

# National award for business started to help young mums stay fit and healthy



**FIT FOR SUCCESS** – Left, Emese Flick and right, Dora Szentivanyi. Above, a FunMumsFitness class taking place before the coronavirus restrictions

by Stuart Flitton

**A WOKING business has won a national award in a category that attracted 300 entries.**

FunMumsFitness, a workout group built around children, was named Small Business of the Year in the Family Network awards.

Dora Szentivanyi, who set up the business, saw the announcement when she logged on to the virtual ceremony online in her car during a coffee break.

"I started crying and went back into the gym and my clients said, 'is everything OK?' I told them 'it's happy crying' and then told them the news," Dora said.

The Small Business of the Year category, for firms with fewer than five staff, was sponsored by Sophia Pregnancy Loss Support.

The *News & Mail* reported in January that FunMumsFitness had been selected as one of the six finalists for a black-tie ceremony that was scheduled for March. When the pandemic hit Britain, the awards ceremony was postponed to this month, and then converted into an online event.

Dora and her business partner Emese Flick had bought evening wear for the event.

"In the end, I heard the announcement sitting in my car in my leggings and sports bra," Dora said.

Earlier this year Dora moved to Devon with her husband Soma Varga and their children Teego, five, and Pixie, three.

Soma was the co-owner of Rino's Restomod Bar-

bershop in Woking town centre, but that closed during the coronavirus restrictions.

Dora was able to continue FunMumsFitness through Zoom classes. When the restrictions were eased, live classes resumed in Woking and Guildford, mostly run by Emese, with new classes in Colyton, Devon, run by Dora, who also commutes to Surrey to lead classes.

She said there was still demand for some Zoom classes and these are continuing alongside the live workouts.

"It was a good opportunity to show mums that it does work online. You don't get quite the same level of community but it does allow mums to exercise from home without having to drive and get the kids in and out of the car," Dora said.

The live classes have to observe social distancing between mums but the "rule of six" doesn't apply to group exercise, so more than that number can take part if space allows.

Dora said she is planning further expansion to FunMumsFitness, which she hopes to announce soon.

She began FunMumsFitness about two years ago, to provide a safe environment for young children so that their mothers can exercise.

"I always say that motherhood is rewarding, it's the best thing in the world, but it is hard and challenging too.

"It's very easy for new mothers to feel lonely and isolated, and we want to offer them the chance to meet up and have a chat over coffee.

"The award means a lot to me and to FunMumsFitness. It's always a nice feeling when your hard work and dedication gets noticed and rewarded, but when it's by an organisation that is run by mums and based on mums and dads, who all know how hard it is to juggle family life and business, it is even more heart-warming.

"I'm very lucky because I'm surrounded by motivating women. During my journey with FunMumsFitness I have come across some exceptional women who have had a huge impact on my business and me.

"I have even become very close friends with a few of the mums from my classes."

The Family Network has 13 branches and some 27,000 members in the UK. It supports parents in business with free networking events and affordable workshops. There is no charge for membership.

This is the seventh year of its National Business awards, which recognise hard-working families across the country.

Entry to the awards is by public nomination, and Victoria Alcock, a director of the Family Network, was impressed by the response to FunMumsFitness. "It stood out by the number of nominations and testimonials," she said.

"We look for detail about the business; what makes it stand out," Victoria added.

● For more information, visit [www.funmumsfitness.co.uk](http://www.funmumsfitness.co.uk) or [www.thefamilynetwork.net](http://www.thefamilynetwork.net).

## Tinned and frozen fruit and veg can be as good as fresh

by Woking-based nutritionist Monique Parker



WITH COVID-19 still lurking, many people try to cut down on shopping trips. It is always a good idea to have some food in the store cupboard or freezer. No need to start hoarding though, just get organised. I don't think anyone would like a repeat of the shortages earlier this year.

No one knows if there will be a second national lockdown, but should there be one, it would be good to have some staples in store. And thinking about the possible consequences of Brexit, the supply of fresh fruit and vegetables could change after 31 December.

Of course, the biggest issue with not being able to go shopping as much as you like is fresh produce.



There is only so much fresh fruit and veg you can buy to keep going and we certainly don't want to add to the already high amount of food waste (more than 600 tonnes in Woking a year).

Luckily, there is plenty of fruit and vegetables available in cans or frozen. Now, you might think that these are not as healthy as the fresh variety, but they are. And if, like us, you have a vegetable plot, you could freeze some of your own fresh produce.

When fruit and vegetables get harvested, they quickly start to lose their nutrients. Some fruit and veg is even picked before it's ripe, so they haven't developed their full range of nutrients yet.

Frozen fruit and vegetables get picked at their peak ripeness and are frozen instantly, so they actually contain a lot of nutrients.

Most vegetables get blanched (put in boiling water for a few minutes) before they are frozen, to kill bacteria and keep texture, colour and flavour.

This leads to a loss of some water-soluble vitamins, but in general there are plenty of nutrients left and the nutrient levels stay fairly stable after freezing. Fruits do not get blanched as this would affect their texture too much.

Tinned fruit and vegetables have undergone a bit more processing and can lose more nutrients, but overall they are still healthy.

My only worry about tinned produce is the lining of the tins. A lot of tins are lined with plastic (bisphenol A or BPA), a potentially unhealthy chemical which can leak into the food.

I'd rather buy glass jars with fruit and veg than tins, but that is a personal choice.

Nowadays you can also get cartons with tomato sauce or lentils, and so on.

Fruit and vegetables are a very important part of a healthy diet. Don't go without them.

Here is a list of useful fruit and veg store cupboard/freezer items:

- Chopped tomatoes
- Passata/tomato sauce
- Packs/tins of pulses such as lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, etc.
- Frozen peas, cauliflower, broccoli, sweet corn, spinach, mixed vegetables, etc.
- Potatoes can be bought in big bags that, if kept in a dark and cool place, last for a long time.
- Tins/jars/cartons of vegetables.
- Frozen fruit such as berries, mango, pineapple, etc.
- If you like apple, make a batch of apple sauce and freeze it in portions.
- Freeze leftover cooked red cabbage, it freezes well.

● If you would like to know more about nutrition and what I do, please visit my website [www.nutritionforyou.co.uk](http://www.nutritionforyou.co.uk).

## Colourful parade of light will be missing from Diwali this year

THIS has been an unusual October in Woking, writes Ruchi Hajela.

This month is normally a very busy time for Indian families, as attending local events like Dandiya dance coincides with preparations for the grand Diwali celebrations organised by the Woking Borough Council.

Weekdays and weekends would turn into playdates as children and their parents meet to rehearse and perfect their singing, dancing and finalising costumes ahead of the event.

But this year the festive period is rather quiet, as the pandemic means much has had to change. Local festivities, along with Woking Borough Council's annual Diwali celebrations which are enjoyed by the town's diverse community have been cancelled, as coronavirus cases continue to increase across the country in its second wave.

"Whilst we aspire to 'business as usual' the reality is that it cannot be. In light of the latest government advice, this year's Celebrate Woking programme of events has been cancelled. Activities which use council resources or facilities will not be programmed or permitted during 2020," a council spokesperson said in its coronavirus re-



**HEALTH COMES FIRST** – The sights and sounds of Woking's annual Diwali parade will be missing from the town centre this year

sponse published on the Celebrate Woking website in March this year.

Diwali, which falls on November 14 this year, is also known as the Festival of Lights and people celebrate it by lighting up their homes with fairy lights, candles and earthen lamps. It is one of the major festivals in South Asia and is of particular significance to Indian people. It marks the victory of

good over evil and light over darkness.

Woking's much awaited annual event usually includes a lantern parade involving children from local schools, which starts in Gloucester Square and makes its way through Peacocks shopping centre.

It is followed by an after party of cultural songs and dancing (held until last year at the HG Wells Centre) with par-

ticipation from many children from the community. Every year, several local community groups such as the Surrey Hindu Cultural Association, the Sayapatri Nepalese Association, Woking Malayalee Association, Woking Telugu Association and Surrey Tamils spend months planning and organising the event.

The spectacle is enjoyed by hundreds of people from the town irrespective of their religion, caste or colour.

The Surrey Hindu Cultural Association (SHCA) will be organising a virtual event via Zoom for this year's Diwali.

"We are still finalising the details of our Diwali celebration. The response to our past online events has been very good," Ritesh Aswaney, communications manager at SHCA told the *News and Mail*.

The SHCA organised some of its popular events like Ganesh Chaturthi and Janmashtami online and has suspended physical events and weekly gatherings at the St Mary's Community centre in West Byfleet until further notice. It has also been keeping the community engaged online through devotional evenings and stories for children.