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**SkillsActive**



**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

**VINCENT CABLE MP VISITS TEDDINGTON FITNESS FIRST**

**Dr Vincent Cable, MP for Twickenham and Lib Dem Shadow Chancellor, today visited the Fitness First Club in Teddington to view the excellent facilities on offer which are helping local people keep fit and healthy.**

Vincent also met some of the professional staff who help run the centre, including fitness instructors registered on the Register of Exercise Professionals (a SkillsActive company).

The visit was organised by SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for the Active Leisure and Learning Sector and the Fitness Industry Association (FIA), to promote the vital role the fitness industry plays in helping to achieve a healthier Britain.

The Fitness First club in Teddington offers the latest equipment and classes coupled with the support of highly trained and enthusiastic staff. They aim to provide down to earth, non-intimidating opportunities for physical activity that are accessible to all.

Vincent Cable MP said: "We have increasingly been made aware of the positive benefits of physical activity and the negative effects of inactivity. The cost of inactivity to the country in terms of healthcare for the conditions it causes, and sickness absence and decreased productivity at work is counted in billions. The Fitness First club in Teddington plays a valuable role in motivating its members and the wider community to exercise regularly."

Mike Metcalf, Chief Executive of Fitness First, said: "We are extremely pleased that Dr Cable MP found the time in his busy schedule to visit this club. The team at the Fitness First in Teddington work incredibly hard to develop new, exciting initiatives to keep our members motivated and teach them about the benefits of regular physical activity. It was good to have the opportunity to show Vince the positive role we play in the community and how our members benefit from using our facilities."

Stephen Studd, SkillsActive Chief Executive, said: “Fitness First is an excellent example of an employer which has fully grasped the importance of staff training. If we are to meet current public health challenges we need enough skilled professionals to run the services needed to keep people healthy. That is why SkillsActive is developing a Sector Skills Agreement between employers, Government and funding partners which will define the Sector’s skills needs and shape the workforce for the next ten years.”

Andrée Deane, FIA Communications Director said: “The Fitness First club in Teddington is just one of 1,600 FIA members. If you look at the impact all these facilities have on a national scale, it is easy to see the massive contribution health and fitness clubs make to the health of the nation. Fitness First is doing a tremendous job in encouraging the local community to get active, and the visit by Dr Vincent Cable MP gave them the opportunity to demonstrate this.”

-ENDS-

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Sport and Recreation, Health and Fitness, Playwork, The Outdoors and the Caravan industries.
2. All the fitness instructors at the Fitness First in Teddington are registered on the REPs (the Register of Exercise Professionals, a SkillsActive company).
3. SkillsActive’s mission statement is: “To ensure best quality, best business and best value within the Sector to achieve its economic and social potential.”
4. SSCs are employer-led organisations that aim to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector throughout the UK. SSCs provide employers with the opportunity to provide leadership to meet their sector’s skills and business needs. In return they receive substantial public investment and greater dialogue with government departments across the UK.
5. For more information about SkillsActive, please visit our website @ [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)
6. SkillsActive is currently developing a Sector Skills Agreement for the Active Leisure and Learning Sector which will define the Sector’s skills needs and ultimately form an agreement between employers, Government and funding partners to shape the workforce for the next ten years.

7. The Fitness Industry Association is the trade body for the health and fitness sector representing over 1,600 health and fitness clubs and leisure centres nation-wide ([www.fia.org.uk](http://www.fia.org.uk)).
8. All FIA members have to comply with a Code of Practice, which covers health and safety, staff training and customer care. In an FIA Code of Practice compliant club, you can ensure that your interests are of paramount importance.