



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-981
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/01961/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Member of the Senedd
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17 August 2020

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders MS,

Thank you for your letter of 05 August regarding petitions P-05-981 and P-05-986.

As highlighted by the First Minister on the 31 July, indoor gyms, leisure centres, swimming pools and other indoor physical activity leisure facilities in Wales will be allowed to re-open as of the 10 August **but only** if they can maintain the relevant safety requirements. These requirements include: ensuring all facility users can maintain 2 metre distance from each other at all times, no more than groups of 30 to gather at any one time, and all staff are fully trained and aware of covid requirements and conduct regular and vigorous cleans.

[Guidance](#) will be available to these businesses and facilities, and the relevant authorities have been engaged in discussions throughout this process.

UkActive have developed a framework for re-opening the fitness and leisure sector safely which can be found here <https://www.ukactive.com/news/ukactive-unveils-recommended-framework-for-reopening-the-fitness-and-leisure-sector-safely/> Sports Wales also provide guidance here <https://www.sport.wales/media-centre/latest-news/implementing-covid-19-safety-measures-in-indoor-facilities/> and there is a small film about how safety measures can be implemented.

Additional guidance and requirements may also be made available from the local authorities, and all businesses are encouraged to check the rules of their local council, and when relevant discuss plans with the relevant personnel.

The decision to keep indoor leisure facilities closed until the 10 August was based on scientific advice to keep Wales safe. Science tells us that the virus lives on surfaces for far longer indoors than out. Evidence up to now has shown that risk of infection is higher

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

indoors in cooler, noisy and humid environments, and where exertion and loudness leads to heavier breathing and louder talking.

The First Minister and the Welsh Government fully acknowledge the importance of exercise for our physical and mental well-being. That is why we have lifted a number of restrictions over the last few months in a safe and orderly manner. Throughout the pandemic we have fully encouraged the public to continue to exercise outdoors, appreciating Wales' natural beauty and the outdoor sports facilities on offer. We have and will continue to take our advice from medical and scientific experts and hope to lift all restrictions in Wales as soon as possible – but **only** when it is safe to do so. The impact of this virus and the challenges we face may unfortunately affect the mental health of many us. It is essential that we in our supporting roles – encourage those in need to seek the excellent expert support available from organisations such as MIND, or where necessary from our doctors.

The Welsh Government reviews the coronavirus regulations every 21 days and, on the basis of the latest available scientific evidence, considers whether they need to stay in place or whether they can be eased. The regulations were reviewed again on 30 July and the outcome of that review has been published on the Welsh Government's website: <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-restrictions-relaxed-further-support-tourism-and-leisure-sectors-wales>. The website also provides some guidance and some frequently asked questions to explain what people can and cannot do during the coronavirus outbreak <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance>. The outcome of the next review will be announced on the 21 August.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Elis-Thomas'.

Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism