



WORKPLACE WELLNESS 2.0

With London experiencing a rise in wellness-focused multifunctional co-working spaces, **Amanda Pauley** explores the importance of easy access to beauty and fitness therapies in the workplace

Over the past year, there's been a dramatic change in the office environment for some people working in London, as new multifunctional co-working spaces open with a strong focus on workplace wellbeing. These forward-thinking offices in the big city are putting employees' mental and physical wellbeing at the heart of their ethos, giving them access to one-on-one or group sessions with specialised beauty and wellness practitioners in the workplace.

It's not surprising that this change has occurred when 12.8 million working days were lost last year in Great Britain due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety, according to the Health and Safety Executive.

"Businesses have become aware of the important link between employee mental and physical wellness and staff productivity, morale and retention," says Kevin Wilson, chief executive and founder of London-based mobile beauty agency Freedom Wellness Therapy. "As we lead increasingly busy lives, employees are spending more of their time at work, which is why there is a need for employers to offer these services."

And the salon and spa industry has never been in a better position to support this movement, as more employers wise

up to the importance of beauty and fitness therapy to achieving wellness at work.

"We're seeing companies actively integrate fitness and emotional wellness into their employee benefits schedule. Alternative therapies such as acupuncture and reiki are being demanded alongside more traditional psychotherapy in order to increase workplace wellbeing," explains Hannah Lanel, founder of co-working space The Fore in London.

So, how can the beauty industry help? The experts advise reaching out to corporate workplaces to offer these wellness services to them on a regular basis, from hosting group yoga or meditation sessions once per month, to a corporate day of massage or nail treatments every quarter.

Not only will it boost your salon's profile with people in the area who may never have heard of you, but it's a more cost-effective way for a business owner to bring wellness into the workplace rather than trying to hire someone in-house and kit out the space with the right equipment.

To inspire you, here are four of the hottest multifunctional co-working spaces in London that have put wellness at the heart of what they do.



The Fore, King's Cross

This multi-functional space opened in King's Cross, London, last year with a mission to deliver a co-working space that offers access to the "four core elements of human health – physical, emotional, social and intellectual wellbeing". The 5,500sq ft site includes a shared work space; café and juice bar featuring a menu tailored to support the body pre- and post-workout; a wellness treatment room offering alternative therapies such as sports-enhancing acupuncture, postural massage and energy healing; two fitness studios; and an exclusive group class concept with sessions tailored to build strength, speed, endurance or mobility. The aim is to boost busy workers' everyday wellness, with access to a 360-degree solution that treats mind and body.

The Wing, Fitzrovia

New York's cult women's-only co-working and community space arrived in London Fitzrovia last year, promising to help the economic advancement and overall wellbeing of women everywhere by "gathering them together to work, connect and thrive". Set in a five-story townhouse with a millennial interior, the private members' club features a fitness room equipped with Peloton bikes, a beauty salon stocked with only women-owned brands, a tea parlour, café and bar, library and a chequerboard-themed rooftop terrace to chill on. There are also networking programmes to help members thrive in their careers. These include support groups for small business owners, financial planning workshops, group yoga, and introductions to coding and bike maintenance.



Fora, across London

With 10 locations across London already, and an eleventh opening in Shoreditch in 2021, Fora is a big disruptor in the shared office market. The flexible workspace is designed to help make people more productive by delivering an environment that ensures both their physical and mental wellbeing, something that is lacking in our time-poor society. Members have access to healthy food options, group yoga sessions, curated events hosted by residents so they can knowledge share, and a roster of fitness and meditation classes to ease stress and clear the mind. Bespoke wellness packages can even be created for companies based in the space, making it a much more personalised experience for employees.

Freedom Wellness Therapy, across London

Mobile wellbeing company Freedom Wellness Therapy is the alternative method to achieving wellness in the workplace – providing existing offices and co-working spaces with access to its one-on-one or group wellness treatments with accredited and specialist practitioners. The aim of the service is to help employers improve the mental and physical wellbeing of their office workers who may be feeling stressed, anxious or burned out, offering beauty and fitness services including massage, yoga, Pilates and personal training. All beauty and fitness professionals who work for the company have the opportunity to upskill in other areas of wellness to broaden their offering.

