

# SPORTS MANAGEMENT

VOLUME 15 Q1 2011

## EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT

**Bidding to host  
major international  
sport events**

## PITCH DESIGN

at Aviva Stadium

**NBA stars  
whet UK's  
appetite for  
basketball**

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#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Denise Gildea  
+44 (0)1462 471930

#### EDITOR

Liz Terry  
+44 (0)1462 431385

#### MANAGING EDITOR

Karen Maxwell  
+44 (0)1462 471920

#### PUBLISHER

David Hunt  
+44 (0)1462 471902

#### NEWS EDITOR

Tom Walker  
+44 (0)1462 471934

#### JOURNALISTS

Martin Nash  
+44 (0)1462 471911

Pete Hayman  
+44 (0)1462 471938

#### PRODUCTS EDITOR

Martin Nash  
+44 (0)1462 471911

#### DISPLAY ADVERTISING

John Challinor  
+44 (0)1582 607970

Jan Williams  
+44 (0)1462 471909

#### DESIGN

Ed Gallagher  
+44 (0)1905 20198

Andy Bundy  
+44 (0)1462 471924

#### INTERNET

Dean Fox  
+44 (0)1462 471900

Tim Nash  
+44 (0)1462 471917

Michael Paramore  
+44 (0)1462 471926

Emma Harris  
+44 (0)1462 471921

#### CIRCULATION MANAGER

Michael Emmerson  
+44 (0)1462 471932

#### FINANCIAL CONTROL

Sue Davis  
+44 (0)1395 519398

FINANCIAL ADMIN  
Denise Gildea  
+44 (0)1462 471930

## Synergies of sporting success

**M**ajor sporting events have become big business in the UK over the last 15 years. We're now bidding for world championships across a wide range of sports, while the momentum continues to build for the London 2012 Olympics and the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

And what a transformation this is to the sporting landscape. Following unsuccessful bids by Birmingham and Manchester for the 1992, 1996 and 2000 Olympic Games before London came back to the table – the increase in confidence which has occurred over that time it's quite extraordinary.

In the early days, the prospect of the UK hosting the Olympic Games was pretty laughable – sport was lacking in investment, infrastructure was tired and we lacked world-class facilities, but more importantly, there was a lack of confidence in our ability to hold our own on the world stage, in terms of athletic performance, event management and facility design and provision.

The changes which have come about as a result of funding from the National Lottery and both government and private sectors have been transformational and we are now in a position where our athletes compete with the best in the world, our expertise in event management is acknowledged worldwide and our facilities rival those of any other nation.

In this issue of *Sports Management*, we talk to some of the people behind the UK's international events activity (see page 22) and find out more about what it takes to get involved with events at this level.

Sally Ormiston, Deloitte's programme director for London 2012, says: "Hosting a major event gives a city or country permission to move quickly and decisively on a wide range of issues and activities that

### Hosting a major event gives a city or country permission to move quickly and decisively on a wide range of issues and activities that would normally be mired in endless debate and bureaucracy

would normally be mired in endless debate and bureaucracy. It provides a rigid deadline that accelerates developments that might take decades to complete." It's this momentum which makes opportunities of this type so compelling for decision-makers who are keen to drive through improvements.

But there's a word of warning from Capita Symonds associate director Simon Molden (page 24) when analysing the financial aspects of major games. He says it's often the international governing body of a sport which keeps the bulk of the revenue – the 2006 FIFA World Cup netted FIFA £260m, for example – with the host federation picking up the organisational and bidding costs in exchange for ticketing income.

The major wins come at a strategic level, with a multiplier effect on spend by tourists. Molden reports that the 2006 World Cup is estimated to have had an economic impact of £7.4bn on the German economy, while the 2015 Rugby World Cup will have an impact of £2.1bn.



There can be other less tangible benefits too – in this issue we talk to England Basketball about their plans to grow the sport from the grassroots upwards (page 36). Prospects for basketball have been significantly boosted this year with the arrival of the NBA in the UK, with the first games taking place at the O2 in earlier this month.

England Basketball says that the press coverage generated by the arrival of world class basketball has led to an increase in recruitment and profile, with all contributing to the growth of the game.

Success in sport today depends on synergies which extend out into the global marketplace and which demand that we play on the world stage.

Liz Terry, editor [lizterry@leisuremedia.com](mailto:lizterry@leisuremedia.com) twitter: @elizterry

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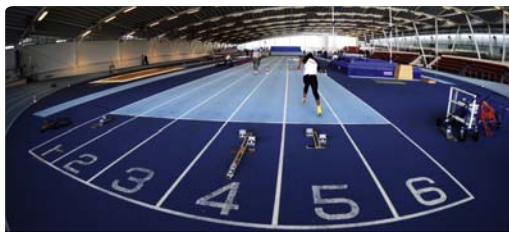
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**SAPCA**

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John Goodbody reports on

## A conflict of use at the Olympic Stadium

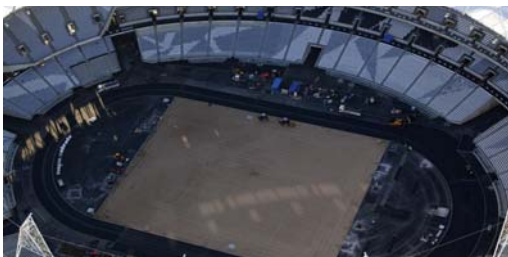
**S**o we've ended up with an Olympic Stadium that, after the Games, is not ideal for football, nor athletics; or Leyton Orient, certainly not for Tottenham Hotspur and probably not even for the local residents of Newham. After the rebuilding of Wembley, to which the word fiasco will always be attached, it might have been thought that lessons would have been learnt for the Olympic Stadium.

Wembley may now be a superb 90,000 seat arena, but for nearly 10 years there were parliamentary inquiries, delays in the building, leading figures losing their jobs, escalating costs, public money ill-used and ministerial disputes.

With the Olympic Stadium, it should have been clear that the ideal legacy stadium would have been a smaller version of the 80,000-seater Stade de France, near Paris – a venue with retractable seating that would accommodate 50,000 fans for football, when the seats are rolled over the surrounding track, and about 35,000-40,000 for athletics.

It's true that the sightlines for athletics may not be ideal because the slope of the stands prevents some spectators from seeing all of the lanes. However, the Stade de France staged the 2003 World Championships and annually holds a Grand Prix, sometimes just a week after hosting a football match. One senior official in UK Athletics has privately expressed his surprise to me that such a plan was not carried out.

One reason was that the Olympic Board and the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) had to get approval of a design in 2007 in order for the stadium to be built in time for the Games. Richard Caborn, the Minister for Sport at the time, has stated of the board: "There was a massive bias against Premier League football and every obstacle was put in the way. They weren't being realistic about the long-term legacy and it became athletics at all costs."



**It should have been clear that the ideal legacy stadium would have been a smaller version of the Stade de France**

It may also be true that the consultants commissioned by the ODA to conduct an Olympic legacy plan were told to exclude Premier League football, because of what Seb Coe promised in Singapore when London got the Games. There's no doubt that several leading figures in the International Olympic Committee, who were also officials in international athletics, were swayed in their voting by the fact that up against Paris in the final round, they would get a large stadium in London, whereas the Stade de France was already up and running.

However, it's also true that West Ham, the local Premiership club was less than completely enthusiastic about their involvement at the new venue. The club was unstable, having been taken over by the Icelandic millionaire Eggert Magnusson in November 2006, and, when he ran into difficulties, the club went to David Gold and David Sullivan, who moved from Birmingham City. In addition, the negotiations over Westfield, the massive shopping centre close to the Olympic Park, were at a delicate stage and it was felt that the frequent presence of

thousands of rival football fans might jeopardise completion of the deal.

As for Tottenham Hotspur, they were nowhere near as forthcoming in their enthusiasm to move from White Hart Lane as they have been in recent months. At the time, the concern at the club was more about ensuring a decent position in the Premiership, rather than competing in the European Champions' League, which this season has given impetus to the desire for a bigger venue.

It may be that Karen Brady, the West Ham vice-chair, will be proved right when she says that she's been advised that retractable seating can be installed at a cost of £10m after the Games. And West Ham may be able to get 60,000 spectators by drastically reducing prices. But that depends on them staying in the Premiership. However, except for the World and conceivably the European Championships, a stadium of more than 40,000 is, in any case, too big for athletics on a regular basis.

In the end these problems are no one's particular fault. It's a matter of timing and changing circumstances. ●

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## Lord Triesman: FA 'backed out' of regulation

PETE HAYMAN

Former Football Association (FA) chair Lord Triesman has claimed the national governing body "backed out" from regulating the domestic sport.

The comments were made as part of the first evidence session for a culture, media and sport committee inquiry into the governance of football.

Lord Triesman claimed that, apart from the issue of on-field discipline, the FA no longer ran the game and had become sidelined by the Premier League.



Extreme Connexions' completed steel structure

## Extreme centre taking shape in Hertfordshire

TOM WALKER

Work on Extreme Connexions, an extreme sports and arts venue in Hemel Hempstead, has reached another milestone with the completion of the steel structure.

The centre is due to open in July 2011 and will include a 60m x 15m climbing wall, a skate park, indoor caving and a challenging high ropes course.

The facility will also feature a music recording studio, a band rehearsal room and an internet café as well as a teen-focused health centre with counselling rooms.

## Council reveals preferred Colwyn Bay designs

PETE HAYMAN

K2 Architects have been revealed as the preferred firm to design a watersports hotspot on Colwyn Bay promenade.

Part of the Colwyn Bay Waterfront Project, which is funded by the Welsh Assembly government and match funded by the European Regional Development Fund, a design competition saw six firms short-listed. The top two were identified following the evaluation process before being put to Conwy Council's cabinet, which backed the Liverpool-based group's plans.

## Wolves stadium to be revamped

PETE HAYMAN

Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club (WWFC) has announced that work is to start on the redevelopment of its Molineux Stadium at the end of the season.

WWFC chair Steve Morgan has confirmed plans for the first stage of the project to demolish the Stan Cullis (North) Stand and replace it with a new two-tier stand.

Phase one will cost around £16m, which will be funded from existing cashflow, and will see the capacity of Molineux increase to 31,700 in time for the 2012-13 season. Extending into the open north east corner of the ground, the new stand will also accommodate away supporters, currently housed in the Jack Harris Flank.

If WWFC proceeds with the second phase of the project, the total cost of the development



Work is poised to start on the stadium revamp at the end of the season

is set to be around £40m and will increase the ground's capacity to 36,000.

A new club megastore, a café, a museum, a family information centre and hospitality facilities are also mooted as part of the development. Buckingham Group has been appointed by the club to deliver the scheme.

## Hunt outlines new School Games proposals

PETE HAYMAN

Culture secretary Jeremy Hunt has outlined government plans for the School Games tournament in a speech to the Sports Colleges Conference.

Addressing more than 500 delegates from schools across the country, Hunt said the project would give every child the chance to take part.

Under the proposals, 500 schools across nine regions are to pilot an annual School Games Day, which would provide a 'finals' day from a programme of intra-school competition. A rolling programme of leagues and tournaments will help encourage greater competition between schools at town or district level and up to 60 new county or city-level Festivals of Sport



The School Games plans are inspired by Olympic and Paralympic sports

will help show off the best in local competitive sport through inter-school finals.

Details of how to get involved with School Games are to be published in the spring.

## Latest stage of Gateshead projct complete

TOM WALKER

Work on the latest phase of a multi-million pound project to revamp Gateshead International Stadium has been completed.

A new two-storey extension - featuring a café, classroom and hospitality facilities - is

set to be complemented by the refurbishment of the existing changing areas.

Gateshead Council is working with S&P Architects on the scheme, which has already led to the completion of a new canopy for the stadium's East Stand.

## Work starts on Dundee complex

PETE HAYMAN

Scottish sports minister Shona Robison has helped mark the start of work on a new £31.5m swimming pool being developed in Dundee.

Dundee City Council (DCC) is behind the scheme, which is set to replace the existing Olympia Leisure Centre and due to be completed in September 2012.

Facilities will include an adaptable 50m competition pool; a wave pool; rapid river; dive pool; flumes, and a fitness suite. A multi-storey car park is also to be built as part of the development.

Mansell has been appointed by DCC to deliver the venue, which has been awarded £3m of funding by sportscotland and will help drive up participation ahead of the 2014 Commonwealth Games.



The £31.5m swimming pool complex is due to open in September 2012

Robison said: "This facility will not only increase participation, it will improve performance and deliver a lasting legacy from the 2014 Games. A competition-standard 50m pool, as well as excellent family-orientated facilities, will benefit swimmers in the city and across the north east of Scotland."

## Green light for DMU leisure centre scheme

PETE HAYMAN

De Montfort University (DMU) has been given the green light for a multi-million pound leisure centre development in Leicester.

Leicester City Council granted planning permission for the scheme on 18 January, having already agreed to sell the land off Duns Lane to the institution in August 2009.

The S&P Architects-designed complex will feature a 25m, six-lane swimming pool; a gym and studio; an eight-court sports hall and a climbing wall. A sauna, a café, and ancillary, changing and reception facilities are also proposed as part of the new two-storey development, which it is anticipated will be available for public use.



S&P Architects are behind the design of the multi-million pound facility

A council report put before planners said "the proposal would deliver a quality building in a prominent location, contributing to the regeneration of the area".

## Football clubs show 'impressive resilience'

TOM WALKER

Deloitte's latest Football Money League has revealed that the combined revenues of the top 20 highest earning clubs has exceeded £3.4bn for the first time. The top six highest earning clubs have remained unchanged from last

year's Football Money League, while England's Manchester City climbed the highest; up nine places to 11th. Other English clubs included in the list are Arsenal (5th), Chelsea (6th), Liverpool (8th), Tottenham Hotspur (12th) and Aston Villa (20th).

## Glasgow 2014 shooting centre gets go ahead

TOM WALKER

A £4.5m project to upgrade the Morton Farm shooting centre in West Lothian to enable it to host events during the 2014 Commonwealth Games has been given the green light by the Scottish Government.

The project is led by sportscotland and the Scottish Target Shooting Federation (STSF) and will lead to a major expansion of the existing clay pigeon shooting site at Morton Farm.

According to STSF, the project will create a "long-lasting legacy" from the Games.



The first funding awards will be revealed in April

## Clubs encouraged to bid for Sportmatch funding

PETE HAYMAN

Grassroots sports clubs and voluntary organisations are being encouraged to bid for grants as part of Sport England's Sportmatch programme.

The initiative has been relaunched for 2011-12 and enables not-for-profit groups to bid for between £1,000-£100,000 to match commercial sponsorship.

Clubs, voluntary groups, governing bodies and other organisations are now being invited to submit applications, with the first awards to be announced in early April.

## Banstead swimming pool decision deferred

PETE HAYMAN

A decision on plans for a new 'dry-only' leisure centre in Banstead, Surrey, has been deferred by the local authority.

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council's (RBBC) proposals to build a replacement venue for the town without a swimming pool attracted nearly 2,000 objections.

RBBC leader Joan Spiers said: "Given the concerns expressed in the consultation responses regarding Banstead pool, members wish to have more information before taking a final decision."



## FIA confirms support for disability sport initiative

TOM WALKER

The Fitness Industry Association (FIA) has lent its support to Yoodo Sports – a new initiative to help people with disabilities take up and enjoy physical activity.

The scheme, which is the result of a partnership between Leonard Cheshire Disability and Sport England, will pilot in Yorkshire this year and is based on bringing disabled people together with activity 'buddies' – people who may or may not have an impairment themselves but want to help others play sport or be active.



The trust will take over a number of public pools

## New trust to operate Doncaster leisure facilities

TOM WALKER

Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust (DCLT) is to take over management of additional leisure facilities on behalf of the local authority.

The trust, which already operates Doncaster Dome, is set for further development after Doncaster Council's cabinet agreed that it would offer the best way forward. Adwick, Armthorpe, Edlington, Rossington, St James Pool and Health Club; and Thorne will be taken over by DCLT, along with Hatfield Water Park and Crookhill Golf Club.

## £5.7m community facility opens in Wolverhampton

PETE HAYMAN

Wolverhampton City Council (WCC) has officially unveiled the new £5.7m Blakenhall Community and Healthy Living Centre.

Funded primarily by All Saints and Blakenhall Community Development, the venue was opened with the help of BBC presenter Satnam Rana on 17 January.

Facilities include a fitness suite, a young people's gym and a toning suite. Sunbeam Children's Centre will operate the venue's crèche, while a café is scheduled to open in due course. WCC will manage the centre.

## OPLC in venue operator search

PETE HAYMAN

The Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) has started its search for operators to take over the Aquatics Centre and the Multi-Use Games Arena after the 2012 Games.

A formal expression of interest process is now underway to identify potential tenants, which had until 2 March to come forward. The OPLC hopes to appoint operators for the venues by January 2012, with contracts set to run for 10 years.

Due to reopen in mid-2013, the Multi-Use Arena will be capable of providing sport and entertainment events, as well as the potential for a health and fitness centre.

The Zaha Hadid-designed Aquatic Centre is due to reopen in January 2014 and will offer two 50m swimming pools, a diving pool and permanent spectator seating for 2,500.



The Multi-Use Arena will stage handball events during the 2012 Games

Malcolm Ross, the OPLC's executive director of operations and venues, told *Leisure Opportunities* that there were clear targets each of the facilities has to achieve. He said: "Each one of the venues has its own specific objectives, and we will be evaluating the expressions of interest against those criteria."

## University of York complex approved

PETE HAYMAN

The City of York Council (CYC) has approved plans for a new 69m sports complex as part of a wider expansion of the University of York's Heslington East campus.

York Sports Village will feature a competition-standard eight-lane, 25m swimming pool and a learner pool; a 100-station gym; and a full-size 3G synthetic pitch.

Three further five-a-side football pitches are also planned as part of the new Space Architects-designed complex, which will be open to members of the public, staff and students. A limited liability partnership company called York Sports Village will operate the complex, with any surpluses ring-fenced for reinvestment into the facilities.



Facilities will include a competition standard 25m swimming pool

The masterplan for the development features a second phase to include more grass pitches, a 150-station computerised fitness suite, floor space for classes such as yoga, three treatment rooms and a sauna and steamroom.

## Buxton pool poised for spring reopening

TOM WALKER

A swimming pool in Buxton is to reopen to the public this spring, following the completion of a "much-needed" overhaul of the facility.

High Peak Borough Council (HPBC) and DC Leisure have carried out a £2m revamp of

Buxton Swimming Pool, with the new-look pool and a 150sq m (1,615sq ft) gym to be handed over on 4 and 26 April respectively.

HPBC and DC Leisure will then take up to three weeks to clean the facilities and deal with any remaining issues ahead of its opening.

## FA reveals youth review findings

PETE HAYMAN

Recommendations to improve the development of young football players have been unveiled following an extensive review carried out by the Football Association (FA).

FA director of football development, Sir Trevor Brooking, identified 25 measures in order to help improve the sport from grassroots level to the Club England set-up.

A reform of the way that youth football is delivered in England has been placed at the centre of the proposals, while another major theme focuses on coach development. The FA is proposing to invest in the education of coaches, which will complement the new St George's Park development near Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire.

FA general secretary Alex Horne said: "The recommendations are fundamental in helping



The FA review aims to help improve the development of young players

us to ensure that we produce more and better English players.

"The FA must ensure that the highest quality coaches are available to the game, and that coaches are trained with the right skills to specifically work with young players at every age across clubs from grassroots to elite level."

## Lifestyle and sport venues for Cheshire

TOM WALKER

Cheshire East Council (CEC) has revealed that new lifestyle centres are to be built in Crewe and Wilmslow as part of efforts to roll out the concept across the region.

The local authority is looking to overhaul the way it delivers health and wellbeing services to residents, with the venues set to accommodate leisure, library and social care facilities. Under CEC's plans, each lifestyle centre will be able to provide activities such as basketball, water aerobics, badminton, PC tuition and tea dances.

The initial two facilities will be followed by two further new-build centres in Congleton and Macclesfield and are designed to reduce health inequalities in Cheshire East.



Plans for the lifestyle centres will see a range of services under one roof

Andrew Knowles, the cabinet member with responsibility for health and wellbeing, said: "This is a bold, ambitious and forward-thinking plan which will bring leisure centres, libraries and care services under one roof."

## App launched to boost disability sports participation

TOM WALKER

A new service allowing customers to search for disability sports facilities while 'on the move' has been unveiled.

The Leisure Database Company, Splashpath and DisabledGo have teamed up as part of

the new scheme, which aims to deliver more powerful consumer information through Splashpath, the newly launched iPhone app.

Information about where, when and how to take part in sport, combined with full access details on sites, is provided by the service.

## Renfrewshire investment plans move forward

TOM WALKER

Renfrewshire Council's plans for a multi-million pound investment in local leisure facilities has moved forward.

Two planning applications – for an adult day care centre as part of the £7.1m upgrade of Paisley's Lagoon Leisure Centre and a £6.3m sports facility at Johnstone High School – have been given the green light.

The facilities will form part of the council's wider £92m investment in schools, community and leisure facilities.



The move could create the UK's largest gym chain

## sporta members to create national chain of gyms

TOM WALKER

Members of the Sports and Recreation Trust Association (sporta) are finalising plans to create a nationwide chain of leisure centres and fitness suites.

The move, which can be seen as an expansion of the current UK Fitness Network (UKFN), could result in linking more than 900 centres across the country – making it the largest gym chain in the UK.

UKFN currently includes 14 leisure trusts, which gives the public access to nearly 130 leisure centre gyms.

## £10m cost for Spalding leisure complex scheme

TOM WALKER

A South Holland District Council report has revealed the cost of plans to revamp Spalding's Castle Sports Complex.

According to the report, the estimated costs of renovating the complex will come to £7.2m, rising to £10m once "design and client supervision" costs are considered.

Councillors have now agreed to earmark £20,000 to draw up a business case for the scheme, with the proposed design having been guided by a survey carried out on behalf of the council by Leisure-net Solutions.

## New indoor tennis centre opens in North Tyneside

PETE HAYMAN

Tennis @ Churchill – a new indoor tennis facility – has been officially launched at Churchill Community College in Wallsend, North Tyneside.

Funded by the college, the Lawn Tennis Association and the government, it is hoped that the new facility will help encourage more people to take up the sport.

The all-weather centre incorporates four courts and will be available to students, local clubs and the local community, catering for all ages and abilities.



FaulknerBrowns drew up plans for the new venue

## £100,000 boost for Aberdeen aquatic centre

PETE HAYMAN

First Group is to provide £100,000 towards the cost of Aberdeen's new aquatic centre.

A 50m swimming pool will be at the centre of the FaulknerBrowns Architects-designed development, which will form the second phase of Aberdeen Sports Village.

Aberdeen City Council approved the development in October, which will see the former Linksfield Academy demolished.

Facilities will include a 25m x 16.5m diving pool with adjustable floor, a full-timing/video analysis lab and a health suite.

## Rodney Parade stadium scheme moves forward

PETE HAYMAN

Newport Gwent Dragons has announced that work is to commence on the next stage of a multi-million pound renovation of the Rodney Parade stadium in Newport.

Work will include a new East Stand at the venue, which is set to boast seating for more than 2,000 supporters and 13 corporate boxes. The development is scheduled for completion in August.

Port Talbot-based Andrew Scott is leading the latest phase of the scheme, with HLN Architects acting as project architect.

## CPFC unveils new stadium plans

PETE HAYMAN

Crystal Palace Football Club (CPFC) has unveiled plans to transform the National Sports Centre (NSC) as part of a major new stadium development to be located at Crystal Palace Park, London.

The npower Championship club – in partnership with CB Richard Ellis and AFL Architects – is looking to move back to its original home with a new 40,000-seat venue.

A new indoor aquatic centre, a reconfigured indoor complex for the NSC, and a community athletics facility are also proposed as part of the development.

CPFC said that the aquatic facility would remove a need for the swimming pool to remain as part of the listed NSC structure and help reduce its running costs. The scheme would also enable the current space to be



Plans include retaining an athletics facility within Crystal Palace

redeployed to cater for a wider range of community and elite athletic sports.

CPFC co-chair Steve Parish said: "We believe a stadium at Crystal Palace park can help create a bright new future for the club as well as helping it to breathe new life into both the sports centre and the park."

## Godalming leisure centre plans submitted

PETE HAYMAN

Waverley Borough Council (WBC) has received a planning application for a new leisure centre in Godalming.

The proposed facility would be located next to Godalming Lawn Tennis Club and feature a 25m swimming pool as well as a learner pool.

A 60-station fitness suite, a dance studio and a café are also included in the design.

ISG has been appointed to deliver the £6m facility, which has been designed by Pozzoni and aims to rival privately operated health clubs.

WBC is likely to decide the fate of the plans in March, with members of the public able to comment until 11 February. The construction phase is expected to take 18 months.



The leisure centre will boast a 25m swimming pool and a 60-station gym

WBC's Roger Steel said: "Building a new leisure centre in Godalming is a top priority for Waverley and receiving the planning application is another major milestone reached."

## Council plans Cheshunt leisure investment

TOM WALKER

Grundy Park Leisure Centre in Cheshunt is to benefit from up to £2.5m of investment under Broxbourne Borough Council plans.

The local authority said that it was proposing "large-scale investment" at leisure facilities

such as Grundy Park, rather than look to reopen Hoddesdon's open air pool.

Hoddesdon Open Air Pool shut in 2008 and councillors have decided that the expenditure required needed to bring the facility up to a "reasonable" standard was not justified.

## Water Polo Arena firms revealed

PETE HAYMAN

Work on the 5,000-seat Water Polo Arena at London's Olympic Park has now started after the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) named the contractors for the scheme.

Silvertown-based ES Group will construct the main building, while A&T/Barr and Wray of Glasgow will install the temporary swimming pools. Jackson Civil Engineering Group, Byrne Group, Alto Seating Systems and Balfour Beatty Engineering Services are also working on the scheme.

A design team – headed by David Morley Architects and including Buro Happold and Max Fordham – has drawn up plans for the wedge-shaped arena, which will feature an inflatable roof and include a 37m-long competition pool and a 33m-long warm-up pool.



The ODA has revealed which firms will build the 2012 water polo arena

The venue will be used to host the men's and women's Olympic water polo competitions.

ODA project sponsor for the Water Polo Arena, Ian Crockford, said: "The venue will join the Aquatics Centre to form a dramatic and action-packed gateway to the Olympic Park when spectators arrive in 2012."

## INDUSTRY COMMENT



SEAN HOLT CEO ISRM

In January, members of The Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (ISRM) and members of the Institute of Sport, Parks and Leisure (ISPAL) voted to merge to form a professional body for sport and physical activity, with support from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport; Sport England; Skills Active and SPELG (Employers Group).

Since 1977, many attempts have been made to bring the two organisations together. More recently, Richard Caborn the former Minister for Sport and his successor Gerry Sutcliffe made it clear that they'd like one organisation to represent the professionals in our sector with whom they could have meaningful dialogue.

Based at SportPark in Loughborough, a transitional board, headed by myself, will be in place for two years in which time we will decide the name, purpose, strategy and future of the new organisation.

If you are not already engaged with a professional body then now is the time to enrol. We have already seen an upturn in membership, which with our combined memberships now stands at around 6,000 and we expect this number to rise towards 20,000 by 2020.

However, we're well aware that members need to see a tangible benefit to becoming a member and to that effect from Feb 2011 there will be 32 hrs online learning available free for members, from a range of courses on topics such as budgeting, coaching and health and safety. In addition, there will be 18 regional, free CPD events for members, a new website, technical support and a new look magazine, which will cover a much wider aspect of our industry.

For more information see [www.isrm.co.uk](http://www.isrm.co.uk)

## Work starts on UEA Soccerpark extension

PETE HAYMAN

Construction work is now underway on a £400,000 expansion of the Soccerpark venue at the University of East Anglia's (UEA) SportsPark.

Three new seven-a-side football pitches are to be constructed as part of the development, which is to be delivered by contractor Bernhards and scheduled to be completed this month.

The 48m x 24m pitches will be fitted with a 3G synthetic surface and will complement the four existing five-a-side 3G and six seven-a-side AstroTurf pitches at Soccerpark.

Sportspark director Keith Nicholls said: "We already have more small-sided soccer pitches than anywhere else in East Anglia.



Three new seven-a-side football pitches are to be created at Soccerpark

"After this extension, we will have 13 pitches for the public to hire. The larger sized 3G pitches will give our customers even more choice when it comes to size and surface."

## Maidstone United in stadium funding appeal

TOM WALKER

Maidstone United Football Club (MUFC) has launched a campaign to raise funds towards a new £1.6m stadium at James Whatman Way.

The Ryman League Premier Division club is planning to fund the development using

capital from its new owners (£250,000) and the Football Foundation (£150,000).

MUFC anticipates that it will source the remaining £1.2m from new investors buying shares in the club, with the closing date for the campaign at the end of April.

## Highlights of the SAPCA Conference 2011

The Sports and Play Construction Association's (SAPCA) annual business conference took place in Stratford-upon-Avon on 31 January, with the theme of 'Meeting the Challenge'.

Under the skilful chairmanship of former Olympian and UK Athletics CEO David Moorcroft OBE, the event focused on the future provision of sports and play facilities, including the likely impact of cuts in spending, and how the industry should best manage and respond to the challenges facing its future business.

Following SAPCA chair Tony Hession's introduction to the work being undertaken to strengthen the association's regulatory role and its drive to raise industry standards, keynote speaker and former business manager to Sir Clive Woodward, Jeff Grout, delivered an inspiring session on the vital importance of effective leadership for continued business success. He also emphasised the essential need for clear business objectives, supported by strong team motivation and communication.



The future procurement of sports facilities was discussed during the conference open forum

Duncan Wood-Allum, of the Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy, presented an insightful analysis of the impact on sports facility provision of the current local government environment, and the implications for the industry. He stressed the importance, in a changing market, of companies being innovative and flexible, and why it would be necessary to understand changes to the way the public sector would procure products and services.

Other key sessions included: a view from Graham Finnie of sportscotland on the future for sports facilities north of the border; guidance was given on the new Construction Act from Colin Jones of Hewitsons solicitors; a study of the future market for synthetic turf from Sylvia Tabero of AMI Ltd; and a review of the findings of SAPCA's Recent Technical Audit from Colin Young of SAPCA.

The conference concluded with a lively open forum on the future procurement of sports facilities, and the challenge to the industry to deliver "more for less", such as through framework agreements. While recognising the pressure on sports bodies and local authorities to maximise the spending power of reduced capital budgets, the debate highlighted the vital importance of ensuring that the quality and longevity of sports facilities should not be compromised by a drive to achieve short-term cost savings.



Left: Wood-Allum on sport facility provision in the current financial climate. Below: The after-dinner auction raised £3,000 for ParalympicsGB. Right: SAPCA chair Tony Hession





## Dates announced for regional events

**S**APCA has announced the dates for three Sports Facility Construction exhibitions and seminars that will take place this year.

The first event takes place at Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility, Motherwell, Scotland on Tuesday 12 April. The second will be held at Aston Villa FC in Birmingham on Tuesday 7 June, and the third at Twickenham Stadium in London on Tuesday 29 November.

Each one-day event comprises a series of informative seminars, accompanied by an exhibition featuring leading designers and constructors of sports facilities, suppliers of related products and services, and consultants offering expert advice on sports facility projects.

The Ravenscraig event will be jointly presented by sportscotland, and supported by the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. Attendance is free and open to all concerned with the design,

procurement, construction, management and maintenance of sports facilities. The seminar programme will include:

- Strategy and funding for sports facility development in Scotland
- Technical guidance for facility design
- Standards for sports surfaces
- Design and construction of synthetic sports surfaces
- Upgrading natural turf pitches
- Stadium redevelopment design
- The selection of indoor sports surfaces
- Community sports hubs
- Sports surface maintenance
- The design of spaces for sport
- Physical activity in modern schools
- The development of the Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility
- Sports facilities for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games

Delegate registration for these events can be made online at [www.sapca.org.uk](http://www.sapca.org.uk), or by phone on +44 (0)24 7641 6316



Expert advice is offered on sports facility projects

## Jeff Perris receives SAPCA Achievement Award



SAPCA's Billy Martin (left) presents Jeff Perris with the award during the SAPCA dinner

**A**t its recent Annual Dinner, the association recognised Jeff Perris' outstanding contribution to the UK's sports facility industry by presenting him with the prestigious SAPCA Award for Achievement.

The award was presented by Billy Martin, chair of SAPCA's Natural Sportsturf Division, who highlighted Jeff's impressive career. This included 43 years' service at

the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI), where he worked as head of advisory services until his retirement from the institute in 2010.

Jeff's vast expertise and experience in sports turf proved invaluable in his support during the production of SAPCA's first Code of Practice for the Design, Construction and Improvement of Natural Sports Turf, which was published last year.

### 2011 SAPCA EVENTS

Thursday 22 March  
**Sports Research and Funding Workshop**  
Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire

Tuesday 12 April  
**Sports Facility Construction Exhibition & Seminar**  
Ravenscraig Regional Sport Facility, Scotland

Tuesday 17 May  
**SAPCA Annual General Meeting**  
Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire

Tuesday 7 June  
**Sports Facility Construction Exhibition & Seminar**  
Aston Villa FC, Birmingham

Wednesday 29 June  
**SAPCA Golf Day**  
Hellidon Lakes, Northamptonshire

Thursday 10 November  
**SAPCA Technical Meeting**  
Loughborough University

Tuesday 29 November  
**Sports Facility Construction Exhibition & Seminar**  
Twickenham Stadium, London



## Keith Mills oversees merger in sport

The project board established to oversee the proposed merger between Sport England and UK Sport is to be chaired by Sir Keith Mills.

Sir Keith has been chosen by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to push through the unification of the organisations into one single arms-length agency by 1 April 2013.

His responsibilities will also include working with stakeholders from devolved administrations and other home nation sports councils to safeguard the delivery of sport.

Hugh Robertson, minister for sport and the Olympics, said: "[Sir Keith's] unparalleled business experience, combined with a detailed knowledge of our sporting landscape, means he is the perfect person to oversee this work."

## Ashton chairs BISL's Sport Working Group

Business in Sport and Leisure (BISL) has named S&P Architects chief executive Keith Ashton as chair of its Sports Working Group.

Ashton, a regular contributor to policy and thinking at BISL in recent years, will succeed David Teasdale, who has assumed the new role of executive chair of the organisation.

Commenting on the appointment, Teasdale said: "Keith brings a breadth of vital experience and creative energy to this important BISL post. He's the right person to lead our Sport's Group's efforts to grow the market in these challenging economic times."

Ashton added: "Despite the economic climate and the threats to public sector sport,



there's real opportunity for creative and holistic leadership in the sector and I'm sure that many parties sitting around the BISL table can deliver that."



## Austin to be CEO at Pentathlon GB

Pentathlon GB has revealed that Jon Austin is to take over as the national governing body's CEO on 28 March.

A former head of performance programmes at Badminton England, Austin has held the position of performance advisor at UK Sport since 2008, where he worked with a number of successful national governing bodies, contributing to world class success.

Austin began his career as a physical training instructor in the RAF before leaving the Services and taking a managerial role with David Lloyd Leisure.

He replaces the previous CEO Peter Hart, who has moved to a role with the Organising Committee for London 2012.



## Whitehead 2012 handball appointment

Sue Whitehead, a teacher from Heywood in Rochdale, has taken up the role of handball and goalball services manager at the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics after being appointed to the position at the end of last year.

The 48-year-old has been granted a secondment from her role as community sports manager at Siddal Moor Sports College – meaning that she will return to the job when the London 2012 Paralympics draw to a close in September next year.

Whitehead says she's been involved with the sport and the British Handball Association for many years and has noticed that the sport is definitely getting more popular – particularly on the Continent.

"In Europe, handball is the biggest participation sport for girls and women and the second biggest after football for men, so it is very important on the world stage," she says.

Whitehead first worked for British Handball when she was event manager for the highly-successful Four Nations Tournament in Sheffield in 2008. She then went on to hold a similar role on the team which planned events at Crystal Palace National Sports Centre in London, the Echo Arena in Liverpool and the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow.

Whitehead will now spend the next 18 months working at the London 2012 head offices in Canary Wharf, although she plans to return home to her husband and two children in Ramsbottom at weekends.



## Sally Hancock

Karen Maxwell talks to the director of Olympic marketing for Lloyds Banking Group

### What's your career background and what does your current role entail?

I was founder and CEO of Redmandarin, a sponsorship strategy consultancy, working particularly with major international brands. I was involved with Lloyds TSB's tie up with London 2012 and stepped away from the company to run this programme for the bank.

My current role covers everything from our relationship with the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and other stakeholders, how the bank activates its sponsorship both internally and externally and how we deliver the rights we get as a partner, to how we manage, govern, budget, programme and basically bring this partnership to life right throughout the group.

### Lloyds TSB was the first sponsor to partner LOCOG, what were the reasons behind this early involvement?

LOCOG needed a bank, a telecoms provider and a power supplier early on so certain categories were released to the marketplace. Although Lloyds TSB was a significant bank it was perhaps not the most adventurous. However, when this opportunity arose it was quickly realised that the partnership could be truly transformational –

both internally and externally – and by being first it made a very bold statement of self belief in its own organisation and in the power of the Olympics to deliver great change.

To make the most of this partnership we're taking a phased approach, which mirrors the public engagement with the Games. Within the next 16 months we will really start delivering against this strategy by engaging with communities around the UK. This will be evident in our partnership with the Olympic Torch Relay, with LOCOG Live Sites, our continued support of National School Sports Week and our Local Heroes programme. All these are locally driven, which really builds on the fact that Lloyds TSB has branches in every corner of the country, top to bottom, side to side.

### How do you measure sponsorship success?

Measuring success across a whole range of metrics is standard practice at the bank. We work across a system of balanced scorecards that link to a whole set of metrics that are identified, targets set and progress tracked throughout the year. Regarding the 2012 tie-up, we measure across three main areas – all of which have been pretty consistent since 2007.

We look at the incremental business developed off the back of this tie up. We're a major supporter of the business opportunities around 2012. Around 650 contracts have been awarded by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) or LOCOG through the Compete4 procurement programme and we have a banking relationship with about a third of these companies.

We measure how the partnership makes customers think differently – by analysing customer awareness and the amount of consideration towards and the recommendation of Lloyds TSB that occurs as a result of the partnership and our activation of it.

We also measure how the partnership is motivating and engaging bank employees. We encourage our workforce to volunteer within their communities, to consider their own health and wellbeing, and reward and recognise good performance with Games-related incentives.

### What are the current trends in sports sponsorship?

The sponsorship world has changed a lot in the past 10 years. We're witnessing an increasing shift towards providing brand experiences for a target audience rather than a simple one-way message during a televised advert break. Although there is still a place for that, a decent, well thought out partnership can provide a far richer communicative experience than an advert on the back of a newspaper.

**We encourage our workforce to volunteer within their communities, consider their own wellbeing and reward and recognise good performance with Games-related incentives**



# MALCOLM ROSS

The OPLC's executive director of operations and venues talks to Karen Maxwell about his vision for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park post-2012

**W**hen the Closing Ceremony of the 2012 Paralympic Games brings London 2012 to an end and the Olympic Torch begins its journey towards its 2016 destination in Rio, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is set to be transformed into a thriving community and a vibrant focal point for events, sport and leisure – with Olympic heritage at its heart.

The Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC), established in 2009 by the Mayor of London and central government as a public sector, not-for-profit company, is responsible for the long-term planning, development, management and maintenance of the park and its facilities post-Games. Its board of directors comprises a team of experts whose skills range from sports,

social enterprise and community engagement, to business, marketing and finance.

A year ago, Malcolm Ross joined the OPLC operations team, bringing 30 years' experience in strategic planning, opening and operating large-scale developments to the party.

Former managing director, Europe for Le Meridien Hotels; vice president of Disneyland Paris; vice president of Disney MGM Studios in Orlando, Florida and most recently chief operating officer for Seven Tides, Dubai – where he was responsible for several mixed-use developments – Ross might be new to the public sector but he's certainly able to bring an international perspective to the project.

"I've worked on mixed-use developments and multi-faceted sites and have a strong background in hospitality, entertainment and the hosting of large-scale international events," he explains. "But developing an Olympic-focused legacy within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and linking it with the regeneration of

East London is a unique opportunity – so I didn't have to be asked twice. The OPLC is not charged with opening a venture and then walking away from it. We'll be opening up the park off the back of an Olympic legacy with a commercially-focused, community-grounded development that will evolve over the next 20 years."

## Long-term vision

So how will Ross' previous experience impact the Olympic park project? "Disneyland Paris was a parallel project, although without the sporting connotation," he explains. "The setting up of this entertainment and leisure destination became the catalyst for the regeneration of Eastern Paris. We developed a very big entertainment and hospitality complex, which has become the biggest tourist destination in Europe with over 15 million visitations a year. In Dubai we developed several mixed-use developments that included five-star hotels, entertainment complexes and residential areas. It was putting



these projects together – from planning to building to launching, operating and sustaining – that has given me valuable, transferable experience,” he says. “The long-term vision for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park includes the building of houses, communities, schools, transport links, parklands and attractions – offering “the best of London in one place”.

“There’ll be no other place like it,” he says.

“The reason why the legacy company was set up well before the Games came to London was to properly plan for the extended life of the park – the way it’ll be operated, programmed and animated,” Ross explains. “I see exciting opportunities, but everything has to be co-ordinated through a planned, focused approach, rather than a knee-jerk reaction.

“We’re looking at the fullest, widest spectrum of co-ordinated events and programming within the park, which has been highlighted in the 10-year attractions masterplan, that I’m driving with my Disney background. I can’t shed any light on the details just yet but what I can say is that we’ll have some attractions open from day one and will be opening something significant in the park every two to three years to encourage repeat visitations.”

This vision of the park is representative of the rapid change and development in East London, since London won the bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games back in 2005 and Ross says local partnerships are key.

“The regeneration outside the park has already started,” he says, referring to Westfield Stratford City at the gateway of the park. Hailed as Europe’s largest



ARCelor MITTAL ORBIT/LEGACY COMPANY, 2010

urban shopping centre, the 1.9 million sq ft of retail space will include 300 targeted retail brands and a 14-screen Vue cinema. It’s projected to attract up to 20 million people to the area by 2015. “This is a good example why working with partners from both the public and private sectors will ensure a successful legacy from the Games,” he says.

Accessibility is also cited by Ross as an essential part of the park’s success. “Nine rail lines will service the park, including

connections to mainland Europe and the planned Crossrail stop at Stratford regional station in 2017. Can you imagine that the Javelin train from St Pancras will take just seven minutes! Then there’s the waterways that surround the park, which we want to animate and develop into refreshing, stimulating and environmentally-friendly attractions that could be used for leisure pursuits as well as routes in and out of the park,” he says.

### Olympic legacy

The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) has set a milestone of 27 July to have all key Olympic venues completed and ready to hand over to the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), in time for this year’s planned test event schedule.

Once the Games have finished, the legacy company will work closely with LOCOG and the ODA to ‘bump out’ or

Above: The £23m ArcelorMittal Orbit will have two observation floors. Main pic: The park’s south hub will play host to sports and cultural events





► remove the temporary venues while the permanent venues will be transformed for long-term use and the north and south hubs created. The north park will house the VeloPark road cycle circuit, the Velodrome, the BMX track and mountain bike trails, while the south will play host to sports and cultural events in and around the Olympic Stadium and the Aquatics Centre. New bridges and roads will be added to increase ease of access and cafés, guest relations, ticketing facilities, toilets and play areas will also appear.

Suitable tenants are essential for the smooth operation of the permanent venues and the OPLC's tenant procurement process has already started.

The Olympic Stadium was the first venue to go through this process and West Ham FC and the London Borough of Newham were recently chosen above Tottenham Hotspur as the OPLC board's preferred bidder for tenancy. This recommendation has now been backed by the Mayor's office and the government. However, choosing football over an athletics tenant has been a controversial issue.

"We inherited a planning consent to convert the stadium into a 25,000 capacity athletics stadium and wanted to enhance that and so wanted to test the market," says Ross.

The criteria set for tenancy included the ability to achieve a long-term, deliverable, value for money solution that enabled the stadium to open as quickly as possible after the Games, while remaining a distinctive, iconic symbol that could accommodate a programme of events that allowed year-round access for schools, the local community and elite sport.

"The preferred bidder had to comply with these criteria and we came to a collective and unanimous view that West Ham and the London Borough of Newham were our preferred bidder. It was a very robust, fair and transparent process," says Ross.

The OPLC has since launched an expressions of interest (EOI) process for the operation of the 114m-tall, £23m Anish Kapoor and Cecil Balmond designed sculpture that is currently being constructed by Sir Robert McAlpine between the stadium and the Aquatics



An artist's impression of the OPLC's vision for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park post-2012

Centre. When completed, the Arcelor-Mittal Orbit will have two observation floors, giving visitors an amazing view across the London skyline.

"We're looking for a best in class operator to run the venue during and after the Games on our behalf," Ross explains. "It would probably be a 10-year tenure, so we're looking for some fit out cost to be injected into the project but we also want the operator to have some say in what the specification might be so it could be tailored to their requirements," he says.

A similar tenure is also being sought for the Multi-Use Arena; London's third largest arena where seats can be retracted to extend the field of play, and the Aquatics Centre – once the temporary seating wings are taken down after the Games.

Rumoured as a possible home for a new London-based basketball team, Ross says the Multi-Use Arena "does what it says on the tin". "It's set up for sports, it's got a beautiful sprung floor, and good seating capacity with great sight lines as well as easy access for equipment. It could easily be used for sports events, cultural festivals, concerts or conferences."

Regarding a suitable Aquatics Centre tenant, Ross says the legacy company is looking for a national or international

operator who's got the necessary experience of running and programming a centre that features two 50m pools and a diving pool, which could [by OPLC calculation] attract up to 800,000 visitors a year. "Programming is the important issue here," he says. "The operator must understand how best to include first-time swimmers through to local, regional and national Olympic swimming opportunities into the facility programme."

Other available contracts within the park that are now open to interested parties include park maintenance, park services and security services.

### Embracing the Olympic halo effect

According to Ross the park will be closed for a certain time period after the Games, which will be frustrating for some people. "We've got to get it right and launch the park to best effect," he says. "It would be great to open it in the spring of 2013 but the worst thing is to set ourselves an impossible time line and not deliver. It's better to under promise and over deliver – that's our goal."

"You have to remember that once the London Games are finished and the park becomes known as the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, by then the focus will have turned to Brazil. So we need to build momentum and excitement around this project to extend the halo effect for as long as possible". ●

Visit: [www.legacycompany.co.uk](http://www.legacycompany.co.uk)

**We need to build momentum and excitement around this project to extend the Olympic halo effect for as long as possible**

# CHANGING TIMES?

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## Everybody's Talking About ...

# Bidding to host major international events

A huge amount of time, energy and resources can be spent on preparing a bid to host a major international sport event. However, winning the rights to become a host nation can offer a significant catalyst for change

– from elevating the host's international status to fast-forwarding economic, political, and social development.

Although the successful host can attract hundreds of thousands of spectators and showcase a city or country to a world-wide television or online audience, for the

unsuccessful candidates, the creation of long-term strategies during a bid preparation can also have fringe benefits.

Karen Maxwell asks key industry people about the advantages and disadvantages of embarking on the bidding process.

**Jon Tibbs**, CEO, JTA and chair of the UKTI Major Sports Project Advisory Group



Bidding to host a sporting mega-event like the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup is not a journey to be embarked upon lightly. The process is long and it's expensive, tying up talent and resources people often believe could be better used elsewhere. However, there are very few things that can unite and inspire cities, or even entire countries, as magnificently as a bid campaign run with professionalism, dedication and long-term thinking at its heart. In my long experience of working with bid committees from all over the world, I have frequently been astounded by the bidding race's capacity to catalyse profound change, regardless of its outcome.

Sochi's successful bid to host the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games is a prime example of what can be achieved when a campaign is run just right. The Russians began the race as underdogs, but finished it with an inexorable momentum. Arguably, the driving force was a public stirred by Sochi 2014's pledge to create 'an Olympic legacy, today'. The locals' faith has certainly been rewarded: bidding for the Winter Games prompted the Russian Federation to make a commitment to redeveloping the region far beyond ski slopes and stadia. Residents in Sochi are already experiencing 'legacy now', from dramatic improvements to infrastructure, to a revitalised community sports framework and the first waves of a sea change in attitudes to people with a disability.

Sochi 2014 far outstripped initial expectations and were deserved winners in 2007. Deserved because, having founded its campaign on a vow to stimulate tangible, lasting change in Russia, the organising committee has already delivered on that vow time and again.

**Sally Munday**  
CEO, England Hockey Board



England Hockey Board's (EHB) decision to bid to host the 2014 Men's and Women's Hockey World Cups was part of our Events Strategy to raise the profile of the sport, and the timing of this event would have launched the London 2012 legacy facility for hockey at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

We've been developing our major event hosting experience with the EuroHockey Nations 2007, the Champions Trophy and the next step was to host the World Cups – the highest-level hockey events outside of the Olympic Games.

The bid involved a 14-month process, which started with a detailed feasibility study and the coming together of the major partners – UK Sport, Mayor for London (Visit London) and Frank Warren. Without their engagement and commitment the bid would simply not have been possible.

EHB spent time developing its relationship with the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and understanding the drivers for its decision-making. Ultimately we were unable to offer as much rights fee finance as our Dutch friends and so they won the bid.

It was a time-consuming process but through this work EHB has developed a closer relationship with the FIH and we're now discussing opportunities to host other world events. We've also developed a strong relationship with our partners, which will help us bid for events we want to bring to the UK post-2015.

While we were extremely disappointed not to win the bid, I think it's very important to be balanced in defeat. We would've put on a fantastic event and it would have been the perfect opportunity to maintain engagement with British hockey fans after the 2012 Olympics, but I'm sure the Dutch will put on a good show too.



**Sally Ormiston**, programme director –  
London 2012, Deloitte



Major sporting events have become a top agenda item for governments around the world. These events can be a significant catalyst for change, elevating the host's global stature and turbo-charging economic, political, and social development.

Hosting a major event gives a city or country permission to move quickly and decisively on a wide range of issues and activities that would normally be mired in endless debates and bureaucracy. It provides a rigid deadline that accelerates infrastructure development and other large-scale improvements that might otherwise take decades to complete. With the whole world watching, it provides a strong incentive to do things right.

Even for unsuccessful candidates, the bidding process brings together multiple stakeholders to articulate a shared vision and commitment to deliver. Once the initial disappointment is put aside, a new impetus can emerge – to build on the consensus created and to develop a new plan to meet some of the bid's aspirations. These are important fringe benefits – fostering collaboration among the public sector, private sector and community. It breaks down barriers between political parties and between national, regional, and local government. It improves efficiency and sets an example for new ideas and behaviours, such as environmental sustainability, diversity, and community involvement.

An unflinching focus on the benefits is essential, not least because the cost of bidding is ever increasing and will come under inevitable scrutiny. These are worthwhile endeavours; they are also challenging to deliver, capture, and prove. Moreover, they all hinge on the host's ability to plan and execute effectively at every stage of the event – from pre-bid to post-event legacy.

The UCI Mountain Bike World Cup at Fort William (above left) and the Laser Radial World Championships in Largs, Scotland

**Paul Bush OBE**  
COO, EventScotland



EventScotland was formed on the back of a failed bid by Scotland to host the 2008 UEFA Euro football competition. It was agreed that there should be a cross-government approach in bidding for events that would promote Scotland as a world-class events destination by 2015 and provide economic benefit and profile for the nation.

This approach has been built on with an event hosting strategy going through to 2020, which sees Scotland positioned as 'the perfect stage' and it now has seven impacts being measured as the benefits of hosting major events. These include: tourism; business; image and identity as a nation; media and profile; participation and development; environment; and social and cultural benefits.

Separate to my role at EventScotland, I also sit on the independent UK Major Events panel, which offers assistance to potential bidders in the form of expert advice, support, funding – through the National Lottery and other partnership opportunities. This service links with the government's 'golden decade of sport' and the positioning of the UK as one of the world's foremost events destinations by 2018.

In my opinion, a successful bid should have strong, unique selling points relating to the country, culture and infrastructure. The bidder must be politically aware and astute and ensure that the application is compliant with the bidding procedures in terms of what the rights holders require.



Capita Symonds Sport and Leisure has been involved with major event feasibility studies for the 2014 European Swimming Championships, the 2015 Rugby World Cup, the 2015 World Athletics Championships and the 2015 EuroBasket event. Associate director Simon Molden discusses the wider benefits for the hosts

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## EVENT IMPACT

The 2017 World Athletics Championships could attract 500,000 visitors to London

For those involved in major sporting events, 2010 was an interesting year, with the 2012 Olympic Games getting ever closer and significant public debate around the wisdom of two other events – the 2018 FIFA World Cup and 2015 World Athletics Championships – coming to these shores. On the face of it, major sporting events are a very attractive commercial proposition, attracting hundreds of thousands of spectators and showcasing a city or country to a worldwide television audience.

However, for the host federation, the commercial reality can be somewhat different with the international governing body often keeping most of the income – including television rights, sponsorship and corporate hospitality – while leaving the host to pick up the organisational and bidding costs.

Then there's the often-required 'guaranteed fee' and examples from recent years such as the Rugby World Cup (£80m required by the International Rugby Board for 2015) that indicate just how significant a sum this can be. If you add in other pitfalls, such as the late release of sponsorship packages to the host federation, thereby reducing their potential value, the financial case for hosting a major event can be marginal at best.

Clearly major sporting events are a very good thing for the international

federations; the 2006 World Cup alone netted FIFA a tidy £260m. However, why would any association, city or public body ever consider bidding for (and underwriting) one when they are largely left with ticketing income, costs and risks?

### The wider benefits

The answer lies in the wider benefits, economic and other, that hosting a major sporting event delivers. For example, if the World Athletics Championships were to come to London in 2017, it has been estimated that it would attract in the region of 500,000 visitors to the city over a nine-day period. The level of spending generated could add up to tens, even hundreds, of millions of pounds and even for a city the size of London the case can be compelling. It's the same for other events: the Rugby World Cup has been estimated to have an economic impact of £2.1bn for the host; for 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany, it was £7.4bn.

Not surprisingly, with these numbers being quoted, some have sought to cast doubt over the credibility of methodologies used to estimate these 'impacts'. However, the recent development of the eventIMPACTS Framework should bring a more standard approach.

As well as the economic arguments, events can be a very effective way of showcasing a host. Returning to the

World Athletics Championships, it has been estimated that for the prestige events, such as the 100m final, the total global television audience in 2009 approached 100 million.

### Bidding considerations

Aside from economic considerations, the benefits of well-planned major events are wide-ranging – from improved facilities and enhanced elite performance to a volunteering legacy and increased grassroots participation. In the two years following the 2003 Rugby World Cup, the RFU estimated that there were 50,000 new players, directly attracted by England's success.

So, despite the costs, there are many considerations to take into account when choosing whether to bid for a major event and with careful targeting the upfront investment can be justified. Nevertheless, planning remains fundamental.

By selecting an event with a strong resonance in the host economy, a wide global reach and a strong, preferably terrestrial, television exposure, and then carefully planning it, governing bodies, city authorities and governments can be onto a winner.

Contact Simon Molden at  
simon.molden@capita.co.uk  
or +44(0)7825 226922





## sports management: major event feasibility

contact us for advice:

Simon Molden

07825 226922

[simon.molden@capita.co.uk](mailto:simon.molden@capita.co.uk)

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# CAPITA SYMONDS

successful people, projects and performance

# Board profiles

## SPORT ENGLAND

We talk to six of Sport England's new and existing board members to find out how their diverse set of skills and experience from across the sectors and communities can help to make grassroots sport a success



According to Sport England chair Richard Lewis there's never been a more important time to lead grassroots sport. "It's an exciting time for sport and Sport England," he says. "With London 2012 fast approaching, its Places People Play mass-participation legacy plans are moving from the page to the playing field and national governing bodies (NGBs) are working to deliver their whole sport plans."

Six months ago, Sport England's already experienced board was strengthened by the appointment of six new members. Armed with a diverse set of skills and experience, the 12-strong board provides an extra level of governance, helps to set direction and offers support and advice to the organisation's executive team to deliver for, and support, grassroots sport.

"We have a strong team here at Sport England and we're using our

statutory roles and influence to look after sport's interests – investing more than £200m a year in the best possible way to bring grassroots sporting opportunities to every community," Lewis explains. "Whether you have the talent and drive to get to the top or just want to enjoy taking part, we're determined that everybody will have the chance to be part of the mass participation legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

Having led the England Women's cricket team to its first Ashes win in 42 years, Clare is now head of England Women's Cricket at the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), non-executive director of Sussex CCC and was appointed to the International Cricket Council Cricket Committee as its first female member.

"I hope to contribute to the goals of the Sport England Board through my personal experiences within sport: as a teacher, coach and player who's played at each stage of the pathway. This appointment is my chance to give back.

"When I played cricket for England, I was a beneficiary of Sport England Lottery funding so I understand the power of funding NGBs and their athletes. Now, as head of women's cricket at the ECB, I understand the crucial role that NGBs play in growing sport from the grassroots up – whether it's growing the number of participants and coaches, improving facilities or providing competitive opportunities.

"Women's team sport in this country is doing amazingly well at the top level. We're ranked in the top four in the world in hockey, rugby, cricket and netball and we're as good as we've ever been on the football pitch. These sports are being proactive about the future and through a quarterly forum, are getting together to share good practice and solutions to common problems.


"In terms of women getting involved and sticking to team sport, we have significant cultural barriers to break down and that won't happen overnight. We have to look at how women's team sports are portrayed and coached in schools from a young age and how it's portrayed in the media. There are so few column inches and airtime dedicated to women's team sport and unless that changes, girls' role models will never be from the world of sport.

"It's imperative that more women move into coaching and volunteering roles within their chosen sport so that girls grow up expecting to see women in those positions. Sports also have a part to play in terms of offering development and advice for their athletes so that they have pathways to stay within sport once they step down from playing at the top level.

"One of the common themes coming out of the projects Sport England is funding through our Active Women programme is leadership. Several of the schemes are increasing sustainability by training up women as coaches and leaders. This should have a long-term effect on the participation of those women – and the people they inspire to play sport."



CLAIRE CONNOR OBE



More female role models  
are needed in sport to  
inspire young people

**N**ick has been CEO of the London Marathon since 1995, where he's seen the event grow to more than 35,000 finishers – raising over £50m each year. He's also a senior partner in the sports law firm Max Bitel Greene and has previously served as a board member of UK Sport.

"UK Sport's focus on the elite end of sport might not seem relevant to the work of Sport England but in fact the structural issues facing sports and governing bodies in this country are much the same for elite and grassroots sport.

"My six years as a board member of UK Sport has helped me to understand these issues as did my focus on major events and the use of them to deliver legacy for sport in this country. This is clearly a central theme for Sport England in the run up to London 2012.

"The demand for the major mass participation events in the UK continues to grow and in fact the growth of participation in running and cycling (see Active People Survey 4 on p40) has largely been the result of iconic events such as these. There are however, many barriers to new events being set up and other sports have yet to find their equivalents. It's no coincidence that many of the successful mass

participation events have been set up by private companies rather than by governing bodies, which tended in the past to concentrate on the elite part of their sports.

"The analyses of the benefits of major events have tended to concentrate on tourism, sporting advantage and economic legacy and these are well documented. However, the major task for Sport England is to ensure that such events also drive up participation and here there has been less success in the past. There have been some good examples, such as the World Track Cycling Championships in Manchester and the Ryder Cup in Wales, however, research has shown that other events like the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games have had less success.

"I'm convinced that we can achieve this in England on the back of London 2012 but the evidence is that only those sports with well-run governing bodies that understand the use of major events to drive up participation will manage this."



**NICK BITEL**

**B**efore becoming Ofcom CEO, Jill was MD of BskyB's EasyNet Group where she secured and managed a three year sponsorship of the British Olympic Association.

"My aim as board member is to ensure that Sport England's programmes deliver value for money, in terms of maximising every extra pound of spend, to deliver increased participation and I hope that my commercial experience brings about this outcome.

"The link between Ofcom and Sport England is that we both have significant roles in relation to the London 2012 Games. Sport England is directly contributing to the funding of the Velodrome and Aquatics Centre and has real focus on the legacy benefits of the Games. Ofcom is responsible for delivering the government's spectrum guarantees that were given as part of the bid. This covers the 20,000 spectrum assignments for pieces of equipment such as radios and

wireless cameras, and during the Games we will be responsible for interference management.

"In my opinion, the basic foundation for sporting success is sound governance and professional management, on which to build talent and team programmes. What is important is that sports governing bodies work together and share the lessons they learn with each other.

"With the issue of encouraging more women into sport, as a busy working mother myself, the issue is time. However, I think sports need to understand what social environment women enjoy and this may mean that they need to re-engineer their products so that they deliver a conveniently timed social experience as well as a sporting one."



**JILL AINSCOUGH**



**A**n experienced NHS manager and senior civil servant, Mike is currently CEO of West Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority and head of Primary Care at the Department of Health. He currently chairs the Strategic Health Authority Chief Executives Group and is the national programme director of NHS Live.

"I'm fortunate to be able to bring the experience of leading major public services to my role at Sport England (in this case the £12.3bn NHS North West health system), as well as the experience of undertaking major national policy roles and also of playing sport at a semi-professional standard. The combination of these things and my years on the board allow me to offer the organisation a real insight into ensuring that good policy gets translated into real action at grassroots level.

"We have a great opportunity under the government's reform of health and wellbeing to bring together NHS and local government resources to promote greater physical activity and sport. There's always been a problem of defining where sport and physical activity promotion fit together and so government departments have often fought over

responsibility and resource issues. Now, at a local level, we can make sure that Local Health and Well Being Boards bring together health, leisure and wellbeing services to create a brilliant, combined set of opportunities for people to engage in physical activity and sport – irrespective of their ability or physical condition.

"Looking ahead, the new General Medical Service (GMS) contract will help to bridge the gap between curative and preventative care because GPs are in an increasingly important position to determine where NHS resources are spent. I believe it is essential that they recognise and allocate money to prevent ill-health as well as cure it. In particular, to spend resources on improving the physical activity levels of the population with its consequent impact on reducing obesity, diabetes and coronary heart problems. We need to use the GMS contract to reinforce this point and reward GPs for keeping their practice population active, healthy and happy."



MIKE FARRAR CBE

**C**EO of the Hamara Healthy Living Centre in Leeds, Hanif has a keen interest in enabling individuals and community organisations to be given the opportunity to enhance participation and achieve excellence.

"There are a number of factors that prevent people from ethnic and social backgrounds accessing regular sport and physical activity. Cost, for example, can be a prohibitive factor for people from low-income households – particularly in the current economic climate.

"Overcoming cultural and religious factors can also play a key role in widening participation, where simple solutions – such as providing female-only classes – can increase participation. Role models and peer mentors are also key in this regard. We only need to look at the impact of someone like Amir Khan and the increasing number of young Asians now taking up boxing, a sport often considered to be mainly for white working class boys.

"Traditional methods employed by local government to meet these different demands tend to rely on sports centres, and other municipal facilities. Although these play a valuable role in providing locally accessible services, I believe we need a more innovative approach in this period of austerity.

"Local authorities now have the power to look at asset transfer to local communities. This is an excellent method to engage grassroots participation by encouraging communities to take ownership and responsibility for developing and running their own facilities.

"In terms of better understanding need, too often the end user is not involved in the planning and development phase of service planning. This is something that can be improved upon by appointing 'community sports ambassadors' who would act as the conduit between statutory provision and the participant.

"The challenge for us in sport is ensuring that we manage to retain participants who do not necessarily have the ability or desire to perform at the highest level. This clearly refers to the majority of participants and here we need to look at a more collaborative approach between the individual, the governing bodies and key agencies, such as Sport England, to ensure that we are supporting individuals to the maximum."



HANIF MALIK



The relationship between clubs and sports will need strengthening and new networks developed to share resources, expertise and enable funding

**F**ormer CEO of Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council, Peter was the director of leisure services at Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council and chief amenities officer at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. He has also held positions involving leisure and recreation at Blackpool Borough Council and Oxford City Council.

"In recent years we've learnt to adopt a strategic approach to facility provision with local authorities drawing together partnerships of local and national organisations and funders to deliver.

"Sport and recreation are fundamental to quality of life and provide the vehicle to achieve health, wellbeing, economic renewal and community cohesion. New partnerships reflect this and County Sports Partnerships now provide a mechanism for schools, clubs, NGBs, health providers, the police and further and higher education to all work together. The challenge is for all parties to share resources and energy to ensure sustainable provision by working together. Public money and input will need to be shared and have greater focus to ensure sustainable developments, future participation and pathways to excellence.

"It may not be designated as a statutory service but sport is highly valued and matters a great deal in localities and to local people. Clubs and governing bodies are now in the driving seat and need to be influential in campaigning for sport locally, regionally and nationally. Clubs have a key role in developing a 'sports society', where the volunteer network, coaches, administrators and officials work collaboratively and take ownership of sports development and promotion, and lead the case for new facility development and rationalisation. To do this, the relationship between clubs and sports will need strengthening and new networks developed to share resources, expertise and to maximise available funding. The future is therefore about working differently and taking the lead to forge new partnerships and approaches.

"The Olympic legacy will inspire local people, raise aspirations and celebrate achievement. This is exactly what local authorities need to do – to build communities, active citizenship and to develop pride in their localities.

"Local government is helping to create legacy through engagement in 'inspire' programmes; school events, festivals, youth sports projects, art activities and the torch relay will bring the spirit of the Games directly to local communities. It has an important legacy role in strengthening the volunteering infrastructure and improving pathways into employment and further education and in making business connections, showcasing business and, tourism excellence. Sport is ideally placed in this agenda." ●



**PETER STYBELSKI**



# ACTIVE PEOPLE

## Survey 4

Active People Survey 2 was regarded as the baseline for future surveys to track change. Now with four years' worth of data, Ipsos MediaCT research manager Andrew Haylett picks out some emerging trends

When the Sport England-commissioned Active People Survey 4 (AP54) came to a close in October 2010, it rounded off another 12 months of fieldwork to add to AP53 (2008/9), AP52 (2007/8) and AP51 (2005/6).

As the first survey to provide data for several key measures, AP52 is regarded as the baseline for future surveys to track change and AP54 shows some interesting trends emerging. Its findings showed that 16.5 per cent of all adults aged 16 and over (6.938 million in total) participated in sport at least three times a week

at a moderate intensity. Highlighting an increase of 7,800 on AP53 and 122,900 on the AP52 baseline, the change at AP54 is not statistically significant. However, when comparing AP54 to AP51, there are now 643,200 more people achieving the One Million Indicator – a key focus set in Sport England's 2008-11 strategy to deliver one million more people doing more sport by 2012-13 – and this measure is of immediate interest.

The population estimates from the time of AP51 in 2005 to 2010's AP54 show there are now more people aged 16 or older in England, but while the

percentage increase in the overall population is around 3.3 per cent, the increase in those achieving the One Million Indicator measure is nearer 9.3 per cent (from 40.71 million in AP51 to 42.11 million in AP54).

Participation against the KPI1 target has also seen a significant increase from AP52 to AP54, and is now 21.8 per cent compared to 21.3 per cent in AP52 and 21 per cent in the first survey. Comparing KPI1 from AP53 to AP54, although there is still an increase in percentage points, which was 21.6 per cent in AP53, in a significance sense this is not considered an increase.

The percentage of the adult population meeting the N18 target has also risen from 21.2 per cent in AP51 to 22.1 per cent in the new AP54 results. Between the AP51 and AP52 surveys, there was a significant decrease of nearly three per cent from 69.5 per cent to 66.6 per cent in the proportion of adults saying they are satisfied with local sport provision. By AP53 this percentage had risen to 68.4 per cent and by AP54 was back up to just over 69 per cent, while still a decrease on AP51, this is an increase compared to both the AP52 and AP53 results.

### Sports specific findings

The results for each of the first three Active People Surveys have always placed the same five sports, in the same order, as most popular in terms of the number of people participating. AP54 has finally bucked this trend, and while the top five remains unchanged, there has been a change to the order.

### Key Performance Indicators and other Definitions:

**One Million Indicator:** This is the number of adults (16 and over) participating in at least 30 minutes of sport at a moderate intensity on a regular frequency of at least three times a week. This does not include recreational walking or infrequent recreational cycling, but does include cycling if performed at least once a week at moderate intensity and for at least 30 minutes.

Other more intense activities, such as power walking, hill trekking, cliff walking and gorge walking are included

**KPI1:** This represents the percentage of adults participating in at least 30 minutes of sport and active recreation (including recreational walking and cycling) of at least moderate intensity, three days a week.

**N18:** This indicator measures the percentage of adults in a local area who participated in sport and active recreation, at moderate intensity, for at least 30 minutes, on at least 12 days out of the last four weeks (equivalent to 30 minutes on three or more days a week). This indicator also includes five light intensity sports (yoga, pilates, indoor and outdoor bowls, archery and croquet) for members of the national population aged 65 and over.

**Sports Participation:** The percentage of adults aged 16-plus taking part in a sport at moderate intensity for 30 minutes or more at least once in the previous week.

Activity	AP51 (2005/6)		AP52 (2007/8)		AP53 (2008/9)		± participants AP53 vs AP52	AP54 (2009/10)		± participants AP54 vs AP52	± participants AP54 vs AP53
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		Number	%		
Swimming	3,273,800	8.04	3,244,300	7.83	3,162,400	7.57	-81,900	3,156,300	7.50	-88,000	-6,100
Football	2,021,700	4.97	2,144,700	5.18	2,122,700	5.08	-22,000	2,090,000	4.96	-54,700	-32,700
Athletics	1,353,800	3.33	1,612,100	3.89	1,739,700	4.16	127,600	1,875,500	4.45	263,400	135,800
Cycling	1,634,800	4.02	1,767,100	4.26	1,880,000	4.50	112,900	866,300	4.43	99,200	-13,700
Golf	889,100	2.18	948,300	2.29	897,600	2.15	-50,700	860,900	2.04	-87,400	-36,700

**Top 5 Sports:** For the first time, there's been a change in the top five sports ranking, with athletics overtaking cycling to become the third most popular activity in the UK (results based on KP11)

Athletics has emerged as the biggest growth sport from AP53 to AP54 and there are now 1.9 million participants in England. The trend over the surveys has been one of increase – 127,600 from AP52 to AP53 and a similar number, 135,800, between AP53 and AP54. In the space of just two years, more than a quarter of a million people (263,400) have become athletics participants and in excess of 500,000 since AP51.

The number of cycling participants grew at a similar rate between AP52 and AP53 (112,900) however, this has not been sustained into AP54 and participation has fallen by 13,700 in the latest survey. While this is still an increase of nearly 100,000 since the AP52 baseline and 231,500 on AP51, it's not enough to see athletics leapfrog over it into third place.

Swimming continues to be the sport with most participants for a fourth survey in a row, however, the trend is one of decline. Nearly 82,000 fewer people participated in swimming from AP52 to AP53. Although there is still a decrease in the AP54 results, it is of only 6,100. So while there is still a decline, the speed of it is slowing. This may be as a result of various free-swimming initiatives over the course of the last 12 months or so.

The other two sports in the top five – football and golf, both showed increases from AP51 to AP52, but have since shown a decline. The AP54 data sees them both register a statistical decline from AP52, and in the case of golf in AP53 versus AP54 as well. ●



# RAVENS CRAIG

## commits to sport

**CLOA's John Bell provides an overview of the redevelopment project at Ravenscraig – including the new £32m regional sports facility**

**R**avenscraig promises to be one of the most ambitious regeneration projects in Europe. Once the largest steel mill in Western Europe, the 1,125 acre once derelict site – an area equivalent to 700 football pitches – is being transformed into a new Scottish town, which will be home to more than 10,000 people, is expected to create 12,000 job opportunities and attract in excess of £1.4bn in private sector investment over the next 15-20 years.

Situated in North Lanarkshire, in central Scotland, Ravenscraig is one of the most accessible parts of the country, with more than two-thirds of Scotland's population within 90-minutes' drive time. The new

community will include more than 3,000 homes, a modern, attractive town centre with 84,000 sq m (0.9m sq ft) of retail and leisure space, up to 216,000 sq m (2.3m sq ft) of business and industrial space and a new transport network.

The redevelopment of Ravenscraig has been divided into two parts. Work on the £200m first phase began in 2006 and is nearing completion. It includes the £70m campus for Motherwell College and the construction of 850 new houses, while the £32m sports facility – built on the site of the former Ravenscraig Steelworks – was opened to the public in September 2010.

The £600m second phase will create the new town centre, leisure, restaurant and community facilities in a modern, attractive town centre. A further 1,500 housing units and 46,450sq m (500,000sq ft) of commercial space will also be created – served by a new railway station, a bus interchange and substantial car parking with dual carriageway access from the M8 and the M74.

### Sports design

Conceived as part of the Scottish Executive and sportscotland's National Regional Facilities Strategy, Ravenscraig's sports centre was financed by the North Lanarkshire

Council, sportscotland and Ravenscraig Ltd (which consists of three equal stakeholders: Wilson Bowden Development Ltd, Scottish Enterprise and Corus).

Jim Fitzsimons, project director at Ravenscraig Ltd, said: "It has always been our ambition to create a sustainable, thriving community at Ravenscraig and these buildings will go a long way in helping us achieve this aspiration."

The Populous-designed sports centre celebrates the history of the site. The choice of materials and the building's structure creates a link with the steel industry that has had a strong cultural presence on the site and within the local community. Metal bands rise from out of the ground to wrap around the structure: a visual reminder of rolled metal sheets and of the industry which employed so many local people.

The complex is notionally divided into three main building blocks: the football and sports hall to the east, the athletics hall to the west and the changing rooms and reception area. The layout, with its common areas and centralised gathering zones between the halls, allows for a high level of interaction between the elite athletes that use the centre for regular training and members of the public. The idea is

### SPORTS CENTRE FACILITIES

- A full-size indoor FIFA two-star third generation (3G) synthetic sports pitch, suitable for football and rugby training, matches and multi-use events for up to 5,000 people
- A full-size FIFA two-star outdoor, floodlit 3G synthetic pitch
- Six floodlit five-a-side pitches
- A six-lane, 135m, indoor running track, throw and jump areas and a strength and conditioning area for elite athletes
- A nine-court sports hall
- A fitness suite with 100 stations of Technogym equipment
- Two dance studios
- Lecture and meeting rooms
- A sports injuries clinic
- Press and media facilities
- Café
- VIP facilities, including fine dining



Ravenscraig will host the 45th International Children's Games in August – when 1,500 youngsters will compete in five sports

that his will encourage athletes to learn from each other's disciplines and help to inspire the local community into regular sports participation.

Sustainability credentials were also key to the design. The serrated roofs allow diffuse, northern light to enter the facility all year round, without the glare that comes from direct sunlight. Natural light minimises the dependence on artificial lighting; reducing annual energy costs, limiting the building's carbon footprint and enhancing the ambience and tranquillity of the spaces. The building's sustainability credentials are also increased by its combined heat and power system and large quantities of insulation, aimed at reducing acoustic break out as well as keeping the heat in.

Designed first and foremost as a sports complex, the football hall is the largest space in the facility, measuring 105m x 71m with an uninterrupted height of 18m at the centre and 10m around its perimeter. It features 400 spectator seats along the western side of the hall with access from behind the seating, allowing an



## The Ravenscraig regeneration links sport with education, housing and shopping and will help create real community development for local people

uninterrupted 3m buffer zone between the pitch and the spectators. The hall can cater for up to 5,000 people attending concerts and exhibitions as well as sports or cultural events and offers equipment and stage facilities.

The athletics hall is the second largest volume in the facility. It has an approximate dimension of 25m x 135m and a clear height of 9m, rising to 12.3m for the pole vault. The hall is directly accessed from the changing and reception area.

The sports hall measures 54m x 27m with a clear, uninterrupted height of 9.2m and has been designed specifically to allow for badminton, basketball, handball, netball and volleyball but also accommodates a range of other sports. It can be divided into thirds offering greater flexibility. Along its length it has a swath of retractable seating and a first floor viewing gallery.

### Sports development

North Lanarkshire Leisure (NLL) – a not-for-profit charity organisation formed in 2006 – operates 18 sport and leisure sites across the Lanarkshire area, including Ravenscraig. Within these sites it operates sports development, community fitness, Fitness Motivators in schools and golf course grounds maintenance.

Within the past four years the organisation has seen its annual income increase by 60 per cent and attendances rise by 44 per cent. It has re-invested £3.5m into community sport and leisure, while £1.5m has been put in reserves.

NLL has four sports development officers based at the Ravenscraig sports facility – specialising in athletics, badminton, football and gymnastics. Former international athletics star Yvonne Murray is the senior athletics development and events officer and has already







► encouraged the centre to play host to high-profile football development and rugby events in partnership with professional and amateur sport teams.

The sports development team also has ambitious plans for voluntary sport through the launch of Club Sport North Lanarkshire, a partnership with local clubs, governing bodies of sport, NLL and the council.

### Sport for all

Ravenscraig sports facility was officially opened at the end of September last year, with a weekend of sporting fun, complete with sporting celebrities, taster fitness classes and plenty of community support. This event kicked off with a 24-hour charity football tournament, which attracted more than 100 local football teams and raised more than £4,000 for the local St Andrews Hospice. The weekend came to an end with an attempt to hold the biggest ever Zumba class, which saw 836 people dance their way into the record book, beating the previous record of 575.

The state-of-the-art facility is also a strong contender as a training site for both the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. Last October, the facility played host to around 5,000 people to 'Get Involved in the Games' and celebrate the handover of the Commonwealth Games flag from Delhi to Glasgow.

Football, tennis, rugby, climbing, trampolining, an inflatable assault course, tae kwon do, Tri Golf and wrestling were just



The 'Get Involved with the Games' event saw 5,000 people celebrate the handover of the Commonwealth Games flag from Delhi to Glasgow



some of the activities offered at the event. There were also demonstrations of four Commonwealth Games sports: athletics, badminton, gymnastics and Rugby 7s.

### A model of best practice

With the facility having been given full support by NLL, North Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Ravenscraig Ltd, sportscotland and EventScotland, Blane Dodds, CEO of NLL said: "We've been delighted with the immediate high-profile impact of this new facility in increasing participation and performance – from grassroots through to elite levels and this has resulted in many new partnerships being formed that have helped to improve sports development pathways and programmes.

Ravenscraig will also be the badminton and judo competition venue for the 45th International Children's Games in August this year – when around 1,500 young aspiring athletes from 80 international cities will compete in nine sports.

North Lanarkshire was put firmly on the European sporting map earlier this year when the region was voted 'European City of Sport for 2011' by the European Capitals of Sport Association – in recognition of proven evidence in how NLL has used sport to improve the lives of people in its local communities.

The judges highlighted the fitness motivators in schools programme and the partnerships developed with local clubs, sport bodies and the NHS as inspirational.

In my opinion, the scale of the Ravenscraig regeneration scheme is impressive and must be a major boost for sport in Scotland. It is heartening that the council has increased its revenue commitment to sport and leisure to help meet the operating costs of Ravenscraig.

In England, most councils are looking to reduce their revenue support to sport and recreation as a consequence of their much reduced grants from central government. The £7m grant from sportscotland and the support of the Scottish Executive for a scheme which is part of the National Sports Strategy for Scotland, demonstrates forward thinking and a real commitment to sport.

Could England learn from this? While English National Governing Bodies of sport are working to Whole Sports Plans funded by Sport England, and County Sports Partnerships and councils are trying to knit all this together at local level, we still lack an overall national plan which identifies Regional Centres of Excellence for sport to NGB and council plans. The North Lanarkshire Ravenscraig regeneration links sport with education, housing and shopping and will help create real community development for local people. ●

*John Bell is honorary secretary of the Chief Culture and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA)*

**sportscotland and the Scottish Executive's support for Ravenscraig's part in the National Sports Strategy for Scotland demonstrates a real commitment to sport**





# Desperate times need not mean desperate measures!

Indoor sports floors that have 'seen better days' don't always have to be uplifted and replaced. Money can be saved if you shop around for reputable refurbishment alternatives

## CASE STUDY Siddal Moor Sports College, (main pic above)

**Old Floor:** Granwood tiles

**New Sports surface:** Taraflex™ Sport M+ DTx

**Installation Method:** Dry-Text™ adhered direct to existing floor

"We chose to upgrade the tired-looking sports hall flooring with Taraflex™ because we wanted to provide our students with a comfortable surface for playing sport," says the community sport manager for Siddal Moor in Lancashire – Sue Whitehead.

## CASE STUDY Harry Mitchell Sports Centre

**Old Floor:** Rubber

**New Sports Surface:** Taraflex™ Sport M+ DTx

**Installation Method:** Adhered on isolating membrane (Gerflor Isolport).

John Robinson, assistant operations manager for Sandwell says: "The sports floor installation went very smoothly. We love the new look and have received some very positive feedback from our users, who are delighted with the investment."

## CASE STUDY Gillingham Leisure Centre

**Old Floor:** Granwood tiles

**New Surface:** Taraflex™ Sport M+ DTx

**Installation Method:** Dry-Text™ adhered direct to existing floor.

John Havill, chair of the Three Rivers Partnership in Gillingham says: "When I think how bad the sports hall floor looked before and how it looks now it's quite remarkable. Gerflor's assistance in providing the project management was hugely appreciated and the floor refurbishment came in on time and on budget. Our customers love it, in particular the badminton club members – some of whom have said that this is the best sports floor they've played on."

## CASE STUDY St Teresa's School

**Old Floor:** Granwood tiles

**New Surface:** Taraflex™ Sport M+ DTx

**Installation Method:** Adhered on isolating membrane (Gerflor Isolport).

Dean Page, estates manager of St Teresa's School in Dorking, Surrey, was in charge of overlaying the existing sports hall floor. He wanted a fast track solution to improve students' sporting experience and act as a stop gap until a new sports facility could be constructed in the future. Commenting on the project, Page says: "The floor has proven to be extremely popular with the pupils and staff and has improved the playing surface by 100 per cent. We've been very happy with Gerflor's customer service, the cost, the installation and the after sales support. I have no hesitation in recommending the company and Taraflex™ to others."

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# England BASKETBALL



Basketball may have some of the highest adult participation rates in England but it also boasts some 30,000 affiliated school players

**F**ounded in 1936, England Basketball (previously known as the EBBA) is the governing body (NGB) for basketball in this country. A non-profit making organisation, the association of member clubs and players elect an executive board (comprising of directors) to administer its affairs. This executive board employs a number of professional staff to undertake the association's duties and achieve its aims.

With its headquarters based in Sheffield, the governing body is underpinned by a well-developed regional structure with each region having an elected voluntary representative. Together the executive board members and these representatives form the council.

The association also employs an army of field officers who work in the regions and undertake the sport's development. Within this regional network there are approximately 800 member clubs.

The governing body's mission is:

- To govern and enhance the sport of basketball in England
- To encourage and enable people to participate in basketball, regardless of their ability, age, gender, status, disability or ethnic background
- To lift the performance and quality of basketball throughout England.

## EXPANDING APPEAL

Basketball boasts some of the highest adult participation rates among team sports in England (source: Sport England's *Active People Survey*). The governing body has an organised structure of accredited clubs that provide opportunities for players, coaches, officials and volunteers. However, it's also been busy significantly increasing its activity within the education sector.

In recent years, England Basketball has established a solid foundation on which to

build. An efficient staffing structure has delivered specialist support to all levels of the game – from grassroots to elite. Clubs are bigger, stronger and more efficient and more than 125 are Sport England/England Basketball Clubmark accredited. The number of qualified, active coaches and officials has quadrupled and more teams are currently playing in the weekly national league competitions.

England Basketball is now responsible for school competitions and its links with British Universities, Colleges Sport (BUCS) and the introduction of the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) programme means that it is working ever more closely with colleges and Sport England's key 16-18 age group. The development of more opportunities for university students within the sport is a major priority for its development staff.

Basketball is a totally inclusive sport and the governing body is one of the first



England Basketball has developed international age-group teams up to senior level

## CASE STUDY: LEEDS TIGERS BASKETBALL CLUB

**L**eeds Tigers received a volunteer grant from England Basketball in 2008. The grant helped the club to reward some of its 'unsung heroes' and help kick start a new volunteer recruitment drive.

The funding allowed the club to purchase new club-branded polo shirts and track suits for its coaches and help to support coaches attend regional clinics to address their own continuous professional development.

The volunteer recruitment drive helped the club produce new club volunteer flyers and promotional leaflets, which helped raise its local profile.

The results have been excellent. The 2009 season saw the club double the number of its active volunteers, while many existing members, including parents and older players, were able to undertake qualifications in coaching and officiating.

"Support for volunteer development for clubs is essential for us if we are to continue to strive to develop basketball opportunities," says Leeds Tigers Club patron, Claude Bandawe. "The invaluable financial assistance from England Basketball is critical to allow us to grow the game as well as our club and its volunteers – both off the court as well as on."

NGBs to reach the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard. It has also achieved intermediate level of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's (NSPCC) Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.

Moving forward, the sport's performance pathway is being strengthened, its talent identification is being improved and it has fielded international teams through the age groups up to senior level.

### SCHOOL BASKETBALL

The 2009-10 basketball year represented the second season during which the National Schools Competitions were administered by England Basketball staff members. It was also the first year of a revised format, within which the Youth Sport Trust's 225 School Competition Managers and 450 School Sports Partnerships (SSPs) implemented the national school competition framework.

With the responsibility for the school competitions now firmly with the governing body, it's exciting to note that, for the first time, England Basketball has 30,256 affiliated school players.'

Tasked with addressing the 'drop off' in activity at the age of 16, the Under 17 (U17) school competitions, have been provided for both boys and girls during the current 2010-2011 season. England Basketball aims to grow these competitions through its staff and county basketball development officers while working closely with Further Education Sports Coordinators (FESCOs).

### PATHWAY TO DEVELOPMENT

Accredited basketball clubs are at the heart of the development of grassroots basketball opportunities in England so club development is key.

England Basketball has used Clubmark as a key tool to lead this development

and now has in excess of 125 Clubmark accredited clubs, which ensures national coverage for grassroots development. The governing body works closely with these clubs to support the delivery of the Grow and Sustain interventions from its 2009-2013 Whole Sport Plan, produced for Sport England.

Through promoting links between clubs and the education sector, the NGB has seen substantial growth in schools participation over the past three years. This growth has seen the clubs develop formal links with over 130 SSPs and individual links with over 3,500 primary and secondary schools.

The last two years has also seen more focussed work supporting basketball clubs in many different areas and a rolling programme of club development workshops has been developed. These workshops are free for clubs to access and have previously covered topics such



## CASE STUDY: LEWISHAM THUNDER AND SEFTON STARS

**E**ngland Basketball works with clubs and facility providers at a local level to improve access to facilities for clubs and Sefton Stars and Lewisham Thunder are good examples of what can be achieved.

Sefton Stars Basketball Club own the lease on Fernhill Leisure Centre in Bootle, near Liverpool. The local council planned to close the centre but the club has been able to buy the lease and take the responsibility for the operation and upkeep of the facility. The club shares the sports hall with local school St George of England during the day, but out of school time the club run its own basketball activities training, games and local leagues. The club has also installed a gym to develop a revenue stream, which is made available to the community and outsourced to a personal trainer.

Traditionally, England Basketball has worked with Sport England via the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme to broker deals for clubs to access BSF facilities for more hours at a reduced cost.

Lewisham Thunder at Forest Green School is a great example of this process. England Basketball was able to get a collective user agreement in place for the next five years so that the club is able to double its existing hours for almost half the price.

The English Institute of Sport in Sheffield played host to 24 teams over two days in the England Basketball Junior Final Fours

➤ as funding, developing volunteers, understanding and development statistics, developing effective school-club links and in depth information on the Sport England Small Grants Scheme. The workshops, alongside regular communication, have witnessed tangible results – particularly with clubs identifying and securing funding. Clubs in the England Basketball network have managed to successfully acquire over £300,000 for grassroots development activities from the Sport England Small Grants scheme since its inception 18 months ago.

### PERFORMANCE

The performance element of England Basketball's activities has come a long way since 2002, before which age-group national teams were either self-funded or non-existent. In 2009, England Basketball's four age group teams (U16 and U18 boys and girls) improved their results, with the U16 boys placed third and the U18 boys fourth in their respective European division championships.

This year, the British Men's and Women's teams have both qualified for the European Championships (or Eurobasket) – finishing top of their respective qualifying groups.

The performance pathway has grown to include 20 Area Performance Centres compared to 11 last year. In addition, U15 national development squads for boys and girls, as well as regional development squads for U13, U15 and U17 boys and girls have been created and 16 fully accredited AAASE institutions currently raise the game for young players.

### FACILITIES – THE BIG CHALLENGE

One of the major obstacles to increasing sports participation in England is the apparent lack of access to indoor sports facilities for people of all ages and abilities – and basketball is no exception.

Basketball transgresses all boundaries and is a major provider of equal opportunity sport participation. The sport is equally at home in the inner city, the

suburbs, deprived areas and in country towns. Throughout the world basketball is characterised as being an inexpensive and easy-to-access sport, however there is a continuous struggle here in England to make that a reality – due to the lack of affordable, accessible places to play.

### LOOKING FORWARD

England Basketball has recently put together a marketing plan with support from Sport England. This plan sets out the ways in which England Basketball will undertake the task of raising participation among those who traditionally may not engage with the accredited club structure. It also demonstrates how the sport will work with a diverse range of partners who will assist in this goal.

The plan is divided into several sections, each of which contain action points and key milestones that are vital to its overall success and will require input from many sectors of the sports world if these ambitious goals are to be realised.

Developing relationships with a wide range of partners will play a key part in this plan moving forward, along with detailed local intelligence and the tireless dedication of England Basketball's development officers. The ultimate aim is to increase the sport's popularity. ●



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# VIVA DUBLIN

Karen Maxwell talks to Dublin's Aviva Stadium architectural and pitch designers to find out how it fits the bill for both rugby and football

**I**n 2007, Dublin's Lansdowne Road stadium was demolished to make way for a new home ground for Ireland's international rugby and football fixtures. Three years later, built on time and within its €410m (£346m) budget, the iconic Aviva Stadium sits above a busy railway, bounded by the River Dodde, amid a central city suburb – testament to 21st century sport and design.

Historically linked with sport since the first multi-sport, purpose-built venue was erected in 1872, rugby soon crept into the sporting calendar and the Irish Football Rugby Union (IRFU) secured the site's lease in the early 1900s. The first stand was built in 1908 and the East Stand was added in 1983, during which time the Irish football team also made the site its home.

Today, the new 50,000-seat stadium is the result of a joint venture by the IRFU and the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) with €191m (£161m) worth of funding

provided by the Irish government and further investment from title sponsor – Aviva insurance company. Its iconic design and reduced carbon footprint is the result of a joint architectural collaboration between internationally-renowned Populous and Dublin-based Scott Tallon Walker (STW).

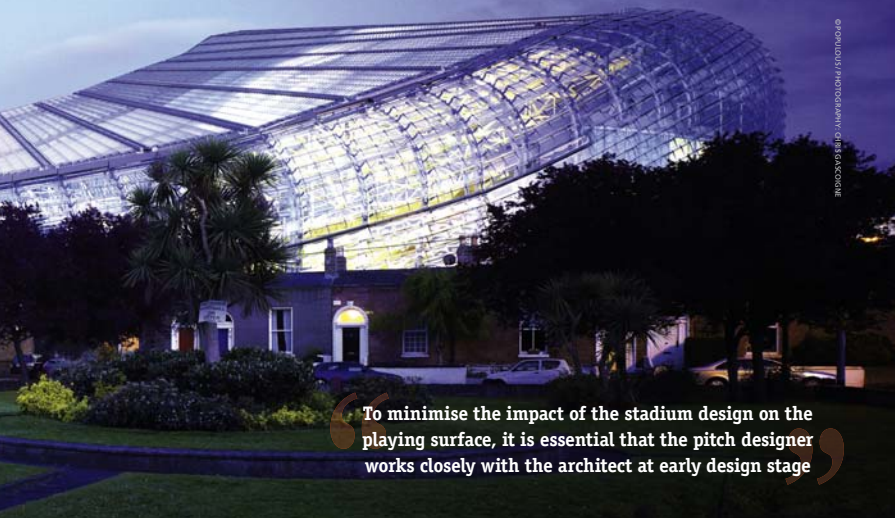
## Designed to fit

Billed as the 'first site-responsive stadium of its kind', Populous senior principal Ben Vickery says its design had to respond to its site conditions by keeping the height of the structure at its lowest close to the nearby two-storey houses. "The curved-shaped roof was designed to allow sufficient daylight into the nearby houses on Lansdowne Road – as well as the stadium pitch – and the building had to accommodate the existing railway, and an external training pitch," he says.

Controlled access to and from the ground was also a major concern within

its complicated, residential location and Vickery says more entrances/exits were added to prevent spectator congestion in the surrounding area. Tunnels have been constructed under the railway so that the level crossing gates remain closed before and after an event, while a passenger concourse for the railway station and an upgrade of the river bank were also added for safer access to and from the stadium.

Another key design issue was to ensure the traditional 'Lansdowne Roar' stayed within the stadium walls during an exciting international fixture. "The stadium consists of a continuous curvilinear-shaped stand, enclosing all four sides of the ground. The seat tiers are located as close to the pitch as possible and every seat offers an unobstructed view of the action," Vickers explains. "This creates an exciting atmosphere during a game and keeps noise pollution to a minimum."



“To minimise the impact of the stadium design on the playing surface, it is essential that the pitch designer works closely with the architect at early design stage”

The North Stand comprises one low level seating tier due to its proximity to the nearby residential area

The stadium's green credentials include more than the vibrant pitch and emerald coloured seats. More than 1,500 tonnes of recycled steelwork from the old stadium has been used in its construction. The crystalline bowl harvests rainwater to irrigate the field of play, waste heat is reused for hot water and the transparent roof allows daylight to suffuse the interior spaces. Inside the stadium energy-saving features include waterless urinals, energy and water meters and standby power to the escalators, which operate automatically when people step onto them.

The horseshoe-shaped roof structure has created a strong image for Irish sport around the world. With sports tourism becoming a major source of revenue, the IRFU and FAI have estimated that a minimum of five football and rugby internationals a year could be worth upwards of €250m (£211m) to the Irish economy – not to mention conference business.

## PITCH PERFECT

Pitch consultant STRI was involved in preparing the design and specifications for the main stadium and external training pitch. STRI turf consultant James Westway says: “We had an active involvement with architects and engineers. We assisted with the selection of the specialist sports ground sub-contractors and, once the pitch construction works were underway, we carried out regular site visits to monitor their progress and compliance with the requirements of the specification. Extensive testing of materials was carried out at STRI's laboratories and approval of pitch construction materials was also undertaken as part of the project.”

“In order to minimise the impact of the stadium design on the playing surface, it is essential that the pitch designer works closely with the main architect during the early design stages of the project,” Westway advises. “This can involve assessing the light availability over the pitch surface from the proposed design structure and advising how this will affect grass

growth. If there's going to be a significant shading effect, the pitch designer can suggest modifications to the roof design such as increasing the opening and/or increasing the amount of translucent panels within it,” he says.

“We also take environmental issues into account and consideration is given to energy and water conservation; ensuring the build and ongoing management of the pitch is sustainable.”

### Unique challenges

Built on the footprint of the old stadium with a restricted site perimeter, there used to be two rugby pitches outside the stadium. However, under the new design, Westway explains that there was only room for one external pitch, which had to be built on top of an underground car park – integral to the new stadium complex.

“As this pitch will be used by two clubs for both matches and training, a decision was made to provide a 3G synthetic turf pitch rather than natural turf which would not have withstood the required level of usage,” Westway says.



### ► Turf choice

According to Westway, the pitch surface was established by seeding with perennial ryegrass onto a fibre-reinforced sandy rootzone. "The type of reinforcement used was Fibrelastic – produced by the Mansfield Sand Company. It comprises a mixture of polypropylene and elastane fibres, it has previously been tested in trials carried out by STRI and has demonstrated that it provided pitches with a much more player-friendly surface, with less jarring of the limbs and a lower risk of injury. It is also less prone to surface disturbance, giving ball players a better grip. This form of reinforcement was particularly well-suited to the intended dual use of the pitch for international rugby and football fixtures," he explains.

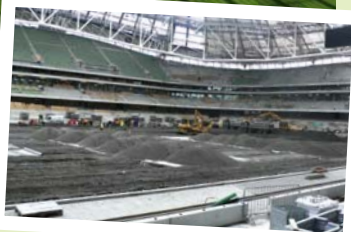
### Performance testing

On the main stadium pitch, performance testing was carried out at the end of the establishment period to check the quality of the playing surface. The main parameters assessed were grass cover, volumetric moisture content, hardness, ball rebound, infiltration, penetration depth, traction and root depth. With the information obtained used as a background to management decisions as the pitch was brought into use.

"On the external synthetic turf pitch an independent testing house was engaged by the contractor to assess the performance of the finished playing surface, conducted to International Rugby Board (IRB) test standards," Westway explains. "On this pitch, performance criteria ball rebound, slip resistance, shock



Above: STRI assessed the light availability over the pitch surface and made site visits to monitor construction progress (right)



absorption and surface regularity were measured and the playing surface passed on all the criteria tested."

### Maintaining quality

A maintenance programme involving routine mowing, fertilizer applications, irrigation, aeration, brushing/scarifying and after-match pitch repairs is currently being carried out. However, Westway says that additional maintenance will include the use of lighting rigs to support grass growth on the more shaded parts of the pitch during the winter period and the under-soil heating system will also be employed as and when required to keep the pitch in playable condition.

### Multi-use issues

Westway says the main issue which will affect the overall quality of the stadium's playing surface is the holding of music concerts and the need to build a stage at one end of the pitch. "While the main part of the pitch surface can be largely preserved, using standard pitch protection materials, the construction of the stage can cause a lot of damage to the pitch surface," he explains.

"This usually involves covering the stage area with heavy duty track sheeting which compresses the turf and prevents sunlight reaching the surface. If left in place for several days or more, it can damage the grass cover. Once a concert has finished, it often takes several days to completely clear the stadium arena and, depending on how long the turf has been covered and the amount of compression the surface has received, there may be damage to the pitch surface.

"In the worst-case scenario, any damaged sections will need to be re-turfed, but the preferred option is to intensively aerate, scarify and overseed the existing turf. The type of renovation carried out will depend upon the time available between the concert finishing and the next sporting event to be held in the stadium.

"We work closely with the stadia and event management to ensure minimum damage to the pitch and effectively manage the pitch back to high quality – often in tight timescales," Vickers says. ●

## UP IN LIGHTS

Most stadia projects are single sport facilities, so having both rugby and football games in a national stadium was an unusual project for Musco Lighting. In addition, its residential location also required carefully orchestrated equipment deliveries to avoid traffic snarls in the area.

The general floodlighting specification called for 2,500 lux in a horizontal plane and 2,000 lux to the main camera locations, while the unique design within the stadium called for exact placement of the lighting fixtures to avoid structural components located in front of them.

The translucency of the roof also called for careful lighting design with regards to environmental issues. However, Musco's specialised aiming process allowed precision to 1/10 of a degree – assuring that the light is focused on the playing area.

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# Synthetic Turf in RUGBY

Steve Griffiths, head of technical services at the IRB, explains how synthetic turf could assist the sport

**T**he International Rugby Board (IRB) is the international federation that governs and develops rugby across the world. Consisting of 117 member unions or federations, its 2010-2020 Strategic Plan outlines the vision: Rugby – A Sport for All True to its Values; as well as its mission to: Grow the Global Rugby Family.

Synthetic turf can assist with these objectives by helping to boost the global development of the game, particularly where there is a lack of playing facilities or inclement growing conditions for natural turf. A synthetic turf surface can be used by many sports to help increase participation and the IRB is witnessing an increase in worldwide provision for rugby. Asian countries are hosting international rugby matches on this type of surface, while the Saracens Rugby Club, in the English Aviva Premiership League, has announced its intention to install a synthetic turf pitch with many more installations expected at the grassroots level of the game in the near future.



## The artificial advantage

A typical natural turf pitch can yield up to 30 playing hours a week if correctly maintained and ambient weather conditions allow, although a strict maintenance process needs to be implemented. Synthetic turf can provide a significant increase in the number of playing hours, over natural turf surfaces.

As a result of this, a synthetic turf installation can become a financially viable option for many sporting organisations. The increased usage, combined with a reduction in ongoing maintenance costs, makes it an attractive proposition for facility managers.

Once installed, the synthetic turf can also offer commercial opportunities, such as multi-sport and even non-sporting usage – usually requiring a standard maintenance regime afterwards to bring the facility back to optimal performance for sport. If managed effectively, the income received from such events can cover the cost of installation and in some instances provide a source of additional income for the club/facility owner.

From an environmental point of view, this surface requires little or no water, in comparison to natural turf, which makes it a more sustainable option for countries in which water is in short supply. It can also be a more practical solution for countries where extreme weather conditions

prevail and growing natural turf is difficult – providing a consistent surface in climates with seasonal variations, particularly when used for elite tournaments.

## Obstacles overcome

Early experiments with the use of synthetic turf in association football in the UK were not very successful and much of the opposition today comes from the managers of teams who experienced the early generations of turf where there were significant issues surrounding ball and player surface interaction on hard surfaces. However, with the innovation of long-pile rubber crumb surfaces (or 3G) the old issues have been removed and fortunately rugby has benefited from today's more positive experiences.

## Player welfare

The IRB's core philosophy is about protecting the player and the sport. The physical nature of the sport means that players have significant high-impact surface interactions. It's therefore vital that the synthetic surface poses no additional risks to players to that of good quality natural turf in normal conditions and that safety standards are maintained during the surface lifetime – not just on day one. This also protects those that invest in synthetic turf and prevents potential litigation.

The IRB also stresses that the turf must not change the normal dynamics of the game, whether that be through player or ball interaction with the sports surface. ➤

College Rifles Rugby Club in New Zealand chose FieldTurf Tarkett for the resurfacing of the club's two rugby fields



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# Benchmark for football turf

A synthetic surface should not pose a risk to players and safety standards should be maintained

### ► Regulatory framework

The IRB has 23 regulations that govern the game and are binding for all member unions (federations such as the RFU in England or the WRU in Wales). The Synthetic Turf Regulation 22 (more information at [www.irbplayerwelfare.com](http://www.irbplayerwelfare.com)) indicates the process required for synthetic turf installation.

### Testing procedures

A surface is defined as the total system and includes the support layers such as any form of shock absorbing layer, which goes beneath the synthetic turf. Therefore testing occurs both within a laboratory environment (type testing) and upon the completed installation.

A product will undergo a series of tests to establish its suitability for installation. Once installed, the performance requirements, together with the construction requirements, will be checked. Only a product that has completed both the laboratory and field-testing will have fulfilled the requirements of this specification. Accordingly only the completed fields will be permitted for use in rugby.

### Laboratory tests and field tests

There are three basic categories that define the overall performance of a synthetic surface suitable for rugby:

1. The reaction of a ball to the surface (ball/surface interaction)
2. The reaction of a rugby player to the surface (player/surface interaction)
3. The resistance of the surface to wear and tear and the environment (durability)

The specific technical requirements are included in Panel 1. (see page 48)

### Performance specification

Technology evolves, therefore the performance specification has to be reviewed

### The process required for synthetic turf installation

Step 1	Bodies seeking to install or use a synthetic turf playing surface must comply with the IRB requirements for the use of artificial playing surfaces (see Regulation 22 notes)
Step 2	Manufacturer submits product to Accredited Test Institute
Step 3	Product is tested. If it passes then it goes to Step 4
Step 4	A pitch is installed with the laboratory approved product
Step 5	The pitch undergoes field testing
Step 6	If the pitch meets all the requirements then it is granted Approved Status by the local member union*

\*The member union is ultimately responsible for the approval of the installation.



One turf for both grassroots and elite in a multi-sport environment, will make matters easier for sports, manufacturers, test institutes, federations and end users

on a regular basis. To that end the IRB established an Expert Group in May 2010, which reviewed the Specification in August 2010 and confirmed that it was appropriate to adopt the FIFA specification save for two elements. (FIFA instigated the quality concept for synthetic turf)

- Head impact criteria – this ensures there are strict parameters in place to protect players from serious injuries as a result of falls (due to the increased risk of head injuries when playing rugby)
- Greater seam strength for the carpet – due to the possibility of rugby studs making contact with the carpet base, particularly in scrummaging, the seams need to be much stronger to withstand these excessive forces

The Expert Group is comprised of the IRB, a FIFA turf consultant, the MD of a test institute, the head of funding and facilities for a member union and the IRB head of technical services. A FIFA synthetic turf manager attends by invitation.

### Accredited institutes

Accredited test institutes are the only organisations permitted to undertake testing on pitches that are to be certified as Regulation 22 compliant. These institutes are accredited by annually demonstrating their competence

through both personnel and equipment at the Round Robin. Having passed the Round Robin the institutes are accredited by both the IRB and FIFA. The current institutes accredited include: Sportslabs Ltd, ISA Sport, Labosport, Acoustoscan Pty and the University of Ghent.

### The Memorandum of Understanding with FIFA

The IRB enjoys a close working relationship with FIFA, made official with a signed Memorandum of Understanding in April 2010 with the following aims:

1. To collaborate on development and technical performance requirements so that artificial surfaces of optimal quality and safety levels are produced and installed in a manner which seeks to ensure the safety of players and protection of the investment made by relevant parties in artificial surfaces in the respective sports
2. To collaborate by exchanging information on technical, development and sports medicine issues so that the producers of artificial surfaces meet specified quality standards – at all stages of production and installation of artificial surfaces
3. To endeavour to ensure that test institutes, which assess adherence to the artificial surface criteria, have achieved the required safety and quality standards

Eventually, the vision may be for one turf for both grassroots and elite level in a multi-sport environment, which will make matters much easier for the sports, the manufacturers, the test institute, member federations and the end users. Only by collaboration of sports' international federations can this vision be realised.

## THE GLOBAL RESOURCE FOR SPORTS PROFESSIONALS

# SPORTS MANAGEMENT 2011-2012 HANDBOOK

The 2011-2012 Sports Management Handbook – the ultimate reference guide for the international sports market – will be published in summer 2011 as a comprehensive resource for operators and suppliers worldwide. The handbook will be distributed to buyers and operators and will also have bonus distribution at key industry events.



### WHAT'S IN THE HANDBOOK?

#### SUPPLIER INFORMATION

- Company profiles including key information, contact details, images of products, a company logo and a picture of a key contact
- Multiple listings of industry suppliers
- Innovation roundup
- Web address book
- Product selector
- Organisation contact book

#### OPERATOR INFORMATION

- Key industry statistics and research
- 2011-2012 Diary: industry events, shows and networking opportunities
- Predictions and trends for 2011-2012
- Features and analysis
- Resource section with contact information
- Development pipeline
- Green resources

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## Panel 1 Performance Specifications – Requirements and Test Methods

### Identification Methods

Characteristic	Surface or Component	Test Method
Mass per unit area	Synthetic Turf	ISO 18543
Tufts per unit	Synthetic Turf	ISO 1763
Pile Weight	Synthetic Turf	ISO 2549
Tuft Withdrawal Force	Synthetic Turf	ISO 4919
Particle Size	Sand or Performance In-fill	EN 933-1 and 933-2
Particle Shape	Sand or Performance In-fill	EN 933-1 and 933-2
Bulk Density	Sand or Performance In-fill	EN 1097-3
Fibre Identification	Synthetic Turf Yarns	DSC

### Durability

Characteristic	Test Method	Requirements
Abrasion Resistance	EN 13672	Remains within the limits: Shock absorption Vertical deformation Rotational Resistance
Joint Strength	EN 12228	Bonded joints $\geq 25$ N/mm Sewn joints 1000N/100mm $\geq 25$ N/mm
Product Stability	ISO 13934-1	

### Climatic Resistance

Characteristic	Test Method	Requirements
UV / Water / Heat	EN 13864	Colour Fastness Abrasion resistance Joint strength

### Player Surface Interaction Requirements

Characteristic	Test Method	Requirement
Shock Absorbency	FIFA Test Method 04	60-75%
HIC	EN 1177	$\geq 1.3$ m on installation $\geq 1.0$ m over the manufacturers' performance warranty
Vertical Deformation	FIFA Test Method 05	Artificial Athlete 4-10mm
Rotational Resistance	FIFA Test Method 06	-25 - 55 N.M.
Stud Deceleration Value	FIFA Test Method 07	3.0 - 5.5g
Stud Slide Value	FIFA Test Method 07	120 - 230
Abrasiveness	FIFA Test Method 08	$\pm 30\%$
Skin Surface Friction	FIFA Test Method 08	0.35 - 0.75
Energy Restitution		30 - 50%

### Ball/Surface Interaction Requirements

Characteristic	Test Method	Requirement
Vertical Ball Rebound	EN 12235	60-100cm

### Construction Requirements

Characteristic	Surface or Component	Test Method
Slope	EN 22768-1	$\leq 1.0\%$
Evenness	EN 13036	$\leq 10$ mm under 3m
Evenness	EN 13036	$\leq 2$ mm under 300mm
Base Permeability	EN 12626	$\geq 180$ mm/hr

### ➔ Preferred producers

According to the IRB (and FIFA), the marketplace has been dominated by contractors who purchase carpet, then use sub-contractors to undertake the different aspects of installation. However, both associations believe that the most effective model for ensuring a quality installation is for one producer to take responsibility for the whole process. This includes inception, design, construction of the sub base and, most importantly, installing the carpet to ensure that appropriate maintenance provisions are in place.

The IRB is currently in the process of engaging with potential 'preferred turf producers' that it will market to member unions and potential end users. Limonta was the first 'preferred producer' selected and has recently been joined by Greenfields. They were chosen because of their artificial sports surfacing experience and their commitment to the 'preferred producer' process by being ISO 9001 accredited, having quality procedures in place, civil engineering expertise and a maintenance management service in place.

### The future

Based around player welfare, the IRB synthetic turf policy, the regulatory framework, performance specification, the expert group, the member union with FIFA, the accredited test institutes and the preferred producer concept has provided a sound infrastructure. This means that the growth of synthetic turf can be managed effectively so the player and the sport are protected. ●



## SPORT AND LEISURE STATISTICS

FORECASTS FOR THE SPORT AND LEISURE INDUSTRIES

The Sport Industry Research Centre publishes two annual reports, Leisure Forecasts and Sport Market Forecasts. These reports provide valuable insight into future market trends.

Both publications are essential references for industry practitioners, consultants and researchers.

The Sport Market Forecasts are produced in conjunction with Sport England.

To find out more please visit  
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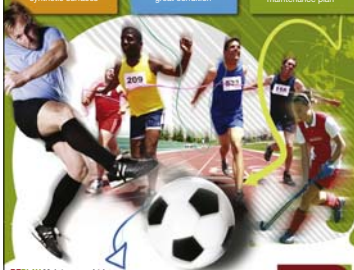
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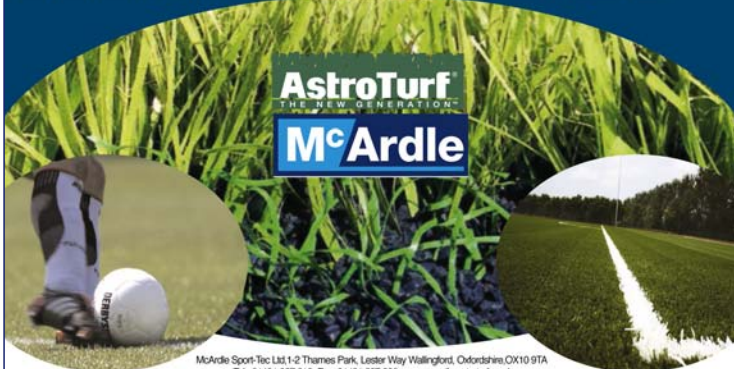
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Wendy Golledge investigates how management models and standards can help sports and leisure centres drive efficiency savings, earn improved perception in the eyes of customers and ultimately improve their business

# UP TO SCRATCH?

**I**n an economic climate where every customer through the door matters, where efficiency drives are the order of the day and sports clubs and leisure centres face ever more demanding financial challenges, can investing valuable funding in management models and standards really help to ease off this pressure?

"Effective and profitable centre management depends on constructive use of management time," says David Monkhouse, regional manager of Quest – the UK quality scheme for sport and leisure. "Achieving that requires staff to work together and follow standard procedures plus tried-and-tested systems to ensure the basics are in place. A quality management award will assess these important criteria and provide recommendations to ensure the centre is working to its full potential. Only then can the management team truly concentrate on generating income."

Clare MacLeod, national manager for Clubmark, Sport England's accreditation

Since attaining Clubmark status, Rochdale Company of Archers is recognised as a financially secure centre of sporting excellence

scheme for junior sports clubs says: "External validation and adhering to approved management models can also have a dramatic effect on customer approval. Management models mean sites can be confident that they've reached minimum standards across a range of criteria and that they have, for example, appropriate insurance,

coaching qualifications and risk assessments in place, which leads to improved customer satisfaction."

## The gold standard

Management models allow sites to benchmark themselves, both internally to recognise good practice and externally to learn from organisations that are doing

### CASE STUDY: ROCHDALE COMPANY OF ARCHERS

**E**stablished in 1954, Rochdale Company of Archers was keen to attain Clubmark status to reflect its position as a well run, organised and ambitious club, plus attract finance and grants to aid development requirements.

Since obtaining the Clubmark, the club is now recommended by the local authority as a financially secure and safe centre of sporting excellence, plus a best practice provider of qualified and appropriate archery training, and has been nominated for Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council's Sports Club of the Year award.

It was awarded substantial funding to recruit, train and qualify nine Level 1 coaches, which also created opportunities to involve schools in archery. "With the help of Clubmark we have identified our opportunities for growth and been able to attract the funding and support to begin fulfilling our development plans," says chair Bryan Woodcock.





things better. Pierre Cachet, chief executive officer at EFQM says: "In any sector, it's important to gain an external view of how robust your internal management processes are and it's increasingly important to be able to demonstrate this to your customers, partners and other stakeholders. Assessments and awards generate this confidence and in the current climate, awards can be used to demonstrate that the services offered are recognised by an independent third party as exceptional and so help businesses differentiate themselves."

According to McLeod, sports clubs and leisure centres shouldn't underestimate the tangible benefits for partners and the industry as a whole, either. "Research suggests that Clubmark clubs help local authorities achieve targets for youth participation and improve school-club links. They deploy more coaches and work harder to develop their skills, thus leading to better quality provision and improved player performance. And the mark gives people confidence when considering a club, hence helping to boost introductory participation," she says.

Ultimately, investing in a management standard will improve the quality of service a sports club or leisure centre delivers, which can only be a good thing for the industry. Monkhouse says: "A centre is only ever as good as its worst lifeguard or duty manager." Cachet agrees: "That's the point of quality awards – even if a centre gains nothing else from the process, they will at least get their staff to the basic standard, which can only lead to increased customer satisfaction, more referrals, improved processes, more people participating and a better bottom line."

## THE MAJOR MODELS

### QUEST

Quest has defined good practice and ongoing development within a customer-focused management framework for more than 12 years. A tool for continuous improvement, it is delivered by leisure professionals and involves mystery shopper visits plus an assessment every two years, after which centres get an overall banded score.

The award was taken over by leisure consultants Right Directions – in partnership with Leisure-net Solutions – at the end of 2010 and a new, enhanced Quest has already been launched. Quest 2011 differs from the old model in that it will have two levels – an entry-level one-day assessment, which takes in the core fundamentals of running a leisure facility, plus a more advanced two-day assessment for centres wishing to push themselves beyond the basic badge. At the advanced level, facilities also have the freedom to choose specific modules to be assessed on in addition to the core areas.

Unlike other quality marks, Quest is the only award that solely assesses leisure facilities and sports development teams. "That's the thing that makes

Quest 2011 stand out; it's been written by the sector, for the sector and assessments are carried out by informed peers who are sourced from within the sector," says regional manager of David Monkhouse. "The self-selection element of the advanced day-two award also means it can be made specifically relevant to each and every centre."

To kick-start the process, sports clubs and leisure centres need to purchase a Quest pack. They can start the procedure by completing a self-assessment questionnaire, a mystery shopper visit is then undertaken before a two-day facility assessment. The centre then gets an annual mystery guest visit and an assessor spends one day reviewing its progress. The cost of this service is £2,300. The new Quest offers a one-day mystery customer and a one-day assessment for smaller facilities. The cost for this is £850.

For more information visit [www.questnbs.org](http://www.questnbs.org)

### EFQM

The aim of the EFQM Excellence Model put simply is to help any organisation achieve sustainable excellence. The assessment framework aims to help leaders to deliver strategy and managers to lead improvements while engaging employees in change and helping them to understand how they can contribute.

"The EFQM Model helps identify areas where the efficiency of internal processes can be improved and focuses on areas that are critical for success – in short, you can deliver increased value with reduced



➤ effort. The schemes are designed to help organisations achieve this while providing external proof of their ability to deliver excellent services to their customers," says Cachet.

The Model is based around a series of fundamental concepts for excellence, from achieving balanced results and adding value for customers to nurturing creativity and building partnerships. Although not leisure specific, it sets out to give a holistic overview of any organisation, irrespective of size, sector or maturity.

For more information visit [www.efqm.org](http://www.efqm.org)

### CLUBMARK

This Sport England scheme is the only national cross-sports quality accreditation for clubs with junior sections. It's built around a set of core criteria, to ensure accredited clubs operate to consistent minimum operating standards.

"Clubmark is endorsed by all the main sporting, youth and education agencies, and accreditation is obtained via either a club's licensed national governing body (NGB) or county sports partnership (CSP)," says Sport England's chair, Richard Lewis. "It plays an important role in creating a safe and accessible environment for young people to play sport and is a good development tool for many clubs."

Accreditation is awarded to clubs that comply with minimum operating standards in four areas: the playing programme, duty of care and safeguarding and protecting children, knowing your club and its community, and club management. "Clubmark stimulates improvements to how clubs cater for junior

(and all) members. The culture it promotes encourages clubs to adopt better, more organised systems and structures, helping them to run more effectively and efficiently, plus it develops partnerships across the industry leading to an improved sporting offer," says national manager Clare MacLeod.

Managed by leisure consultants Knight, Kavanagh and Page on behalf of Sport England, accreditation is free and assessments are undertaken via a site visit by a licensed organisation that assists the club in gathering evidence of how it's working towards the required standard. Clubs interested in registering for Clubmark should contact their NGB or CSP.

For more information visit [www.clubmark.org.uk](http://www.clubmark.org.uk)

### THE BALANCED SCORECARD

A strategic planning and management system open to businesses in all sectors, The Balanced Scorecard measures traditional financial metrics alongside non-financial

performance measures – the aim being to give managers a more 'balanced' view of their organisation's performance.

"The scorecard aims to help any business clarify their vision and strategy, improve performance and translate them into instructions for the staff on a day-to-day basis, with a view to continuously improving strategic performance and results."

By aligning a business to four perspectives – learning and growth, business processes, customer and financial – measuring performance and evaluating results, it also creates a framework for improved communications both internally and externally, smoother day-to-day operation and the achievement of strategic goals.

For more information visit [www.balancedscorecard.org](http://www.balancedscorecard.org)

### CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE SCHEME

The Customer Service Excellence Scheme, formerly the government's Charter Mark, is designed to offer all public services a practical tool for driving customer-focused change.

"We aim to make a tangible difference to public service users by encouraging provider organisations to focus on their individual needs and preferences," explains cabinet office spokesperson Shareena Butt. "The standard tests those areas that research has indicated are a priority for customers, such as delivery, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Emphasis is also placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction."

For more info visit [www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

Wendy Gollidge is a freelance journalist



Following standard procedures and tried and tested systems ensures the basics are in place.

### CASE STUDY: BANBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Following the appointment of a new senior management team and a period of significant transformation, Banbridge District Council felt it was time to establish a national benchmark in two of its centres: Banbridge Leisure Centre and Dromore Community Centre.

"The council's leisure service had already undertaken considerable work to address a number of operational areas and felt ready to address the challenges in the current climate," says Ben Corr head of leisure at Banbridge District Council. "Quest helped motivate the staff and was used as a means of informing and influencing future planning using a proactive approach. This stretched our services, challenged our processes and transformed our offering."



Quest was used to influence future planning at Banbridge Leisure Centre

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The athletics track at Crystal Palace track was pressure-washed last year to prevent athletes slipping on moss and dirt



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P.C. MARK SHEARMAN

# ON YOUR MARKS ...

**Karen Maxwell talks to UKA facilities manager Peter Sutcliffe about athletic provision at new and existing public and private leisure centres**

**N**ow that West Ham FC has won the backing of Olympic bosses in the battle for tenancy of the Olympic Stadium over Tottenham Hotspur's rival bid, the athletics fraternity can breathe a sigh of relief – safe in the knowledge that the track won't be ripped up and the stadium razed to the ground to make way for a venue specifically fit for footballing purpose.

Fulfilling the promise made by the London 2012 bid team to keep the track and

field as a permanent feature after the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the new tenants intend to draw football, athletics and the local community to the stadium post 2012. However, the apparent lack of major track and field events that could be staged and generate enough income to use the stadium is a major concern.

National Stadium aside, the cost of facilities versus profitable events is, according to UK Athletics' (UKA) safety and facilities manager, Peter Sutcliffe, well

understood within the sport. "Athletic tracks can be very expensive to operate and maintain and produce very little income," he explains.

So are athletic clubs and their facilities up and down the country fit for purpose to meet the training and competition needs of aspiring athletes and local communities in the run up to London 2012, as well as the anticipated spike in interest after the big event?

## Getting set

According to Sutcliffe, apart from a few areas of the country, there are already sufficient tracks to accommodate the existing athletic population as well as the potential increase in footfall, which may occur as a result of the Games.

However, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed.

"Although there are a large number of athletic clubs around the country, many are too small to deal effectively with an anticipated influx of young athletes. They have neither the coaching staff nor the administrative organisation to

Lee Valley serves the local community and Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club





The High Performance Centres at Lee Valley (left) and Loughborough (right) feature Olympic-quality training facilities for elite athletes

## CASE STUDY: ALEXANDER STADIUM

**B**irmingham's Alexander Stadium is set to undergo a £12.25m redevelopment now that Birmingham City Council (BCC) has approved the self-financing business plan for the scheme.

The first part of the S&P Architects-designed upgrade will be the 5,000-seat stand, which will be built in time for the IAAF Diamond League meeting this year. This two-tier stand is designed to reflect the summer aspect of athletics with its fabric facade and roof, together with the open aspect to the track from the concourse. The stand will also contain two floors of office space, to accommodate 250 office workers, below the main concourse level. A gymnasium is also planned and will be available to both club members and local residents.

BCC is expecting to fund the scheme through the rental of office space and gym income. BCC leader Mike Whitty said: "Birmingham will play host to gold medal hopefuls from the USA and Jamaica ahead of the 2012 Olympic Games and, to build on that success, we need the facilities required for the world's best athletes to compete here on a regular basis.

provide an effective and sustained learning environment," Sutcliffe explains.

Furthermore, the availability of basic club amenities is also a major problem. "Many facilities require refurbishment to the changing rooms and refreshment areas as well as the athletic facilities, which are essential requirements if parents are going to bring their children to the club on a regular basis."

The problem, he says, lies in the fact that most of these facilities are either local authority owned or managed by private companies, so the governing body has very limited control over them. "In this current economic climate it's difficult for local authorities to justify the cost of maintaining tracks – let alone upgrading them," Sutcliffe says.

### Going forward

UKA is currently in the process of revising its facilities strategy, which it hopes will



## CASE STUDY: LEE VALLEY AND LOUGHBOROUGH

**B**ritain's elite track and field athletes are set to be given a boost in their preparations for London 2012 with the installation of an Olympic track at two training locations, which will maximise the home advantage for the UK's top athletes.

A replica of the Mondo FX track installed at London's Olympic Stadium has been fitted at both UK Athletics' (UKA) National Performance Centres in Lee Valley and Loughborough.

The London Marathon Charitable Trust (LMCT) has provided £220,000 to enable UKA – working with Loughborough University and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority – to lay the track. Only 10 stadiums in the world currently boast

a Mondo FX surface – two of which are in Beijing, China. The National Performance Centres are set to be the only training facilities with such a track.

UKA's Lee Valley Athletic Centre director Dan Pfaff said: "The two National Performance Centres will be the only training centres in the world with this high performance track installed, giving our athletes considerable advantage.

"It is super fast and is of particular benefit to structured running events such as sprints, hurdles and all horizontal and vertical jumps.

"Training on the track day in and day out will mean the Olympic Stadium will feel like home to our athletes by the summer of 2012."

encourage local authorities and privately managed facilities to prioritise athletic provision. At the same time the governing body will also provide technical advice on how best to manage and improve existing facilities.

This strategy will prioritise the upgrading of existing tracks in the UK and assist the operators in determining the key improvements needed to benefit local community use. In addition, it will also provide information regarding the technical requirements for the appropriate levels of training and competition.

Apart from the specific facilities required to successfully host athletic events, Sutcliffe says that the key difference between elite level and grassroots requirements tends to be the ancillary facilities required to improve performance. "The track and field event facilities are of course important, but strength and conditioning rooms, medical treatment rooms

and specialist equipment are the essential components of a high performance centre. Whereas the key considerations at grassroots level are developing potential and retaining interest," he says.

"UKA inspectors already check athletics tracks across the country on a regular basis to ensure they meet all the requirements for UKA training and competition. As and when required, they can also advise facility managers and owners on the correct maintenance and refurbishment needed to upgrade the facility for future use," Sutcliffe explains.

The strategy, he says, is further enhanced by the fact that England Athletics is beginning to make inroads into the club and coaching scene with a steady growth of athletic networks across the country. "By 2012, properly set-up clubs will be in a significantly better position to cater for additional athletes and grow the talent pool," he says. ●

# Building on Excellence



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David Williams, Sussex Downs College, Sports & Recreation Manager



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**Kath Hudson talks to the project managers in charge of the design and delivery of the temporary cluster of iconic venues for London 2012**

**L**ondon 2012 is ground-breaking in the number of temporary structures, rather than purpose-built venues, being used to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. This sustainable approach avoids unnecessary venue construction and allows the city's parks and iconic landmarks to play a major part in this historic event – promoting quintessential English backdrops to spectators across the world.

Specific equipment for these venues will be hired and the pre-fabricated structures will then be recycled or used elsewhere after the big event.

According to Chris Jopson, associate principal of Populous – the official London 2012 architectural and overlay

design services provider – this temporary approach caught the attention of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as a bid winning strategy. "London has set the trend on temporary structures and Olympic bidding nations are becoming more aware about what they're leaving behind once the Games are over. The whole event lasts just six weeks and this temporary overlay on existing buildings ensures that London is not left with structures that offer little or no post-Games value."

#### **Reuseable structures**

Working together to create these sites – under the direction of the London 2012 Organising Committee (LOCOG) – Populous, engineering design company Atkins and project manager Drivers Jonas Deloitte have developed all aspects of the venues, from the look and feel, the user experience, the delivery of seating and accommodation; as well as the back of house requirements such as power, water and lighting.

As well as designing permanent structures, such as the Olympic Stadium and the Handball Arena, Populous has also designed a number

of standalone temporary structures for Games use as well as hybrid venues, which are a mixture of each.

An innovative approach to one such temporary structure is the double pitched, 16,000-seat hockey venue. According to Jopson, after playing host to hockey competitions during the Games, some of the structure will be moved to the north of the Olympic Park to extend the Eton Manor sports facilities. Providing 3,000 permanent seats with the ability to increase capacity to up to 15,000 for major events, this equipment will help to convert the site into a permanent Paralympic wheelchair tennis venue for the Paralympic Games and thereafter.

In another example, the 6,000 seats used within the temporary BMX venue, situated next to the Velodrome, will be removed for use elsewhere after the Games, although the BMX track will be kept to serve the local community post 2012.

The 12,000-seat Basketball and Handball Arena is scheduled to be one of the largest temporary venues built for any Games and there will be just 22 hours to transform the venue from the basketball to the handball competition finals. "The structure is like a huge tent, but fully air-conditioned and environmentally sound," says Jopson. "We've pushed the boundaries in terms of temporary design and what can be achieved with stretched fabric. The whole structure can be unbolted and transported elsewhere to be used again and again."

**Above:** An artist's impression of the Equestrian and Modern Pentathlon venue at Greenwich Park. **Left:** Beach volleyball at Horse Guards Parade.



An artists' impression of Horse Guards Parade as it might look during the beach volleyball competitions

➤ Even the permanent structures have temporary elements to them. The Olympic Stadium will be reduced from 80,000 to 25,000-seat capacity. Likewise, the Aquatics Centre, designed by Zaha Hadid, will be reduced from a 17,500 to a 2,500-seat capacity by taking the two temporary wings off the side.

"Enabling permanent venues to leave the right legacy is central to Populous' design approach for major events," says Jopson. "By considering overlay from the start, embracing the temporary issues and including them as an integral part of our design philosophy, we're able to ensure that every venue, whether permanent or temporary, offers the appropriate legacy to its end users."

As it's unlikely that these venues would be used for another Olympic purpose in their useful lifespan, Jopson says: "If we built to satisfy the Olympic requirements in permanent form, it would be incredibly wasteful. These buildings have to be maintained post-Games, so you need to get the brief right from the outset. It's an interesting challenge to find creative ways of using standard temporary components, which redefines the nature of temporary event architecture."

## Sporting icons

Drivers Jonas Deloitte's partnership with LOCOG involves the delivery of four key landmark venues being fit for sporting purpose during the event.

Hosting the equestrian events, London's Greenwich Park will feature a 20,000-seat temporary arena; Horse Guards Parade will host beach volleyball events with a 15,000-seat arena; the Mall will be the start and finish of the marathon, cycle race and race walk and Hyde Park will be used for the triathlon and 10k open swim events.



**It's an interesting challenge to find creative ways of using standard temporary components, which redefines the nature of temporary event architecture**

Drivers Jonas Deloitte has a track record of delivering stadia in this country, including seven new builds and many redevelopments and expansions. According to the director of the sports and leisure management team, Stephen Jepson, whether it's a temporary or permanent stadium, the building process is fairly similar: "The difference here is that we have little time to build the structures and then take them away afterwards," he says.

"As most of these sites are in continual use there's pressure to take them over for the shortest period possible. For example, work will start on site at Greenwich Park a couple of months before the Olympic Games start, readapted to subsequent Paralympic demands and then put back to normal four weeks later. Horse Guards Parade has an even tighter timeframe: Six weeks to set up and four weeks to take down. In order to meet these deadlines, everything will be built off site, then brought in and quickly slotted together. Since these are public areas, it is also important that the buildings do not get damaged in any way."

According to Jepson, Greenwich Park presented an interesting challenge. "In

order to give a level field of play, a deck has been recreated, which feels and sounds the same as solid ground. This has been tested with horses and signed off by the international federations. It'll be installed for a test event in the park this summer and then warehoused until the summer of 2012. Similarly, a second deck has also been constructed for Horse Guards Parade to provide a beach platform for beach volleyball."

With just 16 months to go, the Velodrome is now complete. The planning process is coming to an end, procurement of commodities, such as seats and toilets, is well underway and construction documents are being drawn up. Then there's the series of test events that will ensure the venues are fully functional and fit for purpose.

Despite the ongoing pressure, Jepson is excited about the outcome. "With sports projects you get the spine tingling moment when the competitors come out for the first time. When you hear the crowd cheering it's great to feel that you've had a part in preparing for the big event." ●

*Kath Hudson is a freelance writer*





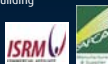
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**Karen Maxwell talks to the Tennis Foundation's head of education, Paul Regan, on the Lawn Tennis Association's strategy to increase children's access to the sport**

**M**any children get their first sports experience at school and tennis is no exception. With or without the benefit of a full-court tennis facility, 80 per cent of schools across England are currently offering children an introduction to the sport, while 47 per cent have already linked with a local place to play to encourage them to stay involved.

### Strategic thinking

The Tennis Foundation (TF), supported by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), has been implementing the AEGON (sponsored) Schools Tennis Strategy by partnering with schools across the UK for the past three years. This strategy sets out the vision, direction and plans for the future of tennis in schools across the country by looking at the current situation, what the governing body would like to achieve in this sector going forward and how it intends to do so.

A crucial part of the tennis legacy for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the strategy also plays an integral role in growing the base of the sport and supporting talent ID and development.

As part of this partnership, the TF provides free resources, such as a coach-led DVD, which offers teachers proven tips to help them conduct an effective tennis lesson, plus the equipment needed to provide a quality experience. The 8,961 packs already distributed nationwide contained the equivalent of 250,000 free tennis rackets and 500,000 tennis balls.

Paul Regan, head of education at the TF, helped to write the strategy. "I delivered a national primary school initiative in my previous role at the Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation so I understood the challenges and frustrations within this sector, which is why we decided to focus on primary schools first," he explains.

### Primary targets

The challenge in year one, Regan explains, was how to engage primary school teachers. "Our research showed that many did not have the confidence to teach tennis to large groups of children and the lack of space and equipment was also a barrier," he says. "In answer to these issues, our child-facing DVD has proved to be a revolutionary way of allowing the sport to be delivered

anywhere within the school environment. Unless a teacher has a sporty background, tennis has been perceived to be a difficult sport to deliver, so the DVD covers the technical demonstrations and progressions – allowing the teacher to conduct the lesson, which is what they do best," he explains. Adding that using the right sized indoor and outdoor balls within the Mini Tennis concept has proven to be the best vehicle for introducing the sport at primary school level.

### Secondary phase

Last year saw the TF turn its attention towards the secondary school sector, where tennis was used to provide lesson plans and used as a way of delivering another element to the curriculum. "We've helped to integrate tennis into English and media, French and history lessons, which has allowed a wider audience to engage with the sport – particularly those children who don't want to play the game but show an interest in understanding its concept," Regan says.

"Within this age-group we recognised the need to provide the skills and lesson plans necessary for 30 young people with ➔

➤ mixed abilities in a variety of environments, so we extended the traditional Under 10s Mini Tennis red, orange and green ball concept to improve the playing experience for this sector. This means that up to 30 people are able to play on four warm, dry, indoor badminton courts and the balls are more likely to stay in play for longer, which sustains interest," he explains.

### Further education

While continuing to roll out programmes specifically aimed at the primary and secondary sectors, the TF is currently in the process of developing and finalising resources for 16-19 year-olds in further education as well as programmes that offer support for teachers working with disabled children and young people.

Regan says that both these sectors offer interesting challenges. "We're looking at the best way to engage with disabled young people across the special needs spectrum and how tennis can make a difference in their lives. While making tennis provision work within the FE sector is about clever timetabling. Many young people attend college for lectures then disappear again, so we're looking at how we can provide more tennis opportunities within their enrichment time," he explains.

### Getting on board

The TF's annual Schools Tennis road shows have proved an effective way of promoting the resources and support available to schools. Held each spring term, the first of this year's 16 events kicked off in Bolton on 28 February and finishes in Roehampton, London on 25 March. Every school that attends receives information on existing and new



**We don't expect all teachers to go away from the course as tennis advocates, provided they understand how the DVD works and what their role is in delivering it**

resources being launched, a selection of school tennis equipment, a guide to school tennis, a chance to meet up with the local tennis development manager and entry into prize draws for additional tennis equipment and Wimbledon tickets. "Last year 650 people from our schools infrastructure attended the events, so it's proved to be a great awareness raiser," Regan says.

In order for a school to cement its partnership with the TF, Regan says a nominated teacher attends a three-hour teacher-training course, held locally with assistance from the Youth Sport Trust

(YST) Schools Sports Partnership. "These courses are free to join and on successful completion the candidate receives the DVD resource pack together with equipment that retails for more than £500.

"We don't expect all teachers to go away from the course tennis advocates, provided they understand how the DVD works and what their role is in delivering it, but feedback from the majority of delegates has been positive. Over 99 per cent of attendees say that it helps and inspires them to deliver tennis," he says.

However, if teachers find they enjoy the game and want to get more actively involved, Regan says they can get a helping hand towards the first rung of the LTA's coaching pathway. "We can signpost enthusiastic teachers towards the UKCC Level 1 coaching course and help them progress from there," he says.

Already 13,100 teachers and coaches have been trained up within the School Tennis programme and Regan attributes this success to its content. "With the help of the LTA's coaching department, the resources have been written by teachers for teachers rather than trying to shoehorn coaching resources into schools in



Schoolchildren are introduced to tennis through AEGON-sponsored equipment and technical know how

## CASE STUDY: POOLE AND PARKSTONE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

School Sport Partnership co-ordinator for Poole Grammar School for Boys and Parkstone Grammar School for Girls, Deborah Wheatley, won the AEGON award for School Tennis provision in her area last year.

"Our tennis activities at nearby schools, since our involvement with the AEGON Teacher Training programme, have primarily been led by the girls from Parkstone Grammar School, although my Young Ambassadors from the boys' school have also been a part of the delivery team," says Wheatley. "This team includes 60 sports leaders from years 10 to 13. The ease with which the activities have been delivered in schools has been due to the easy access to appropriate equipment, the willingness and ability of the sports leaders and the encouragement received from the Tennis Foundation (TF).

"One of the activities the sports leaders have helped to run is the tennis activity afternoons, which target every year two pupil in eight local primary schools (600 in total). Using an AEGON

equipment bag with activity ideas based on the 'tennis activity week' resource available from the TF website, each event allows 60-70 children to try six tennis-related activities in a fun and challenging way within an inter-school competition format.

"The sports leaders also helped co-ordinate the year three and the year four AEGON tennis competitions – comprising a total of 70 participants from five local schools and officiated by year seven sport leaders from Hamworthy Middle School and Talbot Combined School.

"Students from the languages department at Parkstone Grammar School also helped year three children link tennis with simple vocabulary from six different countries, at a tennis festival on National Olympic Day last year. Each primary school represented a different country, made representative flags and took part in an Olympic-style march past. The children were awarded points for using both their language and tennis skills during the event, both contributing to their overall team score."



Sport leaders in Poole, Dorset, helped to organise tennis activity afternoons and inter-school competitions

the hope that teachers would be able to pick them up and run with them," he explains. "We had a team of 15 teachers involved in shaping the programme's content to what's actually required within a school environment and being aware of the barriers and confines – such as large groups of children working around the piano and nativity play props in the school hall," he says.

### Healthy competition

Part of the original School Tennis strategy was to develop a sophisticated competition framework, which included a (already fairly established) national strand as well as a local strand. These are delivered by the YST field team and competition manager network in

partnership with the LTA county-based field teams.

"Basically competition is a performance measure to see how well you do against someone else, which is a great motivator to stay with the game," Regan explains. "Our priority age groups are years three and four at primary level and years seven and eight at secondary level – although we also offer the tools to deliver the sport to other age groups. Over 41,000 children took part in dedicated inter-school competitions in the last academic year, showing a year on year growth of 14 per cent."

Well aware that the younger a child is introduced to a sport, the more chance there is for them to progress through the

performance framework, Regan says the TF, working with field teams, clubs and coaches, makes sure the talent attraction takes place within the school gates and that talent ID and development takes place within the Places to Play. "When I first started in this role, the YST accused the LTA of only being interested in cherry picking the talented kids. Now we're very much focussed on the whole school agenda to get every child involved and encouraged to link with affordable places to play – where everybody has an opportunity to get involved with the sport." ●







# SportAccord Convention

International leaders in business, government and sport will converge in London from 3-8 April for the ninth annual SportAccord Convention

**A**tended by representatives from around 100 international sports federations affiliated to SportAccord – the new name of the General Association of International Sports Federations – in addition to the Association of the Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) and the Association of the International Olympic Winter Sports Federations (AIOWF), approximately 1,500 delegates from 60 countries, representing 500 different organisations will be present at the SportAccord Convention, which will also showcase more than 80 international sports exhibitors.

Owned by SportAccord, the ASOIF and the AIOWF, the SportAccord Convention encompasses the annual Congress and General Assembly of each association. Prior to the creation of this event, the three associations, as well as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board, each held separate annual meetings in different locations. However, this event has brought these meetings under one umbrella – creating a powerful new platform for interaction between the sports movement, companies and cities.

## Impressive line-up

2011 marks the first time the UK has hosted the convention and is a key milestone in delivering London's long-term aim to position itself as the world's leading city in the business of sport and increase its market share in the US\$111bn (£71.4bn) global sports business industry. Previous SportAccord events have been held in Dubai, UAE (2010); Denver, USA (2009); Athens, Greece (2008); Beijing, China



The event brings together presidents and secretary generals of international federations

(2007); Seoul, South Korea (2006); Berlin, Germany (2005); Lausanne, Switzerland (2004) and Madrid, Spain (2003).

London Mayor Boris Johnson will welcome a powerful line-up of conference speakers during the six-day event. Confirmed participants include Lord Digby Jones, chair of HSBC's International Business Advisory Board and Daniel Frigo, executive VP of Walt Disney Motion Picture Studios EMEA, who will be talking about "Why sport matters to the entertainment industry". Lord Sebastian Coe, chair of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and CEO Paul Deighton will also give an update on preparations for London 2012.

Additional speakers include: former England rugby coach Clive Woodward;

West Ham United co-chair Karren Brady; Greg Clarke, executive chair of the Football League; H.E. Sheikh Saoud Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Secretary General of the Qatar National Olympic Committee; Spyros Capralos, chair of the Athens Stock Exchange, who was executive director of the Athens 2004 organisation and Armann Thorvaldsson, former CEO of Kaupthing Singer Friedlander Bank in Iceland.

"Sport really does matter," says Lord Digby Jones, chair of SportAccord London 2011. "It matters economically, educationally and environmentally, for social inclusion and entertainment and culture. The UK is the international home for sporting events so where else for the rest of the world to come and show its wares but London?" ●



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S&P Architects' Keith Ashton and Mark Thomas look at the potential effect of the government's spending cuts on swimming pool and leisure provision

# The future of SWIMMING POOLS

Public swimming pools in the UK have been provided by local authorities and funded through the taxation system for more than a century. During this time, their purpose has changed from bath houses, built to tackle public health issues, to outdoor lidos offering water-based activities and fresh air – the use of which coincided with the Annual Holiday Bill of 1936, which made an annual paid holiday a statutory right for Britain's working population.

Today, the design brief for a typical public swimming pool ensures a suitable place for teaching, recreational swimming and county-level competition. It should offer an ideal environment for children and adults to learn to swim, encourage regular participation, help identify and nurture the swimming stars of the future and be inclusive and accessible to all. In fact, most swimming pools in this country are built as part of a larger leisure centre that represents a multi-million-pound 'wellness'

investment by the local authority on behalf of the local community.

However, the *Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)*, announced by the coalition government at the end of 2010, is expected to see dramatic reductions in the budgets of local government and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport where sport centre funding originates. This being the case, what will be the impact on swimming pools, and indeed leisure provision, going forward?

## Leisure consolidation

Local authorities are clearly expecting to bear the brunt of the CSR with leisure and cultural services on the front line. Some authorities have stated that their post-review budget conclusions amount to a worst-case scenario and that they do not expect to retain the current numbers of leisure centres, swimming pools and playing fields during the next four years.

It will be tough to successfully argue for maintained or increased investment in local authority-funded leisure services

in the face of the required statutory services that target basic public health, education and welfare services. Although the closure of leisure facilities is seen as a possible vote-loser, because of the high-profile headlines and negative media response that they generate, these facilities will undoubtedly be near the top of the list of cuts because of the subsidy cost required to run them.

For those authorities that are in the fortunate position of being able to maintain leisure development, they are likely to consolidate delivery of a range of services, including swimming pools, gyms and sports centres, in a single building to reduce the operational costs and even out the differing levels of demand across the facility throughout the day. In order to encourage continual activity, community links are also becoming increasingly important to operators as large areas such as sports halls can provide flexible space in which to host club and group meetings, birthday parties, weddings and conferences. In addition, communal

PIC: WWW.FARBITHELAND.ORG



Upon completion in January 2012, the S&P Architects' designed £7.5m Horley Leisure Centre development will feature a six-lane, 25m swimming pool and a learner pool



space within the building can also be used to support local voluntary services, social services and neighbourhood policing and library services.

The link between sport, activity and health is also being enhanced by promoting leisure centres as a 'one-stop-shop' for wellness. There are now numerous projects when funding has been shared between the local authority and the local primary care trust to offer patient walk-in centres, rehabilitation care, audiology services, diagnostics and a pharmacy outlet at a conveniently-situated leisure venue.

### Offering choice

People have come to expect quality leisure provision and prospective university students are no exception. Look on any university website and the extra-curricular activities, particularly those associated with sport and recreation, will be prominent. Modern, high-quality wet, dry and outdoor sports facilities are key components in any university's sales and marketing strategy.

**To allow a local community to operate a successful swimming pool amenity, the physical infrastructure will need to be more economical and standardised**

The recent and well-publicised vote by MPs to raise the maximum university tuition fees to £9,000 has been presented as an intention to relieve the tax payer of some of the financial investment in higher education that the universities themselves say is required. Despite assurances from the government that they will force universities to protect the interests of potential students from disadvantaged backgrounds, this is a near trebling from the previous maximum of £3,290 in a market where university places remain oversubscribed.

With students spending more of their own money, those who do apply are likely to be making their selections based on more than the ability of the university to provide a quality qualification that will stand them in good stead for the future.

They will also be seeking a location and range of facilities to make campus life a satisfying and enjoyable experience. In short, universities need to do all they can to be attractive to receive top students.

This decision-making process does not only apply to under graduates. Post graduate students, academic staff, administrative staff and students from the lucrative overseas market will all make similar judgements in advance of an application process.

However, these facilities are rarely for sports and recreational use alone. With many universities and colleges in the UK offering sports science degree courses, the university sports centre is at the heart of education and research activity, supporting demand in the expanding health and wellbeing industry. The location of

- facilities and the opportunity for public membership unites academic and local communities to enable stronger links between the university and the town.

### Private sector

The private sector continues to provide sports-related facilities in the form of health clubs. This industry, which was firmly established in the mid-90s, boomed in the early-2000s when rival chains fought for prime locations. However, overcapacity, the credit crunch and a rise of operators specialising in the development and management of leisure facilities in partnership with local authorities have taken their toll on health club membership retention.

To counter this trend, budget health clubs have emerged to offer a low-cost gym experience but these tend to feature only the most profitable health club components – concentrating on the provision of closely packed fitness equipment and popular exercise classes. Their business model is unlikely to support swimming or spa facilities that are expensive to build and maintain or sports facilities that provide large spatial requirements for only a small number of participants.

Health clubs are also now forging alliances and exploiting links with the health and insurance industries. Cannons Health and Fitness was acquired by Nuffield Hospitals in 2007, as part of the company's proactive approach to health and wellness, with emphasis on prevention and screening to identify health risk. Aware of the burden that rising obesity levels will bring in the future, the insurance industry is also looking at prevention as a preference to cure with many insurance

**St Albans City and District Council has earmarked £16.7m towards a new leisure centre in its budget for 2011-16**



Blaydon Leisure and Primary Care Centre is part of a £36m scheme by Gateshead Council

providers encouraging their customers to be fit, healthy and happy. Incentives come in the form of introductory offers or discounted health club memberships.

### Big Society provider

If Prime Minister David Cameron's Big Society really flourishes as the coalition government hopes and expects, we may see a radical change in how swimming pools in particular are operated and developed in the future.

There is a strong likelihood that local government could be tempted to pass technically failing pools, or pools that are simply not economically sustainable to the local community through an asset transfer scheme. However, lids aside, there are very few examples of where the local community has taken on and successfully operated such complicated assets.

Up until now, most of the sports volunteering sector has often been drawn to managing sports such as rugby, football or hockey, where little commercial or technical expertise has been needed (beyond the aptitude to create a decent social meeting place and provide excellent coaching and motivation skills) to effectively manage the physical place to play.

The volunteering sector does not currently have the capacity to step into

a volunteering role demanded for successful pool development and operation and this may be because the asset is simply too complicated.

Umbrella organisations, such as the Amateur Swimming Association national governing body of the sport and the community sport funding body Sport England are starting to equip people with the expertise to coach and enable communities to rise to the challenge of club development, pool operation and asset improvement. Going forward, commercial organisations such as architect practices, building contractors and leisure management operators will also need to work with local communities in a different way to steer projects towards successful outcomes.

This will mean that in order to allow a local community to operate a successful swimming pool amenity, the physical infrastructure of that facility will need to be simpler, more economic and certainly more standardised. If the Big Society is going to be the big provider of swimming provision then more focus on how to upskill members of the community and how the stalwarts of the sector can help is undoubtedly required. ●

*Keith Ashton is CEO and Mark Thomas associate director at S&P Architects*





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The current 'tighten your belts' attitude will prove a challenge for any leisure manager to keep play facilities new and exciting. Karen Maxwell asks a selection of play providers about emerging trends

# Playtime

## HIPPO LEISURE

"Extending existing play equipment to modernise, improve and add value to play features – in and out of the water environment – could be a cost effective way to introduce fresh, new features in the coming year," says Hippo sales and marketing director Claire Mollett.

"A simple mushroom shower can be converted into a show stopping, multi-level, multi-sensory play feature as Windsor Leisure Centre has just discovered. Mixing low level, easy access interactive play with high level, dramatic water toys ensures fun for all the family. Toddlers can tip buckets and turn hand wheels to control water flow and older children can play under the tipping buckets, splash buckets or water curtains.

"Features can also be built up over two or more phases so leisure centres like Tenderden in Kent can create interactive water playgrounds with stimulating features for all ages and abilities.

"2011 and beyond is going to be a challenge for the leisure markets but good quality products, strong design concepts and a flexible, customer-centric approach will undoubtedly help keep heads above water."

**Multi-sensory water features can entertain the whole family**



**Proludic's play installation for Rushcliffe Borough Council**

## PROLUDIC

"At Proludic we believe in the positive contributions that good quality play provision can make to communities. Challenging, adventurous and innovative products are elements of play that all children should have access to," says Proludic marketing executive Gemma Nickerson.

"The government's Playbuilder funding has helped to bring these key attributes to the forefront. During this programme, we saw a rise in natural play products; using mainly timber and incorporating boulders and rocks.

"Going forward I think communities are more open to ideas for play, whether it be metal, interactive or natural. This trend will be enforced by the new Big Society agenda as it empowers residents to get involved in decisions to provide play installations.

"In my opinion, the important issue is that play should be kept at the forefront as it's essential for children's learning, development and health."

## TIMBERPLAY

Paul Collings, managing director of Timberplay, has witnessed a shift towards professional designers being tasked with designing play spaces with increased emphasis on natural materials – as recent research suggests that children are more active in designated play spaces than in empty parkland.

"In recent years, the importance of play has moved up the political agenda due to concerns over the effects of children's development and fitness through lack of exercise, while research shows that play provides activity levels not far behind organised sports in terms of fitness.

"There's also been a trend towards kicking off the shackles of anxiety by providing more risk in play. However, I'm concerned that funding cutbacks in leisure provision may push back play innovation.

"At Timberplay we expect the focus in coming years to be strongly based around value for money. Although this is welcome it's important not to lose sight of what we are trying to achieve. Cheaper isn't necessarily better value for money, particularly if play value suffers as a result. Sometimes less is more and it forces more creative solutions."

Timberplay uses natural materials in innovative play designs that keep children actively entertained



Exciting equipment that encourages imaginative play by SMP

## SMP PLAYGROUNDS

"The previous government's Play Strategy, which funded 30 new adventure playgrounds and refurbished 3,500 play projects across the country, encouraged exciting trends in playground provision targeted at eight- to 13-year olds," says Steve Sylvester, managing director of SMP Playgrounds.

"SMP Playgrounds now employ play space designers with a background in landscape design, to quickly develop new dynamic equipment that meets this target age range – offering more natural colours and partnering with companies that offer materials such as timber, rock and rope.

"One example is the Tarring Recreation Ground, which features the Titan (five-arm inclined rotating swing) the Viper (long rope swing) and the Nexus (DNA climbing frame) coupled with natural landscaping – to entice youngsters back into the park."

## RECORD RSS

"In the current economic environment, everyone's having to make sacrifices and schools are no exception," says Record RSS marketing manager Gary Wallis. "Many have been heavily affected by budget cuts, but they still have an important responsibility for schoolchildren's health and wellbeing.

"Outdoor activities improve children's physical abilities and develop social skills so it's essential that schools encourage this. Faced with the difficult task of equipping play areas with limited funds, I've noticed a definite trend towards refurbishment rather than new purchase at schools. Repairs and regular maintenance can extend the life of a play area for minimal cost. Adventure trails and play towers are also being increasingly popular as they offer maximum play opportunities for many children and are excellent value for money.

"At our website Play Direct UK.com we offer outdoor learning and school grounds equipment to make playtime more active, challenging and fun. This creates outdoor learning environments to encourage children's natural curiosity for active, social and imaginative development."

A Play Direct UK installation at Crays Hill Primary School, in Billerica



Bespoke rock designs fit with different play environments

## HAGS

"A good example of a play facility to suit today's trends is Hags' Friars Park in Southend-on-Sea installation," says Hilary Locke, design supervisor at Hags Play.

"The park shows the versatility and diversity of the Rox product range, the elements of which can be individually designed to create natural-looking, durable, bespoke climbing structures.

"The Rox consists of a pre-cast reinforced concrete wall as an inner section, which then has a solid-coloured, moulded layer of jetcrete added to give the rock appearance. The surface has a relatively rough finish and this provides an ideal climbing surface, which is functional while adding to the aesthetics within a natural environment.

"Each Rox element is designed by a sculptor and delivered as a single pre-fabricated part with a pre-formed foundation base. Standard Rox have a maximum climbing height of 3m designed so the user can climb in a vertical or horizontal direction without the need for supervision."

# SNOW PATROL

Kath Hudson looks at some of the best training equipment and methods to help skiers hack the pace on the piste

Anyone who's suffered the agony of being out of condition on the slopes and limped back to the apartment at the end of the day with muscles screaming, is likely to jump at the opportunity to take part in a ski fit training programme. Getting fit for skiing means less risk of injury, more stamina, fewer aches and pains in the evening and a lot more fun.

Technogym's Crossover and Cardio Wave are often used in 'ski fit' training sessions



## TARGETED WORKOUTS

Fitness equipment suppliers have already recognised this market and there are several pieces of kit now available which are perfect for building ski/snowboard strength and fitness.

Based on the same mechanics and electronic monitoring systems as the Concept2 indoor rower, the Concept2 SkiErg helps to build strength and endurance by working the entire body in an efficient, rhythmic motion, using the poling movement integral to Nordic skiing techniques and generating a range of resistance similar to that found on the snow. Able to build strength in the upper body, core and legs, as well as delivering a challenging aerobic workout, the SkiErg is ideal for use in ski fit programmes.

Gordon Seaton trains the British Biathlon Team; a sport combining cross-country skiing and rifle shooting, and which demands high levels of fitness and immense upper body strength from its

participants. The SkiErg has become a key part of the team's training regime.

"The SkiErg has given us a whole spectrum of controllable exercise regimes for double poling," explains Seaton. "It can cover the whole range of exercise: gentle, a long mid-effort session or short, sharp, hard intervals. It's very effective in building upper body strength, which is really important for cross-country skiing but also for downhill skiing. And it's excellent for rehabilitation needs."

Meanwhile, Precor's Adaptive Motion Trainer (AMT) provides a full body workout and, as it adapts to the natural movement of the body, can be used to focus on specific muscle groups. Deep lunges can be made to tone and build the glutes, with short strides for calves – areas that skiers need to concentrate on.

Technogym's Crossover and Cardio Wave are also good for ski/snowboard preparation: they provide lateral

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The Concept2 SkiErg was launched in September 2009 to help prepare people for the piste



movement as well as being excellent for strengthening the whole of the leg, bum and hip area, including inner and outer thigh. Crossover gives a total body workout and is ideal for any user at any performance level. For a more challenging workout, the floating motion of Cardio Wave engages all gluteal, core and lower limb muscle groups.

#### SKI FIT PROGRAMMES

The Wellington College Sports Club in Crowthorne has used Cardio Wave for its Ski Fit programme for the past four years: five one-on-one, 30-minute specialist ski fit sessions for £50. The Cardio Wave is used in a combination of positions, complemented with light free weights and medicine ball exercises.

"Various exercises are performed over four sessions, with the fifth session used to go over any exercises the customer needs to repeat," says gym manager Paula Pocock. "Every winter we promote Ski Fit to encourage customers to build up their strength and stamina and work the major muscle groups."

Nordic Walking, which uses poles to engage the upper body while walking, is also great preparation for skiing, according to director Gill Stewart: "Nordic Walking automatically includes the upper body action required in most forms of skiing, as it uses 90 per cent of the major muscles. It's ideal for building stamina and endurance."

In preparation for this winter season, Nordic Walking UK (NWUK) has launched a six-week ski fit programme: an outdoor circuit-based course that includes the skills needed for all types of skiing, from downhill to cross-country. Designed by cross-country ski coach and

qualified doctor Nicky Parsons, the programme includes drills to help clients improve their technique and stamina and prevent falls. All bases needed for skiing and snowboarding are covered: cardiovascular fitness, balance and weight transfer, strength, flexibility, stamina and endurance.

The Lifestyle Leisure Centre in Surrey introduced the programme in January this year. "We're based in a country park, so this type of outdoor activity is ideal," says manager Sarah Plant.

Lincolnshire-based personal trainer Pete Woollard, who last season helped to train the RAF snowboarding team, is also offering Nordic Walking Ski Fit to his clients. "It adds another dimension to Nordic Walking to keep people interested and will hopefully attract a wider client base," he says. The course can be run as a class – ideal for those wanting to train together before their holiday. "It's perfect for groups, as then you have the group dynamic and there are fun games to play," adds Woollard.

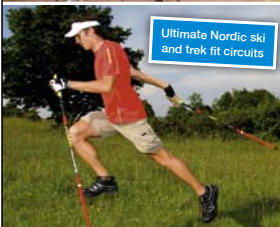
Meanwhile, Virgin Active has put together a winter sports workout in conjunction with the international Roxy Snow Team. Taking training elements used by the team, the Roxy Sno Fit workout focuses on building strength, power, balance and flexibility, with an emphasis on the lower body and core. There are three elements to the workout: warm-up, circuits and yoga. To put members in the mood, adrenaline-pumping music chosen by pro-boarders is played. Each session is different, with a variety of exercises, equipment, drills and conditioning. Yoga is used at the end to unwind and increase flexibility.

French fitness chain Club Med Gym has also brought back its Snow Fit programme for this season. The 45-minute circuit consists of eight stations which recreate the different skills needed for skiing, including building up muscles, increasing cardiovascular fitness and working on reflexes to help balance. The rhythm and difficulty of the exercises vary and participants can choose a circuit according to their ability on the slopes: green, blue, red or black. ●

Kath Hudson is a freelance journalist



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Nordic Walking "automatically includes the upper body action required in most forms of skiing"







### Leveling out for sports participation

White Horse Contractors has helped Danes Hill Preparatory School in Surrey convert 12 acres of steep agricultural land into artificial and natural sports pitches. Doubling the school's sport facilities, the £1.4m scheme included a full-size, sand-dressed, all-weather hockey and football pitch; five natural turf rugby/football pitches and two cricket pitches.

**sport-kit.net KEYWORDS**

#### White Horse Contractors



### New 3G pitch design from Notts Sport

Sports surfacing specialist Notts Sport recently launched a new third generation (3G) pitch system with a football match featuring stars from Sky Sports at Charters School in Sunningdale, Berkshire. The 61m x 41m FIFA 1\* approved synthetic pitch was put through its paces and it was confirmed that it 'plays like natural grass'. Its installation was conducted by Notts Sport approved installer, S & C Slatter.

**sport-kit.net KEYWORDS**

#### Notts Sport

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### Keeping sports surfaces in prime condition

Experienced in all aspects of natural or artificial sports surface drainage, attenuation, irrigation and construction, Cleveland Land Services (CLS) recently worked with Willmott Dixon on a design and build project at Acklam Grange School, Middlesbrough. Within this project, CSL constructed four football pitches and a cricket square – using a hydraulically-controlled AFT100 Chain Trencher to construct 60mm piped sand slits. These feed water into collector drains before entering the main drains.



**sport-kit.net KEYWORDS**

#### Cleveland Land Services



**sport-kit.net KEYWORDS**

#### CopriSystems

### Copri domes extend tennis at Culford

CopriSystems has installed a 67m x 37m, four-dome interconnecting sports dome system at Culford Independent School in Bury St Edmunds. Recognised for the development of high-performing tennis players, the school chose the dome design because it ticked the boxes for low maintenance, cost and longevity. The domes are interconnected beneath support beams, each supported by a single vertical support post between courts and side curtains can be opened to give the illusion of playing in the open air. The playing surface is Proflex® cushioned, impervious acrylic.





**sport-kit.net** KEYWORDS

### Rhino Rugby

## RHINO-TURF for dual demand

Rhino Rugby and Easigrass Sports have joined forces to create the RHINO-TURF series of products for football/rugby pitch demand, following the agreement between FIFA and the International Rugby Board (IRB) to promote dual-use surfaces. RHINO-TURF VT60 – featuring long monofilament fibres, supported by additional curly yarn – is hard wearing, non-abrasive and meets the highest requirements for both sports. While RHINO-TURF VT65 is primarily a rugby training surface, featuring two different monofilament yarns, this surface can also be used for high-level football.

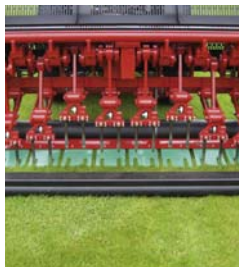
## Gen3 land deal with Irish Rugby Union

Gen3 Kinematics has announced its tie-up with three of the strongest teams in European rugby by supplying the MyoTruk strength training system to Ulster, Munster and Leinster rugby clubs in Ireland. The MyoTruk provides increased muscle activation throughout a full range of movements – from extreme flexion to full extension. This system is said to highlight a significant change in strength training in the last 40 years.



**sport-kit.net** KEYWORDS

### Gen3 Kinematics



## Verti-Drain from Charterhouse

Charterhouse Turf Machinery's new 122.020 Verti-Drain offers an industry-standard solution for intensive aeration of golf and sports turf surfaces to ensure uninterrupted, year-round play. Using an adjustable parallelogram forced heave to shatter soil compaction and an increase in motion speed to enable it to dig deeper, the machine minimises surface waterlogging and encourages grass growth. The new machine accepts one inch tines, giving increased heave and is able to reinvigorate large areas, such as fairways, by combining intensive decompaction with good workrates.

**sport-kit.net** KEYWORDS

### Charterhouse

## Neptunus' VIP service at Alpine Ski World Cup

Temporary structures specialist Neptunus installed 3,500sq m of temporary space for VIP hospitality and catering facilities at the recent Alpine Ski World Cup, the Hahnenkamm-Rennen Races in Kitzbühel, Austria. The Evolution and Alure structures provided guests with comfort and style while they watched athletes compete in the adrenaline-fuelled Super-G, Downhill and Slalom races. Both structures featured insulated

walls and thermal, double-skinned roofs, which reduced climate control costs and ensured that constant temperatures were maintained. Available in countless styles, dimensions and combinations, the aluminium-framed structures were quick and easy to assemble, as well as dismantle after the event. The company also supplies structures to Hampton Court Flower Show, Royal Ascot, Wimbledon and Twickenham.



**leisure-kit.net** KEYWORD

### Neptunus

# SAPCA DIRECTORY



**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 tennis courts and sports pitches to playgrounds and sports halls. SAPCA also represents manufacturers and suppliers of related products, and independent consultants that offer professional advice on the development of projects.

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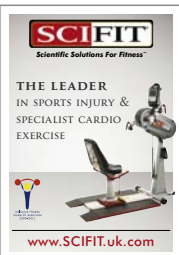


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3-8 APRIL 2011

## SportAccord

Park Plaza, Westminster Bridge, London

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Confirmed speakers include Lord Digby Jones, chair of HSBC's International Business Advisory Board; Sir Martin Sorrell CEO of WPP communications and Daniel Frigo, executive VP of Walt Disney Motion Picture Studios, who will discuss "Why Sport Matters to the Entertainment Industry". LOCOG chair Lord Coe and CEO Paul Deighton will give an update on preparations for London 2012. <http://saco.sc15.co.uk>

12 APRIL 2011

## SAPCA Exhibition

Ravenscraig Sports Centre, Scotland

Free for those concerned with the design, construction, management and maintenance of sports facilities – this Sport and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) event is supported by sportscotland and offers education seminars and an exhibition – featuring sports constructors, suppliers and professional consultants. [www.sapca.org.uk](http://www.sapca.org.uk)

4 MAY 2011

## Sport and Recreation Alliance's National Conference

Grange St Paul's Hotel, London

The 39th national conference will tackle some of the issues which face the sector, such as funding, localism, the Big Society and the forthcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games. Event speakers will be drawn from the worlds of politics, journalism, business and sports administration and the Sports Clubs of the Year Awards will be held the evening before. [www.sportandrecreation.org.uk](http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk)

17 MAY 2011

## SAPCA AGM

Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire

A chance for SAPCA members and interested parties to look at what the association has achieved in the past 12 months and its plans moving forward. [www.sapca.org.uk](http://www.sapca.org.uk)

3-5 JUNE 2011

## Grassroots Football Live

The NEC, Birmingham

This event offers something for everyone involved in football – including players, managers, coaches, referees and volunteers – where practical demonstrations and inspirational discussions will be presented by the likes of Chris Coleman, Peter Taylor, Tosh Farrell, Bill Beswick and Richard Beale. [www.grassrootsfootball.co.uk](http://www.grassrootsfootball.co.uk)

7 JUNE 2011

## SAPCA Exhibition

Aston Villa FC, Birmingham

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14-16 JUNE 2011

## Stadium Business Summit

Hesperia Tower, Barcelona, Spain

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15-17 JUNE 2011

## Stadia & Arena Marseille

Marseille, France

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