

HEALTHY CHOICES

Food for life on Guernsey

p30

FIT FOR FINANCE?

Move ahead with funding

p34

CLEARING HURDLES

Meet athlete Colin Jackson

p47

S&PA Professional

ISSUE 27 • AUTUMN 2017

THE SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INDUSTRY MAGAZINE

CIMSPA

CHARTERED INSTITUTE FOR THE MANAGEMENT
OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

WILD SWIMMING

Daniel Start: Take the
plunge into the waters of
this fast-growing sport



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CONTENTS

S&PA Professional

CIMSPA

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5

Upfront

- 5 **Editorial**
A sector of heroes and heroines
- News**
- 6 Sport England investment, EduMove
- 8 active-net goes techno
- 9 Extreme performance, Contracts
- 10 Movers and shakers
- 11 Top 10 activity infographic

12

In depth

- 12 **CIMSPA update**
Sandra Dodd, CEO of PPL
- 22 **Case study**
Queen's Park Sports Centre, Chesterfield
- 26 **Profile**
Daniel Start: Wild swimming
- 30 **Agenda**
Healthy choices at Beau Sejour
- 34 **Business**
Are you fit to finance?

38

Tech toolkit

- 38 **Tech focus**
Apps: changing the running of centres
- 40 **Product round-up**
The latest high-tech equipment

43

Management

- 43 **Expert Advice**
Reducing the injury risk
- 45 **Workplace focus**
Top tax claiming tips

47

Last word

- 47 **Sport ambassador**
Colin Jackson CBE, hurdles champion
- 49 **24 hours with...**
Keri-anne Payne
- 50 **Sport by numbers**
The great activity divide

34



47



20

"The benefit to the operator is that they can have new equipment or fit-outs/refurbishments without any capital outlay as 100% is fundable" (p34)



14

WE BRING BETTER AIR TO LIFE

by Fläkt Woods

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UPFRONT

EDITORIAL

► DeeDee Doke

Active autumn



Dive into the world of wild swimming, extreme medicine and healthy choices

In the dynamic world of sport & physical activity, the profession is made up of heroes and heroines, sung and unsung, famous and not. It's a profession of doing, of taking action, achieving, exceeding boundaries, and of exploring the unknown. For this issue of *S&PA Professional*, we share stories from a diverse assortment of such stars who light up our sector, their customers and the wider world.

A trip to Guernsey's Beau Sejour Leisure Centre was a real highlight for me recently. Tipped off to the great work being done at this CIMSPA employer partner by Dave Monkhouse of Leisure-net Solutions, I had the opportunity to spend time with the

wonderful Sam Herridge, head of recreation services, sport and recreation for the States of Guernsey, and her committed trading areas team of Nathan Dicker and Lewis Torode. First-hand, I saw how they had brought to life an innovative yet practical approach to healthy eating at Beau Sejour, and I was inspired by their enthusiasm.

We all applauded Mark Beaumont's recent record-breaking Around the World in 80 Days bicycling adventure, both during his journey and at the Paris finale. A big round of applause is also due to his performance manager, Laura Penhaul, who kept him fit during the trip. Laura, former physio to Team GB's Paralympians, took the

time to chat with S&PA en route – what a star. You'd do well to have her on side during your own adventures!

In this issue, you'll also meet Colin Jackson, learn how Queen's Park Sports Centre in Chesterfield has gone from strength to strength, and dive deep into wild swimming with Daniel Start.

Let's get autumn off to a heroic start!



Contact us by
Twitter @SAPA_Pro
and email at
sandpa@redactive.co.uk

EDITORIAL

Editor DeeDee Doke
Senior designer Nicholas Daley
Designers Yvey Bailey, Gene Cornelius
Production editor Vanessa Townsend
Contributors Peter Lennox, Graham Simons, Sue Weekes
Picture editor Chloe Crisford
sandpa@redactive.co.uk
Publishing director
Aaron Nicholls
ADVERTISING 020 7880 6230
Sales executive Pooja Badwal
pooja.badwal@redactive.co.uk

Sales manager Jo Rose
joanne.rose@redactive.co.uk

PRODUCTION
Production manager
Jane Easterman
Production executive
Rachel Young

SUBSCRIPTIONS

S&PA Professional is available to selected members of the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (and is available on subscription to non-members). All member enquiries

should be directed to CIMSPA. For enquiries from non-CIMSPA members, e-mail sandpa@redactive.co.uk
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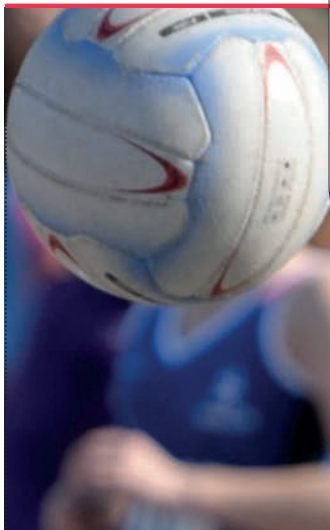
CIMSPA ENQUIRIES
Chartered Institute for the

Management of Sport and Physical Activity,
SportPark, Loughborough University, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough, LE11 3QF
Tel 01509 226 474
E-mail info@cimspa.co.uk
Web www.cimspa.co.uk



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CIMSPA
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OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



S&PA News

A round-up of the latest developments in the industry

CIMSPA will continue to lead the sport and physical activity sector in workforce development after a £1.2m investment from Sport England.

CIMSPA CEO Tara Dillon described the investment as a “vote of confidence” in the chartered institute’s work, and says it will allow CIMSPA to accelerate its efforts in developing a thriving workforce across the sector (*for more, see Dillon’s message, below right*).

The investment covers a 21-month period, and enables CIMSPA to contribute towards the workforce development goals of Sport England’s £250m ‘Towards an Active Nation Strategy’.

The strategy aims to tackle inactivity by transforming the delivery of sport and physical activity services across the country.

CIMSPA will work with government to deliver a workplace environment that:

- Ensures apprenticeships are bedded into the workforce
- Develops professional membership pathways for new and emerging job roles
- Provides sector staff with quality CPD to retain the most talented staff
- Represents the views of those working in a growing sport sector
- Champions all forms of diversity in leadership and at all levels.

CIMSPA will also provide the industry with quality-assured training, standards improvement, and benefits for both the workforce and the customer.

Phil Smith, director of sport at Sport

SPORT ENGLAND INVESTMENT ‘VOTE OF CONFIDENCE’ IN CIMSPA

“CIMSPA’s track record makes them a key partner for Sport England”

England, said they were impressed with CIMSPA’s vision of how to grow membership and satisfy the needs of industry employers.

“CIMSPA’s track record of employer engagement, standards setting and apprenticeship development success makes them a key partner for Sport England as we work together to get the nation more active,” he added. ●

By **Peter Lennox**

MESSAGE FROM CIMSPA CEO



UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS



JAPAN CALLS ON MWAANGA

Oscar Mwaanga, CEO and founder of CIMSPA partner EduMove, is drawing on his vast and varied experience to inspire and educate youngsters at a leading sports university in Japan.

Mwaanga has been appointed as guest scholar at the University of Tsukuba's International Academy for Sport Studies (TIAS). The university will play a key role in the Sport for Tomorrow project, launched ahead of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo, which focuses on training future global sport leaders.

As well as founding EduMove – a company that uses physically active games to deliver educational objectives – Mwaanga has been an important figure in the UN Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) movement.

He has pioneered programmes such as Kicking AIDS Out, which uses movement games to promote the teaching of HIV aids prevention, and Go Sisters, which aims to empower women and girls through training in leadership, life skills and promotion of women's sport.

Mwaanga says he was “humbled” to be approached by TIAS, and gave his first lectures at the university in July. “It was a very meaningful and profound experience for me,” he says. “The



students were very respectful and took a great interest in how they can develop their personal careers in SDP.”

Mwaanga says TIAS students are interested in launching careers across a variety of sports and fitness sectors, from developing SDP projects across the world, to developing new technologies that can aid physical activity.

“Some are looking to work within Asia, in Cambodia or Vietnam, while others would like to reach out to parts of Africa,” he says.

“We have a student doing a placement with us at EduMove – he wants to learn how we innovate and create apps, which engage young people in physical activities.”

Mwaanga will give a series of lectures every July up until 2020, and will also mentor students through email, social media and Skype conversations.

“We will also have more students coming across to the UK to do placements with us at EduMove,” he explains.

“And, as I have a rich network in SDP across the world, I can use my contacts to give them opportunities elsewhere.” ●

TARA DILLON, CEO OF CIMSPA, ON THE £1.2M INVESTMENT FROM SPORT ENGLAND TO TRANSFORM DELIVERY OF SPORT AND ACTIVITY SERVICES ACROSS THE SECTOR.

I am delighted to welcome Sport England's latest pledge of support for CIMSPA, which further strengthens the partnership between our two organisations.

This, together with the backing we receive from the DCMS [Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport], will allow us to resource and service our members through education products. It will also allow us to drive the agenda at pace and all but complete our work on the professional standards matrix by the end of March 2018.

To achieve something that the sector has been talking about for 30 years in just 18 months will be quite an accomplishment, and is down to the support we enjoy from Sport England and the sector.

We've enjoyed extremely positive engagement with the government agency's head of coaching, Stuart Armstrong, in the development of our coaching professional development standards. As a result of this, the standards will be written and published by the end of the year.

Sport England has appointed Caroline Fraser to the new role of workforce development director. With a successful background in retail and the NHS, Caroline has a wealth of experience in people

management and clearly understands the importance of professionalising the sector. Caroline has worked within the sphere of chartered institutes before and is passionate about bringing credibility and status to our sector in line with CIMSPA's goals.

I very much look forward to working with Caroline and Sport England's workforce strategy, which is due to be published later this year.

Finally, I'm pleased to announce that CIMSPA is recruiting across a number of roles in education, communications, membership and partnership services. If you are passionate about shaping our sport and physical activity workforce to tackle the UK's inactivity crisis, please get in touch. ●

UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS



ACTIVE-NET GOES TECHNO

Data and the use of technology across the active leisure sector will be the focus of active-net 2018, set for 14-15 March in Nottingham.

Delegates will hear about the need to better personalise and localise services for leisure customers via enhanced data and technology – and how operators and customers alike will benefit from these and other developments now available to the industry, such as seamless payment methods.

“This is the future,” said David Minton (*inset, top left*), founder and director of The Leisure Database Company, speaking to *S&PA Professional*. Minton will be an opening keynote speaker at active-net.

A key step to embracing the times is to “move to totally mobile”, Minton went on to say. The health, fitness and safety industry overall relies too heavily on websites and “traditional CRM [customer management systems]”, while technology pioneers such as Amazon, Facebook and Google have experimented with and put into place means of “knowing where you are, what you’re interested in, and can send you information about what you want to do locally”.

Such tools have the potential to increase footfall and revenue across the sector, Minton said. For instance, a leisure centre customer who took a yoga class one week could be reminded to sign up for the same class the next week. The system “knows you’re interested because you’ve already done it”, he pointed out.

Ultimately, Minton said, “the whole intent is to make life easier” for customers.

For operators, tapping into “the pool of intelligence available” will enable them to make better decisions about programming and services at their leisure centres, according to Alex Burrows (*inset, top right*) of technical sports consultancy 4 global. Burrows is also scheduled to speak at active-net, and will discuss how to use data effectively.

“Every decision made by facility operators

should be informed by the pool of intelligence available,” he emphasised. Among the questions operators need to be asking are, ‘What is my objective as an organisation?’, ‘What does good look like?’, ‘What things are working best?’ and ‘What is working elsewhere?’.

But first, operators must capture data to answer these and other questions in order to maximise best uses of their facilities and generate increasing revenues.

“I think operators are becoming more and more aware of the tangible benefits of unlocking the potential of their data, as more case studies come to the fore,” said Burrows. “The successful operator partners we work with... are able to use the relevant intelligence and benchmarks to identify where they have most growth potential across their business at any point in time.” ●

By **DeeDee Doke**

• For more information and to book, visit active-net.org

COMMUNITY NEWS

BROWNLEE BROTHERS GIVE SCHOOLKIDS A TASTE OF TRIATHLONS



World-beating triathlon champs Alistair and Jonny Brownlee organised a free mini-triathlon event for 1,300 schoolkids across Derbyshire at the end of September. Primary school pupils aged 7-11 at the triathlon taster completed a 20m swim in Allestree Woodlands School pool, an 800m cycle ride and a 300m run around the playing fields. The pair spoke to teachers about encouraging pupils to take up sport. The mini-triathlon event was put together on behalf of the Brownlee Foundation, set up to give kids fun sporting experiences.

UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS



PENHAUL TAKES PERFORMANCE TO THE EXTREME

From snakebites to a bad gut or a bone break, the range of ailments that participants in endurance and extreme sports may endure during their adventures is endless. For the physiotherapists, or performance managers, who support them, 'be prepared for anything under extreme conditions' has to be the mantra.

This message was reinforced recently for physiotherapist and athlete Laura Penhaul, who spoke with *S&PA Professional* while on the road as cyclist Mark Beaumont's performance manager during his recent record-breaking Around the World in 80 Days adventure.

When Beaumont fell off his bike and broke his tooth in Russia on day nine, Penhaul said she had to add emergency dentistry to her arsenal of skills to create a fix that could last for the rest of the trip. Half of the tooth was broken off, leaving a sharp point that could have further injured Beaumont while he was riding. For the specialist expertise she needed to take care of the tooth and protect Beaumont's bite, she contacted the World Extreme Medicine (WEM) network.

"They put me in touch with a dentist, who talked me through the options of what I could do and gave me step-by-step instructions," Penhaul said, who put a temporary fix of resin in place to protect Beaumont's mouth from the jagged edge.

In November, Penhaul will address the WEM Conference & Expo in Edinburgh,

where doctors, sport and exercise medicine specialists, psychologists and others experts will share knowledge in the key areas of expedition, wilderness, disaster, extreme, humanitarian and pre-hospital medicine. Beaumont will join her at the podium for one session.

Penhaul herself is an 'extreme' athlete, having led the all-female Coxless Crew on their record-breaking row from San Francisco to Australia in 2015-16. "I've always thrown myself into the deep end," she admitted.

During a brief stop near Montreal, while en route with Beaumont, she told *S&PA* that with so many physical stresses on participants in the best of conditions, mental fitness is especially crucial in extreme circumstances.

"Mental preparation has to be so much greater for ultra endurance events," Penhaul said, to counter the impact on participants' focus and performance resulting from severe discomfort, sleep deprivation, extreme temperatures and other testing conditions.

Penhaul recently founded the consultancy Adaptive Performance, which will further enable her to provide specialist elite and extreme performance coaching and support. She currently supports Haitian-Japanese tennis pro Naomi Osaka as performance manager.

• For more about the WEM Conference & Expo on 25-27 November, visit www.extrememedicineexpo.com/

CONTRACTS AND DEALS

CIMSPA PARTNERS LINK UP TO CREATE INNOVATIVE FACILITIES

A partnership between CIMSPA partners Alliance Leisure and Les Mills UK will help leisure operators "create inspiring spaces". Operators can benefit from the combined expertise of both firms – Alliance in facility design and Les Mills in group exercise programming – to grow their businesses.

SWIMMING NATURE WINS NEW CONTRACTS

Swimming Nature has won contracts to deliver tuition services in 15 new pools – expanding its network by 40%. The firm has partnered with the likes of Q Hotels, Hilton, Mosaic, Jurys Inn.

MOD DEAL FOR PULSE FITNESS

Pulse Fitness has been reappointed as equipment supplier for the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice for the next four years.

PARTNERSHIP LOOKS INTO GROUP EXERCISE TRENDS

CIMSPA partner EMD UK, the national governing body for group exercise, has agreed a link-up that will provide insight into participant behaviour. EMD UK will partner with DataHub, which collects data from leisure providers across the country.

EVERYONE ACTIVE WINS LEISURE CONTRACTS

CIMSPA partner Everyone Active has won contracts with both Bromsgrove District Council, and Barking and Dagenham Council to manage their leisure facilities.

GIRLS FOR SAIL JOINS PARKWOOD

CIMSPA partner Parkwood Leisure has announced that Girls for Sail – the UK's only all-female sailing school – has joined its portfolio of outdoor brands. Girls for Sail is based in Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, and aims to encourage females of all ages to take part in the sport.

MOVERS AND SHAKERS



National governing body and CIMSPA partner **British Rowing** has strengthened its indoor rowing team with two new appointments. **Clare Holman** has come on board as business development executive, and will be tasked with leading the nationwide roll-out of the Go Row Indoor programme. **Jo Loughlin**, meanwhile, has been appointed as indoor rowing community and content executive. Loughlin, who joins from England Athletics, will lead on content creation and community development, with the objective of growing participation and connecting indoor rowers to the wider sport.



The British Paralympic Association (BPA) has appointed **Dee Paterson** as a non-

executive director. Paterson replaces Norman Brodie, who stood down from the BPA board after four years of service. Paterson has represented Great Britain internationally at European and World level in a variety of paddle sports and will be representing Great Britain at the World Freestyle Championships later this year. She is also a current board member for British Canoeing.



Olympic champion **Chris Boardman** has been appointed as Greater Manchester's first cycling and walking commissioner. Boardman will lead efforts to build a high-quality cycle network across the region. Transport for **Greater Manchester** wants to see bike journeys increase from 2% to 25% by 2025, improving residents' health and reducing air pollution.



Martin Fichter has been appointed to the newly-created role of chief operating officer (COO) at **eGym**. eGym – headquartered in Germany – offers cloud-connected gym equipment, as well as supporting cloud software and an app, providing users with training regimes and advice, and allowing them to track performance.



The English Institute for Sport (EIS) has appointed **Dr Tom Paulson** as its new Head of Paralympic Performance Support.

Paulson will lead the EIS provision of para sport science and sport medicine services. Paulson moves into the role from his position as EIS senior performance pathway scientist.



Life Fitness has bolstered its team with two new account managers. **Ross Nixon** (left) joins as account manager for Scotland, while **Adam Upton** comes on board as account manager for Southern England.



Tove Okinniwa has been appointed as **London Sport's** new chief executive. Okinniwa – a former head of marketing at

BBC Sport – also serves as deputy chair of England Boxing. She has been working as an independent consultant since 2015, advising clients on commercial and marketing strategies.



Plymouth Diving has appointed **Alexandre Rochas** as its new head coach. Rochas will begin his new role at the Plymouth Life

Centre – which is managed by Everyone Active in partnership with Plymouth City Council – in November. He takes over from Andy Banks, who left the role earlier this year. Rochas will join Plymouth Diving from the National Elite Training Centre in Paris, where he has been head coach for the past five years. GB Olympic diver Tom Daley famously began his illustrious career at Plymouth Diving, in the city where he grew up. ●

Are you taking on anyone or promoting your staff? Send us news of your appointments, promotions or new hires to sandpa@redactive.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you!

WHERE'S THE ACTION?

We take a look at activity at 566 leisure centres across the UK, revealing both the Top 10 sports programmes for percentage of total activity footfall, and the breakdown of activity, the average income received from each person and the number of sites in a region across the country.

UPFRONT

Source:



TOP 10 ACTIVITY LIST

FOR % ACTIVITY FOOTFALL

22.02%

GYM

General



15.80%

SWIMMING

- General



7.07%

CYCLING

Indoor

5.18%

SWIMMING

- Fun sessions



4.77%

SWIMMING

- Adult only



3.21%

CARDIO

Classes



2.41%

BADMINTON

Casual

SWIMMING

- School lessons

2.17%

1.92%

SWIMMING

- Children's lessons



1.47%

SWIMMING

- Family



33.45%

OTHER

Activities

SCOTLAND

0.85%

Total footfall

£5.97

Average income

16

Sites

2.64%

Total footfall

£3.32

Average income

19

Sites

NORTH EAST

NORTH WEST

11.24%

Total footfall

£4.40

Average income

70

Sites

YORKSHIRE & HUMBER

6.19%

Total footfall

£4.36

Average income

37

Sites

EAST MIDLANDS

6.19%

Total footfall

£4.58

Average income

40

Sites

WALES

4.46%

Total footfall

£4.87

Average income

26

Sites

WEST MIDLANDS

10.43%

Total footfall

£4.77

Average income

64

Sites

SOUTH WEST

SOUTH EAST

19.08%

Total footfall

£5.68

Average income

95

Sites

LONDON

27.50%

Total footfall

£5.45

Average income

98

Sites

EASTERN

7.00%

Total footfall

£5.90

Average income

44

Sites

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN FOR ACTIVITY FOOTFALL, AVERAGE INCOME PER HEAD AND NUMBER OF SITES

NORTHERN IRELAND

1.28%

Total footfall

N/A

Average income

13

Sites

IN DEPTH

CIMSPA UPDATE



STAR QUALITY

Sandra Dodd, CEO of Places for People Leisure and CIMSPA member, talks about the organisation's in-house talent programme, which is proving a great retention tool

Places for People Leisure, a CIMSPA partner, develops and manages leisure facilities including swimming pools, gyms and sports halls on behalf of local authorities across the UK. To cultivate its next generation of leaders, the organisation has created an annual elite-talent development programme, which it calls Rising Stars.

Launched in 2013 and running from October to March each year, the programme is designed for those who want to progress their career. Over the course of six months, candidates complete 12 days of training, including modules such as strategic direction, HR, marketing and service support.

"Potential candidates are identified following recommendations from area managers, and they undergo a rigorous selection process," says Sandra Dodd, CEO of Places for People Leisure (PfPL). "People are recruited from all parts of the business, from operations managers and duty managers to regional support managers. Only 20 candidates are accepted onto the programme each year, and competition is fierce.

"The Rising Stars programme is highly sought-after. The candidates just love it. The training is intense but it is delivered in a supportive environment, so it's a great confidence-builder. And because we have developed the programme ourselves, the training is bespoke and relevant to our staff."

The training is delivered off-site by PfPL's own directors and heads of department, generally in inspirational venues such as Lilleshall National Sports and Conferencing Centre, home to British Gymnastics, and the National Badminton Centre, home of Badminton England.

"The training is a great way for senior staff to keep in contact with our up-and-coming people. It usually includes an overnight stay, so candidates have an opportunity to get to know the



directors and heads of departments in the evening over dinner and ask questions about their careers and development,” says Dodd.

The training culminates in a *Dragons’ Den*-like scenario at St George’s Park, the English Football Association’s national football centre in Staffordshire, where the Rising Stars present to members of the PfPL board as well as guest dragons. CIMSPA’s own Tara Dillon and Steve Ward, CEO of ukactive, are among the recent guest dragons to have put the Rising Stars through their paces as they work together in teams and present their solutions to improve the financial performance of a fictitious leisure centre.

Since the scheme’s launch in 2013, 93 people have graduated from the course, 54% of whom have since been promoted. Out of the Rising Stars graduate total, 83% have remained within the business.

“Rising Stars is great for our retention and for our succession talent pool,” says Dodd. “Our operations board are aware of the people who graduate, and encourage them to apply when they are recruiting for new general manager roles. There’s a lot of mentoring that goes along with the training, and we find that the course gives candidates the confidence to apply for roles that they may not have considered before.”

CIMSPA recognises the achievements of the programme and awards free

membership for a year to all Rising Stars graduates.

DRIVE FOR CHARTERED STATUS

Dodd’s own career with PfPL started in 1995 when she joined the then-DC Leisure as an accountant. “I was part-qualified, but the business paid for me to complete my training. I would not have got to where I am if it wasn’t for that,” she says.

Promoted to finance director, she saw the company go through a management buy-out and eventually a full sale to PfPL before she became CEO of the organisation two-and-a-half years ago.

As a chartered management accountant, Dodd has first-hand experience of the benefits of chartered membership. “If you want to become an accountant, you register as a student with the chartered institute, work through the exams recognised by the chartered institute and then become a lifelong member. And there’s real credibility in doing that.

“Our industry needs to get to the same place with CIMSPA. It’s something that can only be built up over time, but I believe CIMSPA will get there – there’s huge will in the industry for it to happen,” she says.

As CIMSPA is the go-to organisation for learning and development in the sector, Dodd believes its work in

developing career pathways for all job roles, and standardising qualifications, will make it much easier for organisations to attract and recruit staff.

PfPL employs around 8,500 staff. Aside from the sector-wide problem of recruiting enough lifeguards, the organisation has not experienced any significant obstacles in recruitment over the past few years. Where it does have difficulties, however, is recruiting women into senior positions.

“There are more female than male employees across the business, yet we have a lot more men than women in duty manager and operations manager roles, and we struggle to get women to become general managers. Even our Rising Stars programme attracts many more men than women,” says Dodd.

The company is doing some work to establish how it can remedy the situation. It will be surveying female staff, and setting up working groups to understand why women are reluctant to take up senior roles.

“The problem is not confined to our organisation; it’s sector-wide,” adds Dodd. “When I go to chief executive forums, I’m typically the only woman in the room. We must always ensure that we recruit the best person for the role, but we need to find ways of encouraging more women to apply for senior roles.”

It will be interesting to learn the findings of PfPL’s research, but in the meantime it is business as usual, with the next cohort of Rising Stars starting the programme this autumn.

“Rising Stars is a huge investment for us each year, but it’s so important,” says Dodd. “Our people are everything. We have great facilities – both new and listed buildings – but it’s our staff who really matter. It doesn’t matter how fantastic our facilities are; if we don’t have the right staff who are motivated about our business and our clients, our facilities will never succeed.” ●

UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS

FUNDING FITNESS

The £1.2m funding investment from Sport England allows CIMSPA to continue its work at pace on core outcomes that are critical to transforming the delivery of sport and activity services across the sector

CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS MATRIX

The CIMSPA Professional Standards Matrix is the cornerstone of our work to create a professional workforce that can meet the changing expectations of customers and stakeholders.

It will detail the essential knowledge, skills, behaviours and learning requirements for all job roles in the sector in a short, easy-to-understand format. This will allow both employers and education partners to develop bespoke educational products that will undergo a rigorous endorsement process to ensure they meet the needs of their stakeholders and customers whilst ensuring baseline content and assessment consistency.

Regardless of the educational pathway an individual has taken, for example an apprenticeship or a degree, employers can be confident that the standards they have developed have been met, ensuring the individual is ready to work in a real-world sport and physical activity environment. The matrix also gives employers comparability when assessing individuals who have come through different pathways.

To date, CIMSPA has developed six standards around the job roles of

personal trainer, fitness instructor, group exercise instructor, swimming teacher, lifeguard and recreation assistant. A further nine standards will be developed by March 2018.

It is important to remember that this standards matrix has been driven by employers. They have set the target for qualifications to meet the needs of their customers and business plans as well as their employees.

The matrix will allow individuals to check that the qualifications they hold, or are about to undertake, meet the industry standard. And employers will now be able to check if potential employees hold a CIMSPA-endorsed qualification.

CIMSPA will act as the custodian of the standards matrix by working with its awarding organisation and quality-assured training provider partners to ensure they are delivering the training against the standards that employers have asked for.

Look for the CIMSPA kitemark when choosing a training provider or for CIMSPA membership when recruiting staff. This is the guarantee – we will only approve the best.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Following the introduction of the



apprenticeship levy in April 2017, employers have tasked CIMSPA to support the creation of additional apprenticeship standards, from entry level through to degree apprenticeships.

These apprenticeships will align to the Professional Standard Matrix, which ensures that irrespective of the route taken to becoming a personal trainer for example, either through a course or an apprenticeship, the employee will complete their training with the standard defined by employers.



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UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS

QUALITY ASSURED TRAINING

According to employers, individuals entering the sector are woefully short of the skills and behaviours required for their role and thus not 'work ready' for immediate employment. Having entered the sector, individuals should be encouraged to maintain and improve their competence through a directed continued professional development programme.

CIMSPA will provide an independent and transparent quality assurance system to ensure that any qualification/degree or CPD meets the requirements of the relevant job standards detailed in the new Professional Standards Matrix.

CIMSPA will endorse and monitor education providers to ensure the content of any endorsed training is delivered consistently against sector-agreed standards. Working with the Higher Education Academy, CIMSPA will also pilot a new higher education endorsement process to increase teaching excellence and provide graduates with wider 'work-ready' skills and behaviours to improve their employability.

CAREER PATHWAYS AND MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

CIMSPA is developing a career map to make it easier for sector employers to attract and retain new talent. Whether sector professionals are working in

leisure, community sport or health and fitness, they will be able to chart a career and plan next steps for personal development.

The career map will guide them on how to progress, the skills and qualifications they will need to progress and where their career choices might take them. For those who wish to move across sector industries – for example, from leisure operations to coaching – the career map will provide the necessary guidance.

The Professional Standards Matrix and career map provide the foundations for a fit-for-purpose workforce with the right knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet the changing needs of our sector and the challenges of inactivity. It's essential therefore that all sport and physical activity professionals hold CIMSPA membership.

CIMSPA membership shows customers, employers and professionals from other chartered sectors that you are appropriately qualified and that you work within the culture, values and standards set by your chartered institute. It creates confidence in you as a professional and improves the perception of our sector overall.

A UNIFIED VOICE

Over the past three years there have been several reforms across education. During this time, sport and physical activity has

not had a unified and influential voice in government and consequently has had negligible input into these reforms. The result of this was that it was not mentioned in the recent review of technical education and the implementation of those reforms in the subsequent Post-16 skills plan.

Similarly, within higher education there is a drive towards making graduates more employable by embedding employability skills and behaviours into degree programmes. However, the benchmark statements that have been developed for sport (by academics) don't adequately address this.

This means there is potential for reduced funding for sport and physical activity for apprenticeships and further education, whilst sport and physical activity graduates could spend up to £27k on tuition fees to study higher education programmes that are not recognised by employers.

In the past 12 months, CIMSPA has worked with the Department for Education in influencing and shaping policy and guidance, and is now the 'go to' organisation for our sector for education and workforce.

This work must continue to ensure we have an influential voice with regards to current changes and that as a sector we are consulted with and included in any further reforms or development.

We are working with other sector partners (Sport England, Association of Colleges (Sport), Association of Adult Learning Providers, awarding organisations, UK Coaching, Youth Sports Trust and Sport & Recreation Alliance) to ensure all stakeholders are consulted, involved and heard.

The building blocks are well and truly in place and in partnering with Sport England we are well on the way to delivering a highly skilled and trained workforce that can tackle inactivity across the UK. ●

CHARTERED FELLOW (e.g. CEO / Director)						
CHARTERED MEMBER	Department Manager / Head of ...	Group Fitness Manager	Head of Coaching	Head of Department Sports Scientist Performance Analyst	Head of Health	7
MEMBER	Operations / General Manager	Contract / Area Fitness Manager	Community Sports Development Manager	Functional Manager	Health Manager	5/6
ADVANCED PRACTITIONER	Advanced Swimming Teacher	Advanced Personal Trainer	Advanced Community Coach	Advanced Performance Coach	Health Referral Co-ordinator	4
ASSOCIATE	Supervisor Duty Manager	Fitness Team Leader / Supervisor	Community Sports Development Officer	Sport Administration Officer	Health Supervisor	3
PRACTITIONER	Swimming Teacher Maintenance Operative	Personal Trainer Wellness Practitioner	Community Coach	Asst. Performance Analyst Asst. Sport Scientist Performance Coach	Health Navigator	3
AFFILIATE	Lifeguard Recreation Assistant	Gym Instructor Group Exercise Instructor	Coaching Assistant	Performance Coach Assistant	Lifestyle Instructor	2
STUDENT						
MEMBERSHIP TYPE	LEISURE OPERATIONS	EXERCISE AND FITNESS	COMMUNITY SPORT	PERFORMANCE SPORT / SPORTS ADMIN	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY / HEALTH	QUAL LEVEL (England)

NOTE: this is an EXAMPLE of the career map under development

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IN DEPTH

CIMSPA UPDATE

DR AMIT MISTRY

A psychiatrist with a passion for sport wants to eradicate the barriers that prevent those with mental health issues from engaging in regular physical activity

“Within medicine, one of the greatest inequalities of our time is that those with severe mental illness die much younger than the general population and have greater physical health co-morbidities,” says Dr Amit Mistry, a specialist psychiatry registrar in general adult and old age psychiatry.

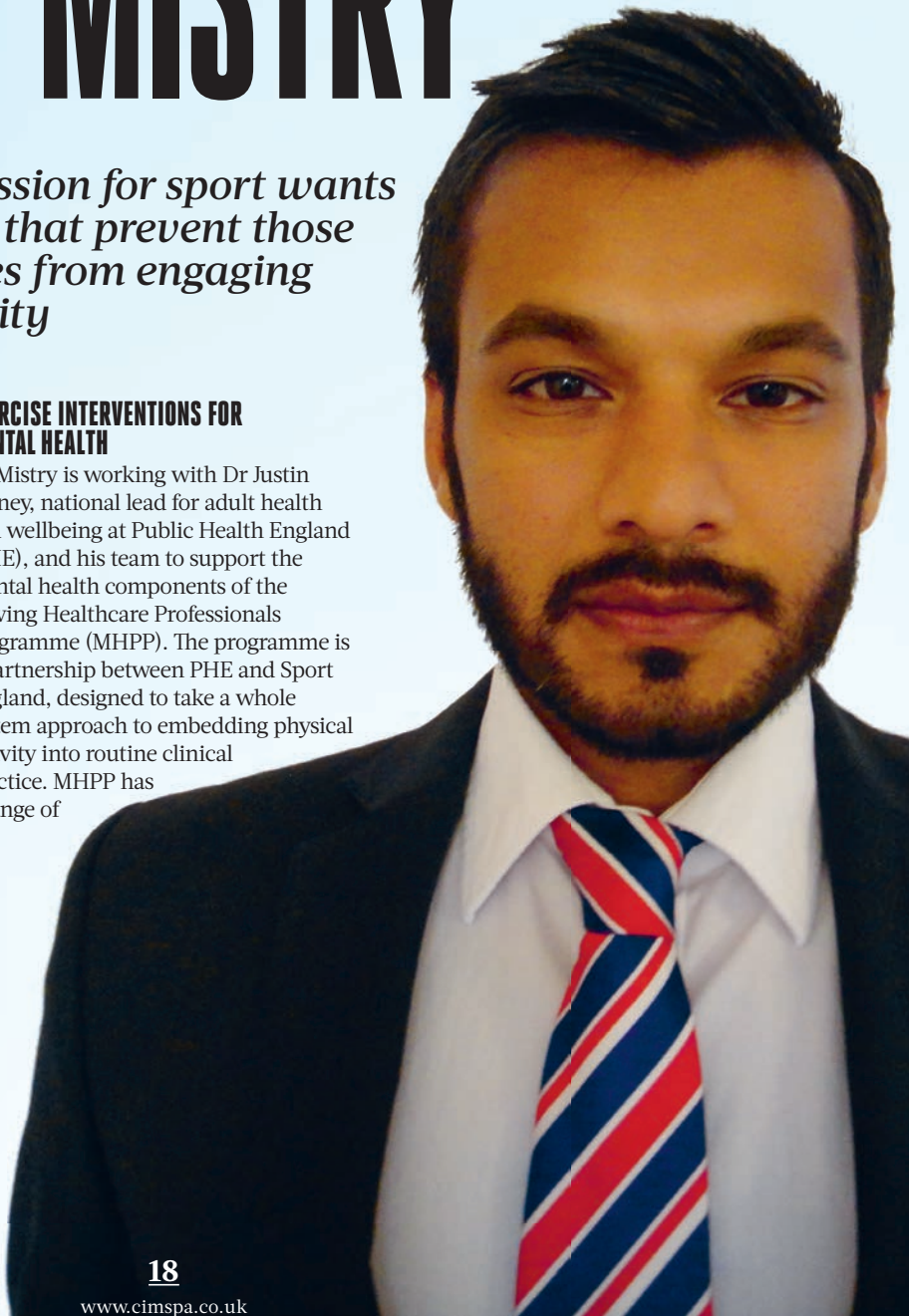
Involved in competitive sport since childhood, and playing for Team GB at the Rugby Tag World Cup in 2015, he is a specialist in the relationship between sport, exercise and mental health.

“I am a strong advocate of the wide-ranging bio-psycho-social benefits of exercise. Psychologists have identified many of the psychosocial benefits of exercise eg. self-mastery and its use as a distraction technique (away from stress),” he says.

“Translating theory into practice, I ask all my clinic patients about their physical activity levels and utilise motivational interviewing techniques to improve their physical activity. All clinicians play a paramount role in validating the benefits of physical activity to their patients and should be directing patients to local exercise initiatives.”

EXERCISE INTERVENTIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Dr Mistry is working with Dr Justin Varney, national lead for adult health and wellbeing at Public Health England (PHE), and his team to support the mental health components of the Moving Healthcare Professionals Programme (MHPP). The programme is a partnership between PHE and Sport England, designed to take a whole system approach to embedding physical activity into routine clinical practice. MHPP has a range of



strands including curriculum resources for undergraduate education, free e-learning modules and educational resources, and the Physical Activity Clinical Champion (PACC) Scheme.

Established in 2016, PACC provides peer-to-peer teaching sessions for doctors and allied healthcare professionals on the benefits of physical activity in disease prevention, and highlights the risks of inactivity and sedentary behaviour. Nationally, there are 45 clinical champions, who include medical doctors and allied healthcare professionals in midwifery, pharmacy, physiotherapy and psychology.

Understanding the mental health needs of elite athletes holds particular interest for Dr Mistry.

“Athletes can experience higher rates of eating disorders and similar rates of depression and/or anxiety as the general population. However, they can face stigma and fears of de-selection when trying to access formalised mental health support.”

Dr Mistry is the exercise interventions lead for the Royal College of Psychiatrist’s new Sport & Exercise Psychiatry Special Interest Group (SEPSIG). The group consists of like-minded psychiatrists, ranging from junior doctors to senior consultants who are keen to explore

“There is a growing yet strong evidence base demonstrating the benefits of exercise for mental health”

exercise interventions for mental health and promote best practice in addressing mental health problems in sport.

“There is a growing yet strong evidence base demonstrating the benefits of exercise for mental health and the need to address mental health issues within elite sport – the two fundamental working aims of our group. As psychiatrists, we wish to raise the profile of these issues and ensure colleagues are kept updated on the latest evidence base. I will also keep CIMSPA updated on our latest research developments and future collaborative opportunities,” he says.

WORKING COLLABORATIVELY

A recent systematic review and meta-analysis (Schuch *F et al.* 2017) found that those with major depressive disorder experienced greater levels of sedentary behaviour and were 50% less likely to meet the chief medical officer (CMO) guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week.

“I find this deeply concerning, especially when lower physical activity and sedentary behaviour are linked to premature mortality and cardiovascular disease in those with major depressive disorder.”

Some of the barriers preventing severe mental illness patients engaging in physical activity include their mental state, such as mood and stress, and experiencing a lack of support by professionals (Firth *J et al.* 2016).

“As professionals we need to work collaboratively to ensure that the most

vulnerable in society experience the bio-psycho-social benefits of regular physical activity too. However, exercise adherence among those with severe mental illness can be challenging, with typical dropout rates of 25-30%,” he says.

But sport and physical activity professionals can make a positive impact. “There is robust evidence demonstrating that patients gain a better antidepressant effect from an exercise intervention when it is led by a qualified exercise professional. This makes sense as exercise professionals have the expertise to tailor interventions, which can hopefully reduce exercise dropout rates.”

Despite the outlined barriers to exercise in those with severe mental illness, there are proven effects for using aerobic exercise in major depressive disorder and a growing body of professionals is requesting that the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) factor this in when updating their next depression management guidelines.

For those wanting to learn more about working with those with severe mental illness, resources are available. The CIMSPA-endorsed mental health charity, MIND, runs specific workshops for sport and physical activity professionals. And Dr Mistry also recently supported an animation created by UK coaching, MIND and PHE to help sports coaches promote good mental health and understand some of the difficulties experienced by clients with a mental health condition (*visit www.ukcoaching.org for more information*).

“Too often we externalise discussions about lifestyle risk factors and don’t reflect on how we can improve our own health and wellbeing as healthcare professionals. I’m really keen to understand people’s views on how we can be more active in our everyday lives and in our clinical practice.”

For more information on the work of SEPSIG, visit www.rcpsych.ac.uk. ●

IN DEPTH

CIMSPA UPDATE

IN THE SWIM...

Quality scheme Quest dives into swimming lesson accreditation

Did you know that Swim England Learn to Swim accreditation can be taken as part of Sport England's industry improvement and quality assurance process Quest?

Managed well, swimming lessons can be a lucrative business, according to Bigwave media marketing expert Tom Gozna, who has seen leisure centres quadruple their swim school figures by focusing on pool programming – some set targets for up to 15,000 children a week. And with half of 11-year-olds in the UK unable to swim 25 metres, the commercial opportunity is massive.

But how do you make your centre stand out from the crowd? What reassurance can you give to parents that your instructors are not only qualified, but competent and up-to-date with their skills?

"Operators can save time and money by achieving their accreditation as part of their Quest assessment," says Caroline Constantine, director of CIMSPA skills development partner Right Directions, the health & safety and quality

management company that manages the Quest process on behalf of Sport England. "They simply pick the Swim England Learn to Swim accreditation module alongside the swimming lessons module, and will achieve not only Quest accreditation but the Learn to Swim accreditation, too."

EFFECTIVE DELIVERY

The in-depth Learn to Swim module requires centres to demonstrate effective management of their swimming lesson programme delivery, including targets and key performance indicators (KPIs) set against areas such as capacity and take-up, achievement and retention. Staff induction and training are also covered, to check instructors are trained and competent, along with their continuous professional development to ensure staff continue to develop their skills and are able to effectively demonstrate they meet the criteria to achieve the Swim England programme. Appropriate health & safety planning and emergency procedures feature heavily, as well as evidence of a sound safeguarding policy and recording of regular risk assessments.

The Swimming Lessons module then looks to help operators maximise potential participation and income opportunities, aiming to ensure children can swim 25m by key stage 2, as well as looking to provide adults with the opportunity to learn a new skill.

"Not only is Swim England accreditation free of charge as part of Quest, but operators don't have the hassle of a completely separate assessment on another day," says CIMSPA member Constantine. "Added to that, as swimming instructors are assessed as part of Quest, alongside other members of staff, they don't feel as though they are being singled out – the whole centre is going through it at the same time.

Alongside the Swim England Learn to Swim accreditation, the ukactive's Code of Practice and the recently added English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) Inclusive Fitness Initiative Mark offer greater benefits and ensure these industry awards are more compatible."

Sally Skipper, programme manager at Swim England, said: "The combined accreditation option has already had a significant amount of interest and take-up from many of our partners. It is an exciting development and we hope to further support providers to develop the quality of their learn-to-swim programmes, so that young people are getting a quality experience across the country." ●

For further information on the Learn to Swim Accreditation, email: info@rightdirections.co.uk





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IN DEPTH

CASE STUDY

REVAMPED CENTRE ENTICES NEW PEOPLE INTO SPORT

Queen's Park Sports Centre in Chesterfield has undergone a spectacular transformation – not only in looks but in membership numbers. Peter Lennox investigates

Since opening its doors in January 2016, the new Queen's Park Sports Centre in Chesterfield has seen membership numbers soar.

The new local authority-owned facility was years in the making. Proposals first went before Chesterfield Borough Council's planning committee in early 2013, but plans for the £11m centre were not officially approved until August 2014, with some councillors believing money could have been saved by upgrading the existing facility.

Construction eventually went ahead, however, and – if membership numbers are anything to go by – the new centre has proved a massive hit. Since the new centre opened, paid membership has almost tripled to 3,886 from the 1,350 who belonged at the previous facility.

Christopher Wright, Queen's Park Sports Centre operations manager and CIMSPA member, says having a “sparkling and shiny” new facility is just one of several factors that have attracted new members.

“In the last 10 weeks we were in the old facility, we started selling memberships for the new one, and it built a sense of anticipation and excitement,” he says. “There's been a lot of hype about it in Chesterfield.

“We also invested in having new gym equipment, and supported this with a good programme of fitness classes. We've really improved the variety of our fitness offering.”

The centre now offers gymnastics and

trampolining classes, group exercise studios, a learner swimming pool, a climbing wall and a sports hall suitable for badminton, football, basketball and volleyball. The centre's state-of-the-art gym equipment, meanwhile, has attracted members dedicated to high-end fitness.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Wright believes the centre's competitive pricing strategy has also been key to its success. A year-long membership costs £26.99 per month – with reduced rates for families, under-16s and students.

“We've also simplified our membership massively,” Wright says. “Before the current offer, we had many different varieties. We had peak, off-peak, we had a fitness membership that included one activity and another that included something else.

“We decided, ‘we're going to get rid of all that’. Now we just have one simple membership that includes your gym, fitness classes, swimming, and also gives you a discount on racket sports.”

As has been the case across the UK, Chesterfield Borough Council has faced significant funding cuts over the last eight years, meaning the centre must deliver value for money.

The huge jump in paid-up members been vital for Queen's Park, with financial sustainability a key objective.

Wright says local authorities must take a more business-



IN DEPTH

CASE STUDY

orientated approach to managing their leisure facilities.

"I think it's fair to say that only recently local authorities have started to use the big P word they've been afraid to use before – profits," he says. "We've got to be financially more self-reliant now, and start treating it like a business."

INCLUSION MATTERS

One of Wright's main goals was to attract more families to the centre. Queen's Park has achieved this through offering more junior fitness classes, which are described as "fun and interactive".

Juniors are also allowed to use the gym with their parents during certain periods. "Throughout Chesterfield that's what a lot of other facilities don't do – it's just about adults [for them]," Wright says. "We want to attract people right from birth to later on in life."

Queen's Park is also aiming to attract people from minority backgrounds, with Wright admitting the number of centre users from certain groups "is still not where we want to be".

Non-members have been approached through an equality and diversity forum in Chesterfield – including people with learning disabilities, the physically disabled, and black and minority ethnic (BME) people – as the centre aims to drive up membership to include more populations.

The centre has also recently launched a fitness programme for people with dementia, and has trained staff specifically for leading these sessions.

Queen's Park is continually courting feedback, and making changes to its fitness offering where necessary. The centre has gained insight from customer

"It's about listening to customers, and making little tweaks that can help improve our service"

surveys particularly focused on their swimming programme – an area in which their service, they believed, could be improved.

"It can be the simplest things that make things better," Wright says. "We now provide more lane swimming, and that's gone down very well. It allows people more time to enjoy their swim."

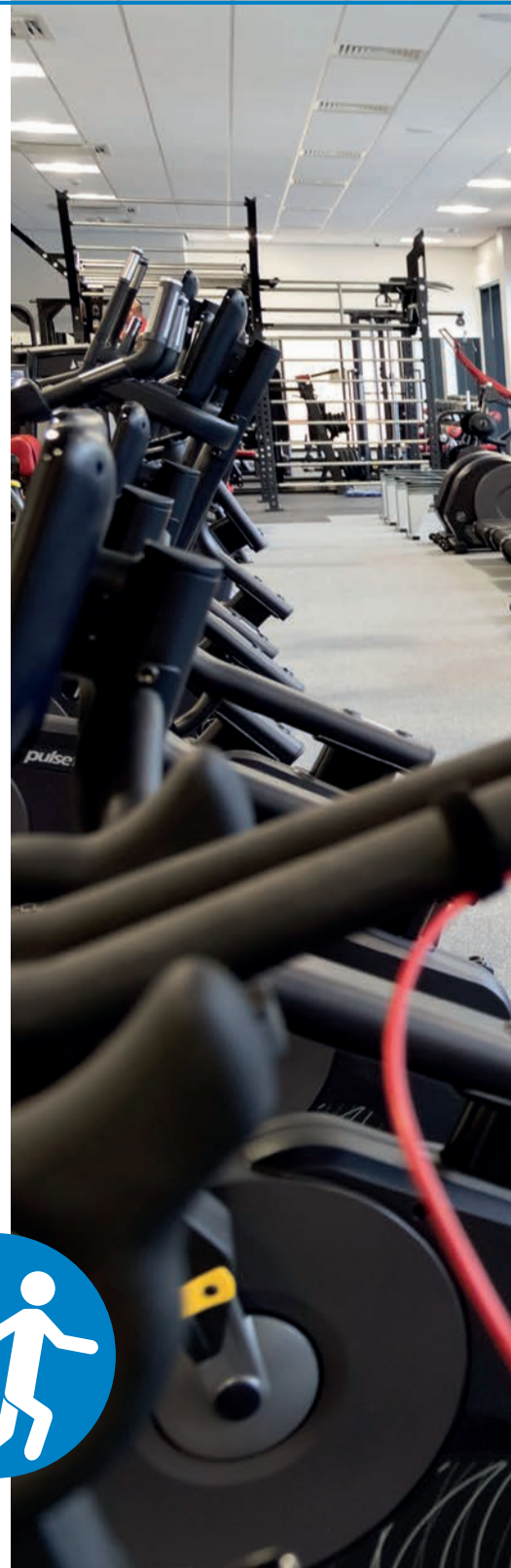
"People were also saying they wanted to bring towels poolside – it may be a parent so they can wrap up their baby, or someone who is little shy and doesn't want to walk across poolside in their swimming costume – so we provided towel hooks."

These changes have resulted in a 10% increase in pay-as-you-go-swimming, while Wright is also convinced they have played a role in the membership surge.

"We've also had quite a lot of feedback around our classes," he adds. "So we've changed the times accordingly. It's about listening to customers, and making little tweaks that can help us improve our service."

TECHNOLOGY

As well as boasting modern gym equipment, Queen's Park has embraced technology with a moveable squash wall – which can be lifted to make room for fitness classes – and a moveable floor in its learner pool,





allowing for its depth to be changed.

While Wright says this flexibility works well at Queen's Park, he urges caution for leisure providers opening a new facility, saying there must be a business case for investing in new technology.

"It's about taking a step back in the early days of planning your fitness offering, and thinking what it is you want to achieve," he says. "For example, a moveable floor isn't cheap, not just in terms of installing it but maintaining it over a number of years. Is that a cash saving that could be used elsewhere?"

"Or if you've got a centre that's got a really high squash court usage, then my advice would be to stick with your rigid walls, because then it is a dedicated squash facility.

"We chose to have a moveable wall in our courts because we knew that, from between 5pm-9pm, they are hardly ever used. We can then have classes there or hire it out to the college who want to hold fitness sessions."

Looking to the future, Wright aims to build on the momentum at Queen's Park.

He's focused on improving the centre's fitness offering even further, attracting more members, while flourishing financially.

"For us, it's about continuing to grow," he says. "We want to get more people coming to use the centre, and maximise every space so we can get as many people in as possible. Financially, we must be self-sustainable.

"If you look at where we were last January, it's a much better facility now. And if you come back to me in 12 months, I dare say we'll have improved it even further.

"We're never going to stand still." ●

Queen's Park Sports Centre

- **Cost: £11m**
- **Opened: 5 January 2016**

Funded by:

- **£6.725m from Chesterfield Borough Council**
- **£2.5m from the Chesterfield College**
- **£2m from Sport England**
- **£25k from Squash England**

"We want to attract people right from birth to later on in life"

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Individual (adults age 16+): £26.99
 Concession: £22.99
 Family: £54 (up to 2 adults and 2 children)
 Age 8-15: £9 (or add to family membership)
 Student: £15
 Corporate: £22.99
 (per month, based on a 12-month membership)

IN DEPTH

PROFILE



AN IMMERSION WITH NATURE

Wild swimming is one of the fastest growing pastimes in the UK. Daniel Start, author of several bestselling books on the sport, spoke to Peter Lennox about the phenomenon

It's a visceral experience. However you feel before a wild swim, you feel fantastic afterwards – euphoric, even.” So says Daniel Start, author of a series of books that showcase stunning wild swimming locations, many of which had previously been unexplored.

One of Britain's fastest-growing sports, wild swimming involves swimming in natural waters such as lakes, rivers, seas and waterfalls. Part of the sport's appeal, Start believes, is that it offers a release for a society increasingly immersed in technology.

“We're spending longer days at the office and longer hours in front of our computer or mobile devices,” he says. “There is a need to escape and detox from all those constrictions, and just be a bit wild.

“There's a sense of adventure about slipping into a river or lake, confronting some primordial fears about what's there – the weeds, the fish and the mud – and then feeling a sort of silkiness in the

water. Whether it's swimming with the current or snorkelling through a waterfall, they're just amazing experiences that fill your senses completely – sensually, visually, the sound.

“It gives you an endorphin kick – as soon as you come out of the water you've almost got this addictive urge to dive back in.”

Start's passion for wild swimming is borne out of a “Huckleberry Finn childhood”, he says. He grew up in Herefordshire, close to the River Wye, where he spent summers making rope swings and rafts, and learning to swim in the river.

His family then moved to London, but he still got his fresh water swimming fix through participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme in Snowdonia.

“I then left school and, as can happen, I ended up in an office job in a tower block in central London,” he says. “And I remember a



IN DEPTH

PROFILE

really hot summer in 2006, when I thought 'I just need to get out of here and jump in a pool'.

"I remembered all the amazing places I used to swim as a child. But when I looked online, I couldn't find any information. I thought, 'this is crazy, I should go off and explore and discover some of these places myself'."

This impulse planted the seed from which Start's writing career blossomed. A keen photographer too, Start took a year out and set off on an odyssey around Britain, swimming in every river, lake and waterfall he could find, and documenting his experiences. He found a publisher, and his debut book, *Wild Swimming*, sold remarkably well (to date, about 70,000 copies have been sold).

For his next assignment, Start followed the British coastline, discovering salt water swims. "It's the same sort of addiction," he says. "Exploring little secret coves, finding the way down secret steps, swimming around the sea caves."

His next book, *Hidden Beaches*, followed and proved so popular Start published a version documenting his excursions around the coast of France. "By that point our original publisher had stopped publishing, so we had to form our own outfit to get the France book out," Start explains.

Wild Things Publishing was born – owned and run by Start and his wife Tanya – and it has now published a variety of books from a range of authors. These include books on cycling, walking and backpacking, as well as the Wild Guides series, which Start describes as a "compendium of adventures" accessible in specific UK regions.

"Most of our books sell around 10,000–20,000 copies," Start says.

So why have they been such a success? "I think our photography is important," says Start. "We go for halcyon images of people doing things in the wild, whether they're wild camping or climbing trees



or swimming. And they're often really normal people, just everyday non-sportspeople having a go.

"People look at them and think 'I could be there on a beautiful evening swimming out on that little island. Why aren't I there? Why don't I just get up and do it?'"

"We always design the books to have three parts: the photos for inspiration; a strong narrative – travel log-type text; and lots of practical 'how to' information."

In researching his books – as well as feeding his addiction – Start has been

wild swimming in many countries, from Uganda to Indonesia. But he believes here in Britain you can find some of the most exhilarating swims anywhere on the globe.

"We've got this incredible coastline," he says. "But Britain's also a very compact country with a lot of rain. So we have a lot of rivers, of very good water quality considering the population density. Nobody's really more than 10 miles from a swimmable river or lake."

"Then there are waterfalls and those are really exciting. You're going to need to be a bit more careful there, but you can swim out and bathe underneath the falls. Often it's very cold, like a natural Jacuzzi."

Start does believe, however, that government and local authorities could do more to encourage wild swimming in Britain. "Unfortunately England in particular has some of the most draconian private property restrictions on swimming," he says.

"I often take the dog. Even knowing the dog's in the water with me makes me feel more comfortable!"

"Some well-meaning legislation back in 1988 essentially made any owner of a river or lake liable for any accident that happens there. So that's led to a huge number of local authority lakes, which have always been traditional places to swim – like a beautiful lake in the woods or a country park – being all fenced off and swimming banned."

Start says there is "nothing inherently dangerous" about wild swimming, but offers advice to swimmers to ensure they stay safe. "The most hazardous thing is the temperature of the water," he says.

"In cold water, we tend to say you can swim to about a tenth of your capabilities in warm water. If it's the first time you've swam in cold water, even just that year, it can create quite a shock to the body. We suggest never jumping into cold water. Ease yourself in, stay close to the bank, and see how your body's going to react."

"It's also good practice not to swim alone. If you swim with somebody you'll find it's so much less intimidating. I often take the dog. Even just knowing the dog's in the water with me makes me feel more comfortable!"

"I still get the heebie jeebies about swimming in a lake by myself. I feel like a sea monster might come along and nobble me! But if there's somebody else in the water with me, I feel safer."

While water temperatures are dropping from their August peak, Start says autumn is still a great time to go for a wild swim. October sea temperatures are often the same as in June, while the season produces some of the most picturesque landscapes imaginable.

"Out in rivers and lakes, I reckon wild swimming weather is from Easter to Halloween," he says. "So I would regularly swim all the way through October, depending on the weather. Rivers and lakes are shallower, and on nice, hot autumn days they warm up very quickly again."

"The colours can be beautiful at this

time of the year too, and the light can be amazing – it's a wonderful time to get out and explore Britain.

"People do winter swims too. Boxing Day swims and New Year's Day swims, for example, are burgeoning across the country."

There are many health benefits of wild swimming: it boosts the immune system, burns calories quickly, improves circulation, and produces endorphins that lift your mood.

For Start, the opportunity to immerse himself in nature is what keeps him going back for more. He urges everyone who's thought about giving wild swimming a go to take the plunge.

"Find somebody to go with, take a picnic, and find somewhere where you can dip in and out easily and stay close to the shore," he says.

"It's an amazing way to de-stress and have an experience, and feel that you're alive again. It's a real communion with nature."

Daniel Start's latest book is Wild Guide to the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales (Wild Things Publishing, £16.99). Visit www.wildthingspublishing.com



The right Start: 5 tips

1 There is no universal right to swim, but some bigger rivers (the Thames, Great Ouse, Wye etc) have statutory rights and others have historic 'long use' rights. Be discreet and polite, and do not disturb fishermen.

2 Bear in mind that all people react differently to cold water. If this is your first time, or you are with novices, stay close to the shore and enter the water gradually to see how your body reacts to cold water – some people get immediate 'cold shock', which can bring on hyperventilation.

3 Count on being able to swim a tenth of the distance you can in a warm indoor pool. Never swim alone and never jump or dive unless you have checked the water depth.

4 'Pollution' hazards can include blue-green algae, sometimes found in lowland lakes in hot summers (best avoided as it can create a rash), swimmer's itch (if you spend a lot of time wading through pond weed where snails breed) and, in extremely rare cases, Weil's disease. This latter illness is a bacterial infection and is caught from rat urine, mostly around urban waterways. It is easily treated with antibiotics (see your doctor if you develop flu-like fever within a week of wild swimming) but if left to develop, it can be very serious.

5 If you want to lead groups of swimmers you should secure the RLSS Beach Lifeguard or Open Water Lifeguard qualifications.

IN DEPTH

AGENDA

Beau Sejour Leisure Centre in Guernsey offers customers healthier lifestyle choices, both in the areas of fitness and nutrition. DeeDee Doke visited the leisure centre and its café on Guernsey



HEALTHY CHOICES



L-r: Nathan Dicker,
Lewis Torode, and
Samantha Herridge

You've just put your body through a thorough cardio workout, and maybe lifted a few weights. Or perhaps you've had an exhilarating swim. What kind of sustenance is the 'inner you' craving – nuts, crisps, a chocolate bar?

At Beau Sejour Leisure Centre in St Peter Port, Guernsey, trading areas manager Nathan Dicker knows that even fervent fitness enthusiasts will often opt for one of the more indulgent choices – something loaded with sugar or fat or both.

But on Dicker's turf at Beau Sejour, a CIMSPA employer partner, there will always be a choice. And customers will understand the choices they're making, as well as being subliminally encouraged to make the healthier choice, under a business strategy that's both making money and supporting better nutrition.

ENTICING SURROUNDINGS

Fitness enthusiasts, mums with children fresh from swimming lessons and drop-in coffee lovers all hang out at Beau Sejour's brightly lit and recently renovated café. What do they find?

Snack pots of nuts and a bowl of fruit sit on the till counter at eye level, easily accessible and ready to buy and consume. Positioned behind the counter against a back wall, like a vice product such as cigarettes or questionable magazines, are jars of salted caramel and chocolate chip cookies – you have to ask a member of

staff to get you one. (Nothing like a little guilt!) A sign posted on the door of the windowed refrigerator reveals the precise number of sugar cubes – 13, actually – contained in that sugary fizzy drink your thirst demands.

"We wanted to nudge people toward a healthier lifestyle," Dicker explains when *S&PA Professional* recently visited the spacious Beau Sejour, the only community leisure centre on the island. "We still carry everything, we still give people a choice; but with subliminal messaging, it's about our pushing you toward the healthier choice without you knowing it."

NEW APPROACH NEEDED

Life was not always so at the Beau Sejour café. Rewind to March 2015, when Samantha Herridge, MCIMSPA, became head of recreation services, sports and recreation, for the States of Guernsey. Food and drink operations at Beau Sejour were turning a profit at the time, while stocking multiple lines of confectionary, full-sugar energy drinks, sandwiches with a rota of 150 different combinations of fillings, and 'one size fits all' tubs of ready meals – in short, a wildly varied menu that paid little attention to healthy eating. "We were driven by sales," acknowledges Lewis Torode, senior trading areas assistant.

Soon after her arrival, Herridge, herself an athlete, says she "started hinting" to the staff that a new approach to food and



IN DEPTH

AGENDA

drink was needed. And in spite of the profits being spun from food and drink, “people were saying we should be selling healthy things”, Torode says. Adding fuel to the fire were low satisfaction marks the café was receiving from its customers, who complained of the industrial cafeteria-like ambiance.

But Herridge’s initial urgings to staff to rethink the then-current course of activity did not go down well. “There was a fear factor,” she says. “In the early 2000s, the café was operating at a loss, and there had been success in changing it to make it profitable.” However, Herridge felt that change was again required, this time to better reflect Guernsey and UK-wide drives to promote and support healthier lifestyles – and hopefully, also deliver a healthy bottom line.

“The first conversation was real interesting, because my hackles were up,” says Dicker, who had played a key role in the financial turnaround nearly a decade before when the food and drink operations lost £17k in 2007, and did not want to see their fortunes fall once again.

Adds Torode: “I was thinking, why change something when it’s working?”

But Herridge persisted. In September 2016, Beau Sejour opened a new-look café with a revitalised food and drink offering and a refreshed approach to marketing its wares, following more than a year of debate, discussion, and trial and error. Also tapped into was guidance from the best-selling book *Slim by Design* by behavioural economist and food psychologist Dr Brian Wansink, which Dicker described as “a complete eye opener for what we’ve been doing”. And, Herridge notes, “dieticians from the [Guernsey] Committee for Health and Social Care came in for sessions over six weeks”.



CAFÉ CULTURE

A year later, the café is an attraction of its own within the leisure centre, drawing locals who may not use the activity facilities but like to stop in to the pleasant, comfortable environment for refreshments.

When it comes to refreshment, adults and children alike receive subliminal whispers to lure them to the healthiest choices.

For instance, the first drinks cooler they encounter is filled with water. When they move on to the next, they are greeted by a chart posted on the door that displays the sugar cube content in each of the soft drinks stocked. Next in line is a chilled food cabinet stocked with meals ready to be microwaved on the spot – or taken home for dinner.

A major difference in how meals are now offered for sale is in the portion size, with three sizes available: adult, child and toddler. Not only are the portion sizes a more pragmatic approach to overall health, smaller portions also create higher margins for the operation and waste less food.

Sliced, chilled fruit and veggies now stand tall in stand-up containers with greater height than width, instead of short, squat ones. Research has revealed that consumers associate food containers that are taller than they are wide with healthy bodies, and are therefore more attractive. To date, this part of the strategy to help customers make better choices has shown stunning results: fruit sales are up by 92% over the past year.

Stand-alone food shelves still feature ‘grab and go’ snacks such as crisps and

“If you’d told us we’d be going out to hospitals to tell them how we do things, we’d have laughed”

popcorn. However, those containing the fewest calories are placed at the most accessible eye level with items most healthy for little ones placed low where they can most easily see them. Also, shelf labels displaying the price of each item also feature their calorie counts for easy recognition.

Smoothies are a new addition to the café’s repertoire, with those made from fruit outselling those made from, say, confectionary items by as much as six to one.

GOOD FOR YOU – AND THE CENTRE

A streamlining of the business has resulted from the new emphasis on ‘good for you’ foods. The number of

confectionary lines stocked at the café has been halved, from 20 to 10. Even so, Torode says: “Some people say we should only sell apples and water, but that’s not real life.”

In the process of evolving the new philosophy of doing business at Beau Sejour, Dicker and Torode have become believers themselves. “The more we did, the more confident we were it was going to work,” says Dicker.

Now, with a number of successes racked up so far, Dicker has been invited to eateries at Guernsey’s Princess Elizabeth Hospital and local schools to advise on how to transform their own food and drink operations à la Beau Sejour. “If you’d told us two years ago we’d be going out to hospitals and schools to tell them how we do things, we’d have laughed, we’d have said ‘not a chance’,” Dicker says.

“It’s been a win-win,” says Herridge. “It will evolve even more. Expectations are high. We want to lead not only in our industry, but on the island.”

Words and pictures by DeeDee Doke

GUERNSEY: A SNAPSHOT OF HEALTHY EATING

Guernsey could be considered to be ahead of the game when it comes to healthy eating. There are no fast food chains on the island measuring just 12 miles long. Good restaurants proliferate. Locals sell homegrown vegetables in ‘honesty’ boxes from vantage points along the hedgerows that line the island’s narrow roads.

So Guernsey residents clearly expect more when it comes to food and drink. In addition to significantly increased customer satisfaction, the Beau Sejour Leisure Centre is enjoying noticeable financial benefits from its café’s evolution to healthier food and drink choices:

- Food and drink revenues increased, from £362k in Jan-Aug 2016 to £438k between Jan-Aug 2017, an increase of £76k
- Profit increased by £29k over the same period
- In 2016, net profit in the total Beau Sejour trading area, including food and drink was £100k; in 2017, £141k
- The café averages £500 of sales per day when swim schools take place
- Previously stocking about 760 items, the café now stocks 450 items
- In 2007, the food and drink operation lost £17k



IN DEPTH

BUSINESS

ARE YOU FIT TO FINANCE?



With the growing interest in fitness and physical activity, securing funding for start-up gyms or new equipment has never been easier. Sue Weekes calls on the experts to discover the best options

The increased focus on health and fitness in the last 20 years or so has had a knock-on effect of making it much easier for owners and operators in the sector to secure funding and finance to help run and/or equip a gym, pool or leisure centre.

Phil Morris, business development director and head of fitness and leisure equipment division at PMD Business Finance in Oldham, has worked as a broker in the fitness finance sector for 20 years. He says that as keen gym users (“though we might not look like it”), he and colleagues spent many years ‘banging the drum’ for fitness businesses when the sector represented “a much harder sell”, but today fitness and leisure is a credible sector. His division of PMD helps gym and health club operators secure equipment finance through leasing or hire purchase (HP) agreements but warns that “the relative ease” with which funding can be secured makes it all the more important that owners and operators work with finance providers they can trust.

A number of options are open to owners and operators who are seeking some form of funding, namely bank loans, an overdraft, asset finance such as HP and leasing agreements and, more recently, crowdfunding. Then

there are grants from local authorities, as well as sporting and charity organisations.

For general working capital requirements (for instance, for redecoration, major maintenance projects or consolidating debts), the bank is still likely to be the cheapest option for borrowing.

When it comes to buying kit, however, it often makes sense to spread the cost and opt for a finance or leasing agreement. There is a healthy equipment finance sector in the UK and whether you go direct to a finance company or through a broker, you should ask for the different options – and fine detail – to be clearly explained.

For example, with HP or ‘lease purchase’ you would pay the VAT in advance (though deferring VAT on major purchase may be an option) with any deposit required before making the regular payments. At the end of the agreed period, you can pay a nominal sum to gain ownership.

Meanwhile, a leasing agreement is where a finance company would buy the equipment and rent it to you and there will be VAT on the rentals. Whatever the arrangement, make sure you understand what happens to the equipment at the end of the specified period.

“Also, if the agreement is a ‘minimum period lease’, what are the arrangements to terminate the lease at the end of the minimum period?” says Morris. “Most customers will always ask about rates and this is important, but it’s just as important that there are no hidden surprises.”

DIFFERENT OPTIONS

SME Business Finance in Surrey offers a range of funding products to the sector and offers its own finance, as well as that from other providers, including fintech companies and crowdfunding (see box, p37). Director Neil Hutton explains

“You need a finance partner that takes a long-term view and you can consult with”



IN DEPTH

BUSINESS

that although asset finance (HP and leasing) was traditionally used to fund, say, gym equipment and lockers, its use has been extended to areas such as electrical works, lighting, flooring, fixtures and project costs.

"The benefit to the operator is that they can have new equipment (it is also possible to fund second-user assets) or fit-outs/refurbishments without any capital outlay as 100% is fundable," he says. However, he adds: "Whilst the principles of the funding products are sound, the challenge is actually finding the providers of finance to start with and then satisfying their credit underwriting criteria.

"The market is made up of number of challenger finance companies and independents who have moved in to the market to take the opportunity of an expanding market where they can compete."

These smaller finance companies may have lending ceilings, so Hutton explains that for a complete fit-out, you may need to get facilities with a number of different funders.

RELIABLE PARTNER

It is vital to undertake due diligence before choosing a finance company and find out about their track record and experience in the sector. Morris points out that if you work with the right finance company people, "they will do most of the work for you". He goes on to say: "You need a finance partner that takes a long-term view and that you can consult with, not one who is simply looking to profit from the immediate transaction; they need to show an interest in what happens to you and the equipment in the future."

A broker's expertise can also help to present your case to the finance company, which, for instance, in the case of a not-for-profit leisure trust can be extremely helpful. "Underwriters

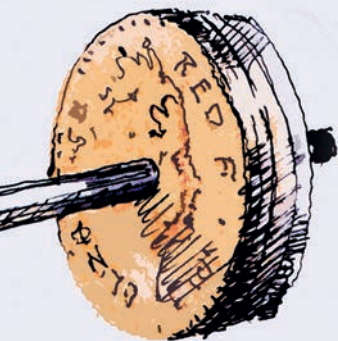


"Providing financial projections and having a clear, well presented business plan will give the lender a much better idea of what the business does and its requirements"

used to looking at plc's might be concerned about lack of profit. But with the right background and explanations to lenders, we can normally overcome any issues," says Morris.

It goes without saying that up-to-date accounts and, where applicable management accounts, will all be required to increase your chances of securing funding. For larger sums of money, lenders will also want to see a business plan.

"If the business plan is unclear or leaves too many questions, the lender



may not have enough confidence in the business to approve the application,” says Greg Durkan, operations director at Portman Leisure Finance, which works with a panel of over 40 lenders. “Providing financial projections and having a clear, well presented business plan will give the lender a much better idea of what the business does and its requirements.”

Durkan adds that while adverse credit is always a factor that will affect any finance application, “it is not always the be all and end all” and adds: “Ask for some general advice on how best to present the finance application.”

ROBUST PLANS

As well as a sound business case and future projections, demonstrating that you have robust business processes in place as well as strategies to protect cashflow will also help. Gyms and leisure centres rely on membership fees for cashflow so, for example, outsourcing direct debit to a specialist payment processor such as Harlands or DFC demonstrates a robust payments business process.

Rob Karn, sales director of Harlands, which processes payments for 20% of the leisure industry in the UK, explains that as well as process payments, its

services include membership management, credit control and customer service around payments. “For most gyms, more than half their income comes via the direct debit process,” he says. “If the direct debit and payment processing is done by just one or two people in the organisation, it can mean the business process is at risk.”

More established owners and operators will always find it easier to secure funds and start-ups with no track record may struggle, but once again seek advice from finance specialists. Morris says many of PMD’s clients are start-ups, while Hutton advises that if you are a personal trainer seeking to start your own gym, the funder will look at two things: the strength of the people starting the business and guarantees will be requested – for example, are they a home owner or have any assets behind them – and secondly, is this business model sound including experience and location of the proposed establishment.

“Sometimes suppliers may help out to give added strength to the deals or provide funding themselves,” he adds. “Service Sport is a major refurbisher of gym equipment and will provide non-status supply and funding to suitable candidates.”

Before applying for any funding, consider the bigger picture and the impact of the approach you take on the business as whole. Many customers want to pay outright for equipment, Morris says, but they should be mindful that this will reduce their cash resources elsewhere – a danger for any growing business.

“We always ask them to consider that most of their members don’t pay three years in advance, and they don’t pay their staff three years in advance, so does it not make sense to pay for equipment as you use it too?” ●

How can crowdfunding help?

Crowdfunding, or peer-to-peer lending, has grown out of the fintech (financial technology) revolution. Put simply, it involves an organisation posting a business proposition on an online platform and individual lenders, who like what they see because they believe it will give them a good return on their money, will lend a small part of the overall amount. Organisations can undertake their own crowdfunding campaign but, as with any financial product, a broker or

finance company can help provide valuable expertise to increase the chances of success. “This is due to our understanding of the various players so that the questions are completed in a way to get the best possible outcome,” says Hutton. PMD similarly has access to crowd-funding options. “We tend to use it where there is a requirement for finance that isn’t for tangible equipment,” says Morris. “So, for example, for decoration and refurbishment of premises.”

TECH FOCUS

GYM APPS

BOOKING UP

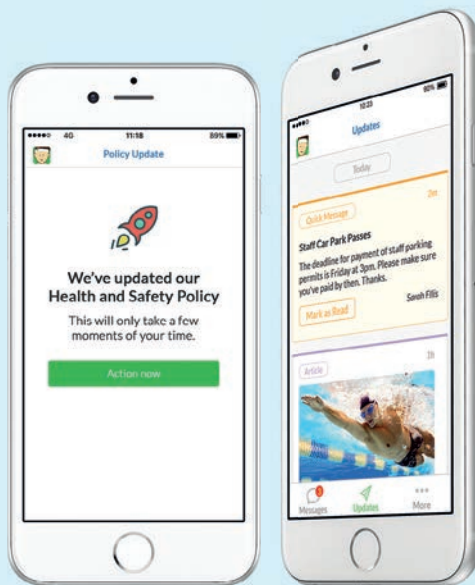
In the past, managing bookings, payments and assessments left leisure staff swamped in paperwork. Now apps can sort it all out at the swipe on a mobile. **Sue Weekes** reports

Dan Haywood recalls a time while working as product manager for CIMSPA partner GLL (Greenwich Leisure Ltd) when people would queue with flasks early in the morning “like the Harrods sale” to ensure they could enrol on swimming lessons run at leisure centres operated by the charitable social enterprise. Then GLL became a user of CAP2’s CoursePro software – and everything changed.

The software was written from the ground up by two entrepreneurs who observed the stress and paperwork that running swimming courses involved at their local club, St James Pool in Taunton.

“CoursePro changed the culture of how swimming courses are run,” says Haywood, who subsequently became the general manager of Bath-based CAP2, which launched in 2009. “It works on the basis of continuous assessment and is not about peak booking at the same time but rather people paying at a time convenient to them and making use of direct debit.”

One of the co-founders of CoursePro was Ross McCaw (with Pete Walker), who went on to launch the communication, management and training app Our People, another of the new generation of tools helping gym and



“The whole system is completely paperless and takes the pressure off reception staff”

pool operators and leisure centres to increase efficiencies.

McCaw believes that mobile apps and smartphones are central to better engagement and communications (see *S&PA Summer 2017*) but can also carry out and assist in numerous back-office

tasks. He says that for years, gym and centre operators were forced to purchase large legacy software systems but as the world becomes more smartphone-orientated, managers are realising that mobile is the best and most efficient way for staff to interact with the various software systems.

“We are now in a great position where operators are able to pick and choose the systems that they implement,” he says. “So they can implement a number of different systems to help them deliver customer excellence within their businesses.”

CAP2’s software has three elements, including a control centre that typically sits on a reception desk, and is used by staff to take bookings and handle other administrative duties. This can be linked direct to a back-office system from providers such as Gladstone and Xn Leisure. Then there is the app used by the instructor, coach or teacher, which runs on a mobile device and can be used for registration and to measure an individual’s attainment.

“So an instructor could record something like a dive from a 5m board and note that the pupil is ready to move on to the next level,” explains Haywood.

Any relevant information from the app goes seamlessly through to the control



centre and, if applicable, through to the back-office system.

The third element is a home portal that allows customers to access information, such as what a son or daughter has achieved in a class, as well as enable users to book and pay for a course.

"The whole system is completely paperless and takes the pressure off reception staff and allows them to focus more on customer service," explains Haywood, who adds the transparency it brings to the information about those taking courses is also invaluable not just for, say a parent, but to an instructor who might be providing cover.

As well as booking and payment, new tools can also help with processes such as compliance and health & safety. The Our People platform comprises an app for easy access for frontline/remote staff and a manager console accessed via a desktop computer. McCaw points out that every single interaction that passes through the platform is logged against each user account.

He adds that management staff have the ability to send out 'broadcasts', which can include a huge number of interactions for the team member to either read or respond to. If an operating procedure is updated within the business, the update is sent directly to the team member's device for them to read and "digitally sign", reducing time and streamlining administration.

"All responses are fed back to the Our People console and can be reported upon," says McCaw. "Management can periodically test team member knowledge using the 'Test Knowledge' function, drastically improving staff education."

An 'Open Shift Broadcast' also allows management the ability to cover a class or course with a team member with the correct skill set at the touch of a button, whereas previously they would have spent time phoning around for cover.

Our People is in the process of

taking things a step further, allowing management to onboard new team members, making sure they are given all relevant training information even before starting work at the centre.

"This is a huge cost-saving, as often operators are paying a new team member to sit and work through a training management system for their first few shifts," says McCaw.

With largely remote workforces, mobile applications clearly hold the key for better communication, staff engagement, increased efficiencies and, ultimately, better customer service in the gym and leisure sectors. The likes of CAP2, Our People, Planday (see S&PA Summer 2017) and others have begun

a quiet revolution in recent years.

The future will bring more products, more choice and more opportunities to liberate workforces to focus on adding value in their roles, which can only be good news for operators and customers. ●



TECH TOOLKIT

PRODUCT ROUND-UP

Product knowledge is power in keeping your gym up to date and stocked with the latest kit

FUTURE FITNESS



VIVO LE GARMIN!

Apple Watch Series 3 may have hogged the headlines following its recent launch but brand Garmin fans will be delighted with the GPS Vivoactive 3 smartwatch. The Elevate wrist-based heart rate provides data on an individual's aerobic fitness and fitness age, so they can monitor changes in their fitness levels. It also provides 'all-day' stress tracking by monitoring heart rate variability data. There are 15 built-in indoor and outdoor sports apps (new profiles include for cardio, yoga, elliptical and stair stepper) and the high-resolution Garmin Chroma display claims to provide for readability



in all lighting conditions. It is also the company's first wearable to have the GarminPay contactless payment system built-in. Meanwhile, Garmin has also announced upcoming support of API integration with popular indoor cycling applications, TrainerRoad, The Sufferfest and Zwift. It means users can import activity files created by these third-party indoor cycling applications directly into their Garmin Connect account.

Price: black/stainless and white/stainless suggested RRP of £279.99; black/slate suggested RRP: £299.99
www.garmin.com

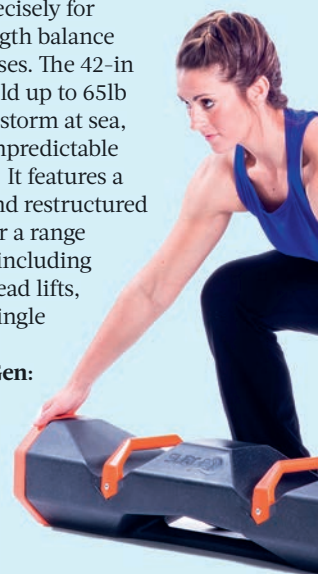


NEXTGEN BALANCE TRAINING AND MAKING WAVES

The Physical Company has introduced updated versions of two of its fitness favourites: the BOSU NextGen balance trainer and Surge Storm hydro-inertia training system. The 26-in BOSU NextGen has a textured dome, which enhances grip, and the four quadrants on the surface help users to position their body more precisely for cardio, agility, strength balance and mobility exercises. The 42-in Surge Storm can hold up to 65lb of water and, like a storm at sea, aims to create an unpredictable dynamic resistance. It features a sleek new design and restructured multiple handles for a range of exercise options including wide grip for overhead lifts, end cap grips and single arm farmer carries.

Price: BOSU Next Gen: £148.44;
 Surge Storm: £164.60 (ex VAT)

www.physicalcompany.co.uk





HIGH DEFINITION TRAINING

Life Fitness is bringing high definition to its consoles with the launch of the Discover SE3 HD tablet console. With the larger 21-in treadmill console and 16-in bike, cross-trainer and PowerMill consoles, the HD tablet claims to bring an image and video resolution that is significantly higher than standard definition with 1080p television

viewing. Life Fitness also recently announced that its cardio equipment will pair wirelessly with the AppleWatch so those exercising can track the most accurate measurements possible.

Once connected, the watch and machine can exchange data such as heart rate, calories burned, distance, speed and incline.

Price: TBA
www.lifefitness.co.uk

AQUA PEDAL POWER

Health clubs and gyms that don't have a pool can now offer aqua fitness thanks to the Fit's Pool from Waterflex, which has officially launched in the UK. With dimensions 1.84m (length) x 1.84m (width) x 1.27m (height), it comes with a pump, filter, heater and LED lighting, as well as a stainless steel Aquabike, which fits inside (it has room for two of these). Waterflex also sells a range of fitness equipment that can be used in the pool. The pool itself is self-supporting and can be dismantled. The UK distributor, Sheffield-based Aquatic Systems, says that a typical pool can be delivered and installed for less than £5,000 and it can also be leased by gym operators and health clubs.

Price on application
www.waterflex.fr

TURNING INACTIVITY INTO ACTION



Thrive is a digital toolkit and learning resource which offers practical steps and suggestions for fitness practitioners to help inactive people become more active and improve their wellbeing. A number of partners, including the Scottish government and sports, public sector and voluntary organisations across the UK, have been involved in its development. It is supported by the Spirit of 2012 and Legacy 2014 XX Commonwealth Games, which aim to preserve the active legacy of their respective games. Thrive is backed by evidence, learning and insight from the Legacy 2014 Physical Activity Fund and the University of Strathclyde. The toolkit includes guidance on what to look out for in sessions, what success might look like, building positive relationships with participants and how to make it easier for everyone to join in. Thrive can be accessed at the link below and there is a feedback facility to share best practice with the community.

Price: free to access
thrivetoolkit.org.uk



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EXPERT ADVICE

Chiropractor Dr Jason Gould on how to reduce the risk of client injuries and speed up recovery

REDUCING THE INJURY RISK

As a sport and fitness professional, it's really important that the work you do not only helps your clients achieve their goals, but also does it in such a way that reduces the risk of injuries.

If you have experienced injuries, reached the threshold of ability with your own training or have developed imbalances yourself, what steps are you putting into place to make sure that your clients do not develop the same injuries, problems or challenges that you faced?

A common area of risk for people is that if they have an underlying weakness, an old injury, a spinal misalignment or restricted motion, it can cause problems within the kinematic chain. Even though clients will have different goals – for example, weight loss, high-intensity training, strengthening and conditioning or core stability – they may be at an increased risk of injury from existing or underlying problems that have not yet been treated.

Neurologically, if there are spinal or joint motion restrictions they can affect both proprioception and neuromuscular control, therefore muscles might appear tight or weak and can be less responsive to exercise. Chiropractic adjustments help to restore these imbalances and can reset the neurology, enabling your clients to get better results with their exercise programmes.

Whatever area of fitness or health that you are involved in, the following advice can really benefit yourself and your clients when exercising.

REHABILITATION FIRST

The most important recommendation to personal trainers, sports coaches or team captains when working with clients is to make sure to rehabilitate them first. Even if they have not had an injury, running through basic full body rehabilitation exercises can really make a huge difference in both improving performance and reducing the risk of injuries.

CORE STABILITY

As a chiropractor, I have seen an increased incidence of injuries relating to high intensity training programmes; generally speaking people will do high-intensity training but not necessarily work on their core stability first.

Assessing your clients' needs and working on a two to three-month programme of stability training and correcting postural distortion patterns before starting their high-intensity training will significantly reduce their risk of injury.

If your client has already experienced an injury, rest from training is usually advisable. However, in many cases they can still train safely by modifying their training; with the right professional advice, they might just have to rest the

injured area and adapt their training programme.

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Closely working with professionals like a sports chiropractor, who understands ability and potential, will help your clients get back to training faster and safer, letting them maintain their health and fitness goals.

Developing good working relationships with local professionals who can help support you will give you a cross-referral network of people that have similar mindsets and goals. I'm sure you would agree that we all want our clients to live a healthy and wellness-based lifestyle that aligns with fitness goals, strengthening and conditioning.

NUTRITION

The food we eat can be the greatest form of medicine or the slowest form of poison. There is a great deal of controversy and differing opinions when it comes to nutrition. Rather than studying the latest fad diet, educate yourself about how the body assimilates its nutrients and think natural rather than manufactured. Rather than just counting calories, count the chemicals.

Dr Jason Gould BSc MChiro DC (Doctor of Chiropractic) has a particular focus on resolving sports injuries and helping people to improve their physical performance from Chislehurst Chiropractic Clinic in Kent.




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WORKPLACE

FOCUS

Jonathan Amponsah gives advice on claiming holiday, school fees, tango lessons and entertainment against your business

TOP TAX CLAIMING TIPS

Did you know you can claim your holiday, entertainment, tango lessons and even school fees against your sport & physical activity business?

Here are a few tips:

School fees, care home fees, staff holidays and even tango lessons – these can be claimed as a business expense in certain circumstances if you run your business through a limited company rather than sole trader or partnership.

If you provide your employees with vouchers that they can exchange for a holiday/tango lessons/care home fees etc, HMRC allows you to claim against that, as long as you report this cost as a benefit to your staff. So as director, you can have your company pay for your holiday, the company reports this as a benefit then pays Class 1 National Insurance on the cost and you as an employee pay tax on it. Then, the company can claim the cost of this benefit against its income. Is it worth it? Yes, because the company would have to pay higher tax on the holiday cost if it went through the payroll.

Entertainment ie. food and drink can be claimed if you have a contractual obligation to provide it. Say you're running a training course and this includes tea, coffee, lunch etc, you're allowed to claim this because you're under a contractual obligation to give the delegates food.

You are also allowed to claim £150 a

“Look carefully into any cost of your business – even the least likely cost might be claimed against”

year per head for staff entertainment – even if it's just yourself, as director of a limited company, because you (the director) are classed as an employee.

Holidays. If you decide to add a few extra days of holiday to your business trip you can still claim the trip provided the primary purpose of the trip is business. But remember that you can't claim the extra cost of staying against business income.

If you bring your spouse, all you have to do is separate the cost; your spouse's flights will be disallowed but your flight will be allowed and so on.

However, if you turn your holiday into a business trip, then you absolutely cannot claim expenses against your income. When you go on holiday and the purpose of the trip is personal but then you decide to do some business while over there, you've waived your right to claim any expenses. Because the purpose of the trip was personal, you can't claim any of the cost incurred while doing business.

Look carefully into any cost of your business, whether you're a sole trader or

director of a limited company, because even the least likely cost might be claimed against, as long as it's done correctly or you seek advice. And make sure you get the paperwork and evidence right. Otherwise, you might be paying more tax than you have to, allowing your business to bleed money that it perhaps can't afford.

Jonathan Amponsah CTA FCCA is a chartered tax adviser and accountant who has advised many clients on tax-deductible expenses. He is the founder and CEO of The Tax Guys, and co-founder of Easy Tax Returns (a tax return app).

Even tango lessons can be offset





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LAST WORD

SPORT AMBASSADOR



Colin Jackson, CBE, former 110m hurdles World, European and Commonwealth champion, Olympic silver medallist, world record holder and CIMSPA partner Everyone Active's Sporting Champions mentor

OVERCOMING HURDLES

I remember missing a training camp with my coach Malcolm Arnold when I was 16. It was a week in France, and my family couldn't afford it. With a scheme such as Everyone's Active Sporting Champions, I would have been able to get on that training course, and that might have helped me and given me more confidence earlier on. Sixteen, as you can imagine, is a stage where you're learning. The more you can do while you're young to gain experience, the better it sets you up later on, when you're up against it.

A course such as this, where you have got the mentoring and the hands-on experience that you can pass onto youngsters, is the best thing that you can do. That is why I got involved with the whole project.

Some of the issues we help with are handling media and sponsorship. Some of the young people don't know how to get sponsorship – what sponsors need, what they like and things like that. They have no experience because they are up-and-coming athletes. That's where I can lend my experience.

What is unique about this whole project is that the young people have the opportunity to get mentored by some of the top athletes who are involved. We try and nurture them in every way. I have been doing stuff with Everyone Active for a long time, so for me, becoming a mentor was an obvious thing to do.

Just as I was retiring in 2003, my first athlete I coached was Mark Foster, who went on to win a silver medal at the world championships in Barcelona in the swimming freestyle. For me,

"I had so many people contributing to my success in all sorts of ways"



coaching is different from mentoring. When you're coaching, you are focused on one particular athlete. Mentoring is for me is more fulfilling, because I can mentor basketball players and athletes.

I had so many people contributing to my success in all sorts of ways. This was one of the ways I could contribute to others and help them get the best out of themselves.

When the young people meet me, they are initially fazed. But they find that, actually, I'm pretty normal. When you normalise yourself, then they can have conversations with you. We may have achieved lots, but ultimately we want to make them feel at ease and happy, and for them to get as much information as they can from us.

We are going to get everyone together in October and then present them with a full-on package where we bring in expertise from health and fitness, how to work their diet correctly, how to have some media training, how to set up a training programme. We want them to feel they know exactly what they're doing, to feel free to question their coaches – let them have a voice rather than just doing what a coach says.

They have got to understand why they do things. That's how you grow and are inquisitive and question, because ultimately you're the performer. You've got to make sure everything is right, so you listen to your coach, but also be inquisitive and think about why you are doing a particular thing.

*Jackson spoke to S&PA Professional senior reporter **Graham Simons**.*



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LAST WORD

24 HOURS WITH...



Keri-anne Payne, *twice 10km open-water swimming world champion, three-time Team GB Olympian and Olympic silver medallist, and founder of swimming coaching business Triscape*

06:15

I get up at 6.15am, which is far earlier than I should do these days. For years, I used to get up at about 5am for training. Everyone would say "I don't know you do it", but you do get used to it. As soon as you don't have to do it any more, then you say to yourself: "What are you doing? There should only be one six o'clock in the day, and that should be in the evening."

I do a little 20-minute workout on the lounge floor, because I know I won't get a chance to go to the gym for the rest of the day. It involves following an app on my phone, which is a seven-minute workout that I do three times – press-ups, sit-ups, star jumps. I'm sure the neighbours downstairs are worried about me jumping up and down.

07:15

I have breakfast – a coffee and a smoothie – before getting ready and leaving the house for the railway station.

08:30

On the train from London to Loughborough.

10:00

Go straight to the swimming pool to coach a guy called Ross Edgley. It's all being filmed by Red Bull. Ross is doing a crazy challenge of swimming from one Caribbean island to another, so 40km of swimming. As if that weren't enough, he's doing it with a tree attached to his waist – essentially, he's towing a tree along the way.

I'm his coach in this crazy endeavour, to make him as efficient a swimmer as possible so he can get from one island to



the next. We're working on his technique and his open-water skills, so he can swim really well in the ocean.

The coaching involves him in the water and me walking up and down, poolside, giving him tips and filming him on my phone so he can see the things he's maybe not doing quite right, and what he should be doing.

We're working on his body position more than anything else, and what his arms are doing when he's pulling himself through the water. We add something called a 'parachute' that you tie around your waist, which we hope will make him feel that he's towing the tree behind him.

14:00

No break for lunch, unfortunately. We finish filming about 2pm, and then at 2.30pm

I get on another train – to Walsall, this time.

15:30

Do a bunch of work on my laptop preparing me for the next day with the Swimming Teachers' Association. We are working with them on open-water swimming qualifications, which is exciting.

17:30

Get to hotel, have dinner of lemon chicken and fries and a glass of wine, because I can do that stuff now I'm not competing any more.

20:00

Watch a film and then bed.

Payne spoke to S&PA Professional senior reporter Graham Simons

LAST WORD

SPORT BY NUMBERS



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This issue... The great divide

A study by the Office of National Statistics explored the disparity of health & physical activity levels between different regions in England. Using statistics from the boroughs with the highest and lowest average healthy life expectancies*, this is what they found....



Highest HLE areas

- 1 Rutland
- 2 Wokingham
- 3 Buckinghamshire
- 4 Richmond upon Thames
- 5 Oxfordshire
- 6 Windsor and Maidenhead
- 7 Harrow

Lowest HLE areas

- 1 Country Durham
- 2 Tameside
- 3 Blackpool
- 4 Hartlepool
- 5 Kingston upon hull
- 6 Manchester
- 7 Tower Hamlets

*Healthy life expectancy (HLE) is an estimate of how many years a person can expect to live in good health

Over a third of adults in the lowest HLE areas

34.2%

were physically inactive (doing less than 30 mins of physical activity of moderate intensity per week). National average is 28.7%



A 1-hour 4-minute London Underground trip along the District Line between Richmond upon Thames (68.5% adults physically active) and Newham (44.8% adults physically active) demonstrates a wide disparity in levels of physical activity amounting to 23%

physically inactive adults

In 2015, York had the lowest proportion of physically inactive adults (17.5%) and Barking and Dagenham the highest (43.7%)



Source: Physical activity levels taken from Sport England's 2015 Active People Survey



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