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June 2021 Issue 790

Your careers & recruitment partner

Virgin gets right to wipe out rent arrears

A court has given Virgin Active the green light to erase the rent arrears it had accrued during pandemic lockdowns.

The wiping out of the arrears is at the heart of the health club operator's restructuring plan, which was sent for a court hearing, following opposition from landlords, including Aberdeen Standard Investments, British Land and Land Securities Group.

During the hearings, Virgin Active said that without the restructuring plan - devised under the government's new Part 26A of the Companies Act 2006 - it would fall into administration within days.

The landlords argued the case, saying that there were other options available for Virgin to save the company, such as putting up some of its assets for sale - or even the entire company.

The case was heard by High Court Judge Richard Snowden, who backed Virgin Active's case.

Court documents show Virgin Active Health Club Holdings was recently



adjusted enterprise value valuation.

Matthew Padian, restructuring expert at Stevens & Bolton, said that the decision is unlikely to signal a wave of similar restructuring plans.

"Launching such a plan is a heavily court-focused process, making it expensive and time-consuming," he said.

READ MORE ONLINE



This decision is unlikely to signal a wave of similar restructuring plans

Matthew Padian



Busiest month ever for **Anytime Fitness**

April sees record level of new memberships





Hasbro to launch **Monopoly Lifesized**

Iconic board game to be turned into live experience





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Fitness industry mourns passing of énergie founder and chair **Jan Spaticchia**

an Spaticchia, founder of énergie Fitness, has died aged 51 following a short illness. Spaticchia was also chair of the recently-launched Empowered Brands group, and vice-chair of BMF.

A serial entrepreneur, Spaticchia was a muchloved and respected industry leader.

Spaticchia began his career in the health club industry as an 18-year-old, after spotting an advert in a local paper seeking fitness enthusiasts to train as gym managers.

His first chain of clubs, called HiLife, was launched in the 1990s, followed by the launch of énergie in 2003.

Together with business partner, Peter Sage,



■ Spaticchia launched the highly successful énergie chain in 2003

"Spaticchia began his career in the health club industry as an 18-year-old, after spotting an advert for gym managers"

Spaticchia set out on a rapid expansion push for énergie.

By 2019 the company's franchise portfolio had more

than 100 sites and 150,000 members across the UK and Ireland. In August 2019, the company was sold to Bridges Fund Management, a private equity firm with significant expertise in the health and fitness sector and a strong social mandate.

He then led a successful MBO of énergie in June 2020, taking back control of the company he founded out of a CVA.

Spaticchia then announced growth plans for Empowered Brands, the franchise investment business that had acquired énergie Fitness, with the aim of making it the 'most dominant fitness franchise business in Europe'.

He is survived by his wife Claire and sons Josh, Luc, Dakota and Mason.

READ MORE ONLINE

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson named as new president of the Local Government Association



■ The Paralympic legend and current ukactive chair will take up the role in July

he Local Government
Association (LGA) has
appointed Baroness
Tanni Grey-Thompson
as its new president.

The Paralympic legend and ukactive chair will succeed outgoing president Lord Kerslake – who has held the role for six years.

Grey-Thompson will be formally elected at the LGA's General Assembly in July.

A long-time advocate of sport and physical activity, Grey-Thompson was made a life peer in "I look forward to continuing Lord Kerslake's relentless work to promote the important work of local government"

2010 and was conferred as Baroness Grey-Thompson.

Since then, as a Crossbench Peer, she has used her experience and knowledge during debates in the House of Lords and has spoken on a range of issues including sport, disability rights and welfare reform.

The president of the LGA is a cross-party role and is elected by the General

Assembly for up to a maximum of eight years.

Grey-Thompson said: "I'm honoured and thrilled to be appointed as the new President of the LGA.

"I look forward to continuing Lord Kerslake's relentless work to promote and support the important and extensive work of local government."



■ Bures, co-founder of Mrs Sporty, launched Vaha in 2019



"Our mission is to empower entire households to train however they want and whenever they want"



Valerie Bures co-creator of Mrs Sporty, brings Vaha fitness mirror to the UK

it tech firm Vaha is launching its interactive fitness mirror into the UK home fitness market.

Vaha has been developed and founded by Valerie Bures – co-creator of Mrs Sporty, one of Europe's largest women-only fitness chains, which has Steffi Graf as an investor.

The business has secured investment from Porsche Ventures and London investment firm Unbound. Also involved are HV Holtzbrinck Ventures, Global Founders Capital, TQ Ventures and RTP Global.

Designed to act as a virtual personal trainer, the mirror uses a "hologram" to guide exercisers through workouts and offers live sessions

as well as a library of 200 on-demand workouts.

Users can also book personal training sessions through Vaha, with trainers connecting live to the mirror and providing users with individual workouts.

Bures said: "Our mission is to empower entire households to train however they want, whenever they want and with the world's best personal trainers – all from the comfort of their own home.

"After the events of the past year, home fitness has never been more important. We want to help people around the world take their home workouts to the next level."

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- JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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■ Phillip Mills was given the Lifetime Achievement Award

Phillip Mills and Dave Wright's Myzone among FIT Summit 2021 award winners

hillip Mills, founder and executive director of Les Mills, Chris Hemsworth's Centr app and Dave Wright's Myzone, are among the winners of the 2021 Fitness & Wellness Awards of Excellence.

Announced during the FIT Summit, held this week, the awards recognise top-performing companies and executives from across Asia-Pacific's fitness and wellness industry.

In total, the awards feature seven different categories

"The awards recognise top-performing companies and executives from across Asia-Pacific's fitness industry"

with a judging committee, composed of 60 companies, picking the winners in each category from a shortlist.

The full list of winners is:

- App of the year award: Centr
- Deal of the year award: Inspire Brands Asia (for its acquisition of Anytime Fitness Asia)
- Technology company of the year award: Myzone

- Fitness/wellness company of the year award: Evolution Wellness
- Franchise of the year award: Body Fit Training
- Executive of the year award: Greg Oliver, CEO, Fitness & Lifestyle Group
- Lifetime achievement award: Phillip Mills, founder and executive director, Les Mills International.

READ MORE ONLINE

Futures expert **Seth Mattison** shares four strategies for leaders to confidently move forward amid coronavirus

OVID-19 has presented our industry with a chance to reinvent itself, said thought leader Seth Mattison at ISPA's Stronger Together Summit.

Mattison, the founder of FutureSight Labs, helps leaders from organisations such as Johnson & Johnson, IBM and The Walt Disney Company prepare for the culture of the workplace years from now.

His human-centric approach to business resonated with delegates as he shared four strategies to help them confidently move forward following the pandemic.

"Find and activate the idea of self-compassion,"



 $\blacksquare \ \mathsf{Mattison's} \ \mathsf{human\text{-}centric} \ \mathsf{approach} \ \mathsf{resonated} \ \mathsf{with} \ \mathsf{delegates}$

"In neuroscience, until you can articulate something, your brain disregards it – but those emotions don't just go away"

he said, explaining that leaders need to take care of themselves before they can support others. Part of his advice was to 'name the emotion'.

"In neuroscience, until you can articulate something,

your brain disregards it," he says, "but those emotions don't just go away, they manifest themselves in stress and illness."

He also suggested that leaders find the time to 'reframe the story'. "You need to ask yourself 'what can I do now, that I couldn't do before'," he said. "What's your story, how can you reframe it and sell it to your team?"

Mattison's second strategy is to 'expand what's possible'.

He recommended operators take a wider lens to their business, looking at what might happen in three to five year's time and what's possible in the longer term.



■ Harmsworth, founder of ESPA, has spent five decades in the spa sector

Sue Harmsworth: "I'm starting to hate the word wellness"

In the Global Wellness
Institute's (GWI) latest Q&A,
spa and wellness icon Sue
Harmsworth spoke to VP of
research and forecasting Beth
McGroarty about the trends
and challenges facing the
spa and wellness industry.

"I'm starting to hate the word wellness because it's become so generic it's utterly confusing the consumer," she began.

In her opinion, the industry should begin differentiating between light wellness and serious wellness.

"As the spa industry took off, the word and concept of wellness became confusing, and it has to do with what the US means by it, versus the rest of the world.

"In the US, every beauty salon, or every two treatment rooms by a pool, suddenly became a spa. When the spa movement became powerful in the 90s, stress was the overwhelming focus and most spas were built for relaxation. What I would call light wellness – with no negative connotations.

"But now, we have a much more complex set of modalities and advanced practitioners at wellness destinations. Plus, we also have more medical or 'serious' wellness."

READ MORE ONLINE



"As the spa industry took off, the word and concept of wellness became confusing, and it has to do with what the US means by it, versus the rest of the world"

MEET THE TEAM

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MINDFULNESS

STA offers mindfulness resources

The Swimming Teachers'
Association (STA) has
partnered with a psychologist
to provide new mindfulness
and wellness resources
for its members.

The new wellbeing and mindfulness activity guidance has been designed to help swimming teachers care for and support, young learners' wellbeing and mindfulness during lessons – at a time when the effects of the pandemic are still being felt.

Developed in partnership with Dr Alexandra Barnett, a chartered counselling psychologist, the 17-page guidance note contains 30 different mindfulness activities and comes with a separate parent guide and a digital marketing pack, containing posters, social media banners and a logo for swim schools to display.

Zoe Cooper, STA's commercial director, said: "Swimming is one of the most beneficial sporting activities for mental health and wellbeing, but it has been really hit hard by the pandemic.

"Millions of children have lost out on the opportunity to start or access their regular lessons over the last 12 months, and for many, this will have affected their confidence and competence – and potential enjoyment of swimming moving forward.

READ MORE ONLINE



■The resources have been designed to help swimming teachers



Millions of children have lost the opportunity to start lessons

Zoe Cooper

PUBLIC LEISURE

First leisure framework celebrates £144m milestone



Local authorities will need to broaden their offerings

Sarah Watts

The UK's first dedicated leisure development framework has completed its first four-year term with £144m committed investment in public leisure projects.

Launched in 2017 by Denbighshire
County Council and managed by
Denbighshire Leisure Ltd, the UK
Leisure Framework makes the
procurement process quicker and easier
so local authorities and other public
bodies can develop leisure facilities
more efficiently and affordably.

The framework is delivered by leisure development partner Alliance Leisure.



■The framework has delivered 41 projects

"Local authorities will need to broaden their offerings, both indoors and outdoor spaces, to create active environments that can be used by as many members of the community as possible to ensure value for money," commented Sarah Watts, CEO of Alliance Leisure.

RESEARCH

Grassroots clubs 'lost 60 per cent of members'

There is "incredible resilience" in the sports and physical activity sector – but the industry requires further support to bounce back from the devastating effects of the pandemic.

That is the headline finding of a new report, based on a survey of more than 1,400 community sport providers involved in the delivery of more than 75 sports and activities across the UK.

Conducted in partnership between the Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA) and the Sport Industry Research Group at Sheffield Hallam University, the survey found that volunteers were crucial in supporting clubs during lockdowns and that the lack of income during the pandemic has placed additional pressure on the financial reserves of community organisations.

However, those responding to the survey lost an average of 60 per cent of their members.

Commenting on the report, SRA chief executive, Lisa Wainwright, said: "Community sport clubs are the lifeblood of cities, towns and village across the country and we must support them as the nation recovers, to allow everyone to take advantage of the incredible wellbeing benefits of sport and recreation."

READ MORE ONLINE



Clubs and sports providers have been hard hit by the pandemic



Community sport clubs are the lifeblood of cities, towns and villages

Lisa Wainwright

RESEARCH

Active adults kept their exercise habits during 2020



The pandemic has had an impact on people's ability to engage in sport

Tim Hollingsworth

Sport England has reported a drop of 710,000 in the number of people classed as active in England during 2020.

In total, more than a quarter of England's adult population (27.1 per cent) is now classed as physically inactive, ie, those undertaking less than 30 minutes of exercise each week.

In spite of this, the good news is that most adults who are classed as physically active maintained their exercise habits during lockdown.

The figures come from Sport England's latest Active Lives Adult Survey, which also shows that there



■The pandemic has change people's exercise habits

7

has been a worrying increase in the number of people who are inactive.

Tim Hollingsworth, CEO, Sport England, said: "The pandemic has had a huge impact on people's ability to engage in sport and physical activity, but the reality is it could have been worse."

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BACK TO BUSINESS

Busiest month ever for Anytime Fitness

Anytime Fitness UK has revealed that April was its busiest month for new memberships since it began trading in the UK.

The franchised health club operator said "tens of thousands" of new members joined its independently-owned clubs during April, following "unprecedented demand".

Anytime achieved the record-breaking numbers despite clubs in England opening 12 days into the month, those in Scotland and Northern Ireland opening in the last week of April and Welsh clubs remaining shut entirely.

Anytime Fitness has opened five new clubs

across the UK during 2021 – in St Helier (Jersey), Epsom, Newark, Addlestone and Daventry.

It is expecting to open a further four clubs in May, taking the UK portfolio to in excess of 180 clubs.

Neil Randall, CEO of Anytime Fitness UK, said however, that while the influx of new members was something to "celebrate", the health and fitness sector will still face challenging times ahead despite a positive re-start to business.

"While these figures make fantastic early reading, our sector still requires more government support to secure the future of facilities."

READ MORE ONLINE



■ Anytime experienced an influx of members during April



Our sector still requires more government support

Neil Randall

OUTDOOR EXERCISE

Parkrun study: low risk of COVID-19 transmission

Importantly, at events where an infectious person did participate, there would have been an average R value of only 0.057

A report commissioned by Parkrun has estimated that allowing mass-participation outdoor events carries an "exceptionally low risk" of COVID-19 transmission.

The study, by Professor Clive
Beggs at Queen Mary University of
London, utilised data published by
the Office for National Statistics
(ONS) from March 2021, looking at
the prevalence of the virus, alongside
antibody levels within the population.

The study found that, on average, if Parkruns had been open in March this year (2020), there would not have

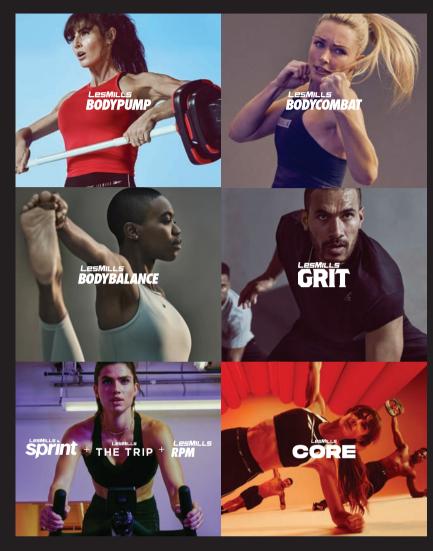


■The research ran through 10,000 simulations

been an infectious person present at 30 per cent of events and in just 0.015 per cent of runners potentially acquiring a COVID-19 infection.

Importantly, at events where an infectious person did participate, there would have been an average R value of only 0.057.

RE-ENGAGE MEMBERS



WITH LIVE CLASSES

96% of consumers who tried a workout from a club during lockdown said they would use that facility post-pandemic. Reconnect your members with your club and celebrate the return to live classes with live and digital launch events both inside and outside your club.

Plus, learn how you can use your digital solutions to support your live group exercise experience to get back up and running with the power of events.

10-YEAR STRATEGY

UK Sport's targets events worth £7bn

UK Sport has outlined its mission to create the "greatest decade of extraordinary sporting moments", driven by success at the Paris 2024 Games and the hosting of major events.

The high performance agency's new 10-year strategic plan includes proposals to host nearly 100 events, which collectively represent a £7bn boost to the UK economy.

It has already secured 22 events through to 2024.

In total, the list includes 97 events across 44 sports, spanning 46 world championships, with specific events being targeted including the 2030 FIFA World Cup. In addition to the ambitious events schedule, the agency's Strategic Plan 2021-31 involves some significant shifts for the high-performance sport community.

Dame Katherine Grainger,
Chair of UK Sport said:
"Together we have achieved
so much in Olympic
and Paralympic sport.
Nevertheless, we are very
aware there is no room for
complacency and that we
must build on our success to
create the next exciting phase
of high-performance sport.

"One where we work even more collaboratively and inclusively to keep winning and win well."

READ MORE ONLINE



■UK Sport strategy targets the 2030 FIFA World Cup



There's no room for complacency – we must build on our success

Katherine Grainger

OPERATORS

Russell Barnes named CEO at DLL, Earlam becomes chair

66

Russell Barnes has been with DLL for the best part of six years, having moved across from Merlin Entertainments with Earlam in 2015. David Lloyd Leisure's Glenn Earlam will move from his role as CEO to become chair of the business, with COO, Russell Barnes, stepping into the CEO role.

Barnes has been with DLL for the best part of six years, having moved across from Merlin Entertainments with Earlam in 2015.

Barnes was a divisional director at Merlin's Midway business, working with Earlam, who was MD.

David Lloyd Leisure is owned by TDR Capital, which bought it from London & Regional and Caird Capital in 2013. TDR has €8bn invested



 \blacksquare DLL operates 100 health clubs in the UK

across Europe and says it "seeks to transform businesses through 'operational improvements and high returning capital investments'.

David Lloyd is one of Europe's largest premium operators, with 124 clubs – 100 in the UK.

THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A PERSONAL TRAINER?

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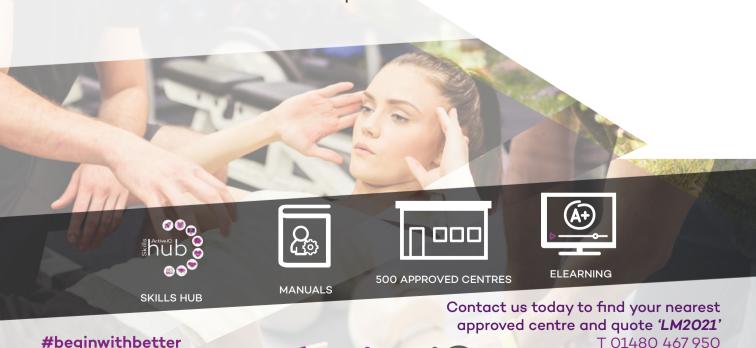
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Active iQ









RESEARCH

8.8m Brits did no exercise in past 12 months

Nearly four in five (73 per cent) Britons are failing to meet NHS recommendations on exercise, as a result of successive lockdowns leading to the formation of unhealthy habits.

In addition, there's evidence of a growing mental health crisis, as 41 per cent of Brits say their mental health has become worse in the past year.

The figures come from *The Nuffield Health Healthier Nation Index*, launched by the healthcare charity, which is based on a comprehensive survey of more than 8.000 Britons.

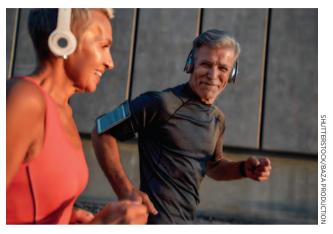
The Index reveals that, on average, 33 per cent said their physical health is worse now (April 2021) than it was a year ago, with older age groups reporting a worse decline.

Strikingly, only 10 per cent of those over 55 years of age agreed their physical health has improved.

Despite evidence linking obesity and severity of illness from COVID-19, and in the wake of the Prime Minister announcing a new obesity strategy last year, 16 per cent of the population – which an estimated 8.8 million adults – have done no exercise at all in the last 12 months.

This rises to a quarter of over 55s, despite inactivity being a risk factor for death from COVID-19.

READ MORE ONLINE



■ A quarter of those 55+ did no exercise in the past 12 months



The Index reveals that, on average, a third of Britons (33 per cent) agree their physical health is worse now (April 2021) than it was a year ago, with older age groups reporting a worse decline

EXPANSION

Gareth Bale's Rowbots to open second site in London



Gareth Bale's love for rowing spurred his involvement in the new concept.

Rowbots, the boutique fitness brand co-founded by star footballer Gareth Bale, has revealed plans to open its second London studio.

Open on 17 May, the studio is located at Broadgate Quarter, a 456,000sq ft office campus located at the junction of the City and Shoreditch.

Offering full-body workouts using rowing machines and floor exercises, the concept was launched by Bale alongside CEO Sam Green and brand specialist, Greg Zimmerman.

Bale's love for rowing spurred his involvement in the new concept.



■The first Rowbots opened in London in 2019

The first Rowbots opened in Fitzrovia in 2019, occupying a 1,800sq ft space and housing 11 rowing machines with a capacity of 22 people per class. The new site will be a similar set-up.

Sam Green, Rowbots CEO, said:
"We're extremely excited to bring our
brand to the City's Broadgate Quarter."

HEALTH CLUBS

Independent clubs "recover quicker"

Independent gyms in the UK have fared better during the pandemic than larger corporate operators in holding on to their members, according to new research.

Net member movement among independents was generally positive during key times in 2020 – in spite of being negative for the wider sector.

The finding comes from a new study, titled Independent Fitness Clubs Benchmarking Report, by 4global, ukactive and GGFit, which outlines the impact of COVID-19 on independent fitness clubs.

Among the key findings is that membership levels bounced back significantly

better at independent clubs, both in terms of visit throughput and active member percentage.

The report is based on a study from July to December 2020, using data from 627 independent clubs, representing a total of 289,000 members, 3.9 million visits, and revenue of £32m.

Huw Edwards, CEO of ukactive, said: "We know that independent fitness businesses have been hit hard by the pandemic but with the support of their members they have proven to be agile and adaptable to change, which is demonstrated in this report."

READ MORE ONLINE



■ Membership levels recovered quicker at independent clubs



Independent clubs have proven to be agile and adaptable to change

Huw Edwards

RESEARCH

Antihistamines can block the full benefits of exercise



he detriment

The detrimental effects on outcomes were caused by impaired adaptations

Dr Wim Derave

Taking antihistamines prior to exercise can prevent the body from getting the full benefit of exercise.

A new study found antihistamines reduce normal increases in blood flow to the muscles by 35 per cent during exercise.

Conducted by Ghent University and the University of Copenhagen and published in the *Science Advances* journal, the study also found that antihistamines decreased aerobic capacity, blocked the improvements that exercise has on circulation and the body's ability to tolerate glucose.



■ Many use antihistamines prior to outdoor exercise

13

Antihistamines are a common drug used by hayfever sufferers – and many take some before exercising outdoors.

Senior author, Dr Wim Derave, said: "The detrimental effects of H1/H2 blockade on functional outcomes were caused by impaired adaptations in key regulatory proteins."

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MARKETING

Nuffield offers NHS staff 40% discount

Nuffield Health is offering NHS staff a 40 per cent discount on membership fees across its UK network of 113 fitness and wellbeing centres.

All direct employees of the NHS can join online with the code NHS40, or visit a centre in person to take up the offer.

The discount applies to full, individual standard monthly memberships.

A spokesperson for Nuffield said: "As a thank you to all NHS staff for their immeasurable contribution each and every year – and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic – we're proud to offer NHS employees a 40 per cent discount to support our purpose to build a healthier nation.

"NHS staff can use the NHS40 at checkout to redeem the offer.

"Those signing up for the discount will need to show a valid NHS ID badge on their first visit to a fitness and wellbeing centre to validate membership and retain the discounted rate."

Earlier this year, Nuffield launched a series of free, online classes focused on emotional wellbeing.

The classes are available on the healthcare charity's digital platform, Nuffield Health 24/7, and aim to give people the means to focus on their mental wellbeing – as well as their physical – from their homes.

READ MORE ONLINE



■NHS staff can activate the discount at any Nuffield centre



As a thank you to all NHS staff for their immeasurable contribution we're proud to offer NHS employees a 40 per cent discount purpose to build a healthier nation

Nuffield Health

RESEARCH

Pool water kills COVID-19 virus in 30 seconds



We could show that the virus doesn't survive

Wendy Barclay

A study by virologists at Imperial College London, which is awaiting peer-review, suggests the risk of COVID-19 transmission in swimming pool water is "incredibly low".

The study looked at the effects of swimming pool water on SARS-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19, to assess the amount of time and contact needed to inactivate the virus in varying chlorine and pH levels.

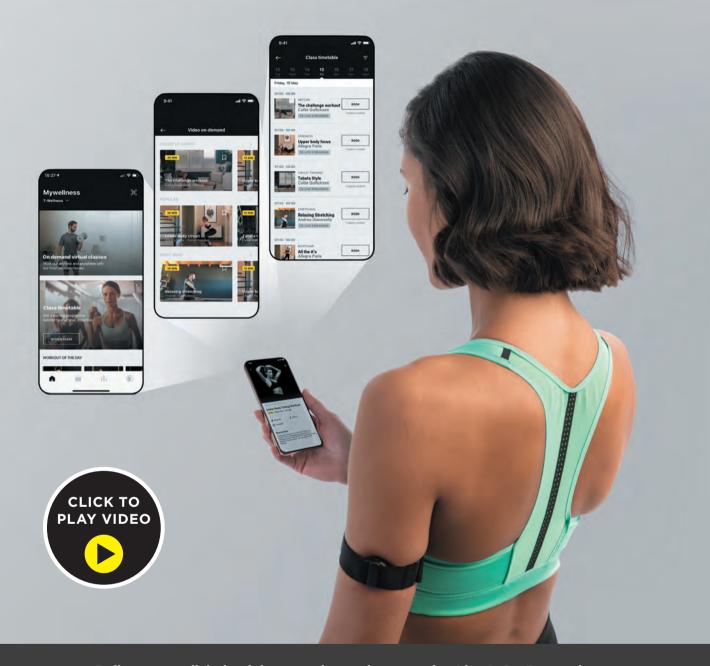
It found that 1.5mg per litre of free chlorine, coupled with a pH between 7-7.2 reduced the infectivity of the virus more than 1,000-fold within 30 seconds.



■The study looked at varying chlorine and pH levels

The research was undertaken by virologist, Professor Wendy Barclay, who said: "By mixing the virus with swimming pool water, we could show that the virus does not survive, meaning the water was no longer infectious."

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PUBLIC LEISURE

Third of councils expect to close gyms and pools



Many facilities face a desperately bleak future

Dan Humphreys

What more, up to 117 centres could run out of money within months, while of those councils that are

while of those councils that are planning to keep all their facilities open, nearly 80 per cent say they will be forced to cut services back.

The chilling figures come from a study by the District Councils' Netwo

One in three councils in England are expecting to close at least one of their leisure centres permanently during 2021.

study by the District Councils' Network (DCN) – a body representing 180 local authorities in England – and reveals the devastating impact of the pandemic on leisure centres.



■117 centres could run out of money 'within months'

Dan Humphreys, DCN's lead member for enhancing quality of life, said:
"As these alarming findings show, the gyms, swimming pools and local leisure centres that communities rely on every day face a desperately bleak future, with many on the brink of closing in the coming months."

READ MORE ONLINE

BOUTIQUES

United Fitness Brands acquires Barrecore

United Fitness Brands (UFB), the recently launched 'supergroup' of boutique fitness brands, has acquired Barrecore, the barre studio operator.

Barrecore will become the third brand in UFB's portfolio – joining Boom Cycle and KOBOX – and adds 12 sites to the group's estate.

The acquisition will extend the UFB portfolio to more than 20 sites and – thanks to Barrecore's studios in Alderley Edge, Hale and Bristol – will establish it as a national operator.

Founded in 2011,
Barrecore is currently in



UFB will be on the lookout for brands to join the group

Hilary Rowland

the process of opening its 13th location in Leeds.

Barrecore will now be owned by UFB, which is backed by Pembroke VCT, Nectar Capital Dominvs



■ Barrecore was founded in 2011 and is currently in the process of opening its 13th site

Group, and chaired by David Lloyd, founder of David Lloyd Leisure Clubs.

The group has outlined plans for "immediate expansion" upon COVID-19 restrictions lifting, with KOBOX opening its fourth studio within one of Boom Cycle's current locations in Waterloo, London.

Hilary Rowland, co-founder of Boom Cycle and one of the driving forces behind UFB, said: "UFB will be on the lookout for brands to join the group that mean more than just a workout to their communities; brands that create collective effervescence."



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NEW OPENING

Legoland's new Mythica revealed

Merlin Entertainments has revealed the first images of the new multi-millionpound Lego Mythica: World of Mythical Creatures zone at its Legoland Windsor theme park.

Opening to the public on 29 May, the new family area is currently under construction and is located between Heartlake City and the resort's Lego-themed hotels.

It will be home to the UK's first ever flying theatre ride – called Flight of The Sky Lion – which stands at more than 25 metres tall.

The 4D experience will include wind, mist and smell effects, which have been synchronised with

the animated film to fully immerse families in the Lego Mythica world.

Flight of The Sky Lion will be accompanied by an array of other attractions and rides, such as the Fire and Ice Freefall, a drop ride standing at 13 metres tall; and Hydra's Challenge, a water ride protected by one of Lego Mythica's guardians Duo.

Helen Bull, divisional director at Legoland Windsor Resort said: "We're thrilled to give our guests a first look at Lego Mythica and showcase some of the attractions, experiences and models that will be unveiled when we open in May."

READ MORE ONLINE



■ Mythica attractions include the 4D ride, Flight of The Sky Lion



We're thrilled to give our guests a first look at Lego Mythica

Helen Bull

zoos

West Midland Safari Park launches viewing lodges



Conservation has been at the forefront of our minds

Neil James

West Midland Safari Park in Bewdley, Worcestershire, UK, has launched an "immersive overnight wildlife experience", offering guests the opportunity to view the zoo's animals from the comfort of their beds.

The attraction has opened its longawaited Safari Lodges, which overlook cheetahs and African elephants in their newly-updated animal habitats.

There are eight lodges in total, with six of them offering overnight stays.

The double-story elephant lodges are themed with thatched roofs, accommodating up to five people.



 \blacksquare The elephant lodges accommodate up to five guests

Project Manager Neil James said:
"It's been thrilling to watch this project
grow into something so spectacular,
and to have done it with conservation
at the forefront of our minds when it
came to the design and build throughout,
has been hugely important."

IP ATTRACTIONS

Hasbro to launch Monopoly Lifesized

The launch of Hasbro's Monopoly attraction in London is back on the cards, with 14 August 2021 slated as the official opening date for the experience.

The attraction was announced in 2019 with an intention to open in 2020 – but plans were put back due to the pandemic.

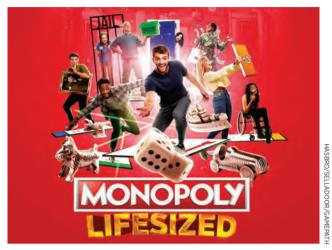
Hasbro has partnered with international theatre producer Selladoor Worldwide to open the live-action version of the iconic Monopoly board game.

Called Monopoly Lifesized, the participatory gameplay attraction will combine elements of the board game with escape rooms and team challenges. It will consist of a 75-minute gameplay segment on a 15 x 15m board, featuring the iconic properties, with each board capable of hosting between eight and 24 people split into four teams, all playing against each other.

David Hutchinson, CEO of Gamepath, said: "For us, Monopoly Lifesized represents a major entry into a growing and exciting marketplace.

"Audiences want to consume live performance differently, and what better way than to jump into a life-sized version of the world's favourite board game?"

READ MORE ONLINE



■ Monopoly Lifesized will consist of a 75-minute gameplay



For us, this is a major entry into a growing marketplace

HERITAGE

Face mask added to St Albans cathedral's carvings

We will also be launching a brand-new pilgrimage route during the annual Alban Pilgrimage in June

St Albans Cathedral

Visitors to St Albans Cathedra will be able to spot a very contemporary item among the newly-restored, medieval shrine of St Amphibalus.

The restoration of the rare memorial took place during the COVID-19 pandemic – a fact which has been commemorated with the addition of a figure wearing a face mask.

The shrine of St Amphibalus is one of Britain's 13 medieval pedestal shrines and St Albans is the only British cathedral to house two.

The St Albans Cathedral reopened to visitors on 17 May, as part of



19

■The new carving – featuring a face mask

England moving to Step 3 in its roadmap out of lockdowns.

A spokesperson said: "To mark the return of the newly restored shrine of St Amphibalus, we will be launching a brand-new pilgrimage route during the annual Alban Pilgrimage in June."

READ MORE ONLINE

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Active IQ leads the way in emerging Saudi fitness market

There's a shift towards health and fitness in Saudi Arabia thanks to the Crown Prince and Chairman of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs, Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz AlSaud, whose *Vision 2030* programme includes an ambitious goal to increase public participation in sports and athletic activities.



 rom this comes a great opportunity for gym and studio owners to
 expand their horizons, upskill their staff and extend their offering across the Kingdom.

Raising standards

The emerging Saudi fitness market is prioritising integrity and high standards as it develops and grows. "There is much admiration for the Western education system in Saudi Arabia and we have been working with fitness partners in the Kingdom for several years to raise standards, drive quality and deliver face-to-face training and physical assessments," says Gavin Baxter, Business Consultant at Active IQ. "We recognised the need to translate materials and tailor solutions to suit





We recognised the need to translate materials and tailor solutions to suit the Saudi culture



the Saudi culture and we are working towards adapting our Level 2 Gym Instructor, Level 2 Group Training and Level 3 PT qualifications accordingly.

"It's an exciting market to be involved in with a high level of energy and enthusiasm from the fitness professionals seeking to grow their profession in line with the new health goals in the Kingdom."

Leading the way

Leading the way to fulfil the new opportunity for Saudi women to train as instructors is Tracy Aldereyaane, Vice President, Spectrum® Wellness for Women. Seeing a spike in interest among women attending her classes and sessions, she spotted the opportunity to train ladies as instructors to bring

more classes to local women.

"I looked to Active IQ for guidance and support knowing its reputation for first-rate tuition and accreditation. Their attention to detail to find solutions to meet our local culture and training needs has helped gain people's trust and confidence in our process."

Tracy undertook the Active IQ
Professional Career Development
programme in September 2020
enabling her to train other women. She
then lost no time in recruiting her first
cohort of 20 ladies to study the Active
IQ Level 2 Certificate in Group Training
train and was delighted to find 18 of
them were Saudi women. "When I first
started training here in Saudi Arabia,
instructors were mainly ex-pats from
the US, South Africa and Britain," says

Tracy. "Now I'm seeing Saudi women wanting to train both for their own self-esteem and confidence and to be able to engage other ladies in exercise.

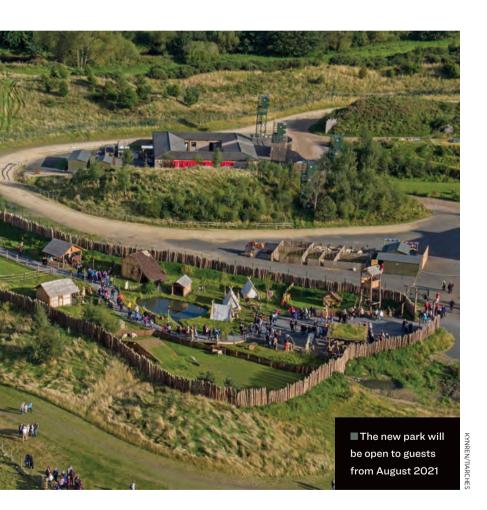
"We are breaking new ground here and currently are the only ones training women as instructors, trainers and assessors," says Tracy. "However, it won't be long before others follow our example and that's an exciting prospect."



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Going back in time

A permanent theme park will open at site of the spectacular Kynren show in Durham this year



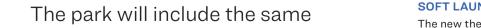
Arches, the registered charity behind the outdoor theatrical spectacular Kynren – an Epic Tale of England in Bishop Auckland, Durham, UK, has unveiled plans to open a brand new theme park.

Called 11Arches Park, the park is set in the grounds of the Kynren show on 45 hectares, close to the River Wear and overlooked by Auckland Castle.

Offering "epic journeys through time" with immersive live shows and attractions, the park will allow visitors to step back in time and explore a Viking village and walk through The Maze of Fame, the Kids' Viking Lair and Dancing Waters show.

Family-focused activities, such as Animal Croft, allow visitors to meet the stars of the Kynren shows - the horses, chicken, sheep and goats - up close.

Visitors can then take their seats at the end of the day for the crowning glory, the latest original new show 'Fina and The Golden Cape' set on the panoramic outdoor stage.



elements that make Kynren so epic - the amazing cast, the stuntriders and immersive experiences



SOFT LAUNCH

The new theme park was initially scheduled to open in 2020, but plans were put back due to the pandemic.

In 2021, the new 11Arches Park will be open to visitors every Saturday





Offering "epic journeys" with immersive live shows and attractions, the park will allow visitors to step back in time



between the dates of 7 August and 11 September 2021, before opening fully in 2022. Tickets are available for *Kynren* and 11Arches Park alongside a joint same day ticket.

Speaking exclusively to *Leisure*Opportunities' sister magazine,
Attractions Management, AnneIsabelle Daulon, CEO and co-founder
of 11Arches, said: "We describe it as
a 'ride-free theme park' with plenty
of immersive experiences. In short,
it's an entirely new visitor experience
to complement our award-winning
evening show, Kynren, with both
attractions presented under with the
theme of traveling through time and
watching legends come to life.

"It will include the same elements that make *Kynren* so epic – the amazing cast, the brilliant stuntriders, as well as all the immersive experiences and special effects." Kynren was first launched in 2016 and was created with the famed French live action operator, Puy du Fou, acting as artistic partner in its first season.

STEADY GROWTH

The UK show has grown independently since, adding and developing the theatrical experience and its visitor offering each year.

The opening of 11Arches Park is part of a strategy to establish the 7.5-acre 45 hectares site as a visitor attraction which is open every day during the UK summer months in 2022.

Night time theatrical spectacular, *Kynren – an Epic Tale of England*, hosts up to 8,000 people in a purpose-built, panoramic outdoor stage. The show centres around a 3,462sq m lake and castle, featuring pyrotechnics, water and light shows and a cast and crew of more than 1,000. ●



■ The new park will offer guests the chance to meet the *Kynren* show's stars – the animals



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Insight



Being more physically active following a cancer diagnosis is associated with a lower risk of cancer recurrence

Dr Kathryn Scott, CEO at Yorkshire Cancer Research



Tackling cancer with exercise

Cancer patients are being prescribed exercise as part of new brand new approach which could aid recovery



■ The programme is being launched by Sheffield Hallam University's Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre

pioneering programme looks to help cancer patients prepare for and respond to their treatment by offering them a combination of exercise, nutrition and psychological support.

Launched by Sheffield Hallam
University's Advanced Wellbeing
Research Centre (AWRC) and funded
by Yorkshire Cancer Research, the
new approach will provide tailored
support and guidance for each
individual on the programme.

Designed to optimise cancer treatment, minimise the length of time spent in hospital and reduce the likelihood of complications from surgery, AWRC expects the method to improve recovery rates and save lives by reducing the likelihood of cancer returning following treatment.





In recent years, it has become very clear that exercise plays a vital role in improving cancer survival rates



25

PILOT PROGRAMME

Patients with cancer of the lungs, colon, oesophagus, stomach and small intestine will be part of an initial pilot before the programme is widened to include patients with other forms of cancer. The pilot is expected to start in the autumn.

Professor Robert Copeland,
Director of the Advanced Wellbeing
Research Centre, said: "We want
to improve the way we support
people with cancer to prepare for
and recover from their treatment.

"Evidence suggests a programme of exercise, changes to diet and psychological support can reduce negative side effects, improve treatment and longerterm quality of life.

"Being more physically active following diagnosis is associated

with a lower risk of recurrence and a greater likelihood of recovery.

"Physical activity is not usually prescribed for patients receiving cancer treatment and we want that to change."

Dr Kathryn Scott, CEO at Yorkshire Cancer Research, added: "In recent years, it has become clear exercise plays a vital role in improving survival rates, and physical activity programmes should be prescribed in the same way as other treatments."

PIONEERING WORK

"At Yorkshire Cancer Research, our aim is for 2,000 more people to survive cancer every year in Yorkshire," said Scott, 'together with the pioneering team at AWRC, we're taking a huge leap into creating a world-leading programme that can be introduced across Yorkshire and beyond, helping to save many lives."



■Individuals will be given tailored support and guidance

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Towards wellness

Bannatyne's financial director, Ken Campling, explains how the group is using spas to reposition itself as a wellness provider



Gyms with a spa are more profitable than gyms without: on average they add 20-25 per cent to profitability

Ken Campling, financial director, Bannatyne

ealth club operator Bannatyne is repositioning itself as a wellness provider, as it looks to bounce back from the effects of the pandemic lockdowns.

Speaking exclusively to Leisure Opportunities' sister magazine, HCM, Bannatyne FD, Ken Campling, says the decision has been partly driven by the fact that clubs with spas are up to 25 per cent more profitable.

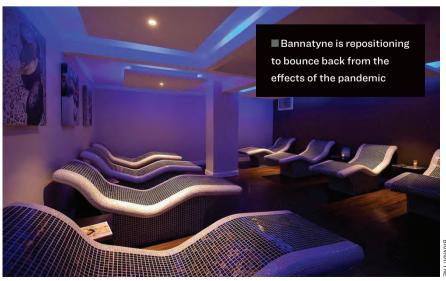
In a wide-ranging interview, Campling said: "The main strategy will be positioning ourselves as a wellness provider, which I believe can be a USP for us.

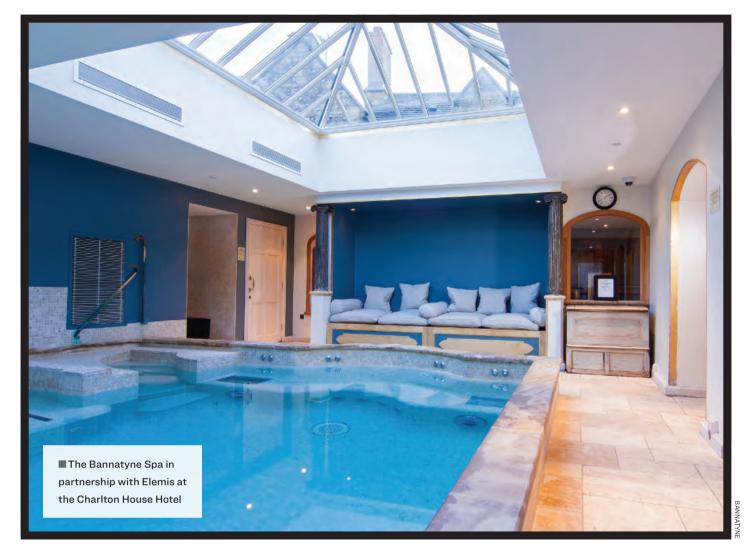
"We have all the elements needed to look after people's wellness. We have gyms, but we also have physiotherapy on every site, café bar areas for a social element and spas at 48 of our clubs.

"Gyms with spas are more profitable than gyms without: on average they add 20-25 per cent to the profitability of a location.

"We want to integrate the offering around these and get that holistic message across."

Campling said the repositioning will also require training. "We need to train staff so they know more about each part of the business and we need to be more persuasive with our members," he said.







We have all the elements needed to look after people's wellness – physiotherapy at every club and 48 spas



MORE THAN FITNESS

"We want them to understand it isn't just about fitness, but about feeling better as a person – physically and mentally – and that taking advantage of more of our complementary services will help them achieve this."

As a result of the strategy, Bannatyne expects to be back making monthly profits by the end of the year.

"I believe we'll be profitable again, month by month, by the end of 2021," Campling said.

"Early sales since reopening have been very encouraging. While I know the trend will drop off slightly, I'm hopeful there could even be a 'January' this September, for example, said Campling, "Once people are back from their UK staycations – perhaps even foreign holidays – and are thinking: 'I've got to get back to the health club now'."

ADJUSTING THE PORTFOLIO

Like other UK operators, Bannatyne has been hit hard by the pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns.

Campling revealed the company has permanently closed two clubs – Birmingham Priory and London's Russell Square – bringing its estate to 71.

Both sites were coming toward the end of their leases and – in contrast with the new focus on wellness – had no spa. ●



■The group is looking to integrate the offering around its spas and get a holistic message across

READ MORE

Read the full interview with Ken Campling in the latest issue of *HCM* magazine at www.HCMmag.com/archive

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leisure opportunities

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We position your job vacancy listings right next to our popular industry news feeds, so your career opportunities catch the eye of those hard-to reach candidates who aren't currently job hunting.

In addition, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Leisure Opps, we've also relaunched the website with fantastic enhanced search functionality which enables you to target the best candidates with a laser focus.

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Contact the Leisure Opps recruitment team

call +44 (0)1462 431385
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We are 11Arches, the producers of multi award-winning Kynren – an epic tale of England; and operators of 11Arches Park, the newest theme park in the UK.

Launched in 2016, Kynren is the biggest live production in the UK and is presented on a $7\frac{1}{2}$ acre stage of land and water with a cast and crew of 1,000 professionally trained volunteers. It was created with Puy du Fou as our artistic partner in its first season and has grown independently since, achieving a Certificate of Excellence and "Top 5 Performances to see in the UK" in Trip Advisor.

This Summer we launch 11Arches Park, a ride-free theme park with more epic journeys through time through live action shows and immersive attractions, following the footsteps of Puy du Fou, winners of 'best park in the world'. With a soft launch of 6 days this Summer due to the pandemic, 11Arches Park will move to an all Summer and a Christmas Season opening starting in 2022, alongside its popular Pyromusical, the biggest in the North East of England.

The onsite production team is expanding rapidly as a result of our growth plans, and we are looking to build a full team fit for year-long operations. We are looking for:

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If you love the thrill of spinning plates, want to get involved with live production and are unflappable under pressure, we'd love to hear from you! Visit www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/11arches for more information.

n. 14. ARCHES

11Arches is an equal opportunity employer regardless of race, colour, religion, creed, sex, marital status, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief.



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OUR VALUES: We live by our values. They guide our decisions and keep us focussed on the business plan.



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PLAY TO WIN
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our underdog mentality results matter.



SHOULDER TO SHOULDER Challenge, support, trust, encourage and believe in each other.



SWEAT THE DETAILS Step-by step, moment-by-moment, go the extra mile.



KEEP MOVING FORWARD Try new things, learn from mistakes, kick the moving ball.





Finding your fit. It's what The Gym is all about. No matter your shape or size or experience, there's a place for everyone here! Seeing everyone at The Gym grow by taking on amazing development opportunities in a growing business, and trying their arm at new things gives us a warm fuzzy feeling. And we want everyone who comes to us to get a piece of that amazing just-smashed-my-personal-best action. The Gym is where you take yourself to the next level.

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