

## Grassroots sport to get a new voice in the regions

By **Martin Nash**

The government's drive to get a million people playing more sport is to be promoted by nine new champions, one for each region in England.

The 'Regional Champions for Community Sport' will act as advocates for grassroots sport and Sport England's plans to increase participation. They will help to develop local partnerships to boost sports provision and take-up, as well as securing continued investment for grassroots initiatives.

Sports minister Gerry Sutcliffe named the appointees as Stephen Castle, East of England; Manjula Sood, East



**The scheme aims to increase participation in community sports**

Midlands; Shaun Dawson, London; Peter Rowley, North East; Pam Jervis, North West; John Cove, South East; Tim Coventry, South West; Dave Long, West Midlands; and Yuri

Matischen, Yorkshire and Humber. Each will be expected to commit an average of half a day a week to their new roles.

The champions' responsibilities include advocating Sport

England's strategy to key regional and sub-regional partners; brokering regional and sub-regional partnerships to secure continued investment in community sport and to provide support to national governing bodies at a regional level to help deliver their plans in support of Sport England's strategic objectives

Champions will also work with the London 2012 Nations and Regions Group to maximise the sporting legacy of the Games and act as spokespeople for Sport England on local issues, reflecting work being done to boost participation, with funding from government and the National Lottery.

## Mayor: £5.5bn Battersea plans 'need more work'

Johnson 'encouraged' by proposals but said some issues need to be addressed

By **Pete Hayman**

London mayor Boris Johnson has welcomed plans for £5.5bn redevelopment of Battersea Power Station but called for more work to be done on the scheme to ensure it meets the city's planning strategy.

In his report to Wandsworth Council, the mayor advised that parts of the Rafael Viñoly-designed development fail to comply with policies set out in the London Plan, with concerns over a lack of affordable housing and play spaces.



**The mayor has raised concerns over some aspects of the plans**

Treasury Holding UK's masterplan for the 40-acre (16.2-hectare) site, which has remained derelict since the

1980s, includes 700,000sq ft (65,032sq m) of restaurant and retail space and a hotel.

A riverside park and public access to restored historic areas of the Grade II\*-listed power station are also proposed.

According to the *Independent*, Johnson told the council: "This key part of the capital is the biggest development opportunity remaining in London and the power station is one of London's much-loved historic landmarks. It is vital that we get the redevelopment of this site right."

## Harry Ramsden's eyes expansion

Fish and chip chain Harry Ramsden's is set to open 100 new properties over the next five years under new plans announced by the company's new owner, Ranjit Boparan.

The iconic business, which first opened in Guiseley, West Yorkshire, in 1928, was acquired by Boparan Ventures group and operates 36 outlets, but is set for a large-scale expansion scheme under new chief executive officer, Marija Simovic.

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## Giant's Causeway nets £3m HLF grant

Historic Northern Ireland attraction one of two confirmed Lottery funding awards

By Pete Hayman

Plans for the construction of new visitor facilities as part of a scheme to enhance the Giant's Causeway World Heritage Site in Northern Ireland, have secured a £3m boost from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The National Trust, which owns the World Heritage Site, is planning to preserve and enhance the attraction, while also implementing a volunteering strategy aimed at including the local community in the site's maintenance.

Liverpool's Florence Institute for the Boys has also received £3.7m funding from the HLF to help finance an extensive repair and conservation programme more than 20 years after the former Toxteth youth club closed its doors to the public.



A visitor centre is set to be built to enhance the Giant's Causeway

The facility – regarded as one of Britain's oldest surviving purpose-built youth clubs – is set to become a new multi-purpose community centre.

HLF chair Dame Jenny Abramsky said: "This is heritage in all its kaleidoscopic glory. From Northern Ireland's coastal landscape to Liverpool's

first-ever youth club, these places have mass appeal.

"Heritage means different things to different people, but what is really important is these places reflect the UK's multi-layer and fascinating history."

Meanwhile, the HLF has confirmed first-round passes for four other UK projects.

## Olympic chiefs unveil vision for new 'great park'

By Pete Hayman

London's Olympic Park is set to become a new 'great park' in a bid to help transform east London after the 2012 Games, under new proposals announced by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA).

Around 250 acres (101.2 hectares) of parkland currently being developed to host the London Games are set to form part of one of the largest urban parks created in the UK for more than a century.

More than 4,000 trees will be planted under the 'great park' plans, which will also include hanging gardens situated 30ft (9.1m) above the ground on the footbridge from Stratford City into the park's main pedestrian entrance, a tree-lined park road to the



The new 'great park' will help transform East London

north of the Olympic Park, modelled on The Mall and Birdcage Walk, and a regional sports club.

A new large oval lawn boasting an amphitheatre, a cycle circuit around the 2012 Velodrome and wildlife and wetland habitats have also been earmarked for the site.

ODA chief executive David Higgins said: "We are cleaning up industrial land and creating the green backdrop for the London 2012 Games that in legacy mode will become the UK's largest new urban park in over a century.

"Inspired by the original Victorian parks, the meadows, gardens, woods and river walks in this new 'great park' will create a fantastic public space for people and wildlife right at the heart of the transformation of east London."

The Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) is now leading plans for the Games' legacy. OPLC chief executive Andrew Altman added: "We will create one of the great London parks, sitting alongside places like Kensington Park, Victoria Park and St James' Park



# Mayor announces Big Dance festival plans

Biennial dance festival set to take over the capital's streets and public spaces in July

By **Pete Hayman**

London mayor Boris Johnson has announced plans for this year's Big Dance festival, first launched as the result of a partnership between the Mayor of London's office and Arts Council England (ACE) in 2006.

The biennial dance festival, which will also take place ahead of the London Olympics in 2012, is scheduled for 3-11 July and has received nearly £2.9m from Legacy Trust UK to help expand the event and to reach more people over the next two years.

T-Mobile – the mobile phone company was behind the 'Dance' television advert – has been announced as the main sponsor of Big Dance 2010, which will see the capital's streets and public spaces taken



The Big Dance 2010 event will include hundreds of performances

over for Big World Dance on 10 July involving 10,000 people.

Hundreds of other performances, workshops, community programmes, school events and free events will form part of Big Dance 2010.

Meanwhile, the mayor has confirmed that Wayne McGregor

of Wayne McGregor/Random Dance company, has been commissioned as choreographer for Big Dance 2012.

Johnson said: "Big Dance is a terpsichorean feast that takes it quite literally one step further. We want to get as many people moving as possible this July."

# Green light for Salford regeneration proposals

By **Pete Hayman**

Planners at Salford City Council (SCC) have unanimously approved a multi-million pound scheme to regenerate a 17.4-hectare (43.8-acre) area in the heart of the city centre.

Backed by Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company, the project is being led by English City Funds (ECF) and will link sites including the University of Salford, The Crescent, Chapel Street and the Springfields business district.

ECF's plans, which have identified a number of zones



The city's Chapel Street is one area earmarked for a makeover

earmarked for development, include the creation of nearly 400 new hotel bedrooms, 24,000sq m (258,334sq ft) of retail, leisure and entertain-

ment space and the restoration of historic buildings.

A public square – to be called St John's Place, a commercial quarter and cycle and footpaths are also among the plans submitted to the council in July 2009.

SCC's lead member for planning, Derek Antrobus, said: "This is an ambition of local people and local businesses as well as the local council. We are delighted our vision to restore Salford's city centre has been taken a step forward today by the approval of this planning application."

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## IN BRIEF

### Stevenage Leisure nets management deals

► Management company Stevenage Leisure (SLL) has secured a deal with North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) to operate the Hitchin Swimming Centre and the Royston Leisure Centre in Hertfordshire. SLL will take over the management of the two sites in April 2010. The company already works in partnership with NHDC, having managed the North Herts Leisure Centre, Letchworth Outdoor Pool and Fearnhill Sports Centre – all owned by NHDC – since 2005.

### Revamp for Blackpool Sports Centre gym

► Blackpool Council has invested £200,000 in the refurbishment of the health and fitness facilities at the Blackpool Sports Centre. The eight-month revamp has more than doubled the size of the health club area – from 136sq m (1,500sq ft) to 300sq m (3,200sq ft) – and has included the upgrading of the gym equipment. Supplier Life Fitness was appointed to refit the gym, and the company created zones catering for the rehabilitation of groups suffering from respiratory and cardiac complaints as well as those with limited mobility.

### Youth gym opens in Wellington

► Leisure trust Tone Leisure has launched a health club for children in Wellington, Somerset. The £200,000 Z3 Fitness Zone at Wellington Sports Centre has been partly funded by The Big Lottery Fund's Young People's Fund Programme and is designed for children aged between 10 and 16 years old. Equipment, supplied by ZigZag, includes Xer-Dance Mats and a Sportwall, which tests reflexes and offers a cardiovascular workout, as well as Nintendo Wii games.

## New leisure complex opens in Darwen

£12.7m development located on the site of the Lancashire town's former centre

By **Pete Hayman**

A new £12.7m leisure complex in Darwen, Lancashire, has opened its doors to the public.

The new three-storey centre incorporates a 25m, eight-lane swimming pool with a Sport England-funded moveable floor, a small pool, an 80-station gym, a fitness studio and a multi-use sports hall.

More than £250,000 has been invested in the centre's 376sq m (4,047sq ft) gym, which has been equipped by Startrac, and a new health suite, including a sauna, a steamroom and a massage, aromatherapy and treatment area.

The main swimming pool has been designed to competition standard and is equipped with electronic timing equipment, a video and results scoreboard and spectator seating for 250 people. The pool area also feature materials that will aid



The new Darwen leisure centre boasts an 80-station fitness suite

acoustics to ensure swimming coaches do not have to shout.

Facilities at the centre, which has been built on the site of the town's former leisure centre, also include changing areas, activity rooms available for a range of courses and a café.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's (BDBC) executive member for leisure and culture, Michael Law-Riding, said: "It's been completed

on schedule and within budget and is one of the best sports and leisure centres in the area. I am confident it will be very well used by people from the borough and beyond."

The council has worked in partnership with London-based Capita Symonds, which has provided design and project management services. Architects Saunders Boston were also involved with the scheme.

### Batley centre's gym reopens

The last phase of a £4.6m redevelopment at Batley Sports and Tennis Centre in West Yorkshire has been completed.

The former gym has been remodelled and re-fitted with equipment supplied by Technogym.

The 40-station suite is part of a larger revamp of the facility, including the upgrading of the centre's swimming pool and six badminton courts.

Funding was provided by a £1.75m government grant, a £2.75m contribution from Kirklees Council and £140,000 from Kirklees Active Leisure.

## Joint bid to combat child obesity

By **Pete Hayman**

A report compiled by London Metropolitan University and City University of New York has found that the two cities face similar issues when it comes to tackling child obesity levels.

According to *A Tale of Two ObesCities*, both London and its US counterpart feature mobile populations, child poverty and overcrowding that contribute towards the number of young people that are overweight or obese.

Nearly a quarter of children aged four years old in London were found to be obese, which increases to 36.3 per cent by the age of 11. Meanwhile, 40 per cent of children of a similar



The study found London and New York share similar issues

age in New York are considered to be obese.

Recommendations outlined by the new report include the promotion of physical activities, such as walking and cycling, as well as the incorporation of active design elements into housing developments and building projects.



# Council unveils Maltby Leisure Centre

New complex forms part of £35m borough-wide programme to improve facilities

By **Pete Hayman**

The new Maltby Leisure Centre – part of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's (RMBC) wider £35m overhaul of the borough's leisure facilities – has opened to the public.

Originally due to open in 2009, the revised opening date of the centre – the last of four facilities to be built in Rotherham – had to be put back after recent snow delayed the final stages of construction.

Delivered in partnership with operator DC Leisure, Maltby Leisure Centre includes a 50-station Kinetika gym, a 25m competition-standard swimming pool with moveable floor, a diving pool with moveable floor and a six-court sports hall.



A 50-station Kinetika gym is among the leisure centre's facilities

A dance studio and a coffee bar are also among the facilities at the centre, which was built by Willmott Dixon and connects to a service centre featuring a doctor's surgery, a dental practice, a pharmacy and council offices.

Maltby Leisure Centre is the result of a joint public/private venture and was funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Communities and Local Government through its private finance initiative.

## IN BRIEF

### Matrix appoints Cox to expand reach

► Fitness equipment supplier Matrix Fitness Systems has appointed David Cox to lead its efforts to increase its sales to the uniformed services sector. Cox will focus on managing the sales of equipment to the police, fire, prisons and the military services. Cox said: "I look forward to raising the profile in this sector and will relish the opportunity to work with the Ministry of Defence to provide fitness kit to the military."

### Leeds Metropolitan completes gym refits

► Leeds Metropolitan University has completed a revamp of its two gyms. Both the university's Headingley site and Civic Quarter campus have seen their gyms remodelled for the first time in 10 years. The work was carried out over the Christmas period and involved relaying floors and knocking down walls, as well as replacing all the equipment with £400,000 worth of Precor kit. The Headingley campus gym now boasts a 52-station fitness suite and the Civic Quarter campus facility in the city centre has a 60-station gym.

### New fitness trails for Welsh NHS staff

► Nearly £50,000 will be invested in the installation of fitness trails within the grounds of two hospitals in Wales. Outdoor schemes are to be piloted at Nevill Hall Hospital in Abergavenny, South Wales and Ysbyty Alltwn in Tremadog, Gwynedd, to promote healthy lifestyles to all National Health Service (NHS) staff. The planned trails, which will comprise five or six stations of equipment, will form part of the Welsh Assembly Government's new Creating an Active Wales project to get more people physically active.

## Detailed plans submitted for new Horley complex

By **Pete Hayman**

Detailed plans for a multi-million pound leisure centre on the site of a former secondary school in Horley, Surrey, have been submitted to Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.

Outline planning permission for the new complex was awarded by council planners on 25 March last year, although the plans were referred to the Government Office for the South East for consideration.



Horley's proposed new centre

Facilities at the centre, which will replace the ageing Horley Anderson Centre, will include a

314sq m (3,380sq ft) fitness suite, a 25m swimming pool and a learner pool, a four-court sports hall and a dance studio.

Wet and dry changing areas and a reception are also among in the plans, which were drawn up by S&P Architects, as well as cycle and car parking.

Energy-saving measures will be incorporated into the new leisure centre to reduce carbon emissions by 30 per cent, compared with the existing Horley Anderson Centre.

## £16.1m Knowsley leisure complex proposals approved

Knowsley Council has approved plans to build a £16.1m leisure complex at the site of the St Thomas Becket School in Huyton, Merseyside.

Plans for Knowsley Leisure and Culture Park, include two 25m indoor swimming pools, a six-court sports hall, a health and fitness club, squash courts and dance and exercise studios.

Spa facilities are also planned, while one of the two pools will be built as an eight-lane competition pool with 300 spectator seats.

There will also be extensive conferencing facilities capable of hosting a range of sporting and cultural events, including award ceremonies and art performances.

## IN BRIEF

### Sportech secures US\$83m SGR purchase

► SGR, the racing and venue management division of US-based Scientific Games Corporation, has been acquired by the UK football pools operator, Sportech, in a deal worth US\$83m (£51m, €59m). An initial payment US\$65m (£40m, €46m) will be made to Scientific Games Corporation, which will take a 19.9 per cent stake in an enlarged Sportech along with UK-based online gaming software provider Playtech with 10 per cent.

### PartyGaming founder sells remaining shares

► Anurag Dikshit, the co-founder of online gambling company PartyGaming, has completed the sale of his remaining 9.5 per cent stake to institutional investors for a reported £105m. The businessman, who formed the company in 1997 along with Ruth Parasol, had already offloaded an 18 per cent stake in October last year and has now cut his links with PartyGaming following the latest disposal. According to a statement from Dikshit's investment vehicle, Crystal Ventures, the sale of 38.8 million shares was completed at 270p per share.

### BDO dismisses PDC takeover bid

► The British Darts Organisation (BDO) has rejected a takeover offer from the rival Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) after delegates from the 65 BDO counties voted against the proposals. A bid of £1m was submitted by the PDC in October in an attempt to acquire the BDO, with a further £1m earmarked for investment into amateur and grassroots darts. However, the 27-year-old organisation has confirmed that it has resisted the offer.

## Deloitte: Betting sector 'worth £6bn'

New report reveals "significant contribution" of gambling industry to the economy

By **Pete Hayman**

New research carried out by professional services firm Deloitte on behalf of Ladbrokes has revealed that the betting industry is worth an estimated £6bn to the UK economy.

*The Full Picture*, which aims to provide a quantitative and qualitative study of the gambling sector, has found that the economic contribution made is equivalent to 0.5 per cent of the UK's gross domestic product.

According to the report, the UK industry is responsible for providing 15 per cent of horse racing's annual income and supports employment in rural areas closely linked with the racing industry, while also providing jobs for workers with little or no qualifications.

Simon Oaten, betting and gaming lead at Deloitte, said: "The betting industry makes a



**Racing receives 15 per cent of its annual income from UK betting**

significant contribution to the British economy – but is subject to international competition.

"With internet and mobile betting growing, the challenge for government is to balance effective regulation with creating the conditions for the domestic industry to compete."

Ladbrokes chief executive Christopher Bill added: "This report comes at a crucial time for the industry and will help

inform the government and stakeholders about the important contribution the industry makes to employment and taxation in these difficult economic times.

"We hope it will contribute towards more informed policy making and help remove much of the uncertainty that has surrounded the taxation and regulation of our industry in recent years."

### Revenue boost for William Hill

Bookmaker William Hill has posted a 6 per cent increase in net revenue in the 13 weeks ending 29 December 2009, when compared with the same period for 2008.

The group, which is scheduled to release its preliminary results for 2009 on 26 February, said it expects to post total group net revenue for the full year showing a increase of around 4 per cent, compared with 2008.

Group chair Charles Scott has also revealed that he intends to step down from the position by the end of 2010.

## NLC reveals Scunthorpe bidders

By **Pete Hayman**

North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) has announced that three leisure operators have submitted bids to manage a new entertainment venue currently being developed in Scunthorpe.

Plans for the £16m Baths Hall venue were approved by the council in March 2009. It will retain its 1930s frontage and boast a standing area for up to 2,000 people, seating capacity for 1,200 people and conference facilities.

SMG Europe, which has been appointed to operate the new Leeds Arena; Sheffield Arena operator Sheffield International Venues (SIV) and regional theatre operator HQ Theatres



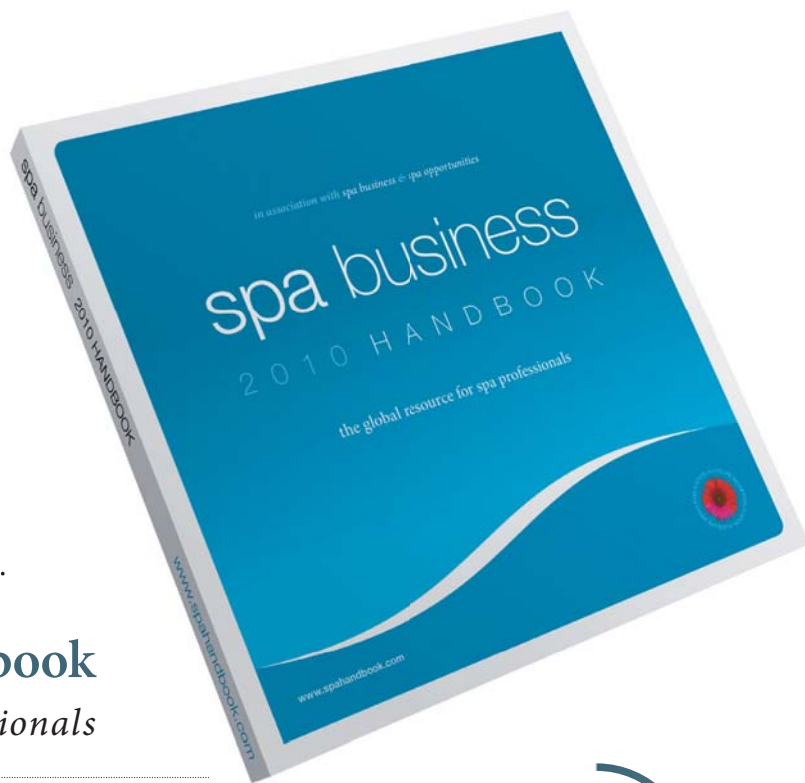
**Three firms are vying to run Scunthorpe's new Baths Hall**

are the firms currently vying to operate the Scunthorpe venue.

NLC leader Mark Kirk said: "The initial submissions received from three operators with the reputations of SIV, SMG and HQ Theatres Ltd is really good news. It is testament to the quality of the landmark design for the Baths Hall."

# Get your copy of the new Spa Business Handbook

**T**he *Spa Business Handbook* is the ultimate reference guide for the international spa market. Published in January 2010 as a comprehensive resource for operators and suppliers worldwide, it will be read by key decision makers including leading hotel and spa operators, suppliers, developers, consultants and other experts. It will also be distributed at key spa events.



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## IN BRIEF

### Rotherham United secure stadium site

► Rotherham United Football Club has confirmed that plans for a new multi-million pound stadium have taken a step forward after the club acquired a site for the development. The club, which competes in Coca-Cola Football League Two, currently plays its home matches at the Don Valley Stadium in Sheffield but is now set for a return to Rotherham after acquiring the former Guest and Chrimes Foundry site.

### Oxford play areas set for 'complete overhaul'

► Oxford City Council (OCC) has announced plans for a 'complete overhaul' of the city's play spaces as part of a £2.5m investment programme over the next three years. Between 2009 and 2012, the council's Play Area Refurbishment Programme will see improvements carried out at many of Oxford's 87 play spaces in a bid to ensure children have access to high quality play opportunities. Groundwork Thames Valley, the Denham-based environmental regeneration charity, has been appointed by OCC to project manage the revamp scheme.

### Edgbaston revamp contractor named

► Warwickshire County Cricket Club has appointed contractor Galliford Try to deliver the £24m redevelopment of Edgbaston stadium in Birmingham. The company will carry out the design and construction of the new-look Edgbaston Road end at the venue. Work is expected to get underway in March 2010, which will see the section's seating capacity increase from nearly 5,000 to 8,250 and the development of player and media facilities. The venue will remain open throughout the work.

## Funding bid for St Albans sport plans

Local authority invited to submit further proposals as part of government initiative

By **Pete Hayman**

St Albans City and District Council's (SACDC) bid to secure a £500,000 cash injection towards the new multi-million pound Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre development has moved to the next stage.

The council is set to submit further details to support its bid as part of the government's Free Swimming Capital Modernisation Programme, administered by Sport England.

An initial 173 applications from across the UK were made to Sport England to receive a share of the £10m earmarked by the government, with the St Albans project named as one of only 45 to move onto the second stage of the process.



The new complex will include a 200-station gym and a 25m pool

When complete, Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre will include a 200-station fitness suite with a cycle spinning studio, a regional competition-sized 25m swimming pool, a 17m learner pool and a four-court sports hall.

Two exercise studios, a climbing wall, a spa area, a crèche and soft play area, a youth facility and a standalone café/bistro also form part of the plans, which are expected to be submitted to SACDC planners by the end of January.

## University unveils new sports complex proposals

By **Pete Hayman**

Plans for the development of a new sports complex on the site of the University of Oxford's existing Iffley Road facilities have been unveiled.

Designed by Faulkner Brown Architects, the project will see the Iffley Road centre completely overhauled in order to provide facilities for more than 80 indoor sports, while the existing swimming pool will be integrated into the main venue.



The site is set to be overhauled

Oxford City Council has already approved a new tennis centre but the university aims

to gather views on the sports centre development before submitting plans in spring.

Facilities will include one double-sized and one single-sized sports hall linked by a timber and glass structure housing an atrium foyer and a two-storey gym.

The grandstand at the site's running track – where Roger Bannister broke the four-minute-mile barrier – will also be replaced by a new building to house an indoor cricket school.

## Multi-million pound sports complex set for Rochdale

Plans for a major new swimming pool and sports complex in Rochdale, Lancashire, have taken a step forward after the local authority set aside £8.2m for the scheme.

The new facility will replace the outdated Rochdale Baths on Entwisle Road, forming part of a wider £33.8m capital programme announced by Rochdale Borough Council in July 2007 to coincide with the launch of cultural trust Link4Life.

Link4Life managing director Craig McAteer said: "We are working with architects to update the original 2007 feasibility study. This is looking at plans for the centre, location and costs."



# PM raises football finances concerns

Gordon Brown urges club owners to consider their responsibilities towards fans

By **Pete Hayman**

Prime Minister Gordon Brown has criticised the number of UK football clubs that have failed to cut back on high levels of debt and has urged owners to consider their responsibilities towards supporters.

Speaking at his monthly Downing Street press conference for January, Brown stopped short of calling for the government to intervene, but raised concerns that clubs with high debt levels could not generate income needed to "deal with the leverage".

Brown said: "There is an issue here for football supporters that over the last few years, a number of football clubs have become highly leveraged and therefore they have far higher



**Manchester United is one club reported to be saddled with debt**

levels of debt than the income that they're able to generate from their footballing activities and their television activities.

"Football clubs have to look very seriously at their responsibilities to their supporters. They have high levels of income from their supporters but debt

levels have been at a leverage level that has been too high."

Manchester United Football Club, Liverpool Football Club and Portsmouth Football Club are among a number of clubs that have raised concerns regarding financial stability in recent weeks.

## IN BRIEF

### Premier League clubs slash January spending

► Premier League football clubs have dramatically reduced the amount spent on transfers during this year's January transfer window to around £30m, compared with £170m in 2009. According to Deloitte, transfer expenditure among the 20 clubs matched expectations for the period as clubs continue to tighten their belts. The estimated total spent during the 2010 January window is the lowest since 2003. More than two-thirds of player transfers this year were loan arrangements.

### Mayor to head London's 2018 bid team

► London mayor Boris Johnson has been named as chair of London United, the group co-ordinating the city's support for England's bid to stage the World Cup in 2018. Formed as part of efforts to drive the capital's bid to be named as a candidate host city, the refined organisation will now work with England 2018's senior team. The new-look London United group will include Ivan Gazidis, Arsenal Football Club's chief executive officer; Daniel Levy, chair of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club and Wembley Stadium managing director Roger Maslin.

### AFC Telford United extends stadium lease

► AFC Telford United, which currently competes in the Blue Square North competition, has confirmed it has safeguarded the long-term future of football at the town's Bucks Head Stadium after agreeing a 150-year lease with the local authority. The deal, which will see the club pay a peppercorn rate to site owner Telford and Wrekin Council, has also ensured local football-based community initiatives will continue to operate.

## Oswestry plans dealt blow

Shropshire Council has insisted that a new £7.6m leisure centre in Oswestry will be completed as planned, despite concerns the company appointed to build the facility had gone into administration.

Shrewsbury-based Frank Galliers started work on the Oswald Park Active Lifestyle Centre in March 2009, which will replace existing facilities at College Road.

However, the council has confirmed that it has been told by management staff at the Oswald Park site that the contractor has encountered financial difficulties, despite having not received any official word from the company itself.

## Clubs 'missing out' on tax breaks



**Sutcliffe called on more clubs to take advantage of major savings**

By **Pete Hayman**

Sports minister Gerry Sutcliffe has called on thousands of amateur sports clubs to join the Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) scheme in a bid to benefit from major tax savings.

More than 5,500 sports clubs are currently registered with the CASC initiative, which has saved organisations more than £60m in tax relief over the past seven years and is designed to

provide more money to drive a sporting legacy post-2012.

The CASC scheme enables amateur clubs that meet certain eligibility criteria to receive mandatory business rate relief for 80 per cent of total rates bills and the potential to reclaim Gift Aid on donations.

Sutcliffe said: "It is great that we have signed up more than 5,500 clubs to the scheme. But there are thousands of clubs out there that are missing out."

## IN BRIEF

### Sea Life Adventure completes £1m upgrade

► The Sea Life Adventure in Southend-on-Sea, Essex, is set to reopen later this week (13 February), following a £1m redevelopment project. The aquarium's new flagship attraction will be the Tropical Shark Tank. Holding more than 195 tonnes of water, the tank will exhibit Black Tip Reef sharks and an array of other fish from the Indo Pacific region. Visitors will be able to view the fish by strolling through a perspex tunnel beneath the tank.

### New attraction for London Dungeons

► Merlin Entertainments will open a new attraction at its London Dungeons site near London Bridge. The Bloody Mary Killer Queen exhibition will tell the story of Mary Tudor, Henry VIII's daughter and Queen of England between 1553 and 1558. The actor-led attraction will transport guests back to London in 1556, the height of Mary's reign, and is set to include a number of special effects.

### Wells palace revamp appeal launched

► A new appeal has been launched to help raise £1.6m towards a major project at the Bishop's Palace and Gardens in Wells, Somerset, which dates back to the early 13th century. The scheme, which has received planning permission, has already secured more than £3m, including monies from the Heritage Lottery Fund, grants from other trusts, the Church Commissioners and individual donors. Plans include a 'green' café, a community garden and an outdoor theatre, as well as an activity, creativity and education centre in the Old Stable Yard and using the medieval undercroft as a focus for the Palace's history.

## DCMS to reduce world heritage bids

'Fewer and fitter' UK heritage sites to be considered for future UNESCO status

By **Martin Nash**

The government has launched a competition to find more cultural and natural heritage places fit to become future UK World Heritage Sites. It plans on putting forward fewer sites for consideration by UNESCO, with a streamlined application system to help ensure success.

Local authorities and others throughout the UK, plus the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, will have the opportunity to nominate such sites for assessment by an independent expert panel. A new 'Tentative List' of candidate sites will then be drawn up for submission to UNESCO in 2011, with the first nomination going forward from 2012.

Those on the last UK Tentative List, drawn up in 1999, which have not so far gone forward for consideration by UNESCO,



Stonehenge is one of the UK's sites to be recognised by UNESCO

will be able to apply again for inclusion on the new list.

Culture minister Margaret Hodge said: "To be designated a World Heritage Site is a real honour and a rare privilege. It can bring social and economic benefits to areas chosen, and it's great for tourism, promoting the profile of our cultural and natural heritage to the world in an eye-catching way.

"But bidding for World Heritage status carries a cost, and we want to be sure that public resources are well deployed. In future, we want a process that ensures that only sure-fire winners with outstanding universal value go forward. This means we will make fewer nominations, selecting sites from a new, shorter and more focused list."

## Merlin unveils US Legoland plans

By **Tom Walker**

UK-based attraction operator Merlin Entertainments has announced two ambitious new attraction projects.

Cypress Gardens theme park in White Haven, Florida, US, which the group acquired in January, is set to be rebranded as a Legoland attraction.

The theme park, which had closed in September 2009, will undergo a complete redevelopment and will reopen as Legoland Florida in 2011.

The park will become Merlin's second Legoland site in North America and, according to chief executive Nick Varney, play an important role in the group's continued growth in the US.



Legoland Florida is set to open by the end of 2011

Meanwhile, Merlin is set to open its 11th Madame Tussauds wax attraction, and the fourth in Europe, at the Prater Park in Vienna, Austria in early 2011.

The £10m attraction will be designed to reflect the culture of Vienna, housing around 70 wax figures of famous Austrians such as Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein and Johann Strauss.

## Living Legend plans resubmitted

Revised plans for a housing development at St Peter, Jersey, which would result in the closure of the Living Legend attraction, have been submitted to the island's government.

Initial proposals for the demolition of the attraction, which boasts a karting complex and two adventure golf courses, and the construction of 65 new homes were first mooted last summer due to a fall in tourism prompting a need to find an alternative use for the site.

However, the States of Jersey announced on 20 August 2009 that plans would not be processed until park owners, the Lewis family, completed a transport assessment and provided further information.



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## IN BRIEF

### Private sector funding for arts decreases

► Private sector investment for culture has fallen 7 per cent in 2008/09, according to Arts and Business, which predicts that the worst is yet to come. The total of £654.9m received last year amounted to an average of 15 per cent of the industry's total income, according to a study by the organisation. Public sector funding came to 53 per cent, and the remainder came from ticket sales and trading.

### Government grants for Jewish institutions

► The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has awarded grants of £100,000 to each of The Jewish Museum and The Wiener Library – both in London – to help meet relocation costs. The Jewish Museum, situated in Camden Town and set to re-open on 17 March after a major revamp, explores Jewish heritage and identity as part of the wider story of Britain. Four permanent galleries will display a variety of objects, films, photographs, hands-on exhibits and personal stories. Meanwhile, the Wiener Library, which was formed in 1933 is set to move to Russell Square in 2011 after 50 years at its current Regent's Park home.

### Funding boost for Scottish arts

► The Scottish government is to provide a further £50,000 for Arts and Business Scotland's New Arts Sponsorship (NAS) awards scheme. NAS provides match-funding for first-time arts sponsors, or for companies that have not sponsored for at least three years, and is also open to non-Scotland-based companies to sponsor Scottish arts projects. An organisation receiving an eligible grant will receive £1 of government funding for every £1 of sponsorship through NAS.

## London theatres post record takings

Box office receipts exceed £500m for the first time as attendances hit new high

By **Pete Hayman**

London's theatres saw a record number of visitors in 2009 as box office receipts passed the £500m mark for the first time, according to the Society of London Theatre (SLT).

Attendances for plays, musicals, operas and dance shows during the 12-month period increased by 5.5 per cent to more than 14 million, compared with 2008, while like-for-like box office revenues increased by 7.6 per cent.

Plays proved the most successful for London's theatres in 2009, with attendances up by more than a quarter, while opera, dance and entertainment also reported growth. Musical attendances, however,



Attendances at London theatres increased by 5.5 per cent

declined by 2 per cent for the overall year.

SLT president Nica Burns said: "Britain's artistic community continues to create exceptional work. The extraordinary quality and breadth of productions available nightly in

London explains these record figures in such a difficult year.

"While musicals continue to flourish, 2009 was an outstanding year for plays – proving that audiences respond to challenge and stimulation, as well as toe-tapping entertainment."

## British Museum announces new BBC partnership

By **Luke Tuchscherer**

The British Museum has joined forces with the BBC to launch a new campaign dedicated to world history, which will see a number of special productions for television, radio and online.

At the heart of the scheme is a BBC Radio 4 series, *A History of the World in 100 Objects*, which started on 18 January and sees 15-minute shows focusing on one object from the museum's collection.



The British Museum in London

British Museum director Neil MacGregor said: "Parliament set up the British Museum

to allow all 'studious and curious persons both native and foreign born' to construct their own history of the world and to find their place in it.

"Thanks to the incomparable reach of the BBC – radio, television, World Service and the web – as the series develops, everybody across the UK and across the world will be able to participate, using not just the things in museums, but their own objects as well, to tell their history of the world."

## DCMS announces 200 new arts apprenticeships

Culture secretary Ben Bradshaw has announced that more than 200 performing arts apprenticeships have been made available to help more young unemployed people into work.

Nearly 170 jobs will be provided across 14 London boroughs as part of a project run by New Deal of the Mind, including design

assistants, marketing assistants and fundraisers at organisations including the British Library.

Meanwhile, New Deal of the Mind is also behind 56 positions at a disability-led theatre group in Ongar, Essex, which will enable young people to take roles including community craft workers and arts programme workers.



Sport Industry  
Research Centre



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## IN BRIEF

### Best Western expands UK hotel portfolio

► Four hotels across the country have come under the Best Western Great Britain brand, increasing the US-based group's UK portfolio by an additional 137 bedrooms. Henbury Lodge Hotel near Bristol; Himley Hotel in Dudley, West Midlands; White Hart Hotel in Moretonhampstead, Devon and Ilford Hotel in Ilford, Essex, have all joined the company within the last month.

### Prezzo acquires Tring site

► Italian restaurant operator Prezzo has expanded its portfolio by acquiring a freehold property in Tring, Hertfordshire. Prezzo will take over the former La Viña tapas bar and, following a rebrand, plans to reopen the site later this spring. Davis Coffey Lyons acted on behalf of Prezzo on the deal. It is the second Hertfordshire site that the company has secured in the past month, after acquiring a 26-bedroom hotel in Bishop's Stortford. Prezzo operates 140 UK sites and plans to open 10 new restaurants this year.

### Punch Taverns offloads Alcester property

► Punch Taverns has sold the Mother Huff Cap Inn near Alcester, Warwickshire, to a private investor, in a deal believed to be worth around £300,000. The new owner has granted a new lease on the Mother Huff Cap Inn to Urban and Country Leisure, the managed multiple pub operator, taking its estate to 14 sites. Christie + Co acted on behalf of Punch on the deal. The Mother Huff Cap, which dates back to the 18th century, comprises a 40-cover main bar, a 20-cover snug, games room, 80-capacity function room, and a three-bedroom owner's accommodation.

## 'Staycations' blamed for hotel worries

Regional properties affected by increase in number of caravan and camping breaks

By Tom Walker

The rising number of hotel operators going bust outside London has been blamed on the 'staycationing' trend, as consumers are increasingly swapping hotel nights to accommodation offered by caravan and camping sites.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) research revealed that the rate at which hotel companies became insolvent increased by 68 per cent during the fourth quarter of 2009, when compared to the previous three-month period.

According to PwC partner David Chubb, the traditionally quiet trading period between January and March could mean that there is no respite in sight for hoteliers outside the capital.



Smaller, regional hotels have struggled to cope with the recession

Chubb said: "Individual hotels based in the provinces and not affiliated with a major brand have continued to suffer from poor occupancy and low rates."

"We expect this to continue into 2010. In addition to the absence of the corporate traveller, the substitution of

hotel visits for staycations has taken its toll on hotels, particularly in the provinces.

"Very few hotel owners have experience of operating in the current harsh climate, and must identify realistic options, diagnose problems, and implement a survival strategy."

### Salcombe Hotel to relaunch

The Salcombe Marine Hotel is set to reopen on 29 March 2010 after being acquired by an independent hotel chain.

Harbour Hotels Group has taken over the 53-bedroom property and will relaunch it as a four star hotel.

To be called Salcombe Harbour Hotel, the property boasts a restaurant, an indoor swimming pool and health club as well as a sun terrace. Led by MD Mark Godfrey, the Harbour Hotels Group currently operates hotels in St Ives, Sidmouth and Christchurch, as well as the Rhodes South restaurant in Christchurch in partnership with chef Gary Rhodes

## Hospitality driving UK's recovery



The sector boosted the economy's output during the fourth quarter

By Tom Walker

The UK has officially emerged out of recession after new figures published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) revealed that the economy grew by 0.1 per cent during the last quarter of 2009.

According to the ONS, the increase in output for the three-month period between October and December 2009 was driven mainly due to

increases in hotels and restaurants, as well as distribution and public services.

The growth, however, was slower than expected as commentators had widely predicted the increase in gross domestic product to reach 0.4 per cent.

The ONS announcement brings to an end an 18-month period of recession – the longest such period suffered by the UK since WWII.





Could the smoking ban be extended to cover pub beer gardens?

## Smoke-free gardens on the way?

New proposals could ban smoking completely at pubs

By **Martin Nash**

New plans, aimed at halving the number of UK smokers from 21 to 10 per cent of the population by 2020, have been unveiled by the government.

Based on the 1998 strategy 'Smoking Kills', the proposals outlined could see the current smoking ban extended to building entrances and public open spaces, potentially impacting on beer gardens and similar external areas.

Pub operators are already facing a commitment by the government to ban the sale of

cigarettes from vending machines from October 2011.

Health secretary Andy Burnham said: "The government has made massive progress on tobacco over the past decade.

"Ten years ago, millions more people smoked and many have died early as a result. We've come so far and now we'll go even further – to push forward and save even more lives."

Other government plans include the possibility of selling cigarettes in plain packaging and offering smokers NHS help if they want to give up.

## Rebel shareholders win M&B battle

Piedmont, the investment vehicle headed by billionaire Joe Lewis, has been successful in its battle with board members at pub group Mitchells and Butlers (M&B).

At the company's AGM on 28 January, rebel shareholders ousted chair Simon Laffin and former chair Drummond Hall from the board, while all four independent directors put forward by Piedmont were elected.

One of the four newly-elected directors, John Lovering, has been appointed chair of M&B, while Simon Burke, Mike Balfour and Jeremy Blood will also take a place on the board, bringing an end to the long-running feud.

Lovering said: "The board will put recent history behind us and move forward committed to the interests of all shareholders."

## Change of government, change of approach?

The prospect of an incoming Conservative administration will result in likely changes

**T**he general election is approaching, so what would the industry want from a Conservative government, if one is elected?

The most important change that can be expected – and is needed – is to ensure there is a minister with sole responsibility for tourism, who leads tourism policy within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and who builds up tourism expertise.

At present, this is lacking. The DCMS appears to believe that tourism is a by-product of the other areas it funds and cannot be seen as a sector itself. This approach must surely change.

A tourism minister should represent the industry across Whitehall more skillfully and more forcefully than recent experience. He (or she) must ensure the industry's specific – and often unique – needs are considered when policy is being driven by other departments.

Secondly, a Conservative government will have genuine doubts about the effectiveness of the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and will certainly want to take the responsibility for tourism away from them.

Conflating iconic and discrete tourist areas (such as the Cotswolds or the Lake District) into RDAs which stretch for many miles on either side, does little to promote tourism in the area itself. It would be far better for voluntary associations of local government, destinations and private partners to get together to develop partnerships that can promote a specific tourist area more directly and in a more focused manner.

A Conservative government would also look to revitalise the economies of seaside resorts. Once the gem of British tourism, resorts have been neglected since the 1970s and few can now boast of their facilities or the standards they offer.

Plans to move away from regional quangos towards helping local authorities to develop partnerships will certainly help here. So will proposals to allow local government to keep some increases in business rates. Such a measure will enable them to develop their local tourism economies free from an RDAs overriding (and occasionally misguided) diktat.

One of the most important aspects of this is the prospect of establishing Tourist Growth Zones which will give local authorities tax incentives to encourage development and regeneration. If all these measures came to pass, the industry will be mightily satisfied. Only time will tell.



**BOB COTTON** is chief executive of the BHA. *Leisure Opportunities* is a member benefit of the BHA, for your free copy call 01462 471932

## IN BRIEF

### John Lewis confirmed as 2012 sponsor

► The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) has announced the appointment of John Lewis as a Tier Three provider to the 2012 Games. John Lewis is the 26th sponsor to be named by LOCOG and will help to furnish lounge and reception areas at venues due to be used during the Games. The company's Oxford Street store and proposed Stratford outlet adjacent to the Olympic Park, scheduled to open in 2011, will also become integral retail space for Olympics merchandise.

### Council plans to capitalise on TV hit

► The popularity of *Gavin and Stacey* – the BBC television programme set in Barry Island, South Wales – could help to increase tourism to the area under new plans laid out by the Vale of Glamorgan Council (VGC). Local residents are being asked by the council to help with the development of a new tourism strategy for the region, which aims to identify the priorities over the next five years. According to the *Draft Tourism Strategy 2010-2015* VGC said it "recognises the marketing potential" of the programme.

### Two new adiZone locations announced

► Southampton City Council has announced that a new adiZone – a multi-sport outdoor facility – is set to open at Mansell Park, Millbrook, on 9 March. The 625sq m (6,727sq ft) venue will boast a basketball, football and tennis area, a climbing wall, an outdoor gym and space for dance and gymnastics. Canvey Island, Essex, is also set to benefit from an adiZone after Castle Point Borough Council secured funding for the facility.

## Sky unveils new 3D football coverage

Nine pubs experience revolutionary broadcast of Premier League football fixture

By **Pete Hayman**

Customers at nine pubs across the UK and Ireland have been among the first football fans in the world to experience a live 3D sports television broadcast.

Broadcasting company Sky equipped pubs in London, Manchester, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Dublin with '3D Ready' sets to allow customers to watch Arsenal's Premier League match with Manchester United on 31 January in 3D – the first fixture to be filmed and broadcast in the new format.

Sky, which is launching Europe's first dedicated 3D television channel in April, expects to roll out the new concept to pubs across the UK later this year in order to reach more football fans.



Special glasses will enable customers to experience the 3D action

Jeremy Darroch, Sky's chief executive, said: "3D is one of the most talked-about developments for years. Sky has always innovated to bring customers the best possible viewing experience, so we fully intend to take the lead in bringing 3D to the UK and Ireland."

Barney Francis, Sky Sports' managing director, added: "Sky Sports has a proud history of innovation, from the simple clock and scoreline in the corner of the screen through to high definition. It's fitting that we're pioneering this revolutionary development in broadcasting."

### MTFC fans 'pay what you want'

Mansfield Town Football Club (MTFC) has handed supporters the chance to decide their own entry price for the club's Blue Square Premier game with Gateshead Football Club (GFC) on 6 February.

Fans were able to turn up on the day as part of the one-off strategy and pay any amount at the turnstile, as well as having the opportunity to sit anywhere inside the Field Mill stadium – except the North Stand and Season Ticket Holders' seats.

GFC supporters also benefited from the "pay what you want – sit where you want" offer, which MTFC chair Andrew Perry said was an attempt to say thank you to supporters.

## NT sites added to Google service



Corfe Castle was one of 19 Trust sites to be added to Street View

By **Pete Hayman**

A number of National Trust (NT)-owned castles, country houses and landscapes across the UK, have been added to Google's Street View service.

People around the world will now have the opportunity to visit a total of 19 NT properties through Google Maps, which provides a 360-degree ground level tour of the trust's sites.

A new online tour is provided to help visitors explore the sites, including Northern Ireland's Downhill Demesne; Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire; Dorset's Corfe Castle and Plas Newydd.

Ed Parsons, geospatial technologist at Google, said: "National Trust properties/locations offer all of us a special glimpse of history, nature and architecture up and down the country."



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## IN BRIEF

### Heritage deal for Leicestershire locks

► British Waterways has secured a new Heritage Partnership Agreement to safeguard the long-term future of Foxton Locks in Leicestershire. English Heritage, Harborough District Council and Leicestershire County Council have all signed up to the agreement, which sets out ways in which the historic environment of the attraction will be managed. Foxton Locks, which attracts more than 300,000 visitors each year, boasts 10 locks and is classed as a designated conservation area.

### Trust acquires Scottish crofting estate

► A trust has become the first community group in Scotland to complete the purchase of a Scottish government-owned crofting estate, after acquiring land on the Isle of Harris. The West Harris Trust has taken control of 6,578 hectares (16,255 acres) of land, incorporating the Borve, Luskentyre and Scaristavore estates in a bid to improve the tourism potential of the area. Plans for the land acquired by the trust include improvements to Scarista Golf Course, enhanced access to the beach, a new café/restaurants and the provision of a site for touring caravans and camping.

### New ways to learn about the New Forest

► An initiative by the National Park Authority will see five new local information points opening in the New Forest, Hampshire. The points are designed to provide a one-stop shop for residents and visitors who want to learn more about the National Park and what is best to see and do in the local area. The five new information facilities will offer information and a range of maps, leaflets and publications.

## Green light for Cairngorms paths plan

Authority to move forward with the development of a "more integrated network"

By **Martin Nash**

After getting approval from the Scottish government, Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) is to move forward with its Core Paths Plan.

In total, 1,197 people were involved in the plan's three consultative phases, it being designed to attract more people to the outdoors and help land managers to manage access across land and water.

The plan highlights an overall path network of new and existing tracks, roads, pavements and water courses in the park totalling around 932km (579 miles). In a first for Scotland, the Cairngorms Core Paths Plan has designated the surface of the River Spey within the park as a core path. It is hoped that this will result in a



The plan will cover more than 900km of new and existing tracks

better managed river catering more effectively for the needs of the diverse range of users who enjoy it.

David Green, convener of the CNPA said: "Now that the Core Paths Plan has been approved, the development of a more integrated network of paths for a wider range of

people and abilities to enjoy the special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park can be taken forward.

"Once completed, the work will allow users to move around and enjoy the park more easily while minimising conflict with farmers, foresters and estates who manage the land."

## £216,000 River Lea towpath upgrade completed

By **Pete Hayman**

British Waterways (BW) has completed work on a £216,000 scheme to improve a 1-mile (1.6km) section of towpath on the River Lea between Cheshunt Lock and Waltham Common Lock in Hertfordshire.

Norwich-based contractor May Gurney carried out the work to help to establish a 4-mile (6.4km) wheelchair and pushchair-friendly route and has involved the widening and resurfacing of the towpath.

The towpath between Waltham Town Lock and Old Nazeing Road has been the subject of efforts to improve the route after BW was awarded funding through the Department for Communities and Local Government's Green Arch Growth Area Project.



May Gurney carried out work to improve the section of towpath

Antonia Zotali, BW's senior project manager, said: "This section of the River Lea Navigation is extremely popular with walkers, cyclists and anglers and as a result the towpath, which is more than 20 years old, had become worn and uneven, meaning that when it rained some very large puddles were created.

"The improvements that British Waterways has made will ensure that everyone can have safe and easy access to the river and surrounding park all year round."

In addition to the towpath improvements, benches, lock furniture and mooring bollards underwent repair work, while muddy areas were regrassed.

## INVITATION TO TENDER

### INSTALLATION OF A FOUR TEAM CHANGING ROOM

**Stafford Borough Council** invites suitably qualified organisations with a proven track record to tender for the installation of a four-team modular changing facility at Charnley Road Stafford.

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Completed tenders must be returned to the Head of Legal Services by 12 noon on the Monday 9th March 2010.



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**To request a Tender Briefing Pack please contact:**  
Adam Hill, Head of Leisure and Culture,  
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e-mail: [amhill@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:amhill@staffordbc.gov.uk)  
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**Deadline for submission of tenders is 12noon Tuesday 9 March 2010.**



## LONDON YOUTH GAMES



Europe's largest annual youth sports event is on the lookout for an **event management partner.**

Organisations are invited to express their interest in working with the charity from September 2010 to August 2013.

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Companies wishing to express an interest in this opportunity are requested to complete the pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) available from midnight on February 1st at [www.londonyouthgames.org/eventmanagement](http://www.londonyouthgames.org/eventmanagement)

**The closing date for the PQQ is 1st March 2010.**

## NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

**OCCUPANCY AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AT TYNE RIVERSIDE COUNTRY PARK CENTRE BUILDING, LOW PRUDHOE, NORTHUMBERLAND (GR NZ 086 635)**

Proposals are invited to develop and manage a new use(s) for the Country Park building, creating a viable use which that will deliver community benefits while being compatible with the continued role of the surrounding area as a Country Park.

Within easy access of the Tyne and Wear conurbation, the Country Park is on a major national cycle route, has excellent access to canoeing on the River Tyne and is a hub for local walking routes and environmental activities. The park centre building (which will continue to be partially occupied by the Council) offers approximately 135 square metres of floor space mainly on the ground level, and divided between 2 rooms.

**To request further details and to receive an expression of interest proforma please email:**  
[mike.jeffrey@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:mike.jeffrey@northumberland.gov.uk) or call (01670) 534085.

**Initial proposals are to be returned to the Council by 26 February 2010 and it is expected that a short list will be invited to develop and submit more detailed proposals.**



# leisure property news

Visit [leisureproperty.com](http://leisureproperty.com) for the latest news on Properties, developments, tenders and investment.

## IN BRIEF

### Funding boost for Bargoed regeneration

► Plans for the regeneration of Bargoed town centre in the Rhymney valley, South Wales, have received an £8.3m boost from the Welsh Assembly Government. The funding will go towards schemes designed to improve Bargoed, including enhanced public spaces and improved pedestrian zones. More than £3m has come from the European Regional Development Fund and £2.5m of Targeted Match Funding has come from the Assembly Government.

### Council completes waterfront site deal

► An "unpopular" waterfront site in Bournemouth is set to for a major overhaul after the local council completed the purchase of the site. Bournemouth Borough Council now intends to enter into talks with the site's three tenants over plans to develop a new entertainment venue. In January, the council confirmed plans to redevelop the "detested" property, which houses an IMAX theatre, after running out of patience with the site's previous owner.

### £7m revamp for former Yeovil glove factory

► A former glove factory in the centre of Yeovil, Somerset, is set to undergo a major £7m phased transformation under plans announced by South Somerset District Council and developer Zero C. Work to clear the site is set to be completed by early February in order to enable the scheme to start, which will boast a residential development and a café/restaurant, as well as an outdoor courtyard area.

## Telford scheme receives council boost

Local authority commits to relocate offices as part of £250m Southwater plans

By **Pete Hayman**

Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) has committed to locating its new civic offices at the heart of a new £250m regeneration scheme, which is designed to transform Telford's Southwater area.

It is hoped that the council's investment in the new Southwater offices will drive forward the redevelopment plans and attract increased inward investment from the private sector as part of the scheme.

Plans for the Southwater development aim to provide the town with a thriving night-time economy centred around a pedestrian high street and including cafés, bars and restaurants, as well as a new public square for events and arts, an extension to the Telford



The scheme is designed to transform the town's Southwater area

International Centre and a new leisure hub, featuring a revamped ice rink, a new leisure pool and a cinema.

The development proposals also feature two new hotels, four office buildings and a new Learning and Media Centre.

TWC leader Andrew Eade said: "This development is a

demonstration of the council's confidence in the viability and vibrancy of Telford's business economy at a very difficult time for the national economy.

"We have carried out careful assessment of a number of different sites across the town centre and Southwater is undoubtedly the best location."

### Surrey Quays plans approved

Southwark Council has awarded outline planning permission for a new Surrey Quays development within the borough's Surrey Docks ward.

The scheme, which will be carried out in phases to enable the existing cinema, bowling alley and bingo hall to remain open, will include a new cinema complex and restaurants.

The council has also backed the expansion of the Decathlon store, which is set to include new waterfront cafés, bars and restaurants.

## Cardiff street proposals unveiled

By **Pete Hayman**

Construction work on the first phase of a new scheme to enhance Cardiff city centre's streetscape has got underway.

The first stage of the project will see High Street undergo a complete facelift, involving the pedestrianisation of the area to create a new "Castle Quarter" and establish an improved environment for residents, businesses and visitors.

Delme Bowen, Cardiff council's executive member for traffic and transportation, said: "High Street's unique mix of independent shops, banks, restaurants and professional



Cardiff's new-look High Street

services is an important part of its appeal.

"The scheme will strengthen connections between the arcades and Cardiff Castle, creating a safe, attractive, distinctive and high quality environment for pedestrians."



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## LPF: Cinema – the digital revolution



**An early evening LPF seminar and demonstration to be held at:**

The Apollo Piccadilly Circus Cinema, 19 Regent Street,  
London SW1Y 4LR **on Tuesday 2nd March 2010**

### CONTENT:

As well as getting an update on development activity and rents in the cinema sector, this seminar offers you the chance to join experts from the operating, technical and property sides of the cinema market in a discussion as to where the digital revolution is taking the industry next.

Come and witness the digital cinema revolution for yourself and see this presentation of film clips in the latest Sony 4k digital technology in 2D and 3D formats.

### SPEAKERS:

**Rob Arthur**, Managing Director, Apollo Cinemas. Rob oversees an estate of 13 cinemas and 77 screens. He has worked in the UK and International Cinema sector for the past 18 years for companies such as Vue Entertainment, SBC International Cinemas, Warner Village, Warner Bros and UCI.

**Dave Cowlishaw**, Business Development Manager - Digital Cinema, Sony Professional Solutions Europe

**Neil Richmond** of Neil Richmond & Co is a recognised specialist in the cinema property sector counting Apollo, Cineworld, City Screen and Vue amongst his many leisure clients.

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### PROGRAMME

- 6.15pm** Seminar registration  
**6.30pm** Introduction  
**6.45pm** Speaker presentation and film clips  
**7.45pm** Panel Discussion with Q&As  
**8.00pm** Refreshments and networking  
**8.30pm** Close  
**Venue:** The Apollo Piccadilly Circus Cinema  
19 Regent Street, London.  
SW1Y 4LR  
**Fee:** £45.00 + VAT LPF members  
£55.00 + VAT member guests  
£90.00 + VAT non members

The LPF takes no responsibility for the statements made by, or the opinions or views expressed by speakers or any other person at this event.

**TO BOOK OR FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Emmerson, LPF Administration**

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## UK tourism set for 'bumper' year

Study reveals increasing number of Britons opting for a domestic break

By **Pete Hayman**

Britain's tourism industry is set for another "bumper" year after new research by BDRC Continental revealed that more than two-thirds of adults said they were likely to book a UK holiday in 2010.

According to the survey, the weak pound and frustration with air travel has contributed towards an increase, from 25 per cent in 2009 to 31 per cent this year, in the number of people who believe the UK is a more attractive holiday destination.

Seaside breaks are expected to retain their popularity in 2010, despite last summer's poor weather conditions, after it was reported that 38 per cent of all UK holidays already booked will be taken in coastal locations.

Steve Mills, director of the tourism, travel and leisure team at BDRC, said: "The acid test will be when sterling strengthens,



**The UK is set to retain its tourism appeal**

particularly against the euro. The UK tourism industry needs to continue to focus on delivering two key components to ensure it takes full advantage of this trend and makes Britain the destination of choice in the future – that they are value for money and provide quality of service."

## Cardiff Airport unveils development scheme

By **Pete Hayman**



**Cardiff Airport aims to improve its facilities**

Cardiff Airport has unveiled plans to extend its terminal building, linking the departures and arrivals halls into one common area, as part of a bid to improve the facility.

The project, which was first put forward in March 2009, has reached the planning stage and is expected to create new food and retail units when complete.

Plans also include relocating the security control point for departures to the first floor, and the redesign and landscaping of the approach areas in front of the terminal.

## Isle of Man reports inbound tourism increase

The Isle of Man Treasury's economic affairs division has reported a 4.3 per cent increase in the number of people travelling to the island in 2009.

More than 278,000 people – compared with 275,203 in 2008 – visited the Isle of Man during the 12-month period, including business and day trips, as well as visits to friends and relatives.

The new figures also reported a 5.9 per cent increase in the number of leisure visitors during 2009.

Martyn Quayle, the island's tourism minister, said: "Many more millions of pounds have been circulating within the accommodation sector, air and sea carriers, bars, cafés, shops and restaurants, all of whom will have benefited."





The scheme helped a Birmingham casino to recruit two croupiers

## Routes into Work plan launched

New government scheme to benefit leisure operators

By **Pete Hayman**

Leisure operators are being encouraged to take advantage of a new government initiative, which guarantees the offer of a job, training or work experience for each unemployed young person across the UK.

Routes into Work has been established by Jobcentre Plus with training providers to offer eight-week schemes designed to equip young people with relevant skills.

Industry employers are now being offered the chance to work with Jobcentre Plus as

part of the initiative to promote vacancies to young candidates who have been able to benefit from the skills training.

Firms will also be able to benefit from a risk-free 'work trial', which enables a young jobseeker to start work while continuing to receive benefits, and a subsidy from £1,000 for each candidate recruited.

Routes into Work will create up to 70,000 pre-employment places as part of the Young Person's Guarantee, which has been developed by the government with employers and sector skills councils.

## RFL unveils new coaching initiative

A new initiative has been launched in a bid to encourage more members of black and minority ethnic (BME) and faith communities to sign up to rugby league coaching courses.

The Rugby Football League has teamed up with Sporting Equals in order to offer the new Level One certificate in Coaching Rugby League, which aims to provide participants with an introduc-

tion to working with adult and junior teams.

Cliff Simms, a sports consultant with Sporting Equals, said: "We want to engage and promote positive initiatives to tackle race and faith inequalities, change attitudes and cultures to participation in all sports and develop a fair and representative sporting nation."

The course will take place on 27 March and 10 April.

## Apprenticeships are the key to future success

Employers need greater encouragement to take on young workers in an apprentice role

Last week (1-5 February) was National Apprenticeships Week in England and once again we brought together key industry stakeholders, employers and decision makers to demonstrate the crucial role apprenticeships play within our sector.

It is vital we show ministers and key stakeholders what our sector can do given the right support, and with 50 employers and more than 100 apprentices under one roof, our event at Lord's cricket ground in London showcased how our sector embraced the apprenticeship programme and the value we place on it.

It is no secret that traditionally, we have been a fragmented sector with no established qualification route, but things have changed dramatically. We have developed a programme of choice for employers and young people wanting to work in the sector by engaging with the apprenticeship programme, and developing the right frameworks in partnership with our employers.

More employers have to be helped and supported in working with apprenticeships and that's one of our key challenges. This is why we set up our National Skills Academy; we can help small employers to access the programme by finding them quality providers and helping them to access funding. This is crucial with so much emphasis being placed on apprenticeships as a key driver to coming out of the recession, as well as our efforts to demonstrate that apprenticeships work for us in the sport and active leisure sector, just as well as they work in plumbing, engineering and manufacturing.

We need employers to step forward and take the leap into employing an apprentice, whether that's a coach, fitness instructor or playworker. We need to continue to demonstrate the depth of our sector, and the fact that not all of our apprentices can be employed from day one of starting the programme. And we need to ensure that our apprenticeship frameworks are fit for purpose, and are reviewed and refreshed to keep up with an ever evolving sector.

Apprenticeships in our sector are highly regarded and hugely beneficial. They are a great way to enter and begin a career in a vibrant, exciting and public-focused sector that continues to gain profile, and really is at the heart of society as a whole.



**SkillsActive**

**STEPHEN STUDD** is chief executive of SkillsActive. Leisure Opportunities is the official recruitment magazine for Spring-board UK

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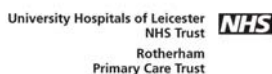
The BLF bursary, funded by Air Products, is available to exercise professionals who meet the following entry requirements:

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**For more details or an application pack please log on to [www.lunguk.org/supporting-you/blf\\_active/](http://www.lunguk.org/supporting-you/blf_active/) or contact Danielle Smreczak using the details below**

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For an informal discussion on the post please contact David Hall (CEO)  
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**Right Directions are growing again & need more people to help us build on our success!**



### Quality / Health & Safety Consultant

We have some exciting opportunities for experienced leisure professionals to step out of their Management jobs and join us.

We work with over 200 leisure facilities across the UK, supporting their teams in both quality and health & safety. To help us build our success, we are looking for a 'hands on', self motivated, methodical, 'people person'.

The job will be very varied, challenging and will involve visiting facilities nationwide, working alongside numerous Management Teams and their front line staff.

The successful applicants will have at least 5 years Management experience of leisure facilities, be familiar with Leisure Quality Award Schemes and hold a NEBOSH General Certificate (or equivalent). You will also need to have good Swimming Pool Safety knowledge & can deliver quality management / health & safety training courses.

We operate flexible working hours—and will happily consider either full or part-time positions. The full time equivalent salary will be in the range of £30k—£35k dependent on previous experience.

**For more information or an informal discussion please contact us on 07919 214423 (Caroline Constantine) or 07919 214396 (Joe Ryan) or email your CV to [joe@rightdirections.co.uk](mailto:joe@rightdirections.co.uk)**

**Deadline for applications: 1st March 2010**

**Right Directions**

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

Registered in England, No. 5043765  
60 Common Road, Kensworth, Bedfordshire LU6 3RG

## Assistant Manager

£25,000 per annum



SLEBECH PARK - PEMBROKESHIRE  
[www.slebech.co.uk](http://www.slebech.co.uk)

Slebech Park, with a stunning waterside location, has recently opened as a unique 5\* venue in Pembrokeshire and now offers luxurious accommodation and exclusive-use facilities for corporate and private events, weddings and special interest groups, with a critically acclaimed fine dining restaurant.

We are looking to appoint a dynamic and ambitious Assistant Manager to join the team and help drive this new business forward and maximise the opportunities from the differing but complimentary revenue streams.

Candidates will need to have had relevant hotel or hospitality management experience. They will need to be 'hands-on' and prepared to lead from the front, demonstrating strong interpersonal skills with the ability to effectively manage and develop a small and dedicated team of staff.

Please email [Geoffrey.P@slebech.co.uk](mailto:Geoffrey.P@slebech.co.uk) with your CV and short covering letter by 21st February. First interviews will be held week commencing 8th March.

**The 53 roomed Salcombe Harbour Hotel will be re-opening it's doors on March 29th and is now recruiting key staff to join their team.**

**Salcombe Harbour Hotel**  
& restaurant

- Head Housekeeper - Experience Ideal
- Leisure Club Manager - Must Be Fully Qualified
- Head Chef - Experience Essential

- Housekeeping Supervisors
- Bar and Restaurant Supervisors
- Chefs Experience Preferred

- Leisure Club Staff - NPLQ Essential
- Kitchen Staff
- Receptionists
- Bar and Restaurant Staff
- Room Attendants
- Porters

All positions are experience preferred but not necessarily essential

Applicants must have good customer skills and attention to detail and willing to work weekends and Bank Holidays. Some positions require evening work. Meals on duty, staff uniform and accommodation are available.

**For an application form please email: [Helen.ruffell@harbourhotels.co.uk](mailto:Helen.ruffell@harbourhotels.co.uk)**  
Salcombe Harbour Hotel, Cliff Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8JH Tel: 01548 844444

## WENTWORTH CASTLE GARDENS & STAINBOROUGH PARK

### COMMERCIAL MANAGER

(c. £26,000 plus final salary pension)

Wentworth Castle Gardens near Barnsley is a Grade 1 listed landscape with national collections of Rhododendrons, Camellias and Magnolias. We are looking for an experienced and dynamic leader to oversee marketing and commercial operations; and to maximise income whilst ensuring the highest quality visitor experience.

**For further details, please contact us on (01226) 776040**  
**Or [heritagetrust@wentworthcastle.org](mailto:heritagetrust@wentworthcastle.org)**

**Deadline for applications is:**  
**12pm on Friday 19th February.**  
**Interview date: Tuesday 2nd March**



wentworthcastle  
HERITAGE TRUST

## PARK HOLIDAYS

### CARAVAN SALES MANAGERS CARAVAN SALES CONSULTANTS

£: Competitive Package

Park Holidays UK Ltd, one of the UK's leading holiday park companies, now require sales staff at several locations across the South of England. The successful applicants will work alongside our existing sales teams in a fun and lively team environment on some of the best coastal locations.

Previous experience is not essential as full on-going sales and customer service training will be provided.

**To apply please email your CV to [hboyce@ParkHolidaysUK.com](mailto:hboyce@ParkHolidaysUK.com) or send it to Hayley Boyce, HR Manager, Park Holidays UK Ltd, Coghurst Hall, Ivyhouse Lane, Hastings, East Sussex, TN35 4NP**

**Closing Date: 19 February 2010**

## help us get dudley moving

**Do you have a passion for the outdoors? Can you help ordinary people to become active in our parks? Can you work with partners and community groups to deliver a programme of fun activities? If so then you could be just what we're looking for.**

Dudley has been awarded £4.5 million to transform five of its borough's parks and play areas into 'family health hubs'.

We're appointing 7 full time and 1 part time park rangers and 2 full time senior park rangers. They will deliver programmes and promote healthy messages from the Change 4 Life initiative by supporting and delivering events and activities include walking, physical activity and play.

Senior park rangers will hold at least an NVQ level 3 in an environmental subject, sports development, leisure or community development. Experience in supervisory or managerial role and working with community groups and public bodies is also essential.

Park rangers will hold at least an NVQ 2 in sports and recreation, play, environment or horticulture and will have experience in working with local communities.

**Closing date for applications is 26 February**

**For more information, or to download an application pack, visit [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk) or call 01384 811657.**





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Ofsted Report May 2008

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Fixed Term Post until December 2010

36 hours per week, 52 weeks per year  
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We are seeking to a full time Lecturer in Sport to  
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Diplomas.

You will need to possess a degree or equivalent level  
qualification in Sport or a related subject area and  
have experience of teaching or coaching sport.

Experience of teaching and assessing fitness and/or  
coaching qualifications would be an advantage. You  
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19. You should also be prepared to work towards  
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College will support financially in full.

Closing date: Tuesday 23 February 2010.



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### Specialist Technology School

Bowling Road, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol BS37 6EW

Tel: 01454 862900

[www.chippingsodbury.school.com](http://www.chippingsodbury.school.com)

Headteacher: Mr Philip Lidstone



### Sports Facilities Manager

Salary: Hay Grade 8 (£22,958-£25,472 per annum)

37 hours per week, all year round

Start date: 19th April 2010

At Chipping Sodbury School we are in the process of constructing a fabulous new £3.5 million sports facility including a new sports hall and floodlit 3G all-weather pitch. In addition to providing for the needs of our students we are committed to serving the local community and aim to deliver first class sport and leisure activities for all. This is a fantastic career opportunity for a dynamic, committed, innovative professional and a rare opportunity to play a leading role in realising our vision.

You will bring management, organisational ability and a strong customer first ethos in leading your team in the operation of the centre during evenings, weekends and holiday periods. You are likely to be experienced in managing a leisure centre or similar customer facing role.

Chipping Sodbury School is committed to safeguarding young people through its selection process.

An application form and further details are available from the Headteacher's PA, Julie Passco, Tel: 01454 862900, [headspa@chippingsodbury.school.com](mailto:headspa@chippingsodbury.school.com)

Closing date: Tuesday February 23rd

Interviews to be held during week commencing March 1st

Chipping Sodbury School: Respect, Aspiration, Responsibility, Integrity

## aberdeencity.gov.uk/jobs

### Head Coach – City of Aberdeen Swim Team

£29,264 – £33,458, AECC and Citywide. (Ref. AR049/10)

You'll develop, co-ordinate, manage and deliver a world class swimming programme through the City of Aberdeen Swim Team. Developing the competitive programme, you'll establish both a team of talented performers who can excel at National and International level, and Aberdeen as one of the top Swimming Programmes in Great Britain.

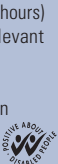
### Aquatics Co-ordinator

£22,395 – £25,589, AECC and Citywide. (Ref. AR050/10)

You'll develop, manage and co-ordinate the Aberdeen City Aquatics Swim Lesson Programme in order to meet the needs of present and future customers. You'll be responsible for the overall management of staff within the programme, and the day to day operations. As part of a team of co-ordinators working across the city, you'll play a vital role within the aquatics development team.

**Closing date: 22 February 2010 (noon)**

- Apply online or call 01224 522105 (24 hours) for an application pack quoting the relevant reference number.
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TDLB new AI Award for Assessors. They should  
have established links within the industry in the form  
of current work experience. A good understanding  
of administrative work related to awarding bodies  
such as OCR, CYQ, Active IQ and other sports  
and recreation qualifications would be desirable,  
as would a full driving licence.

Please visit our website at  
[www.kingston-college.ac.uk](http://www.kingston-college.ac.uk) for further  
information about the post and to download  
an application form.

Closing date: Friday 19th February 2010 (noon).

[www.kingston-college.ac.uk](http://www.kingston-college.ac.uk)



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1

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With an ABC audited circulation of **23,035**, Leisure Opportunities is the proven industry market leader for recruitment, meaning your job will be seen by more of the right candidates than in any other publication.



2

## Web advertising

A full listing on the Leisure Opportunities job board - [www.leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk) along with an email link to deliver cvs direct to your mailbox.

With more than **360,000** unique users each month, the Leisure Opportunities job board is the leisure jobseekers' favourite place to search for vacancies.

PLUS, we have relaunched [www.leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk) with a new look and lots of extra functionality to make it even easier for candidates to get in touch with you.



3

## E-zine advertising

Your jobs are listed on the Leisure Opportunities e-zine, which is sent out to more than **66,000** subscribers who are actively seeking employment.

4

## Bonus web and e-zine

Leisure Opportunities works across 27 different leisure markets and is linked to more than 20 industry associations and organisations. As a result, we have launched a range of market-specific job and news e-zines and we're offering all Leisure Opportunities customers the chance to select an additional e-zine listing for each vacancy.



5

## Instant jobs email

Leisure Opportunities' instant jobs service sends details of your vacancy straight to the mailbox of job seekers across the leisure industry.

6

## Leisure Opportunities' digital magazine

Visit [www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/digital](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/digital) to view Leisure Opportunities in digital format. This new service has been designed to put your advertising in front of an even larger audience at no extra charge to you.



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**[www.leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk)**



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Apply, enclosing your cv to:

**The Leisure Media Company Ltd,  
Portmill House,  
Portmill Lane,  
Hitchin,  
Herts SG5 1DJ**

or by email  
[lizterry@leisuremedia.com](mailto:lizterry@leisuremedia.com)

[www.leisuremedia.com](http://www.leisuremedia.com)



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## GYM MANAGER

**Salary – £19,621 to £21,519 per annum**

Purbeck Sports Centre is set in the beautiful Dorset countryside close to Bournemouth and Poole. A new architect-designed £750,000 Fitness Suite opened just over a year ago comprising of a 35 station gym equipped with the latest Technogym equipment (including Wellness), and two studios. The project has been an overwhelming success, with first year income and membership targets met within months of opening.

We are looking for an enthusiastic professional with a formal leisure qualification and experience to lead a team of four staff in the continuation of this success story.

In addition to a competitive salary the Council can offer: the opportunity to join the Local Government Pension Scheme and free staff car parking. A relocation package is also available if appropriate.

For an informal discussion about the posts please contact Terry Peterson (Sports Centre Manager) or Michelle Goodman (Operations Manager) on 01929 500 000.

**Closing date for applications: 16 February 2010**

**Interviews for all posts will be held week: 25 & 26 February 2010**

Application forms and further details are available by telephoning 01929 557305 or apply online at [www.purbeck.gov.uk](http://www.purbeck.gov.uk)

We welcome applications from all sections of the community

# news & jobs at [www.leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk)

## Dinosaurs Unleashed attraction launches in London

Life-size animatronic Stegosaurus and Tyrannosaurus rex take up temporary residence in capital's West End

By **Pete Hayman**

Visitors to one of the busiest shopping streets in London's West End will have the chance to experience a prehistoric jungle as part of a new large-scale dinosaur attraction.

Dinosaurs Unleashed will be open at Parklife Oxford Street until 30 April and boasts 24 life-size animatronic creatures among what would have been their natural habitat.

Landowner Land Securities has worked with consultants Progressive Events and Avalon

Studios Group on behalf of temporary exhibition firm Tour-Ex to deliver the new attraction.

Dinosaurs Unleashed – devised by Progressive Events' Nick Allison and Gavin Howard of Avalon Studios Group – also includes interactive elements, such as Paint-a-Dinosaur and a marine interpretation exhibit.

Allison said: "Dinosaurs Unleashed has been created for all the family in this location and the scale of the encounter, with its animatronic dinosaurs and Jurassic Forest, provides for a truly unique experience."



IMAGE: DAVID PARRY/TNR

The Dinosaurs have taken over a site adjacent to Oxford Street

## Newbury Racecourse scheme gets the go-ahead

By **Martin Nash**

West Berkshire Council has granted planning permission for the major redevelopment of Newbury Racecourse.

The board of the racecourse – together with joint venture partner David Wilson Homes – is planning to create up to 1,500 homes, a 120-bed hotel, and an upgraded racecourse with new leisure, racing, conference and events facilities.



Race facilities will be revamped

Access to the racecourse will be improved with the construction of a new bridge, which already has planning approval.

The development proposals will now be referred to the Government Office for the South East. A decision is expected to be reached within six weeks.

Sir David Sieff, chair of Newbury Racecourse, said: "This is a positive and important step forward in pursuit of our strategy to develop and transform the site into a leisure, entertainment and events business with the racecourse as its core asset."

## Mixed 2009 for UK film industry

Record box office figures and an increase in inward investment helped the UK film industry weather the recession in 2009 amid ongoing challenges facing production in Britain.

More than 173 million people visited the cinema last year – the highest number for seven years – while box office takings passed the £1bn mark.

## CONTACTS BOOK

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