

Closure of leisure centres and gyms

Dear

I am writing to you as I am really concerned about the closure of leisure centres and gyms.

Leisure centres has had to go above and beyond to be safe, be it through ensuring air handling units are up to spec or through reduced numbers enforcing strict social distancing and cleaning measures. The sector is also one of the safest for people to be involved in during times COVID and brings the most benefit in terms of fitness to fight COVID-19. From a study by UKActive, 0.34 cases per 100,000 visits¹. In addition, there is the benefit that exercise releases antioxidant enzymes, helping to prevent the most severe effects of COVID-19². Not to mention the mental health benefits of exercise, which are numerous.

Included in this are swimming pools, these are the safest indoor environments for people to be in. Chlorinated pools are considered safest, as they're maintained and regularly disinfected, which can help to deactivate the virus³. The World Health Organisation (WHO) suggests "swimming in a well-maintained, properly chlorinated pool is safe".

I want to urge you to lobby the government to reconsider the closure of sports facilities like leisure centres and swimming pools during this 4 week lockdown. The benefits far outweigh the risk and the damage this closure could do to the fitness sector is unthinkable. The closure has the potential to wipe out some leisure businesses.

Make this a positive out of the lockdown, to get people fit and well giving them a safe space to do their exercise.

Many thanks for your time and I really appreciate any help or support you can give leisure sector.

Your sincerely,

¹ Fitness and leisure sector reports COVID rate of 0.34 per 100,000 visits since reopening in England - <https://www.ukactive.com/news/fitness-and-leisure->

[sector-reports-covid-rate-of-0-34-per-100000-visits-since-reopening-in-england/](#)

² Yu, Z., Li, P., Zhang, M., Hannink, M., Stamler, J. S., & Yan, Z. (2008). Fiber type-specific nitric oxide protects oxidative myofibers against cachectic stimuli. *PLoS one*, 3(5), e2086.

- <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0002086>

³ Gallè, F., Baldelli, G., Valeriani, F., Di Rosa, E., Liguori, G., & Brandi, G. (2020). Swimming Pool safety and prevention at the time of Covid-19: a consensus document from GSMS-SItI. *Annali di igiene: medicina preventiva e di comunita*, 32(5), 439-448. - <https://europepmc.org/article/med/32578839>