

MERITED SUCCESS

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AGE OF OPPORTUNITY

Older people fill skills gaps

p30

POWER OF SPORT

Etienne Stott MBE

p43

S&PA Professional

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 **CIMSPA**

THE SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INDUSTRY MAGAZINE



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"I see my British Empire Medal as recognition of what we did, not necessarily just what I did. It's acknowledging that what we have done to make swimming pools safer has been recognised" (p26)


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► DeeDee Doke

S&PA and COVID-19



Dealing with rapidly changing circumstances way beyond our control for the S&PA industry

At the time of going to print, the spread of COVID-19 was accelerating throughout the UK, with organisations' plans and actions changing rapidly with government guidance. On 20 March, the Prime Minister ordered that gyms and leisure centres – along with bars, cafes and restaurants – close their doors immediately. While understandable under these extraordinary circumstances, it was a blow to fitness operators and their customers and clients alike.

CIMSPA, along with other organisations in the sport & activity space, asked the government on

18 March for financial support for the sector in the form of comprehensive salary payment support, rental/management fees reduction support, making gym memberships tax deductible for a stipulated period and, for public sector operators, additional support with cashflow, clarification of local authority clients' responsibility and the non-payment of management fees.

We will bring you news and insight about challenges and solutions for keeping our nation active and harnessing the power of sport & physical activity in these extraordinary times in your membership magazine going forward. Tell us your stories to

share in the next issue of S&PA Professional.

At the same time, keep an eye on the CIMSPA web site, CIMSPA social channels and our digital news for updates to support you, your business and staff.

Stay healthy – and think sustainably.



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CIMSPA

S&PA News

A round-up of the latest developments in the industry

INDUSTRY SHOULD 'WORK AND THINK DIFFERENTLY'

By DeeDee Doke

Themes of collaboration, inclusion and moving the sport and physical activity sector forward professionally ruled the day at CIMSPA and Quest's annual conference on 27 February in Derby.

Co-joining the two conferences into one day proved a popular choice, with the Pride Park Stadium facilities packed out with sport and physical activity industry delegates to hear from Sport England CEO Tim Hollingsworth, Future Fit Legacy Award winners Joseph Bleetman and Jaina Mistry, and behavioural change advocate David Thomson among other key speakers.

Fuelling the theme of



collaboration was the announcement by CIMSPA CEO Tara Dillon and UK Coaching CEO Mark Gannon that the two organisations have agreed to create a single directory for exercise and fitness professionals. (See *CEO's column, right, and article on p10*)

Sport England's



Hollingsworth continued the theme by telling the audience that the sector

and industry – or “ecosystem” as he called it – could “no longer transact our way” through navigating the state of play. At Sport England itself, he said: “We have to let go a bit, be a bit less transactional and more focused on outcomes.”

By thinking of the sector and industry as an

ecosystem, Hollingsworth said “you get that sense of co-dependency. We’re very keen for people to know we want to listen and learn.”

As the Working Towards An Active Nation strategy in particular has progressed, “we’ve had to learn to work very differently. There are those who feel excluded by that. (But) If I’m honest about our ambition, it is to work and think differently”, he said.

Moving forward,

UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Legacy Award winner Joseph Bleetman shared his struggle with mental health and how his discovery of weight training has led him to pursue a career in fitness through taking a Level 2 gym instructor course. Fellow Legacy Award winner Jaina Mistry, below, took the audience through the loss of her sight in 2002 and how committing to improving her health also helped her discover a passion for fitness and wellbeing. She is now qualified as both a qualified gym instructor and a nutrition and weight management consultant.

Behavioural change advocate Thomson urged the audience to “stop selling memberships – start selling change you can believe in”. By prompting potential customers to think about change they may want in their lives, he said: “They’re wiring themselves” to

recognise the value of what is on offer and the difference it could make to their lives.

Phil Carr, CEO of CIMSPA partner My PT Hub, suggested that personal trainers could eliminate clipboard administration and build revenues through digitisation. Often, Carr said, PTs usually “max out” at 15 clients because of the ‘back office’ work associated with being a small business. By capitalising on trends for the use of data in working out and remote-based workouts alongside gym-based activity, PTs can provide better service as well as grow their customer base, Carr said. “If you can build that into your model, the sky’s the limit.”



MESSAGE FROM CIMSPA CEO



TARA DILLON ON THE FAST-CHANGING SITUATION FOR THE SECTOR

As we go to press, the coronavirus was tightening its grip on the UK with schools closing and the government discussing a clampdown on pubs, cinemas and gyms across the capital in an effort to halt the spread of the virus.

The pandemic is causing immense uncertainty for both businesses and employees, but we are doing everything we can to support the sports and physical activity sector during this extremely challenging time.

We are working with our partners, including Sport England, ukactive, Community Leisure UK and the DCMS, to ensure the government provides financial support for the sector and that we deliver practical help, support and advice.

In the midst of all this uncertainty it's important to remember the vital role our sector and its workforce plays in the health and wellbeing of the nation as well as the UK economy.

And this is why CIMSPA and UK Coaching will continue to work together over the coming months to combine the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) with the CIMSPA Exercise and Fitness Directory, creating a unified recognition system for all fitness professionals, hosted and managed by CIMSPA. Our aim is to give employers and the public confidence that a CIMSPA member is a highly trained professional.

Our services will be needed more than ever once this crisis is over, but in the meantime, we will work tirelessly to support our members and keep the sport and physical sector afloat.



Hollingsworth said, the sector's next strategic cycle must be “more about how we are going to do it” instead of focusing primarily on what is to be done: “We want it to be a revolution of how we do it.”

Praising the agreement between CIMSPA and UK Coaching to collaborate on a single directory, he said: “This is a classic example of what can be achieved... Good collaboration is a contact sport.”

UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS

YST YOUNG
AMBASSADORS'
FUTURE FOCUS

By Patrick Appleton

Figures of influence in the sport and physical activity sector have a responsibility to help young people become decision-makers.

That was the message from Aled Davies, Young Volunteers Wales development coordinator, at the Youth Sports Trust (YST) conference in Coventry on 27 February.

The charity's 25th anniversary conference was held at the Ricoh Arena and focused on keeping young people socially connected in an increasingly digital age.

Keynote speakers included para-athlete and former Royal Marine Andy Grant, and Mel Young, sportsScotland chairman.

Speaking during the 'Young Ambassadors: Be the change' seminar, Davies said that he experienced difficulties growing up in "a small area of Wales, not much going on" during his teenage years. Davies went on to youth leadership roles at Sport Wales and the YST, and hopes he can use his current role to help future industry leaders.

"It's all about developing young people as individuals," said Davies. "After that, it's about ensuring they are the decision-makers, not just having an impact on a decision. This is about a shift from influencing change, to making change."

LOOKING AT S&PA'S
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

By DeeDee Doke

The CEO of a leading environmental advocacy group has called on the sport and physical activity industry to "lend your muscle to advocacy" in driving sustainability practices across facilities, travel and the acceptance of commercial sponsorships.

Replacing plastic drink cups with reusable ones, creating wildlife corridors, and travelling within the UK by train instead of by air for events and meetings are ways in which the industry could demonstrate leadership in tackling environmental problems, said Craig Bennett, who heads Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

Bennett said the sport industry should "show leadership" and reminded the audience of how sport creates "role models and icons" who could "lend their muscle to advocacy" in support of the natural world.

Bennett was speaking at the Sport and Recreation Alliance's Fit for the

Future Convention in Loughborough in January. "A sustainable sport and recreation sector is important to keep the nation active and to help address some of society's biggest problems," SRA said in a prepared statement.

The two-day event featured Olympic canoeing gold medalist Etienne Stott MBE (see *interview p43*), who advocates for environmental issues with Extinction Rebellion, Hattie Park, sustainability manager at the All England Lawn Tennis Club, and Professor Kevin Hylton, emeritus professor at Leeds Beckett University among others.

SRA CEO Lisa Wainwright told *S&PA Professional* that membership demand for "common sense" tools to find sustainable solutions for financial restraints had prompted the event.

SRA chairman Andrew Moss echoed those concerns in his opening remarks: "As a sector, we have to prove that we are using every pound of funding in a sustainable way," he said.

If your S&PA organisation has launched a sustainability strategy or initiative, please contact S&PA editor DeeDee Doke at deedee.doke@redactive.co.uk

UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS

BOUTIQUES MUST 'CREATE THE YEARN TO RETURN' AMONG CUSTOMERS

By DeeDee Doke

Gym operators must be agile, imaginative and develop cult followings for their brands to create “the yearn to return” amongst their customers, the “unofficial queen of boutique” urged attendees at ukactive’s SWEAT conference.

“We have to get good with change – it’s coming fast,” said Emma Barry, author of *Building a Badass Boutique*. She added that the current pace of innovation, “is the slowest it’s ever going to be... Change is the new normal”.



Aimed at boutique gym operators, the one-day SWEAT programme served up talks on the future of fitness, branding, how to fund business expansion and reinventing space. In her introductory keynote, Barry highlighted the rise of the

on-demand gym market, which is experiencing triple digit growth.

Alongside the “hyperpersonalisation” of the boutique industry – in which, for instance, some hotel chains are installing personal fitness equipment in rooms – development of other strands such as cognitive health and nutrition is well underway.

Operators need to “create the yearn to return” among customers, Barry added.

“In 10 years’ time, we won’t even recognise this industry,” she said.

'TAKE TIME TO BUILD FACILITIES' – ARCHITECT

By Colin Cottell

Those responsible for commissioning sports and leisure facilities should learn the lessons of the Olympics, where stadia has often ended up neglected after the games finish, according to a sports architect.

Speaking to S&PA Professional at the book launch of *Olympic Stadia: Theatre of Dreams*, professor Geraint John, a senior adviser to architects and sport venue design experts Populous, who co-authored the book with Dave Parker, said: “So often people don’t take enough time to write the brief and think about what the building should be doing. That is very difficult to correct later on.”

John – who has worked on stadia design for three Olympics – said legacy “and a building’s contribution to the planet” is also important.

Lord Coe, president of World Athletics and a key driver of London’s successful 2012 Olympic bid, was also in attendance.

“It is very important that when you are designing something in sport it reflects the local communities,” he said. The UK’s non-elite leisure facilities were “pretty good” Coe added, and “even with straitened budgets, I think by and large things are in pretty good shape”.

WAVE MAKER OF THE QUARTER: ADVENTURE PARC SNOWDONIA

A £3m renovation and expansion programme has paid dividends at an indoor and outdoor adventure play centre in North Wales, as **Graham Simons** reports

Pozzoni Architecture has recently helped complete a £3m extension of an activity centre at Adventure Parc Snowdonia in North Wales.

According to Pozzoni, the extension of Adventure Parc Snowdonia has made it a year-round destination for visitors of all ages, with some attractions aimed at children aged over 5 and others aimed at older children and adults.

While its man-made lagoon at Surf Snowdonia was predominantly a spring/summer attraction, the addition of Adrenaline Indoors is aimed at providing a more inclusive experience for visitors.

Adrenaline Indoors’ new facilities include an aerial assault course, extreme slides, an indoor adventure climb, one of the longest man-made cave networks in the world, a soft play area, a high



wire course, an outdoor rock and drop as well as a zip line over the lagoon.

As Adrenaline Indoors is now the first building that visitors encounter when approaching Adventure Parc Snowdonia, Pozzoni’s brief was to design an iconic landmark that welcomes people to the destination, the spokesperson explained.

And the facilities appear to have been very well received by the public so far, as

Adventure Parc Snowdonia recently won the ‘One for the Kids’ (family experience) award at the National Geographic Traveller Reader Awards in December 2019. The project officially opened to the public on 1 August 2019.

■ Is your facility making waves in the industry? Get in touch at sandpa@redactive.co.uk

UPFRONT

S&PA NEWS



A NEW DAWN FOR S&PA

CIMSPA and UK Coaching have recently announced new plans to combine the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) with the CIMSPA Exercise and Fitness Directory.

As well as creating a single directory for all sport and physical activity professionals, CIMSPA members will gain access to UK Coaching's learning and development platform.

Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA, and Mark Gannon, CEO of UK Coaching, explain what the move means for the industry.

WHY IS THIS GOOD FOR THE SECTOR?

Tara Dillon: Ultimately, this is about the two organisations working together to create, for the first time, a unified recognition system for the sector and a single endorsement mechanism for training providers. This will help CIMSPA and UK Coaching provide the best possible service to the workforce and will also realise important elements of the government's Sporting Future strategy and Sport England's Towards

an Active Nation strategy. The big picture is ultimately about elevating the status of the profession; giving employers and customers confidence that anyone who is a CIMSPA member is a highly trained professional who will deliver a quality service.

FROM AN EMPLOYER'S POINT OF VIEW, WHAT WILL THE IMPACT BE?

TD: We see a big benefit for employers in simplifying and bringing clarity to the system. CIMSPA membership will become the only professional recognition that employers need to look for. Many employers are already CIMSPA partners and require all of their staff to have a CIMSPA membership, and we will be working closely with others to make them fully aware of the new landscape. The same goes for training provider partners.

HOW WILL THIS AFFECT REPS AND CIMSPA MEMBERS?

TD: Members won't notice any immediate change in the short term.

There will be a transition of membership from REPS to CIMSPA. One of the most important outcomes of the partnership will be the recognition of the new CIMSPA kitemark for professional status and recognised CPD, which UK Coaching will host.

WHEN IS THIS HAPPENING?

Mark Gannon: Over the next few months we will start to unify the two membership bodies, bringing about a single directory of exercise and fitness professionals. We will be in regular contact with members, employers and training providers in due course to explain the rollout process. We understand that this is a big change for the sector, and both UK Coaching and CIMSPA are here to help every step of the way.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF UK COACHING?

MG: UK Coaching already has a well-developed learning and development platform that supports those who deliver sport and physical activity and as a result of this partnership we will now make this available to all CIMSPA members. UK Coaching will continue to provide all our other services to all our other customers and we will continue to add value to members through our innovative learning and development platform. In addition, CIMSPA members can also access best in class insurance cover through UK Coaching.

WILL THE REPS NAME DISAPPEAR IN THE UK?

TD: Yes. Once all members have had a chance to transfer to CIMSPA and therefore the exercise and fitness professionals directory, the REPs brand will disappear. This will take about a year, as members renew over the next 12 months.

For more information, visit www.cimspa.co.uk or www.ukcoaching.org

MOVERS & SHAKERS

OLDHAM COMMUNITY LEISURE

Oldham Community Leisure has appointed **Simon Blair** as its head of business development. In the newly-created role, Blair will oversee the trust's marketing and sales functions, as well as its customer relationship platforms. As a member of the senior team, Blair will also be accountable for the organisation's strategic direction.

SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT COALITION

Andy Reed OBE has been named chair of the Sport for Development Coalition (SFDC). Ex-CIMSPA chair Reed succeeds Matt Stevenson Dodd, who had been sitting as interim chair of the SFDC board since 2018. Supported and funded by Sport England, Comic Relief and the Laureus sport foundation, the SFDC is a movement of organisations invested in the positive

social power of sport and physical activity.

UKACTIVE

CIMSPA partner ukactive has expanded its management team. **Chris Foster** takes on the role of head of learning and development alongside **David Gerrish**, who has been named head of digital transformation. **Emma Thomas** and **Gemma Williams** have both been appointed client services managers.

MAX ASSOCIATES

Max Associates has welcomed the appointment of **Rachel Gomm** as principal consultant. Gomm's role at the leisure and contract management consultancy will see her work with local authorities across a wide range of



GOVERNMENT

Nigel Huddleston has been appointed as sports minister. The MP for Mid Worcestershire replaces Nigel Adams and is the fourth sports minister to take up office in 16 months. Huddleston said he was "delighted" to oversee a sector that "sustains millions of jobs and activities that truly enhance people's lives" in a statement on his official web page.

services, including procurement and facility strategies.

FOOTBALL FOUNDATION

The Football Foundation has announced former Football Association (FA) CEO **Martin Glenn** as its new chairman. Glenn will oversee the development of the FA's strategy to aid grassroots football, created in conjunction with the FA, CIMSPA partner Sport England and the Premier League.

CONTRACTS AND DEALS

KEEPME AND TEN HEALTH & FITNESS JOIN FORCES

Keepme, the AI-retention tool, has joined forces with CIMSPA partner Ten Health & Fitness. The partnership follows a recent £4m growth capital investment from Foresight Group LLP and is part of an ongoing growth strategy for Ten & Health Fitness, set to open in three new locations this year.

ACTIVE LUTON CREATES BAME SWIMMING ROLES

Active Luton has teamed up with the Institute of Swimming to provide swimming lessons throughout the local community. Active Luton trained 64 female swimming teachers through their CIMSPA-endorsed Swim England Qualifications last year, with 21 of the newly qualified teachers having BAME heritage.

£62.8M INVESTMENT FOR DURHAM LEISURE SERVICES

Durham County Council has approved a £62.8m investment programme to transform leisure services across the county. Working in close consultation with CIMSPA partner Alliance Leisure through the UK Leisure Framework, proposals were submitted and approved by the council cabinet in January.

ACTIVE-NET BRANCHES OUT INTO SCOTLAND EVENT

Active-net, a key networking event for the sector, is taking its blend of one-to-one meetings, seminars and networking opportunities to Scotland. The first active-net Scotland and N Ireland will take place at Crieff Hydro, Perthshire on 9-10 September 2020 in partnership with CIMSPA and ukactive.

IN DEPTH

CIMSPA UPDATE

CIMSPA has grown significantly over the last five years, increasing its workforce from less than 10 to almost 40, with 19 employees joining in the last 12 months alone. And this doesn't include our new sub-committees.

As we continue to expand, the senior executive team are determined not to lose the culture they embedded when they took over the reins five years ago. It is imperative therefore that we adopt a consistent approach to how we operate within our behaviours and values. It is for this reason that we have developed our new People Strategy.

Built on ensuring that the health and wellbeing of team members comes first, we did a full scoping of our benefits. These now include unlimited holidays, health care, a healthy living allowance and life insurance to name but a few. These benefits ensure we live by our values: quality, teamwork and respect. In line with our work to support an active nation, we have extended lunch breaks for those who want to exercise during the working day and we make

“In line with our work to support an active nation, we have extended lunch breaks for those who want to exercise during the working day and we make the most of our SportPark setting, by holding walking meetings and team sports activities”



Morwenna Crespín, people development manager, shares CIMSPA's new People Strategy, which has the health and wellbeing of team members at its heart

the most of our SportPark setting, by holding walking meetings and team sports activities. We've also taken part in some office yoga.

Launched last November, our People Strategy encompasses new learning and development processes, including new CIMSPA CORE training, which gets underway this year to ensure all team members are confident and competent leading a team, with HR policies and additional benefits built in to support team members. A talent management

tool will ensure internal talent is harnessed and grown, while a new employee value proposition will shake up our recruitment processes, delivery and culture to ensure people feel respected and valued and have the freedom to be the best they can be in their role.

As people development manager at CIMSPA, it was my job to develop the strategy. As my role was new to the Chartered Institute, it was important that there was an understanding about



what I was there to do to support the organisation. Having worked in various blue chip organisations, I observed and searched for the impact of the current processes and procedures within CIMSPA, gaining feedback from team members on what they liked, disliked and wanted from the organisation. Using my feedback and previous business insight, I developed a strategy that builds on some of the great policies that were already in place and encompasses all focused areas of

Working at CIMSPA

We strive to be an exemplar, high performing team, that acts out CIMSPA's vision and values at all opportunities and in their truest form. With a transparent leadership approach, CIMSPA has a culture of encouraging and listening to feedback and we always strive to harness and grow our talent. As part of a high-performing team, all of our team members are given the freedom and responsibility to make conscious choices to 'do the right thing' and thrive whilst working in an environment where our behaviours are deliberately recruited for, developed, recognised and respected.

19

CIMSPA has grown significantly over the last five years, increasing its workforce from less than 10 to almost 40, with 19 employees joining in the last 12 months alone

'people' in the workplace (see box).

The strategy encourages people to be themselves, have fun and work with the freedom to do their job to the best, all while being supported, developed and feeling that their work is valued and is contributing to CIMSPA's vision and mission.

As previously stated, ensuring people's health and wellbeing has been

the most important element of the whole process ensuring our policies and procedures match this vision. We have regular bear hunts, an Easter egg challenge coming up and even a sports day this summer all built into the strategy through health and wellbeing.

The strategy was first launched to our senior management team and received fantastic feedback. We will hold regular team meetings this year to help embed the strategy in our day-to-day operation.

As CIMSPA continues on its trajectory of growth, it is essential that we keep our people at the centre of the work that we produce and that our culture isn't lost in the operation. Many managers have had quick succession into leadership roles and it was important that there is a plan to support those in the transition and also to prepare our future leaders as and when more opportunities arise.

As CIMSPA grows, we expect new roles to be created and natural progression for team members to grow into these roles, supported with a succession plan and training for the roles. Having a strong employee value proposition ensures we are attracting a varied and diverse audience for new roles should they become available. The new processes will support current employees with any learning and development requests. Ultimately, our new People Strategy will ensure people feel supported and are given the right tools and equipment to succeed and enjoy their role.

I have now started work on CIMSPA's People Strategy 2.0, which can support the organisation to take the next level for its team members and volunteers. The Chartered Institute is going places, and it's a very exciting time to be in the sector. I'm very much looking forward to the direction of travel we are taking CIMSPA and its team members. 

IN DEPTH

CIMSPA UPDATE

AIMING HIGH

CIMSPA's goal is for all individuals working across the sector to have a route to chartered professional status. Nick Sellwood, CIMSPA's lead chartered assessor, explains how



What is a Chartered Professional? To be classed as Chartered, you

have to demonstrate that you are operating at a higher level than the professional standards and that you can demonstrate impact over time. We are looking for applied learning and skills in the workplace, which is quite different from sitting an educational exam.

There are two classes of Chartered: Member or Fellow. Member is for those

in strategic and operations roles, while Fellow relates to those whose roles are predominantly strategic.

In my mind I see these roles at the same level. The skills are quite different, but whether you are excellent at operations or excellent strategically, you are excellent and you are Chartered.

CHARTERED PROCESS

● **Phase 1:** CIMSPA member applies and demonstrates the required prerequisites

- identification of role and environment, population groups and their experience and level of training. This is normally a qualification that meets the professional standards and has been endorsed by a CIMSPA partner organisation and/or a testimony from senior managers who are CIMSPA members.

● **Phase 2:** Candidate is assessed against the agreed Chartered competencies. This can include practical assessment/Viva

(professional discussion)/written submission plus supplemental evidence (this can vary with job roles)

● **Phase 3:** Candidate passes and is awarded Chartered status and agrees to abide by its Code of Conduct and CPD policy

● **Phase 4:** To maintain Chartered status the candidate would have to demonstrate that they have undertaken relevant CPD (10 points per year, approximately 10 hours).

The Chartered Process will be bespoke. Candidates will be assigned an assessor, who will support them through the process and mould it around the candidates individual situations. The assessment process will therefore reflect the population groups, the experience and environment in which an applicant works.

There are three routes of the process, which have been developed to reflect people's experience, qualifications and whether or not they have positive endorsement of professional competences from a CIMSPA employer partner or a line manager/senior manager or director who is a CIMSPA member.


From the moment managers enter the process, they have six months to complete it. The interview itself will take up to three hours. The interviewer has 72 hours to type up the transcript of the interview and send it back to the

individual, who then has seven days to review the transcript and make any adjustments. They can also submit more evidence to support their answers. Once this has been submitted, CIMSPA has 21 days to assess and internally verify the application before they give the results. Applicants will receive a pass, a referral or a fail, as well feedback from the assessment.

WHY BECOME CHARTERED?

Being Chartered enhances the status of professionals working in the sport and physical activity sector, and with improved standards of practice come improved outcomes.

It also gives the public greater confidence in the work that we do, while providing assurance and confidence for employers and the wider sector. In addition, it will help to open the door to collaboration with other professions.

We are currently running pilot Chartered projects for Management at Member and Fellow level, and Health & Activity Practitioners [Personal Trainers] at Member level. We intend to offer a limited capacity of places for these Chartered pilots from April. During 2020, we intend to increase capacity on a quarterly basis. An additional pilot for Personal & Professional Developers will launch in April 2020. 

Phase 1: Do you have the prerequisites to apply?

ROUTE ONE	ROUTE TWO	ROUTE THREE
YES, I have the prescribed level of experience and CIMSPA recognised qualifications for my current role	YES, I have the prescribed level of experience and CIMSPA recognised qualifications for my current role	I DO NOT have a CIMSPA recognised qualifications, but I DO meet the experience criteria for my current role
YES, I have a positive endorsement of professional competences from a CIMSPA employer partner or a line manager/senior manager or director who is a CIMSPA member	I DO NOT hold an endorsement of professional competences from a CIMSPA employer partner or a line manager/senior manager or director who is a CIMSPA member	YES, I have two endorsements of professional competences from CIMSPA employer partners or line managers/senior managers or directors who are CIMSPA members

THE NEXT STEP IS TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION FORM WITH:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum vitae outlining employment profile, education, evidence of qualifications and sector events you have attended • Identify your current working environment and sector including specific population groups that you have worked with • Once allocated an assessor submit video and other evidence of parts of practical sessions with client[s] that demonstrates excellence in delivery of the CIMSPA identified elements of professional standards. Any video evidence must be supported by a case study for that client[s] • A portfolio of evidence or any other documents that the applicant intends to refer to during the Viva | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum vitae outlining employment profile, education, evidence of qualifications and sector events you have attended • Submit three case studies of clients that they have worked with for longer than 3 months • Identify your current working environment and sector including specific population groups that you have worked with • Once the initial screening process is complete and you've been allocated an assessor, submit videos and other evidence of parts of practical sessions with client[s] that demonstrates excellence in delivery of elements of professional standards. Any video evidence must be supported by a case study for that client[s] • A portfolio of evidence or any other documents that the applicant intends to refer to during the Viva | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum vitae outlining employment profile, education, evidence of qualifications and sector events you have attended • Submit three case studies of clients that they have worked with for longer than 3 months • Identify your current working environment and sector including specific population groups that you have worked with • Once the initial screening process is complete submit videos and other evidence of parts of practical sessions with client[s] that demonstrates excellence in delivery of elements of professional standards. Any video evidence must be supported by a case study for that client[s] • A portfolio of evidence or any other documents that the applicant intends to refer to during the Viva |
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IN DEPTH

CIMSPA UPDATE

SHAPING THE FUTURE

CIMSPA is developing its employer-led governance by expanding the oversight system for employers, explains Colin Huffen, head of standards and regulations

To date, CIMSPA's Professional Development Board has been responsible for shaping and developing the Sport and Physical Activity sector's education policy including the development of professional and apprenticeship standards through a network of professional development committees.

The Professional Development Board, since 2016, has overseen the development of 35 professional standards, five apprenticeship standards and the endorsement of over 1,200 degrees, qualifications and CPDs. The group has identified that a new structure is needed to support CIMSPA to achieve its goals.

It has approved the introduction of a new group structure, which comprises a UK Workforce Strategic Stakeholder Group, Professional Development Boards, one for the UK supported by home country boards, and five new professional development committees.

The UK Workforce Strategic Stakeholder Group will assess what our sector needs both now and in the future. It will look at how many people we will need and the skills that will be required to ensure the education sector meets current and future demand.

The Professional Development Board will oversee and direct the work of

CIMSPA, including which professional and apprenticeship standards are needed, the process of endorsement and what each of the five professional development committees are doing for their sectors. It will also act as the trailblazer group for apprenticeship

development and submissions to the Institute for Apprenticeships.

We are very pleased to announce the creation of the Scottish Professional Development Board. Our partnership with sportscotland marks an important step for the future of CIMSPA and is critical to achieving our vision of professionalising the sport and physical activity sector across the UK.

These overarching groups are supported by five industry-level committees employer led supported by technical experts they will oversee the standards needed, the endorsement of training by CIMSPA, as well as the training required for their industry (see box).

The entire process is led by employers. Employers will chair the groups and will be supported by sector stakeholders and education partners. We have written the terms to make sure that we have representation from all types of employer (micro, small, medium, large) supported by other organisations that may help them such as education providers (universities, colleges, training providers) and representative bodies.

We are currently going through the recruitment process. People were asked to express their interest for the roles in January.

The nominations committee will recruit the chairs of the groups who will then recruit the group members. The chair of the Professional Development Board will come from the CIMSPA board of trustees, the chairs of the committees will be employers. Derek O'Riordan from sportscotland will chair the Scottish Professional Development Board.

This new structure will ensure we continue to both establish and meet the training and development needs of the sector to create a sector everyone wants to be part of. 🔄

How it works: Scottish Professional Development Board

- Professional Development Committee – Physical activity, health and wellbeing
- Professional Development Committee – Leisure operations
- Professional Development Committee – Community sport
- Professional Development Committee – Exercise and fitness
- Professional Development Committee – High performance sport

The Youth Panel pilot has been a great success for CIMSPA. Not only have we obtained the authentic youth perspective from a wide variety of peers aged 16 to 25, we have also been challenged to think differently about how we better serve the next generation of the workforce.

We have established a structure where the youth perspective is included in our governance, strategy and operations, and we are a better organisation for doing so. We have also provided 14 young people with opportunities for their own personal growth, giving them access to the sector as well as mentors and support with their careers.

The Youth Panel has proved a valuable asset for CIMSPA in so many ways. It has given us a perspective that we didn't have previously. The panel's authentic perspective has checked, challenged and inputted into our strategy. Members of the panel have influenced the board and achieved a non-voting position at every board meeting, providing greater cognitive diversity to our board and executive team. They were the first group to see our new brand and give us valuable feedback. They also represent CIMSPA at events and will be presenting at future events.

All in all, the Youth Panel has helped CIMSPA to not only navigate the sector from a youth perspective, but also to reach a new audience that supports the chartered professional body.

The aim of the pilot was to determine the effectiveness of a Youth Panel and how it can best serve the needs of CIMSPA and the panel members. The next phase will focus on building a sustainable system that embeds the young adult perspective, needs and ambitions into our day-to-day operations, strategy delivery and future



COMING OF AGE

*Following the success of the first year's pilot, CIMSPA is making the Youth Panel a permanent feature of its governance structure, says **Danielle Peel, CIMSPA's Head of Organisation Design and Development***

"The Youth Panel's authentic perspective has checked, challenged and inputted into the CIMSPA strategy"

endeavours. Moving forwards, we would like to give greater autonomy to the Youth Panel and act in more of a guidance role.

We are currently recruiting six new youth panel members, aged 16-25, who are passionate about the power of sport and physical activity to create an active nation. This will bring our panel to 12 members. Sadly, we are saying goodbye to a few panel members this year as some step down to pursue their next step and others retire after reaching our age limit of 25 years. We aim to stay in touch with all of our panel members; in fact the Youth Panel is in the process of creating an annual alumni legacy event to celebrate achievements.

We expect the new members of the Youth Panel to be in post in June for the second meeting of the year. Leading up to the meeting, we will hold induction days with the new members and assign them committee buddies to ensure they are supported and feel welcome. The tenure is for one year, but we will endeavour to support panel members who wish to continue with CIMSPA up to the age of 25.

The Youth Panel has helped CIMSPA to grow, learn and develop, and we have shared some great experiences. It has been a fantastic year watching our Youth Panel go from strength to strength, attending board meetings and having a positive impact on CIMSPA as well as each other. 🌟

IN DEPTH

QUEST REVIEW

SUSTAINED IMPACT

2019's Quest Annual Review found that many facilities remain clean, well-maintained and environmentally aware

Delegates at the 10th Quest NBS Conference were the first to hear initial findings from the Quest State of the Nation 2019 Annual Review.

Using Quest's online reporting platform RD-Dash to analyse data from Quest's 2019 assessments, the report identifies key trends in the sector, shining a light on areas where it is performing well or can do better.

The findings were released as part of the Quest Operations stream by Gill Twell, head of development at Right Directions, which manages the UK Quality Scheme for Sport and Leisure on behalf of Sport England.

Quest NBS ran four breakout streams at the conference, exploring topics linked to the Quest NBS assessment modules: engagement, operations and customer experience. Practical and interactive, they were tailored to help delegates identify clear pathways toward their personal development, as well as looking at how facilities and teams engage with their communities to deliver high quality, inclusive and accessible opportunities for local people to enjoy health and fitness.

"The RD-Dash will be invaluable to operators who are committed to continually improving their operational procedures and health agendas," Twell told conference delegates.

KEY FINDINGS

Quest assessments look at how well facilities are doing in meeting the objectives set by Quest's continuing development process within the five stages of Plan, Do, Measure, Review and Impact. Data from the RD-Dash has highlighted areas for improvement in the way facilities review their performance and determine the impact of the steps they have taken.

Modules in which facilities had an overall score of 'Very Good' include:

- **Cleaning and Housekeeping:** Facilities are assessed for ensuring a visibly acceptable level of cleanliness in line with customer expectations; displaying high standards of hygiene in critical areas; taking steps to prevent injury and inconvenience; and presenting a fit, clean and tidy facility that merits the pride of staff and customers.

Facilities scored best within this module for keeping staff informed of the standards and procedures needed to keep facilities clean and tidy. Nearly one third (32%) were ranked 'Excellent'. The areas that could see improvement were those of reviewing strengths and weaknesses.

Mystery visits resulted in strong scores across the board, with high levels of facilities scoring 'Excellent'. For Fire Safety, almost two thirds (65%) achieved the highest grading, while


Presentation (39%) and Monitoring (40%) were other strong areas.

- **Maintenance and Equipment:**

Facilities scored best in this module for providing training to maintenance staff to ensure competency, with nearly half of facilities (47%) scoring 'Excellent' for this. Facilities received lower scores for reviewing performance and being aware of the impact of their actions.

Mystery visits resulted in strong results in most areas assessed, with 55% of facilities scoring 'Excellent' for the provision of activity equipment and 44% showing effective management of maintenance issues.

- **Environmental:** There were many areas in which facilities performed well, with over a third achieving an 'Excellent' score for displaying an Environmental Policy and making staff aware of this; having a designated and competent 'Green Champion'; and measuring and reviewing utility usage. Some 77% of facilities scored 'Excellent' for implementing a regular testing regime for the management of water.

An area with the potential for improvement was training staff in environmental awareness. While 23% scored 'Excellent', 21% were marked 'Satisfactory' or 'Unsatisfactory'. Mystery visits revealed facilities could do more to encourage customers to help with environmental management. 

IN DEPTH

AGENDA

JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED

By Sam Burne James

The positive effect of exercise referral schemes on the local population in Suffolk has caused others to sit up and take notice



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The NHS suggests that UK adults do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise each week. But with little more than a quarter managing even half an hour, physical inactivity is costing nearly £1bn each year to the NHS, and several times more to wider society.

Despite the role the sport and physical activity (S&PA) industry can play in alleviating this, it has often been unable to build genuinely transformative partnerships with NHS and government. The manifold reasons include health professionals lacking confidence in the fitness industry, and fearing that collaboration may be motivated more by profit than an earnest desire to improve public health.

But over recent months, one forward-minded council has brought together fitness providers and doctors through a scheme whose strong focus on data and evaluation is promising to bear fruit.

Suffolk County Council's Most Active County programme, a 2012 Olympic legacy project, is a public, private and voluntary sector partnership. Its goal, as the name suggests, is to make England's

easternmost county its most active.

With this in mind, in 2018 the council's public health team scrutinised exercise referral schemes (ERS), a mechanism for healthcare professionals to connect people whose level of inactivity is damaging their health, with local fitness opportunities. The intention is for a tailored scheme, which could include initial one-to-one sessions before progressing into a group environment and kick-starting a more active lifestyle.

As is the case across the UK, several ▶

Thumbs up from Sport England

CIMSPA partner Sport England is enthusiastic about the potential for ERS across the UK. Sarah Ruane, its strategic lead for health, tells *S&PA Professional*: "We know that people with a health condition are much more likely to be inactive and at Sport England we want to bring the proven benefits of regular physical activity to everyone. This kind of collaboration is a great way for people to get started. Everyone has a different way into exercise – and all activity counts. So for some, it's about finding an activity at home – others might join an organised sports club or try out a gym."

"When visiting facilities like gyms and fitness classes, it is so important that everyone, particularly those faced with additional barriers such as living with a health condition, is supported to have the best possible physical activity experience."

"My PhD research found that GPs and other healthcare professionals were particularly concerned about the knowledge, skills and levels of professionalism within the sector"

DR ALEX DE LYON, personal trainer

UNIPISTOCK

IN DEPTH

AGENDA

“The health system has said that the only way [they’re] going to stop a real crisis and relieve that [inactivity] burden is by working with fitness professionals”

COLIN HUFFEN, head of regulation and standards, CIMSPA

ERS were already being provided in Suffolk’s leisure centres to people of different ages and with a range of conditions, but with varying features and outcomes. Sharna Allen, a health improvement commissioner in the county council’s public health team, spoke to providers, users and those making referrals to understand what was working – and what wasn’t.

“The results were revealing, and highlighted some key issues,” she explains. “These included the fact that there is a general lack of awareness of ERS among healthcare professionals, that there are huge variations in how schemes are delivered, making it time-consuming for those referring into schemes, and that it was really difficult

for us to demonstrate the impact of schemes in Suffolk, because monitoring and evaluation of schemes was inconsistent across the county.”

Although not involved in the review, this was little surprise to Dr Alex De Lyon, a personal trainer whose PhD in sport and exercise science included a project investigating the role of fitness professionals in improving public health.

“A significant challenge the physical activity sector as a whole faces is a lack of trust and recognition among key stakeholders in public health and medicine. My PhD research found that GPs and other healthcare professionals were particularly concerned about the knowledge, skills and levels of professionalism within the sector,” De Lyon tells *S&PA Professional*. Also problematic for ERS, De Lyon says, is doctors’ concerns “that the schemes would simply be used to achieve commercial goals, such as increasing gym membership numbers”.

It is a challenge CIMSPA understands. “Credibility of our workplace among healthcare professionals of our workforce is critical,” comments Colin Huffen MCIMSPA, the body’s head of regulation and standards – in part why CIMSPA launched its chartered fitness practitioners scheme [in February].

But while the fitness industry does its bit, Huffen also suggests that the NHS and wider health system need to meet it

halfway, commenting: “There have been numerous documents and papers where the health system has said the only way [they’re] going to stop a crisis and relieve that [inactivity] burden is by working with fitness professionals.”

Philip Lown, partnerships programme manager for Most Active County, was tasked with negotiating those challenges. “The logical solution,” Lown describes, “was to try to address these with a quality standard (QS),



£1bn

Physical inactivity is costing nearly £1bn each year to the NHS

Source: NICE



“We all know physical activity is good, but proving the case for the particular product you’re taking to the health providers is the key”

PHILIP LOWN, partnerships programme manager for Most Active County



which would raise standards and enable the ERS to be monitored and evaluated. And importantly, from a promotion point of view, it would create something to take to the healthcare professionals making these referrals and explain the standards they are working to.”

Lown and the county’s public health team convened a working group of stakeholders from both leisure and health sectors. For the former, which

has at times struggled to explain its capabilities to the latter, it was a welcome opportunity. “We all know physical activity is good, but proving the case for the particular product you’re taking to the health providers is the key,” he explains, adding that evaluation “can make the difference” between success and failure when running sports and leisure programmes in conjunction with public health.

The group’s Suffolk Exercise

ERS success at Abbeycroft

Abbeycroft Leisure has operated an ERS for more than a decade. Under the new QS, it is hoping for many more success stories:

■ **Brian Parsley** was taking regular painkillers and had severely limited mobility during a two-year bout of back and hip pain, weighing over 20 stone (127kg) at his heaviest. After seeing an osteopath and joining a Slimming World group, his GP made a referral through ERS. He was given a tailored programme of twice-weekly visits to Newmarket Leisure Centre, and was soon nearing a 14-stone weight target.

■ **Paul Brough** was a competitive runner before a cerebral stroke put him in hospital for four months. A brain injury centre’s ERS took him to Haverhill Leisure Centre, and he was given a programme including Pilates and yoga. He has returned to running, and while he is now at the back rather than front of the field, he says just being out there has rid him of depression and confidence issues that arrived post-stroke

■ **Mary Thomas** had arthritis for several years before a hospital-based physiotherapist referred her to Abbeycroft. After an ERS involving a circuits class at Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre, she is now a regular at the centre and is back to playing lawn bowls. Her arthritis has improved to the extent that her medication has been reduced, and an operation she may otherwise have needed sooner may now be able to wait 10-plus years

IN DEPTH

AGENDA

Referral Quality Standards were designed to get health system credibility through compliance with PH54, the ERS guideline from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

In April 2019, a two-year pilot programme began. Some 15 pools, gyms and leisure facilities run by four providers were earmarked to go through an accreditation process run by Quest and CIMSPA partner Right Directions.

At the time of writing, 11 sites have been accredited and are welcoming users onto a variety of gym-and-pool-based activities, as well as walking

groups. Participants fill out questionnaires during, at the end of and 12 months after their scheme finishes, following PH54's data stipulations. Two further sites should be accredited in the coming months, while one has pulled out and a final centre's participation is on hold pending refurbishment.

Nine accredited sites are run by non-profit CIMSPA partner Abbeycroft Leisure. It had already been running its own ERS for 10 years, with 49% of its 300-plus referrals completing their programmes, and an even higher proportion (56%) going on to become a member of one of its 18 facilities across the county.

Those individual successes include some "really, really powerful, inspiring stories" (see box p23), says Abbeycroft CEO Warren Smyth. But, he adds: "Some of the feedback we'd had from partners, particularly in the health system, was that they didn't really understand exercise and referrals; there was a bit of a trust issue around the qualifications our staff might hold, perceptions they [healthcare professionals] might have of us," he comments.

There were also "some slight



Almost half of Abbeycroft Leisure referrals completed their programmes, with 56% going on to become a member of one of its 18 facilities across the county

Source: Abbeycroft Leisure

"There is a general lack of awareness of exercise referral schemes among healthcare professionals"

SHARNA ALLEN, health improvement commissioner, Suffolk County Council

The Quality Standard

Suffolk Exercise Referral Quality Standard is made up of four individual Quality Standards (QS):

QS1 concerns scheme safety, including making sure instructors carrying out ERS activities have relevant qualifications (such as CIMSPA practitioner membership) and a first-aid award, and sets out which individuals are eligible for referral

QS2 on scheme delivery sets out that the ERS activities should last at least 12 weeks, when reviews and consultations should take place, and what should happen when a person completes or drops out

QS3 and QS4 sets out the monitoring and evaluation data that should be collected and shared to enable analysis.

variations" between how schemes ran at different sites.

Thanks to county council funding, there have been "no direct costs" of accreditation for Abbeycroft, Smyth says. The organisation hasn't needed to make fundamental changes to what it does, but has afforded staff some time to understand new protocols and data collection methods. He also acknowledges that it has required some fitness practitioners to hone their soft skills in order to be supportive of individuals who might feel intimidated by their perception of what an exercise and gym environment will be.

"The difference you can see being made in the programme, and they way we can articulate the impact we're making, will be far better," Smyth says. He is also pleased that the scheme "does introduce new people to our centres who might not otherwise come... so there is some business sense behind it". While this might ring alarm bells given Dr De Lyon's caution against leisure providers viewing ERS solely as a source of new members, it is clear that Smyth is no hard-nosed sales machine.

List of accredited sites

(*indicates accreditation due to be confirmed in next few weeks)



He points to Abbeycroft's non-profit social enterprise status, and the fact that it provides subsidised rates if users could not otherwise afford to take part.


A key measure of success for the scheme will be whether its participants remain active beyond the initial ERS term. Lown explains: "What we don't want is people going in to do a 12-week exercise referral, then feeling fine or better or whatever, and then not doing anything else again, and then in two years they're back going through exercise referral."

He acknowledges that this may require a shift from the funding mindset whereby achieving a certain

level of course attendance is considered success, and what happens after that is not measured. Lown recalls how in a previous job he pushed delivery partners to think more about long-term effects, after course completion, on participants' lives. He is doing the same on this project. "We have asked and challenged partners to improve their process for tracking participants post the initial intervention; to think about how they can retain those customers and to understand the behaviours that need to be changed to achieve long-term participation," he says.

Lown will not be drawn on how well the scheme is going - he wants the data

to do the talking. "It is very early days and there is nowhere near enough data to pull even any tentative conclusions yet," he says, but adds that early signs "are promising around improvements in physical activity and wellbeing".

A report in May will give some idea of where things are headed at the halfway point of the 24-month scheme. It is promising to hear that Lown is currently in talks with Right Directions to make the QS accreditation criteria available nationally. Should the Suffolk Exercise QS turn out to be just what the doctor ordered, Smyth and Lown's counterparts across the country would be wise to take note. 

IN DEPTH

PROFILE

By Dean Gurden

MERITED SUCCESS

Andy Ebben says receiving an honour from Queen Elizabeth II is recognition for the whole swim and leisure industry's journey, from humble beginnings to an innovative future

Andy Ebben FCIMSPA has recently been awarded the British Empire Medal in recognition of 30 years' service to swimming pool safety. Ask him how he feels about being a recipient and, as well as saying how humbled he is, Ebben will mention all the help he's had along the way from colleagues and associates.

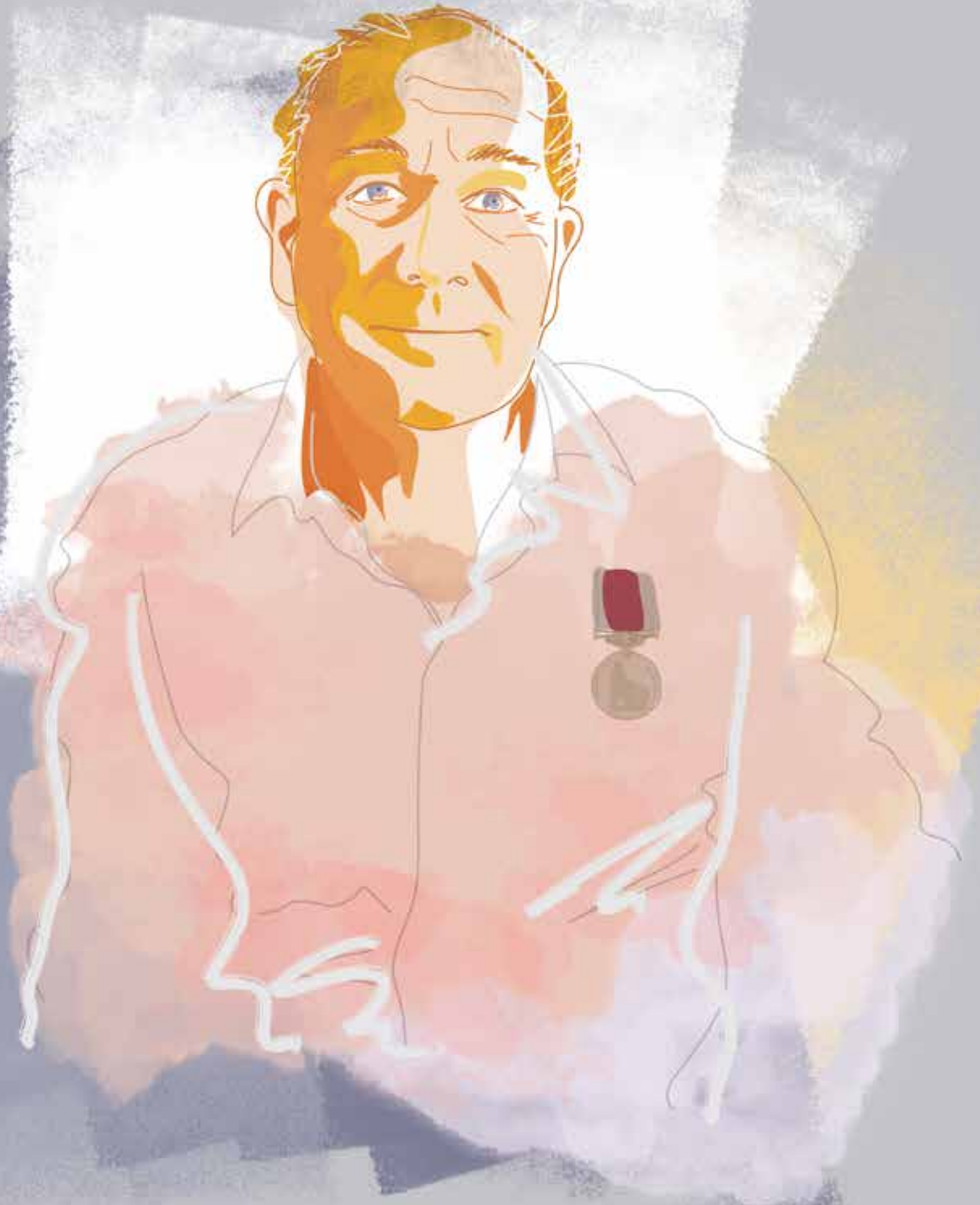
He probably includes his younger sister in that list. It was back in 1975, when Ebben was fresh out of the Army, living in Edinburgh and wondering what to do with himself, that she suggested he take a walk along to the Royal Commonwealth Pool and see if he could get a job.

There's a bit of luck involved in most successful careers and it just so happened that a lifeguard had left the day before and there was a vacancy. Ebben was interviewed and promptly offered the job. His mother wasn't too happy, bearing in mind this was a young man who had gone through public school and Sandhurst, been an officer in the British Army, and would now be wandering up and down a swimming pool for a living, but it was a life-changing moment.

"It was the best thing I ever did," he says. "I worked there for two years, qualified as a swimming teacher and then, early in 1977, my boss called me in and said 'You can't be doing pool duty all your life - you need to go to university and get yourself a degree'."

So off he went to Loughborough University and did a sports science degree, followed by a post-graduate teaching qualification. It was while teaching for two years in Cyprus that he wrote a training manual for the Cypriot police on water rescue. "They had no training materials, but what they did have was a fairly big drowning problem," Ebben says. "I had to send my manuscript to the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) to get it agreed, and when I returned to the UK I was offered a job as development officer at the Society."

Unfortunately, it was a government-funded post and the money dried up eventually. Thankfully for Ebben, a college friend who was head of swimming management for Birmingham City Council got in touch to mention that the council was going through a swimming pools review, and his skillset was just what they were looking for. ▶



IN DEPTH

PROFILE



"I see [the British Empire Medal] as recognition of what we did, not necessarily just what I did. It's acknowledgement that what we've done to make swimming pools safer has been recognised"

Ebben spent five years as swimming management officer with responsibility for the health & safety of all the wet area facilities in Birmingham.

But in 1988 that the RLSS came calling again. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) had published new guidance on safety in swimming pools, and had charged the RLSS with

producing a new lifeguard qualification. "Nothing existed at the time," says Ebben. "I took the task on as a volunteer, but it quickly became clear that it was a far bigger job than anticipated. So I said 'Give me what I'm earning now and a car, and I'll come' and they said 'Yes'."

Ebben set about writing a training

manual for lifeguards, and developing a certification and training programme that met HSE criteria. He readily acknowledges it was always going to be a work in progress. "After 30 years and around a million lifeguards later, it's fair to say we've cracked it, but the work will always go on," he says.

At the moment, that continued work is focusing on how to integrate technology into swimming pool supervision. It's a hot topic, according to Ebben. "We've had CCTV systems in pools for a long time that give the lifeguard a live picture of what's going on," he explains. "But the difficulty we identified is that sitting in front of nine live images means the lifeguard hasn't got any real chance of interpreting what's happening. We would rather they looked at the pool than a screen. And people prefer this as well."

Ebben cites a couple of recent fairly high-profile drowning incidents where the coroners have said very much the same thing: the principle of cameras is sound, but the application doesn't really work. "The images are too small," he says. "The ability of the lifeguard to use distance vision to look at a pool and then adjust to a tiny screen, and then go back to looking at the pool just doesn't work – we're setting them up to fail."

On a more sophisticated level, computerised drowning detection systems are now being deployed with smart cameras installed either over or in the pool under the water. The cameras digitally map the pool when it's empty and flag up anything that shouldn't be there or unusual movement when it's full. It's then down to lifeguards to respond.

"We're in an industry that has largely contracted out its pool operations to leisure trusts," says Ebben. "They are almost all charities and struggling for

cash, and the cost of lifeguards and staff is their biggest concern. If they can reduce staff, but maintain levels of supervision and safety through the use of technology, then that's a challenge for all of us to make happen."

Anything that makes the job of lifeguarding easier can only be a good thing, believes Ebben. "It's tough," he says. "The hours can be long and the working environment can be horrendous. And working for most leisure trusts often involves you doing a whole host of other things as well. But you can earn more stacking shelves in a supermarket than you can as a lifeguard."

"Yet people place their lives in a lifeguard's hands and expect us to deliver. If you look at the figures, we have about 650m swims a year in this country and there are only two or three fatal accidents. That's got to be a testament to the fact that we're good at what we do," he says.

But accidents do happen and with 20 years' experience as an accident investigation expert witness in civil and criminal cases and for HM Coroners, Ebben has seen his fair share of them. One case involved a drowned man who had suffered a massive heart attack and was probably dead before he hit the pool floor. No intervention would have changed the circumstances.

However, the case centred on how the lifeguard could have possibly missed the drowning – it was a quiet day at the pool and it occurred right in front of him. "In fact, the case put forward by the defence barrister was that we are all human and we make mistakes, and the jury accepted it," says Ebben. "It's tragic and there were a number of significant failings in the overall system, but ultimately the

"Figures show the UK has about 650m swims a year, yet only two or three fatal accidents. That is testament to the fact that we're good at what we do"

lifeguard simply made a mistake – it happens."

Ebben is quick to agree that most people forget the effect of a drowning on the lifeguard. "I've counselled lifeguards who have been through this and, to some extent, I've been in the same situation," says Ebben. "You always wonder afterwards if you should have seen something. The impact on individual lifeguards can be horrific. It's important to have support."

As principal consultant with AQUA Leisure Safety & Training Services, his job takes him around the world. Which is all the more remarkable when you find out he's been a wheelchair user for the past 20 years, following a climbing accident that resulted in a year in hospital. "I said I was going to retire two years ago and failed dismally," he says. "I've eased up, not so much because of age, but because it gets so much harder. I've got a national and Europe-wide client base and it's tough."

As a CIMSPA fellow, his work with the body has tailed off. "Largely because we've achieved what we set out to do," he says, which was to put together an overall package of policies, procedures and qualifications for the swimming pool world.

But there's always something new to consider. At the moment it's the alarming spread of the coronavirus.

"I've not had any specific questions so far about the risks in pools, but it seems likely that if an infected person did swim and infected droplets did get into the water, the chlorination would render it ineffective," he says.

Probably more important is the issue of staff training and CPR. "Good hygiene practices are always needed when using mannequins, and they should be properly cleaned between use with lungs changed at the end of each training session," he adds. "In a live CPR emergency, we would advise staff to use face shields or CPR face masks to minimise the likelihood of infection transmission."

So the work goes on in a job that has given Ebben immense pleasure and satisfaction. "I have loved my career – being a lifeguard was the best thing I ever did," he says. Which brings us back to that medal, awarded for services to lifeguard development and swimming pool safety.

"It's very humbling," he says. "It's nice to get it as an individual, but I see this as recognition of what we did, not necessarily just what I did. I might have had the initiative and driven it, but I had help all the way down the road. It's acknowledgement that what we've done in our industry to make our swimming pools so much safer has been recognised." 🏆

IN DEPTH

CASE STUDY

Helen Flannigan teaches around 10 fitness classes every week. These include energetic, dance-based sessions, such as Zumba and FitSteps, as well as Aqua Fit and Flexi Bar, which involves lots of squats, lunges and abs work. “I love jumping around and working up a sweat,” she says. It often comes as a surprise to participants to learn that she is 83 years old.

She is one of a growing number of fitness professionals who choose to continue working into their later years, keeping themselves fit and inspiring others to get active too. Working past retirement age is a trend that can also be seen across other sectors. Office for National Statistics data shows that one in 12

over-70s is now in employment, a figure that has almost doubled over the past decade. Some may be working out of necessity to top up meagre pensions, but many do it because they feel they still have much to contribute.

Flannigan, who teaches at CIMSPA partner Edinburgh Leisure’s Craiglockhart site as well as a nearby

CIMSPA partner Nuffield Health facility, gained her first fitness qualifications during the Jane Fonda-inspired aerobics craze of the 1980s. She later moved from secretarial work into managing the leisure centre that previously occupied the Nuffield site, and was asked to continue teaching classes when she retired.

AN AGE OF



"I wanted to keep fit," says Flannigan. "Why should you stop doing something at a certain age if you enjoy it?"

When she broke her ankle last year, doctors said it would take a year to heal but Flannigan was back teaching in a little over three months. Her loyal following of older class participants have seen the benefits of regular exercise too. "I've had quite a few who have gone into hospital for serious operations and afterwards the surgeon has said to them that their gym membership has definitely paid off," she adds with glee.

But it's not only older members who benefit from her classes. "When I stand in for another instructor, I can see the 20-somethings looking at me and my white hair," she says. "But at the end of the class, I've had them come up to me and admit they had considered walking out when they saw me, but that they'd ended up thoroughly enjoying the class."

The 2018 'Reimagining Ageing' report by CIMSPA partner ukactive highlighted that 38% of people over the age of 55 are inactive, and this figure rises to almost half by the age of 75. Although progress is being made, facilities are still

"It's about having a range of ages and being as welcoming as possible to customers of all age groups"

ALLY STRACHAN group fitness manager, Edinburgh Leisure

Utilising older people with time on their hands could help plug a vital skills gap in the leisure industry, as Caroline Roberts found out

OPPORTUNITY

IN DEPTH

CASE STUDY

struggling to attract members in the 55+ age range. Currently, the demographic makes up 36% of the adult population but only one in five members falls into this age group.

Employers in the sector may be missing a trick if they don't capitalise on the availability and enthusiasm of older staff like Flannigan, who can act as exercise role models, says Ally Strachan, group fitness manager at Edinburgh Leisure. Among its gym staff, 14% are aged over 50 and most have a significant length of service.

"We're pretty flexible, with lots of part-time roles and we try to accommodate people's shift preferences where possible," says Strachan. "That's one reason why they would want to stick with us. We certainly don't go out looking to recruit in certain age groups. It's about having a range of ages and being as welcoming as possible to customers of all age groups."

It's important not to pigeon-hole older staff, he adds, as it's sometimes the case that they get channelled into focusing on exercise referral work and leading the seated exercise classes.

"It's down to everyone's expertise, experience and passion, and who it is that they gel with," Strachan explains. "We have one instructor over 55 who's a triathlete. He's good with exercise referral but he also does tri training because he's very experienced in that."

Many older employees have a wide range of skills to offer, as well as high levels of fitness. Mark Golden, 57, an instructor at Trafford Leisure's Sale site, won't be retiring any time soon.

"I'm currently working five days a week and I love it. It keeps me young," he

says. "I believe in inspiring people and demonstrating that my age doesn't limit me." Golden has had a varied career that has included fitness industry roles, dental products manufacturing and a period working as a chef, but decided to return to his main passion in 2018.

"I have no desire to slow down. Yesterday I did a 10km run, took three exercise classes and completed an arm and upper body workout in the gym."

Like many older workers, he also wants to carry on learning with an eye to the future. In 2018, he gained his Level 1 Swimming Teacher Assistant qualification and now assists with the CIMSPA partner Swim England Learn to Swim Programme at Trafford Leisure. "I was keen to get this qualification as it's something I can continue to do as I get older," he says.

There is a good supply of

people coming to the industry after working in other sectors, says Elaine Briggs, director of education at CIMSPA partner Future Fit Training. She estimates that that over half of its students are people looking for second careers and, to date, and it has trained almost 200 people

14%
Among Edinburgh
Leisure gym staff,
14% are aged over 50

Source: Edinburgh Leisure



over the age of 60. For many of these, it's more about job satisfaction and giving something back and they often bring skills and stability that can be lacking in younger staff.

In the 2018 ukactive 'Raising the Bar' report, 61% of employers said that staff transience is a problem and 74% said that many employees needed training in social skills to make them work-ready.

"Older staff can bring a huge amount of life experience to the profession, and that's something you can't teach," says Briggs. "And they're often very good at communicating with people of their

own age, as well as younger people as they may have children and grandchildren.

"As a sector, we need to recognise it's not a case of 'one size fits all'," Briggs adds. "Employers could do a lot more to access the huge, untapped resource of older instructors out there as well as identifying those among their members who might be interested in gaining qualifications. It can only benefit the membership as a whole." 🌐

See the full report at ageing-better.org.uk/publications/becoming-age-friendly-employer

"Why should you stop doing something at a certain age if you enjoy it?"

HELEN FLANNIGAN fitness class teacher



Engage with experience

The Centre for Ageing Better has compiled a report on how to recruit, support and retain older workers. Here, its senior programme manager Jess Kuehne outlines the key advice for employers who want to become more age-friendly.

Be flexible. Older adults are more likely to have caring responsibilities for other family members and our research has found that they particularly value flexible working. The range of opportunities for this in the fitness industry means it is well placed to attract older workers. Highlight this when recruiting.

Minimise age bias. Think carefully about the wording and imagery used in marketing and recruitment materials and make sure age diversity is represented.

Be supportive of health conditions. Although older workers have been found to take less time off for short-term illnesses, it's an inescapable fact that older bodies are more prone to health problems and may take longer to recover from injury. Have early and open conversations, and make sure they can balance work with health needs.

Provide opportunities for development. People tend to think that older adults aren't interested in career progression and further training but that's just not the case.

Create an age-positive culture. Support managers to work with age-diverse teams, encouraging skill-sharing across the age range, and recognising age bias. HR should actively monitor workforce data and age diversity, keeping track of the age profile of applicants and successful candidates.

ADVERTORIAL

ALLIANCE LEISURE

UK LEISURE FRAMEWORK DELIVERS MORE THAN £40M INVESTMENT

As the UK Leisure Framework, owned by Denbighshire Council and Managed by Denbighshire Leisure Ltd, enters its fourth year, Paul Cluett, FCIMSPA and MD of Alliance Leisure reflects on its success

WHY HAVE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND LEISURE TRUSTS CHOSEN TO MANAGE CAPITAL PROJECTS THROUGH THE UK LEISURE FRAMEWORK?

The UK Leisure Framework is unique, providing an end to end solution for leisure developments. In addition to



allianceleisure

procuring and managing the transformation of physical buildings, the Framework offers services that contribute to whole-community engagement, providing an efficient and effective means of increasing opportunities for physical activity through inspiring active spaces.

All design and facility mix decisions result from comprehensive, evidence-based feasibility studies, supported by our expertise, gathered from more than 20 years of leisure development experience. Most local authority in-house legal, procurement and leisure management teams are already over stretched. Adding a potential multi-million pound leisure development project to the mix is beyond the resource of most. Providing a mechanism that enables project delivery, by leading leisure development experts, from concept to completion, resolves this resource issue and produces self-sustaining active spaces which transform communities.



DESCRIBE A TYPICAL PROJECT DELIVERED BY THE FRAMEWORK.

There is no such thing as a typical project. The UK Leisure Framework delivers a diverse array of projects. Project values range from £200K for the installation of Anglesey's first 3G pitch to £18m for a new build destination water park in North Wales.

Projects completed under the Framework range from single site refurbishments to the reconfiguration of entire leisure stock portfolios. Whatever the project value, the Framework's focus is always on the delivery of community value. Something as simple as an inexpensive

A PERFECT PARTNERSHIP

Denbighshire County Council launched the UK Leisure Framework in 2017, naming Alliance Leisure as leisure development partner. The UK Leisure Framework provides an efficient and effective means of procuring and managing leisure development projects and is open to all named public bodies and third sector leisure organisations across the UK (which is all UK Local Authorities).

- Completed, current and committed projects **33**
- Completed projects value **£40.7m**
- Project Questionnaires authorised **81**
- Call off contracts signed **31**
- Projects currently on site **6**

WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

"The UK Leisure Framework offered the unique wraparound solution we were looking for when we developed an F&B and function room facility at Pembrey Country Park. Other localised Frameworks could have offered us support to construct the physical building but we needed wider leisure expertise to create a truly engaging experience."

Ian Jones, Head of Leisure, Carmarthenshire County Council

"The cost certainty element of the UK Leisure

Framework meant we had absolute clarity on costs that would be incurred by the proposed capital investment. The leisure development expertise that Alliance Leisure brought to the table was central to the success of our investment."

Malcolm Fleming, Programme Manager, West Suffolk Council

"Our internal procurement teams do an outstanding job but capacity is limited and they would have struggled to successfully project manage a development of this scale. Alliance

Leisure was instrumental in coordinating all aspects of the project. Footfall is up and we increased our membership by 100%."

Ian Saunders, Head of Tourism Leisure & Culture, Monmouthshire County Council

"The Framework gives a high degree of confidence. It has been procured in accordance with EU Regulations and has been extensively tendered. Customer and employee feedback on the projects have been fantastic."

Kieron Vango, CEO, Inverclyde Leisure

HOW ARE UK LEISURE FRAMEWORK PROJECTS FUNDED?

Through multiple funding sources. Many projects are funded through prudential borrowing from the PWLB whilst others use capital, privately sourced by Alliance Leisure. There is also the opportunity to incorporate third-party grants. Some projects use a mix of funding options. The UK Leisure Framework is built to be flexible, making it as easy as possible to invest.

THERE ARE LOTS OF FRAMEWORKS. WHY ARE PUBLIC SECTOR LEISURE PROVIDERS CHOOSING THE UK LEISURE FRAMEWORK?

The UK Leisure Framework adopts a full service approach, supporting all elements that contribute to a successful, sustainable development including, design, business planning, funding, construction and marketing.

Most other frameworks do not have this bandwidth, instead focusing on individual elements. Also, this is the second generation Framework for Denbighshire County Council and the expertise they brought to the table has been absolutely instrumental in its success.



play park refurbishment can have a huge impact on the long term health and wellbeing of a community.

IN THESE TIMES OF AUSTERITY, SOME PUBLIC SECTOR LEISURE PROVIDERS MAY BE RELUCTANT TO INVEST IN A NON-STATUTORY SERVICE SUCH AS LEISURE. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THEM?

Councils taking a longer term view of community wellbeing should consider calculated investment in leisure provision, even during times of austerity. Redevelopment can bring economic, health and social benefits to whole communities, delivering a return on investment that is hard to match.

In many cases, when old, tired leisure stock stops meeting community needs and becomes a drain on resource, the immediate reaction is to close it down. This is often not the only or the best solution. Alliance Leisure has worked with local authorities up and down the country, presenting and proving a case for reinvestment and regeneration in leisure. When the correct facility mix is

presented in a vibrant, inspiring environment, communities re-engage and facilities become sustainable.

The UK Leisure Framework helps to mitigate investment risk. Working with leisure experts and maximising efficiencies during development helps ensure the finished project delivers desired outcomes and creates income-generating opportunities which drive sustainability.



TECH TOOLKIT

PRODUCT ROUND-UP

CUTTING EDGE

From workout tools to skateboarding apps, discover some of the latest technology in the leisure sector



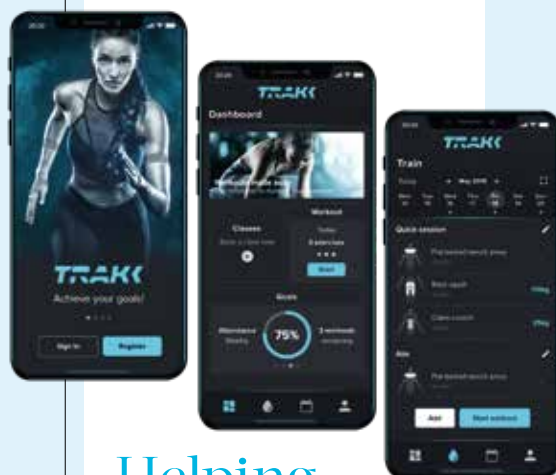
MAKING INDOOR CYCLING SMARTER

Wattbike and Intelligent Cycling have joined forces to provide operators with a smart, connected and immersive indoor cycling class experience. Intelligent Cycling's indoor cycling technology connects to the Wattbike AtomX and personalises the resistance reaction on each bike to match the needs of each rider. It means everyone in the group can follow the same workout at a personalised intensity. The software doesn't require additional hardware and can be downloaded on a computer. Users can log in remotely to join a class using their smartphone and a class access code. The Intelligent Cycling database includes hundreds of different workouts targeting different levels and with different visuals. The Wattbike is used by the world's top cycling federations including Australia, GB and the US. Its performance computer enables the accurate measurement of more than 40 performance parameters.

Price: On application

www.wattbike.com

www.intelligent-cycling.com



Helping users and operators keep on track

TRAKK is a new app from Pulse Fitness that aims to change the way both operators and users track and log workouts. It allows users to plan and track their fitness goals, devise their own workout plans, as well as use ready-made plans (users can access a library of free, curated workouts). Meanwhile, operators can set personalised goals for members and keep track of how they are performing inside and outside the gym. TRAKK also allows operators to easily manage the gym floor with a colour-coded system that identifies at-risk members, provides a summary of previous contact and the ability to log new interactions to improve retention. Pulse adds that it also presents an additional revenue stream that allows operators to introduce a paid subscription service, which will allow members to access nutrition packages, retail discounts and more.

Price: On application

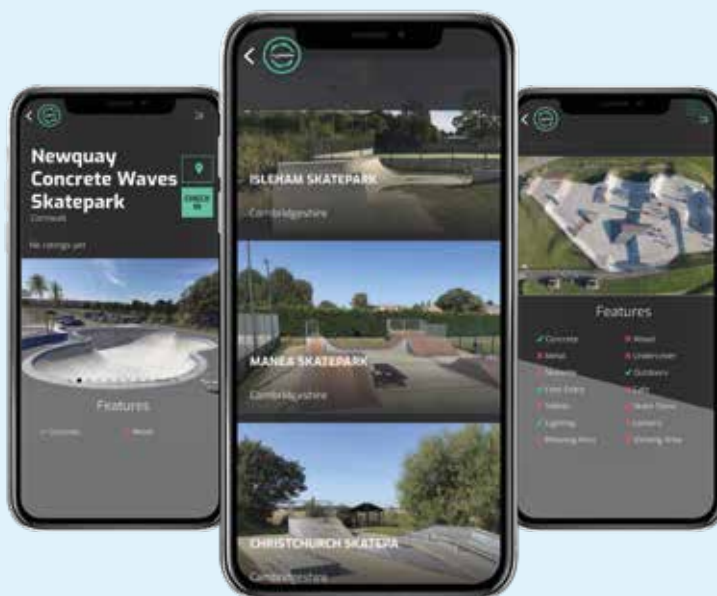
www.pulsefitness.com

APP PUTS SKATEBOARDING ON THE MAP

Skateboard England is launching a smartphone app that maps every skatepark in the UK, lists UK skateboard events and provides Team GB content. Skateboard England, which focuses on “skating more and skating better”, reports that more than 750,000 skateboarders are active in the UK and this is set to increase by more than 15% ahead of the Olympic Games in Tokyo this year, where the sport will make its debut. The MySkate app allows anyone to search and locate skateparks across the country by entering a postcode. It also aims to promote the social side of the sport by featuring a gamified mobile version of the popular game, S.K.A.T.E. The non-profit The Skateparks Project has also been involved in the development of the app. It is dedicated to helping communities get new skateparks and has documented over 1,500 skateparks in the last five years.

Price: TBA

www.skateboard-england.org



SHIELDING YOUR WORKOUT

The Rotator's Shield is a weighted plate designed to rehabilitate the rotator cuff muscles and deliver a full-body workout. It has been created by personal trainer Alex Klein, in partnership with entrepreneur Raj Umayavan Yadhunanathan. The shield features a patented design with grip handles at the centre of the plate rather than the sides. The creators say this encourages central placement of the wrists and isolates the exercise by creating resistance, making the weight feel heavier than it is, due to the gravitational pull on the outer wrists. Users can attach additional weights around the outside of the plate to create an unbalancing effect that can be used for rehabilitation exercises. Klein says he got the idea for the piece of kit when working with a client with rotator cuff issues who was unable to perform the overhead work he had planned for the session. The shields range from 5kg and 25kg and are available for pre-order in stands of six or 12.

Price: £750 per shield

<https://rotatorsshield.com/>

EXPERT ADVICE

SECURING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS

Using popular messaging apps in the leisure industry could have privacy implications, warns OurPeople CEO Ross McCaw

For anyone working in the sports and fitness industry, instant messaging apps like WhatsApp are a great way to communicate with colleagues, employers and clients. Due to the nature of their work, they may not always have access to a computer and their only means of communication is often a smartphone.

While quick communication apps are convenient, they're not designed to be used in the workplace and could do more damage than good. Businesses often assume that because WhatsApp and similar platforms are encrypted, everything will be fine. However, there are issues around security and privacy.

Since the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force nearly two years ago, businesses have had to rethink the way they handle and protect data. The issue with many popular messaging apps is that using them for business purposes isn't always GDPR-compliant.

Whether it's messaging colleagues or sharing work files, users don't have control over this data. It often sits in a datacentre owned by a tech giant. If one of these locations were to be breached, businesses risk losing sensitive data and would be liable under GDPR.

One of WhatsApp's main attractions is end-to-end encryption, but this technology is far from perfect. By default, backups and chat exports aren't encrypted, so there are still ways data could be breached. Tech site Vice recently reported on a way to access WhatsApp chats via Google.



“The issue with many messaging apps is that using them for business purposes isn't always GDPR-compliant”

Sharing personal details, such as phone numbers, without permission is another big issue. WhatsApp accesses every phone number in an address book, which puts user privacy at risk. There's no way to revoke access to chats and data too, so what happens when an employee leaves a company and is still in a WhatsApp chat or group?

This is a massive issue for sports and fitness companies, and what's alarming is that so many employers aren't aware of this issue. One company, which runs 50 leisure facilities across the UK, stopped using WhatsApp when it discovered several cases of people

leaving the business and still being in group chats. They could access messages, files and phone numbers.

Unless companies want to be affected by GDPR fines or lost confidence from staff, tackling this issue is crucial. But how can that be done? First, you need to understand GDPR and how it affects your business. A good place to start is by looking on the Information Commissioner's Office website, which provides lots of helpful information.

Then ask yourself if your company is using ways of dispersing information you can't control? When it comes to identifying non-compliant messaging apps, use a system audit to work out which platforms are being used. If you find apps that are non-GDPR compliant, find a safer platform.

Communicating the issues surrounding GDPR and the risks of using non-compliant messaging tools is also important. Understandably, staff want a convenient way to communicate and share data but will also want their data to be protected. You can do this by writing blog posts, holding company workshops or creating printed guides.

Security and privacy risks change over time. When you have implemented data privacy policies, you'll need to assess them by conducting regular audits. These are important because new risks could emerge, and you won't have a way to tackle them.

In today's digital world, it's crucial that businesses take steps to protect the privacy of their employees as there's so much at stake. Using messaging services that are compliant with laws like GDPR is an important first step in protecting employee privacy. 

Ross McCaw is CEO of OurPeople, a secure communications platform for businesses

WORKPLACE

FOCUS



*Mentors should know how to address a range of issues – big and small – to help others, says **Malcolm McPhail**, Life Leisure CEO*

KEEPING IT REAL

In my experience those people who don't think they'd be a good mentor usually turn out to be the best; it's just a question of how you approach the mentoring process to begin with.

If you think it's about following a structured framework, underpinned by targets, then you'll struggle to unlock the full potential of the person you are supporting.

For example, I've never used key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure progress. Instead I focus initially on addressing micro-goals, which lay the foundations for future personal growth.

These are often rooted in day-to-day life and may appear to some to be trivial. But in my view if you can't help someone deal with everyday challenges, the chances of them overcoming bigger barriers down the line are slim. This process also helps generate the long-term resilience needed to face an issue, and in turn that resilience gives you the discipline required to tackle it.

In fact, despite my background in international athletics and behavioural psychology, you'll never hear me refer to motivation. Motivating someone is relatively easy, but it's very hard to sustain.

In contrast, resilience and discipline

stay with you all your life, giving you the capacity and confidence to face a difficult situation knowing you'll come out the other side.

Another part of my mentoring philosophy, which some people find surprising, is agile methodology, a project management concept pioneered by the software industry and used widely by large corporations.

Agile methodology is not a prescriptive model; it's a fluid and organic process where the final outcome might look very different from the original vision while still fulfilling the overarching objectives of the exercise. However, to utilise this method effectively in a mentoring context requires a number of key elements:

- You have to abandon any sense of being the 'leader' of the process, and both parties have to see each other as complete equals.

- You need a culture of total honesty with each other, warts and all, which includes drilling down into the past to really understand how each other ticks.

- You need the confidence to challenge assumptions, attitudes or objections which you feel might be detrimental to the bigger picture objectives.

"If you can't help someone deal with everyday challenges, overcoming the bigger barriers is difficult"

This can initially be quite a raw process, but if you have built trust and instilled the resilience it can be a genuinely transformational stage in the relationship, helping to spark new ideas and open more doors.

What's really satisfying is when a person you've been helping through this approach feels empowered enough to make a significant choice without checking in with you. For example, one person I support recently decided his work environment was having a serious impact on his wellbeing, concluding that leaving was the only answer.

A more traditional mentoring relationship would have involved them asking me what I thought they should do, but instead they made their own decision and secured a better-paid job at a more reputable firm.

When they told me, I was absolutely buzzing, especially when they said that during the interview they simply used the way we communicated as the basis for an 'honest' conversation with their new employer.

For me this episode sums up everything about my mentoring philosophy: helping people deal with what's happening in their lives right now, equipping them to face challenges with a self-belief that helps them tackle them, and developing a positive and open-minded approach with regards to what might lie ahead.

It might not look pretty on a spreadsheet, but it works. ☺

*A former international athlete, **Malcolm McPhail** is group CEO of Life Leisure, a company that manages 14 sports and leisure facilities in and around Stockport in Greater Manchester*

LAST WORD

SPORT AMBASSADOR



Etienne Stott MBE, Team GB canoeing juniors coach, Olympic gold medallist and Extinction Rebellion protester says the industry has a powerful voice in the climate change debate

SPORT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Sport is an amazing vehicle for empowerment and for people to explore their potential. It's something I discovered upon retirement, having thought back about how I got into canoeing and realising that it helped me grow as a person.

There is a great power involved in this industry. Sport connects people like nothing else, as we saw at our own Olympics in 2012. That was a prime example of people saying: 'I wasn't interested in sports before but I really found it inspiring'. It speaks to us about this idea this kind of idea about what human beings are capable of.

It's not just about elite sports – I believe both sports people and organisations have a huge influence in the lives of the general population. They have a role to play because anyone or anything with influence has a responsibility to act in the face of this climate and meteorological emergency because they have power. But we must remember that leadership is not telling people what to do, but showing

people what can be done.

Sport has that authenticity and credibility with a lot of people, which means it has a huge role to play in society, and that is part of the reason why I became involved with Extinction Rebellion.

Joining the group was driven by this idea of empowerment and learning that we're all capable of more than we realise.

That was perhaps most apparent last

April, when I was part of the Extinction Rebellion protests and ended up getting arrested. I was sitting in the road on Waterloo Bridge when a police officer demanded that I move, but I told him 'I'm not moving', and then he handcuffed me and I was taken to the police station.

Eventually that got to court in January this year, and I was convicted with a public order offence. I got a nine-month conditional discharge, but was ordered to pay costs of £300 for the offences. I stand by what I did as I believe it will impact all of society, including the leisure sector.



Of course, there are consequences for me but it's a small price to pay. Extreme events are already becoming more frequent. For example, our canoeing course in Nottingham, where young athletes train, and where I go canoeing, had to be closed for quite a significant part of the winter because of the flooding.

Uncontrolled climate change will mean that people will have less chance to enjoy sports and all it has to offer because they will be busy dealing with effects of extreme weather. I believe it's important for athletes and people with voices to use their social power in this time of this emergency. 🌱

Etienne Stott MBE was interviewed by S&PA Professional's Graham Simons



LAST WORD

SPORTING LIFE



Dayvyd Akeem Sappor, youth mentor and CIMSPA-accredited Hatton Academy boxing trainer at Padworkz, says he is enjoying giving back to a sport that has given him so much

GOING THE DISTANCE FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

WHICH SPORT IS YOUR FIRST LOVE?

It has to be boxing. There's no other sport that provides you with the same fitness, strategy and composure.

HOW DID YOU GET INTO BOXING?

My parents bought me a boxing bag when I was seven years old and I never looked back. I remember watching tapes of Sugar Ray Leonard and Muhammad Ali on TV and I just aspired to be like that.

Growing up in Birmingham in the 1980s, there were quite a lot of bullies, and boxing helped me to protect myself, and even run away if needs be.

In 2008 I had the opportunity to meet some professionals, watch them train and really understand how they keep themselves in shape. Even though I've never been a professional, I have an idea of the roadmap how to get there.

WHO IS YOUR MENTOR AND WHY?

My parents, because without them giving me the opportunity to box, all this wouldn't have been possible.

On a professional level, going to the next level, it would have to be Rob McCracken, Anthony Joshua's trainer and Team GB performance director. He was doing a boxing clinic at my club at the time, and seeing me training he gave great tips on how to be better – such as diet, composure and roadwork.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT BOXING?

It's the fine motor skills that it gives you. For example, skipping is great for your visual tracking and so is padwork. The nimbleness, fitness and strategy required in order to defeat your opponent – those are the things I like about the physical activity of the sport.

Those skills are transferable because as a boxer you are making decisions in split seconds. It's similar to being a race car driver or a pilot. The decisions you have to make engage your executive functioning and that's important, especially for the kids that I work with who have ADHD and issues like dyslexia. They have a very weak executive function so the padwork enables them to sharpen those areas.

WHAT'S THE HARDEST CHALLENGE YOU HAVE EVER FACED IN YOUR SPORTING CAREER?

My first white collar fight in 2008 with a guy called Charlie Boy Peters, who is now Muay Thai world champion. It was hard because he was very skilled and much younger than me. I did defeat him, but that was a very hard challenge and it was my first fight in front of a big crowd, which was daunting too.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST BRILLIANT MOMENT OF YOUR CAREER?

Getting to meet and train with [former world champion] Lennox Lewis and having him do a masterclass for my students. What was great about that was he called me in to do a demo with him, so I got to work on the jab, defence and offence with him.

WHAT WOULD YOU REGARD AS THE FUNNIEST INCIDENT IN YOUR CAREER?

When Lennox came to the camp, I said to the lads, "You might want to bring something for him to sign." At the end of the session, one particular guy brought in a book on Lennox that I knew he wouldn't sign because it was quite derogatory. I said, "There's no way he will sign that." The guy didn't agree, so he tapped Lennox on the shoulder and Lennox said, "I'm not signing that mate." You should have seen the guy's face, but Lennox signed some gloves for him then.

WHAT IS YOUR THEME TUNE?

Training Montage in *Rocky IV*. 🎧

Dayvyd Akeem Sappor was speaking to S&PA Professional's Graham Simons



LAST WORD

SPORT BY NUMBERS

► Follow us on Twitter @SAPA_Pro and @cimspa



This issue... Growing in stature

Research from the Youth Sport Trust (YST) found almost two-thirds (64%) of UK adults felt that PE should be considered a core subject on the curriculum alongside English, maths and science. As its recently published 'Impact Report' suggests, although schools and young children are engaging more in sport and physical activity, there is still more work to be done.



The Girls Active programme was designed to engage more girls with PE, sport and physical activity. According to the Youth Sport Trust, in 2018/19 it delivered the following results:

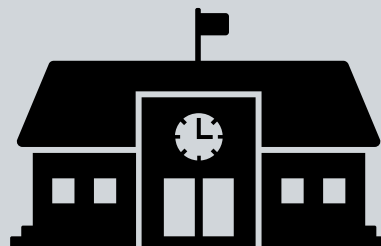
9,993 girls now more active (of 15,071 reached)

1,728 girls trained as leaders, role models, influencers and advocates

207 schools engaged
363 teachers took part

£320m

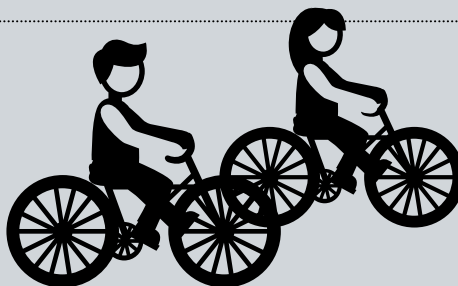
In 2018/19, **primary schools** in England received £320m government funding to **improve their provision** of PE and sport



484,062

participation opportunities were provided for young people with **special education needs and disabilities**

10,109 children were engaged in **HSBC UK Ready Set Ride**, a learn-to-ride cycling programme for children between the ages of **18 months and eight years**. According to YST follow-up research, **71%** of teachers said they would not have delivered any cycling activities without the programme



£10.9m

Youth Sport Trust secured funding of **£10.9m** to **improve young people's lives through sports** in 2018/19, from a variety of sources including foundations, fundraising and National Lottery funding

3.8m

young people (**53%**) do not meet the chief medical officer guidelines of an average **60 active minutes a day**

2.1m

of young people (**29%**) average **fewer than 30 minutes a day**



4.7m

participation opportunities were provided for young people to take part in **competitive school sport**, from inter-school competitions to smaller internal events