Successful Applicant: The Bank Fitness

Awarded £10,000 for renovation of stairwell and video intercom entrance system



'...services for a wide range of people coming together as one community.'

What's your background?

I was a teacher at an infant school for the last 10 years and I noticed there was a gap in the market for children's fitness. Having spent the last three and a half years building up a business that focused on holiday clubs I wanted to expand this further and keep working with the lovely community we'd built.

I think I bring lots of transferable skills from teaching which is all about bringing people together. I love inspiring children, parents and grandparents to be empowered to prioritise their health and fitness. I think covid has prompted lots of people to think about this and they've also missed social interaction. We're trying to bring all this together to create a lovely cocktail of community spirit.

Interview with our Grant Advisor, Crover: crover.james@bristol.gov.uk

Tell me about yourself and The Bank Fitness.

I'm Adam Turpin (he/him) and The Bank Fitness is a community fitness centre at 73 Henleaze Road, BS9 4JS.

We've repurposed an old bank with a central gym, treatment rooms, large studio spaces, shower facilities, and a kitchenette.

We hire rooms to different therapists and teachers throughout the local area, enabling lots of small businesses to grow alongside us.

Our core values are being family friendly and creating a sense of belonging for the community. We offer a range of services that have something for everyone. We want to bring people together for events in an inviting and relaxed environment.

What makes the place so fun and friendly?

All of the therapists, teachers and coaches we work with, and employ are humble, approachable and trustworthy. When you walk through our doors, you'll meet lots of people who want to chat.

We have classes for mums and babies, seniors, teens, and lots of adult classes catering for people from diverse groups. We offer services for a wide range of people coming together as one community. It's a really special place to be!



How has your business diversified the local high street?

I'm Henleaze born and bred and live locally with my wife. This is our local high street. We have lots of charity shops, coffee shops and the things you'd normally expect. People are fiercely loyal and protective of this high street but there wasn't anything bringing together other small businesses and focusing on fitness.

Under one roof we offer CrossFit, martial arts, pilates, yoga, physiotherapy, and sports and remedial massage. We've had so much positive encouragement about the services we're bringing to local people. Their excitement makes us work harder to deliver something great!

'The excitement of local people makes us work harder to deliver something great!'

What's been the most challenging aspect of starting this new business?

The workload has been massive!

It takes an emotional toll when you have a vision and know where you want to get to but must manage budgets and everyone's different opinions. It's a challenge bringing everyone together for a common goal. As a family we've achieved something that we're really proud of but it's been a slog!

The journey we've been on makes us more appreciative of the results and has really determined the success of everything.

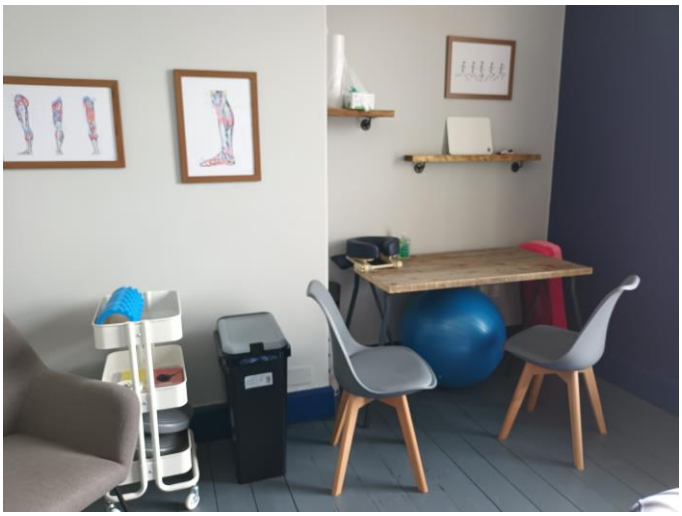


What sustainability commitments have you made?

Since this is a community hub for local people most of our members walk here. We've replaced and modernised all the lighting throughout the building, and we've installed a new boiler system that can be switched on and off for different zones.



'As a family we've achieved something that we're really proud of...'



How does The Bank Fitness make Bristol a better place to live for our residents?

Local residents were expecting the old bank to be turned into flats or a wine bar. We've made it into something different that brings people together. You wouldn't expect to have gym classes in an old bank! We bring premium services to a premium building.

We plan to support families from areas of deprivation. We want to get them working out together and empower them to take control of their health and fitness. We'll be offering some services for free to those on low incomes which makes us feel warm inside as we're giving back to the community.

'At some point there are things beyond [your] skills. We wouldn't have finished the building to such a high standard... without this grant funding.'

How has this funding helped your business to trade and achieve your goals?

We're very much a family business. My dad has been instrumental in project managing. My uncle used to run an electrical company and has managed all the electrics. My brother is head of operations and has worked seven days a week for four months, he's the brains behind a lot of it. My brother-in-law is setting up the martial arts club and his dad has helped with all the painting and decorating.

At some point there are just some things that are beyond our skills. We'd already overspent and needed professionals to come and help renovate the staircase. Having the council's funding in such a timely manner allowed us to act quickly and create a really lovely first impression for our new clients as they walk through the door. We've been able to completely refurbish.

We wouldn't have been able to finish the building to such a high standard or open the doors as soon as we have without this grant funding.



Visit The Bank Fitness

73 Henleaze Road, BS9 4JS
Web: thebankfitness.co.uk

Find out more about our Vacant Commercial Property Grant
Part of the City Centre & High Streets Recovery & Renewal Programme

WEST OF ENGLAND Combined Authority

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