



Issue 18 2018

Together

The official journal of **ukactive**

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The boutique business of fitness

Sweat returns

Inside:

Featuring insight from Steve Ward's crystal ball into what 2018 holds and how to create the ultimate member experience.

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Welcome

January has arrived, that time of the year when we shake off the festive period excess and get back on the proverbial bike once again. I certainly hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year and are raring to kick-start 2018 like everyone here at ukactive.

I particularly enjoy writing the January journal at the turn of the year, as it offers an opportunity not just to reflect upon the year gone but to also take a fresh-eyed look at the twelve months ahead of us. For an in-depth look at what's in store for 2018, visit p4-5.

2017 was certainly a momentous year – the physical activity sector, for so long a niche lifestyle market, is now in the mainstream: a £7.7bn giant attracting interest and investment from across the globe. Fitness memberships are at an all-time high, with 1 in 7 Britons now members.

An end-of-year highlight was National Summit, which took place at the QEII centre in Westminster on 1st November. Bringing together over 700 of the best and brightest minds from the worlds of government, health, and physical activity, the agenda explored physical activity as the 'golden thread' running through the burning issues facing society – including health, education, and social cohesion. Summit 2017 lined up an unprecedented cast of speakers, including three Government ministers, Rugby legend Lawrence Dallaglio, and ex-convict turned star John McAvoy, who earned a standing ovation from the audience with his incredible story. More on this on p24-25.

We rounded off 2017 with the Active Training Conference and Awards, exploring how to build a world-class workforce capable of turning the tide of inactivity. Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson opened the Conference by calling on attendants to pull together to drive rapid progress in the next 12 months, while CEO of Amaechi Performance Systems and former NBA star John Amaechi urged delegates to recruit diverse workforces to cultivate innovative solutions and propel organisations to new heights.

As we turn to 2018 and beyond, it's probably fitting that we start by talking about ActiveLab, the fit-tech start-up accelerator aiming to revolutionise the way we move. Applications opened on 1st November and we have now paired our 12 excellent finalists with the leading lights of business and physical activity. To find out more about ActiveLab, visit p33.

Boutique fitness event Sweat also returns, taking place on 8th March 2018 at Studio Spaces. This iteration seeks to educate and empower Britain's booming boutique fitness sector – offering valuable insights on how to build your brand and harness customer loyalty.

The Future Leaders development programme also features in this month's edition; the two groups were reunited at Active Training Awards in November 2017, and have created a fantastic cohort to pave the way for our sector's future.

So, following a hectic but highly successful year for ukactive and the sector as a whole, we won't be resting on our laurels. The UK still faces a physical inactivity crisis that costs 37,000 lives a year – so the onus is on us to build on the momentum from last year to get more people, more active, more often in 2018. I hope you can join us on that mission.

Steven Ward Executive Director, ukactive

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More people
More active
More often

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ukactive Crystal Ball Feature

By Steven Ward, ukactive CEO



What a year 2017 was. Whether it was the fall-out from Brexit and the early General Election clogging up British politics, or the daily episodes of drama emanating from the Trump White House, the year was certainly a tumultuous one.

Whereas once a President was elected with the mantra 'yes we can', today's political and social climate seems closer to 'no we can't'. The upshot of this is that taking matters into our own hands has become more important than ever. We face an environment where the onus is on our sector to affect possible changes ourselves, leading the way to address the challenges facing us both nationally and globally.

Yet despite the challenges of the current political environment, the growing influence of our sector now spreads throughout UK society, and this is being increasingly recognised. At National Summit 2017 we explored the role of physical activity as the 'Golden Thread' running through various aspects of society, and this will only increase over the next year as our sector plays a growing role delivering positive outcomes in health, education and civil society. The sector's position as a key delivery mechanism for Sport England's new national strategy for an Active Nation is already established, but there is potential to do even more.

For example, ukactive have called for £1 billion capital investment in regenerating Britain's ageing fleet of leisure centres into wellness hubs, serving as the front-line for preventative health agenda. It is up to the sector to align with current and future Government strategy and ensure we make the clearest case for investment. It is terrifying to think what could be achieved in more stable political times.


Nonetheless, with Government facing a myriad of challenges in the coming years with Brexit and slowing economic growth on the horizon, it appears that our sector must also find alternative solutions to drive forward the physical activity agenda and tackle the issues facing us as a nation. Relying on Government alone has never been a viable strategy, and this is true now more than ever. Former PM David Cameron was once derided for his idea for 'a Big Society', talking about how civil society can step in to places that the government can't. Yet we are increasingly seeing the premises of that idea come together, as our sector begins to take the lead on its own. We are now working collectively in a way that is unprecedented. For example, several distinct exercise referral programmes across the UK could come together to serve as a National Activity Therapy Service, which will have seen over 125,000 people over the past year alone. Our sector is beginning to serve a wider social and public health purpose independent of Government strategy, leading rather than following. I expect this trend to pick up pace over the course of 2018 as we build momentum behind the physical activity agenda.

Physical activity initiatives are increasingly coming together

with support from non-traditional partners, whether that be from third-sector groups or big corporates. Who would have predicted the rise of ParkRun 5 years ago, yet it now has more than 2 million registered runners worldwide. Meanwhile, major brands are playing an increasing role in encouraging physical activity, such as AXA PPP and Argos' role in National Fitness Day 2017. The borders of the sector are not just blurring; they have fully dissolved. What this means is that we have more support and resources than ever before behind the battle to tackle inactivity, and we can look to be more ambitious with what we can achieve in the short and long term.

In stark comparison with the events in wider society, the past year has been a stable one for the physical activity sector, a story of continued growth and development. Low-cost fitness continues to grow, with all the budget operators opening new gyms throughout 2017 with plans to build new clubs in the year ahead. The growth isn't confined to the budget gym sector, however. High-end gyms and boutique fitness markets have both seen healthy development this year. Meanwhile, public leisure has proven a real engine for growth, with the ukactive report Active Leisure Trends finding a 9% rise in membership over the past year.

That doesn't mean we can rest on our laurels. Indeed, the competition facing our sector is greater than ever before. Joining the myriad of new fitness concepts springing up across Britain is competition from across the world. Take Peloton, which five years ago was a new idea for cycling from home. Now it's a \$1bn company which will



likely soon have a presence in the UK, and that brings new challenges to our sector. They are not alone. The next year will see an increasingly globalised fitness world, with global behemoths entering the UK market and British fitness operators looking to expand abroad. Only the fittest will survive or face being consigned to the growing list of founding fitness brands left behind.

standards will continue to rise, from the frontline to the boardroom. There will be a concerted focus on developing skilled personnel capable of delivering high-quality workloads in the face of increased costs of recruitment. CIMSPA will become increasingly central in driving forward high standards in the sector and to continue the push to full professionalisation, particularly

Technology and innovation tend to feature prominently whenever we look to the future, and this is for good reason. Sector leaders have long acknowledged technology not as a perceived threat to be managed, but as an opportunity to take advantage of. The speed of change is now accelerating, with on-demand fitness apps becoming the norm among major operators rather than the exception, and immersive fitness concepts like 'The Trip' by Les Mills becoming an increasingly common offering. Thousands of new disrupters and innovative concepts will stake their claim in the coming years – and ukactive's goal with the ActiveLab accelerator is to help the sector navigate through these to find the real game-changers that will shape the future of the sector. Many of last year's alumni have since scored strong investment, and ActiveLab 2018 will build on that success to serve as the global launchpad for physical activity start-ups, giving them the tools to become the next fit-tech titan.

To summarise, when we talk about the future of physical activity, we are no longer talking about simply the UK fitness market. The fading lines that separate nations and industries have blurred such distinctions. It means everyone in our sector must look to 2018 with a global mind-set, while being bold enough to embrace innovation and come together to share information, all with a view to making local impact. If we can do so, I am confident we will transform physical activity in Britain from being the pinnacle of our sector to being the vanguard of a global movement.

The borders of the sector are not just blurring; they have fully dissolved

This increasingly global market should not be viewed solely as a threat however; it is also an opportunity. We are seeing a global coming together of technology, health, fashion, music and social media around physical activity. What that means for us in the coming years is an increasingly self-confident sector capable of attracting world-class talent and high-value investment from the business world and other industries. This is an enormous opportunity for the UK physical activity sector to become a global economic leader. Our sector will begin to stimulate an investment culture that sees banks and major investors – public, private, third sector, institutional – all primed to support the best initiatives we have to offer. We must ensure that the sector is ready to embrace these strategic opportunities – finding new ways of working and embracing innovative solutions to old problems.

As the stakes get higher for our sector, the standards will need to rise in accordance. Much excellent work has been done to professionalise our workforce, and these professional

given the £1.2m financial backing from Sport England, as part of their Active Nation strategy. It is up to stakeholders across public and private leisure to work with CIMSPA to continue driving standards.

Operators are beginning to see the benefits of pooling data to build an evidence base for the work we do. We are actively addressing the knowledge gap in our sector through the sharing of information, and operators increasingly recognise the huge advantages to be gained through access to sector data. Our willingness to share has led to DataHub – putting us in a position to assess what over 250m customer visits can tell us. This growing understanding of our sector is a huge opportunity – giving operators greater insight than we've ever had before, allowing detailed evaluation on prevailing trends, customer segmentation and target markets. This robust data will also allow the sector to make a much stronger case for the services they provide, whether courting public and or private investment.

Former Swim England Chief Executive Adam Paker Joins Swimming Nature as CEO



Adam Paker, the former Chief Executive of Swim England and Chief Executive of Commonwealth Games England, has joined Swimming Nature as CEO.

Paker takes the reins from Eduardo Ferre, who founded Swimming Nature in 1993. Ferre moves into the role of Product Director to focus on the company's delivery of the very best swimming tuition product on the market.

Swimming Nature recently reported exponential growth of its pool network, which included signing deals with venues such as Bannatyne, Q Hotels, and Hilton. Paker's intent is to continue to drive growth across the business – including creating an international pool network – while retaining the values, quality product, and service for which Swimming Nature is renowned.

"A growing business needs strong

leadership, and Adam's track record with major sporting organisations is second to none," says Ferre. "To find someone with this expertise, as well as a personal passion for helping



more people to learn to swim properly, is a huge coup for Swimming Nature and I'm excited for the future."

Paker's insight-led approach during his time at Swim England was instrumental in reversing the decline of participation numbers for swimming.

He will bring his data-driven method to Swimming Nature with the intention of building on their already advanced technology.

"I am excited to be joining Swimming Nature at this critical point in the company's growth," says Paker. "I first interacted with Swimming Nature as a customer in 2012 and have followed the company with interest. I was impressed with the premium nature of the product, and strongly believe there is more potential to unlock in the swimming tuition market. I intend to work closely with the internal teams to build on

the strengths of the business, so we can take the brand further and wider to teach more people to swim and to swim beautifully."



www.swimmingnature.com/sn-public

FitQuest Introduces Innovative New Machines in Partnership with The Gym Group



FitQuest, industry leaders in human performance monitoring, have launched a brand new version of the FitQuest machines, now with state-of-the-art body composition analysis. At the end of 2017, the new machines were installed in 40 Gym Group locations across London. They are the first of their kind to be fitted with the MIE FitQuest Body Composition Analyser, which uses industry standard techniques to determine body composition.

Using small, varying electrical currents, the machines can determine body fat and muscle percentage as well as a user's hydration levels. In addition to the unique FitQuest score which measures fitness against average gender and age groups, the new machines will provide a more complete assessment for users, now including both a fitness and body composition analysis.

"Our new machines are able to give people much greater insight into their health," says Brian Firth, FitQuest CEO. "Our FitQuest machines were always designed to give gym users the ability to quickly assess their general fitness. Now, with the addition of the MIE FitQuest Body Composition Analyser, people will have even greater access to data that could help them make real improvements in their overall health and wellbeing. Capitalising on the growing popularity of fitness tracking in London-based gyms, we're proud to be working

with The Gym Group to offer this innovative, new FitQuest experience to their members."

"The FitQuest machine is a stand-out product in the field of fitness measurement," says John Treharne, The Gym Group CEO. "With an engaging and easy-to-use interface, combined with the comprehensive body composition analysis, the machines provide sophisticated fitness measurements for our members. The new FitQuest machines support our premium membership offering and help us give members the tools and information they need to find their fit."

The installation with The Gym Group follows a successful pilot programme that took place early last year. The machines were made available to members of The Gym Group in Q4 of 2017.



www.miefitquest.com

Inspiring innovation and new initiatives to increase activity will be showcased at Elevate 2018

A number of brand new exhibitors are set to be a part of Elevate 2018, which is now in its third year. Technology and innovation will be showcased through a range of products that will help to create an active nation, with big brand names demonstrating the latest training equipment for gym operators. Exhibitors to date include MINDBODY, Matrix, Renew Health, PayAsUGym, Eliko, Idea, eGYM, Total Gym, FitQuest, and MyZone.

There will be three exhibitions in partnership with the COPA Series and the Elite Sports Performance and Rehabilitation Expo, as well as more products aimed at improving performance and rehabilitation.

As well as the Elevate seminars, there will also be a MINDBODY-sponsored Elevate Conference – a first for this year. The conference programme will feature a line-up of speakers who will challenge the physical activity sector

to live up to its full potential, analyse its challenges, assess its evidence, and present its opportunities to create a more active nation.

Speakers confirmed to date include: MP Tracey Crouch, Sir Muir Gray, This Girl Can architect Tanya Joseph, WHO's Alana Officer, National Obesity Forum's spokesperson Tam Fry, NHS England's clinical lead for social prescribing Michael Dixon GP, and Sport England's strategic lead of campaigns Kate Dale.

The seminar programme will consist of four streams focusing on physical activity for health and wellbeing, strategies for an active nation, the business of physical activity, and performance-maximising potential. Key issues to be addressed will include keeping the UK's top killers in check through exercise; the use of physical activity during key stages of life – including adolescence,



pregnancy, menopause, and older age; redesigning sport to reach the inactive; and maximising potential for all people to get the most out of life.

At last year's event, ukactive's CEO Steve Ward said, "If we're going to get more people, more active, more often and improve the health of the nation, we need the broadest possible coalition of partners: public sector, private sector, and third sector working together – that's what Elevate is all about."



www.elevatearena.com





Upping the ante with Active IQ

Our active leisure industry is constantly under scrutiny, so it's crucial for operators and trainers to deliver a high standard of training and guidance to members and clients. Upholding high standards will, in turn, produce health, fitness, and wellness results that fulfil our professional goals to engage more people in more activity more often.

As a leading Ofqual-recognised awarding organisation, Active IQ has a great responsibility to support the active leisure industry from top to bottom, enabling everyone involved in delivering physical activity to act with professionalism, skill, and confidence.

Key to ensuring professionalism and progression is the move towards Level 4 qualifications. No longer are they the preserve of the 'chosen few' elite trainers. Level 4 is the new 'normal' for trainers and operators who want to stand out and thrive in the market, and we have four brand new qualifications to help achieve this.

- **Level 4 Certificate in Strength & Conditioning**, developed in partnership with British Military Fitness. The course enables personal trainers to enhance their existing knowledge and extend their advanced strength and conditioning skills to work with clients who want to build strength and power, alter body composition, gain flexibility, and boost metabolic power.
- **Level 4 Certificate in Instructing Pilates Matwork**, developed in collaboration with Body Control Pilates – widely regarded as the benchmark for Pilates education. Pilates is exceedingly popular as a standalone class, but now elements of the practice are also finding their way into prehab and rehab sessions for clients.

Active iQ

- **Level 4 Certificate in Advanced Personal Training** focuses on the client journey and equips personal trainers with the skills to discuss and deliver real progress for clients, mapping them at regular intervals over an extended timeframe.
- **Level 4 Certificate in Corrective Exercise** provides learners with the knowledge and skills to assess a client's posture and movement capacity and identify issues such as joint dysfunction or restricted range of motion. From this they can create an effective corrective strategy to help regain a client's optimal movement capacity.

Upping the ante to accept Level 4 as the new 'normal' is the next step in ensuring that high standards are not just upheld, but continuously developed within our industry. This will enable us to continue to deliver accessible and effective physical activity sessions with professionalism, skill, and confidence.

www.activeiq.co.uk

External Counterpulsation Therapy – A review by ukactive's Research Institute

Renew Health Ltd is an organisation dedicated to the advancement of medical technologies in order to improve the lives of people across the world. External Counterpulsation Therapy (ECP) is an innovative non-surgical therapy that involves compression of the legs in time with a person's cardiac cycle, in order to improve blood circulation and overall heart function. ECP is recognised within the medical community as an effective tool for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases such as angina – particularly for those who cannot undergo major surgery.

The ukactive Research Institute conducted a thorough review of the scientific literature available on the health benefits of ECP in August 2017. The review highlighted some key benefits of undergoing ECP therapy:

- Patients with angina and stroke patients experienced a reduction in pain symptoms and improvements in health-related quality of life after a full ECP treatment – the effects of which lasted up to 6 months

- › For patients with chronic heart failure and coronary artery disease, ECP treatment improved arm and leg blood flow and reduced arterial stiffness that leads to poor blood circulation

renew™
enhanced circulation



- › In patients with type II diabetes, ECP significantly improved the body's sensitivity to insulin (the opposite to insulin resistance, which causes diabetes), lasting for 2-weeks post treatment
- › ECP can provide a 'training' effect, enhancing maximum walking distances and exercise performance in non-elite populations
- › When combined with strength and conditioning training, short 30-minute ECP sessions helped

enhance the recovery of elite male rugby athletes by reducing stress symptoms and muscle soreness, and improving players' wellbeing

- › Research is beginning to suggest that ECP can, in the short-term, increase short-term memory and cognitive functioning

Initial research indicates that ECP therapy has a beneficial role to play as a health treatment for certain medical populations. It also illustrates that ECP can be used as a tool to enhance training effectiveness and post-workout recovery for those with a broad range of fitness levels. Yet ongoing research is still required to discover the full impact that this therapy can have on both medical and non-medical populations.

Nonetheless, ECP may offer a light at the end of the tunnel for individuals with specific health or training needs, and it remains a promising up-and-coming therapy treatment.



www.renewtherapy.co.uk

The changing landscape of education in the fitness sector

You will likely have heard by now that education in the fitness sector is going through a period of significant change. But to what extent and why? For too long, the standard expected of our fitness professionals has remained static, while record numbers of Personal Trainers leave the industry within the first two years of entry.

The solution? To raise the bar and improve the standard of training provided to people wanting to become a fitness professional. Creating distinct career progression routes, signposting to additional training, and encouraging a culture of learning and innovation are the steps we need to take to progress training in a sector that has already produced so much. The result? A drastic improvement in staff retention – meaning more motivated people ready to tackle physical inactivity, while making a

career in fitness a genuinely attractive prospect.

We look to the work being carried out by CIMSPA and other partners when updating the professional standards relating to the Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing and the Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training. These standards will form the basis of redeveloped qualifications – however, this is only one part of the process. Selecting the appropriate assessment methods, ensuring manageability for centres and learners, and providing a range of support products also play a key role. As does stakeholder engagement that oversees, reviews, and signs off key decisions throughout the process. It is this depth of expertise and engagement that confirms the qualifications are fit for purpose and meet industry requirements.

YMCA
awards

YMCA Awards are now in the latter stages of this process, and we will be looking to launch our own qualifications early next year. The main aim of this development is to raise the bar and ensure that a person achieving one of our qualifications has the necessary skills, knowledge, competence, and behaviours to not just succeed, but thrive in the fitness sector.

If you would like any further information please contact us directly at:



awards.products@ymca.co.uk

The Retention People become TRP with vibrant new look



Customer experience management software providers The Retention People have become TRP, launching their fresh new visual identity across software, website, and brand collateral.

The new branding has been designed to better represent the company's goal of creating raving fans (members who love their clubs) and enhance the experience of interacting with the brand, by upgrading their visual identity to match the world-leading software and service they provide the industry.

James Charles, who led the project, says "This is an incredibly exciting time for TRP and our customers. The new brand identity is just one outcome of the great things that are going on within TRP every day. Whilst our look has changed, we really want to emphasise that brand values, software, and the great people who support it haven't, and we are as committed and passionate as ever about empowering health and fitness club operators to delight their members with the delivery of an exceptional customer experience."

Part of the Jonas Group of companies, TRP provides fully integrated customer experience management tools for targeted in-club interactions, intelligent automated email and SMS journeys, and actionable member feedback to operators across the globe – empowering them to increase referrals, improve loyalty, and drive concessionary spend.

You can take a look at TRP's new website here:



www.trpcem.com

OCL helps unemployed people improve their health to find jobs



A group of unemployed people from Oldham have taken part in an innovative health and fitness programme designed to help them find work.

Oldham Community Leisure (OCL) and Oldham Council's Get Oldham Working (GOW) team developed the 10-week Wellbeing Programme, specifically targeted at local people who are out of work.

Twelve people who had been unemployed for six months or more were selected for the pilot programme. They took part in a 60-minute session each week at Oldham Leisure Centre, which included exercise classes such as strength and conditioning, studio cycling, stretch and tone, and high intensity interval training (HIIT) as well as receiving advice on nutrition.

Of the 12 people who took part in the programme, three have found employment, two are taking part in work experience, and a further three have been offered work experience opportunities within OCL.

"The programme has had a significant impact both physically and mentally and I want to join this centre to continue my progress. As an Asian lady, I would have never felt comfortable in coming to this centre alone; these sessions have made me feel confident now to do so," says one participant.

Councillor Shoab Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills, says: "This programme gave attendees the opportunity to meet new people and share their experiences, which provided a great boost, as most of them have little or no social interaction outside the home."

"We are very pleased with the success of this pilot programme with Get Oldham Working. Being unemployed can be very stressful, but regular exercise can help to reduce anxiety and stress and we have seen how it has given these individuals the self-confidence they need to find employment going forward. We are looking forward to working with Get Oldham Working on a regular basis to provide opportunities for more unemployed residents of Oldham," says Louise Walton, head of human resources from OCL.



www.oclactive.co.uk

Sofa to seven marathons in just one year

Just one year ago, running wasn't part of Laura Jones's life. Now, the 29 year-old from Dorset is halfway through an epic challenge to run seven marathons around the world within a year and raise £10,000 for The Jonny Wilkinson Foundation and The Scout Association.

Jones started training from scratch in August 2016 with the help of a local beginners running group, as well as working with staff at SturFit: a non-profit community gym in Sturminster Newton. Jones loved using SturFit's Precor treadmills to improve her cardio fitness, but as time went on it was the Precor Adaptive Motion Trainer (AMT) that became her best friend.

Jones says: "As I increased my miles and started to run the marathons, the AMT became a great way to keep my fitness up without the impact. I was especially grateful after returning from my third marathon with a knee injury, as the low impact meant I could still do a challenging workout without the worry of further injury."

Jones slowly built up her distances at local events before completing the 2017 London Marathon seven months later. Then, following a tough two-

Jones will finish her epic challenge with the Kilimanjaro Marathon in Tanzania in March 2018.

Jones chose to raise money for the Jonny Wilkinson foundation, which supports mental health issues. This has a personal significance for her after the death of her father when she was just 13. Jones is also raising money for the Scouts, an organisation that helps young people to reach their full potential through challenging activities, unique experiences, and everyday adventure: a fitting match for her challenge.

On 2nd December 2017, SturFit gym closed its doors for a special fundraising challenge to amass 1700 miles on the Precor bikes, treadmills, AMTs, and rowers combined in just twelve hours.



Equipment manufacturer and supplier Precor, which is part of Amer Sports, donated a watch from its sister brand

Suunto. The Spartan Trainer with wrist heart rate monitoring is worth £399, and SturFit raised money for Jones' causes by raffling the watch on the day.

Justin Smith, Head of Precor UK, says: "To go from complete beginner to running seven marathons in a year is an exceptional feat; Laura has done

much of her preparation for this on the Precor equipment at SturFit gym, so we thought it was only fitting to donate the Suunto watch to help her raise money for her chosen charities. We wish her the very best of luck with the rest of her marathons."

Jones comments: "I hope that going from a complete beginner to running seven marathons in just one year will encourage other people to break down their barriers and overcome their fear of judgement about not being good enough, fit enough or fast enough. Hopefully I've proved that with enough determination, self-belief and commitment, you can achieve anything!"



www.precor.com/en-gb/commercial

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week trek to the start line, Jones took part in the World's Highest Marathon at the end of May, starting 5,300m above sea level at Mount Everest Base Camp in temperatures of -10c. Many of the competitors took two days to complete the course, but Jones crossed the finish line in just 9 hours and 35 minutes.

The Great British Sports Show



The Live Event Specialists

The Great British Sports Show is the brainchild of Grant Horan, Managing Director of GGS International Ltd – a Live Events Company who boast customers from around the globe.

Speaking about the concept, Horan says, "Without knowing it, the idea behind the show began straight after the London Olympics & Paralympics. My whole family got right behind Team GB and loved every second of the Games. Luckily we are a sporty family, so all of us are involved in regular activity. But I could see that wasn't the case for everyone. What happened to the legacy that we were all talking about? After much head-scratching, I realised that the missing ingredients were ease of access and communication. The Great British Sports Show is founded on filling those gaps."

Horan and his team have put in place a touring sports show that utilises the services of activity providers and sports clubs in and around the host cities. They are then selling tickets to the local communities, promoting an access-to-all approach and specifically targeting families. They proudly boast that "four hours of fun with access to over thirty different activities will cost less than going to the cinema".

Underpinning the event is an online marketing and bespoke CRM system which ensures that those who show an interest in any of the sports will be supported throughout their journey to get and stay involved.

"As far as we know, this is a first in the UK. The digital infrastructure we have put in place will ensure that if our attendees are interested in a sport, the communication channel with the provider will be there to make it happen. Not only that, but we will put in place a digital portal for self-generated news in each region we work in. Our plan is to leave a digital footprint as well as a physical one: showing measurable increases in activity wherever we go."

Exeter will be the first host city for The Great British Sports Show on 3–4 February 2018.



Tickets are on sale on the event website (www.tgbss.co.uk) and there are still exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities for organisations who want to get behind this new movement to get the nation active.

Pulse Fitness reappointed as preferred equipment supplier to the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice



After taking part in a rigorous tender process, Pulse Fitness – the dedicated equipment arm of The Pulse Group – has been reappointed as a preferred equipment supplier for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) for the next four years, making them the only equipment supplier to retain the contract.

Pulse have supplied over £7m worth of award-winning equipment to military bases in the Ascension Islands, Germany, the Falkland Islands, and the UK. UK installs include RAF Marham, RAF Coningsby, HMS Dauntless, Basingbourne Barracks, and even the prestigious Royal Guards room at Buckingham Palace.

Pulse will be looking to build on its excellent relationship with the MoD and the MoJ. All MoD and MoJ sites will be able to purchase or lease equipment from any of the following of Pulse's equipment ranges:

- CV equipment from Pulse's Series 1 – 3 lines
- Strength kit with option of increased weight stack to 145kg
- Pulse Freeweights
- Olympic Bars and bumper plates
- Indoor and outdoor functional training rigs

The contract also allows the MoD and MoJ to procure flooring, MyZONE products, training, and branding and design support from the Pulse Group.

Pulse's Managing Director Chris Johnson says, "We are delighted to be continuing our relationship with the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice, and look forward to building upon this."

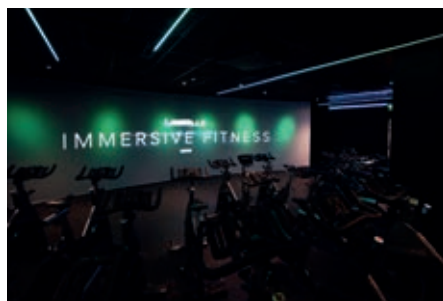


www.thepulsegroup.co.uk/pulse-fitness

Industry heavyweights join forces to drive participation

Two leading industry specialists have joined forces to help leisure operators create inspiring facilities that drive participation in physical activity.

The partnership between leisure development company Alliance Leisure and group exercise specialist Les Mills UK will allow operators to harness the benefits of the latest innovations in facility development and group exercise. With their shared expertise, Alliance Leisure and Les Mills UK are adopting a holistic approach to facility development,



providing solutions for both the physical building and the studio programming to motivate today's users.

Alliance Leisure has a long track record of designing and developing progressive facilities that engage communities in physical activity. The company is currently working on a raft of developments across the UK under the new UK Leisure Framework, which is designed to make public sector leisure facilities more efficient and affordable

Les Mills UK is at the forefront of innovation in group exercise. The company invests £1.5m each year in research and development to create products that help operators attract and retain members. These include the ground-breaking immersive cycling experience, the Trip™, which combines AV, lighting, and full screen

projection, and features in Alliance Leisure's latest project, the £5m redevelopment of Salt Ayre Sports Centre in Lancaster.

"Partnering with Les Mills allows us to offer operators the latest solutions in facility development and group fitness, which will help them to attract new markets and widen participation," says James Foley, commercial director of Alliance Leisure.

"We are delighted to partner with Alliance Leisure. With more facilities understanding the importance of group exercise, innovation, and design, our partnership will provide an easy framework to help deliver inspiring spaces which motivate members to keep coming back," says Aimee Barry, Business Development Director at Les Mills UK.



www.allianceleisure.co.uk
www.lesmills.com/uk

Swimming great Steve Parry to address active-net 2018 delegates

One of Britain's greatest swimmers, Olympic medallist Steve Parry, has been confirmed as active-net 2018's after dinner speaker.

Parry, who retired from professional swimming after winning Bronze at the Athens Olympics in 2004, will talk to delegates about lessons learned from being an elite athlete, as well as his personal battle with cancer and his business successes.

Following his retirement, Parry created Total Swimming, the UK's first temporary pool programme which specialises in the delivery of swimming at grassroots level. Parry says: "I was astounded when I found out just how many children leave primary school unable to swim, so I set up this mobile swimming company. It was very much a CSR programme rather than a profitable business, but it got me really excited about being part of the journey of getting kids to swim."

For the past 10 years Parry has worked as a presenter on BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC Sport, covering major swimming, diving, and cycling events.

Most recently Parry has become Chair of outdoor swimming and water safety programme Swim Safe, run jointly by Swim England and the RNLI.

As an inspirational, motivational and entertaining speaker, Parry will talk about overcoming adversity, implementing a vision, how to turn failure into success, and embracing change.

Dave Monkhouse, Director of Leisure-net, which manages active-net, says: "Steve's message is all about the impact a positive mindset can have, as well as the need for teamwork whilst taking individual responsibility to ensure you get the desired outcome. His energy and passion, along with the messages he shares, will no doubt leave active-net delegates with much to take away."



Launched in 2014, active-net brings together leading operators and suppliers from the active leisure



sector for business-focused, pre-selected meetings, together with informative educational slots, networking lunches, and an evening meal. active-net 2018 will take place at Eastwood Hall in Nottingham on 14 - 15 March.



www.active-net.org

MyLocalPitch signs as London FA's official Bookings Partner



MyLocalPitch, the leading grassroots sports search and booking portal, has signed an agreement with the London Football Association to become its official Booking Partner.

The partnership will provide a simple means for London FA's members to search and book football facilities in London either online or through the app. MyLocalPitch helps football venues to bring their booking systems online, allowing players to view pitch availability in real time, and to book instantly. By simplifying the search and booking process, MyLocalPitch is increasing revenues for sports venues London-wide.

MyLocalPitch is working with all levels of men's, women's and junior football to ensure participation levels grow, and they are providing a vital service to teams who find their games washed out and need to find alternative venues.

London FA members will gain access to MyLocalPitch's online platform via the London FA website, opening up the city's football facilities to make it easier for players to get involved. The London FA represents over 2,000 clubs, approximately 1,000 referees, and over 50 active leagues and competitions.

Jamie Foale, Co-Founder of MyLocalPitch, comments: "We're delighted to be working with the London Football Association and their members to continue improving access to the full range of facilities

that London has at its disposal. This is making it easier for people to participate in football at all levels of the amateur game and helping people to keep up an active lifestyle."



Lisa Pearce, CEO of the London Football Association, comments: "The natural affinity between the London FA and MyLocalPitch is the



foundation for this new partnership. We have a shared goal of getting more people in London playing football. Having quick and easy access to pitches means fans of the beautiful game can play regularly, maintaining fitness levels, improving skills and enjoying the social side of our great game."

Being selected as the booking partner for the London FA further assists MyLocalPitch in its mission to maximise pitch utilisation across the capital. MyLocalPitch already has a proven track record with pitch utilisation rates in Islington, which has increased from 64% to 83% since working with the council.

The additional bookings revenue that MyLocalPitch is generating for venues is helping public-funded sports facilities to reinvest back into grassroots football and local communities. MyLocalPitch has partnerships in place with London councils, charitable leisure operators, independent sites, and schools throughout London. Since launching in 2014, MyLocalPitch has helped over 1.5m people play grassroots sports.



www.mylocalpitch.com



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PHOTO: GARY HARRIS

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www.activeiq.co.uk



Active iQ

Moving more, Ageing Well:

How engaging with local communities can open new markets for providers

As a nation, we're frequently reminded of the significant impact that diminishing physical levels are having on society. Sport England reports that 36% of people aged 55+ are currently inactive, compared to 26% of the total population – a statistic that we as an industry can't


Physical activity as a social solution was the focus of the 2017 ukactive Summit event, with keynote speakers and experts referring to activity as a "golden thread" that runs through our society. The day showcased evidence-based research that highlights the real impact that physical activity can

appropriate opportunities for older people" that are community-based, accessible, and affordable.

Rather than seeing physical activity as a fashionable choice, we should see it as a tool for social inclusion – whether it be walking groups, exercise classes, or participation in team sports. However, for social inclusion to be truly realised, fitness providers need to go out into the communities and start offering their services to those who are not already coming to their facilities. Previous research conducted by ukactive and Life Fitness found that over half of regular gym-goers aged over 55 felt that they were more likely to remain a member of their gym or leisure centre if they were offered services, classes, and equipment specifically tailored for older people.

We need to reach people at home, at work, and in community centres, allowing the thread to naturally connect them to the leisure centres and fitness facilities that should, over time, become the hubs of our communities across the UK.

The full report, Moving More, Ageing Well is available to download on

 www.lifefitness.co.uk/ukactive_report



ignore. The Moving Communities: Active Leisure Trends 2017 Report highlighted that older people account for only 9% of the membership base, compared to 22% of the overall UK population. Yet one in five of the total UK population will be aged sixty-five or over by 2025 – a 22% increase from today.

Has society moved in such a way that we need Government Ministers to tell a country of educated people that it's better if we walk to work (or at least the some of the way), take the stairs rather than the lift, or to get up from our desks when we have breaks?

Sadly, it looks like the answer is yes – especially when you factor in the billions of pounds that inactivity is costing our government and the inevitable threat it poses on our economy.

It seems that daily physical activity is fast becoming a fashionable choice rather than a necessary function. Those that walk or cycle as part of their daily routine are very much in the minority, and it would take years to change the behaviour of an entire nation.

have on health, reduced crime rates, increased educational attainment, and improved life satisfaction.

The need for social inclusion is also evident in the report Moving More, Ageing Well from ukactive, in partnership with Life Fitness. The report highlights the benefits of providing "varied, engaging, and

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & THE NATION'S AGEING POPULATION: THE REALITY, THE CHALLENGES AND THE SOLUTIONS

WHERE WE ARE NOW

54% of people aged over 65 are classed as 'inactive'

Over 400,000 adults aged 65 & over live in residential care

Across the whole of the NHS, approximately

FIVE HUNDRED MILLION

prescriptions are dispensed per year

Less than 2/3 of GP's in England are confident about discussing activity with their patients



"The report sets out a new agenda which will have huge benefits for individuals and for the professional services of both health and social care. This is the start of a new era"

Professor Sir Muir Gray

Consultant in Public Health
Oxford University Hospitals
& the first Chief Knowledge Officer for the NHS



One in five of the total UK population will be aged 65 by 2025, up **22%** from today



WHY WE NEED TO CHANGE

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

Up to 600,000 long-term and acute health conditions could be prevented over the next decade

If all older people reached the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines for physical activity it would save the NHS **£12 billion** in treatment costs alone



ADDRESSING THE ISSUE

Embed physical activity into all care pathways

Upskill health and social care providers

Create a national centralised database of physical activity & exercise referral opportunities

Visit lifefitness.co.uk/ukactive_report to download the 'Moving More, Ageing Well' report

Focus Fitness: providing a second chance through physical activity



For former Crystal Palace footballers Gavin Heeroo and Dougie Freedman (now current CPFC Sporting Director), the life-changing power of physical activity is something that resonates all too well. The pair have used their own career experiences to set up Focus Fitness – a training provider committed to giving learners with a diverse range of backgrounds career opportunities in the physical activity sector.

After being released from the books at Crystal Palace in his late teens, Focus Fitness co-founder Heeroo felt his life was at a crossroads. Amassing worrying gambling debts and lacking motivation, Heeroo was looking for purpose. That's where senior player and mentor Freedman stepped in, providing Heeroo with the sound advice and guidance needed to get his life back on track. Taking inspiration from this mentorship, Heeroo and Freedman got together in 2012 to set up Focus Fitness UK – driven by a desire to support individuals who have a true passion for health and fitness to change their lives for the better.

Today, Focus Fitness works with learners from a wide range of

backgrounds, including NEETS (those not in employment, education, or training) and people from troubled or underprivileged homes. Career pathways and structure within the programme offers a new focus and helps to transform lives.



Speaking at ukactive's Active Training Conference on a panel concerning 'Scaling and Growth in the Training Market', Freedman commented that Focus Fitness is "here to give opportunities to everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or background".

To date, the feedback from Focus Fitness learners has been immensely powerful, with their stories boldly illustrating the power that physical

activity can have upon the directions that people take and the allure of the sector as a desirable career option.

"I was recently released from prison, and having been interested in getting into the training scene my probation referred me to Focus Fitness to do my personal training course. I enjoyed every moment of it and the staff were very helpful. Upon completion, I'll be seeking employment in a gym."

Anthony Mcdermott

"I found it very rewarding in so many different ways! A few weeks before I started this course I dropped out of university and was very confused about what my life was going to entail."

Selina Cheung

For Focus Fitness UK, this is just the beginning. The organisation has ambitions to work with more learners, leisure operators, and government departments. For Heeroo and Freedman, the lessons learned during their careers in professional sport are proving invaluable to the business and its contribution to the sector as a whole.



www.focusfitnessuk.com

Look to the future

Managing Director of Gladstone Tom Withers looks at what was hot in 2017 and what he sees as the industry's big ticket items for 2018...



What really captured your attention in 2017?

The rise of the boutique sector has been interesting, and begs the question of whether it's just fashionable or has longevity. On the positives, it demonstrates that the public are willing to pay for an experience. As an industry we can be too focused on the downward spiral of membership pricing, but the boutiques flip that on its head.

Ultimately, humans want entertainment and to feel part of a community, so the challenge for these niche clubs is driving their community through technology. Paying a premium for classes, customers also want easy booking access via a website or app, and expect it to work first time and in real time! Using a PC behind a desk to drive their business just won't cut it, which is why so many smaller operators choose our hosted, cloud-based membership management system, guaranteeing 100% up time.

Do you feel the industry is embracing technology as it should?

Put simply, no. To give it some context, Marks and Spencer spent £300 million on a three-year digital journey. The entire UK leisure sector spends just £30 million each year on their management systems, so we are massively challenged to keep up with consumers' expectations, given their digital experiences with retail and entertainment brands.

That's one of the reasons the Jonas Group, which includes Gladstone, sponsored ukactive's ActiveLab programme. Technology moves incredibly quickly and Active Lab is unearthing entrepreneurs with brilliant ideas. Our vision is to enable our customers to have the strength



of a Gladstone core back-end solution alongside a range of specialist integrated partners. Supporting Active Lab helps our clients to get hold of those technologies faster.

What's the biggest challenge the industry faces for 2018?

Definitely the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May. It's time for operators to get their act together in the way they use and manage data. We're helping them to do that through a third-party consultancy service and by enhancing our Gladstone360 software solution. New capabilities will help to address issues such as the right to be forgotten and members under the age of 13, as well as allowing consumers more direct access to update and change preferences. We've written a White Paper to help unravel what the changes mean:

 <http://blog.gladstonesoftware.co.uk/news/gdpr-overview>

It's often said people are our industry's greatest asset. What do you think is our biggest failure?

As an IT company, our assets are all about people. We only sell software, and that comes from people's minds – so we invest heavily in a training fund for our staff. We've also redeveloped our offices, designing an environment that's more creative and diverse. It's our job to take staff to the next level, which is reflected in the way we continue to retain and grow our team.

Planning is the industry's biggest failure; Not looking beyond the now and only reacting when we should be looking beyond. That's why we run our yearly customer summit. We want industry leaders to discuss what tomorrow looks like, so we can plan, create, and develop it now.

imoves, inaugural winners of ActiveLab, tell us about the transformation that winning has meant



In early 2017, imoves founders Imogen and Ian Pickles were nervously waiting to give their pitch to over 300 industry leaders at ActiveLab Live. Along with the cohort of ActiveLab'ers, they had prepared a 60-second pitch and were hoping their ideas would capture the excitement of how tech can change lives for the better.

The pitch focused on the story of John. John was a 5-year-old boy who loved being active, but by the age of 11 he had become one of the 80,000 children who leave primary school overweight or obese each year.

Children spend 6 hours a day in school – engaging in physical activity at this age is critical for children, as it sets a precedent for life. But the harsh reality is that children don't have the opportunities to be active throughout the school day other than the two hours of PE each week. Foundation stages focus on learning through play, but as children get older and move up the school they spend much of their time sat behind a desk learning. But who said children need to be sat down to learn?

This is what imoves challenge. They believe that it's those around our children – the teachers and parents – who need support to develop the skills and confidence to get our children active every day.

The question is: 'How do you provide the ideas to enable teachers and parents to get children active when we all lead such busy lives?'. This is where the technology comes in. Using a digital platform, imoves provides thousands of ideas, supporting teachers with useful videos, music, ideas, and materials in an easy-to-use way.



Ian Pickles, co-founder of imoves, explains what winning ActiveLab has meant for them: "It really gave us the confidence to build the next phase of our digital platform. We already had our PE resources for schools, but we knew that it was in the classroom that children are most sedentary, and teachers are least confident in getting the class active. In the past year, we've been able to re-brand the company, build a new website, and develop over a thousand new resources focused on getting children active in the classroom setting."

Imogen, co-founder and key driver in making sure the resources are teacher-ready, agrees: "Developing so many resources across our internal



team, with support from some of the best experts available, was a lot of hard work but the reception we've had from teachers, schools, academia, and national bodies has been extraordinary. Every teacher can now get their children active, whether it's as part of a literacy lesson, science, humanities, or as a 15-minute activity blast to re-energise the children – all within the classroom itself."

So, what's next for imoves? Imogen tells us: "We believe teachers are the first step in getting children more active, and our focus is on giving them the confidence to get every child active every day – whether in the classroom, hall, or outside. We want to use schools as the hub for activity, and by setting 'active homework' – which is fun and can involve the whole family – activity will be 'pushed' into homes, which will consequently raise parents' confidence. Our next phase is to then create the active home: activities which parents can easily and cheaply do with their children, all through the use of the ubiquitous smartphone."



www.imoves.com



Evolving School Culture – Project He:RO

Evolve: A Social Impact Company have been combatting the growing physical and mental health concerns across the UK through their unique school programme, Project He:RO. Health Mentors are at the forefront of this initiative, and they are fast becoming standard figures within primary school environments across the country.

Project He:RO places highly trained, passionate Health Mentors in schools to help address physical, emotional, and cognitive health challenges faced by children aged between 5 and 11. The programme's primary aim is to enable children to lead longer and more fulfilled lives.

Health Mentor placements range from one to five days per week for the full academic year. They work against set objectives that align with the school development plan, with regular reviews taking place to discuss the impact being made. Health and wellbeing assessment toolkits are utilised to track the emotional, physical, and personal development of individuals, classes, and the whole school. Results from 2016–17 showed an average emotional wellbeing increase of 8% across primary schools that deployed an Evolve Health Mentor.

Physical activity is a key feature of the Health Mentor's role within classroom situations, extra-curricular clubs, and through lunchtime animation. However, it is only when this aspect of a child's life is contextualised and addressed as part of a holistic

coaching programme that children begin to make independent and informed choices about their lifestyle.

Mentoring sessions and nurture groups are utilised to support individuals and small groups who require support in certain areas such as self-esteem, confidence, and



academic progress. Active learning is another key strand of Project HE:RO, with a continuous focus on merging physical health improvement with the development of emotional wellbeing.

To underpin the programme, Evolve have developed a bespoke Level 4 Qualification in Health Mentoring, in partnership with Newman University in Birmingham. This compulsory induction course takes 12 months to complete and equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to fulfil the multi-dimensional role of a Health Mentor.

Evolve recently received further recognition for their work when they were awarded the Healthier Lifestyles Award from the Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH) on Thursday 19th October 2017.

Shirley Cramer CBE, Chief Executive of RSPH, explains: "The RSPH Awards are always a major highlight of the public health calendar and this year the event was bigger and better than ever. It is a great morale booster for the public health community to be able to

come together in this way, celebrate best practice, and share innovation."

Evolve were praised for their dedication to training staff and for their unique approach to impact reporting. The judging panel commented: "This project has excellent training practices and

a superb approach to evaluating the impact of its work. It has good sustainability and scalability potential, as it links health to educational outcomes and highlights the importance of effective partnership when working with schools and local authorities."

Graham Morgan, Chairman of Evolve, explained: "Everyone in the Evolve family is to be congratulated on the recognition of this RSPH Award. We have pioneered the direct support of children's health and wellbeing in schools while everyone else has been claiming that sport is some sort of silver bullet.

We would like to thank the hundreds of school head teachers who have supported our work to help children become healthier, happier, and smarter."

For more information regarding the support Evolve can offer to develop the wellbeing of children in school, contact Josh Cronin on



josh@evolvesi.com

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Think Big: DataHub



We create more data every two days than we did from the beginning of time up until 2003. Where data's involved, we've got to think big.

In the fitness industry, data is something we've got in spades and yet something we've been lacking, all at once. Every treadmill, kiosk, turnstile, CRM system, smartwatch, and online booking adds to the prolific amount of data that sports providers, health clubs and leisure centres collate daily. But until recently, there has been no central repository for that data – nowhere to compare like for like, to access accurate and standardised reporting or share benchmarking data. Getting an industry-wide picture? Impossible.

The DataHub, established in 2013 by 4 global, Badminton England, Places for People, and Xn Leisure is a collaborative project providing an automated, secure way to aggregate all physical activity data from health, fitness, and sports providers and align it with data standards. The initiative has grown into the largest repository of sports and leisure participation data in the UK, with DataHub currently holding data from more than 300+ million visits to more than 1,300 sites – numbers that grow week on week.

Utku Toprakseven, Director at 4 global, says: "By sharing live, business-critical intelligence, our ultimate aim is to allow the industry to make data-driven decisions that will get the nation more active and healthier. Accumulated data is power."

Knowing how well your business is performing, seeing beyond your four walls, and identifying areas that need developing is crucial for every customer-focused business.

"Where once we were living in the dark, our sector is now on the verge of being blinded by the light, thanks to the sheer amount of information available and our growing competence to process it," says ukactive's CEO, Steven Ward.

What makes the DataHub stand out is standardisation. "Every software system reports differently. An adult swim is an adult swim. Youth football and Little Kickers offer the same activity. But we all name sessions differently, so operators could never compare or share intelligence on why one activity is more popular. The task of creating industry-wide, standardised naming seemed insurmountable," says Phil White, Head of Technology Services and Support at Places for People.



The DataHub is governed by an industry-led Steering Group made up of ukactive, CLOA, Sporta, CSPN, 4 global, the main NGBs, national operators, and leisure management system providers. Will Barr, Business Intelligence Manager at GLL, sits on the Steering Group. "Its role is to lead discussions on data standards and grow the DataHub, so eventually the entire activity sector will use it to drive operational improvement and gain insightful insight," says Barr.

ukactive plays a role as the DataHub's research and insight partner.

"Generating effective insight across the whole activity sector is something we've talked about at length but never been able to do," says Dr Steven Mann, ukactive Research Director. "As an activity provider, what you really want to know is what works, what's on trend, where's the industry heading. We can finally start finding this out."

The DataHub is allowing the activity sector to create a tangible link between what it does and improved health outcomes in practice. GLL has been using the Social Value Calculator (SVC) module, delivered in partnership with Experian and Sheffield Hallam University, to measure the social value of its interventions since 2016. Winner of the 2017 Flame Spark of Innovation award, the SVC allows operators to map the social impact of a particular scheme within any centre.

In summer 2017, the ukactive Business Performance Benchmarking tool was integrated with the DataHub to give the service increased independence and credibility. Free for ukactive members, it provides insight into how facilities are performing against competitors across a number of key performance metrics – attrition rates, membership movement rates, joiner rates, membership yield and average length of membership – and against the industry average.

Collecting data is something all businesses in this industry do. Now, it's using that data successfully – to improve decision-making, generate effective revenue streams, enhance operations, and ultimately create that joined-up approach that everyone's been talking about for so long – that really counts.



www.web.datahubclub.com

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EVIDENCE BASE: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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This series of seminars will examine the evidence base behind physical activity and its potential contribution to health and wellbeing throughout an individual's life.

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Elevate's business seminars see industry experts providing insights into the trends shaping the sector, how to get the attention of the investment community, and how to use the data your business gathers, as well as practical sessions on topics including marketing, social media, cost-savings, staffing and many more. There will also be an afternoon dedicated to aquatics and pool operation.

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National Summit Review 2017

By Anne Rees



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With Physical Activity as a social solution its headline theme, this year's National Summit saw nearly 700 thought leaders gather to discuss the role of activity in tackling society's biggest issues.

Lords, heads of corporate firms, national governing bodies, charities, and local governments. All were eager to learn, debate, and progress the role of physical activity as the golden thread within society.

The day was kicked off by ukactive Chair Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, who delivered a compelling speech that called upon government to make physical

for a pioneering cross-sector initiative. The scheme will be led by ukactive, Sport England, Disability Rights UK, and the English Federation of Disability Sport. Long term, this venture will give disabled people and those with long-term health conditions improved access to physical activity opportunities and, in turn, positively impact the discrepancy in activity levels between disabled people and the rest of the population.

England rugby star Lawrence Dallaglio rounded off the morning sessions with a dynamic discussion between himself and Greg Whyte on physical activity's capacity to turn lives around. He spoke openly of how, in his darkest moments as a teenager, it was physical activity that saw him through. Dallaglio ended with a challenge to the sector – and big brands in particular – to team up with ukactive if they want to make a difference through physical activity initiatives.

A highlight for many in attendance was the speech from John McAvoy – a reformed armed robber sentenced in his youth to a double life sentence. It was an impassioned speech, in which he detailed his unhealthy and dangerous lifestyle prior to his life sentences, portraying himself as a man far from ever embracing – let alone encouraging – physical activity. Yet, he proceeded to tell his captivated audience how, whilst inside prison, he discovered physical activity and how it dramatically transformed his life. John is now an Iron Man runner, Nike ambassador, and true figurehead in



National Summit was a thought-provoking day of shared intelligence, policy debates, and inspiration

With Physical Activity as a social solution its headline theme, this year's National Summit saw nearly 700 thought leaders gather to discuss the role of activity in tackling society's biggest issues.

Included amongst guests were physical activity heavyweights, Government Ministers, MPs and

activity a 'national religion'. She urged Westminster to take decisive action in battling the growing physical inactivity crisis, and praised the MPs in attendance as 'glimmers of hope' in this high-stakes battle.

Following this, the then Disability Minister Penny Mordaunt MP used Summit as a stage to unveil plans



raising the profile of physical activity among those akin to his former self. John showcased the true power of physical activity as a social solution, and in doing so brought the audience to its feet for a standing ovation at the end of his session.

The day's high quality agenda was bolstered by several lively panel sessions on pertinent topics where physical activity can serve as the golden thread. These sessions brought experts together to debate the role of physical activity in areas such as improving wellbeing among the elderly. Meanwhile, the 'Looking after our future' session, Chaired by leading educationalist and ukactive Board Member Adrian Packer CBE,

comprised a childhood activity-focused panel which was unique in its inclusion of a student – allowing for an inimitable perspective on the topic.

The Active design panel's attention focused on the benefits to be gained from well-considered road structures, buildings, and the implementation of wellness hubs. The conclusion of the debate was a unanimous response that the science of behavioural change lay at the heart of the

McAvoy showcased the true power of physical activity as a social solution, and in doing so brought the audience to its feet for a standing ovation

issue and encouraging an active childhood is essential in ensuring physical activity becomes habitual in adult life. Other panel sessions focused on hot topics such as

disability access, mental health, and how physical activity can help positively shape our communities.

The National Summit agenda was supported through the release of three ukactive policy reports, which tied in closely with the event's theme of physical activity as the 'golden thread'. The reports outlined the physical activity sector's increasing role in battling a range of societal issues; including supporting ageing

populations (through a report released with Life Fitness), building more active communities through the rollout of wellness hubs (through a report with Alliance Leisure), and the social value that leisure facilities deliver by helping to improve health, subjective wellbeing, education, and prevent crime (through a report with the DataHub).

Overall, National Summit was a thought-provoking day of shared intelligence, policy debates, and inspiration. It delved deep into the positive benefits that physical activity can have on society in tackling the most pressing issues we face, serving as a springboard for future action and tangible impact.



For more information www.ukactivenationalsummit.com



Promising Practice

By Dr Steven Mann

Building on the recommendations of the All Party Commission on Physical Activity, the ukactive Research Institute in collaboration with the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine – Sheffield and Public Health England invited organisations, individuals, and groups to take part in a second review exercise to identify physical activity programmes that demonstrate promising practice in local communities.

This exercise followed on from the Public Health England commissioned review in 2014, which was conducted by the aforementioned parties, seeking to identify 'what works' for local interventions in promoting physical activity.

The aim of this second review was to identify physical activity interventions in the UK, understand how evaluations are being undertaken to inform and support delivery, to gauge the impact of these interventions, and assess the progress made within the physical



activity sector in terms of evaluation quality. Interventions entered to the review were assigned a level based on

This study is part of a continuing process to design, evaluate, and implement evidence-based

This study is part of a continuing process to design, evaluate, and implement evidence-based interventions to tackle inactivity in local communities across Britain.

the Nesta Standards of Evidence, with evaluators considering the quality and design of evaluation as opposed to the quality or impact of the intervention. This process culminated in the production of the **"Moving at scale – Promising practice and practical guidance on evaluation of physical activity programmes in the UK"** report. This report provides practical guidance and support to those delivering projects and programmes across the UK on how to effectively evaluate their work. It also includes a number of case studies which have implemented, or are in


interventions to tackle inactivity in local communities across Britain. The ukactive Research Institute are working with partners such as the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine – Sheffield and Public Health England to deliver a developing programme to support this aim.

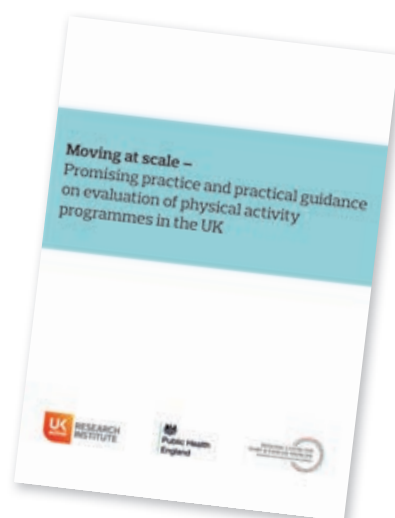
For more information about the Promising Practice programme or the work of the ukactive Research Institute more generally, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Research Team via

 research@ukactive.org.uk

Promising Practice 2 In Physical Activity



the process of implementing, a level of evaluation in line with the requirements of Nesta Standards of Evidence Level 3. To download a free copy of the report, please visit <http://research.ukactive.com/moving-at-scale/> 



Research update – ERS Project



In 2016, the ukactive Research Institute launched a new project to establish the extent to which exercise referrals schemes (ERS) can change behaviour and increase physical activity.

The project, a first for the industry, is a partnership between ukactive and exercise referral software and public health specialist, ReferAll. The goal is to create a pool of solid evidence from ERS across the UK that can be used to facilitate a nationwide rollout.

PhD student Nikita Price is undertaking the three-year research initiative. We caught up with her to find out more:

Why do you think ERS are so important?

Having worked in exercise referral, I have seen first hand the benefits both psychologically and physically. The literature suggests it works, but we need more evidence. Understandably, because of this lack of evidence, the medical profession underrates exercise referral. This may in turn reduce the likelihood of GP referrals.

Where did you start with such an immense project?

Background reading followed by a literature review is essential. This

indicates clearly what is missing and therefore the scope of the work required. I am currently undertaking a meta analysis on existing research of ERS. From this I hope to see what schemes are working and for what types of patients. For example, a patient undergoing cardiac rehab: I'd look at what exercise has been scheduled, with what frequency, and whether it is improving their health.

I have also been reviewing the operators' data on the ReferAll database. This includes the date the referral was made, the type of exercise they are referred to, length of scheme, and biometrics. Alongside this I am looking for flaws in data entry and the data itself. The entire project is based on ReferAll's database. I hope my work will highlight the important research and development they have done to create this platform and that we can use it to promote the success of ERS throughout the UK.

What are your aims for the research?

I am hugely enthusiastic about this research. I have always questioned how ERS could and should be changed and now I have a chance to make a real impact by working with ukactive and ReferAll. Specifically, I would like to see whether it's possible to define what type and duration of exercise is needed for any particular condition to create a successful outcome. If we can highlight proven success via data and analysis, then hopefully we can increase adherence and even influence NICE guidelines. Ultimately, it's about engaging more patients in exercise referral schemes to give them a better quality of life.

1 If you are an operator running an exercise referral scheme and would like to participate in the research, register your interest at <https://secure.refer-all.net/uka>



Nikita Price is a first-year PhD student at Coventry University. Her interest in exercise referral has continued from work experience and volunteering at secondary school to employment and education as a Personal Trainer, Exercise Referral Instructor, and in Cardiac Rehabilitation during a BSc in Sport Psychology. Her passion for research into ERS was brought to fruition during her dissertation for an MSc in Health Psychology. Alongside the PhD, Nikita is currently working as a Research Assistant at Solihull Council.

The Gym Gets Personal: Creating the Ultimate Member Experience

With competition ever increasing, operators are quickly realising that personalising the member experience can be an effective way to keep members committed and engaged. But personalised experience is more than just a welcome-by-name at reception. Today's gym user demands more.

As a result, some operators are creating completely bespoke experiences, ensuring that every member feels like their fitness journey is recognised and supported from the moment they walk in the door.

Speedflex at their Darlington and Mansfield sites. With Speedflex machines, the gyms can now provide members with live feedback on their training through continuous heart rate monitoring using a MyZONE belt. Member progress is also regularly evaluated throughout the session and shared digitally.



"We decided to introduce Speedflex as the classes provide a high intensity but also low impact workout,

and as the machines generate personalised resistance levels, every individual can train at their optimum level," says Anthony Elliott, Operations Director at The Bannatyne Group. "This means that you could have an 80-year-old workout next

allows trainers to tailor each class to members attending.

"We're moving into an experiential age. Customers are looking for more than just a gym with some kit in it," says Elliot. "We've realised that providing the best experience possible for customers doesn't just mean using technology to do this, but in fact providing our members with the best programming possible to meet their needs."

So far, the addition of Speedflex at Bannatyne's Darlington and Mansfield location has improved retention rates and helped drive secondary spend, as many members are now buying their own MyZONE belts to use during their sessions. The gym is planning to roll out Speedflex to four more facilities by the end of 2017.

DW Fitness First

Lee Matthews, Fitness and Member Experience Director at DW Fitness First says that while personalisation has become a buzzword of late, DW Fitness First have always focused on providing a bespoke experience for members.



"We realise that not everyone is a member for the same reasons and people specifically have

different levels of gym confidence and motivation. That's why variety within our products, services, and programming is so important. Whether it's groups, 1:1 support, no support, or an injection of inspiration, we recognise that everyone prefers something different. We know we have 6 types of members and train our entire team to understand how



The Bannatyne Group

Recognising that many of their members are demanding a more personalised experience, The Bannatyne Group recently introduced

to an 18-year-old and both are still getting a fantastic workout."

A key factor to the Speedflex offering at Bannatyne is the control they have with the programming, which



best to engage with them and which products are best suited to them."

Similarly, Matthews highlights the importance of virtual experiences at DW Fitness First. Everything from apps to the website to the digital screens in the club are designed to help people connect with the brand in a tailored way. DW Fitness First's BEAT classes are a great example, providing real-time data to members during the class. Summary emails are sent to participants after each class with data like maximum heart rate, average heart rate, and time spent in each zone.

Since adding elements of personalisation to the member experience at DW Fitness First, Matthews says that the biggest impact has been an increase in visitation. "Members are exercising

more often than they used to, and this is a direct result of everything we've changed."

Everyone Active

Leading local authority leisure operator Everyone Active is more connected with their members than ever before. With the introduction of many new personalised services,



Associate Director Ben Beevers says it's the personal touch that keeps members coming

back. One example is the digital feedback built-in to children's swimming lessons. Now, whenever a child masters a major swimming milestone, like putting their face in the water, parents are sent an email with details of the skill and how their child has been getting on, and a prompt encouraging them to take their children swimming to help their development outside of lessons.

Similar personalised services now exist on the gym floor too. With TechnoGym equipment, QR codes, and more personalised member information on file, all data is now consolidated, and feedback is continually shared with members, giving them regular summaries of how active they've been.

"We know that people who plan their activity will come twice as often as those who don't," says Beevers. "It's not rocket science. The easier you make it for someone to book and plan their gym sessions, the more likely they are to go."

Beevers sites growing acceptance for people to provide data for more bespoke experiences. "Two or three years ago, people didn't trust sharing their data online," says Beevers. "Now, that expectation has changed. As long as members get something back from it, people are happy to share data related to their fitness goals."



However, Beevers acknowledges there must be a balance. If the level of personalisation gets too invasive, it could be detrimental. If done correctly though, the effect on customer experience and retention can be huge.



Sweat 2018



sweat

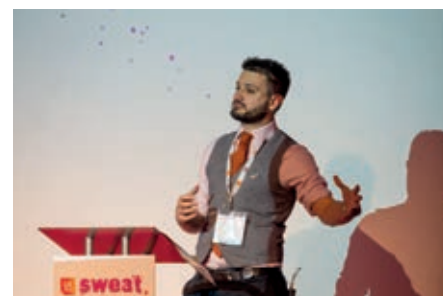


Sweat is returning for round two – set to take place on the 8th March in East London. The boutique fitness area is continuing to grow in strength and prominence within the sector, with its customers religiously dedicating time and money to their chosen boutique. As such, many operators are asking for guidance on pertinent business issues, marketing strategies, and are all keen to understand – what's next?

Building upon the incredibly successful first year of Sweat, the 2018 event will look to answer burning questions on what the future holds for boutique fitness and help sector figures to navigate the minefields of the boutique market. Alongside broader relevant discussions there will be dynamic panel debates on topics including; partnerships – how, who and why, the importance of data within the boutique space and how it can be used beneficially, and when and how to scale up. There will also be a strong emphasis on sector trends, with keynote speakers giving insight into current global trends, trends in the UK and in the years to come, and the longevity of trends in boutique fitness.

The day will bring together over 200 delegates from across the physical activity sector, including;

mainstream and boutique operators, corporate organisations, trainers, entrepreneurs, design workers, media, PR, and social influencers. This unique mix of delegates occasions a rare opportunity for all involved



in the boutique space to learn from and debate with experts and like-minded business figures. Moreover, it is an outstanding opportunity for attendees to form relationships and foster partnerships that will open up opportunities for their own brand, and press forward the mission of getting more people, more active, more often.



www.ukactivesweat.com

UK Active – Future Leaders

By Valerie Copenhagen, UKDS



**'F.E.A.R has two meanings
– Forget everything and
run OR Face everything
and rise' Zig Ziglar.**

I wasn't sure what to expect when I hit submit on my online application to attend and participate in the Future Leaders course earlier this year. Having only been in my role at UK Deaf Sport – an organisation that had undergone significant change over the past two years – for less than 7 months, I was a little low in confidence and feared the direction I was going in my career.

Over the course of the week I met some incredible people, I learnt so much more about the sector, and the networking opportunities were invaluable. Early on in the course I realised I was going to struggle with the set-up of the course due to my deafness. With the presenters spending their time walking all over the main room and the acoustics not being great I worried I was missing information. I was supported by several members of the group, and I'm so grateful for this.

The course was life-changing for so many different reasons, and I regularly refer to my notes and the study books I was inspired to buy soon after.

Having the opportunity to talk to other professionals in the field, share my concerns, and get feedback was an amazing experience and gave me the confidence I needed. I soon noticed after the course that I had come back to England a different person – a person not only filled with confidence and determination to continue the good work of the organisation and face the challenges I would be presented with on a daily basis, but also an individual who just wants to continue to learn and soak up as much information and knowledge as I can.

So what now? In August we received word that we had been successful in receiving funding, so I'm really pleased to say that not only is the organisation going to be around for a while, but I'm not going anywhere either – I'm here to stay and endeavour to grow within the sport and physical activity sector.

Leadability and Future Leaders

By David Morphew, Aspire



Being disabled can have its challenges, but I also get to do some amazing things. The Future Leaders programme is way, way up there.

I was over the moon to be selected for the new leadability programme sponsored by Matrix, and to be one of only four people with a disability to win a scholarship to ukactive's Future Leaders Course at prestigious business school IESE in Barcelona in July. This Course is to catapult future leaders up the senior management chain, to hopefully one day become future CEOs or on the board of directors for fitness organisations.

The classes on the course are very intense and in-depth, but with great tutors like Miquel, Alan, and Mireia who made them fun and interesting, you can't fail to learn.

We learnt so much in such a short space of time. Classes on things like customer experience personalisation, digitalisation, leading through uncertainty, and getting things done teach the tools needed to be better leaders and build successful, forward-thinking companies.

I met some fantastic people and I made some great contacts. We are now part of an exclusive Alumni, which we can use as a platform to keep in contact with each other.

I cannot express enough what a fantastic experience this was and how important it is to start getting people with disabilities into senior positions within large fitness organisations to promote inclusion and give disabled people a recognised voice in our centres and sports facilities.



www.ukactivefutureleaders.com

Nothing is impossible: Future Leaders 2017 Review

by Laura Sheasby, Head of
Business Development, Active IQ

After spending time in any industry or role, it's easy to default to automatic decision-making. One tends to tackle challenges in the same way every time. The Future Leaders programme taught me to think differently. With theory applied to different case studies, I was challenged to take a new approach to problem solving.

involved, made this truly the best management course I have done in my career.

Our class was a diverse group of managers and leaders from across the fitness industry, and the case studies we evaluated were broad and varied. Each day, we worked in small teams to discuss the cases, and then got back together as a whole group to work through them with some of the IESE's top business professors, all of whom brought with them an impressive breadth of expertise and experience. We also took on an executive challenge; a structured Action Learning peer coaching exercise where each person brought a real challenge from their current



The Future Leaders course stands out because of the world-class professors who worked with us. I have never experienced such a great range of absorbing and thought-provoking interactive lectures. The academic director, Miquel Llado, and the rest of the faculty were incredible. It was highly engaging learning with top quality teaching. The entire programme was also incredibly well run. Michelle Amato, the Programme Director, and Fatima Ros, the Programme Coordinator, deserve a special shout-out. Every detail was organised to ensure the entire week ran smoothly.

The people I met at Future Leaders are incredible contacts. If we don't naturally cross paths in the future, I know there will be times when I can draw on this excellent network for advice. They were also great company for a week. While the programme was a week of intensive learning, our schedule included social activities such as a bike ride and a visit to one of Barcelona's cookery schools to make paella. Many of us set our alarms early to run and train together – I'm glad to say this number grew each day!

It was such a stimulating environment – both academically and socially. Not to mention the fantastic location! The challenge now is maintaining that energy. You rarely have the opportunity to spend so much quality time concentrating on a single project like this. While it is a week out from the day-to-day, this is an important event that supports ukactive's vision of enabling more people to be more active, more often. And it is most definitely shaping the future leaders of our sector.



In July, I joined 48 other people for an intensive week of learning at the IESE campus in Barcelona. Before arriving, we were required to read several case studies and complete a management-style questionnaire and 360°-feedback process. The pre-work was a key part of the programme.

We left behind our day jobs to focus totally and completely on the course, without distractions. It required discipline and this, combined with the sheer commitment of everybody

job to discuss with the group. The brief was: "what keeps you awake at night?"

The goal was to get feedback on that challenge from your peers. And even though everyone had different areas of expertise, we found many synergies with other people. The key things I learned were that nothing is impossible and that there is great value in looking at problems in a different way.

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Joining the dots on workplace mental health

by Huw Edwards

ukactive Public Affairs Director



There has been much fanfare and attention on the much-needed new report into mental wellbeing in the workplace, "Thriving at work", led by Paul Farmer, CEO of Mind and Lord Dennis Stevenson. The attention is fully merited, as the report sets out in a considered way the impact of mental illness, and proposes solutions for employers to implement.

The report puts the annual cost to the UK economy of poor mental health at up to £99bn, of which about £42bn is borne by employers. It was found that approximately 15 percent of people at work have symptoms of an existing mental health condition, which highlights that, given the right support, people who suffer from mental illness can thrive in employment. The report also links current failures to the UK's relatively poor productivity. An analysis by Deloitte examining existing workplace mental health interventions identified potential to generate a return to business of between £1.50 and £9 for every £1 invested.

This is a comprehensive piece of work and should be welcomed. It comes up with worthy suggestions for change:

open conversations about mental health in the workplace, monitoring employee mental health and wellbeing, and developing a mental health at work plan. It also wants to make Statutory Sick Pay more flexible to help with a phased return to work for those who are starting to recover from an illness, and for employers to accept sick notes from mental health nurses as well as doctors.

One observation is that the weight of expectation does fall heavily on the employer, so can Government do more through providing a better landscape to encourage employers further?

It was found that approximately 15 percent of people at work have symptoms of an existing mental health condition, which highlights that, given the right support, people who suffer from mental illness can thrive in employment.

What the report doesn't address is the role of physical activity in this vision, which is surprising when government has already acknowledged the significant part our sector has to play in this agenda. Sporting Future outlines the Government's commitment to "work with others to establish a network of employers which will bring together organisations keen to support and encourage their staff to be more physically active."

Two years on, we await news on the development of this network, knowing that both the physical activity sector and the business sector remain keen to support its development. Furthermore, Government has the ability to incentivise through the tax system to support workers accessing deals around both gym membership and home equipment, a case we at ukactive continue to make to it.

The connection of this commitment back to the report is clear: evidence shows that people who exercise regularly have improved self-esteem and reduced stress and anxiety,

something that has been recognised within NICE guidelines. The office, and the workplace should be no different. It's time for Government to show greater emphasis on delivering a partnership between the business community and our sector, so that the role of physical activity in supporting mental wellbeing is both fully recognised and utilised.



publicaffairs@ukactive.org.uk

Why data-enabled insight is the key to an active nation

By Steven Ward

With consumers' money, time, and attention at a greater premium than ever before, physical activity providers have got their work cut out if they want to attract the public. Today, we face more distractions than ever – and that's before you even look up from your smartphone.

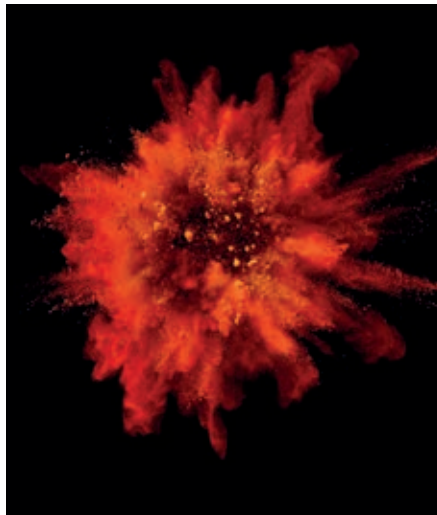
But while the proliferation of mobile devices has changed the way we access services – such as navigating from A to B, ordering takeaways, or even dating – accessing sport and physical activity offerings remains an arduous process. No wonder humans are less active than ever before – we can order in KFC without leaving the sofa, but booking a badminton court to burn off these calories can be tougher than catching said chicken would be.

How digital innovation can help

It doesn't have to be this way. Innovative companies have allayed the headaches of travel, eating and meeting partners, and so too can gyms and leisure centres adopt digital innovations to drive business through their doors.

Open data is key to this; by collaborating and sharing more information about their services, physical activity providers can make exercise the natural choice above non-physical leisure activities and help

millions unlock the health benefits of a fun and active lifestyle. A standardised approach to integration between activity providers and third parties seeking to drive traffic their way will make partnerships easier and drive the growth of the industry.



At a time when sedentary habits are placing unprecedented strain on the NHS and local social care services by causing major diseases such as stroke, type-II diabetes, and dementia, there is a growing sentiment that gyms and leisure centres have the chance to step forth and become the preventative frontline of health care. Driven by the growth of ukactive's gym, technology, and equipment supplier members, our industry has gone from being perceived as a niche lifestyle sector to a £7.7bn behemoth acknowledged by government as being integral to the future health of our nation and economy.

Encouragingly, a growing number of gym and leisure centre operators are

already feeding their information into the DataHub platform – a collaborative project between ukactive, 4global, and other partners – which aggregates data to achieve shared objectives such as increasing participation levels and commercial return. DataHub offers insights into consumer fitness preferences for businesses to improve their offering, but the growing acceptance of data-sharing among operators is a promising sign that benefits may soon be harnessed to easily identify activity opportunities for consumers in their local area.

Meanwhile, physical activity accelerators like ukactive's ActiveLab and the OpenActive Accelerator are

helping to develop innovative startups with the potential to transform the sector and facilitate greater collaboration.

As a data geek myself, I cannot stress the importance of driving this agenda: data partnerships have the potential to be game-changing. A comprehensive approach to sharing data can empower the physical activity sector to transform society by unlocking health opportunities for key demographics – such as older adults – that could bring significant NHS and social care savings. A recent ukactive report found that supporting over-65s to meet recommended exercise guidelines could save the NHS more than £12bn in treatment costs.

Across all age groups, data partnerships form a central pillar of ukactive's mission to foster happier, healthier, and wealthier communities across the UK. What's more, we'll be able to book a Pilates class as quickly as we can order a pizza.



www.activelab.co



#Fitness2Me

#Fitness2Me is our movement to celebrate what fitness means to each and every person, promoting that keeping active means something different to us all.

We want to break down the barriers that stop people being active, embrace the unique reasons for leading an active lifestyle, and show that fitness is for everyone!

We hope that by encouraging people from all walks of life, activity levels, and interests to share what fitness means to them, it will inspire others to live healthier and happier lives through being active.

Here were a few of our favourite shots from 2017:



Would you like to be a part of the #Fitness2Me movement?



➤ Simply grab a piece of paper and scribble down what fitness means to you



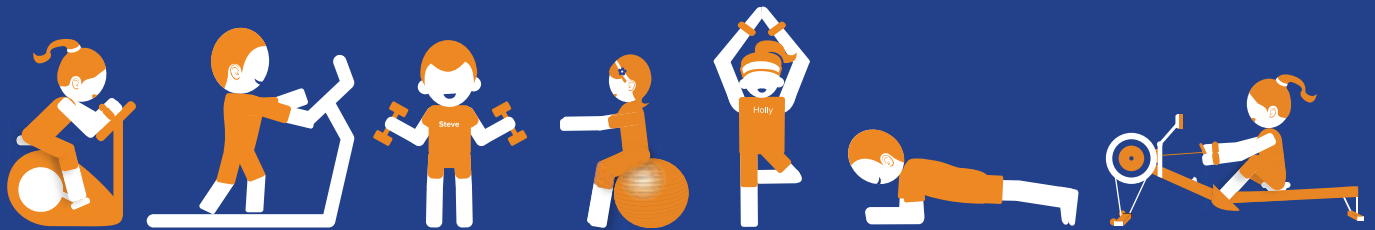
➤ Then take a photo or capture a video to share with us on social media



➤ Don't forget to add #Fitness2Me and #FitnessDay and tag us via @FitnessDayUK



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National Fitness Day 2017 Hits New Heights



On Wednesday 27th September, National Fitness Day got off to a flying start with Strictly Come Dancing Star Darcey Bussell CBE leading a mass workout at Everyone Active's Paddington Recreation Ground.

Darcey was joined by keen fitness enthusiasts and groups of school children for a DDMIX session – a dance fitness class.

The workout attracted Britain's leading TV and radio stations, including BBC Breakfast, Sky Sunrise, 5Live, and Global Radio – resulting in it being broadcast live to people all over the country, helping to take the total media reach of the National Fitness Day campaign in 2017 to 62m and expand awareness of the campaign.

In its seventh year, National Fitness Day got more than 5.1m people taking part in physical activity on the day itself, making good on its pledge to be the most active day of the year. With over 20,000 free events taking place in gyms, leisure centres, communities, workplaces, and schools, it truly did celebrate the fun of fitness of physical activity.

The day was incredibly popular across social media, attracting tweets from the likes of Anthony Joshua and Davina McCall, as well as members of the public to show how they were getting active to celebrate the day.

National Fitness Day trended yet again throughout the day on Wednesday 27th September, resulting in the biggest social media reach to date for the campaign. This was hugely influenced by the successful #Fitness2Me campaign that encouraged people to share what fitness meant to them throughout the campaign build up.



Save the date

Wednesday 26th September 2018



#fitnessday

National Fitness Day 2018 will take place on Wednesday 26th September, with the aim to go above and beyond the great successes of the 2017 campaign.

Our ambition will yet again be to deliver the biggest and widest reaching National Fitness Day to date, deepening the engagement of audiences from the inactive to

the already active across a range of settings from the home to the high street, the office to the gym.

We will also look to expand on the interest and success across schools, colleges and universities this year to help widen the reach of the campaign and day itself.



For updates and news on all things National Fitness Day visit nationalfitnessday.com

#BeActive, BeMindful

by Georgia Seabrook



September 2017 was quite a month for fitness campaigns, with National Fitness Day and the European Week of Sport (EWoS) successfully championing the fun of fitness and the diversity of all things active. ukactive were chosen to be the UK's representative organisation for the EWoS #BeActive campaign, which meant getting involved in a number of exciting events to help celebrate all the fantastic things that physical activity can bring!



On Monday 25th September, mental health charity Mind organised the Be Mindful event at the London Olympic Park to highlight the benefits that physical activity can have on mental wellbeing. I was lucky enough to be asked to help out with

(and, occasionally participate in) the mindful walks, bike rides, parkour lessons, yoga tasters, and boccia games that were on offer.

This meant that most, if not all people who attended tried something completely new.

Trying something for the first time can often be the biggest hurdle, regardless of whether you suffer from mental illness or not. Trying a new activity involves stepping outside of your comfort zone, which is why it can seem somewhat daunting.

For a number of those who do have a mental illness, stepping outside of the comfort zone can seem almost impossible; when a haven is built out of familiarity and routine, anything unknown can be the most terrifying thing in the world.

While I was at the Be Mindful event, I was witness to people taking the plunge – despite any fears, hang-ups, or negative thoughts. During

the parkour class, there were trembling legs and white knuckles, but everyone had the determination to see it through. The most moving moments were when you could see the sense of achievement on people's faces when they did something they

never thought they could ever have done, or seeing the fun people were having when they realised they'd found something they truly enjoy.

When someone mentions parkour, what usually springs to mind is young urbanite gymnasts somersaulting from one rooftop to the next, using the occasional wheelie bin as a springboard. But the class didn't involve any acrobatics or wheelie bins: it was all about **starting small and encouraging people to build their way up**. The first challenge was simply to get to the other side of the bridge. The challenges got progressively more difficult, but everyone went at their own pace. It was an active display of how small steps can conquer mountains. This is the best way to approach any new activity, as the prospect of throwing yourself in the deep-end can make it seem all that more terrifying.

I also saw how much trying a new activity can bring people together – whether it's a group of total strangers or lifelong friends. The adrenaline and the hilarity involved in giving something a go can be one of the best ways to form bonds and reconnect with loved ones.

The spirit of the day was the best we could have hoped for; it was exciting, fun, and a true celebration of all things active. The loveliest part was hearing about how much people had enjoyed the day and the different activities they'd tried. Some people left with the intention of making a lifelong habit out of the things they'd tried for the first time that day! It's in this way that a relationship with activity can be ignited.



www.letsgetmoving.org.uk



Our Mover of the Month Georgina, from Essex

What was your motivation for joining Let's Get Moving?

I just wanted to be and feel healthier. I've got two children and two stepchildren, so it was important for me to feel like I could play with the kids and keep up with them without getting out of breath!

What did you enjoy most about Let's Get Moving?

It's definitely the group sessions that I most enjoy. Andy's always giving us so much information – things we wouldn't have thought of before. We all learn something new each week. What's great is that we're a group of people who are all completely different, but very similar in a way; I think because we're all at the

I've been feeling so much better in myself that I've started to cut down on my antidepressants!

group wanting to get more active, we share the same things that can make getting active difficult, but then we listen to the different ways that other people have tried to get over them. We share what works and what doesn't. It's such a relaxed atmosphere: it's never serious and we have a laugh all the time!

Has there been an increase in your physical activity?

Definitely. It's all the small, extra things that are making a big difference. I've been walking the dog a lot more and for a lot longer than I used to. I'm taking the kids out to the park more and I'm doing more active things with them – I feel like I'm able to do this now.

Has your wider family benefited, and if so how?

As I've been taking the kids out more, it means I'm spending more quality time with them. My partner's also noticed that I've been using my inhaler less, so he's really happy to see how my health's improving.

Have there been any additional positive outcomes, e.g. self-esteem, energy etc?

Being more active has improved things for me in lots of ways. When I started Let's Get Moving, I suffered with depression – to a point where I would find it a struggle to get off

the sofa to do everyday things. Being more active has really helped with that – I feel so much more motivated to do more and get on with everything. Each day I feel more and more motivated to do things – even things that I'd never normally do, such as walking for that bit longer or actively taking the kids outside to just do something. I've been feeling so much better in myself that I've started to cut down on my antidepressants! The extra bits of activity that I've been doing has also meant that I'm losing weight, which is really good.

How did the Community Exercise Professional help to achieve the changes made?

The great thing about Andy is that he never tells you what to do. Andy lets you go at your own pace and encourages you to try or change things whenever you're ready. The handouts and information that Andy gives us in group makes me look at activity in a different way. It's a fantastic programme to be doing!



Upcoming Events

ukactive events bring together our members, partners and stakeholders to network with key decision makers, engage in discussion, and keep up-to-speed with developments that affect our sector.



February 2018

27th – 2nd March > [Global Active Leaders](#)



March 2018

March > [SWEAT](#)



April 2018

12th – 15th > [FIBO Tradeshow](#)

12th > [FIBO ukactive Member's Dinner](#)



June 2018

20th – 22nd > [ukactive Conference and Awards...](#)
[watch this space!](#)



July 2018

15th – 20th > [Future Leaders Programme 2018](#)



September 2018

12th > [National Summit 2018](#)

Find out more > www.ukactivenationalsummit.com

26th > [National Fitness Day 2018](#)





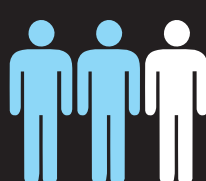
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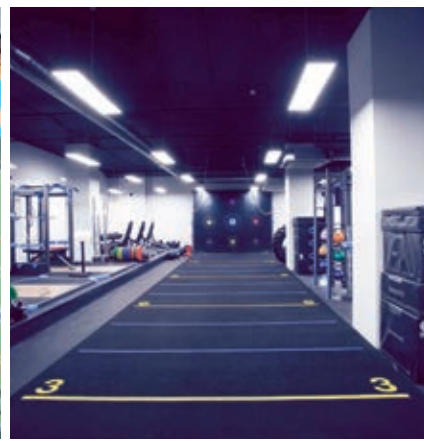
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