique selling point," she said.

"The guests were certainly not expecting such an amazing live and on-demand service. The fact we offered a 100+ on-demand class, with the flexibility of live classes at different times has been an asset in relation to the guest experience – having it at the tip of their

fingers and all in one place is such a win.

"We will continue to keep live and on-demand evolving and fresh, as it has been a huge success and we can only move forward with the great uplift we've had."

### CV Life

#### ENGAGING MEMBERS AND ATTRACTING NEW AUDIENCES

CV Life has launched live and on-demand across its four locations in response to changing market conditions and to engage a wider audience.

"Launching live and on-demand felt like the natural step for short term adaptation, to continue the engagement plans with our members, as well long-term to enhance our offering," comments Chris Panter, senior manager health and fitness, at CV Life.

"Mywellness has always played a central role in our contact with members, given the current global climate - this has been more important than ever. Earlier this year, due to the lockdown, we immediately

adopted this to offer personalised contact and programmes remotely, reaching over 3,000 of our membership base."

"Technogym Live and On-Demand is incredible – it's full of excellent ready-made content, flexible to add our own classes and very quick to deploy.

"Speed and flexibility are important as we embark on meeting the needs and engaging with our members."

"Feedback from users has been very positive with a strong uptake of the classes and offering. It is a great way to continue the interaction with our instructors and our facilities."





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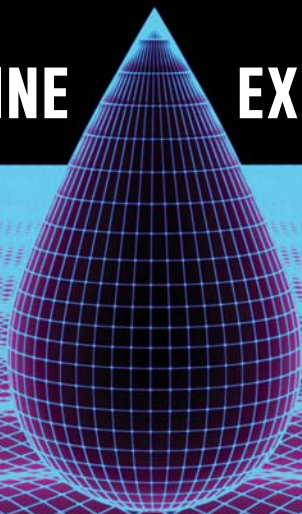


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# HCM

## 2020 vision

In this special edition of *HCM*, we wanted to say a huge thank you to our industry partners who have stood firmly by our side this year, enabling us to continue our work of lobbying on behalf of the sector and keeping everyone connected. Our 2020 Vision report is their contribution to this review of 2020

### Chapters

#### p62 / **The suppliers**

Our creative, innovative suppliers constantly respond to customer needs with R&D and new launches. They share their thoughts on how the industry can thrive in 2021

#### p82 / **The PRs**

The industry is fortunate to have a number of dedicated, passionate and skillful comms, marketing and PR agencies and we celebrate their contribution in this chapter

#### p66 / **The events**

Our industry event organisers have been some of the hardest hit businesses in the sector. We hear how they've deployed digital to continue to make a contribution and their plans to return to live events as soon as circumstances allow

#### p88 / **The training companies**

As a people-centric industry, training companies have been at the heart of retooling the workforce for the challenges ahead. They explain their vision for 2021 and beyond

### Showcases

#### p56 / **It's streaming – your way**

Technogym has ramped up its live and on-demand services this year. We hear how the new streaming services are being used by operators to build customer engagement

#### p90 / **Tried and tested**

Physical Company is launching a raft of new products in 2021, following consultation with clients, we get more details about the design process and what's in store for the new year

#### p92 / **Build strong from the start**

Virtuagym is enabling operators large and boutique around the world to build successful hybrid offerings. This case study of Thebodycontent in Dublin gives insights

#### p94 / **Game changer**

Egym is working with operators of gyms and physiotherapy businesses, enabling them to respond to an increasing demand for wellbeing services. We find out more about how it works

## Alliance Leisure

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Key contact

**John Leaver**

Head of marketing

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**We're really proud that** working with our amazing clients and supply chain we managed to keep all our developments progressing during this challenging year and actually start three new-build leisure centres during the first lockdown. Our TA6 team also supported many operators with a range of free resources.

**Whilst it's been a harsh 'reset'** for the industry, as a crucial cog in the wheel of delivering a healthier nation, our people, services and facilities have never been more important. We're confident in our recovery, and the benefits of physical activity will be widely acknowledged and valued.

**All of our clients have gone the extra mile** with us to ensure we

keep delivering projects successfully despite the challenges caused by the pandemic. We value our clients' continuing belief that the improvement of physical infrastructure for the benefit of communities has remained more important than ever.

**As a company** Alliance Leisure is here to support operators to both develop facilities and provide ongoing operational support through our team at TA6. The UK Leisure Framework continues to provide a compliant, fast, robust delivery route for development projects where 'on time, on budget' is crucial in the current climate.



ALLIANCE LEISURE

“

**We managed to start three new-build leisure centres during the first lockdown**

## The visionary, positive team at Repose-Space Kensington not only rose to the challenge, but also surpassed it

**2020 has been challenging** for everyone, but launching a brand new £3m clinic at the time of lockdown could have been too big a task for most. However, the visionary, positive team at Repose-Space Kensington not only rose to the challenge, they also surpassed it.

**A unique facility delivering** exceptional mental, physical and spiritual wellness, Repose-Space offers many unique selling points,

including anti-gravity yoga, EMS and an exceptional technology department.

**It's the first facility** in the UK to install our single Vaultz cryo chamber, which sits at the centre of the wellness offering.

**Our hands-free, whole body** cryotherapy treatment solutions offer a safe treatment in crazy times. Distance can be assured, gloves protect against smear infection, masks

**artofcryo.com**

+49 (0)2935 9652 0

<https://artofcryo.com>

Key contact

**Rainer Bolsinger**

CSO & CMO

[r.bolsinger@artofcryo.com](mailto:r.bolsinger@artofcryo.com)

protect against droplet infection and the regulated air flow condenses all particles in evaporators. Treatments also boost your immune system.

**Now, more than ever,** bio-secure, evidence-based, replicable results – including a consistent offer to customers, independent of the location visited – are the key to building trust in effective treatments and for the creation of a successful business model. artofcryo.com offers not only reliable cryo-chambers, but treatment solutions which support a wide range of other treatments.



ART OF CRYO

## Core Health & Fitness

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EMEA marketing manager  
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## We're excited to have added Throwdown to our portfolio of brands

**BodyWorld Plymouth, the largest gym in the south-west, is the first to showcase all five Core Health & Fitness brands, including Star Trac FreeRunners, StairMaster 10Gs, Schwinn AC power bikes, Throwdown rigs, dumbbells and a variety of Nautilus pieces of strength equipment.**

**They had opened their doors for less than three weeks before having to close for lockdown 2.0!** They did a really good job of keeping their members and community engaged and active during that time by providing workouts and virtual challenges.

**Our new StairMaster 10G** marks a revolutionary shift in stair-climbing. The innovative design features an OverDrive training mode that stimulates carrying or pushing a load upstairs for the most

intense climbing workout. Plus, our focused features such as the widest and deepest step in the industry.

**One of the key fitness trends** over the last few years has been functional fitness, so we're excited to have added Throwdown to our portfolio of brands. Throwdown rigs and racks provide clubs with a modular, customisable solution for individual and group functional training.

**It's a really tough time** for our industry but we will get through it and come out stronger on the other side. Keep active and continue supporting your customers and local communities. We are all about sharing our passion for fitness. We hope to see you in 2021!



CORE HEALTH & FITNESS



CORE HEALTH & FITNESS

## Crown Sports Lockers

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Key contact

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Director  
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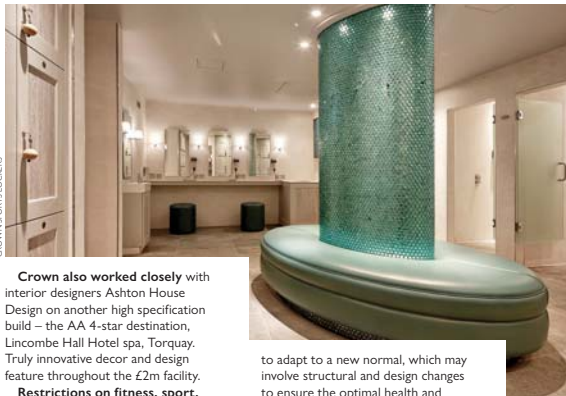
**We've been busy this year** launching our 100 per cent waterproof healthcare lockers and ancillary furniture, which are available in tailored solutions, including options for antiviral and antibacterial surfaces.

**The range has been designed** for wet changing areas in gyms and health clubs, where easy-clean surfaces allow staff to reduce the time devoted to maintenance programmes.

**Carden Park golf, fitness and leisure estate** has further developed its expansive provision, by opening a multi-million pound standalone spa on its 1,000-acre estate.

**Crown had already supplied** and installed health club changing areas on the site and returned to complete a challenging, though highly satisfying, project in a bespoke fit-out that matches the high-end construction throughout the spa.

## Our new solutions include options for antiviral and antibacterial surfaces



CROWN SPORTS LOCKERS

**Crown also worked closely** with interior designers Ashton House Design on another high specification build – the AA 4-star destination, Lincombe Hall Hotel spa, Torquay. Truly innovative decor and design feature throughout the £2m facility.

**Restrictions on fitness, sport, spa and hospitality** have hit the sector hard, but 2021 promises major opportunities and uplift for operators as government measures ease.

**While some operations will** resume where they left off, others are having

to adapt to a new normal, which may involve structural and design changes to ensure the optimal health and wellbeing of members and guests.

**As a made in Britain manufacturer and installer**, Crown looks forward to working closely with owners, operators, architects and interior designers to ease this transition.



## We launched Immunity Boost, a scientifically-based programme that enhances the body's ability to fight infections

### EGYM UK

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The pandemic is driving a new audience of 'health seekers' to our facilities, focused on physical activity for health rather than aesthetics. We're developing digital and in-club solutions that support operators, helping to ensure they're able to meet this demand.

**As part of 'Immunity Plus'** – our COVID-19 support package for operators – we launched Immunity Boost, a scientifically-based, pre-programmed strength training programme, available via our Smart Strength and Cardio Series, that enhances the body's ability to fight infections, including COVID-19.

**Nine weeks after the first lockdown**, Club Kingswood, an independent club in Essex, reported an 85 per cent member bounceback and accredited this success partly to EGYM.

**Club Kingswood installed the EGYM Smart Strength Series in 2019**, recognising that user-friendly, highly personalised, progressive strength training provision would play an important role in driving positive health outcomes and attracting a wide demographic who wanted to live a longer, more mobile and fulfilling life.

**When lockdown restrictions were lifted in July**, health-focused members were keen to return to their trusted training environment, understanding the positive impact on health and wellbeing.

**It's been an incredibly tough year** and as we look forward to 2021, we must continue to support each other and unite together under a common goal to elevate the perception of our sector from a 'nice to have' to an 'essential' contributor to the nation's future health.

## We must stay positive. While 2020 has been stressful, the work instructors do is so valuable in keeping people active

**EMD UK has been hard at work** during the pandemic supporting group exercise instructors. We've produced our Return to Play guidelines, which were signed off by DCMS as the sector guidance, we've created an online music licence to allow virtual delivery of classes and reduced the cost of insurance for all instructors to under £50 a year.

**Group exercise instructors have** become technical experts and carried on delivering online classes to their participants. Most instructors are self-employed, have to learn new skills very quickly, and have done a fantastic job, with no big corporate budgets behind them.

**They faced IT issues**, equipment scale-ups and legal issues over music, and despite all these hurdles, thousands continue to deliver fantastic, engaging classes, to their usual class members and – more importantly – to new clients, due to virtual platforms not being geographically restricted.

**We, as the whole sector of sport and activity**, need to ensure (UK) Parliament understands the crucial role we play.

**While keeping people active** may not generate substantial income for the Exchequer in the way that retail sales do, physical activity saves billions for the NHS.

**We must stay positive.** Whilst 2020 has been stressful, the work instructors do is so valuable in keeping people active. Pre-lockdown, nearly five million people a week were doing group exercise classes, making it the second most popular activity.

### EMD UK

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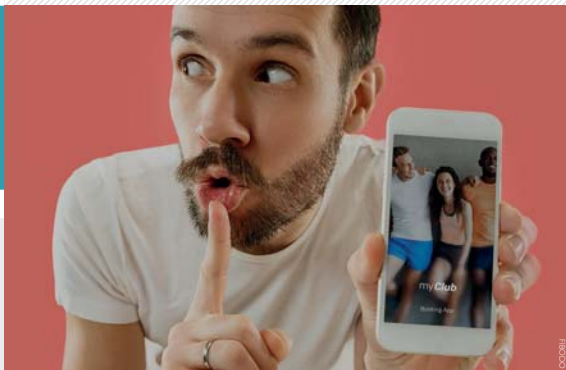
## integrations with Myzone and Apple allow clients to record physical outputs, at home or in the gym

### Fibodo

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Key contact

**David Hendry**  
CMO



**There's never been** a better time to work in fitness. Due to the UK's pent-up demand for health improvements across the nation, fitness centres and coaches are very well placed to deliver this for their communities.

**During the lockdowns**, our subscribers developed models based on live streaming, on-demand and outdoor one-to-one/group exercise.

**This has offered them** more opportunities to engage with their clients and can future-proof their cashflow. Should there be further disruption in future, trainers will be better prepared.

**Fibodo's recent Integrations with Myzone and Apple** allow clients to record their physical outputs during sessions, at home or in the gym. They can choose to compare their performance with others to add some competition, or use it to

help them work towards their goals by sharing data with their coaches to deliver better performance, driven by data.

**To meet the demand** for digital learning and training, we've launched Learn2Earn to help people kick-start and grow their careers. Learn2Earn is a training marketplace for accredited premium training, where learners can start up and level up their fitness skills.

**We worked with Champneys** to digitalise gym-member bookings at its six UK gyms, ready for reopening after lockdown one.

**They were taking more** than 30k bookings a month and we implemented COVID-safe web, mobile and bespoke app booking journeys, digitally supporting track and trace capabilities.

**Champneys cleaned its CRM** data, re-engaged lapsed members and

reset tier level benefits. Members had full visibility of schedules and enjoyed a safe welcome back to training with new web and apps. The company is now in a better position to delight its customers than it was prior to COVID.

**Coaches, gyms and studios** are planning to do things differently in 2021, and we support that – from coaches adding on-demand content production, to gyms integrating new technologies to drive customer experience. It's time to make these changes – UK consumers expect it.

**We're integrating with** a range of facility management software – it's important to know that platforms can run beside each other for specific use cases and we've introduced a free switching service to help operators update their digital capabilities.

## “ When COVID-19 closed clubs, GoodLife Fitness launched Goodlifeathome to deliver the brand into thousands of homes

### Funxion

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Key contact

**Joyce Power**  
Marketing lead

**We deliver 360° digital** fitness experiences, taking clubs out of the four walls of the gym and into the homes of members

**Isolation does not need** to be isolating. Stay strong and build resilience. Digitisation creates opportunities to extend brand influence into daily lives and through the introduction of digital solutions, you can maintain your community and generate revenue.

**When COVID-19 closed** clubs, GoodLife Fitness Canada launched Goodlifeathome. This delivered the brand into thousands of homes, providing free access to a one-stop resource

for physical and mental health. The provision included digital workouts and training plans created by us.

**This digital provision integrates** with the in-club experience, with visuals and ethos standardised throughout.

**Through the creation of** its hybrid model, Goodlife Fitness has built resilience and market share.

**Virtual and functional players** enable clubs to stream and schedule virtual classes and workouts anytime, providing an interactive workout experience on the gym floor, the functional area or directly to members at home, via the same content in-app.



## The digital journey is never over, it keeps evolving. The key is to get started and keep putting one foot in front of the other



Digitalisation can sound daunting but it doesn't need to be. Small integrations can make a big difference.

The digital journey is never over, it keeps evolving. The key is to get started and keep putting one foot in front of the other. We can help with that.

**Our business intelligence dashboard** gives operators a visual snapshot of their business and operational performance, in real-time.

**Member activity both in and out of the facility** – class attendance, payments, PT and on-demand interactions are all fed into the digital solution and presented back in an easy to interpret format.

**Third Space began its digital journey** with Fisikal in 2018. In addition to class content and bookings, the app also enables scheduling and payment of

personal training sessions, with access to exercise demonstrations and workouts.

**In March 2020, Third Space launched** a branded app that's recorded 65,000 on-demand views, with a further 10k views of live streamed classes.

**The solution has maintained** a vital connection to members through periods of social isolation, enabling a continuation of service. It's also engaging 'frozen' members, until they're ready to return to the club.

**Nobody knows when this pandemic** will end but one thing's for sure, consumer-driven demand for digital fitness solutions is here to stay.

### Fisikal

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## The interactivity of the iFit workout series makes members eager to return

**COVID-19 has made us realise** the importance of being connected with members – inside and outside the facility.

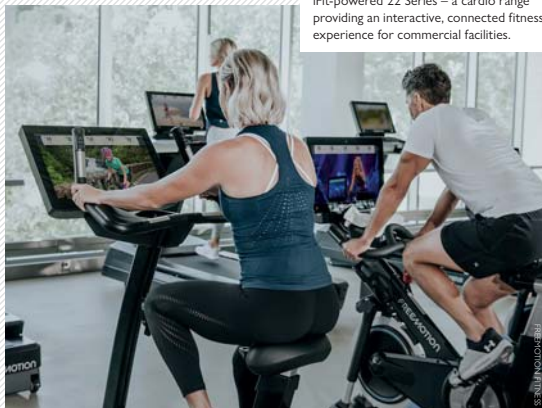
**Exercisers have turned to** on-demand fitness more than ever and to meet this need, we've launched the iFit-powered 22 Series – a cardio range providing an interactive, connected fitness experience for commercial facilities.

**Combining product design with** on-demand, digital content, the 22 Series has been designed to deliver a results-driven, immersive and personalised virtual training experience.

**Just as the "Netflix effect"** makes viewers hungry for more episodes, the interactivity of the iFit workout series makes members eager to return, by providing progressive workout experiences, enabling them to build lasting fitness habits and form strong connections with the facility.

**We take pride in building long-term relationships** with customers. A great example of this is the partnership between Freemotion and Impulso Fitness in Villa Nueva, Guatemala – a low-cost, high-quality chain offering high-end equipment and infrastructure at an affordable price.

**Freemotion has helped the operator** create a modern, best-in-town gym with leading-edge, technology-driven equipment. We're looking forward to helping Impulso Fitness deliver its ambitious three-year growth plan.



## Hussle was delighted to partner with Revolut – the challenger bank – to provide ‘fitness as a benefit’ to its 1.9m customers

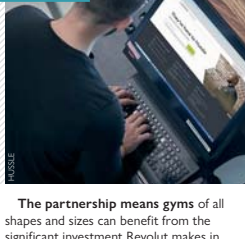
2020 has been challenging for the sector, but as a result, the social mandate for health and fitness has never been more powerful.

This presents a huge opportunity for 2021, provided we can work together and support new types of customer needs. Doing things differently is how we will be successful.

With the launch of the Membership Acquisition Programme (MAP), Hussle has become a complete fitness enabler, providing a pathway for targeted customers to join gyms as members directly.

The service runs in parallel to the existing national marketing we provide, and creates an effective new joiner channel for gyms.

Hussle was delighted to recently partner with Revolut – the challenger bank – to provide ‘fitness as a benefit’ to its 1.9m customers. Revolut needed a partner that could provide a gateway to thousands of fitness venues across the UK and selected Hussle to enable this.



The partnership means gyms of all shapes and sizes can benefit from the significant investment Revolut makes in its customers. Revolut said of the deal: “Customers value health and fitness more than ever and we have partnered with Hussle to reach as many of our customers as possible across the UK.”

Lockdown has afforded the opportunity to reflect on our service and ensure we’re providing gym partners with a trusted partnership. We’ve taken steps to ensure that working with us in the future provides gyms with a cost-free marketing channel that works proactively to grow the number of new joiners.

### Hussle

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#### Key contact

**Jamie Owens**  
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## Hutchison Technologies provided Virgin Active with the equipment required to produce high-quality content, without the need for a professional film crew



### Hutchison Technologies

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#### Key contact

**Jonny Curley**  
Director of sales  
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Using the disruption caused by the coronavirus to innovate, iterate and keep inching forward, Hutchison Technologies has developed new portable audio, access control and live streaming solutions in 2020.

We’ve also worked closely with our customers to understand their unique circumstances and develop creative solutions.

We’ve supported Virgin Active to respond to social distancing restrictions, with high quality on-demand and live streaming content.

Hutchison Technologies provided Virgin Active with the equipment required to produce high-quality content, without the need for a professional film crew.

We installed networked pan/tilt/zoom cameras that can change position and focal points at the touch of a button.

Film lights ensure images are crisp, while our head mics and music interface enable high-quality audio. Content is mixed live during filming sessions and has a high production value.

We’re also developing an app that manages intervals during HIIT workouts, with the aim of improving participant experience. It integrates with our custom LED lighting solutions to control lighting and create an immersive and intuitive experience. It can be used across multiple devices simultaneously and tracks music for licensing purposes.

We understand how challenging things are just now, and we want to help operators feel comfortable in the digital space. Hutchison Technologies is focused on building personal relationships with operators, and helping them to deliver for their customers through our best-in-class technology solutions.



## Gympass

gympass.com/uk

Key contact

**Eamon Lloyd**

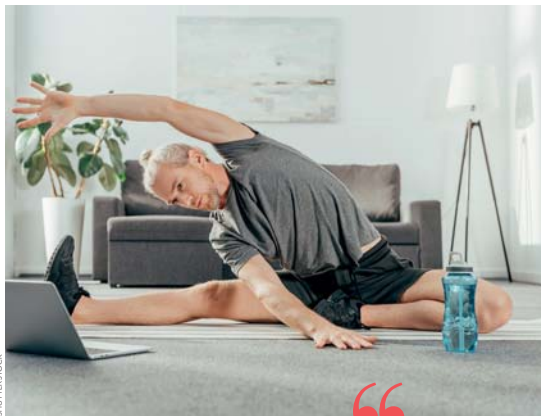
Senior director

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Over this past year we've seen some fantastic work from our clients, but I'd really like to praise the Bannatyne Health Group. They've been doing an excellent job with their communication to members throughout this pandemic, instilling confidence to come back into the gym.

We've been working alongside them to provide content for their members through our Gympass Wellness services. Their phenomenal effort throughout this time has helped ensure that when lockdown lifted, they saw members come back right away.

I'm really proud of the pivot to digital Gympass made at such speed when lockdown hit. In 2020 we launched four brand new services; Gympass Plus, Gympass Wellness, live classes and personal training, all designed to support both our users and operator partners.



SHUTTERSTOCK

If 2020 has taught us anything it's to be brave, seize the moment and embrace change. Going into 2021 there's never been a better time to explore new partnerships and test that innovation you've been thinking about.

This year we've learned a great deal about the value of wellness and how it's not just about fitness. Our holistic approach has ensured we can offer services to support someone's entire health journey. We're open to all ideas and suggestions.

**If 2020 has taught us anything it's to be brave, seize the moment and embrace change**

## We've delivered an outdoor PT and Zoom-integrated online PT booking module for our operator clients

2020 has seen traditional business models torn up and re-written, and the public's approach to physical activity re-set.

Giving operators, personal trainers and the public innovative solutions to enable them to remain active is going to be key to succeeding in the new world.

This year, we've delivered an outdoor PT and Zoom-integrated PT booking module for our operator clients, such as Fitness First, to help their personal trainers connect more easily with their members for sessions away from the clubs during lockdown.

Providing tools to let members book outdoor PT sessions away from

## Go:Do Fitness

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Key contact

**Steve Chapman**

Co-founder

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the clubs was not only good for the members, but key to helping PTs through a very challenging time.

We've made the Go:Do platform free on a 3 month trial from January.





## Les Mills

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Key contact

**Martin Franklin**  
CEO, Europe  
martin.franklin@lesmills.com

**We're working on a new offering – the latest digital solution for club partners. Called Les Mills Content, it's launching from January 2021**

**This year, a key focus has been pivoting rapidly and enabling digital solutions so our club partners and instructors can stay connected to members.**

**We've bridged the gap** between physical and virtual fitness to offer a blended approach to support member retention and engagement with our live streaming and Les Mills On Demand Affiliate Programme.

**Livestreaming provides a platform** to keep the connection alive between clubs, instructors and members. Whether a facility is open or shut, our partners can livestream all their Les Mills programmes using original music.

**The Les Mills On Demand Affiliate Programme** allows clubs the opportunity to offer an at-home workout option for members, earning a commission in the process for each new sign-up.

**We're now working on a new launch** – the latest digital solution for club partners.

**Called Les Mills Content** and launching from January 2021, it will deliver a selection of Les Mills programmes and content to members through clubs' own web or app ecosystem.

**Members now expect to** train where they want, when they want – in fact, 85 per cent of consumers were already working out at home pre-COVID.

**The Bannatyne Group** is a shining example of one of our partners who reacted quickly to implement digital solutions at the start of the pandemic and has now built this into its long-term plan in order to provide maximum flexibility for members.

**Through the Bannatyne app**, more than 200,000 members across 72 clubs had free access to Les Mills on Demand for 60 days. Since launch, there have been over 10,000 sign-ups, helping Bannatyne members stay connected while clubs were closed.

**Bannatyne's was also one of the first** to implement livestreaming with a comprehensive timetable of group exercise classes via its YouTube channel. The account grew from 600 subscribers to 11,000 in the span of a few weeks, keeping many instructors in employment throughout the pandemic with its broad livestreaming timetable.

**As an extension of our partners' businesses** we remain dedicated to supporting them, and the industry, to come out stronger in 2021.

**We're committed to continually** emphasising the essential need for our sector, inclusive of group exercise and will continue to fight on behalf of our partners and Instructors to reverse the decision to exclude group exercise in tier 3 in the UK.

## Mental health will be the next pandemic. We're doing what we can to launch an industry-specific, national mental health campaign



### Matrix Fitness UK

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Key contact  
**Matthew Pengelly**  
Managing director

**Mental health will be the next pandemic.** We're doing what we can right now, in partnership with other industry leaders, to launch an industry-specific, national mental health campaign which will offer training, support and advice to frontline staff and those that need it most.

**We also have an exciting new cardio range launching in 2021** which gives the user complete control – enabling them to train the way they want, with interchangeable equipment bases and screen options, so they can adapt their own exercise experience.

**2020 has been tough**, but it has driven business analysis, forced digitalisation and made everyone take a long, hard look at evolving.

**Our industry has been forced** to evolve. New trends, consumer demands and opportunities will arise and we're planning our next steps in order to stay ahead.



### InBody UK

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UK sales director  
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## We're seeing a change in the way health is perceived and we believe this will continue

**We've been working hard** to build and launch our InBody Academy. We've spent time getting this right, so this free learning platform offers our customers the chance to develop their knowledge of body composition.

**The platform also accommodates** our management system – LookinBody Web – and the free InBody app.

**We're seeing a change** in the way health is perceived and we believe this will continue. We recommend operators invest for the long-term in products, services and education to help with this health focus – especially those that create the opportunity to make direct revenue in the long-term.

**This has been one of the toughest** years anyone in the industry has faced.

There's been no text book to help get through this and so everyone who has remained positive and used the time to improve their offering for the future deserves admiration.

**To be honest**, the hard work and praise is yet to come. Those that now do what is needed to continue to promote the health focus through their business and directly help their customers become better, will be the success stories of 2020.

**2021 is going to be** one the most exciting years, as the health and fitness industry gains more credibility and importance. InBody – as an already health focused company – has a responsibility to help and assist customers as we move into this exciting time.







## Miha Bodytec

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Key contact

**Phil Horton**

Country director, UK  
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“

**In Germany, memberships of EMS studios are 60 per cent higher than before the coronavirus lockdown**

For miha bodytec, the 'safety first' directive was a priority long before COVID-19. This year, our 'no compromise' policy meant certified EMS PTs could continue to offer COVID-secure, zero contact, one-to-one workouts, especially with our versatile portable system. This has enabled EMS PTs to facilitate sessions when clients need it most.

**In Germany, memberships of EMS studios** are 60 per cent higher than before the coronavirus lockdown, because people are looking for safe, effective ways to train.

**The EMS global movement** is gaining traction in the UK and a groundswell in the number of trainers is happening, alongside increasing consumer awareness, as EMS secures its rightful place in the market.

**It's great to see** one of our EMS studios – Vive fitness – working across a whole variety of client types – especially an 85-year-old client, who decided they wanted to enhance their wellbeing and

found EMS sessions were the perfect solution to improving their strength and mobility, without it being weight-bearing or overly taxing on the body.

**One session per week** was enough to improve their quality of life, and for us, it really does show the true accessibility of EMS training.

**If COVID has taught us** anything, it's the huge importance of health and wellbeing.

**For many, the coronavirus** has solidified the link between activity and wellness and between obesity and illness, enabling EMS operators and PTs to position themselves at the forefront of safety in health and fitness.

**For now, while we** continue in an adapted normal, EMS offers a safety-first fitness offering, one that's fully COVID-secure and stands out from the crowd. And once COVID anxiety diminishes, EMS will remain as a safe, highly efficient, one-to-one or small group training session that's only required once per week.



### Myzone

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Key contact

**Dave Wright**  
Creator and CEO of Myzone

**Evidently, operators with deeper connections to members are going to be more successful.**

**Helping owners and trainers to** engage with clients and customers, growing memberships at a time where none of us can enter facilities physically is vital, even when lockdowns end.

**Enabling more people to experience** virtual live group workouts with the MZ-Remote system has been an incredible highlight for us lately.

**Face-to-face experiences in-club** will continue to be amplified by data that connects members with your facility.

**Systems which give immediate** feedback to all participants, bridging gaps with motivation, encouragement and removing intimidation will continue to thrive.

**The Myzone community has** been working harder than ever, but



Jones' Fitness stepped up, hosting an MZ-Remote session for over 80 participants during lockdown. Together they earned 1000s of MEPs in a Myzone World Record-breaking workout.

**That's the spirit of community.** Proof that we're stronger together when facing any challenge.

**We're committed to bringing** incredible experiences of physical activity to more people, both in person and online.

**Supporting the sector through** good times and bad, Myzone will keep putting in the effort that makes exercise enjoyable for everyone and keeps more people moving for longer.

**Enabling more people to experience virtual live group workouts with the MZ-Remote system has been an incredible highlight**

**The new Octane Fitness rower – 'Ro' – has a resistance lever and a fan that kicks in when the user goes fast**



### Octane Fitness

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Key contact

**Neil Campbell**  
General manager  
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**Octane Fitness customers add** our products to give their gyms something different, whether it be to their cardio floor, their HIIT areas or for their rehab users.

**The new Octane Fitness rower** – 'Ro' – has a resistance lever for real resistance and power, as well as a fan that kicks in when the user goes fast. It has the added extras of quick release straps – ideal when you use it in a circuit or HIIT session.

**It's great to see the industry operators, my fellow suppliers and the governing bodies all working together** for our common cause. Hang in there everyone and keep up the great work!

**I'd like to say a big 'thank you'** to Sarah Roberts at Places Leisure, the teams at Everyone Active, Parkwood Leisure, Rick Crawford and all at Nuffield Health, Paul Street and all at Serco Leisure, Matt Hunt at Freedom and everyone else. They're all such a pleasure to deal with, I cannot thank them enough!

**2021 will be a great year.** I look forward to continued collaboration.

## Our team has designed a new range of dumbbells, kettlebells, plates and studio sets – launching in early 2021

### Physical Company

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#### Key contact

**James Anderson**

Director of sales and marketing  
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The hybrid model looks to be here to stay, with at-home complementing in-club workouts. We can help clubs create a seamless hybrid training experience, including high-quality, free-to-use digital workout content in our app and a wide range of affordable equipment that clubs can recommend to members.

Our team has been designing a new range of dumbbells, kettlebells, plates and studio sets all of which will be available in early 2021. These products have been developed using feedback and recommendations from our customers.

Our new partnership with ZIVA, exclusively distributing its premium commercial range in the UK, is very powerful: from free weights to functional equipment, we now have a product range to suit every budget, from a price-led

offering, through our 'good value, high quality' range, to a premium collection.

Our clients have been busy this year – Lynsey Goodyear invested in a wide range of Physical equipment when she launched her PT business GOOD220, including dumbbells, barbells, slam-balls, Reax Kettlebells and Fluiballs, BOSU Storms and battle ropes.

Lynsey launched just as COVID-19 hit, but nevertheless found herself immediately busy and credits our range of innovative equipment with giving her business a competitive edge.

We love the way she has given clients their workout mojo back, changing their perspective on exercise, helping them realise it can be fun and encouraging them to focus on how it makes them feel – their physical health and mental feelgood.

Our mission statement, 'First for Fitness Solutions', reflects our expertise in the way people now choose to train: functional, mind body, small group training and free weights. However large or small your workout space, these disciplines should be your first thought.



## It's difficult to understand why the authorities do not promote fitness, when tobacco shops remain open and fitness centres are closed



We want to send a strong message of encouragement to everyone in the market and to thank them for the great work they are doing to ride out this situation.

It's difficult to understand why the authorities do not promote and support fitness centres when tobacco shops, which are harmful to consumers' health, remain open and fitness centres are closed.

We're really proud of how our company adapted to the new situation, offering hygienic flooring, new products such as our PaviFlex Army extreme flooring, better

### Paviflex Gym Flooring

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Sales manager  
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discounts for supporting customers in these difficult times and our work building new business opportunities in the home fitness market.

### Precor

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*Marketing manager*

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**We're launching the new Preva mobile app;** a complete refresh, integrated with Sony's Advagym to capture cardio, strength and functional workouts.

**A white-labelled product, it's** a springboard to stronger engagement with members, connecting them both inside and outside the club, while integrating other popular wellness apps.

**COVID-19 highlighted that our** industry is essential in keeping people healthy, and we will continue to work with ukactive to help position gyms as safe and essential. But now, more than ever, people value connections, so operators must work to stay connected to their members,

wherever they decide to exercise.

**Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV)** has blown us away with its use of Precor's PREVA platform.

The team is using meaningful data to make operational decisions that have benefitted the business.

**For example, after lockdown,** ASV used data to identify peak times and amended its group exercise timetable and staff rota. Every month, fitness manager Kris McIntosh shares the latest data, learnings and actions with staff, customers and board members, to demonstrate how ASV is continuously making improvements and how well it works.



**We're launching the new Preva mobile app, a complete refresh, integrated with Sony's Advagym**

**“We've launched the Power Plate 'black edition', designed to appeal to all market sectors, and with a focus on wellness and recovery**

### Power Plate

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Key contact

**Iain Murray**

*Sales director, UK*

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**We're encouraging communities to** stay fit this winter with a campaign to encourage comfort and confidence with a 'Smarter, Shorter, Safer' campaign which encourages engagement, health integration and diversity, to help facilities stay relevant, drive satisfaction and operate with ease.

**Fitness consumers, staff and** facility operators are concerned about safety and managing anxiety on top of maintaining their usual practices and routines, and Power Plate wants to make it easy for clubs to create trust and drive adherence.

**With ukactive research finding** facilities are 'almost risk free' environments and consumer data showing people intend to exercise more due to the pandemic (University College London report), the fitness industry is perfectly positioned to meet this new demand.

**A growth area identified by** Power Plate is the healthcare sector – our partnership with Berkley care

homes delivered a wellness solution to older populations suffering with chronic illnesses as a direct result of lockdown. The results are incredible.

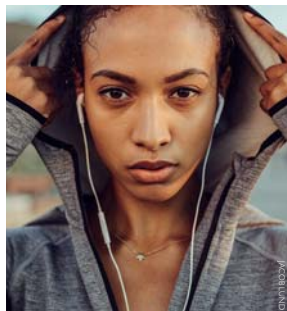
**Everyone Active in Porchester** is another great example of how the industry can widen its reach and offer health and wellness to suit every need. With three floors of fitness equipment each containing a Power Plate, Porchester dedicates a whole floor to its active ageing community, providing a safe, secure environment for this population to stay healthy.

**We've launched the Power Plate 'black edition'** range, designed to appeal to all market sectors, and with a continued focus on wellness and recovery. This new, sleek look has been designed to fit within a variety of different environments.

**Our 'Trade in, Trade up'** initiative helps health clubs upgrade older models to a new premium version, driving value by adding vibration training areas for members to prepare, perform and recover.



## “Core’s new Golf module will promote online bookings, have EPOS capability, take tee/buggy bookings (and more) and will launch in 2021



We’ve been working on a new Partnership Scheme which will give clients and third parties access to Core’s API. Through this interface, other systems can interact and share data with Core. The API is currently in pilot stages and will be launched in 2021.

Throughout 2020, our team of developers has also been enhancing Core’s functionality with an exciting software add-on – Golf.

Designed for hotels with golf courses on-site, Golf integrates with Core to promote online bookings, EPOS, tee/buggy bookings and more, and will launch in 2021.

Our clients have been using Core to strengthen their businesses during the pandemic. For example, the team at The

### Premier Software Solutions

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**Oliver Cahill**

Chief operations officer

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Belfry Hotel & Resort has been working with Core account manager, Laura Meeson, to ensure they’re maximising Core’s full capabilities. This has enabled them to identify a number of additional revenue opportunities and processes.

As we near the end of a turbulent year, we want to remind clients that we’re here to support them. We promise to continue delivering first-class support, account management and training, while providing them with the tools they need to drive business revenue during this unsettling time.

## Our new mystery shopping product will use geofencing to trigger push notifications offering instant mystery shops with rewards

We completed complimentary mystery shops for all of our clients on their virtual classes, drawing together the results on how our sector successfully went digital in a matter of days and providing benchmarks in this growth area.

Most of our clients have been through the biggest shake up to their systems in their history and they’ve all impressed us with their resilience and creativity in pivoting and diversifying what they offer and how they do it.

We invested a lot of the downtime during lockdown in the development of a new product designed to work alongside traditional mystery shopping. This programme will use geofencing to trigger push notifications offering instant mystery shops with rewards.

One thing we’ve learned during the pandemic is that first impressions count! We’re likely to see a huge swathe of people looking to join gyms and



### Proinsight Mystery Shopping

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**David Hopkins**

MD and founder

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leisure centres as they recognise the huge boost that exercise gave them in lockdown. Ensuring their journey and experience is perfect will continue to ensure long-term, committed customers.

Through the last three months, we’ve seen a huge uptake in digital

mystery shopping, providing insight to brands like Mercedes Benz, Hollywood Bowl and The British Army.

Helping our clients remove digital roadblocks within their customer journey is where we’re seeing Proinsight add real value for our clients.



## We're excited to launch the new Pulse app – Trakk – a content platform and activity tracking tool which works with any equipment in any setting



As a British company which designs and builds equipment in the UK, we know only too well how important it is to support our workforce and manufacturers in these challenging times. We'd like to encourage the industry to support British businesses in 2021.

We're excited to launch the new Pulse app – Trakk – a content platform and activity tracking tool which works with any equipment in any setting. It's free for consumers, can be completely white labelled for operators, and connects seamlessly to any fitness equipment.

During the lockdown two of our clients took this time as the perfect opportunity to give their facilities a full refurbishment. iGym London, which we operate in partnership with Imperial

### Pulse Fitness

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**Chris Johnson**

Managing director

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College London, did a full interior redecoration and a complete overhaul of cardio equipment, following a £500K investment and is now fully equipped with the latest Pulse Fitness lines.

Pulse Health & Fitness in Carshalton has also undergone a significant refurbishment, receiving over £425K worth of new equipment and a brand refresh. Both clubs will have access to the new app Trakk when it launches.

2020 has been a difficult year and we want to do our bit to help the industry get back on track. The Pulse Group has one of the largest range of support services on offer to do so, from financing and funding to refurbished equipment.

## 2021 will be all about creating healing services and spaces and optimising our light environments, with red light and blue light's healing properties being used in gyms to create new services

We recommend operators introduce their customers to red light therapy in 2021. Our devices are used in gyms, health care facilities, spa and wellness and sports settings, as well as private homes.

This kind of therapeutic red light, penetrates the body causing a release of natural anti-inflammatories, making them ideal for operators who want to offer a broader range of health and wellness services or to enhance recovery rooms.

We also make blue light blocking glasses to help protect the eyes of wearers from the harms of artificial light. These glasses can also improve sleep.

One of our clients, chiropractor Aidan Robinson, uses our red light therapy devices along with our blue light blocking glasses with his patients helping improve and heal injuries, as well as increasing quality of life for his amputee patients.

2021 will be about creating healing services and spaces and optimising our light environments. We know spending too much time indoors has drastic effects on our biology and health.

### Red Light Rising

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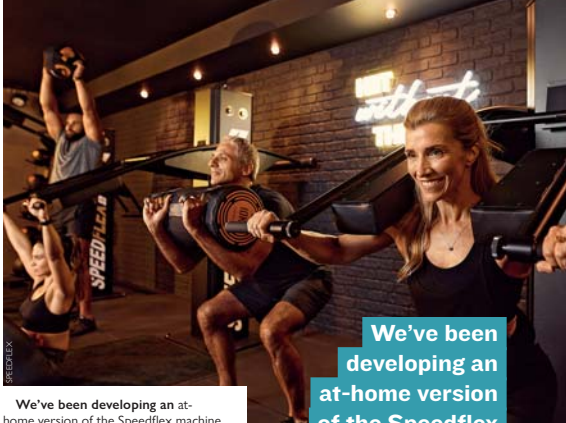
## Speedflex

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CEO  
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**Going into 2021, we** need to remember the importance of community now more than ever before. Many members would've been left feeling lonely in 2020 and we need to build up confidence once again. A class like Speedflex has the power to do that, in a safe environment.

**Our client, Go Gateshead,** has been doing some fantastic work over this past year in working to bring something different to members. The site has had significant investment from Gateshead Council and as part of this, the gym received a full refurbishment. We were able to work with the team to create a brand new Speedflex studio as part of the offering which has been well received by members.



**We've been developing an** at-home version of the Speedflex machine and class concept which we hope to launch to market in early 2021.

**We're going to see** more people with long-term health conditions as a result of COVID-19. We have a duty of care to help this demographic get fitter and healthier by adapting our programmes and removing barriers to participation. Do get in touch to discuss how we can help.

**We've been developing an at-home version of the Speedflex machine and class concept which we hope to launch to market in early 2021**

## “ Personal trainers are using our technology innovatively – TrueCoach has seen the number of UK users increase by 48 per cent since March

**Our recommendation to operators** is, if you haven't gone virtual yet, then try it! In the current climate, it's vital for businesses to deliver value to their members, even if that's not on-site. There are many third-party video providers to work with and virtual content is a great way to connect with members.

**Personal trainers are really using** our online technology innovatively; TrueCoach has seen the number of UK users rise by 48 per cent since March and PTminder has recently launched a new video workout library which contains over 1,200 videos that can be shared with clients to customise their personal training programme.

**Our clients have been amazing** – across all our solutions, including Legend, BrightLime, Clubware, DFC and Harlands – in not only leveraging their native apps to help members book via their smartphone and stay

engaged during lockdown, but also in pivoting their fitness offerings to a hybrid of in-gym class options and live stream or on-demand workouts.

**It's more important than ever** to give members flexibility to use fitness services in a way that suits them. Start thinking about monthly membership solutions differently by creating virtual classes, offering more pay-as-you-go options, and rewarding loyalty. It's also vital to communicate with members regularly to help reduce churn.

## TSG

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SHUTTERSTOCK MICHAEL PUGH





**We work closely with the team at Pure Gym and even during COVID-19 – a challenging time for all gyms – they've remained incredibly ambitious**

#### TVS Group

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*Sales director*

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**A huge project** for us this year has been our work on Deansgate Square, Manchester's groundbreaking high-rise development. TVS used its latest acoustic flooring technology and specialist perimeter isolation techniques for a luxurious new health and fitness facility to prevent noise and vibration transfer to adjoining residential properties and between facilities within the leisure complex.

**We work closely with** the team at Pure Gym, the UK's largest gym operator, and completed a number of high-profile projects with them this year. Even during COVID-19, a challenging time for all gyms, they've remained

incredibly ambitious, working towards opening 15-30 new sites in 2021.

**Humphrey Cobbald, Pure Gym's CEO**, has recently announced a new franchising model for markets in the Middle East and Asia which is exciting news. We've been fortunate to work with the Pure Gym team for many years and we are proud to be part of their success.

**After such an unpredictable** 2020, next year is all about rebuilding confidence in the market. We will need to react to the unprecedented changes in our business environment, respond to the opportunities which they present, but most of all work ever more closely with our clients, existing and new.

**We have an exciting programme of updates ahead and will be adding tokenisation, to make payments more seamless**

#### Xn Leisure

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**Jason Watts**

*Sales director*

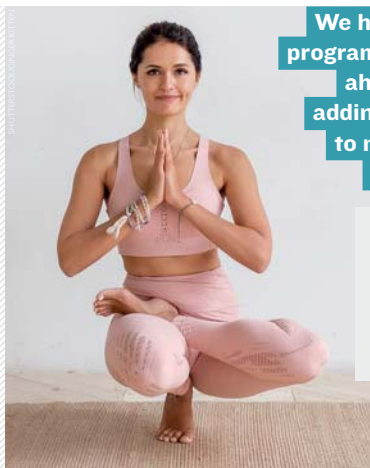
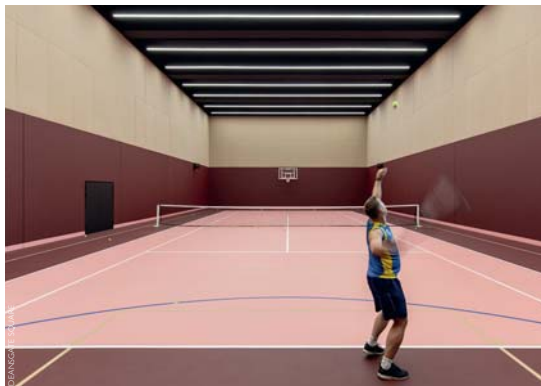
jason.watts@xnleisure.com

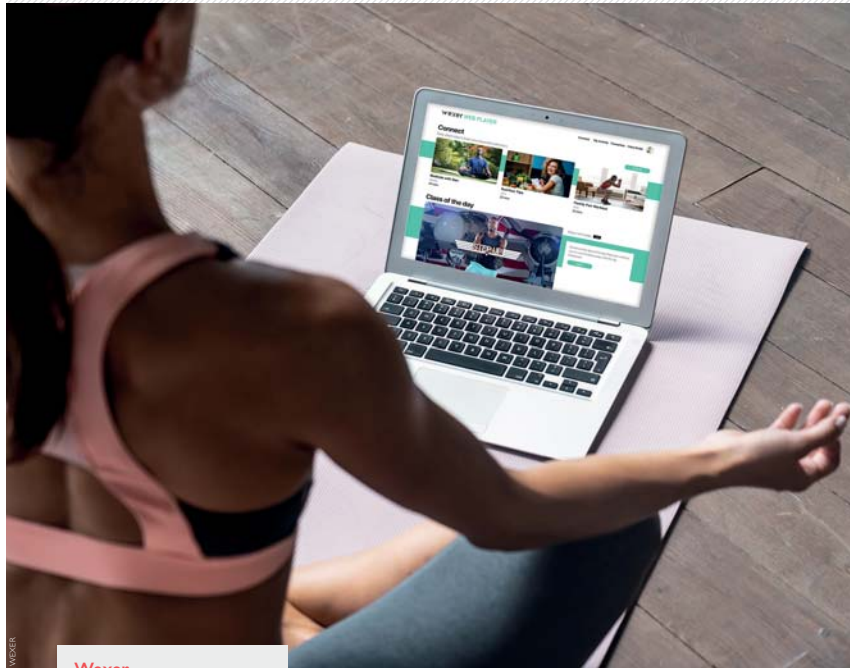
**This year we helped** our clients move to online community engagement by launching 'Xn Move', an on-demand, digital workout platform.

**Since then we've been re-certified** as ISO9001 compliant and rolled out new features to our Leisure Hub product, including a 'Notify me' tool and Google analytics/Tag.

**We believe health and wellbeing is** neither a fad nor a luxury and should be part of the fabric of our lives. We're confident our industry will not only recover but will come back even stronger than before. We are here to support clients to do just that.

**We have an exciting programme** of updates ahead for our Leisure Hub product and will be adding tokenisation, to make payments more seamless, and upgraded chip and pin devices, to introduce the next generation of payments.





WEXER

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“

**A new product called Channels – launching in January 2021 – will allocate dedicated content channels to top influencers**

**2021 will be the year of content creators and the hybrid model.** Seamless member journeys, in and out of the club, will be underpinned by rockstar trainers' digital content.

**Gyms' ownership of this experience – via bespoke content shared on own-branded, monetisable, password-protected platforms – will be key to member loyalty.**

**We continue to evolve** our white label web player – Connect – which now hosts providers' content alongside 600+ classes from our global partners.

**Launched in June, Connect** lets operators upload their own live-streamed and on-demand content, while a new product – Channels – launching January 2021 will allocate dedicated content channels to top influencers.

**In 2020, gyms' reliance** on social media to deliver live content was understandable – an easy solution – but it was also a mistake.

**Operators must now take back control** by building their own ecosystems: branded networks of physical and digital touchpoints that deliver undiluted, ownable fitness experiences to their members any time, anywhere.

**Swiss operator BaseFit** has done some great work this year. With its digital plans accelerated by COVID, it launched its white-label web player just as lockdown hit.

**Password access ensured exclusivity** for its members, with all content initially offered for free. Uptake was instant: usage quadrupled within a couple of days of launch.

**BaseFit's strong digital execution** continues to drive success today, with Web Player Connect a popular tool: members can take part in BaseFit's own instructor-led workouts wherever they are. The operator is now in a position to drive new revenue streams, in the omnichannel world of 2021.

## Volution

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### Key contact

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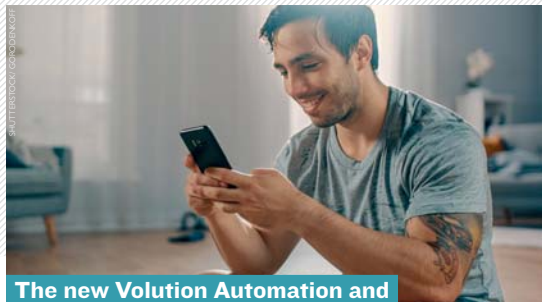
*Chief operating officer*

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As an industry, we're still exploring digitisation, so we recommend you talk to multiple suppliers to ensure the products and partners you bring on board are aligned with your business proposition and core values. Any tech solutions implemented should be meaningful to your brand/customer values and part of your long-term strategy.

The new **Volution Automation and Recommendation Engine** will enable a facility – or group of facilities – to automate their data into powerful, real-time actions – shown on a dashboard – driving member acquisition/retention, member engagement, team effectiveness/efficiency, and commercial outcomes.

**Among our clients, Anytime Fitness Asia** has been doing outstanding work during the pandemic. Following the news that each of its 120+ on-site



**The new Volution Automation and Recommendation Engine will enable you to automate your data into powerful, real-time actions – shown on a dashboard**

locations in the Philippines would be temporarily closed, Anytime Fitness quickly realised it needed a new way to engage with members – so tasked Volution with designing a virtual platform and mobile application that enabled it to deliver virtual PT sessions, stay operational, sustain revenue, and support future growth.

**By integrating this remote model,** Anytime Fitness has achieved: +US \$1m increase in revenue through

data analytics and digitisation, +14.2% increase in PT revenue, and all staff have remained employed.

**Your data belongs to you,** so look for partners that support this, enabling you to maximise your data to enhance member/commercial outcomes. Implementing the right tech/data solution for your business, brand, and customers can be a seamless, straightforward process, and it doesn't have to cost the earth.

“ **Many of our clients have been doing a fantastic job – two that stand out are Ninja Cycling Academy and Race Hub**

**Wattbike remains committed to** supporting the fitness industry and its home users through such difficult times. By continuing to innovate products, as well as its digital and in-club offering, Wattbike is working with operators to support them in maintaining communication and engagement with members digitally at home.

**The Wattbike AtomX is one of** the most advanced commercial smart bikes incorporating cutting-edge technology and a feature-filled, high-definition Performance Touchscreen to elevate the user experience.

**The Wattbike Hub, the 'brain' of** the AtomX, acts like a coach, providing workouts, testing performance and analysing data at home or in the gym.

**Many of our clients have been** doing a fantastic job of staying connected with members but two studios that stand out are Njinga Cycling Academy and Race Hub.

## Wattbike

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### Key contact

**Steve Marshall**

*Sales manager*

**Njinga has adapted its offering to** include online programming, remote training sessions and digital challenges for members, while also providing access to chat to its professional coaches to make sure members stay connected, motivated and on the right track with their training.

**Similarly, Race Hub has been** encouraging virtual member challenges through its new virtual challenge website and has been loaning out equipment to members if they need something to help them workout at home.





## “ Aligning your brand to consumers’ new value systems will be the key to attracting members back to your club

### Zynk Design

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zynk is designing some of the most cutting edge wellness facilities in the country, including large format health clubs, boutique studios, residential and student accommodation and luxury home gyms.

**zynk Wellness Design Experts** is a team made up of specialist interior architects and designers with more than two decades of experience in gym design and interior architecture for the wellness sector. We have helped a considerable number of businesses, of all shapes and sizes, to

create successful wellness ventures through intelligent design.

**Our advice to operators** is to utilise this period to re-evaluate your brand and its proposition. Lockdowns have altered the value system of consumers, so aligning your brand to these new motivating factors will be key to attracting members back into your club.

**We salute all of** our clients who are being brave in these uncertain times. Opportunity is out there now is the time to go and find it!

### Action Group

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Co-founder and director

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In April this year, after 10 years of trading, Action PR became Action Group.

**Rebranding in the middle** of a national lockdown has not been ideal, especially when we had grand plans for a physical relaunch. Raising awareness of the full breadth of our services has been tough to do remotely, but we've tirelessly campaigned to be seen as a full-service agency and it's really starting to pay off.

**Health and fitness should** play a pivotal role in the new world we face. We've never been through such tectonic changes physically or mentally, so post-pandemic, health will be paramount.

**The old adage** of people not being motivated to stay fit is outdated, we've noticed a real attitudinal shift – even at its most challenging, people want to work out, whether outside or inside.

**Baked bean tin dumbbells** and wine bottle weights have proven it's

**We've seen a real attitudinal shift - even when things are challenging, people want to work out, whether inside or outside**

more important than ever before to people that they stay sane and healthy.

**From an operational perspective** it's essential for operators to install confidence and provide clarity for members. We've all seen the effects of the "stay at home/ don't stay at home" messaging debacle.

**From a sales perspective** it's about standing out. The market for fitness products and services was crowded pre-COVID, now it's positively exploding and if you want to cut through to your audience you need first rate comms, so PR has never been more important.

**Nothing will be the same** after COVID, so you can't always do what you've always done.

**We're innovators who spend** a lot of our time working to convince brands to consider a different approach.

**Take time to reevaluate** your beliefs, listen to the innovators, give them the chance to inspire you with their vision. You never know, you might just create something even better than you have now.



Cheryl Hersey and Dawn Tuckwell

PHOTO: ACTION GROUP



**In a world without face to face meetings, PR and comms are more vital than ever**

### AIM Content Marketing and PR

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**The biggest challenge**, but also the biggest opportunity of the pandemic has been adapting our work to reflect the constantly changing situations faced by the fitness industry and our clients.

**As a PR agency** working with health, fitness, and wellness brands in multiple countries, we've seen the pandemic from numerous angles. By being proactive and reactive with this information, we've delivered campaigns that have positioned our clients as thought leaders and have advised on initiatives

to enhance customer engagement and drive commercial returns.

**We know physical activity** is the "magic pill" that can do wonders for our health and wellbeing, but the pandemic has shown there's still a long way to go for the government, its advisors, and even scientists to fully recognise the true impact it can make within our society.

**Confronted with a deadly virus**, one of our best forms of self-defence is to stay active. Therefore, in the new world we face, health and fitness must play a central role in the country's preventative agenda to ensure a healthier, happier, safer population.

**Good PR shows you're** listening and understanding the moods, thoughts, and feelings of your customers, which is even more essential during uncertain times.

**PR and comms** are also key to spreading the "gyms are safe" message and lobbying the government to recognise the true worth and power of physical activity, so we (industry and nation) are stronger moving forward.



Tom Tawell

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When lockdown hit, our first thoughts were for operators. They needed urgent assistance to ensure members knew how to access the support they'd put in place.

**Our communications acknowledged the** emotional situation, and generated coverage, harnessing a strong narrative of community. One example was Oldham Community Leisure's foodbank, which helped the vulnerable, while reinforcing the values at the heart of community leisure.

**Another example was Trafford Leisure**, which devised an online community hub – almost overnight.

**We worked tirelessly to promote**



**Abi Harris**

this and when centres reopened they saw an impressive 53 per cent uplift in memberships; we were proud to be part of this success story.

**Now, more than ever**, the fitness industry plays a crucial role in the nation's physical and mental wellbeing. With people eager to get out during lockdown and using exercise as their excuse, the ears of the world are more receptive to our offer.

**Lockdown has improved the sector's** speed to market with digital offerings and I believe they're here to stay. There's a proportion of the population now who will never visit a health club, but as we've seen through the success of hybrid offerings, we can now begin to entice some of them with online memberships.

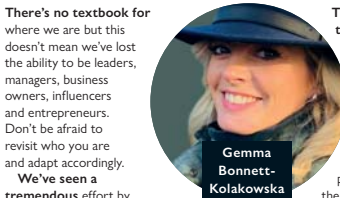
**When times are tough**, it's easy to think comms and marketing are expendable, but the fight to get back will be hard, not everyone will survive and your comms will be a

**There's no textbook for**

where we are but this doesn't mean we've lost the ability to be leaders, managers, business owners, influencers and entrepreneurs. Don't be afraid to revisit who you are and adapt accordingly.

**We've seen a tremendous effort by** operators, suppliers, NGBs and organisations such as ukactive. This industry has the power to be united and we should embrace that.

**As an industry we** should not work in silos – make connections and partner with other industries, as collectively looking outside the norm will need to shift.



**Gemma Bonnett-Kolakowski**

**The biggest challenge**

this year has been ensuring we remain agile and creative, with ideas and solutions to support the ever-changing needs of our new and existing customers.

**The health and**

**fitness sector must** play a leading role in the new world we face.

People's awareness of their own health has changed and this is an opportunity for the industry to embrace this, alter their messaging and the offering and connect with the target market in a more effective way.

**Partnerships and collaborations will** be vital. Never be mute, create a story.

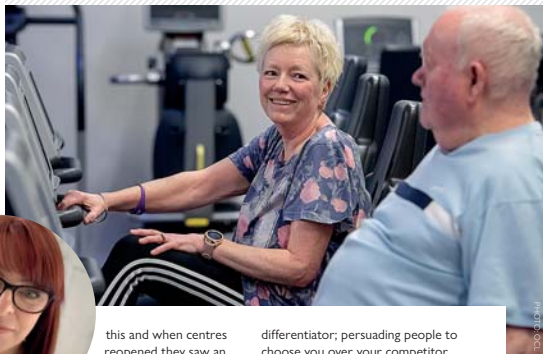


Photo: iStock

**COVID-19 has given the sector an opportunity to put people back at the heart of what we do**

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**There's no textbook for where we are – don't be afraid to revisit who you are and adapt**





## Our sector has the power to change lives, which is pretty amazing. I love doing my bit by supporting my clients



Vicky Kiernander

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**Vicky Kiernander**

Owner

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Thanks to the close relationships I've developed with my clients, I've been able to support them throughout the crisis.

**Some have reduced their PR activity**, while others have increased it.

**Flexibility and an ability** to quickly adapt to new ways of working has been key. We've refocused their brand messaging, found new ways of engaging with their customers and even launched new campaigns. It's been challenging, but exhilarating too.

**The sector has the power** to play a critical role in public health, but we must improve our messaging and how we promote ourselves to government and the public.

**We also need to evidence our impact.** It's something we've talked about for years – as a former journalist I've written about it countless times – but we're still not doing it adequately.

**Exercise is vital for health**, yet gyms and leisure centres were closed, which shows we still have some way to go in convincing the powers that be about the role we can play.

**If you're not engaging in PR and comms**, you're not communicating with existing and potential customers. They need to know you're still around and that means continued engagement.

**It's not all about the hard sell.** Now, more than ever, you need to be talking to

your customers and letting them know how you can help and support them.

**A former editor of Health Club Management** and now a freelance PR and communications professional, I've been supporting the UK health and fitness industry for 20 years. I work with a variety of companies – operators, suppliers, education specialists and more – to produce engaging content in all formats and across all channels to help raise brand profile, retain existing customers, attract new clients and keep them in the public eye.

**Our sector has the power** to change lives, which is pretty amazing. I love doing my bit by supporting my clients.

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Director

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## The fitness industry will need to shift and change its narrative, focusing on movement and wellbeing



**We've adapted, both personally and professionally** to the challenges of 2020. Showing up for our clients was our first and foremost priority, this meant being available 24/7, especially during the first few weeks of lockdown.

**Things changed on a daily basis**, and our clients needed support with developing new strategies such as switching from offline to online and from commercial to 'at home'. We created weekly emails for our clients and wider network, adding value with marketing tips and advice on how to navigate the effects of the pandemic.

**David Minton predicts that the aftermath of the first global pandemic in our lifetime will need a substantial new response** if individuals and governments are to improve levels of health.

**This means that fitness, health and wellness sectors will need to work together** to widen their reach beyond the already converted.

**The fitness industry in particular will need to shift and change its narrative and offering, focussing on movement**

and wellbeing to support changing lifestyles and motivations, if we are to adapt to the new needs of members and utilise developing technologies.

**Staying connected during these times** has been vital for everyone. PR and communications are fundamental tools to help businesses create this connection, so long as the message conveyed is relevant, timely and tuned in to the changing needs of their audience. Otherwise it can seriously damage brand loyalty and preference.

**Conscious communication puts the customer or client at the centre of the process and together with transparency builds the reassurance and trust required during times of crisis.**

**During this time we've become adept at adapting, constantly learning and developing our own knowledge and skills in order to benefit the ever-changing needs of our clients and their customers.**

**We made a commitment to show up fully and have enjoyed the challenge of rapidly evolving in order to deliver real value.**



Lawra Angell and Cheriee Wales

## PACE PR

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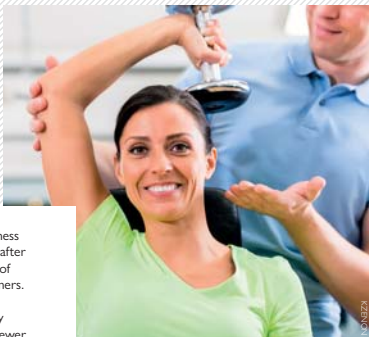
**Nicky Jobson**

Director

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**Nicky Jobson**



© PACE PR

Personally, this year has been a real test of practicing what I preach day-in-day-out in my work, which is the importance of exercise.

**Getting out each day** to workout, run or just walk in the fresh air has been key to keeping me going – physically and mentally!

**In business, I don't** use the word 'PR' anymore, because it doesn't reflect what successful communications looks like for my clients – even more so, now we're constantly finding new ways to reach members and stay connected with communities.

**The pandemic has heightened** the importance of a strong immune system and we know from research that the immune system is highly responsive to exercise.

**There needs to be** a shift in emphasis from fitness to overall health. Gone

are the days when aesthetic fitness ambitions are the most-sought after goals. Instead we'll see the rise of more health-orientated consumers.

**Hopefully this shift will** also engage the more sedentary population – people who are newer to exercise since lockdown.

**Communication is what** keeps us connected and it's more important now than ever before.

**In facing lockdowns, social distancing** and capacity restrictions, communication has become the key way businesses engage with customers and keep them informed.

**Businesses that recognise the** importance of a communications strategy will build trust and confidence amongst members and staff.

**The fitness industry is** a social one and that doesn't stop now. So, let's keep talking.

**Gone are the days when aesthetic fitness ambitions are the most sought after goals. Instead, health will become the priority.**

## Brand Chatter

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**Companies who've continued to actively communicate will have the competitive edge**

### The biggest challenge this

year has been a personal one. As a working mum, with a keyworker husband, I found myself at home, often alone, with my six year old daughter while also managing a business.

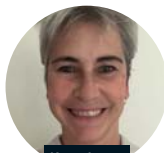
### Recognising the

pressures my clients faced, I found myself constantly saying 'yes' when – if I'd been sticking to paid hours – I should have been saying 'no'.

**This put me under** increasing time pressure when time was in short supply. Somehow, I managed. My daughter is back at school and the world is still turning, but it's not a scenario I look forward to repeating!

**The pandemic has exposed** the fragility of our sector. To build resilience we must unite behind our representative bodies and change the perception of our sector from a 'nice to have' to 'essential'. This means shifting our rhetoric from 'fitness' to 'health'.

**The language we use** to describe our services needs to change. We need to talk less about 'footfall' and 'number of visits' and more about



**Katie Lewis**

'evidence-based outcomes' and 'delivered value'.

**Delivering 'fitness' means we** are relevant to about 20 per cent of the population. Delivering 'health' means we become relevant to the whole population.

**It has been really interesting** to watch how brands have reacted to this pandemic. Largely, there have been two responses. Firstly, to go into communication hibernation and wait until it all blows over. Secondly, to maintain a strong presence and shout loudly while others sleep.

**I believe those companies** who have continued to actively communicate – assuming their messaging has remained relevant – will have the competitive edge as we emerge from this crisis.

**Language and the presentation** of messaging plays a vital role in how a brand, product or service is perceived. Our industry is highly competitive and often what distinguishes one solution from another is not the technology that drives it but the language used in its promotion.

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**We plan to reduce the carbon footprint of active-net and make it accessible, while replicating the face to face event as closely as possible**

*David Monkhouse*

**We're busy pivoting active-net** as a virtual event for 24/25 March 2021, with the CPD theme 'Post Covid Sport and Physical Activity landscape – what will be our part?'

**The event will maintain** our strengths of quality, well-selected meetings and unstructured networking that's both fun and professional. Suppliers can invite and entertain delegates at their 'table' throughout the evening and, as usual, there'll be two morning exercise classes for delegates to join.

**A charity treasure hunt** and quiz will run throughout the event with prizes. We're even sending delegates survival packs, coffee, snacks, alcohol.

**We plan to reduce** the carbon footprint of our active-net event and make it more accessible to our colleagues, while still replicating the traditional

face-to-face event as closely as possible.

**Lockdown and follow-on social** distancing measures have shown us that digital methodology can almost replace face-to-face; although it's also taught us just how much we're missing attending events, shaking someone's hand and leaning against a bar chatting!

**We want to reward** 'unsung heroes' of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, so we'll be asking delegates to nominate team members they feel deserve recognition for their outstanding efforts during this time.

**They may have operated** food banks, supported their community, delivered individual support by phone to GP referral customers or helped to fight our cause to Government. We'll ask delegates to provide a short video that will be voted on.

**After this period of lockdown, we're now longing for face to face interaction and a more personal approach to business**

*Lucy Findlay*

**With our venue [EXCEL]** becoming a hospital, all mass gatherings postponed and many parts of the physical activity sector having to pause or pivot their businesses we felt the changes brought by COVID-19 from every angle.

**While we paused** the planning of the fifth edition of Elevate until we have a clearer understanding of when live events can take place again, we hosted a webinar series enabling some of our pre-planned sessions to happen virtually.

**These had some great** success and have resulted in new partnerships and new business contacts. We can't wait to help more partnerships move forward at Elevate!

**In 2019 it was** a given that we would see our industry associates soon, in an exhibition hall or over a coffee. However April gave our faces the glow of a Zoom

call and an insight of the bookshelves of everyone's home offices. We admit it was a successful solution at first but more than ever before we are now longing for face to face interaction and a more personal business approach.

**So much has happened** since we first announced Elevate was moving dates in light of the increasing COVID pandemic. At times it has been challenging to see positives but the importance of physical activity for the mental and physical health of the nation has been highlighted throughout.

**We should feel positive** that the power of being active is moving up the political agenda and its key place in society is being understood more clearly. The opening is now for physical activity to cement itself at the core of delivering health.

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**Our top priority in 2021 will be holding FIBO live and in person, shining a spotlight on prevention and health**

*Silke Frank*

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Event director

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**We're proud of the first digital FIBO** that was held in October this year. It was really moving to see how everyone pulled together to make the project possible.

**The fact that more than 30,000** participants attended FIBO@business and FIBO@home shows just how much potential there is for digital and hybrid events.

**Our top priority in 2021 is** holding FIBO live and in person. We're currently planning to occupy eight halls at the Cologne Exhibition Centre.

**In terms of content, FIBO 2021 will** be shining a spotlight on digitalisation, new concepts, prevention and health – topics that are the key to the future.

**Many industry associations have** been doing extremely valuable work during the coronavirus crisis. This involves

showcasing the importance of fitness to public health, providing practical help for operators, and lobbying politicians.

**I'd like to mention the DIFG** (German Industry Association for Fitness and Health), DSSV (Europe's largest employers' association for the fitness industry) and EuropeActive.

**With the SafeACTIVE study,** EuropeActive has launched a new project that aims to provide information on the actual risk of COVID-19 infection in fitness studios, and preliminary results are showing extremely low levels of risk in fitness clubs.

**My message to HCM readers is stay healthy!** That's clearly the most important thing – and helping one another to get through this time. I'm very much looking forward to seeing you again.



**The pandemic has opened our eyes to alternative digital solutions which we will look to incorporate in the future**

*David Zarb Jenkins*

**Our SIBEC events in 2020 didn't** go ahead as planned and these have been rescheduled for 2021.

**As a result we've had to look at** different ways of keeping buyers and suppliers connected until things get back to normal again. This has involved offering digital solutions such as white papers, content syndication, targeted email campaigns, webinars and many other solutions, enabling suppliers to promote their products and services.

**In addition, we've set up a virtual** platform which allows for multiple meetings to be conducted online in a similar fashion to the live events.

**The past months have taught us** that the live event and the opportunities it offers are invaluable. However it's also opened our eyes to alternative digital and virtual solutions which are effective and time-efficient and which we will look to incorporate in the future together with the live events.

**It's undoubtedly been a challenging** time for the industry and among the challenges it has given us time to regroup and address areas of the business we didn't have time for previously.

**These efforts will give us a great** platform to enhance our offering in the future and put us in a stronger position than pre-COVID. With news that the vaccine has been found we are now excited for reconnecting the industry at our SIBEC events in 2021.

### **SIBEC**

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Key contact

**Jenny Patrickson**  
Managing director  
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Training has adapted significantly to move online this year. We made changes to both delivery and assessment methodology, to ensure training can continue from home.

**To support those delivering** qualifications online we also created a wide range of e-manuals and launched a whole raft of digital support services.

**We've learned that the** true value of learning digitally is that when people learn at their own pace and in their own time, they can achieve fantastic results.

**Greater understanding within our** sector of the potential for digital delivery and assessment could prove valuable in tackling a number of the learning and development challenges we face.

**There's no denying that** both the market and the way we learn has changed forever as a result of



**The industry has pulled together fantastically well and I'd like to see that shared trust and respect prevail**

*Jenny Patrickson*

COVID-19. Looking to the future, we believe the best solutions will be hybrid in approach – combining effective and high-quality online programmes, utilising flipped classrooms with time spent face-to-face in a classroom and on the fitness facility floor.

**We need to ensure** everyone feels supported and has the right skills to both train and teach in a digital world, as it's certainly here to stay.

**This year has given us the** opportunity to take stock, update, improve and future-proof our services. It's also shown the power of collaborating with like-minded, open-minded organisations and individuals.

**We've been working more** closely than ever before with other awarding organisations, the Federation of Awarding Bodies, Ofqual, the Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education and CIMSPA to ensure the best interests of our many training partners, learners and leisure employers.

**This industry has pulled together** fantastically well and I'd like to see that shared trust and respect prevail.

**We're offering bite-sized training modules free of charge, covering nutrition, online PT and mental toughness**

*Dan Rees*

### Premier Global NASM

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Managing director  
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**As the world plunged** into lockdown, we already had a fully operational live learning platform. This meant, when people were ordered to self-isolate at home, they were still able to access and complete our training courses.

**Individuals who suddenly found** themselves with more time on their hands due to a lost commute or being furloughed were able to commit time to learning and development.

**Training providers need to quickly** adapt their offer to cater for the ever changing needs of the market. This will ensure the workforce is continually being joined by individuals who possess the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed.

**The pandemic has highlighted the** value of live learning through a digital

platform. The effects of this pandemic will be with us for many months yet and as we face more lockdowns and physical distancing measures, it's important the workforce is able to continue to develop skills and knowledge.

**We've been offering a range** of services to support learning and development – in addition to running regular webinars, we've created a suite of bite-sized training modules covering a range of topics, including nutrition, online PT, mental toughness and functional training.

**We're offering these free of charge,** while also developing classes to address new needs – for example, a CIMSPA-accredited Virtual Coaching Specialism (NASM-VCS), has been designed to help PTs build resilient digital businesses.

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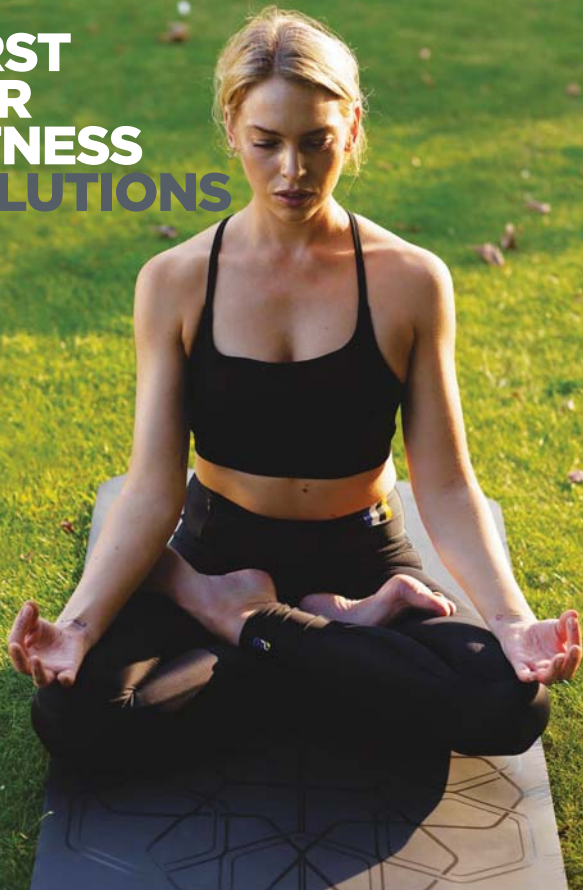
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Physical Company has revealed a range of new and improved products for 2021



## Tried and tested

**High quality user experience and good value for the operator. This is the winning formula behind an expanding Physical Company product range, says James Anderson**

**“W**e’ve always featured a number of different yoga mats in our collections, and they’re very popular items,” says Physical Company sales and marketing director, James Anderson. “When it came to expanding our Physical-branded range, we knew it had to include a fantastic mat that delivered against our ‘good value, high quality’ ethos.”

The result is the Performance Yoga Mat, an affordable yet highly durable, ultra-hygienic product for in-club and at-home use, that’s designed to deliver an exceptional user experience.

“As we went through the design process, we enlisted a group of yoga instructors to give us their hands-on insight,” says Anderson. “They tested out the various materials we were considering and their feedback was instrumental in creating a product that truly ticks every box for the end user.”

The eco-friendly mat is designed to be the perfect thickness – “just enough to provide comfort, without losing any of the control you need for yoga” – with excellent grip on both sides. On the rear, this comes courtesy of a textured surface to grip the floor, while on top, a closed-cell PU performance layer provides maximum hand and foot grip in all conditions.



***“As we went through the design process, we enlisted a group of instructors to give us their hands-on insight. Their feedback was instrumental in creating a product that truly ticks every box for the end user”***

**James Anderson,  
Physical Company**

Additional features of the REACH-compliant mat include built-in NFC technology, which provides smart device access to an app-based exercise library. There are also positional markings – a central postural guide, plus horizontal alignment markings for the hands and feet – and eyelets for hanging storage.

### **New functional kit**

Other new additions to the growing Physical range include Performance PU dumbbells and barbells, as well as Performance kettlebells, which will be launched in the spring.

“Our previous ranges featured a prominent green Physical logo and customer feedback indicated this didn’t always align with clubs’ own branding,” Anderson explains. “On the new products, our logo is a subtle grey and the dominant marking is the weight: large white digits ensure ease of selection. Products can also be custom-branded.”

The highly durable dumbbells and barbells feature anti-roll heads, while the kettlebell design has user comfort in mind. Consideration has been given to every element of its ‘anatomy’, including bell shape and grip, handle ergonomics (width, diameter and shape) and window size for one- and two-handed exercises.

**More: [www.physicalcompany.co.uk](http://www.physicalcompany.co.uk)**



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Virtuagym's systems power Thebodycontent studio in Dublin

## Built strong from the start

**How Virtuagym and Thebodycontent created an ecosystem of fitness within a small community**

**W**hen COVID-19 struck, and gyms were forced to take their business online, Thebodycontent had little to fear. This humble Dublin-based gym, run by personal-trainers-turned-business-owners Eoin O'Malley and Beth Johnston had already adapted to digital transformation with help from Virtuagym's gym management software. This meant they could automate operations, provide virtual offerings, and embrace a flexible business model.

### Hitting pause – but not stopping

The sudden lockdowns meant that fitness facilities had to reconcile appeasing their clients and managing revenue. For O'Malley and Johnston, this was far from stressful, thanks to Virtuagym's 'Pause' feature – at the click of a button – they put a blanket pause on all memberships.

Having this system in place allowed them to quickly bring their offering online and communicate that shift to their members.

As a result, they saw 50 per cent of their clients sign up for virtual classes on Zoom at full membership rates. Finances aside, the speed at which Thebodycontent was able to

amend contracts and inform their members created an atmosphere of trust – which translated into support for their small but savvy gym.

### The social factor

Thebodycontent's personal-trainer approach requires it to have software that facilitates personalisation. Virtuagym's completely white-labeled app allows Thebodycontent to provide a tailored online coaching experience alongside a spirited online community.

They make use of Virtuagym's rich library of workout content to promote challenges and set up leaderboards to encourage friendly competition amid closures. This in-app interaction gives the gym a personable atmosphere, even online. O'Malley and Johnston have leveraged the well-known community aspect of Thebodycontent to get more signups during the pandemic.

### Fewer arduous tasks

Thebodycontent decided to empower members to handle their own bookings and scheduling. Members have a clear overview of payments, finances, and a timeline of how closures have affected their contract end-dates. This takes the strenuous day-to-day tasks out of the



***"Virtuagym's software facilitates hybridisation in the face of an uncertain economic environment"***

**Hugo Braam, Virtuagym**

owners' hands – which is imperative for small gyms. Automating things such as billing also means O'Malley and Johnston can spend more time crafting an above-par client experience, which, when push comes to shove, makes their business as strong as their community bonds.

### A better model for the future

The year to come will undoubtedly be ridden with unpredictability – but one certain thing is that a healthy lifestyle will be in demand. Virtuagym's software facilitates hybridisation in the face of an uncertain economic environment. With the aid of innovative, future-focused solutions, Thebodycontent can contribute to the adoption of a healthy lifestyle while staying in tune with the constantly developing digital pace of the industry.

Start future-proofing your business with Virtuagym, and check out Thebodycontent for fitness inspiration.

<https://business.virtuagym.com>  
[www.thebodycontent.com](http://www.thebodycontent.com)

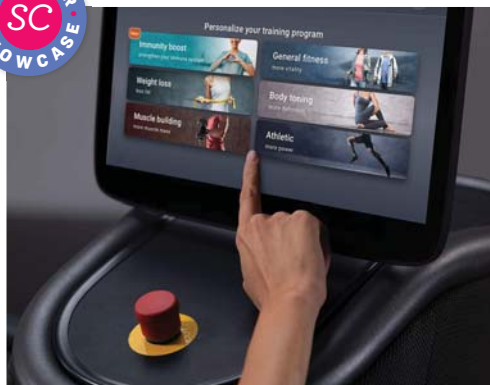
A close-up photograph of a woman with short, grey hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a light blue t-shirt. Her hands are positioned in front of her chest, with her fingers interlaced to form a heart shape. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

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EGYM smart equipment is being used to support physiotherapy interventions at Nu Physio and Fitness

## Game changer

**Nu Physio and Fitness has placed EGYM at the heart of its protection and prevention model**

**M**att Ardle Msc is a forward-thinking health and fitness professional who, for many years, has been blending personal training with physiotherapy practice to provide his community with a wraparound service of care, focused on prevention and protection.

Ardle has elevated the scope of his clinic by placing an EGYM Smart Strength Series circuit at the centre of his community practice, with impressive results.

### Optimising training time

"Most people are very capable of being active, without the intervention of a coach or personal trainer, but very few will know how to optimise training time to achieve desired health outcomes safely and effectively," says Ardle.

"This is where a community training space, supported by qualified professionals, has a vital role to play.

Ardle runs his business from an independent community gym,

**Ardle says the EGYM equipment is a game-changer in terms of results**



NRGym, in Keighley, West Yorkshire. While he has full access to the gym, he also rents a consultation room and a dedicated rehabilitation and training space, which includes an EGYM intelligent Smart Strength Series.

"EGYM has been a complete game changer for the business," says Ardle. The beauty of EGYM is its automation and performance feedback capabilities. Once clients have completed an instructor-led induction on the kit, they can access and administer bespoke workouts independently, freeing my time to dedicate to coaching and mentoring.

### Performance feedback

"The performance feedback, with regards to strength and imbalance testing, is something I couldn't glean by any other means with the same level of simplicity and reliability. I find this functionality absolutely invaluable in my rehabilitation work.

It also motivates clients, because they're provided with regular evidence that their efforts are translating into the achievement of specified goals. This keeps them training and financially committed."

EGYM has enabled Ardle to attract a broader client base. He says: "60 per cent



**"EGYM has been a complete game-changer for the business"**

**Matt Ardle**  
**Nu Physio and Fitness**

of my clients are now independent of my physiotherapy services and represent a diverse segment of the local population.

"The equipment's pre-installed, scientifically-based programmes enable me to target specific population groups. For example, Metabolic Fit is designed to tackle diabetes, whilst Immunity Boost helps fight infection. These personalised programmes are largely self-managed, freeing up my time to focus on coaching."

The pandemic has obviously created challenges for Ardle and prevented him from fully optimising the benefits of the EGYM install but he's incredibly optimistic about the future, saying: "While there have been many negatives associated with the pandemic, one positive is the heightened awareness of the importance of maintaining health and fitness in order to protect against infection and disease."

**Find out more: [www.EGYM.com](http://www.EGYM.com) and [https://nuphysioandfitness.com](http://https://nuphysioandfitness.com)**



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A team at Oslo University found no COVID-19 transmission, even when intensive training was taking place

GARY FOSTER/GETTY IMAGES

## 2020 gamechangers

This was a year when research helped transformed the gym sector into a serious political force. Two pieces of work stand out in terms of timely impact

In April, Professor Zhen Yan at the University of Virginia found regular exercise may reduce the risk of complications in people with COVID-19, as well as offering the potential for alternative treatment approaches.

He studied an antioxidant called extracellular superoxide dismutase (EcsOD) that's released in the body during exercise.

His work "strongly supports" the possibility that higher levels of EcsOD in the body can prevent or at least reduce the severity of acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) – one of the worst outcomes of COVID-19. EcsOD does this by hunting down free radicals, binding to organs and protecting tissue.

### Gyms are safe

In June, research published exclusively by HCM indicated gyms pose no additional risk of catching COVID-19.

The story was picked up by the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

The large-scale academic study concluded that there is "no threat of increased

**“ Our trial showed no virus transmission or increase in COVID-19 related to the opening of gyms and no threat of increased COVID spread at fitness facilities, even when intensive training takes place**

COVID-19 spread" at fitness facilities, even when intensive training takes place.

A team of researchers at the University of Oslo, led by professor Michael Bretthauer, investigated SARS-CoV-2 transmission and whether it was attributable to gyms.

"Our trial showed no virus transmission or increase in COVID-19 that was related to the opening of gyms," said Bretthauer.

The research – the first of its kind in Europe – studied 3,764 members of the public, aged between 18- and 64-years, who had no COVID-19 relevant comorbidities.

The research team then tested each person for SARS-CoV-2 by self-administered naso, oropharyngeal and sputum sampling after two weeks – and clinical disease by linkage to electronic patient records after three weeks.

In the group that trained at a gym, 81.8 per cent trained at least once and 38.5 per cent visited a gym six times or more, with the remainder ranging between these two measures.

Out of 3,016 individuals who returned the SARS-CoV-2 PCR tests, there was one positive test, but while the positive individual was part of the "gym group", they had not visited the gym before the positive test and contact tracing found that they had actually been infected in their workplace.

During the three-week study, there were no outpatient visits or hospital admissions due to COVID-19 in either group. ●

Find out more about both piece of research at [www.HCMmag.com](http://www.HCMmag.com)



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