



Press Release

Date for Release	From	Contact Tel	Email
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Title:

“Inclusive Fitness is GO!”

Body

Bridges Health & Fitness club at Bradley Stoke Leisure Centre recently celebrated the launch of its **Inclusive Fitness Initiative** facility. Officially opened by user Richard Dando and IFI activator Jonathan Wheeler

Bradley Stoke Leisure Centre has become one of approximately 180 health and fitness suites around the country to install inclusive fitness equipment, enabling disabled and non-disabled people to train together in its Bridges Health & Fitness Club.

Sport England provided £5 million from its Lottery Sports Fund to the English Federation of Disability Sport Operating Company (EFDSOC) towards the cost of the 'Inclusive Fitness Initiative'. Bradley Stoke Leisure Centre has received over £5,000 of this funding as well as support from South Gloucestershire Council, which has been spent on the equipment, training for staff and recruiting an 'activator', Jonathan Wheeler, to support customers.

The IFI continues to evolve, pushing the boundaries of inclusive fitness provision, and challenging the industry to continuously raise the bar, meeting disabled people's rising expectations. Jonathan Wheeler said, "It is fantastic to get this off the ground, now the hard work starts in encouraging people to come and try us out."

If you or your group would like to visit Bridges Health & Fitness Club to find out more about the IFI call John on 01454 867055.

Images

None

Ends

Notes for Editors

- **South Gloucestershire Leisure Ltd**

South Gloucestershire Leisure Ltd is a charitable trust established in November 2005. It operates the four leisure centres in South Gloucestershire on behalf of South Gloucestershire Council. The Trust is overseen by a board of voluntary trustees.

South Gloucestershire Leisure

Head Office, Bradley Stoke Leisure Centre, Fiddlers Wood Lane, Bradley Stoke, South Gloucestershire. BS32 9BS

T: 01454 865798. F: 01454 867048. E: leisure@southglos.gov.uk. W: www.sgleisure.org

Registered as a Limited Company in England and Wales No. 05384234. Registered Charity No. 1111467

- **Press releases**

All press releases can be found online at: www.sgleisure.org/press

- **Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI)**

In 1998 The Gary Jelen Sports Foundation Commissioned some research, investigating how the fitness industry was accommodating the needs of disabled people.

Gary Jelen MBE himself was an elite power lifter, winning countless medals, on a local, national and international stage. Gary also has a learning disability, and initially facility's lack of ability or willingness to work with Gary, prevented his progression in his chosen sport.

Following on from the research in 1998, a pilot programme was set up by the English Federation of Disability Sports (EFDS), designed to work with 30 facilities across England, testing the IFI model, and building the foundations of a much more substantial programme. The pilot programme was hugely successful and resulted in facilities across England from Redruth in Cornwall to Berwick Upon Tweed.

Building upon the success of the pilot programme, Sport England supported the scheme further with £5million from the Lottery Fund. This paved the way for the main rollout of the scheme, incorporating 150 facilities across England. The ultimate aim being that every disabled person in England should have access to an inclusive fitness facility within reasonable distance of their home.

The main rollout of the programme concludes in March 2007 (all grants have now been allocated), at which point other projects such as the Inclusive Fitness Mark will continue creating inclusive facilities across the United Kingdom.

Gary's personal story is one of someone who has benefited hugely from physical activity – and as a consequence there are now many more similar stories. The IFI continues to evolve, pushing the boundaries of inclusive fitness provision, and challenging the industry to continuously raise the bar, meeting disabled people's rising expectations.

- **Bridges Health & Fitness Clubs**

Bridges Health & fitness Clubs operate in all four South Gloucestershire's Leisure Centres at Bradley Stoke, Kingswood, Thornbury & Yate.

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