

COVID-19: Warwickshire County Council Support for Business Recovery

Survive, Sustain & Grow Programme

Gymnastics Club harnesses SSG support to stay at the heart of its community

A gymnastics club at the heart of its community believes that input from a Warwickshire County Council business support programme was "fundamental" to its survival of the pandemic.

Leamington & Warwick Gymnastics Club (LWGC) is a thriving organisation, run by passionate local people, built on the philosophy that gymnastics should be accessible to everyone.

Their mission is to instil confidence in a fun and safe environment where gymnasts can try new skills, be proud of their achievements and together celebrate being the best they can be.

Since its foundation in 2010, the club has become a true focal point of the district community. By March 2020, it was serving hundreds of members and employing 30 members of staff - then COVID hit.

The pandemic had an enormous impact on the club, with the gym able to open for only three of 12 months. Within hours of the first national lockdown, they were receiving up to 50 cancellation requests per day and took the decision to temporarily reduce their fees to stem the flow of cancellations.

With the forced closure lasting considerably longer than anticipated, and rent, loans and other financial commitments to meet, by the time LWGC were able to reopen on 31st August, they had lost hundreds of thousands of pounds turnover.

Throughout the pandemic, the club went to great lengths to continue serving their community and ensure their business survives. They adapted in a number of ways to keep children active as their reduced team worked tirelessly to provide youngsters with the opportunity to continue participating in gymnastics.

Despite their best efforts, when LWGC reopened in August, they had lost almost 500 members. Due to new social distancing requirements, they had to reduce capacity for all classes by between 25% and 50%, limiting their ability to increase participation and revenue. It was during this period that the club enrolled onto the Warwickshire County Council's, Sustain, Survive and Grow initiative - and that, reflects director Dave O'Neill, was the turning point.



To find out more, contact us on:

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"The support that LWGC has received from Warwickshire County Council (WCC) through the Survive, Sustain and Grow programme has been fundamental in securing the future of the club," he said.

"The focused mentoring support has enabled the business to adapt and diversify, to keep children engaged in the sport and ensure the clubs survival.

"The county council team also supported us with accessing and securing a grant through the SSG programme, which has allowed us to purchase a new covered landing area. This very hygienic product, with PVC matting on top, is cleanable after each use and therefore provides a COVID-secure option, enabling the club to reopen three key pieces of apparatus."

SSG programme specialist consultant Anita Dinnes, was delighted to advise the club.

"Whilst the main challenge was putting in place a COVID survival strategy for the business," she said, "the SSG intervention also helped LWGC to explore all marketing avenues they could adopt to support the business. The implementation of this has been an enabler for the company to retain the staff that were at risk".

Jagdish Soor, Lead SSG Consultant, added: "The grant award will have a huge impact on LWGC's sustainability, their ability to attract new members to the club and will undoubtedly support their recovery from the pandemic."

The Survive, Sustain & Grow Programme

Survive, Sustain and Grow is a new support programme for businesses most affected by the Covid-19 crisis. Open to all small businesses in Warwickshire with a focus on retail, tourism, hospitality and leisure, the programme offers a tailored one-to-one recovery support package through a network of specialist consultants.

Find out more [information on SSG](#)

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