

# Edinburgh Leisure – more pools to open

Edinburgh Leisure has announced it will reopen the rest of its Victorian pools. Warrender, Portobello, Dalry and Glenogle Swim Centres on Monday, 26 October 2020.

June Peebles, CEO of Edinburgh Leisure said: “We’re delighted that we can finally reopen the rest of our beloved Victorian pools, which we know our customers and communities are so fond of. They’re unique buildings that we are justly proud to be the caretakers of.

“As you can imagine, bringing Edinburgh Leisure’s diverse range of venues and services ‘back to life’ in a Covid-19 environment is a big and complex task. And the additional restrictions that the First Minister announced last week, which meant the stopping of group fitness classes and a number of group activities for adults (although working out individually in the gym and swimming can still happen), has posed further challenges. These restrictions will hopefully have been lifted by the time our third round of venues reopen on Monday, 26 October.”

To allow the venues to re-open, Edinburgh Leisure must comply with The Scottish Government and **sportscotland**’s extensive guidance – which ensures venues are safe for customers and employees.

Initially it will be the Victorian pools (lane swimming, club swimming and Family Swim sessions), the fitness classes at three of the four venues and the gyms at Portobello and Glenogle that will be open their doors.



## Gym areas not yet open

Unfortunately, the gym areas at Warrender and Dalry will remain closed, as there are no ventilation systems installed and these do not comply with the new minimum requirements as set out by The Scottish Government. Other services that will continue to remain closed are the Turkish Baths, steam room, the rest area and the Aerotone – the forerunner to the modern jacuzzi – at Portobello Swim Centre; the fitness class programme, free weights room (although this will be housed in the fitness studio) and the sauna and steam room at Glenogle, and the sauna at Dalry.

June Peebles explained: “As a charity and operating as a not-for-profit organisation, we need to balance the books and

weigh up the viability of reopening various services in a Covid-19 compliant way. Our number one goal is to provide our customers with a clean, safe, and enjoyable Edinburgh Leisure experience.”

The reopening of these four Victorian pools follows on from the reopening of seven other Edinburgh Leisure venues, which opened on 14 September and 21 September. These include Ainslie Park Leisure Centre, Craiglockhart Leisure and Tennis Centre, Drumbrae Leisure Centre, The Royal Commonwealth Pool, Leith Victoria Swim Centre, Gracemount Leisure Centre, and the EICA: Ratho.

Edinburgh Leisure’s six golf courses have been open since 4 June, and there has been a big upturn in demand for tee times. ([Enter our competition run in conjunction with Edinburgh Leisure here](#)). The outdoor tennis courts at the Meadows have also been open since the end of May.

The Edinburgh Leisure experience will be different from before but customers will still receive the warm, Edinburgh Leisure welcome.

The main changes that customers will notice are:

- All activities must be pre booked via the Edinburgh Leisure app or website.
- They will be operating in a cashless environment, accepting contactless payments.
- Safety guidance will be on display throughout the venues.
- Additional sanitisation stations have been installed throughout the venues for use before and after each visit.
- All activities are timetabled with staggered session start times to reduce congestion.
- It will be necessary for customers to wear face coverings in communal areas, (unless exempt) but not for

their activities.

Edinburgh Leisure has produced [a series of videos and guidelines to virtually help customers through their first visit](#), and have a new 'Ask Us' section, which is available on the website, advising and supporting customers to make a booking and answer any questions they may have.

Edinburgh Leisure, like every leisure trust in Scotland, is facing huge financial challenges. They continue to lobby the Government for financial support for the sector to ensure the sector survives and can continue to contribute to the country's health and wellbeing.

The charity had made a request for additional funding support for 2020/21 to the council which has been approved this week.

June Peebles said: "It's with considerable relief that Edinburgh Leisure's request for additional funding for 2020/21 from the City of Edinburgh Council has been approved by the full Council. Without the support of the Council, we could not continue to operate. We still face numerous challenges and uncertainties now and, in the future, but this additional funding enables us to continue to work through the challenges and deliver services that contribute to the health and wellbeing of the Edinburgh citizens."

## **#FitTogether**

Edinburgh Leisure is joining an industry wide initiative led byukactive. The #FitTogether campaign aims to ensure a united front on behalf of the wider sector, which utilises key statistics that evidence the extremely low rates of COVID-19 transmission across the sector and demonstrates the vital role of the sector in the nation's health and wellbeing.

The purpose of the campaign is to message that the sector is safe and essential and to influence customers and policy

makers accordingly.

June Peebles, CEO of Edinburgh Leisure said: “Edinburgh Leisure is committed to ‘building back better’ to a sustainable Edinburgh Leisure and to continue making a positive impact to the citizens of Edinburgh’s health and wellbeing – as we have done for the last 22 years.

“Never before has health and wellbeing been so important. And Edinburgh Leisure remain committed to supporting the people of Edinburgh to be active and enjoy good health.”

Edinburgh Leisure is a charity dedicated to creating opportunities for everyone to lead more active, healthy lives. They do this by running over 30+ sports and leisure facilities across the city and deliver their Active Communities programme, which helps improve the lives of people affected by health conditions, poverty, inequalities, and disabilities.

[www.edinburghleisure.co.uk](http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk)