

SPORTS

MANAGEMENT

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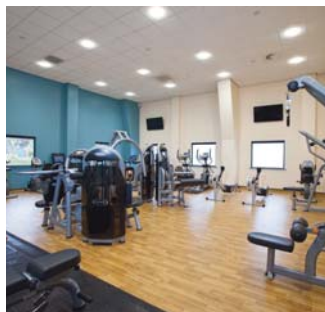
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Countdown to the crunch

We're in the middle of a radical shake up of the way Sport England funding is deployed, but while this is bedding down, we've also got a government spending review to get through

The sports team at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has little more than a year to produce a strong, well-evidenced case for continued government funding for sport and physical activity before the next government spending review.

That was the stark message from Andrew Honeyman, head of sport at the DCMS, speaking at Willmott Dixon's 'Future of Leisure' conference on 31 January.

Honeyman said the team at the DCMS has been hard at work preparing evidence, so when the time comes, the case made to the Treasury will be a strong one. Sport is accepted to have done well from the 2015 review.

However, with so much change to crunch through since *Sporting Future* hit people's desks, I have to ask if we'll be ready for the review? Will we have gathered enough evidence? Will the new strategy have worked? Will it have had enough time to bed down? If not, will the government and the treasury allow more leeway to prove the concept, or will we be subject to cuts?

Change takes time – evaluating and setting up new schemes and then monitoring and refining them is a big process, so being ready with hard evidence to prove the new set-up within three years of such a big shake up is a huge ask – not only of Sport England, its partners and the DCMS, but also of the whole sport and activity sector and others who are now involved.

Last week DCMS released *Sporting Future: Second Annual Report*, giving an update on progress. Amazing work has been done in areas from safeguarding



The sports minister took a risk shaking up the status quo, but it was a good risk and we must to everything we can as an industry to ensure its success

to mental health, but we'll know more about the important numbers on 22 March when the second batch of data from *Active Lives* is published.

The first 18 months of *Active Lives* data, released on 12 October 2017, showed 27.1 million people (60.6 per cent of the population) are active, meaning they do 150 minutes or more activity per week and meet the chief medical officer's guideline, while 11.5 million (25.6 per cent) are inactive, meaning they do less than 30 minutes of activity a week. The industry will be watching to see how much the needle has moved.

Honeyman gave a few clues as to how DCMS is building the case. One was talking about the value of sports spectating, so although spectating isn't mentioned in *Sporting Future: Second Annual Report*, perhaps it will make its debut soon as a measure of engagement?

The sports minister took a risk shaking up the status quo, but it was a good risk and we must do everything we can as an industry to ensure its success.

LIZ TERRY, EDITOR, SPORTS MANAGEMENT

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Sports facilities can provide psychological support to the community



Months after the Grenfell Tower fire, Westway – run by Everyone Active – continues to support the community

As a psychologist in the area of physical activity and exercise, I was interested to read about how Westway Sports and Fitness Centre responded to the Grenfell Tower fire (*Sports Management* November/December 2017, p44). I believe that Westway's response to the fire clearly highlights the significant influence that sports and fitness centres can have on their members' wellbeing, even in the most adverse situations.

Psychologists describe resilience as the ability to 'bounce back' in the face of adversity. It usually describes a human characteristic, but at the group level, communities have been known to develop a culture of resilience. By opening its doors after the Grenfell Tower fire, Westway



Sports centres have a responsibility to support the social and emotional needs of the community

promoted community resilience by creating an environment in which people felt welcomed, connected and socially supported.

In the months following the disaster, Westway offered tangible support to the people affected by the fire in the way of shelter and facilities, but it was the emotional support and cohesive environment that broke down barriers, gave the community a sense

of normality and empowered people to move forwards with their lives.

We tend to think that sports and fitness centres are places that only promote physical health, but Westway has demonstrated how being the central hub of a community can offer so much more in the way of psychological support. The Westway case study was a tragic and exceptional event, but lessons can be learned. Sports and fitness centres need to be much more than a facility; they have a responsibility to recognise and prioritise members' needs and thereby support not only the physical, but also the social and emotional needs of the local community. ●

Dr Helen Quirk, researcher in exercise psychology, Sheffield Hallam University

“

Sport gives you so much more than just the fun you have in that moment

ALEX DANSON • CO-FOUNDER OF ALEX DANSON HOCKEY ACADEMY

This is something I've always wanted to do, for my whole life," Alex Danson says with a grin.

The Olympic gold medallist and current Great Britain and England hockey captain is talking about the Alex Danson Hockey Academy, a new scheme that she launched in 2017 in partnership with Everyone Active. The academy aims to get more youngsters active by offering access to fun, engaging hockey sessions and expert coaches.

"So many kids don't get the recommended amount of activity per week. We need to change that," she says.

"By 2020, we're aiming to engage 10,000 young people aged seven to 11 and get them into hockey. We'll be running hockey camps at 100 Everyone Active sites during school holidays. We'll also be going into primary schools to run sessions."

Danson, who was part of the gold-medal-winning GB hockey team at the Rio 2016 Olympics, says that sport has "completely and utterly changed her life" and wants to give youngsters the opportunity to awaken this passion in themselves.

"The Rio Olympics was the most unbelievable two weeks of my life," she says. "We just played one game at a time. We won one, then we won the next and before we knew it we were in a final."

"It wasn't until we came home that we realised there's actually an audience. Nine



Alex Danson won Gold at Rio 2016 as part of the GB hockey team

and a half million people watched our final, and thank goodness we had no idea – we would have been so nervous!"

Spotlight on hockey

The key to translating this success into more people getting active, Danson believes, is visibility of the sport.

"The final at Rio proves that if you see it, you can be it," she says. "We've had 10,000 new people come into the sport since Rio, so it can grow, it just needs to be seen."

"England Hockey has a great new TV contract with BT Sports – they're now covering all our international games. We've got a home World Cup in 2018 and with 104,000 tickets already applied for, all



The academy will run hockey camps at Everyone Active sites during school holidays



our games will sell out. I hope this is again going to change how our country sees hockey. It's changed so much from what it was, thanks to our success in Rio, and hopefully people have gained an insight into what the game can offer.

"The Alex Danson Hockey Academy is exciting because it will introduce thousands of kids to the sport, and then there's an ongoing programme to keep them engaged all year round."

Schoolyard sessions

Danson will be working to upskill the Everyone Active team to become England Hockey sessional coaches to ensure participants receive a high-quality training experience. Danson says she'll be staying closely involved in the programme and will be delivering regular 'train the trainer' sessions.

The Academy will be launched into 500 primary schools and all



We've got a home World Cup in 2018. I hope this is going to change how our country sees hockey

Everyone Active coaches will be qualified to upskill teachers so they can continue to deliver quality hockey sessions outside of the Academy.

The Academy will consist of a 24-week programme that has been approved by England Hockey and will use Quicksticks, a four-a-side version of the game designed to introduce young people to the sport. It can be played on any surface and uses a larger, lighter ball. The sticks are very similar to those used in hockey, which aids progression into the game.

Variety is key

As a child, Danson says she was lucky to have active parents – her mum used to play hockey with her in the back garden. She says she played lots of different sports at this time, and believes this is the key to keeping kids engaged in activity.

"When I was young, I did everything and anything – cross country, hockey, tennis, athletics. I think we need to make sure kids do a variety of activities. There are so many distractions in the world, everything is so media- and phone-driven that we need to make sure we keep kids engaged."

"Obviously my passion is hockey, but what I really want is for every young person in the country to enjoy some form of physical activity, no matter what it is. Because if I didn't have sport in my life, I don't know where I'd get my friends from, or my sense of wellbeing, self-confidence and resilience."

"Sport gives you so much more than just the fun you have in that moment." ▶



Working in places on the edge of existence, streetfootballworld is an organisation happy to get its hands dirty in order to use football to make the world a better place

DR VLADIMIR BORKOVIC • CO-FOUNDER AND NETWORK DIRECTOR, STREETFOOTBALLWORLD

Life doesn't end here. We have to go on. No matter how difficult, we must stand back up. We only have two options: either allow anger to paralyse us and the violence continues, or we overcome and try our best to help others."

These words were written by footballer Andrés Escobar after his own goal brought about Colombia's first round exit from the 1994 World Cup. A few days later he was shot dead in a car park, in his

home city of Medellin, with his murderers reportedly mocking the mistake as they pulled the trigger.

Jürgen Griesbeck, a German PhD student and friend of Escobar, felt that if football could lead to such a negative action, then it must be able to bring about a positive change too.

Football for Peace

Griesbeck started Fútbol por la Paz (Football for Peace), a youth project using



Dr Vladimir Borkovic challenges everyone to do what they can to create positive change in the world

football matches to combat violence in Medellin. There were a few requirements: the games had to be mixed, the players had to agree the rules themselves and not rely on a referee, they had to be clean from drugs and leave their guns at the door.

It worked. People started talking and conflicts were sorted on the pitch. Wearing football shirts allowed people to walk into different neighbourhoods where previously they risked being shot by rival gangs. Griesbeck realised that similar projects were happening around the world, but there was no collaboration or knowledge sharing. With this in mind, he joined forces with Dr Vladimir Borkovic to form streetfootballworld in 2002.

Now with 127 network members in 80 countries, streetfootballworld supports these independent organisations with resources and knowledge exchange, as well as financially. "We are the brokers for social change and football is the catalyst," explains Borkovic.

Charities and organisations that are involved in football-related projects are matched with companies in the commercial sector and footballing world that want to invest in corporate social responsibility projects.



Young people using the football pitch at Cañada Real are also given education



The pitch in Cañada Real, Spain, is now used by over 200 participants

Empowering communities

So far, streetfootballworld's work has helped 2.6 million people living in areas of need. "Football is not the only way to change the world, but it's our way," says Borkovic. "It has a special appeal. It's universally popular and you can play it in its many guises – futsal, five-a-side, on the beach or up a mountain."

The organisation works with established charities on the ground, who then empower the local community to deliver the programme themselves. "We don't tell them how to do it, we empower them to do it as they want to," says Borkovic.

One example of this is a project in Cañada Real, Spain – an area of extreme deprivation just outside Madrid. In 2016, streetfootballworld worked with FedEx and the UEFA Foundation for Children, along with local charity Deporte y Cooperación, to introduce an artificial football pitch, along with an education programme.

"This place is a dumping ground for garbage, even the hills are made out of garbage," says Borkovic. "It's home to a Roma and Moroccan population living in shacks, they are the poorest of the poor. Ten thousand people live in this illegal settlement, where drugs and prostitution

“

We are the brokers for social change and football is the catalyst. It has special appeal and is universally popular

are rife and there's no schooling. There are no streets, no law, no running water or electricity and taxis won't take you there. Police only come to pull the shacks down."

Basis for learning

"We needed a carrot that could be used to introduce education to these children, who are completely out of the system, and football was perfect," Borkovic continues. "We incentivise them with football and then add some learning."

Getting community buy-in was crucial from the get-go if the pitch was to survive. "You have to make the community value it and own it, otherwise they will just rip it up to have artificial grass outside their home," says Borkovic. "You can't place a guard there, otherwise it becomes a nice little challenge for the children to get by them.

So they have to feel they are in charge of the pitch and programme, it takes a lot of understanding of the local community to make them feel empowered to do this."

However, putting the pitch in was just the start: it's the daily programmes that cost the most time and money and also bring about the most profound changes.

"The idea is to create awareness of fair play and ethos," says Borkovic.

Make a change

A year later, there are 200 regular participants using the pitch. The age range is from six to over 18, both boys and girls.

As part of its US\$200m FedEx Cares CSR programme, which wants to create 200 community projects by 2020, another pitch has since been installed in northern Poland and three more are slated for 2018, in South Africa, Brazil and Indonesia. Borkovic hopes they will do 10 to 20 more.

He says he challenges everyone, from his project managers, to his students and his own children to do what they can to bring about positive change in the world.

"If you're in a position to make a change, then why don't you do it? If not you, then who? And if not now, then when? Start now and make a change!"



Melissa Handford says the National Trust offers a welcoming setting



National Trust and Sport England have shared goals of providing public benefits and improving physical and mental wellbeing

**MELISSA HANDFORD • ACTIVE OUTDOORS
PROGRAMME MANAGER, NATIONAL TRUST**

When did the National Trust first realise it could use its estates to get people active?

Some of our sporty staff identified that many of our properties – which were initially designed as pleasure gardens for the wealthy – are ideal locations for getting people active outdoors. However, we were lacking funding and strategic direction, which is what we looked to Sport England to provide.

What does the Sport England partnership involve?

We match all the funding from Sport England. The first round of funding was in 2012 and it was refreshed in April 2017 for another four-year partnership, until 2021. Over the entire period, we'll receive £2.5m. Some of this has been used for capital projects, including the development of 10 cycle trails, and also a watersports complex at Fell Foot on Lake Windermere.

The rest has been used to fund the active outdoors programme team and active development officers at the 15 properties that were initially targeted, as well as the marketing of the programmes, the creation of a volunteering package to deliver them, technology development and data and insight gathering.

How did you go about getting activities up and running?

Some properties were already providing sporting opportunities. But we have also struck up really valuable partnerships with many national governing bodies, including England Athletics, British Cycling, Archery GB, British Canoe, the LTA, Badminton England and Rounders England, which have all been key to helping us get the projects off the ground, frequently providing free equipment and seeing our work as a testing ground for different ways of delivering their sport to new audiences. Some of our delivery work has also been supported by local clubs, which has been invaluable.

Were there any challenges?

Firstly, we needed to ensure all the activities were sensitive to the properties, their heritage and their 'spirit of place'. It was also crucial to make sure they didn't create problems for other users or get in the way of their enjoyment. For this reason, we try to organise activities around the shoulder season and quieter times, for example the parkruns happen before the properties are open to the public.

We also had to make sure nothing was visually jarring, for instance, we didn't want lots of plastic around the properties. Sometimes this led to us creating our own equipment, such as tennis nets with wooden posts.



Parkrun events take place weekly at 29 National Trust properties



The National Trust is encouraging people to get active in its stunning locations



If we give people a great time, they'll come back, develop a loyalty to the trust and engage with our cause

How do these sporting opportunities benefit the National Trust?

One of the things we measure is how good an experience people have at our properties. Overall, 56 per cent of our visitors say they have a very enjoyable visit, but this is higher among our active visitors, with 76 per cent saying they had a very enjoyable visit. If we give people a great time, they'll come back, develop a loyalty to the Trust, engage with our cause and hopefully make use of our cafés and retail outlets.

Parkrun now takes place at 29 of our properties each week, bringing 135,000 unique visits each year.

As well as sometimes becoming members, the runners spend, on average, between £10 and £15 per group at the property's cafés and retail on each visit.

What has the response been like?

From March to September 2017, the investment at our 15 properties attracted at least 250,000 people to be active.

In 2016, 31 per cent of our active visitors were new to exercise. Another heartening statistic is that 65 per cent were female, which bucks the trend of wider sports participation, identified in Sport England's *Active Nation* survey. We believe this is because we offer a safe, secure and welcoming environment. Most of our runners are aged from 35- to 45-years-old.

Now funding has been secured for another four years, what are your plans?

Both the National Trust and Sport England have shared goals of providing public benefits, engaging with the community to be more active and improving physical and mental wellbeing, so going forward we'll be looking for more ways to extend our reach, by widening programmes, adding more activities and utilising more properties.

We've appointed national product leads for walking, running and cycling, and we'll also be working with NGBs to look at how products can be adapted to attract more diverse audiences, such as seniors and people from more diverse backgrounds.

Another focus will be to make sure that what we offer becomes embedded within the property, so that it will be sustainable even when the funding ends, and that the National Trust will become well known for providing active outdoor opportunities. ●

NEWS + ANALYSIS

Broadcasting code delivers £125m to grassroots sport

Grassroots sport in the UK has received a cash injection of £125m as a result of the voluntary code of conduct on the broadcasting of major sporting events.

The Code of Conduct for Rights Owners, which was initiated by the Sports and Recreation Alliance, stipulates that each signatory commits to complying with one or both of two key principles.

The first is ensuring that television coverage of their major events is available on free-to-air channels, and the second is reinvesting 30 per cent of net revenue from UK broadcasting rights into the long-term development of their sport.

The seven organisations to have met the funding pledge so far are the Football Association, England and Wales Cricket Board, Rugby Football



League, the Rugby Football Union, the R&A (golf), the Lawn Tennis Association and the European Tour (golf).

Signatories who have only adhered to the accessibility principle of the code are the English Premier League and UK Athletics.

Sir David Scott, chair of the monitoring committee for the

“
£125m is a significant contribution to the development of sports

Sir David Scott

code, said: “£125m represents a significant contribution to the development of the respective sports. It reinforces the

importance of the code as a collective commitment by governing bodies and event organisers.”

The investment includes youth programmes, facilities for communities, education and training, as well as research and development, and engagement programmes.

More: http://lei.sr?a=n8r2h_P

Sports minister gets extra challenge – to tackle loneliness



Theresa May has appointed minister for sport and civil society Tracey Crouch to a newly created position as minister for loneliness.

The move comes as the prime minister backed a series of recommendations made by the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, which highlighted the prevalence of the problem and its impact on both individuals and society. MP Jo Cox, who campaigned

“
For far too many people, loneliness is the sad reality of modern life – I want to confront this

Theresa May

to find ways to combat loneliness, was murdered by a far-right terrorist in 2016.

The Commission highlighted research showing that more than nine million people

“always or often feel lonely” and that around 200,000 older adults have not had a conversation with a friend or relative in more than a month.

The findings also showed that up to 85 per cent of young disabled adults aged 18 to 34 feel lonely.

“For far too many people, loneliness is the sad reality of modern life,” said May. “I want to confront this challenge.”

More: http://lei.sr?a=8x9T3_P



Theresa May hosted a reception for British athletes and coaches

World Athletics events valued at over £107m to UK economy

An event impact study has measured the value to the UK of hosting the World Athletics Championships at £107m (US\$143.2m, €120.8m).

In 2017, London became the first city to host both the World Para Athletics Championships and IAAF World Championships in the same year, with more than 3,300 athletes from more than 200 nations competing in 30 sessions across 20 days.

The study, delivered by The Sports Consultancy, assessed



2017 was a phenomenal year of athletics for the UK
Sebastian Coe

the total direct economic impact of the events as exceeding £107m, with more than one million fans attending the championships.

"It was a phenomenal year of athletics," said IAAF president Sebastian Coe.

More: http://lei.sr?a=x5Q9Y_P

Call for ombudsman to help make community sports safer

Community sports groups have urged the government to appoint an ombudsman to help them improve safety, according to a survey from the Sports Think Tank.

A report by the think tank showed only five per cent of senior managers or board members in community sports settings have received training in duty of care, which covers issues ranging from first aid to child sexual exploitation,

safeguarding and online safety. The research is part of the sector's response to Tanni Grey-Thompson's *Duty of Care in Sport* report and also calls for a task force to help deliver an industry standard.

The latest findings show that less than 40 per cent of organisations have collected data in these areas, with 75 per cent saying they receive no financial support for training.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Y6P3S_P



Getting people from all backgrounds involved in sport is a big challenge
Nick Pontefract

Nick Pontefract joins Sport England from DCMS

Nick Pontefract has left the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to become Sport England's chief operating officer.

Pontefract will join the body in March, taking over from Rona Chester, who is retiring after eight years in the post.

"Getting more people from all backgrounds

involved in sport is a big challenge but if we get it right the impact could be enormous," said Pontefract.

Theresa May's cabinet reshuffle saw Matt Hancock appointed secretary of state for digital, culture, media and sport, taking over from Karen Bradley, who has been made Northern Ireland secretary.

More: http://lei.sr?a=D5K9d_P



Chelsea can move ahead and redevelop Stamford Bridge

Chelsea's £1bn stadium plan overcomes injunction threat

The £1bn (\$1.38bn, €1.12bn) project to rebuild Chelsea Football Club's Stamford Bridge stadium has overcome its final hurdle, after a motion was passed preventing a local family from blocking the proposed plans.

The Crosthwaite family, whose house is the closest residence to the ground, took out an injunction under their 'right to light', stating that

a redeveloped East Stand would restrict daylight coming into their home.

But Hammersmith and Fulham Council agreed to acquire land at Stamford Bridge, which ensures the injunction is not valid as the family cannot take the council to the High Court.

Work on the 60,000-seater stadium is set to start in 2019.

More: http://lei.sr?a=4C5H8_P



'Watershed' as FA adopts Rooney Rule

The FA has revealed a raft of major reforms, including a rule to interview at least one applicant from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background for coaching roles

The Football Association has announced plans to create its own version of the 'Rooney Rule', which was implemented in the NFL in 2003 to improve diversity in head coaching and senior football operation jobs.

"The FA wants to become a more inclusive organisation where the workforce better represents the people who play football today," said chief executive Martin Glenn.

Lord Ouseley, chairman of Kick It Out, the anti-discrimination campaign group, described the proposals as "a watershed moment".

"I looked to the FA to give leadership on the matter of equality, inclusion and cohesion and I now expect those in positions of power across professional football, along with the FA, to drive forward the highest standards of activity in order to achieve these objectives which will benefit everyone who participates in the game," he said.

The FA's last anti-discrimination and inclusion action plan ran from 2013 to 2017, however, it admitted "there are



The FA wants to become a more inclusive organisation

Martin Glenn

significant issues that require renewed and sustained focus... We must better demonstrate our leadership on this agenda".

It said the 'Rooney Rule' will apply to jobs across England teams. English Football League clubs agreed to introduce their own version of the rule from 1 January but the same measure has been applied to roles in their academies since June.

Research conducted in November showed only 22 of 482 roles across England's top-four leagues were filled by coaches from BAME backgrounds.

Other changes include:

- Inclusion Advisory Board (IAB) chairman Paul Elliott will attend all FA Board meetings as an observer. The IAB will present the next iteration of its plan for 2018 for approval on an annual basis, with quarterly progress updates provided to the board. The equality, diversity and inclusion plan will be written into a revised FA strategic plan for 2016-20.
 - The chief executive of Kick It Out will be invited to attend all IAB meetings as an ex-officio member, to help improve the coordination of inclusion work.
 - Representatives from the Premier League, English Football League, National League, Professional Footballers Association, League Managers Association and the Football Supporters Federation will be invited to attend IAB meetings.
- More: http://lei.sr?a=H2r5X_P



Twickenham's museum will chart the history of rugby

Mather and Co to design World Rugby Museum

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) has named Manchester-based firm Mather and Co to design its new World Rugby Museum at the spiritual home of the sport – Twickenham Stadium.

Scheduled to open in early 2018, the museum was commissioned by the RFU as part of the redevelopment of the 82,000-capacity stadium's East Stand.

The museum will cover 650sq m (7,000sq ft) and will chart the

history of rugby from the early days as 'mob football' through to the women's and men's World Cups, through a collection of more than 38,000 objects. The plans feature a mini exhibition space and an area dedicated to rugby's Six Nations.

"Exhibits will explore how the game is played throughout the world, not just within the home nations," said Mather and Co CEO Chris Mather.

More: http://lei.sr?a=v5D4N_P

Sheffield United reveal plans for South Stand extension

Designs for a new stand at Sheffield United will celebrate the city's steel industry, the club has revealed.

The Blades have proposed to add more than 5,400 seats to the second tier of Bramall Lane's South Stand, as well as new executive boxes and a media centre.

Designs by local architects Whittam Cox will celebrate the

exposed steelwork supporting the cantilever roof from above, using high-quality profiled steel cladding and areas of red brickwork to help anchor the building.

Outline planning has been granted, with final plans due to be submitted soon and expected to be approved in the spring.

More: http://lei.sr?a=3K5G5_P



I'm interested in the impact sport has at both individual and group level
Professor Rosie Meek

Study examines impact of sport in offender rehabilitation

The role of physical activity and sport in the rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders in the criminal justice system is being investigated as part of a review commissioned by the Ministry of Justice.

Professor Rosie Meek, of the School of Law at Royal Holloway University of London, is leading the review, which will help build a model for partnerships to improve sports programmes for offenders.

The report will analyse the impact sports programmes have on specific issues that affect offenders, such as gang affiliation, violence, employment, and health and wellbeing.

Speaking to *Sports Management*, Prof Meek said:

"As a psychologist, I'm interested in the impact that sport has at both an individual and a group level."

More: http://lei.sr?a=v5s6P_P

Premier League clubs dominate global football finance index



This highlights how the global football landscape has shifted
David Wright, Soccerex

Manchester City has more financial muscle than any other club in world football according to a new financial index, with Premier League clubs dominating the top 10.

The *Soccerex Football Finance 100* ranks clubs using five variables: playing assets, fixed assets, money in the bank, potential owner investment and net debt.

Manchester City came top with a Football Finance Index score of 4.883, and four other



Manchester City was top of the finance index

English clubs made the top 10, with Arsenal in third (4.559), Tottenham (2.591) in fifth and Chelsea in ninth (2.093).

"This study highlights how the global football landscape has shifted over the past two decades," said Soccerex's David Wright.

More: http://lei.sr?a=8M3M5_P

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle visit StreetGames

A StreetGames project in Wales has received a surprise royal assent after it was visited by Prince Harry and his fiancée Meghan Markle.

The couple attended table tennis and street dance workshops, led by young people as part of StreetGames' UsGirls and Doorstep Sport initiatives, at the Star Hub Centre in Cardiff.

The visit was part of the couple's first official visit to Wales, during which they toured projects that look to change the lives and opportunities of young people in some of the country's most disadvantaged areas.

Paul Roberts, StreetGames' head of programmes in Wales, said: "In Wales, one in three



The StreetGames visit was part of the couple's tour of Wales

children grow up in poverty. The work that StreetGames does, with the help of our volunteers, ensures that those children aren't denied

the opportunity to grow up experiencing firsthand the benefits of sport."

Working together with Sport Wales, the Welsh government



StreetGames ensures children aren't denied the benefits of sport
Paul Roberts

and 300 community organisations, StreetGames has so far reached 40,000 disadvantaged young people through its sports initiatives.

Since founding the Invictus Games in 2014, Prince Harry has become an active and passionate advocate of "sports for good".

He has also championed access to sport for children and young people to give them confidence and valuable life skills.

More: http://lei.sr?a=G8V3m_P

Boardroom changes help sports bodies to hit governance target



Volleyball England has a three-month extension

More women and independent voices in the boardroom have seen 55 of the UK's national sports bodies pass the first test posed by the sector's new governance code.

With more than 1,000 pieces of evidence submitted by the deadline of 31 October, only three sports were found not to be fully compliant with the Governance Code for Sport. Of those, the British Mountaineering Council has been granted an extension to achieve compliance by April 2018, following a recent independent review of its structure.

Volleyball England has been given a three-month period to make changes to its governance and finance arrangements.



Our governing bodies should take great pride in what they've achieved
Liz Nicholl

And the British Equestrian Federation met its initial requirements but is undertaking a review and is expected to report back in the New Year.

Governing bodies are required to meet the code in order to be eligible to receive public investment.

UK Sport chief executive Liz Nicholl said: "Our national governing bodies should take great pride in what they've achieved." More: http://lei.sr?a=G5z9M_P

Birmingham named host city for Commonwealth Games

Birmingham has officially been named the host city of the 2022 Commonwealth Games, beating competition from Kuala Lumpur, Victoria (Canada) and Australia.

Louise Martin, president of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) said: "We warmly congratulate Birmingham and England on today's announcement – it's a defining moment for this truly Commonwealth city."

"With its rich history, cultural diversity, youthful dynamism and ambitious spirit, Birmingham embodies all that we cherish about the Commonwealth."

"The vast majority of the Games venues are in place, and with extensive experience in the UK of hosting successful major events – including Manchester



Early designs show Birmingham has big plans for the 2022 Games

2002, London 2012 and Glasgow 2014 – the CGF looks forward to a truly spectacular Games." Birmingham 2022 is expected to take place from 27 July to 7 August.

The official handover to Birmingham is set to take place at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Closing Ceremony on 15 April 2018. Karen Bradley, secretary

of state for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport at the time, said: "The Games will give us a chance to show the best of Britain to the world." More: http://lei.sr?a=h4x6c_P

National centres give managers mental health training

Elite sports centres Lilleshall, Bisham Abbey and the National Water Sports Centre have announced plans to rollout mental health training to all managers.

The training aims to create a culture of wellbeing for employees and athletes, helping them to spot signs and symptoms, as well as encouraging staff to start the conversation with anyone who may be experiencing a mental health issue.

Operator Serco Leisure has recruited trainer provider Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) to deliver skills and



We wanted to build our people's skills and understanding in this important area

Steve Nelson

knowledge training to staff at Lilleshall National Sports and Conferencing Centre, in Shropshire and Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, in Berkshire, which it operates on behalf of Sport England. 'First Responder' and 'Champions' courses will be taken by duty, operations, general and team managers.



Mental health first aid trainees at Lilleshall Sports Centre

Training will also be provided at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham, which Serco operates on behalf of Holme Pierrepont Leisure Trust and Nottinghamshire County Council.

"We're getting better at talking about mental health – we wanted to build our people's skills in this area," said Steve Nelson, Serco partnership director for the centres. More: http://lei.sr?a=p2p5A_P

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Perth's billion-dollar stadium set for grand opening

One of the Asia Pacific's most flexible stadiums has opened in Perth, Australia, with an open day welcoming fans into the 60,000 capacity landmark.

The AU\$1.6bn (US\$1.2bn, £1bn, £925m) Optus Stadium – collaboratively designed by architecture firms Hassell, Cox and HKS – is owned by the state of Western Australia and can accommodate athletics, cricket, football, Australian rules football, rugby league and union, and huge concerts and shows.

Located east of the Perth Central Business District, the ground is the focal point of a new public Sports Precinct, designed by Hassell, that stretches to the Swan River.



The flexible new stadium can be adapted for athletics, cricket, football, rugby and concerts

Constructed as a large bowl, the stadium boasts five tiers, the largest stadia super screens in the southern hemisphere, and a lightweight fabric roof covers 85 per cent of seats.

Leisure facilities, connected by walking and cycle trails,

include children's playgrounds, an amphitheatre, picnic areas, restaurants, bars, a boardwalk and a community sports oval that will be available for public use on non-game days.

The stadium is connected to a bus and train station

by a community harbour. It will be home to two Australian Football League teams – Fremantle and the West Coast Eagles – as well as the Perth Scorchers Twenty20 cricket team.

More: http://lei.sr?a=t2w3H_P

Maryland Heights sports and wellness centre opens

A hub for recreational sports, wellness and civic engagement has opened in St Louis, Missouri, using a design that shelters it from an interstate highway.

Architecture and engineering firm CannonDesign were tasked with creating the new home for the Maryland Heights Community Center to replace a facility no longer fit-for-purpose.

The brief called for a destination centre for the community of Maryland Heights, offering a variety of uses and preserving the

“
The adjacent highway presented an enormously harsh acoustical environment

David Polzin

site's usable green spaces while mediating the harsh environment of the highway.

“The project's greatest challenge was also its greatest opportunity,” CannonDesign executive director David Polzin told *Sports Management*.

“The building's proximity to the adjacent highway presented an enormously



CannonDesign were tasked with creating a new home for sports

harsh acoustical environment with noise levels upwards of 90 db, nearly equivalent to the noise of a jet engine.

“Through the shaping and siting of the building, we were able to create an ‘acoustic

shadow’ disrupting the propagation of sound waves from the highway and cutting decibel levels nearly in half – opening up the possibility for a very expressive architecture.”

More: http://lei.sr?a=k4w8G_P

Rwandan cricket stadium inspired by bouncing ball

An international cricket stadium built using local materials and sustainable building practices has opened in Rwanda, with a design inspired by a bouncing ball and the country's rolling hills.

Cricket is Rwanda's fastest growing sport and has been used as a tool to bring people together in the country, which was torn apart by genocide in 1994.

To accommodate the growing demand and to counter the lack of purpose-built facilities, the Rwanda Cricket Stadium Foundation was established to create a dedicated home for the sport on a 4.5 hectare plot on the outskirts of Kigali, the capital. Architectural practice Light Earth Designs



The design was inspired by a bouncing cricket ball and Rwanda's rolling hills



The project is innovative both from the point of view of sport and architecture

Michael Ramage

were commissioned to plan the facility using local labour to build skills, avoid imports and lower carbon levels.

Facilities include a clubhouse offering free HIV testing.

"The project is innovative

both from the point of view of sport and architecture," Light Earth Designs founding partner Michael Ramage said.

To find out more, see *Sports Management* Nov/Dec 2016.

More: http://lei.sr?a=R7w2H_P

NFL Experience lets fans 'suit up' for Super Bowl in New York City



A fan tries out the quarterback experience

NFL fans have the chance to step into the shoes of their idols as a new experience opens in the heart of New York City.

Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group and the NFL unveiled NFL Experience Times Square, which spans 40,000sq ft (3,716m) and promises fans "the most interactive football experience in the world".

"We wanted to create a captivating and authentic football experience that enables fans to step into the locker room and onto the field of an NFL stadium," said NFL commissioner Roger Goodell.

"Whether you're a seasoned veteran or new to the game, NFL Experience Times Square takes you on an unforgettable



We wanted to create a captivating and authentic football experience

Roger Goodell

journey where you enter as a fan, become a player and leave as a Super Bowl champion."

The four-storey attraction offers visitors an interactive exploration of football, from the practice field to the Super Bowl – with prices starting at \$39 (£33, £29).

Fans can test their skills against their idols' performance stats and experience the rush of the game in an immersive 4D movie theatre.

More: http://lei.sr?a=P2f6A_P



The venue will be located at the home of rodeo in the city

Bjarke Ingels Group unveil design for sports district under one enormous roof

Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) have revealed their latest major US project – a sports and entertainment neighbourhood in Texas under a dramatic chequered roofscape

Ambitious plans for the 1.3 million sq ft (121,000sq m) East Austin District have been announced by Austin Sports & Entertainment, founded by sports media executives Andrew Nestor and Sean Foley.

Located at the home of rodeo in Austin, the new complex is described as “a world of worlds for sports fans, music festival-goers and adventurers to take the pilgrimage for the quintessential Austin experience”.

Underneath the distinctive latticed roof – inspired by Thomas Jefferson’s grid system for dividing America’s fields, forests and towns into square-mile sections – there will be a 40,000-seat stadium for soccer and rugby matches, music festivals and other major events.

There will also be a 15,000-seat multi-purpose arena for Rodeo Austin, musical acts, basketball, hockey and other programmes.

And the venue will include a 190,000sq ft (17,600sq m) area for hospitality and support functions, conjoining the two arenas and providing space for medical facilities, workshops and youth programmes.

The individual elements will be unified by all-wooden interiors based on the local



The collective campus unifies all elements of rodeo and soccer into a village

Bjarke Ingels

barn and porch vernacular, while the rooftop will be covered in red photovoltaic panels.

Sandwiched between the buildings and connecting the district will be eight courtyards, conceived as outdoor “living rooms” for public life where local people can gather for communal gatherings, food truck scenes and concerts.

“Like a collective campus rather than a monolithic stadium, the East Austin District unifies all the elements of rodeo and soccer into a village of courtyards and canopies,” explained BIG founder Bjarke Ingels.

“Embracing Austin’s local character and culture, the East Austin District is a single destination composed of many smaller structures under one roof. Part architecture, part urbanism, part landscape – the East Austin District is the architectural manifestation of collective intimacy – a complex capable of making tens of thousands of fans come together and enjoy the best Austin has to offer inside and between its buildings.”

In a statement, Foley and Nestor said:

“The East Austin District represents an opportunity for Austin to combine what it needs with what it wants – community infrastructure for District 1 with world-class facilities for sports and entertainment.

“We’re in active discussions with leading global sports and entertainment organisations, including our partner Rodeo Austin as well as various corporations, to serve as anchors.”

BIG – who are best-known in the US for designing the VIA 57 West ‘courtscraper’ in New York and the forthcoming 2 World Trade Center in Manhattan and Google Headquarters in Mountain View – are collaborating on the project with Austin-based architects STG Design.

More: http://lei.sr?a=x2M3t_P

Sports and Culture Campus set to revitalise Aarhus

Schmidt Hammer Lassen Architects (SHL) have been commissioned to design a sports and culture campus in Aarhus, Denmark.

The multi-use community project is a core component of the revitalisation of the city's western Gellerup district, with local leaders committed to delivering "an inspiring, welcoming and open destination" for residents and 600,000 visitors annually.

The sprawling Gellerup Sports and Culture Campus will include an 'activity house' for football; climbing and circus performances; a library; community facilities for local residents; and, potentially, a large public swimming pool.

Aarhus commune and the Brabrand Boligforening



The Gellerup Sports and Culture Campus will encourage activity, community growth and tourism



We wanted to create a welcoming place for the local community while also appealing to visitors from across the world

Trine Berthold

homeowners' association ran a design competition for the project, with SHL's entry developed in collaboration with local designers Loop Architects, landscape specialists MASU Planning and engineers COWI A/S.

"Our intention was to create a welcoming place that's open and relevant for the local community, while also appealing to residents from across Aarhus and visitors from across the world," said Trine Berthold, SHL associate partner. More: http://lei.sr?a=c4v4p_P

Demountable stadium hosts high-stakes golf putting

An international putting tournament has been hosted at the first flat-pack 18-hole putting course, which can be disassembled and moved from city to city.

The touring facility is the brainchild of Canadian firm MSOP Entertainment Inc, which has launched a new tournament called the Major Series of Putting (MSOP).

The sport of putting, developed by Cirque du Soleil founder Guy Laliberté, is a simplified version of golf, in which players compete on a putting surface with only one club each and no tee allowed.



Designing the MSOP stadium was a unique experience because there's no precedent

Jeff Keas

The goal of MSOP's creators is to take the event around the world and the inaugural tournament recently finished in Las Vegas, where professionals and amateurs competed for large cash prizes.

Global sports architects Populous and golf course architects Nicklaus Design – founded by golfing icon



The demountable putting stadium will now be relocated

Jack Nicklaus – designed the venue for the event.

The stadium accommodates 2,000 spectators but has no fixed seating except for in the clubhouse. Instead, spectators are encouraged to explore.

Jeff Keas, Populous principal-in-charge for the project, said: "Designing the MSOP stadium was a unique experience because there is no precedent in place." More: http://lei.sr?a=9g7G5_P

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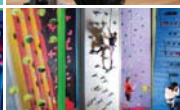
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"Having an Innovation award at Elevate keeps the fitness industry on its toes, it shows that we are moving forward and trying new things in health and fitness."
Ben Coomber



"I wanted to come today to find out more about innovation in fitness, and see what was disruptive, what was accumulative, what was creating buzz within the community."
Lord Jason Allan Scott

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A CLEAR GOAL for school sport

There needs to be cross-party consensus about what we want to achieve with physical education in schools, says Andy Reed

The release of the DCMS *Taking Part 2016/17 quarter 4* survey caused almost no news or reaction. Yet the survey showed that the numbers of pupils taking part in sporting competitions against other schools dropped from 31 per cent to 25 per cent. Other indicators showed declines in National School Sport Week, pupils playing in teams and being members of sports clubs. In the past we would likely have seen an outcry in the *Daily Telegraph*, but now nothing.

Have we stopped caring or is everyone simply confused? The more I look at school sport policy the less I understand about what we're trying to achieve for children. As adult participation policy has moved away from a focus on sport to one on physical activity, we've seen the same happening in school policy. This shift, however, has happened without being part of a wider plan for what we want children to have achieved by the time they leave school, thus making things muddled.

In search of a solution

After years of just defining the problem, we need a clear solution. We must look at what we want to achieve and then work backwards to how it can be done. The Department for Education (DFE) states that by years 11 and 12 students should have "the opportunity to plan and participate in a regular, frequent and balanced programme of physical education that, among other things, contributes to, and helps to sustain, a healthy and active lifestyle".

How do we achieve this?

I would love to see the DFE Education Select Committee Report: *School sport*



The number of young people taking part in school sport competitions is declining



The more I look at school sport policy, the less I understand about what we're trying to achieve for children

following London 2012: No More Political Football become a reality. We need a cross-party consensus both inside and outside parliament about the purpose and objectives for school sport.

Perhaps a great first start would be to define what school sport is. Is it competitive sport, physical activity or physical literacy? They are all different enough to require different inputs and lead to different outcomes.

A collaborative approach

A consensus should include advice from a variety of professionals about what the end goal looks like for a 16- to 18-year-old leaving school. While the emphasis is likely to be on physical activity rather than sport, I don't believe it needs to be one or the other. We can create a mix that gives young people the base they need to be active in whatever way they choose.

If we can collaborate on this clear approach we can stop school PE and sport being kicked around at the whim of each new administration inside DFE and create a generation of young people who are well equipped to lead healthy lifestyles in the future. ●

Andy Reed is the founder of Sports Think Tank, former MP for Loughborough, and chair of SAPCA sportsstinktank.com

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& THANK YOU FOR SHARING OUR JOURNEY

Another year has come and gone at Sports Labs, but we know we couldn't build our business without the cooperation and support of our associates. It has been a pleasure doing business with you and we look forward to a new year full of shared opportunities and exciting challenges.

2017 was a great year for us and it also marked the launch of our new publication FIELD NOTES. If you aren't already subscribed, we invite you to share our journey in 2018. Please send an email to LisaMarie@SportsLabs.co.uk



5 Things to Know About the Light-Weight Deflectometer (LWD)



Artificial Turf: How Do We Assess Quality?



5 Things You Need to Know About Shockpads



Testing Times: Addressing Regional Standards



5 Things to Know About Maintaining Your Artificial Pitch



Artificial Pitches: Is it Time to Review Performance Requirements?



Understanding Artificial Turfs and Concussions



5 Things You Need to Know About Rotational Resistance



Key Stage Inspections: The Stealthy Way to Ensure Quality



5 Things You Need to Know About Force Reduction Testing



5 Things You Need to Know About Planarity



What is One Turf?



A Time for Change

SAPCA chief executive Chris Trickey is looking forward to an exciting year

At SAPCA, we've spent a large part of the past year laying foundations for an exciting 2018.

One of the most important changes taking place over the next year will be the repositioning of SAPCA to become more customer-facing. There will be a new emphasis on helping those who are driving the UK's sports facilities projects – from clubs and local authorities to schools and private companies. We'll look to provide a range of valuable information and guidance for those who develop facilities, assist them through their project journey and encourage them to work with SAPCA members at every available step.

At the heart of this repositioning will be a new website, which will be at the centre of our new marketing strategy.

The annual conference – under the title 'Time for Change' – will be part of the modernisation process too, as it will kick off a programme of events planned for 2018. The events will be designed with both members and the wider marketplace in mind, offering opportunities to learn about key aspects of sports facility development.

We also have a new chair, Andy Reed OBE, who will be leading a number of



The radical changes in the way sport is viewed by the government, and consumed by the public, require SAPCA to adapt

changes in our governance that will be coming into force in June. Andy's vast experience at board level with other sports bodies will also help us forge new and stronger relationships with the many stakeholder organisations in our sector.

Changing environments

The changes at SAPCA are part of a strategy to adapt to an evolving sporting landscape. The government's *Sporting Future* strategy has fundamentally changed the way sports and sports facilities are funded.

Perhaps the most radical of these changes has been the way Sport England grants are determined. The funding body is now required to deliver against health, social and economic outcomes – resulting in much greater emphasis being placed on

groups that are typically much less active, such as women, disabled people and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The changes form a part of the government's overarching strategy of bringing sport and physical activity into the domain of preventative healthcare. This poses a number of opportunities to our industry, as well as some challenges.

One of these challenges is to adapt to the requirements of our clients – the people and organisations who build the facilities of the future. Tomorrow's facilities could take the form of those envisioned by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, the former paralympian and current ukactive chair, who has called for the UK's ageing leisure centres to be transformed into community hubs that combine sports facilities, swimming pools and gyms with GP drop-in centres, libraries and police services, in order to create a one-stop-shop for public services.

The radical changes in the way sport is viewed by the government – and consumed by the public – require SAPCA to adapt. The changes will also demand action from our members. Being innovative and keeping up to date with industry developments will be crucial for the success of all businesses in the sports and play sector. As the industry's trade body, we will be there to support those wanting to benefit from the opportunities ahead. ●



Sport England grants will focus on getting less-active groups, such as women, moving



SAPCA is the UK trade association for the sports facility construction industry and represents businesses across the sports, physical activity, recreation and play sectors. Sports Management is the official magazine of SAPCA

www.sapca.org.uk

THE EDUCATION GOAL

Members of Manchester United's famous 'class of 92' have partnered with Lancaster University and Microsoft to launch a new university focused on teaching leadership skills and wellness. Tom Walker speaks to Gary Neville and Lancaster University's vice chancellor Mark Smith about the plan



“When we do something, we don't tend to do things by half,” says Gary Neville, former England defender and Manchester United legend. “We want this new project to transform education – our goal is for UA92 to become a new model for universities across the UK.”

Ryan Giggs (L), and the rest of the 'class of 92,' played for Manchester United

Neville is describing his ambitious plans to establish a new university in his hometown of Manchester, just a stone's throw from the Old Trafford football stadium, where he played for more than 20 years.

Called UA92 – short for University Academy 92 – it is the latest project driven by The Class of 92, a venture launched by Neville and four other former Manchester United stars – his brother Phil Neville, Paul Scholes, Ryan Giggs and Nicky Butt. The quintet has previously developed Hotel Football, an upmarket 133-bedroom hotel next to Old Trafford, which opened in 2015.

The group's plan is for UA92 to transform higher education by placing as much of the focus on personal development as there is on academic attainment. The idea is to give graduates not just a degree, but a set of life skills and character traits that will help them carve out a successful career after their graduation.

At the centre of UA92 philosophy is something Neville calls the Target Talent Curriculum, which, he explains, will ensure personal development is a large part of the learning experience. It will focus on providing students with 10 attributes: academic learning, life skills, work experience, survival and coping strategies, leadership skills, self and peer group analysis, participative learning, fitness, presentation and financial skills.

MORE THAN A QUALIFICATION

“Most people go to university simply to get a degree,” Neville says. “But I don't think it should just be about that. It should be more than a piece of paper.

“These days, employers aren't merely looking for someone with a qualification, they expect more than that. They're looking for someone who can display



These days, employers aren't merely looking for someone with a qualification, they want someone who can display confidence, character, leadership and a real passion for what they're doing



The Class of 92: (from left to right) Phil Neville, Ryan Giggs, Gary Neville, Nicky Butt and Paul Scholes

confidence, character, leadership skills, a good attitude and a real passion for what they're doing.

"You don't get those attributes and qualities without honing them and working on them. When I was coming up through the youth system at Manchester United, I learnt about football, but there was also an emphasis on the character development side of things. It was an important part of the 'education' there.

"That made me think that character building should be embedded into all education for 16 to 21-year-olds, and that's where the idea for UA92 came from."

The Class of 92

WHO:

Gary Neville, Phil Neville, Ryan Giggs, Paul Scholes, Nicky Butt

WHAT:

A venture set up by the former Manchester United stars, named after the famous crop of young players which won the 1992 FA Youth Cup and went on to become an integral part of the club's dominance of English football in the 1990s and 2000s.

We'll challenge students to improve their wellbeing, so they'll feel good about how far they've pushed themselves both physically and mentally

GRAND PLANS

Neville and his former teammates – now business associates – have already secured a number of important key partners for the UA92 project. Lancaster University will act as the academic lead and will also validate UA92's degrees, while Microsoft has joined as technology partner. They have also gained the support of Trafford Council and property firm Bruntwood, which has been tasked with the regeneration of an old industrial site in Trafford – the preferred site for a new UA92 campus.

The plans for the campus are now at a consultation phase and, if successful, construction work on the first UA92 buildings will begin in 2018. The first student recruitment cycle is set to begin in January 2018 and, if all goes well, the first intake of UA92 undergraduates will begin their studies in September 2019.

Neville says that UA92 will initially offer degree courses across three academic subjects: sport, business studies and media. He adds that sport and fitness will feature heavily in the curriculum.

"While taking part in sport won't be obligatory, what we want to see is each student taking a wellbeing and fitness module," he says.

"Those modules will be all about students looking after themselves physically, not about the student receiving a qualification in fitness. We'll challenge them to improve their physical wellbeing, so they feel good about how far they've pushed themselves both physically and mentally."

To support the wellness element of the curriculum, the UA92 campus is set to feature impressive sports facilities – including a new indoor sports centre and a number of playing pitches. The UA92 partners are also in talks over partnership deals with two of its future neighbours, Manchester United and Lancashire County Cricket Club. The exact details of the partnerships are expected to be revealed in 2018.



Mark E Smith is Lancaster University's vice chancellor



The Class of 92's previous project was Hotel Football, an upmarket 133-bedroom property next to Manchester United's home ground, Old Trafford



ACADEMIC HEAVYWEIGHT

While character development will be a key focus of UA92, the involvement of Lancaster University – one of the UK's top 10 universities – means that the degrees will have considerable academic weight behind them. According to Lancaster University's vice chancellor, professor Mark E Smith, the initial contact from The Class of 92, which occurred in 2016, came at an opportune moment.

"We're always keen to try new approaches," says Smith. "We published a new strategy in 2013 and one of its key elements was for us to be open-minded and accepting of the possibility that we may need to look at new models for delivering education. So when Gary and his team came along with their plans, they fitted perfectly with that element of our new strategy."

"What appealed to us in the UA92 model was the inversion of the traditional university concept – placing



Plans for the UA92 campus include a community leisure centre and several sports pitches

the broader life skills at the heart of learning and then wrapping the academic context around it.

"It's important to emphasise that the UA92 approach doesn't diminish the importance of the academic content in any way. What it does do is change the way the learning experience is constructed and presented."

Another element that appealed to Smith was the opportunity to devise an entire curriculum from scratch – and to do so with "non-traditional" partners, such as Microsoft and the former footballers.

"The great thing about UA92 is that, as far as the curriculum is concerned, we have a blank piece of paper," Smith says. "So we can come up with entirely new ways of delivering a degree. From a Lancaster University point of view, that's an opportunity, because there might be some learnings we can use back at our own university too."

Both Neville and Smith say that the new approach will be designed to attract those young people who might not see a traditional university as "their thing". ▶

The UA92 approach doesn't diminish the importance of the academic content. It just changes the way the learning experience is constructed and presented

UA92: The 10 principles of success

Influenced by the experiences of The Class of 92's footballing careers, the UA92 concept is based on a Target Talent Curriculum (TTC). The TTC places personal development at the core of the learning experience and focuses on 10 principles of success:

- Subject knowledge
- Life skills
- Participative learning
- Self and peer group analysis
- Presentation
- Leadership
- Work experience
- Survival and coping strategies
- Fitness and wellbeing
- Financial skills



Students at UA92 will be encouraged to express themselves and find the learning style that suits them best

► "We want to try and attract people from all backgrounds – and especially those who normally wouldn't think of going to university," Neville says. "But we also want people who do see university as a route – we want to compete for and win those students over too."

Smith adds that the alternative approach of The Class of 92's new university will help broaden its appeal to a range of potential students.

"We want to attract the students who find this approach more appealing than a conventional university degree," he says. "And I'm firmly of the belief that different approaches suit different people."

LOCAL BENEFITS

As well as bringing something new and innovative to the UK's higher education sector, UA92 will look to be a catalyst for development and regeneration in the local community. The plans for the university campus and its surrounding area – led by property partner Bruntwood – include a new community leisure centre that will replace the existing Stretford Leisure Centre as well as a large number of new sports pitches, which will be built at the nearby Turn Moss Playing Fields.



Gary Neville's goal is to transform education delivery

This isn't about five footballers just dreaming up a university course. We're surrounding ourselves with world class operators in education and business

While the partners are tight-lipped about the exact financials, Smith says that the investment in establishing UA92 will be "significant".

"The total initial investment will be more than £10m, and that will be shared by the partners," he says. "We're looking to other, new partners to contribute to that and there are active discussions going on, but I'm not prepared to reveal who they are just yet."

For Neville, the partnerships will define the entire UA92 project. "Ultimately, this isn't just about five footballers in a room dreaming up an academic university course," he says. "We're surrounding ourselves with world class operators in education and in business to ensure this is an incredible proposition to young people. It'll be something very different from what's already out there – and it will give people choices." ●



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How can sports facilities be made more dementia-friendly?

In our ageing population, dementia is common. It's important that those with the condition can still reap the physical and mental benefits of sports and activity. Steph Eaves asks the experts how sports facilities can assist



There are over 850,000 people in the UK and an estimated 46.8 million people globally living with dementia, according to Alzheimer's Society. These figures are predicted to double every 20 years, with global figures rising to 115.4 million in 2050. And not all of these people are old – in fact, there

are over 40,000 people under 65 with dementia in the UK.

People with dementia can live for many years, so maintaining an active, healthy lifestyle is crucial for good physical and mental wellbeing. Importantly, recent studies show exercise may improve memory and slow mental decline. If activity takes place in public facilities or as part of a group, this can



People can live for many years with dementia, so maintaining an active, healthy lifestyle is crucial for wellbeing

also help to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

However, as the condition progresses and the world becomes

a more confusing place, it can be increasingly difficult for people with dementia to navigate the sports and leisure centres where they could be getting active. It's important, therefore, for centres to adapt in order to accommodate this group, to ensure people with dementia are not losing out on the benefits of sport and activity that are available to the rest of the community.



GLL provides activities for people with dementia, led by specially trained staff

CAITLIN THOMAS

Corporate health manager, GLL

In the UK, over 850,000 people are living with dementia – two thirds of whom live at home, rather than in a care home. It's believed that 22 per cent of those people felt they had to give up activities such as exercise. It's imperative that the sport and leisure industry takes steps to improve its understanding of dementia, and that facilities, processes and services are adapted to minimise restrictions for people living with this condition.

By understanding how dementia changes people's



It's imperative that the sport and leisure industry takes steps to improve its understanding of dementia, and adapts accordingly

needs, the industry can ensure that facilities are inclusive, providing an environment that's inviting, avoids logistical complexities and offers activities that provide health and social benefits to this group.

At GLL, we feel it's important to ensure that facilities allow people living with dementia to remain active, not only to delay the onset of their condition, but to avoid neglecting other areas of their health and wellbeing. In order to make our facilities as accessible as possible, we've begun to introduce extra

assistance such as dementia-friendly signage, additional training for staff and activities such as specially adapted swimming sessions.

GLL was one of the first operators to adopt the dementia swimming programme, which provides sessions under the supervision of staff who have received dementia awareness training. Due to expand in the coming months, these sessions are currently being delivered in public pools in Manchester, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Barnet, Kensington and Chelsea. ▶



Supportive classes can ensure that people with dementia maintain a vital link to the community, as well as staying active



Group activities can be a great way for people living with dementia to stay active and social

EMMA BOULD

Programme partnership manager, Alzheimer's Society

It's important that organisations such as leisure centres and sports clubs support people living with dementia to remain connected to their local area and community.

People with dementia tell Alzheimer's Society that a huge barrier to keeping active can often be the toilet and changing facilities. Typical symptoms of dementia can include problems with memory and understanding. What may seem like a simple task of remembering which door you came through to a toilet

or changing area can be a disorienting and distressing experience for someone living with dementia. Clear signage is, therefore, very important.

We also recommend that sports facilities have designated areas where people with dementia and their carers can get changed together. This is because those in the later stages of the condition may need assistance with getting ready, and having a designated space allows them to do so with dignity.

People with dementia might have difficulty following

instructions, so traditional exercise classes can leave them feeling alienated and unable to keep up. We encourage sports facilities to consider how to support people with the condition and their carers in their programming. Supportive classes can ensure that people with dementia maintain that vital link with the community, as well as staying active.

To support their staff in learning more about what it means to have dementia, sports facilities should encourage all customer-facing employees to

become Dementia Friends. This is done by participating in an online or face-to-face information session that aims to transform the way people act, think and talk about the condition.

Other things to consider are accessible parking bays and drop off points next to the entrance to minimise walking distances, and visible seating in waiting areas. Alzheimer's Society recommends that leisure centres and gyms use the Environmental Audit in the Dementia Friendly Business Guide to review their premises. ▶



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LOCKLYNNE HALL

Business director, LiveWire, and former chair, Warrington Dementia Action Alliance

LiveWire is currently developing its first dementia-friendly leisure and health facility to support an ageing population in west Warrington. We're working with the University of Stirling – world leaders in dementia-friendly design – and Walker Simpson Architects to ensure the new Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub meets the needs of residents in the area.

There are three things to consider when making a facility dementia-friendly: the estate, staff and the services provided.

The layout of the facility must be simple; allowing users to easily find their way around, with toilets located in common areas. The building must feel spacious and have sufficient seating. Quiet areas should also be



Colour schemes must be carefully selected to create a comfortable physical environment

provided, for use by people who may feel confused or anxious.

Signage must be clear and positioned at eye level – incorporating both symbols and words. People with dementia

have difficulty remembering things, so you can't rely on them building up a familiarity with where everything is.

Colour schemes, including contrasts between walls, floors and doors, must be carefully selected to create a comfortable physical environment for those with dementia. For instance, a pattern on the floor may appear to be a trip hazard, causing someone who has a problem with depth perception or visual processing to stumble or fall.

Non-slip and level floor surfaces should also be considered.

Staff should receive specialist training to increase their awareness of the disease and the impact it has on the person and their surrounding network.

There should be specialist activities on offer for both those with dementia and early onset dementia. This could include walking and tai chi. We're working with our sister organisation, Culture Warrington, to produce an art-based memories project.



LiveWire is developing its first dementia-friendly centre



Sport should be tailored to people's strengths, to promote feelings of accomplishment

TONY JAMESON-ALLEN

Co-founder, Sporting Memories Network

While memory loss is often the key challenge for people living with dementia, other symptoms commonly include difficulty processing visual or verbal information, difficulty following complicated instructions, struggling with coordination and motor skills, and changes in personality. Clear, concise instruction along with visual cues can help to address the difficulties that these symptoms present.

Sports and activities should be tailored to people's strengths. We need to avoid setting people up for failure – sport should help promote feelings of accomplishment and of learning new skills or regaining old ones.

Taking sport and physical activity into accessible, non-sporting venues that older people are comfortable in can be very effective as an initial contact, as not everyone has the confidence to go to a leisure centre or sporting venue

initially. Libraries and social club locations are a popular choice.

The Sporting Memories project provides opportunities for people with dementia to participate in community-based, multi-generational weekly sessions. These groups take part in sports such as croquet, table tennis, darts and walking football.

Sports facilities can get involved with Sporting Memories by becoming delivery partners – either linking up with their local group, or hosting one.



RICHARD JONES

General area manager,
Everybody Sport and Recreation

From the design stage of Crew Lifestyle Centre, the importance of making the building suitable for all users was clear. It was created to accommodate leisure, libraries, adult daycare and children and family services, bringing a diverse audience through the doors daily.

With the increasing number of people diagnosed with dementia and that number expected to grow, it was important to factor those customers' needs into the building design. The project team involved dementia specialists and charities to advise throughout the design process and help create a building that would enable those with dementia to access the services with minimal stress.

Colour was a very important consideration in the design. The colour scheme throughout the

building was kept neutral and large areas of bold colours were avoided, as they could cause confusion or disorientation. The various types of doors were kept consistent, with blue doors for toilets and yellow for public



Dementia awareness training for staff has been essential to the site's operation and programming



Designed by experts, dementia swim sessions are fun and active

access. Also avoided were floor finishes that could be perceived as moving, such as blue – a colour associated with water.

Another design decision was to have the open-plan changing village, which allows carers to provide assistance. There are also dedicated 'changing places' within the village for those with more specialist needs.

Members of the project team and those now operating the building went through dementia awareness training and are

recognised by Alzheimer's Society as Dementia Friends. This training has been essential to the site's operation and programming, allowing us to host specialised activities such as dementia swim sessions. ●

ANYTHING TO ADD?

If you have an opinion or new information to add to the debate, send your letters to stepheaves@leisuremedia.com

A PROFESSION IN MOTION

As new standards and training are introduced in order to raise professional levels in the sport and physical activity sector, CIMSPA CEO Tara Dillon talks to Rob Gibson about changes which are afoot



The sport and physical activity sector has come a long way in recent years, with plenty to celebrate in areas such as access, affordability and diversity. However, professional standards have long caused confusion, with employers and staff both losing out as a result – not to mention the impact on consumers.

The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) received its chartered status in 2012 – meaning it is recognised by the Privy Council as the professional development body for the sector. It has two long-term strategic priorities: to provide opportunities for young leaders to develop and succeed; and to provide leadership on the development and management of career pathways.

But with so much at stake, and an array of opportunities, risks and politics to tackle, how much progress has been made in the quest for improvement and, ultimately, a better profession for everyone?

LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

"There's never been a more exciting time to enter the sport and physical activity sector – and I've been in it for 30 years," says Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA, who started out as a lifeguard. "It used to be solely focused on sport: you would teach a sport or lifeguard at a swimming pool, whereas now you could be treating patients referred



There's a drive from employers and government to bring physical activity and health closer together

by a doctor, improving an athlete's performance or improving the life skills and physical literacy of children. The sector used to be very narrow but in the past 10 to 15 years it's become so exciting and empowering."

Dillon admits that the widening of the sector has brought its challenges. "We should be pulling together



more to create a coordinated plan for the health and wellbeing of the nation, as this is the very thing that makes the sector sustainable,” she says.

She believes the profession has established all the core capabilities required to deliver sport and physical activity to communities – from kit to training, from boutique to budget – but now must focus collective strategies on the bigger picture: the health of the nation.

The health agenda has dominated reports and events in the sector over recent months, including the release of the *Moving More, Ageing Well* report in November 2017. This report included evidence that supporting over-65-year-olds to meet recommended exercise guidelines could save the NHS more than £12bn in treatment costs and prevent up to 600,000 incidences of disease.

Clearly, health and physical activity is a priority shared by others in the sector, but the question remains: how can improvement in this area be achieved? Dillon believes partnerships such as that established between CIMSPA and ukactive will be crucial to develop a workforce that meets the needs of the health agenda.

“Through the work of CIMSPA, ukactive, the Sport and Recreation Alliance and Sport England, there’s a drive from employers and government to bring physical activity and health closer together,” says Dillon.

“Medical organisations, such as Public Health England and the Royal College of General Practitioners, are working with our sector. We want to get physical activity practitioners on an equal footing with a nurse practitioner who might refer someone for physical activity. ▶

Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA, says the widening of the sector has created opportunities



There are now CIMSPA standards for group exercise instructors and many other physical activity roles

© SHUTTERSTOCK/STOCKFOUR

- ▶ "Ideally, GPs would like a register showing the number of chartered practitioners of CIMSPA within a 10-mile radius to whom they can refer someone who, for example, is showing signs of developing type 2 diabetes. GPs want to be confident that that person has the ability to treat or train the individual referred to them. People in our sector have an opportunity to shine a light on themselves and show that credibility."

SETTING THE STANDARD

While ambitions to establish such health partnerships and systems may seem a little way off, CIMSPA has just released six new professional standards – the first step to improving recognition and career pathways within the sector. Created following a year's consultation with employers, awarding organisations, higher education institutes and training providers, there are now CIMSPA standards for the roles of personal trainer, swimming teacher, core group exercise instructor, gym instructor, recreation assistant and lifeguard. Further standards will be delivered by March 2018 for the roles of coach and coaching assistant, as well as standards for management roles and specialisms.

The CIMSPA Professional Standards Matrix captures each occupation in the sector – rather than specific job roles, which are far greater in number – and plots them against the required levels of knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to be successful in that occupation.



GPs would like a register showing all the chartered practitioners of CIMSPA within a 10-mile radius

Dillon explains: "It puts down a marker for people entering into the sector and allows them to identify the direction they want their career to take, as well as the training that needs to accompany it."

The idea of a career pathway and training guide for occupations is a hugely attractive proposition to both graduates and those who might feel that they have lost their way in the sector. Happy, satisfied practitioners who feel they are in control of their career and progressing are far more likely to deliver happy, satisfied customers.

FORK IN THE ROAD

But while standards and accredited training provision begin to take shape, leading to "between 300 and 700 new CIMSPA members a month" according to Dillon, and CIMSPA's accredited training 'kitemark' appearing





The CIMSPA Professional Standards Matrix provides a guide for how people can progress through the sector

in more places, there are still two major challenges to overcome. Many practitioners in the sector are unaware of the support available, while others are confused about which body to join – CIMSPA or REPS (the Register of Exercise Professionals).

Dillon addresses the elephant in the room. "In its day, REPS was the best thing that happened to this sector in terms of forging a professional pathway and giving our sector credibility. But feedback from many employers in the industry, shared at a seminar which was hosted by CIMSPA and Skills Active in 2015, suggested that REPS is seen to have lost its way. Since REPS was sold, there's been further confusion within the sector.

"Through the Skills Protocol Employer Led Group, employers have asked CIMSPA to provide everything under one roof – they don't want different registers

“ People in our sector have an opportunity to shine a light on themselves and show their credibility

for exercise professionals, aquatic professionals and pool plant operators, for example.”

But what of the apparent impasse between REPS and CIMSPA as each continues to compete for members? Dillon says she is actively pursuing a solution with REPS. "In an ideal world, I'd like to find a way for our memberships to work together or be amalgamated – I'm certain that we can find a way of merging those two registers," she says. ▶



GPs want to be confident that they can refer patients to a physical activity professional who has the ability to train them appropriately

- ▶ "If we don't find a solution to this quickly then we're disenfranchising a large portion of self-employed people within this sector. I would guess there are about 15,000 to 20,000 self-employed personal trainers out there who don't understand what's going on."

THE PAY ISSUE

Putting party politics aside, arguably the biggest issue facing the profession is poor pay. While other sectors make progress to bridge the gap between entry level and senior positions, sport and physical activity has lagged behind. While the sector remains attractive as a vocation, Dillon has no doubt it's not currently doing enough to attract and retain talent.

"There's a huge challenge for the sector to work as a whole to resolve the pay issue," says Dillon. "We're a very low-paid sector and we have a massive skills shortage – some 20,000 skills shortages at technical and entry level, from lifeguards to fitness instructors and front-of-house staff. These are arguably the most important roles and yet we're still paying minimum wage to some very hard-working people."

While entry-level jobs in other careers require little or no formal training to achieve a similar salary, roles such as lifeguards require continued investment and training to meet the required professional standard.

“

We're a very low-paid sector and we have a massive skills shortage. There's a challenge to work as a whole to resolve the pay issue



Pay needs to be in line with skill level, says Dillon

"The sector spends an awful lot of money on recruitment and retraining staff. The training bill is about £1.1bn, we spend about £112m on apprenticeships and £600m in universities. But then we put people on minimum wage and spend another £400m to retrain them. If we can start to spend that money retaining people we'll start breaking new ground."

And therein lies the thread that runs through everything Dillon says. There is a vision and determination to improve the industry. While obstacles undoubtedly remain, CIMSPA and other bodies in the sector are steadily making progress. History has shown us that a lot can change in 10 years – professionals across the sector are depending on it. ●

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Spurs' new White Hart Lane stadium will offer a complete leisure experience



REIMAGINING STADIUMS

Major sports venues are increasingly becoming leisure destinations, as operators aim for financial viability. Tom Walker looks at two major trends shaping stadium development – fan-centric technology and sustainable design



In an age of commercialised sport, stadiums and other major venues are no longer simply a stage for the action to take place on. With terms such as 'multi-use', 'fan-centric' and 'environmentally friendly' peppering project briefs, modern sports facilities are as much revenue generators as the sports that they hold. As a result, technology, sustainable design and improved guest services now play a crucial role in the design and management of major venues.

Take the new White Hart Lane stadium, the future home of Tottenham Hotspur FC, currently under construction in North London, UK. Offering fans heated seats with built-in USB ports, superfast broadband, a fromagerie, microbrewery and a Michelin-starred restaurant, the venue is set to be more a complete leisure destination than a simple football stadium.

As for the sport itself, the stadium will also take a revolutionary approach to creating a truly multi-use venue. A natural grass pitch will sit directly above an artificial one, making it the first of its kind to have two pitches inside the same bowl. The fully retractable grass surface will be used for Spurs' Premier League matches, while the artificial

pitch will be used for NFL games as well as music concerts, to protect the integrity of the grass surface.

"We believe our new stadium will redefine sports and entertainment experiences," says Daniel Levy, chair of Tottenham Hotspur. "We've travelled to some of the best venues in the world to ensure no stone is left unturned in order to deliver the best visitor experiences."

While Spurs might provide us with the perfect case study of a modern stadium, it's not the only venue implementing technology and sustainability. How then, are modern venues tackling the two main trends – sustainability and a fan-centric approach?

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

In the past decade, environmentally-friendly operations and practices have gone from a marginal concern to a major consideration in sports venue management. Organisations – such as the Green Sports Alliance (GSA) – have been set up to offer guidance and support for the sector, and there is now an understanding that 'sustainable stadium' equals 'economically efficient'.

The trend towards sustainable building practices is encouraging construction companies and architects to look for more innovative ways to use recycled materials



The London Olympic Stadium, designed by Populous, utilised recycled materials



Stade Oceane in France is Europe's first carbon positive stadium

The trend towards sustainable buildings is encouraging construction companies and architects to look for innovative ways to use recycled materials

in sports projects. At the London Olympic Stadium, recycled materials included an unused gas pipe from a North Sea oil project, while approximately 40 per cent of the concrete used was made of recycled aggregate.

Meanwhile, at the Amsterdam ArenA, seating made out of plant material was installed as part of plans to make the venue carbon neutral. The raw material for the 2,000 seats – renewable ethylene derived from sugar cane – was supplied by Brazilian petrochemical company Braskem.

As well as the use of recycled materials, the deployment of sustainable building materials in place of traditional ones is becoming increasingly popular. At the new Stade Oceane in Le Havre, France – designed by KSS Design Group – the use of Ethylene tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE) has allowed the venue to become Europe's first 'carbon positive' stadium.

Used as cladding, ETFE has a carbon footprint much lower than comparable systems and also weighs as little as 1 to 3 per cent of traditional cladding systems. ▶

► Wood too, is making a comeback. Architecture practice Bear Stadiums has teamed up with Italian timber manufacturer Rubner Holzbau to offer wooden sports venues that can be built quickly and cost-efficiently.

Targeting Italy's smaller football clubs, which can quickly move up the ladder of the professional game, creating a need for larger capacities, the modular design means the stadiums can be assembled in just six to eight months and are "totally green". The designs allow venues as small as 1,500 seats, but this can be raised incrementally to a maximum of 20,000 seats.

"We see a huge demand for medium-capacity stadiums, typically ranging from 5,000 to 20,000 seats, which represents 80 per cent of the global market for this type of infrastructure," says Jaime Manca Di Villahermosa, creator of the format and co-founder of Bear Stadiums.

"Given the rise of HD television technology, which drives us to watch games in the comfort of our homes, it's necessary to build a new concept of a beautiful, comfortable, safe and easy-to-assemble stadium."

APPING IT UP

While "at-home technology" offers a potential threat to operators, it also provides opportunities. With their smartphones, fans now carry a supercomputer in their pockets. This opens up a way of delivering entirely new spectator experiences – ranging from viewing instant replays from any angle to the ability to have food and drink delivered to your seat.

The tech experience can begin even before fans enter the stadium, with parking apps such as JustPark and StadiumPark being designed to help arriving fans find their way to the nearest free space. Inside the stadiums the Venuenext app helps fans navigate the venue – pointing out the nearest bathrooms and offering queueing times at food stands.

Tech can also be used to create atmosphere in the stands. The AT&T Stadium app at the Dallas Cowboys' home has a unique mood-lifting feature. At any time during a game, the app can be set to a "Unite This House" mode by the stadium's tech



The Pogoseat app allows fans to upgrade their seats during the game

Smartphones open up a way of delivering entirely new spectator experiences – from instant replays to having food delivered to your seat



Bear Stadiums architecture practice is building wooden stadiums

Wood is making a comeback, with architecture practice Bear Stadiums offering wooden sports venues that can be built quickly and cost-efficiently

team, which sends a push notification to fans, telling them to activate the app. When fans do so, their phones begin to vibrate and flash. The resulting noise and flashes are then synchronised in an 'electronic wave'.

Apps can also be used for upselling products for fans after they arrive. ExpApps and Pogoseats allow fans to upgrade to better seats at discount prices. Among the venues to have introduced the app is AT&T Park, the home of Major League Baseball franchise San Francisco Giants.

"Fans can check out ticket inventory that may not have been available when they originally purchased their tickets," says Russ Stanley, Giants managing vice president for ticket sales. "We see our partnership with Pogoseat as another way to enhance the fan experience."

SCREEN TESTS

While operators can take advantage of the technology that fans carry in their pockets, they still need to provide a "wow" factor at the venues. This led to an arms race throughout the 2000s and 2010s, as venue owners began competing to have the largest screens and videoboard at their facilities. Operators began mounting huge TV screens either at the corners or ends of stadiums, or hung large 'jumbotrons' from arena ceilings above the playing areas.

The screens became a major feature especially in the US, where it seemed that every stadium opening

A race to provide the best 'wow factor' led to venue owners competing to have the largest videoboards



The 60ft x 362ft video board at EverBank Field was the largest traditional screen when built in 2014

or redevelopment would out-do the previous "biggest screen in sport". Take the screen at Dallas Cowboys' AT&T Stadium, which opened in 2009. The 25,000sq ft video display came at a cost of US\$40m – more than the construction of Cowboys' old Texas Stadium.

A peak in the size of the traditional screens was hit in 2014, with the launch of the 60ft (18m) high, 362ft (111m) wide videoboard at EverBank Field, home of the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars. Containing 35.5m LED bulbs, the US\$63m installation of the Daktronics screen was a major feat of engineering and involved a number of high-profile architects and building specialists, including Populous, Elkins Construction, Haskell and Troika.

Increasingly flexible screen technology is now, however, ushering a new generation of displays into sports venues. The new generation of screens are still large in size, but move away from the traditional square shapes.

At the new 34,000 capacity Krasnodar Stadium, a 4,700sq m, 360-degree LED video panel has been wrapped around the entire interior wall of the stadium above the top seating bowl. Supplied by Unilumin and animated by Russian AV specialist A3V – in partnership with UK-based content house The Mill – the screen has been designed as a wave and offers fans inside the stadium a jaw-dropping AV experience.

Perhaps the most impressive example is the 360-degree videoboard found at the Mercedes Benz stadium in Atlanta, the new home of the NFL franchise Falcons. Manufactured and installed by Daktronics, the 'halo board' has been installed above the field as part of the stadium's unique retractable roof structure.



A 4,700sq m, 360 degree LED screen adds to the atmosphere at Krasnodar Stadium

Measuring 58ft (17.6m) high by 1,075ft (328m) in circumference – large enough for a helicopter to fly through – it is the largest LED video display in all of sports.

Bill Johnson, design principal at architects HOK and lead architect of the Mercedes Benz Stadium, says the halo board will come into its own when the venue's secondary tenant, Major League Soccer franchise Atlanta United, plays at the 75,000-capacity stadium. Johnson says it will help create atmosphere in the cavernous space even when lower attendances at United's home games will result in parts of the upper bowl being closed.

"Having this halo right above the soccer pitch will really focus fans on the action on the pitch," Johnson says. "If we'd had end-zone scoreboards – or a scoreboard hanging from the middle – it would've been really detrimental to creating an intimate feel for the soccer matches. I believe it will help prove that you can play soccer in larger football venues, as long as it's designed properly." ●



TOM HOLDEN

Research is the backbone of the sports industry, providing the basis for decisionmaking. Steph Eaves talks to Tom Holden, executive director of the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences about how the organisation supports this important work

What's your background?

My background is in research, evaluation and project management. My first role in sport was within the Insight Directorate at Sport England. That really opened my eyes to the power of research to inform and guide public policy and initiatives designed to get more people physically active and playing sport.

My current role at the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) felt like a natural progression from this; I have a wider remit, but many of the same

principles apply. There are some fascinating – yet challenging – issues that the sport and exercise sector is facing right now, and being involved in an organisation that's helping to provide solutions in response to these challenges is really exciting.

What is BASES?

BASES is the professional membership body that represents sport and exercise sciences in the UK. Sport and exercise scientists apply scientific principles to the promotion,

maintenance and enhancement of sport- and exercise-related behaviours, incorporating one or more of the core disciplines of physiology, biomechanics and psychology.

BASES is involved in a variety of activities. We develop and administer a range of professional standards to ensure that sport and exercise scientists have the knowledge, expertise and experience to practice safely, ethically and to a high standard.

We provide grants to support research and run a variety of events, including workshops, webinars and conferences, which provide forums for learning, knowledge sharing and professional development.

BASES also produces a quarterly publication for its members, *The Sport and Exercise Scientist*, which provides sector news and information, discusses topics of interest and tackles important issues and challenges faced by the sector.

Who are your members?

The BASES membership reflects the varied roles and settings in which sport and exercise science is applied and practiced. This includes researchers and academics working in universities; applied practitioners working in elite sport at organisations like



BASES supports sport and exercise scientists to practice at a safe, high standard



UK Sport and the home nation's Institutes of Sport (English Institute of Sport, sportscotland Institute of Sport, Sport Wales, Sport Northern Ireland); and a range of other professions in clinical exercise and health, teaching, coaching and sport and exercise support services.

Which other organisations do you work closely with?

BASES works with other NGOs and professional bodies in the sport and exercise sector, both in the UK and abroad, sharing knowledge and resources to support shared objectives. For example, we're currently working with the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA), supporting the delivery of Sport England's workforce strategy for the sport and physical activity sector.

BASES partners with the English Premier League and the English Institute of Sport to implement professional standards for their sport and exercise science employees.



In sport psychology, there's been a growing focus on athlete health, wellbeing and development

Why is it important to be constantly conducting new research?

Compared to some disciplines, sport and exercise science is relatively young and is a fast-growing area of research. There remain so many important questions – from how to reduce the incidence of injuries in professional sports, to tackling the increasing prevalence of sedentary lifestyles – that require scientific research

in order to be better understood. There are benefits for all of society in enhancing our scientific knowledge about sport and exercise, from improving athlete and team performances on the world stage, to finding new and innovative ways of helping us live more active, healthy lives.

What are the latest trends and focuses within the field?

The potential of technology to enable increasingly sophisticated and effective methods of monitoring and analysing performance in professional and elite sport is a research area with a lot of current focus. Also being explored is the potential role of 'wearable tech', and everyday devices like smartphones, in increasing mass participation in sport and physical activity.

In sport psychology, there's been a growing focus on athlete health, wellbeing and development, with studies on resilience, life skills, personal development and how athletes can successfully transition through sport. ▶



BASES' magazine has the latest sports science news and research

© SHUTTERSTOCK/WIDE DOCTOR

Research can provide advanced and tailored support for sportspeople



► Have there been any recent breakthroughs in the field?

The use of big data (for example, statistical performance analytics) and data mining in sport and exercise science is a fast-growing area of both research and practice that is changing some of the ways in which sport and exercise science is applied, particularly in elite sport settings. These continuous streams of data provide personalised feedback on performance and wellbeing, enabling more advanced and tailored support for sportspeople.

Can you tell us about your work with UK Anti-Doping?

BASES is committed to clean sport and we work in partnership with UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) to ensure that the integrity of sport is protected. BASES has worked closely with UKAD to develop education and information programmes that help current and future sport and exercise science practitioners to contribute to clean sport through their own actions and those of their athletes.

In addition to the creation of a BASES Clean Sport Interest Group, we've published

“
Finding effective ways to empower people to become more physically active is one of our greatest challenges

a position statement on supplement use in sport and recently published an expert statement on inadvertent doping in sport, which provides information and practical guidance to help support and protect athletes and sport science practitioners.

What are the biggest challenges facing the field?

Finding effective ways to empower people to change their behaviour and become more physically active is a very topical and important issue that impacts all of us.

If we are able to just nudge members of the population to be a little more active we could realise massive health benefits, reductions in health care costs and greater independent living in older adulthood.

How can sporting bodies become more aware of current research?

There are many ways that sporting bodies and individuals studying or working in sport and exercise can engage with BASES. Our website is a good place to start, to understand more about what we do and read the latest news and opinions on contemporary issues in the field.

We're always open to developing partnerships with organisations that share our interest and commitment to developing and promoting sport and exercise science and we have a range of membership categories for individuals starting from just £29 a year. BASES members receive a range of benefits that help them keep up-to-date with the latest news, research and contemporary issues in sport and exercise science via our monthly newsletter and quarterly publication. ●



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The new centre features prominent branding, which can be seen by air passengers landing at LAX



LA Lakers' new HQ

The NBA's Los Angeles Lakers recently signalled a new era for the organisation, combining business and basketball operations under one roof. Matthew Campelli speaks to principal architect Carl Meyer from Perkins + Will's LA studio about the project



The NBA has entered a race of sorts, with teams across the league investing in world-class training facilities that help them recruit the best athletes. With a recent move to its new US\$80m UCLA Health Training Center in California, the Los Angeles Lakers is one of the teams leading the way.

Designed by ROSSETTI and Perkins+Will, the facility integrates business operations with a holistic approach to player performance, health and training. Designed to enhance connections between various departments, the facility aims to convey that everyone in the organisation is an integral part of 'the business of basketball'.



Perkins + Will's Carl Meyer

Los Angeles Lakers forward
Kyle Kuzma shoots the ball
against Sacramento Kings
guard George Hill

Can you tell us about the project?

Since the early planning stages in 2012, we worked closely with ROSSETTI and Lakers leadership to create a new headquarters that would unite operations in one facility for the first time since 1999. The goal was to foster a strong organisational culture to support the future of the Lakers while proudly celebrating its past.

Focused on connection, operations are strategically programmed around the highly visible central courts, making the game of basketball visible from almost every part of the facility. This interplay of transparency between court level and second level executive offices creates a sense of unity, connectivity and community through all levels of Lakers operations. From the championship trophies sitting above the courts in the office of the president, to the rooftop logo visible from the planes landing at nearby LAX – the legacy, history and identity of the iconic franchise is showcased inside and out.

What was important in the planning stage?

The most important thing was to integrate operations. The training and business operations were previously located in separate buildings, the result of years of growth. This project was an opportunity to create a physical space that could transform day-to-day operations.

How did you do this?

We spent weeks in brainstorming sessions with ROSSETTI and the entire leadership of the Lakers. These resulted in a vision that focused on enhancing connections and making a long-term investment in the team's success.

How will the building promote on-court success?

Inside, spaces encompass everything a modern sports team could need. In the old days, players would just go to a gym, practice and go home. It was just a matter of getting the workout in. That's the opposite of what is happening today. Now, there's a full programme of activities, which includes nutrition, strength training, recovery, injury prevention and rehabilitation.

Wellness, health and performance are weaved heavily into the design, with features like a new cryotherapy



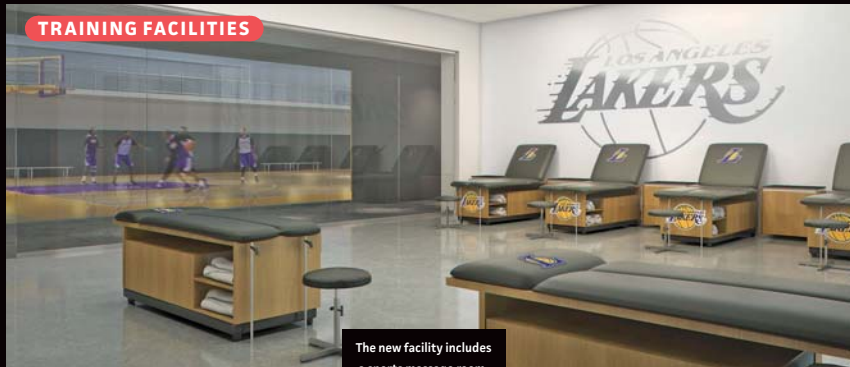
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Supporting player wellness is a much more holistic effort than it was in the past – now there's a full programme of activities

chamber to maximise recovery and agility. Courts have been designed with conditions that mimic the Staples Center conditions – everything from the lighting to the acoustics – so players are perfectly prepared for game day.

Supporting player wellness is a much more holistic effort than it was in the past. Recognising that recruitment and retention is not just limited to the courts, aspirational player spaces feature world-class amenities reflective of the status of an elite Laker player – such as the players-only lounge which also provides the team with enhanced opportunities to connect off the court. ▶

TRAINING FACILITIES



The new facility includes a sports massage room, a players' lounge and a weights training studio



- The use of data and performance analytics has also expanded inside the new headquarters. Players get feedback on everything that happens in training. This data is incredibly detailed, giving coaches an advantage when it comes to game time decision-making.

Where did inspiration come from?

We researched numerous facilities around the world from a wide group of sports organisations and looked to exceed the status quo in every aspect possible – from the player spaces to the workplace design.

How does the new facility compare to those of other teams?

It's probably the most advanced in the world, certainly in the NBA. How long this will be the case, I'm not sure, as other teams are understanding not only the importance of a good training facility but the importance of the holistic approach to winning and success in team sports.

The Lakers are improving the health of LA by creating opportunities for community engagement in health and fitness

Aligning the Lakers with progressive design and methodology around training, wellness and injury prevention will help the team attract the best and brightest in the NBA.

By creating an innovative partnership with UCLA Health, the Lakers are also investing in a commitment to improving the health of Los Angeles by creating opportunities for community engagement in health and fitness. The 120,000 square-foot facility marks a vibrant addition to the local community in El Segundo. One of the courts converts to a 750-seat exhibition court providing opportunities for community and public interaction. ●

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We don't have a professional platform for outstanding volleyball athletes in England, so when we find players with potential we support them to look abroad for professional contracts or scholarships.

What engagement campaigns have you run?

Recently we ran a campaign that was a call to volunteers to help to build the sport. We've created a 'Pool of Experts' – a group of people who have offered their skills and support for our new way of working.

What challenges do you face?

The biggest challenge clubs face is finding sports halls that are available at a reasonable time with the required equipment. The other challenge is the length of time a match takes; often teams book two-hour sessions, but some matches cannot be completed in two hours.

How have recent funding cuts impacted the sport?

We receive no performance funding from UK Sport. Our funding from Sport England in this four-year cycle 2017-2021, like many other organisations has been reduced. We understand the reasoning behind this and have to



We're working to make volleyball more self-sustaining and less reliant on grant funding

accept that sports don't have a right to government funding to continuously underpin the work we do.

As an organisation, we're working to increase our income generation. We're looking at innovative ways to raise funds and provide a quality service to our membership and the wider communities involved in the development and delivery of sport.

What are your future plans for the sport?

We're focusing on supporting our membership through the development of both clubs and volunteers. We're also working to make volleyball more self-sustaining and less reliant on grant funding in the future.

We are already making progress in developing our new way of working, but we need to keep engaging with people and the more people who engage with our 'Join Us at the Net' campaign and help us, the stronger the infrastructure will become at Volleyball England. ●

PUMPED UP

Mountain biking is growing in popularity as an inter-school sport in mid-Cornwall, partly due to the pump tracks being built in schools, which are enthusing young kids about bikes. Kath Hudson reports



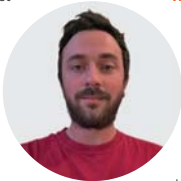
Gears and pulleys are being discussed in a primary school science lesson at Wadebridge Academy in Cornwall, but instead of the children reading about how it works in a textbook, they're learning about it in a far more memorable and applied way, by riding their bikes on the school's brand new pump track.

According to teacher Tom Slater, the track, which opened in December 2016, has been a massive asset to the school. As well as being used for PE, it is being utilised in other curriculum subjects to make learning fun; it provides a sporting resource that has almost universal appeal and has improved fitness levels and inspired the children to cycle outside school hours.

Wadebridge Academy used the sugar tax to pay for the track. Unlike other schools who have invested in pump tracks, they chose not to buy any bikes for the children to use at school. "I wanted to build the desire in the children to have their own bikes," explains Slater. "We finished the pump track just before Christmas and whereas previously lots of children had wanted an Xbox, loads of them asked for bikes instead. We used to have just two or three bikes in the shed, but now we often have 70 to 80 that the kids have brought to school."



Top: Tom Slater
is a teacher at
Wadebridge
Academy



Bottom: Dave Angel,
St Breock's pump
track builder

The school has capitalised on this enthusiasm for cycling by opening up Bikeability sessions to its Year 4 kids, which give them the safety skills to cycle to school. It also runs after-school clubs for different age groups, makes the track available at lunchtimes, uses it in the morning to walk the Daily Mile and as 'golden time' for Year 6 kids on Friday afternoons, if they have worked hard.

INCLUSIVE SPORT

"Cycling is a very inclusive sport," says Slater. "Even the four-year-olds are landing jumps on balance bikes. We've also found it's good for building resilience, as they have to get back on when they fall off."

One of the brilliant knock-on effects of the pump track is that it is encouraging the children to go out riding with their families at the weekends. The school recently organised for 32 children and their parents to go to a local cycling venue on a Friday evening. "I love the fact that on Mondays lots of the children come in with videos and pictures of cycling jumps and tracks they've built themselves at the weekends," says Slater. "It's like my childhood!"

Wadebridge Academy isn't the only school in mid-Cornwall lucky enough to have a pump track. Another school in the same town, St Breock, was the first to take the plunge, in the wake of the 2012 Olympics. ▶

"It's clear there's a lot of buzz around the pump tracks, which seem to be loved by both girls and boys. They're engaging children who might not participate in team sports"



MOUNTAIN BIKING



The Angel Trails team with staff and students at the launch of St Petrocs School pump track

► Its development was driven by three parents who were all keen cyclists, one of whom persuaded the school gardener, Dave Angel, to build the track.

"My Dad and I built it by hand," says Angel. "We spoke to the local leisure trust about the health and safety guidelines and then designed a track with jumps, rollers and berms." This has led to a business diversification for Angel, who has expanded his team with two pro-riders, has built five tracks in schools to date, and is now in talks with further schools, leisure centres, the Forestry Commission and parish councils about building pump tracks all over Cornwall.

Angel says that one of the advantages of pump tracks is that they can be situated in land that often doesn't get used for other purposes, such as the perimeter of playing fields, or through scrub or woodland. "We work with the topography of the site to create an interesting track with multiple lines, which offers progression as the kids improve," says Angel. "The idea is not to pedal, but to use the momentum of the lumps and bumps."

UTILISING WASTELAND

The parents who were keen to see the development of the St Breock track all attended a British Cycling coaching day and started an after-school club to train up a team of riders. "This wasn't about teaching children to ride bikes," says parent and coach, Simon Miller. "We wanted to give the kids another competitive sport to engage with. Cornwall used to be out on a limb in terms of elite athletes, but with the likes of Helen Glover, our children have seen that Cornish athletes

We work with the topography of the site to create an interesting track with multiple lines, which offers progression as the kids improve



Cornish rower Helen Glover (L) is inspiring children in the region with her success

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GET ON YOUR BIKE!

According to the
Active People Survey:

15% of people
in England over
16 (6.6m) cycle at
least once a month

3% (1.3m) cycle
five times a week

9% (4m)
cycle at least
once a week

According to the
National Travel Survey:

66% (40m)
cycle less than
once a year
or never

42% of people
over five years
old in the UK
have a bike

In the UK, only

2% of journeys
are made by bike,
compared with

27% in the
Netherlands

Participation
remains skewed
towards men in
the UK, making
up **72%** of
bike trips

© SHUTTERSTOCK/HERISA



The pump tracks allow kids to train for inter-school competitions

can get to the top.” St Breock’s team has indeed been very successful in inter-schools tournaments and even medalled at the South West School Games.

Another local school, St Petrocs, in Bodmin, received £9,500 from the Big Lottery Fund to develop a track. Premises manager, Jason Gordon, was the driving force behind it. “The school had bikes that were only used occasionally for Bikeability and a big school field that wasn’t fully utilised,” he explains. “The middle of the field was used for running and games, but the outside wasn’t used at all, and just attracted stinging nettles and rubbish, so it was the perfect place to build the track. Now we’ve planted the hedges with wild flowers, brought another area into use and have another great sporting facility for the kids to use.”

Gordon says another incentive to improve the children’s cycling skills was because it linked well with what was going on in the town. Bodmin, which has a number of cycling resources on its outskirts, aims to link them all up through some cycle-friendly infrastructure, to become Cornwall’s first cycle town (see *Sports Management* August 2016).



Top: Simon Miller

Bottom:

Jason Gordon

GETTING COMPETITIVE

It’s clear there is a lot of buzz around the pump tracks, which seem to be loved by girls and boys alike and appeal to the sporty and non-sporty. It is also creating a new form of inter-school competition, which can engage children who might not participate in team sports.

Outside of school, participation in the South West cyclocross series, which is held in the autumn across Devon and Cornwall, has doubled since it started in 2011. There are five different age categories for under 16s and almost as many children as adults now take part.

Although research shows that cycling is currently dominated by white, middle class males, the installation of free-to-access pump tracks located in parks, open spaces, and school and leisure centre playing fields could be a way of changing this, helping to introduce more girls and bring about a return to the 1970s, when playing outside on a bike was the default activity of children everywhere. As Slater points out, you don’t have to be a sporty kid to love cycling and anyone can appreciate the thrill of riding on a pump track! ●

PROTECTING GREEN SPACE

Green space has huge benefits for physical and mental health. Despite this, there are many threats to Britain's green pockets. Helen Griffiths, CEO of Fields in Trust, talks to Kath Hudson about the charity's work to protect our green space



Helen Griffiths, CEO of Fields in Trust, says that austerity has made parks vulnerable

What is Fields in Trust?

Formed in 1925 by King George V, Fields in Trust is a charity that protects green spaces, parks and playing fields for recreational purposes, in perpetuity. Previously known as the National Playing Fields Association, it's the only organisation in the UK to make such interventions and is funded entirely by voluntary income: from trusts, foundations and individuals. We believe all communities, and especially young people, should be able to enjoy recreation within walking distance of where they live.

How challenging is it to keep green spaces protected, given the pressure on local authority budgets?

The period of austerity has had a massive impact on local authority budgets, which has made non-statutory services, such as parks, vulnerable. As receipts generated from the sale of playing fields are no longer ring-fenced, sales are now more appealing in the short term, especially as there is a massive need for housing.

I would never advocate the closure of libraries, but at least if, for instance, a library does close it could be reopened in the future, but once a green space is gone, it's gone for good, which makes the work we do very important.



If, for instance, a library was closed, it could be reopened in the future. Once a green space is gone, it's gone for good

Despite the financial pressure facing local authorities, we've seen an uplift in the number of protected spaces during austerity and since 2010 we have doubled our number of sites, from 1,250 to 2,600.

How can we balance the need for both green space and more housing?

We do understand there's a need for more housing, and so we're trying to work with housing developers to agree on protected green space around developments.

In 2015, we issued clear guidelines to planners and developers about the recreational space needed per capita as a reasonable and impactful target.

We're looking to engage with developers to safeguard and design green space into the plan from the outset. Our first successful project with a housing developer – Kevin McCloud's Happiness Architecture Beauty, which builds contemporary volume housing surrounded by plentiful landscaped space – has just been completed. ▶

KEVIN MCCLOUD

British designer Kevin McCloud, best known for presenting Channel 4 series *Grand Designs*, started Happiness Architecture Beauty to challenge the way identikit volume housing was built in the UK. The projects are designed to be sustainable, beautiful and a pleasure to live in.



© DOUG PETTERS/DOUG PETTERS/EMPHASIS ENTERTAINMENT



Children enjoy being active at Charsfield Recreation Ground

PRINCE WILLIAM – A ROYAL ASSOCIATION

Since its inception, Fields in Trust has enjoyed royal patronage. The Duke of Edinburgh (Prince Philip) was president for 64 years and handed over to the Duke of Cambridge (Prince William) in 2013. The Duke of Cambridge's particular interest is the Centenary Park Project, which protects war memorials, parks and playing fields that are symbolically important for remembrance.



Fields in Trust is building a living legacy to the fallen
Duke of Cambridge

Speaking at the dedication of Kensington Memorial Park in 2016, he said: "I launched the Centenary Fields programme in Coventry, and as we reach the midway point of the commemorative period



The Duke of Cambridge is the president of Fields in Trust

for the Great War, Fields in Trust continues to build a living legacy to the fallen by protecting Centenary Fields in perpetuity as places for play, sport and

recreation. I urge others to support this important cause and protect these living spaces of remembrance for generations to come".



Parks can lead to financial savings as a result of better health and reduced antisocial behaviour

► **Given the financial pressure on local authorities, will entry fees ever need to be introduced for parks?**

Maintaining free access for parks is important. There have been some models that charge people for the use of adventure playgrounds and the like, but I would rather see more innovation – for example, the use of amenities like cafés, which can generate profits that can then be re-invested. The 2016 NESTA Rethinking Parks report also identified different ways local authorities had diversified to boost income, such as staging community events.

From our point of view, we're changing the conversation from cure to prevention as a means of sustaining the future of parks. Although park maintenance is an ongoing expense for local authorities, we're emphasising to them that these costs can lead to savings upstream, by improving things like health and anti-social behaviour.

NEW ACTIVE SPACES

The best in Belfast

● Belfast City Council is protecting Cregagh Green, an open space in the heart of a large housing development, where George Best was spotted playing football as a talented teenager.

Getting active in Wales

● Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has designated Gelligaled Park, Ystrad Rhondda as an Active Space. The council will be coordinating a new physical activity programme for local residents in this area, which has the lowest levels of activity in Wales.

Cornish community spirit

● Roskear Recreation Ground in Camborne, Cornwall serves an expanding community. A new strategy will improve local facilities and attract all ages to become more physically active.



There will be 50 Active Spaces across the UK, and a flagship park in each home nation

Saving Norfolk's green space

● The River Lane Sports Pitches, in Kings Lynn, Norfolk, were earmarked for a new road and housing development, but the local residents association campaigned for the council to safeguard this site with Fields in Trust. Levels of physical inactivity in Kings Lynn are higher than both the regional and national average, and a new programme is being developed to engage inactive members of the community.

Scottish bootcamp

● Park West is owned by the City of Edinburgh Council and located in an area of multiple

deprivation. A physical activity bootcamp run by Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust will work with the recently established park's friends group to improve physical activity while building community connections.

Family time in Nottinghamshire

● Nottinghamshire's Mansfield District Council is among the most deprived areas in England. Forest Road Playing Fields are going to be the site of intergenerational sports coaching – supporting families to enjoy sport and exercise together.



The Active Spaces project provides grants to encourage the community to be more active

Few public services have such an impact as parks and green spaces, and using them to get people active is in line with current government thinking.

What campaigns are you currently running?

Our campaign 'Have a Field Day' ran in July, encouraging people to enjoy their local parks by organising an activity or event.

Also, we're excited about our new Active Spaces project, funded by the London Marathon Charitable Trust. Launched in May, £675,000 has been set aside for 2017/18 to create 50 Active Spaces across the UK. Each will be provided with activation grants to encourage the local community to be more active and every home nation will have a flagship park, which will receive an extra £25,000.

Fields in Trust development managers are identifying Active Spaces opportunities across the UK and responding to applications from councils and landowners seeking to safeguard green space. We're targeting areas with high levels of inactivity and will run programmes like walking, walking football, fitness and inter-generational activities. Six Active Spaces have been decided so far (see box: New Active Spaces).



Sports providers are ideally situated to engage with our work, by offering sessions in nearby parks

How can the leisure industry engage with you?

Sports providers are ideally situated to engage with our work, both with the Active Spaces project and also by offering group sports or fitness sessions more widely in parks that are near the facility.

We're looking to bring about behavioural change, but with just 50 sites, we won't be able to activate massive numbers of people. It would be good if leisure operators could start programmes that can be replicated elsewhere, to build a sustainable future that enables people to be active and to enjoy our green spaces. ●



GREEN SPACE NUMBERS

- **2,600+** sites are currently protected by Fields in Trust (about 30,000 acres, including playing fields, playgrounds and formal and informal parkland)
- **57%** of British people regularly use parks each month
- **90%** of the users are families
- **10%** say they use a park for their mental wellbeing
- **61%** of people with good access to parks said they are satisfied with their health
- **50%** said they would be less active without access to parks

A DEEPER ISSUE

There are now fewer people swimming regularly than there were 10 years ago. Could the decline be blamed on a lack of decent facilities? Tom Walker investigates

Despite efforts to get more people in the pool, the number of regular swimmers has fallen steadily in the past 10 years. Data from Sport England's *Active People Survey* 2016 showed that the number of adults swimming at least once a week had fallen by nearly a quarter (23.7 per cent) in the past decade. During 2015-16, only 2.5 million people swam weekly – compared with 3.27 million in 2005-06.

The lack of swimming teachers and lifeguards is well documented, but are facilities also to blame? Are there enough pools? Or is it a case of enough water, but a lack of diversity in the pool offer? Does the current pool stock cater for everyone?

WATER ISSUE

According to Dave Candler, CEO of the Swimming Teachers Association, the answer regarding the number of pools is simple. "No, we don't have enough," he says.

"The number of swimming pool closures over the past five years outweighs the number of openings in both the public and private sector. Demand for water time has become an increasing issue, particularly for the burgeoning private swim school market, which relies on hiring pools for lessons."

Candler's view is shared by Jane Nickerson, CEO of Swim England, the governing body for swimming. "I think we'll always need more pools," she says.

"In the past 17 years since 2000, we've only had 400 new public pools built in England. That isn't a lot, when you consider how many have closed.

"There certainly are places in the country which no longer have adequate provision – such as London and Birmingham, where capacity is well below the national average."

Both Candler and Nickerson add that there is also an issue with some of the country's existing pools. "We have many excellent, well-run facilities, but the



The number of swimming pool closures outweighs the number of openings

DAVE CANDLER, SWIMMING TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



A school swimming report recommends new pools be built to aid the delivery of lessons

problem is that we have a lot of ageing stock too, which is expensive to repair, maintain and run," Candler explains.

"Someone has to subsidise these pools, but with budget cuts it's not always been feasible, hence the closures we've sadly seen throughout the 2000s and 2010s."

According to Mike Hall, partner at sports architects FaulknerBrown, which specialises in pool design, the problem is two-fold.

"Firstly, a lack of investment in leisure has left us with a pretty grim legacy of unattractive facilities," Hall says. "Secondly, the typology needs to adapt to meet the changing demands of society. Some of the pools are in the wrong place, inefficient to operate or not attracting people."

Nickerson agrees. "We have nearly 500 pools that are more than 50 years old, so there's a need to renew the stock."

FUNDING SWIMMING

To its credit, the government hasn't entirely sat on its hands when it comes to efforts to improve the country's swimming pools and some funding has been earmarked for the cause. Between 2017 and 2021, Sport England will provide Swim England with £12.16m in order to encourage more people to start swimming, while a further £25m will be invested, through the Strategic Facilities Fund, to construct 21 new leisure facilities – which will include a number of swimming pools.



A lack of investment in leisure has left us with a pretty grim legacy of unattractive facilities

MIKE HALL, FAULKNERBROWN

Earlier this year, sports minister Tracey Crouch announced that the government is also setting up an "implementation group" to explore the recommendations from the school swimming report, published in July 2017. The *Swim Group Review of Curriculum Swimming and Water Safety Lessons* report found that 31 per cent of Year 6 pupils will finish their schooling without being able to swim and without basic water safety skills – this despite both skills being stated within the national curriculum.

The report's 16 recommendations include making new resources available for all those involved in delivering school swimming lessons – including pools. A key aspect of the government working group's focus, according to Crouch, will be to find ways to work more closely with local authorities and private operators in order to make "better use of facilities".

Mike Hall says that any spending on swimming should be seen as an investment

with a high return. "The data coming out of Sheffield Hallam University, from the likes of professor Peter Taylor, suggest that every £1 of financial investment delivers £3.15 of social return on investment," Hall says.

"That means that investment in swimming can only be a good thing for society. That said, the immediate financial challenges are ever present and we need to accept that we may need fewer, more appropriately designed pools."

BETTER FACILITIES

What, then, should the approach to improving pools be? Candler believes that, while there is a need for more facilities, more could be done with the current stock. "We need to ensure the existing pools fulfil their potential – not only from a financial viewpoint, but also to encourage more people to use the facility," he says.

"Pool programming – fitting everyone in at a time everyone wants – is one of

Does size matter? Examining the case for smaller pools

Are developers and operators too focused on providing 25m pools? Might smaller pools, which could be cheaper to build and operate, work better – especially when looking to attract families and children?

JANE NICKERSON:

As the national governing body for swimming, we need a sufficient number of 50m pools and 25m pools with 10 lanes for competition purposes. The smaller training pools can, however, have much lower running costs and can do the job for a community very well.

It's true that the more teaching pools you have, the more children you're going to teach to swim. But if you want to keep them in the water, you need to provide them with the next step too. If all you have is a teaching pool, have you then got a larger pool for lane swimming? If there's a 25m pool close by, that's fine because some will travel to it.

It's about providing appropriate facilities that match the community's specific needs – and that's what we should really be pushing for.



Dave Candler proposes building more "fun pools" to attract families and kids

DAVE CANDLER:

The new 25m pools that are being built are fantastic for the communities they serve, but in addition to these I'd like to see more fun pools being created – ones that incorporate fun activities, like flumes, pirate

ships and rapids, to encourage more people/families to actively participate.

We want more people to go to their local pool and enjoy the water on a regular basis, and for pools not just to be a hole in the ground filled with water.



Put pools next to a library, a GP surgery or a school and make them part of a community-based centre

JANE NICKERSON, SWIM ENGLAND

► the biggest issues. Pools are an expensive commodity and with many council pools now not subsidised, timetabling is even more of an issue, with the most profitable sessions given a priority to cover costs.

"We've seen first-hand that getting the timetable right and offering a more diverse range of activities helps to maximise the pool space and increase revenue."

Nickerson emphasises that when a decision is made to build a new pool, it should cater for the entire community – including special populations.

"It's all about putting the right pool in the right place," she says. "We need to make sure that when we do build or redevelop pools, they're right for the community they're going to serve. For example, if we want to include the entire community, we need to cater for those who don't want windows in the pool area, or need separate changing villages, such as Muslim women."

Nickerson is also fully on board with Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson's recent calls

to transform the UK's leisure centres into "community wellness hubs" by joining up a number of services. Grey-Thompson's vision is to combine swimming pools and gyms with GP drop-in centres, libraries and police services, creating a new "preventative frontline" for the NHS in the process.

"I think Tanni's right – what we should do is have pools acting as the heartbeat of the community," Nickerson says. "Get the pools next to a library, a GP surgery or a school and make them part of a real community-based centre that everyone can go to."

For Hall, designing more attractive and customer-friendly pools is key. "We need to make these facilities more attractive and engaging for a range of users," he says.

"For the last 20 years, much sporting policy and funding in aquatics facilities has been driven by lane swimming – and indeed this is as important for health as revenue-generating lessons – but the reality is our efforts to increase participation should cover a wide spectrum of activity." ●



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BUILD UP TO THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Temporary structures play an increasingly important role at major sports events. Tom Walker looks at how the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games will deploy them this April

In April, Australia will host the Commonwealth Games for the fifth time in the event's 106-year history. The Games, which kicks off on 4 April, will see a total of 70 nations and territories battle for medals at 17 venues across Queensland's Gold Coast during 11 days of competition.

Gold Coast was awarded the Games in 2011 and its successful bid was partly down to the region's existing sporting infrastructure. Most of the Games facilities, around 80 per cent, were already in place when the bid was launched – including the Carrara Stadium, the main venue of the Games.

Only three entirely new, permanent facilities have been built for the Games – the Anna Meares Velodrome, Coomera Indoor Sports Centre and the Gold Coast Sports and Leisure Centre. While this



Mark Cutler is the head of venue and overlay at GOLDOC

year's Games will rely heavily on existing venues, bringing them up to elite competition standard has involved a redevelopment programme driven by Queensland's state government. In total, AU\$320m has been spent on the three new venues and the general upgrading of existing venues.

TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS

At the heart of the delivery of the Games, however, is a plethora of temporary structures and overlay. In addition to the AU\$320m investment in new venues, the Gold Coast 2018 Organising Committee (GOLDOC) is spending AU\$180m on temporary infrastructure – bringing in everything from spectator grandstands and competition venues to auxiliary buildings.

According to Mark Cutler, head of venue and overlay at GOLDOC, the use of temporary structures and fit-outs will play a huge role in getting venues games-ready. "Temporary overlay is required at every venue to meet specific Commonwealth Games Federation and other international requirements," he says.

"The amount of overlay required at the venues is highly variable. In general terms, we need to add 25-30 per cent of overlay space to venues that are already well-suited to competition, and more to other venues – such as the conference and exhibition venues being transformed to host sports for the Games."

According to Cutler, temporary structures will be used in a variety of ways during the 2018 Games. "We are using temporary structures in everything from increasing venue capacities – by building additional



The opening and closing ceremonies will be held at the Carrara Stadium



More than 62,000 temporary seats will be added across 17 venues, including the aquatic centre



The Gold Coast 2018 Organising Committee is spending AU\$180m on temporary infrastructure

grandstands – to catering for the Games' operations, such as media centres and workforce areas.

"And then there are the broadcast lighting enhancements, additional video-board and scoreboard structures, security screening facilities and equipment, and additional spectator amenities – as well as additional electrical and hydraulic servicing capacity to support the additional loads," says Cutler.

SHOWING OFF THE SIGHTS

Three of the 17 venues being created for the 2018 Games will be entirely temporary – the triathlon centre at Southport Broadwater Parklands; The Currumbin Beachfront area, which will host the road cycling; and the beach volleyball arena at Coolangatta.

A WORLD-CLASS HEALTH HUB

The legacy of the Games will not just be a sporting one – it's speeding up development of a new health and innovation hub that will benefit the region for years to come.

- This AU\$5bn hub, known as the Gold Coast Health & Knowledge Precinct, will be the region's largest ever urban renewal project and is being developed by the City of Gold Coast, Griffith University, Gold Coast Health and the Queensland Government.
- The Commonwealth Games Village will become part of the new 200-hectare hub, which will house a world-class university and two major hospitals.



The athletes' village

© DAVID HUNT/ARND BRONKHORST



The use of temporary venues has allowed the organisers to showcase stunning locations

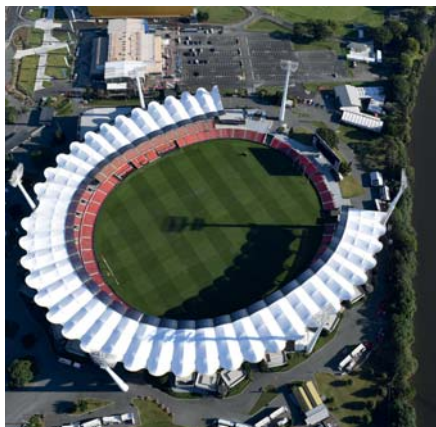
► Using a temporary stadium for beach volleyball has allowed the Games host city to create a setting that will provide the TV audience with some spectacular backdrops. Located at a beachside location, the expected 1.5 billion broadcast viewers will be able to take in the Gold Coast's iconic coastline.

According to Mark Peters, CEO of GOLDOC, the use of temporary venues has allowed the organiser to select a landmark site for the volleyball – but one that has also presented several challenges.

"There is a significant space requirement for the beach volleyball and much more than meets the eye when it comes to technical delivery – right down to the consistency and grade of sand on the court," Peters says.

"Coolangatta is a great location for the temporary stadium and with the magnificent skyline it's an opportunity for it to be showcased all over the world."

The second temporary venue, at Currumbin Beachfront, will host the road cycling and race walk events. The location was chosen following a "rigorous technical process" to design the courses, which – like the beach volleyball venue – will showcase the coastline.



© GARY HUNT/LAP IMAGES

The Carrara Stadium has been expanded to a capacity of 35,000

Meanwhile, Southport Broadwater Parklands will host the start and finish of the Games' athletics competition, by being the setting for the marathon and triathlon.

At all three venues, temporary stands have been built to accommodate spectators. In total, more than 62,000 temporary seats will be added across the 17 venues.

AUXILIARY BUILDINGS

As well as providing the necessary extra competition venues for the Games, temporary infrastructure will be used to provide the wide range of additional facilities required for various client groups. "These include the

CREATIVE TRANSFORMATIONS

For the second Commonwealth Games in a row, the hosts have come up with an innovative, temporary solution to create an elite athletics track at a non-athletics track at a non-athletics venue. In 2014, Glasgow's Hampden Stadium saw 6,000 stilts being used as part of a revolutionary solution to raise the football stadium's surface by almost two metres, in order to create enough space for the running track. This year, the Gold Coast organisers came up with their own piece of genius. Mark Cutler explains:

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Carrara Stadium is home to Australian football team the Gold Coast Suns

"The athletics track at Carrara Stadium is longer than the playing surface required for Australian Rules Football. Therefore, when a stadium upgrade was made in 2011, around the time when GOLDOC was being awarded the 2018 Commonwealth Games, the northern seating stand was made of modular construction, so that it could more easily be lifted out to accommodate the athletics track construction, and then be reinstated for Australian Rules Football after the Games."



A temporary venue for beach volleyball has allowed for a landmark site to be chosen

Main Media Centre at Broadbeach and sponsor showcasing sites," says Cutler.

"Then there are all the corporate hospitality locations within venues, training venues for all sports, a dedicated hotel for the Games Family dignitaries and the Commonwealth Games Village for all the athletes. Most of the 'backstage' operations – such as the operational sites for transport bus and fleet staging purposes, security deployment and logistical storage – will also rely heavily on temporary infrastructure."

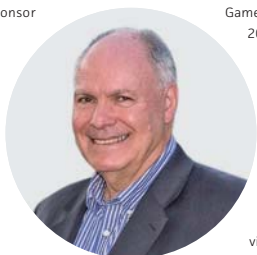
LASTING LEGACY

The investment into upgrading the existing venues has given the facilities a new lease of life – and will provide a lasting legacy for the Gold Coast community. There is also a 'pre-Games legacy', as – in most cases – the improvement work on the venues has been completed well before the athletes arrive.

"Most new venues are already complete and in use by the community," Cutler says, adding that there will be no white elephants at this Commonwealth Games.

"The venue legacy is already evident, with higher than predicted community usage levels for all of the new and improved venues. While a number of the venues will retain the capability to host major, high-performance events, the plan for the vast majority will be to facilitate enhanced community activity."

The Games will also speed up the development of a major, non-sporting project. The Commonwealth



Mark Peters is
CEO of GOLDOC

Games Village will form an important part of the 200-hectare Gold Coast Health & Knowledge Precinct (GCHKP), being developed through a partnership involving the City of Gold Coast, Griffith University, Gold Coast Health and the Queensland Government.

Described as "Asia-Pacific's emerging health and innovation hub", GCHKP will be a global business location for high-tech industry development, research and healthcare. Following the Games, the athletes' village will be transformed into an AUS\$50m mixed-use community, creating a space in which to live, work and learn. It will be an integral part of the AUS\$5bn GCHKP – the region's largest-ever urban renewal project – which will ultimately house a world-class university and two major hospitals. ●

TEMPORARY SPECIALISTS

The suppliers of temporary infrastructure at Gold Coast 2018:

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COCKRAM CONSTRUCTION delivery of the athletics track works and construction management of the Carrara precinct

GL EVENTS EXPONET grandstand seating and exhibition fit-out

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PRODUCT INNOVATION

Lauren Heath-Jones takes a look at the latest technology and innovation currently making waves across the world of sport



For full company and contact details of any of the products and services featured here, please visit www.sport-kit.net

Nike Vapor to 'dramatically evolve performance', says Kurt Parker

Nike has debuted the Nike Vapor basketball uniform, an innovative new uniform designed for the NBA.

To create the new uniform, Nike's designers focused on three key areas of improvement: fit, movement and heat regulation.

Using atlas mapping, a process involving digital body scanning, designers identified sweat zones, contact zones and range of motion, and were able to utilise the data collected to create a uniform that keeps players cool and dry and their movement uninhibited.

It was in development for over a year, and underwent hours of testing from both the athletes and designers, with players trialling the uniforms at the 2016 Rio games.



Kurt Parker says the uniforms are the lightest in NBA history

Billed as Nike Basketball's most advanced kit to date, the uniforms feature Nike AeroSwift technology and are made from a knit material that is designed to wick sweat away from the skin 30 per cent faster than its predecessor.

Kurt Parker, vice president of Apparel Design at Nike, says: "We wanted to dramatically evolve both the performance and look of the uniforms."

"We were able to streamline the fit by tailoring the uniforms to their need, resulting in the lightest uniform in NBA history," he says.



The new basketball uniform keeps players cool and dry

SPORT-KIT KEYWORD

NIKE

Polar OH1 combines 'comfort and accuracy', says Tom Fowler

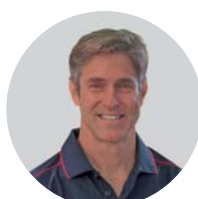


The Polar OH1 can be worn on the lower or upper arm

Wearable tech company Polar has expanded its range of heart rate monitoring technologies with the launch of the Polar OH1.

Polar OH1 is an optical heart rate sensor designed to be worn on the lower or upper arm. Polar's advanced heart rate solution allows it to provide accurate heart rate data without the need for a chest band.

With a battery life of up to 12 hours and an internal memory capable of storing up



Tom Fowler is president of Polar USA

to 200 hours of HR training, the OH1 is made from a soft, machine washable fabric, while the armband is designed

to fit snugly and discreetly around the wearer's arm during any sports activity.

Tom Fowler, president of Polar USA, says: "Polar OH1 delivers a compelling alternative to wrist and chest-based heart rate measurement. We know that comfort and accuracy are key drivers of high performance, both of which were paramount when we engineered the details of OH1."

SPORT-KIT KEYWORD

POLAR

John Miller introduces 'world class' track in Liverpool

Sports construction specialist CLS Sports has upgraded the running track at Wavertree Stadium, Liverpool, as part of the city's bid for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The stadium, which was used as a training centre for London 2012, has undergone a multi-million-pound refurbishment over the past four years in order to create a world-class athletic venue.

CLS was appointed by project administrators Sports Lab to replace the existing eight-lane 400m track with a new IAAF Polytan non-porous

sandwich system. The new all-weather track consists of a rubber mat placed onto the existing macadam sub-base with a polyurethane and red rubber crumb top surface.



CLS Sports managing director
John Miller



The new track is an IAAF Polytan non-porous sandwich system

It includes a 110m home straight, mirrored on the back straight, and features augmented field facilities, also constructed by CLS.

John Miller, managing director at CLS Sports, says: "This project reinforces our

reputation for excellence in the track-building industry. We're privileged to be able to deliver a world-class sporting facility for Liverpool."

SPORT-KIT KEYWORD

CLS SPORTS

Exterity to create immersive fan experience at Lord's Cricket Ground, says Colin Farquhar

Exterity, a Scotland-based provider of IP video content and digital signage, has completed an installation at the Warner Stand at Lord's Cricket Ground.

The installation forms part of a multi-year redevelopment plan, which is designed to maintain the ground's

reputation as the most prestigious in the world.

The Warner Stand, which was officially opened by the Duke of Edinburgh in May 2017, is a £25m (\$33m) state-of-the-art stand that has been designed to deliver an enhanced viewing experience for members and guests

alike. It includes a significant upgrade to both its catering and entertainment facilities.

Exterity's AvediaStream HDCP Encoders, TVgateway and ArtoSign solutions were installed throughout the stand by systems integrator RTS.

AvediaStream HDCP Encoders securely deliver live-content from the BT Sports and Sky channels to screens across the Warner Stand, JP Morgan Media Centre and scorer's box.

As Lord's also records non-televised county matches, AvediaStream TVgateway was installed to capture and stream live camera feeds from an existing RF system.

The ArtoSign digital signage system is designed to create



Colin Farquhar is CEO at Scotland-based Exterity

personalised and branded signage screens. It was installed in the bar and catering areas.

Colin Farquhar, CEO at Exterity, says: "We are delighted that our solutions are helping to create an immersive fan experience at a world-class sporting institution such as Lord's."

SPORT-KIT KEYWORD

EXTERITY



The Warner Stand is undergoing a significant redevelopment

The Sports and Play Construction Association, SAPCA, is the recognised

trade organisation for the sports and play facility construction industry in the UK. SAPCA fosters excellence, professionalism and continuous improvement throughout

the industry, in order to provide the high quality facilities necessary for the success of British sport. SAPCA represents a wide range of specialist constructors of natural and synthetic sports surfaces, including both outdoor and indoor facilities, from

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