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THE SCARLET

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eco hotel in Cornwall

Getting Wigan Active

3D

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BRIEFING THE PLANNERS

We often lament that those in power don't understand, recognise or sometimes even acknowledge the leisure industry, but we've rarely been as badly understood as Cornhill Squash Club in Northamptonshire, which is being forced to close down after the local council gave planning permission for a house to be built with a bedroom which shared the front wall of the squash court.

After a year of living with the noise, the owners of the new property have applied for and been granted a noise abatement order and as a result, the club will no longer be able to operate.

Cornhill was founded in 1924 and has members who've played for 35 years – some having passed the game down through generations. Fifty members use the club on a regular basis.

The situation seems farcical – how on earth could anyone think a squash club could sit happily alongside a residential development? Apparently, a soundproofing membrane should have been built into the party wall, but it was left off the final plans, which were passed, so construction went ahead without it. Hopefully, either soundproofing can be retrofitted into the building, or the squash club can be found a suitable new home in which to continue its great work.

Nightclubs are great if they're sensibly located, but putting people who are trying to sleep, side by side with people who want to party is as ridiculous as building a bedroom onto the back wall of a squash court and thinking all will be well. Planners need to open their eyes to the needs of our industry

Noise is a big issue with leisure planning – I stayed in a hotel in Ireland one Easter and slept well on the first night (the only dry night of the year in Ireland, as I later found out) only to be kept awake the following night by pumping dance music and singing outside my bedroom window.

The reason? Planners had given consent for a late night bar and nightclub to be interleaved with the hotel, so that the dancefloor was about five metres from my bedroom window. To complicate matters further, the nightclub was a separate business, owned and run by an entirely different company, meaning the hotel operator had no control over the club and a 12.00 midnight closing time drifted into the early hours as the revelling continued.

The tensions this caused with guests made the hotel staff's job extremely difficult. A queue of grumpy guests queued up the following morning to request room changes and refunds.

Clubs are great if they're sensibly located, but putting people side by side who are trying to sleep and party is as ridiculous as building a bedroom onto the back wall of a squash court.

Many towns have facilities which have been juxtaposed with inappropriate operations, or placed in the wrong location, and in most cases the cause is a lack of experience on behalf of the operator or a lack of understanding and sometimes even just a lack of interest from planners.

Not only do these operations fail or have to be extensively reconfigured, they also harm the industry's reputation, because of the poor quality of experience being offered. It's important we continue to work together as an industry to brief planners on the needs of our sector and that we share best practice to ensure lessons are learned from experience – whether bitter or not – to help those considering taking the same path in the future.



Liz Terry, editor liz@leisuremedia.com

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PHOTO: WWW.BITJAMONVIEW.COM



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World Leisure

October debut for Wolgan Valley

Work on the AU\$120m (US\$100.8m, £61.3m, 70.4m euro) Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa in Australia's New South Wales region, is nearing completion ahead of its launch in October 2009.

Wolgan Valley is the second conservation-focused property within the Emirates Hotels and Resorts group, Emirates Airlines's hospitality division. It has a similar ecological blueprint to Emirates' existing Al Maha Desert Resort, located an hour away from Dubai City, UAE, which first opened in 1999.

The spa at Wolgan Valley will feature Emirates' signature Timeless Spa products, which have been developed in conjunction with German product manufacturer Babor. The spa will offer six double treatment rooms, each including a Japanese-style soaking tub.



The AU\$100.8m resort will include a large luxury spa

Other facilities include a large swimming pool. The resort incorporates a number of ecologically sustainable design principles, including a heat exchange

technology to reduce electricity consumption. Natural and recycled materials, such as sandstone and timber, were also sourced to reduce the carbon footprint.

Disney in US\$4bn takeover of Marvel

The Walt Disney Company is to buy Marvel Entertainment in a deal that values the company at approximately US\$4bn (£2.5bn, 2.8bn euro).

Under the terms of the agreement – and based on the closing price of Disney on 28 August – Marvel shareholders will receive a total of US\$30 per share in cash plus about 0.745 Disney shares for each Marvel share they own, making the transaction value US\$50 per Marvel share.

Robert A. Iger, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Walt Disney Company said: "We believe that adding Marvel to Disney's unique portfolio of



Iron man is to join Mickey and Donald

brands provides significant opportunities for long-term growth and value creation."

The deal will see Disney assuming ownership of Marvel, plus intellectual property rights to more than 5,000 characters.

Cliffside hotel and spa opens on Phuket

A destination spa has launched at the Kamala resort in Phuket, Thailand.

Managed and owned by the Paresa Corporation, the 2,400sq ft (222.9sq m) facility has five treatment suites, each equipped for two people, and each boasting its own private balcony, a daybed and a bathroom.

Signature therapies offered include a Thai Boran Massage, a circulation-stimulating ritual where therapists focus on certain pressure points. There will also be a Paresa Senses Massage, which combines Eastern and Western techniques. All treatments will use the Panpuri brand.

Queen Mary under new management

Buffalo-based Delaware North Companies is to take over hotel operations aboard the historic *Queen Mary* liner.

The company will be replacing Hostmark Hospitality Group which was hired by developer Save the Queen, buyers of the iconic ship and its surrounding assets from the city of Long Beach for US\$43m in 2007.

'Queen Mary' – built in Clydebank, Scotland, weighing 81,237 gross tons and launched in September 1934 – retired from passenger service with shipping line

Cunard in September 1967 and has been drydocked in Long Beach, California since December of the same year. It welcomed its first visitors in 1971.

Delaware North is one of the largest privately owned companies in the US, generating US\$2bn in annual revenue and employs approximately 50,000 people.

The group has operations in hospitality, tourism and travel and the firm currently manages the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex and the Yosemite National Park, a US\$100m operation.



The Queen Mary is based in Long Beach

IMAGE: PPHOTO.COM

SA Fitness opens first club

SA Fitness, a new health club operation set up in South Africa by owner Nash Cohen, opened its first club last month.

The R3m (£224,300), 1,000sq m, 5,000-member capacity club is located in Ballito on the north coast of Durban, a rapidly-growing upmarket area of the city, targeting the mid/upper-mid market with a mass-appeal, non-intimidating brand.

The main gym - equipped by suppliers including Star Trac, Technogym, Concept2, Expresso and Octane Fitness - offers a view of the sea.

In addition to CV and strength kit, it also features a boxing ring for personal training, two group exercise studios, two outdoor chilling out/relaxation zones, a crèche and a juice bar.

Classes include South African Pole Dancing, a boot camp on the nearby



The club is designed to accommodate members of all abilities

beach, and Extreme Kettlebells from Optimal Life Education.

Cohen said: "For some people, entering a club can be incredibly intimidating."

"We must recognise this and create an environment that's welcoming."

Three more clubs are in the pipeline - in Durban, Cape Town and in Hermanus.

Elixia clubs for Holmes Place

Holmes Place, the leading European operator of premium health clubs with 72 clubs across 10 countries, has acquired the Elixia chain of clubs.

Elixia's two high-end clubs in Vienna have been rebranded Holmes Place and incorporated into the Holmes Place business. This brings its portfolio to six clubs in Austria and makes it the country's leading health and wellness brand.

Holmes Place is also consolidating its group in Europe, with Doron Dickman taking on the CEO role across the continent.

Regarding the Elixia acquisition, Dickman says: "The Holmes Place 'one



Holmes Place has clubs across Europe

life, live it well' philosophy and the 'vitality' concept of Elixia attract a similar type of member, one who is primarily looking for a club with top-end facilities that promote lifestyle enhancement."

Argentine government strikes football deal

A funding crisis that has delayed the start of the football season in Argentina appears to have been resolved after the government stepped in to acquire broadcasting rights from the Argentine Football Association (AFA).

The 10-year agreement will see live football made available on terrestrial channels for free, and the deal is reported to be more than double the amount paid by private sector companies as part of a previous agreement.

AFA president Julio Grondona said: "The government's support has resulted in us moving to a new order."

SEGA Republic opens in Dubai

SEGA Republic, a gaming-themed indoor theme park, has opened at The Dubai Mall in the UAE.

The 76,000sq ft (7,060sq m) attraction, developed by UAE-based Emaar Retail in association with Japan-based SEGA Corporation, comprises five themed zones: Speed, Adventure, Sports, Cyberpop and Redemption.

Nine attractions, including Spin Gear, Sonic Hopper, Halfpipe Canyon, Storm-G and Initial D4, offer visitors more than 150 amusement games.

The Speed Zone features a 9-metre drop ride called Sonic Hopper, while the Adventure Zone centres on a spinning coaster called Spin Gear and the Sports Zone offers thrill seekers a snowboarding ride called Halfpipe Canyon.

Arif Amiri, CEO of Emaar Retail, said: "SEGA Republic is the first of its kind in the Middle East and it delivers an unmatched, distinctive leisure experience for all visitors. The theme park complements the myriad of other leisure attractions within the mall."



All the park's rides are SEGA-themed

Property

Council raises questions over Belfast scheme

Belfast City Council (BCC) has raised concerns over a lack of progress on the proposed £360m Royal Exchange scheme.

In November last year, developer Leaside Investments was given nine months by the council and the Northern Irish Department for Social Development (DSD) to draw up a planning application for the mixed-use project in the city's north east quarter.

However, plans are yet to be submitted and BCC officials are now seeking answers from DSD and Leaside Investments, a joint venture comprising William Ewert Properties and Snoodon Construction. ING Real Estate is also involved with the scheme.

William Humphrey, chair of BCC's development committee, said: "I fully appreciate that the market has changed



Planning applications are yet to be submitted for the £360m scheme

radically. However, I remain committed to seeing the area preserved and developed in a way that is economically viable and don't want to see things drift."

The project, originally due for completion in 2013, is to include the creation of a new theatre and a community art gallery in the former Northern Bank building.

Council approves Clyde Gateway scheme

A new multi-million pound leisure and retail development, which will form part of the heart of the Clyde Gateway regeneration initiative near Glasgow, has been approved by South Lanarkshire Council.

Ashfield Land's plans for the 268,000sq ft (24,898sq m) Two74 Cambuslang Road mixed-use scheme include a nine-storey, 170-room hotel, a nine-screen cinema, restaurants and 50,000sq ft (4,645sq m) of sports retail space.

The proposed £50m development will be built on a 7-hectare (17.3-acre) site at the heart of the Clyde Gateway site, adjacent to the route to the planned



Plans include a 170-bedroom hotel

2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games Athletes' Village and Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome and situated close to junction two of the M74 motorway, which is currently being extended.



The plans have been drawn up by KSS

Tottenham nets £15m for new ground

Tottenham Hotspur Football Club's plans to develop a new 58,000-seat stadium in north London have received a boost after the Premiership club successfully raised £15m through a share placing.

In a statement to the London Stock Exchange on 21 August, the English Premier League Club revealed that the cash will be used to fund the submission of a full planning application for the new venue later this year.

Plans for the new stadium, which have been drawn up by KSS Group, include a new public square designed by Martha Schwartz Partners featuring a dedicated space for community events, including a temporary ice rink, street markets and arts performance, while a smaller, quieter space will offer an area for people to relax.

Worcester City FC housing plans deferred

Worcester City Football Club (WCFC) remains committed to plans for a new stadium despite deferring a planning application to build houses on the site of its current St George's Lane home.

It is anticipated that the funds raised through the sale of St George's Lane to developer Careys New Homes will be used to finance the construction of the club's new 6,000-capacity stadium at Nunnery Way on the outskirts of the city.

In a statement, WCFC's Jim Panter said: "The club continues to be comfort-

able with Careys, which played a significant part in the construction of Wembley Stadium. The club expects them to work through the detailed requirements in a sensitive fashion and develop the optimal solution for both themselves, WCFC and the people of Worcester."

Plans for the new stadium, which were unveiled in October and were designed by The Miller Partnership, form part of a £30m mixed-use redevelopment designed by developer St Modwen and will have the potential to increase capacity to 10,000.

Commercial

Ffos Las Racecourse set to open

The new £21m Ffos Las Racecourse near Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, which is the first turf horse racecourse to be built in Britain since the 1920s, is to be officially opened on 28 August.

Located on the site of a former 650-acre (263-hectare) open cast mine near the village of Trimsaran, the 1.5-mile (2.4km) left-handed circuit was built by Aberdare-based civil engineers, the Walters Group and is managed by racecourse group, Northern Racing.

Facilities at Ffos Las Racecourse, which hosted its first meeting on 18 June, includes a grandstand with 150-seat restaurant and eight hospitality boxes, a weighing room and a permanent media room. It is expected that the venue will cater for up to 16 horse racing meetings each year both on the flat and over jumps.



Ffos Las will host 16 race meetings each year.

It is also hoped that the course will attract a number of Irish horse trainers due to west Wales' ferry links with Ireland.

Ffos Las' general manager, Jon Williams, said: "Everyone at the racecourse has been thrilled by the public's reaction to the first two racing days at Ffos Las."

Council sets out Hull casino criteria

Casino operators looking to secure a licence to run a large facility in Hull will have to provide bars, restaurants and conferencing facilities as part of new criteria outlined by the local authority.

Hull City Council (HCC) drew up the guidelines, which also call for prospective bidders to create 125 retail, hotel and catering jobs, following the government's decision to award the city one of eight licences for a large casino in March 2006.

The proposed casino will have to complement existing regeneration plans for the city centre and be built within a set period, while the awarding of any future



Hull was awarded a licence in 2006.

large casino licence is currently subject to a wider review of licensing policy.

John Robinson, HCC portfolio holder for culture, said: "A casino would create a large number of job opportunities for people in the city."

More than 300 jobs could go at Gala Coral

The Gala Coral Group is set to cut up to 300 jobs from its bingo club operation, as well as 45 from its online bingo arm.

The group, owned by private equity companies Candover, Civnen and Permira, will cut 200 office jobs and may close five of its 153 clubs, which will lead to a further 100 cuts.

The five clubs that may close are at Hull St Stephens; Port Glasgow; Leven; Fife; Pitsea, Essex and Aldridge in Birmingham.

The company already closed its Crystal Palace site in July.

Gala Coral Group has debts of around £2.5bn and is likely to be heavily hit by the government's Budget announcement to increase gaming taxes from 15 to 22 per cent, which will cost the bingo sector an estimated £20m more in tax annually.

Meanwhile, company chair Neil Goulden stepped down as chair of Business in Sport and Leisure (BISL) in order to focus his attention on the ailing company. Goulden has already met with Treasury minister Sarah McCarthy-Fry in an attempt to reverse the tax hike.

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Health & Fitness

Burnham unveils physical activity proposals

Health secretary Andy Burnham has announced details of new sports and physical activity schemes that will form part of the government's vision to improve fitness levels throughout the UK.

In a speech to industry representatives at Leisure Connection's Willesden Sports Centre in London on 13 August, Burnham identified four key aims as part of the government's ambitions to establish Britain as one of the healthiest and most active nations in Europe.

With more than 2.5 million people currently on incapacity benefits costing the economy £13bn and the industry £11bn each year, one of the main targets for the government is to use the National Health Service (NHS) to take a more proactive role in the promotion of healthy lifestyles as a main concern.



Burnham at the Willesden Sports centre

According to the Department of Health more than a third of people currently on incapacity benefits suffer from either mental health issues or muscular or skeletal

disorders, which could be addressed by tailored physical activity initiatives, while a 20 per cent increase in cycling could also save the NHS more than £50m a year.

Dorothy Hyman centre opens gym

Barnsley Premier Leisure (BPL) has reopened the Dorothy Hyman Sports Centre in Cudworth, South Yorkshire, following a £400,000 refurbishment.

Work at the centre included the creation of a new 50-station health and fitness club, spread across two levels, and the refurbishment of the 400m running track.

BPL invested £100,000 in the redevelopment, with Coalfields Regeneration Trust providing the remaining £300,000.

Steve Roberts, head of business development at BPL, said: "The launch of the new facilities is part of helping people in the local community to get fit and enjoy



The new fitness suite at the centre

healthier lifestyles. As obesity levels in Barnsley are higher than the national average, it is really important that people have access to good quality facilities that are conveniently located."

Yoga and teen fitness 'trends for the future'

Dance classes, teen fitness and exercise involving a mind-body aspect are among the strands of gym activities that are expected to increase in popularity over the next decade.

The annual Programs & Equipment Trends Report by US-based IDEA Health & Fitness Association (IDEA) shows that 81 per cent of clubs taking part in the survey expected to mind & body classes, such as yoga, to become more in demand in the future, while only 16 per cent currently offer them.

Other activities deemed to have the most growth potential include teen fitness and dance classes.

£46.5m Life Centre scheme approved

Plans for the construction of a new £46.5m regional sports and leisure centre in Plymouth, Devon, have been given the green light by planners at Plymouth City Council (PCC).

The new Life Centre will include a family leisure pool with flumes, beach entry and a bubble pool, a climbing zone with a 15m (49.2ft) wall and aerial assault course, an eight-lane bowls centre and a 12-court multi-use sports hall.

Facilities will also include a 150-station fitness suite, a 10-lane, 50m swimming

pool with moveable floors and submersible boom, a diving pool, a dryside training facility for elite divers, multi-purpose areas for dance and martial arts and a youth gym, as well as a sauna, a steam-room and changing facilities.

Funding for the project has been secured from a number of sources, including £2.5m from the University of Plymouth, while PCC will finance the majority of the centre's costs through capital receipts gained from the sale of the council's assets.



The centre will include a 150-station gym

Spa & Wellness

Butlins opens spa hotel in Bognor

Butlins has opened a new hotel and spa at its resort in Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

The £20m Ocean Hotel covers seven storeys, linked by 'Disco' lifts to colour coded bedroom corridors to help children find their way around, and offers 200 rooms in a variety of configurations.

The hotel's 670sq m Ocean Spa, designed by Klafs, offers public areas in shades of purple, pink, orange, yellow and lime green in addition to a sauna, steam room, snow cave, heated loungers, foot spas, disco showers and an outdoor hot tub. There are ten private treatment rooms, all featuring laserpods.

In addition to facials, massages and body scrubs, the spa offers a range of specialist treatments exclusive to Butlins. These include the Beauty and the Beach exfoliating treatment for women, offered



The £20m hotel has 200 bedrooms

in a specially created treatment room with SAD lighting, 25 degree heating and seagull calls designed to help relax the mind as well as the body.

Luxury spa to open at Rockliffe Hall

A large spa is to open at Rockliffe Hall, near Durham in north Yorkshire, UK, as part of a £55m resort development.

The spa will feature 13 treatment rooms, including a double suite, as well as relaxation areas.

Product houses Comfort Zone and ILA have been chosen for amenities, treatments and retail. Other suppliers include treatment beds by Living Earth Crafts.

There will also be a large heat experience area, with a caldarium, a tepidarium, a salt inhalation suite, a studio for Pilates/yoga and an igloo with an ice fountain. The spa's fitness suite will include equip-



The spa will have 13 treatment rooms

ment from the Technogym Kinesis range, while facilities also include a spa bistro, serving up healthy food for members. Details: rockliffehall.com

Bath Priory Garden Spa prepares to reopen

The Bath Priory's Garden Spa will be re-opening in September 2009 following a complete refurbishment.

The spa will offer two reception areas, a total of four treatment rooms, an indoor swimming pool, a sauna, an elliptical steam pod and changing facilities.

There will also be a brand new gym, consisting of two rooms offering resistance and cardio equipment, as well as Technogym's Kinesis cable system.

The Garden Spa has been transformed to showcase the hotel's landscaped gar-

dens, which can be viewed through the large windows by guests. The spa will offer a full range of beauty and massage treatments, using Decléor, Li'Tya and Jessica Nails products.

The four-star Bath Priory is privately owned by Andrew and Christina Brownswor. The hotel houses Bath's only Michelin-starred restaurant, The Priory, which is operated under the direction of two Michelin starred executive head chef Michael Caines MBE. Details: bathpriory.co.uk

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Hospitality

London restaurants resisting downturn

Restaurants in London closed at the lowest rate for nearly a decade in the previous year to mid-2009, according to the latest publication of the Harden's London Restaurants guide.

A total of 64 restaurants and eateries across the capital closed during the 12-month period, seven fewer than the previous year and the lowest number of closures since 2000.

Peter Harden, co-publisher of the guide, said: "There would seem to be no single explanation of why, during a period of such economic upheaval, the low rate of restaurant closures has so confounded the pessimists. One of the more important reasons may be that most restaurant-going Londoners are still in employment, and many of them have had their disposable income boosted by lower mortgage



Eating out is still on the menu for people in the capital

payments. Another is that active promotion by restaurants is no longer seen as embarrassing, and they have more sophisticated promotional instruments at their disposal."

According to the guide, a total of 121 restaurants have opened in the capital over the past year, while the average spend per person for a meal out in London is now £40.73.

Aqua to launch new London restaurant

Aqua, the Hong Kong-based restaurant operator, has unveiled plans to launch its first property outside China with a new restaurant at the former Dickens and Jones building in central London.

The new aqua london venue in Argyll Street will boast two distinct dining spaces - aqua nueva, serving northern Spanish cuisine, and aqua kyoto, offering a range of Japanese cuisine, while the aqua spirit bar area will provide pre and post-dining drinks.

Aqua currently operates 10 restaurants in China and Hong Kong, including the Michelin-starred Hutong property.



A rendering of the rooftop restaurant

Aqua MD David Yeo said: "Like our venues in China, we hope that London will prove a hit with locals and visitors alike. It will combine great food with approachable service and an exquisite ambience."

Irish hotels facing 'crisis situation'

A "financing crisis" facing the Irish hospitality sector will threaten the long-term future of the country's tourism industry if the government fails to act, according to the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF).

IHF president Matthew Ryan has called for the Irish government to take urgent action to address a number of issues that could have severe implications for hotels and guest houses.

Surplus capacity, difficulties obtaining bank finance to survive the effects of the recession and excessive local authority charges are among the list of issues the IHF wants action on.

Welsh hospitality fears tax proposals

The government's proposal to end tax breaks for holiday property owners from April 2010 has prompted ministers in Cardiff to petition the Treasury to repeal the decision.

The Welsh Assembly Government is concerned that the budgetary decision could force people into bankruptcy, have a damaging impact on the tourism industry in Wales and make it more expensive for people to holiday in the area. The new measures will put an end to home owners nationwide from using their properties

to defer capital gains tax payments, offsetting losses made on their investments against their income and from receiving capital allowances.

The Welsh Conservatives estimate that such measures could cost a person running a furnished holiday lettings business around £4,000 per year more in tax.

Shadow heritage minister Alun Cairns said: "The government's decision to abolish the rules on holiday lets could have damaging consequences for the tourism industry in Wales."



The price of lodging holidays could increase

Parks & Countryside

£7m revamp for Hull's West Park

Hull City Council and Hull regeneration agency Gateway have unveiled £7m plans for transforming West Park.

The money, which would be invested over the next five to six years, would go towards reviving the park's "original Victoria splendour, but with a dramatic, contemporary twist".

The proposals include a new entrance from Anlaby Road, lighting displays designed to interact with park users, public artworks and sculptures, a new paddling lake with an island, a new bandstand, a skatepark and climbing wall, improvements to the existing miniature railway and bowling club and new play facilities for children.

Laura Carr, interim chief executive at Gateway, said: "The proposed changes for West Park are very exciting and represent



Plans include making the park more 'user-friendly'

a major part of the work being carried out to revitalise the whole of the area.

"By restoring the park to its former glory we hope to provide not only a focal

point for the local community, but also create a sub-regional attraction."

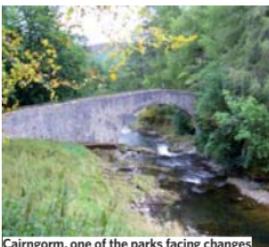
The work on the park is expected to begin in early 2010.

Scottish National Parks report published

A new strategy group chaired by Scottish environment minister, Roseanna Cunningham, is to be established following the publication of report looking at the future of Scotland's National Parks.

The number of members serving on the boards of both the Cairngorms National Park and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authorities (NPA) will also be slashed as part of efforts by the Scottish Government to reduce public spending.

Cunningham said: "There is a clear case for reducing the number of members on National Park Authority boards while con-



Cairngorm, one of the parks facing changes

tinuing to have a mix of national and local interests. I intend to reduce the number of ministerial appointees and local authority representatives whilst maintaining the number of directly elected members."

1.6m euro cycle and walking route for Mayo

Noel Dempsey, the Irish transport minister, has announced that 1.6m euro (£1.4m) has been made available for the construction of a new off-road cycling and walking route in County Mayo, Ireland.

Funding for the 17.5km (10.9-mile) route, which will run between Newport and Mulranny, is also being provided by the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, while the project is being supported by Fáilte Ireland.

The majority of the route will travel along the former Midland Great Western Railway line.

Green light for Brockholes development

Building work on a new floating visitor centre at the Brockholes Wetland and Woodland Reserve near Preston, Lancs, is set to get underway in October after plans were given the green light.

The development of the landmark building, which has been designed by London-based Adam Khan Architects, forms part of the £59m Newlands land regeneration scheme. The initiative is led by the Forestry Commission and the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA). Plans for the visitor centre,

which is being developed in partnership with Lancashire Wildlife Trust (LWT), include a café, a shop, a gallery and education and meeting rooms. It will provide a regional environmental showcase and aims to encourage visitors to engage with the natural world.

Brockholes Wetland and Woodland Reserve boasts more than 106 hectares (261.9 acres) of natural habitats, including lakes, reed beds, grassland and a link to an adjacent 66-hectare (163.1-acre) area of ancient woodland.



The Brockholes covers more than 106 hectares

Sport

Regional football centre opens in Scotland

Scotland's first regional football centre has opened to the public in Toryglen, Glasgow.

The £15.7m centre houses the region's first full-size indoor synthetic pitch built to FIFA's 2 Star standards and can accommodate 700 spectators.

Other facilities include three full-size, outdoor synthetic pitches; a full-size grass pitch; 13 seven-a-side pitches; a strength and conditioning zone; players' lounge and rest area; café; and a briefing room with video analysis equipment.

Toryglen will act as the new home of the Scottish Women's Football Association and will also host full national team training sessions.

The centre will be operated by leisure trust Culture and Sport Glasgow on behalf of Glasgow City Council.

Councillor Steven Purcell said: "The



Scottish football legend Kenny Dalglish opened the facility

new facility will be widely used across the community. It's my hope that by working with a range of partners, including sport-scotland and the SFA we will ensure this

facility continues to make a positive contribution to the development of football and healthier living in general for everyone in the city of Glasgow."

New £4.5m 'green' sports complex opens

A new £4.5m sports and community complex, which has been designed to incorporate a number of environmentally friendly features, has opened to the public in west London.

The Little Venice Sports Centre on Crompton Street, which is the only venue in the area to be accredited by the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI), includes four badminton courts, a large sports hall with underfloor heating and a multi-purpose dance and exercise studio.

Designed by LCE Architects, the 1,800sq m (19,375sq ft) facility also features a 30-station fitness suite equipped



The centre has been accredited by the IFI

by Matrix Fitness Systems and an IT training suite, which will house the Centre of Excellence for Physical Activity - part of the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure.

its target of three medals at the 2012 London Games, while also providing a legacy for the sport through the continued development of elite performers through to the 2016 Games and beyond.

Margaret Hicks, British Judo performance director, said: "The Institute has allowed us to bring together high level expertise to provide the best possible support and delivery to our athletes.

"We want the BJPI to become a hub of excellence and also provide a resource for the talent development structures."



The plans were drawn up by Archial

Curling Academy planned for Kinross

Kinross Curling Trust has announced plans to build a National Curling Academy in the town of Kinross.

The design by Archial Architects - formerly the SMC Group - comprises a six-rink ice pad, a gym and changing facilities, in addition to a café, a curling museum and offices.

Charles Smith, director of Archial Architects, said: "The general design features of the building reflect the intentions for a world-class facility.

"The elevational treatment of the building is suitably distinctive and will enhance the site's sense of identity and linkages to the adjacent rural character, using natural, sustainable materials such as timber cladding."

If the plans are approved by Perth and Kinross Council, the academy will be operational for 2010/2011 season.

British Judo launches new Kent facility

A new centralised training centre, designed to help judo players prepare for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, has been unveiled by the British Judo Association in Dartford, Kent.

The British Judo Performance Institute (BJPI) is housed within the £4.5m purpose-built Dartford Judo Club, which opened in 2006, and will provide a full-time training facility for Britain's judoka and performance teams.

It is hoped that the new centralised institute will enable British Judo to meet

the juiciest launch of 2009

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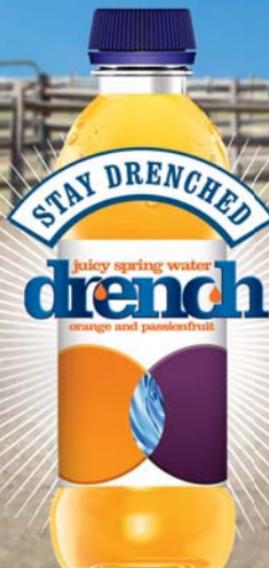
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Public Sector

Tourism vision for 2012 Games

The London Development Agency's (LDA) strategy to attract international travellers to the capital for the 2012 Games has been detailed in the publication of the London Tourism Action Plan 2009-13.

Key priorities include sustaining job opportunities and improving customer service standards in the tourism industry through the London Employer Accord partnership, the Olympic Park Events Plan and the LDA's ongoing £2m international marketing campaign dubbed Only in London. In addition, 12,000 Host City Volunteers will be recruited to welcome visitors at transport hubs and attractions..

Mayor of London Boris Johnson also plans to support bids to attract major events, including the 2015 Rugby World Cup and the 2018 FIFA World Cup, to the capital.



London will receive an influx of visitors

London attracted almost 15 million overseas visitors and more than 11 million domestic visitors in 2008, supporting 253,000 jobs and earning the city £22bn.

Cash injection for Scottish town centres

Nearly 50 Scottish towns are set to benefit from a share of a multi-million pound funding package announced by the Scottish Government as part of its Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF).

The £60m TCRF was launched in April in order to revitalise towns across the country, with £40m made available by the government for projects to upgrade leisure and community facilities, as well as improvements to public spaces.

Towns including Ayr, South Ayrshire; Kirkcaldy, Fife; Craigmillar, Edinburgh; and Alloa, Clackmannanshire; have netted at



Fife, one of the towns to benefit

least £2m each as part of the first round of funding, which will benefit a total of 48 towns. A further £20m will be made available later this year for applicants who failed to meet the 5 June deadline.

English museums to net DCMS funding

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has named the 34 museums across England that are set to benefit from a share of £4m funding to help improvement schemes.

Grants have been made available through the annual DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvements Fund in conjunction with the Wolfson Foundation, which was first established in 2002 to upgrade the quality of museum displays and public spaces.

The largest share of the latest round of funding was awarded to the Bowes Museum in County Durham and Natural History Museum in London, which will both receive a grant of £300,000 to help fund construction and refurbishment projects.

HMS Belfast, part of the Imperial War Museum, has been awarded £150,000 to fund the reinterpretation of the ship's command and control centre, while the Wiltshire Heritage Museum in Devizes has also netted £150,000 to create a new Bronze Age Gallery housing material excavated from Stonehenge. London's National Gallery (£200,000), the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge (£250,000), Exeter City Museums and Art Gallery (£200,000) and the Victoria and Albert Museum (£240,000) were also among the recipients of grant funding.

The DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund aims to provide grants for schemes that seek to improve access, displays or public spaces at English sites.



A clear winner at Ayr Races

Over a century old, and in fine fettle, Ayr Racecourse is Scotland's premier horse racing venue. The all-year-round course with its flat and jump meetings saw over 105,000 punters pass through the turnstiles last year. The racecourse and facilities which includes two fine dining restaurants and a champagne bar and lawn, has benefited from an ongoing £14 million renovation programme.

The UK's leading washroom provider, Armitage Venesta, supplied Equinox cubicles with streamline, polished pilasters to provide lasting, modern styling. Jasper Morrison basins installed in granite vanity tops complete a winning, contemporary finish – perfect for this esteemed venue.

For more information on Armitage Venesta's washroom systems call 01474 353 333 or visit www.armitage-venesta.co.uk.

designnews

project: the new acropolis museum

design: bernard tschumi architects

location: athens, greece

New Acropolis Museum opens

The New Acropolis Museum has launched, displaying antiquities from the Acropolis across 150,000sq ft of exhibition space – 10 times more than in the previous museum.

The 226,000sq ft, Bernard Tschumi-designed museum, which stands less than 1,000ft south east of the Parthenon, features three layers – a base, a middle zone, and a top.

The base contains glass floors looking onto the excavation site of an ancient Athenian city discovered by archaeologists during the museum's pre-construction phase; a glass ramp leads to the middle zone, which contains the permanent collection galleries and a mezzanine, and the top layer includes the Parthenon Gallery, a glass-enclosed space rotated 23 degrees from the rest of the building to align with the Parthenon, offering 360-degree views of the site.



project: verdura golf & spa resort

design: olga polizzi/rfc

location: sicily, italy

First resort for Rocco Forte

The Rocco Forte Collection (RFC) has launched its first resort, the £120m Verdura Golf & Spa Resort in Sicily.

Covering an area of 175 hectares near Sciacca on the southern coast of the island and including 1.8km of private coastline, the resort offers 203 rooms with interiors created by Rocco Forte's sister Olga Polizzi, who is currently the director of design for RFC. Facilities include one nine-hole and two 18-hole golf courses designed by Kyle Philips, a 4,000sq m spa with 11 treatment rooms, four restaurants, five bars, a ballroom and an open-air amphitheatre.



project: sulwhasoo spa

design: jacques ferrier architectures

location: hong kong, china

New spa for Sulwhasoo

Korean skincare brand Sulwhasoo has launched its inaugural spa in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong.

The spa, which features nine treatment rooms, was designed by French architect Jacques Ferrier. Ferrier's inspiration for the spa's striking façade was the floral motif that can be found in temples from the Joseon Dynasty.

Sulwhasoo plans to launch similar spas in China and the US; over the next two years, the company will enter both markets with its products before expanding to a spa business model.

project: corby pool

design: s&p architects

location: corby, northamptonshire

£20m pool opens in Corby

The £20m, 50m Corby East Midlands International Pool has opened in Corby, Northamptonshire.

Designed by S&P Architects, the pool is equipped with moveable floors and booms to accommodate international junior diving events and short and long course races.

The facility also includes a 20m, four-lane training pool, a fun pool with a 63m aquatube body ride and pirate ship, a 70-station fitness suite and an aerobics studio.

The pool also includes a health suite incorporating a sauna, a spa pool and a steamroom, a meeting room and a café, as well as the area's first Changing Place that exceeds requirements outlined in the Disability Discrimination Act.



project: mandarin oriental hotel

design: hok architects

location: moscow, russia

Striking design for Moscow hotel

An internal nine-storey atrium, designed in the style of a Fabergé egg, is at the heart of designs for the proposed new Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Moscow, Russia, which have been unveiled by architects HOK.

The 250-room, five-star property, which is scheduled to open in 2011, is to be housed in a renovated 19th century manor house and features an 'upside-down' design that will invite visitors to check-in at sky lobby level overlooking Red Square.

Facilities will include 70,000sq ft of retail space dedicated to luxury brands, two ballrooms, a health spa and wellness centre, a fitness centre and an indoor swimming pool, as well as restaurants and bars.



project: hotel missoni

design: matteo thun & partners

location: edinburgh, scotland

Missoni-branded hotel concept debuts

Rezidor Hotel Group has opened its first Missoni-branded hotel in a joint venture with the Italian fashion house.

The five-star, 136-bedroom hotel, located on Edinburgh's Royal Mile, has been designed by Allan Murray Architects, with interior design from Matteo Thun & Partners. It features a bar and a restaurant as well as conference rooms.

The portfolio's second property, Missoni in Kuwait City, will launch this autumn, followed by a third property in Cape Town in 2010, and a fourth in Oman in 2012.

Missoni and Rezidor aim to open 30 hotels over the next decade. Initial focus will be on Europe and the Middle East, later expanding to North and South America and Asia.



JULIAN TAYLOR



Julian Taylor Design Associates created the interior design for Cinema de Lux, the new VIP cinema brand from the company behind Showcase Cinemas. Founder Julian Taylor talks to Rhianon Howells about his route into the industry and the rewards and challenges of creating a look for a cinema

How did you get started?

I graduated from Manchester Polytechnic in 1991 with a degree in interior design, and then did a Masters in architecture at the Royal College of Arts. From 1993 to 2000, I worked for various design firms in London, ending up as a director of a company in Kew. By then I'd had enough of working for someone else, and I was tired of London, so I set up my own design company in Romsey.

We specialise in leisure retail environments: bars, nightclubs, hotels and restaurants. We offer both architectural and interior design services, but our primary focus is interior design and the reuse of existing and historic buildings – that's one of my passions.

What projects have you worked on that you're particularly proud of?

Mint Leaf bar and restaurant in Piccadilly, London, which we worked on five or six years ago, was one of the most rewarding because it was so difficult to shoehorn the restaurant into the site: a Grade II listed banking hall.

We had a basement space that not only needed to be serviced with fresh air but also acoustically sealed from the rest of the building, which housed a law firm and a 24-hour call centre.

That was a £2m project, but I'm equally proud of a tiny project we did last summer: a renovated bar called Wax Jambu in London's Islington. The client wanted a venue that had sustainability at its core, but also seasonal changeability – all within a budget of just £80,000. I think we achieved their goals and more.

Another project I'm very proud of is 24: London, which opened in 2007. It's the first nightclub to use interactive technology in its design. The all-white environment acts as a canvas for projected backdrops that can be controlled by the customer – any intersection with the beam causes the image to move or change. You can even play ping pong or football on the walls with hand control!



The broken wall screens in the Studio 3 bars refract the sound

How did you get the Cinema De Lux commission?

We were introduced through Aedas, the UK architects for National Amusements [US owners of the Showcase brand]. They asked us to do a credentials pitch and we were lucky enough to secure the contract. The development of the first Cinema de Lux site in Derby was already under way by the time we came on board in November 2007, and the cinema opened in May 2008.

How much of the design came under your remit?

Aedas did the strategic masterplanning for the site as a whole and already had quite a well-established palate for the 12 auditoria, which largely stayed in place. The public spaces, spillways, access routes, the signage and multimedia presentations, as well as the food and beverage operations, all came under our remit, although we worked closely with Aedas throughout.

What was your brief?

The client wanted to create a total entertainment offer that wasn't just about film.

It had to be a complete experience: a one-stop shop in terms of going out.

The location of the Derby site was also a factor. The cinema is in a high-spec shopping centre, and customers travel up to the venue through the food court, so we knew we needed to come up with food and beverage operations that could compete with that. So from the outset the idea was to offer not just concession stands serving burgers and Pepsi but full-service restaurants where the standard was very high.

What did you create?

We've ended up with two distinct offerings. Studio 3 is located within the main lobby and is open to anyone, regardless of whether or not they're seeing a film. By contrast, the Director's Lounge offers direct access to two luxury screens, known as Director's Halls, and is only open to those who have paid a premium for their ticket. As well as enjoying exclusive access to the Director's Lounge before and after the film, guests can be served food and drink in the auditorium itself. It's as close to a VIP experience as you can get in a cinema environment.



The Director's Lounge bars have a luxurious, exclusive feel

SHOWCASE CINEMA DE LUX

Showcase Cinema de Lux is owned by National Amusements, Inc. A world leader in the film exhibition industry, National Amusements operates more than 1,500 screens in the US, UK, Latin America and Russia under its Showcase, Showcase Cinema de Lux, Multiplex and KinoStar brands.

In May 2008, the company launched its first Showcase Cinema de Lux –

a new high-end cinema concept – in Derby, UK. The cinema has 2,200 seats across 12 auditoria, including two Director's Halls equipped with luxury leather armchairs, digital 3D presentation, a concierge service and reserved seating. This year, the company has opened a further two Cinema de Lux sites in the UK – in Leicester and Bristol – as well two sites in the Boston area of the US. It has also launched a new live-

entertainment concept, Showcase Live, next to one of the Boston sites.

Based in Dedham, Massachusetts, US, National Amusements is controlled by the third generation of the Redstone family. As well as operating cinemas, the company is a partner in the online ticketing service MovieTickets.com and is also the majority shareholder of American media conglomerates Viacom and CBS Corporation.

What were you aiming to achieve with the design?

National Amusements is a massive company so it was important to create something that would translate from one country to another. We also wanted the design to be very contemporary, and we wanted to create genuine bar and restaurant experiences. The Director's Lounge had to be a great bar in its own right, not just a room in a cinema where you could get a drink and some food.

Studio 3 has quite a broad, international feel. Colour-changing lights are used to move the space from day into night. The Director's Lounge is more grown-up, darker and slightly sexier. We wanted it to have an old Hollywood feel without being themed. This influence can be seen in features such as the hanging lights in the bar, which are evocative of the lightbulbs found around the mirrors in actor's dressing rooms.

What challenges did the project present?

There was a learning curve in terms of working within a cinema complex – getting to grips with the acoustic

requirements and the flow of people. A cinema's busy periods are very staccato: they're hit very hard before and after a showing, then there are times when no one's around. To manage flow, we used directional cues, such as signage frames and materials, while in Studio 3 and the Director's Lounge we controlled the acoustics by balancing hard and soft materials. For example, the decorative "broken" wall screens in Studio 3 are designed to refract and soften sound. The use of curtains and soft furnishings also help with this.

You've worked on two other Cinema de Lux sites, in Bristol and Leicester. How did you adapt the design template for those locations?

The actual design template remained the same, but the spaces themselves were quite different. The building in Leicester, for example, has a very particular architectural style: it started life as a Foreign Office and is very angular, with lots of triangles, so we integrated those shapes into the floor and ceiling designs. As a company, we always adapt the design to the building. I'm not a big fan of the

cookie-cutter approach; I don't believe in just putting something in whether it works with the building or not.

What's your favourite part of the design?

It would have to be the Director's Lounge, particularly the one at Leicester. I really like the way the bar is positioned at the back, with the hanging lights in front. I'm particularly fond of Leicester because, as the second site, it proved that the template did translate.

What feedback have you had from the client?

It's been very good. We're lucky to have a really good relationship with the client. They're very innovative, they've understood what we've been trying to do and I think it's fair to say that what we've achieved has matched their aspirations. Two years on we're just finishing off their flagship site in the US – a Cinema de Lux in Boston. We've also done two other sites for the company in Boston: another Cinema de Lux and a live entertainment venue called Showcase Live. We're now waiting to see where they go next! ●



GMP

Partners Stephan Schuetz and Nikolaus Goetze talk to Kath Hudson about their firm's designs for three major new concert halls: Kulturpalast in Dresden, the Grand Theater in Qingdao and the Chongqing Grand Theater



gmp has designed the Grand Theater in Qingdao (above) and the Chongqing Grand Theater (top left)

What's gmp's approach to architecture?

We create architecture in a social and programmatic context, searching for simplicity and avoiding formal exaggerations.

You've recently been awarded the prestigious contract to design the Kulturpalast in Dresden. What's your brief for this project?

It's the renovation of an existing building in the centre of Dresden, integrating a 1,600-seat concert hall and the central library of the city, with some other public functions. As a remarkable example of the post-war architecture of East Germany, it's a protected monument. The challenge is to conceive a high-class concert hall and a library that will support each other, in one building.

How has your design responded to this challenge?

Both the concert hall and library are highly public and busy during the day and evening. We are redefining the foyer and other circulation areas as a public space and a public passageway within the city. Currently, the building is in bad condition, especially the brass colour of the glass façade, which appears like a hermetic mirror. We'll substitute the existing glass façades with transparent ones so the foyer spaces communicate with the surrounding city spaces.

You're designing two theatres in China. What are the main considerations when designing theatres?

Going to the theatre means leaving the ordinary world behind. Theatre performances, musical dramas and operas are among the highest levels of artistic interpretation of the reality of human existence, and of dreams and illusions, wishes and pleasures. The architectural shell is intended to give structural expression to this extraordinariness and to the world of illusion.

What was the brief for the Grand Theater in Qingdao?

The brief asked for a complex to include an opera house for 1,600 people, a concert hall for 1,200 people and a multifunctional hall for 400 people, together with a hotel, an art gallery and restaurants. Beyond that, it was of major importance to consider the location of the building, in front of the famous Laoshan Mountain and next to the beach of the Yellow Sea.

Can you describe your design?

The design creates an open space raised above the surrounding park, which serves as an urban plaza, surrounded by the different venues. The raised plaza provides views of the Yellow Sea and Laoshan Mountains, and is covered by a floating roof which provides shade as well as an architectural statement.

What unique design elements were incorporated?

From the platform, the major functions of the Grand Theater grow up like the local granite rocks: the opera house in the north, the concert and multifunctional hall in the south, the media centre in the west and the artist reception and training centre in the east. Reflecting the local weather, the roof appears like a cloud drifting along the mountain, creating a poetic architectural image, and making the building recognisable all over the world. The expressive and massive rocks of the architectural landscape and the light and elegant cloud-like roof form an exciting architectural dialogue.

Can you describe the design of the Chongqing Grand Theater?

It's an expressive sculptural array of parallel double-walled, spaced glass strips, creating the metaphor of a ship sailing in a sea of light. The two concert halls, the Grand Hall and the



Kulturpalast, a 1,600-seat concert hall and central library in Dresden, will be completed in 2014

PROJECTS

KULTURPALAST:

This prestigious project involves restoring an historic building to its former glory, integrating the library and concert hall and making it an urban meeting point. The project is due for completion in 2014.

CHONGQING GRAND THEATER:

On a headland above the Yangtze River, the Chongqing Grand Theater has been designed to look like a ship. When completed in September, it will include two concert halls and catering facilities.

GRAND THEATER QINGDAO:

Due for completion next year, this theatre incorporates an opera hall, concert hall and a multifunctional hall. The architecture complements and mirrors the scenery of the Laoshan Mountains, where it is set.

Medium Hall, and their respective foyers, are placed on the longitudinal axis, rather like the keel of a ship, thus forming the bow and stern of a ship. The Grand Theater is close enough to the Yangtze River to seem to 'float' on it.

The unique location and the panoramic view of the city's imposing skyline, as well as the sculptural architecture, make this theatre a symbol and a place of international cultural encounters.

What design features are you most proud of?

It's not a building with the customary façade of walls and window areas. The light radiating from within and visible from outside, together with the reflections of sun, clouds and water on the multifaceted and multi-angled glass surfaces, create constantly changing patterns of light – the structure seems to shine and gleam in ever-mutating, enigmatic, almost mystic moods.

What other projects are you currently involved with?

The Chinese National Museum in Beijing is nearing completion, and the Museum for Urban History of Hanoi is currently being built. In South Africa, we're working on three world championship stadiums in Capetown, Durban and Port Elizabeth, which will be completed later this year.

We're also currently involved with a range of projects in India, Vietnam, Brazil, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Romania, Poland and Latvia.

Do you design with environmental sustainability in mind?

Yes, in two ways. First, in a technical way, which includes aspects like the orientation and location of a building, the building envelope and the technical features, which help us to reduce energy consumption and to use green energies to run our buildings. We try to use those measures as much as possible. The second aspect is equally important: the quality of a building in terms of its social relevance and architectural value. Sustainability also means creating flexible typologies, durable constructions and a timeless appearance of architecture. More than 50 per cent of global waste is produced by demolished buildings which are either not functional anymore, badly built or represent bad architecture which doesn't endure.

What do you think your clients like most about your work?

Our clients like the rational approach and the logical way we work. They appreciate the conceptual working procedure from the competition design to the completion of a project. ●



THE SCARLET

Emma Stratton, Debbie Wakefield and Rebecca Whittington are building on the family business with the launch of their new luxury eco-hotel in Cornwall. Kath Hudson speaks to the sisters about the project

Almost 50 years ago, Peter and Mary Whittington opened the Bedruthan hotel in north Cornwall. Now three of their daughters are following in their footsteps with the launch of their own next-generation hotel.

Built into the cliffs above Mawgan Porth beach, the five storey Scarlet hotel is already blending into the North Cornwall landscape. With its sympathetic curvy architecture, natural materials and sea thrift roof, the hotel appears to cascade down the hillside.

The £10m, 37-bed eco-hotel, opened on 1 September and has been built with two aims: to provide a luxurious treat for its adult-only guests, and to reach new standards in sustainability. No expense or effort has been spared with green technology and many innovations have been adopted, including a natural swimming pool on the cliff-top – the first of its kind in a UK hotel.

The Scarlet is the baby of sisters Debbie Wakefield, Emma Stratton and Rebecca Whittington, who have all returned to Cornwall to take up roles in the family business. Wakefield returned 23 years ago and became Bedruthan's operations director after serving an apprenticeship under her mother; Stratton followed, taking responsibility for marketing, strategy and sustainability, and six years ago Whittington joined to look after design and the spa. They gravitated towards their roles without arguments: "We got to grips with the areas we were good at, although there's some crossover," explains Whittington.

"We've all got quite a strong sense of design, and there are areas we're all passionate about and all get involved with, such as sustainability and providing a caring style of hospitality."

They all say that apart from minor disagreements, they don't argue, although naming the hotel caused a few differences of opinion when they couldn't agree on a Cornish name. "We kept vetoing each others' first choices, so Scarlet slipped through," says Stratton, adding that the name works well from a marketing standpoint. "And the Scarlet brand is brave and bold," points out Wakefield. It's also fitting, since this is the first new project for Red Hotels, a company set up by the sisters which owns the two hotels and is likely to produce more in coming years.

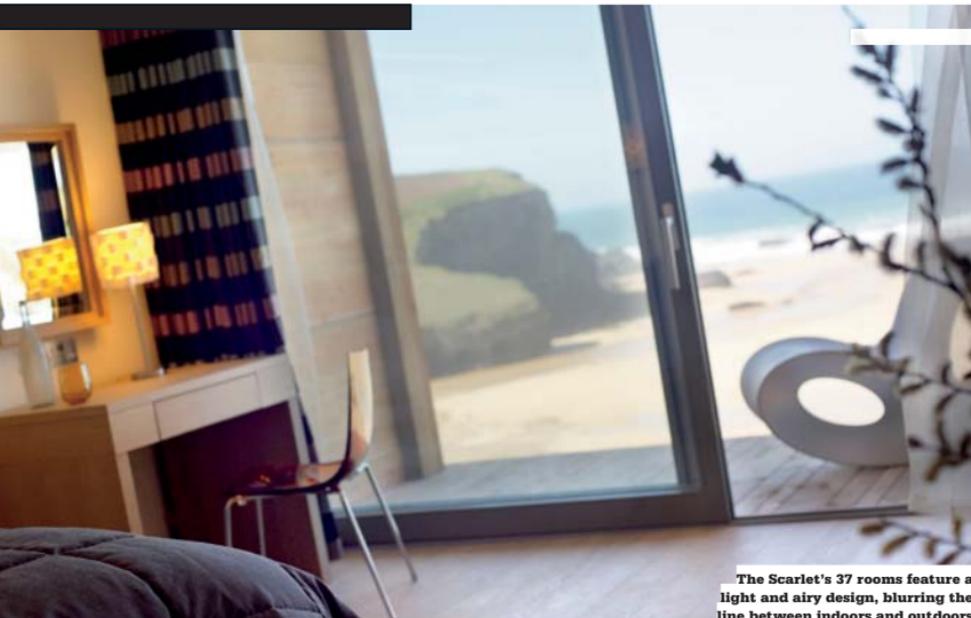
"With the Scarlet, we've created a place we'd like to stay: somewhere you can go with friends, your partner, or even on your own to escape," says Stratton. "There are lots of fantastic restaurants in Cornwall, and fantastic hotels, but not many have both, as well as a spa. We drew on elements of our favourite restaurants and places – lots of beautiful hotels are scary, but some relaxed and welcoming places don't serve good food."

DESIGN

Although the design and styling are an integral component of the Scarlet, Stratton points out that they didn't want the hotel to be pretentious, and it was important that it was warm and



BEDRUTHAN Opened in 1960 by Peter and Mary Whittington, the 101-bed Bedruthan has always endorsed the principles of being family-friendly, environmentally sensitive and buying locally. In 2003, the hotel started to open all year round, and in 2005 it won four star recognition from the AA. The Ocean Spa was refurbished in 2007 and boasted the only hamman in Cornwall until the opening of the Scarlet. Children are welcomed and are catered for with indoor and outdoor play areas, Ofsted registered clubs and daily entertainment. Family dining is available.



The Scarlet's 37 rooms feature a light and airy design, blurring the line between indoors and outdoors

welcoming as Bedruthan, with friendly staff and no pressure on guests to feel they have to be a certain type to fit in.

Bedruthan has always had good environmental credentials, and the sisters have taken this to another level during their time at the helm, appointing a sustainability manager and working on waste management and energy consumption. Wakefield says they look at sustainability as a threefold process: keeping the planet cherished, sustaining the local economy and the local community.

The standards have been raised again with the Scarlet. The hotel has solar and bio-mass heating, with gas as a back-up, but the aim is to use it for only five per cent of the energy consumption. The building is airtight, uses low energy bulbs and grey water is reused.

Two of the most eye-catching eco features are the roof, which is planted with native sea thrift to encourage birds to nest and flowers to grow, and the natural swimming pool, which looks more like a rustic garden pond. Reeds and other vegetation are used to filter the pool water, half of which is used for swimming; the other half is in the regeneration area and is constantly circulated.

"There are lots of natural pools around Europe, but none which are on a cliff top and exposed to north Atlantic gales, so it's all quite experimental," says Stratton. "We wanted a green roof to lessen the visual impact, allow it to sink into the landscape and to encourage local wildlife. Sea thrift should work well, and hopefully the birds will nest there and the bees will buzz."

THE SCARLET Aimed at the adult market, the Scarlet is a 37-bed hotel combining sustainability and luxury. Three of Peter and Mary's daughters, Debbie, Emma and Rebecca, came up with the concept, creating the type of hotel they'd enjoy staying at. Blurring the boundaries between indoors and outdoors, the hotel is light and airy, but also has places to get snug on stormy days. Rooms are arranged in clusters, each with a private outdoor space and open plan arrangement allowing plenty of light. There are seats for two to cosy up in on the terrace, cliff top baths for two and a couples' treatment room.

There are lots of fantastic restaurants in Cornwall, and fantastic hotels, but not many have both, as well as a spa. We drew on lots of elements of our favourite restaurants and places

In building the hotel, the team decided against following a recognised system such as BREAMM, considering the investment could be better spent on actually delivering sustainability. Instead, a sustainability group was put together with representatives of the client, designers, contractor and external bodies with experience in delivering sustainable projects in the South West, including the Eden Project. This group set targets for the hotel to meet in terms of the construction process, operational issues, energy, water, materials, social and biodiversity.

On completion of the construction, the targets were transferred to the operational team.

Inside the Scarlet, the idea was to blur the boundaries between indoors and outdoors, so all the rooms have floor to ceiling windows, with sea views and their own outdoor space, whether a balcony, terrace or garden. The outside grounds have been planted to look scrubby – no mown lawns here – again to blend with the hotel's cliff-top location.

Whittington was responsible for the design: "We wanted it to



The Scarlet has been built with natural materials and features a sea thriff roof to encourage wildlife

feel like a luxurious beach house, without being full of driftwood. The styling needed to be aspirational, so people really felt they'd gone somewhere special, and we wanted it to be luxurious without losing sight of sustainability. We weren't afraid of using colour, but didn't want it to be overbearing, and a lot of local art is displayed."

TAKING A CHANCE

Opening an upmarket hotel in a recession is a bold move. "There are two ways of looking at it," says Wakefield. "You could say: 'why would you ever want to do that?', or you could see it as a great opportunity because not many people have the stomach to do it. It's a gamble, but one which has had a great deal of thought put into it. We're very excited about the potential of a new type of hotel, it's an amazing building and now we just need to breathe life into it."

The Scarlet is located on Bedruthan's doorstep, but the sisters feel the hotels will complement each other rather than compete. Bedruthan is aimed at families and the Scarlet is a romantic break for adults, so the same guests might visit both hotels at different times. Michelin-starred chef Ben Tunliffe has been lured to the Scarlet from The Abbey in Penzance to mastermind delicious, non-fussy food, all locally-sourced. And the Scarlet's spa takes a different approach from Bedruthan's Ocean

Q&A **GEORGE MARTIN**
head of sustainable
development, Willmott Dixon

What consultancy work did you provide for the Scarlet?

I was the sustainability champion, looking at environmental, social and economic sustainability, making sure there was joined-up thinking on these topics and that they were integrated into the thinking process early.

I suggested a series of workshops at the inception stage, which were continued during the design and construction and aimed at keeping people talking and focussed on sustainability.

There are many things you can do to integrate sustainability into a project that aren't particularly sexy, such as orientation of the building and air tightness. We call these passive measures and make sure they're right, before looking at the bolt-on 'eco bling' technology.

detoxifying treatments and 'soul-hunting' for those who are at a crossroads in their life and are seeking a retreat.

Seemingly genetically-programmed to launch a hotel at some point in their lives, the sisters have ticked all the boxes with the Scarlet, creating a genuinely special property and throwing down the gauntlet should their children decide to join the business. ●

We wanted it to feel like a luxury beach house, without being full of driftwood. The styling needed to be aspirational so people really felt they'd gone somewhere special

Spa, which is aimed at time-pressured guests – a spa journey at the Scarlet's Ayurvedic spa will take half a day.

"We specifically created seven different spa journeys to try and meet the various needs of people and their emotional and physical states," says Whittington. "All will include therapeutic massage and bathing rituals, including seaweed baths on the cliffs." Journeys range from nurturing to

PARTNERING FOR PROFIT – A NO-RISK BUSINESS SOLUTION

Being commercially aware in today's tough economic climate is vital if clubs and centres are to achieve social and financial objectives.

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free health check

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growing membership and income

When Blackpool Council entered into a partnership with Alliance in May 2008 membership increased from 1,300 members to 1,600 in just six months.

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Partnering with Alliance can help boost membership and generate income growth

John Hawkins, head of leisure Management observes: "We decided that external expertise and focus would deliver the results far quicker than could be achieved alone."

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Steve Fitzmaurice, general manager for Leisure, Entertainment and Catering, Blackburn and Darwen Borough Council said: "Since working with Alliance, we have addressed some real issues in relation to sales and retention. The membership growth and income increase reflects the quality of our partnership with them and the commitment from everyone involved."

choosing the right partnership

Alliance Leisure offers a risk-free payment method – a monthly income share partnership. Alliance bears all the costs upfront, with the client only paying

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- Mystery visit, email & telephone calls
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- Analysis of projected income & finance targets
- Review of marketing campaigns, literature & planning
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commission when memberships reach an agreed threshold.

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or visit the website at www.allianceleisure.co.uk

RILEY KELLY

MAURICE KELLY

Leisure industry veteran Maurice Kelly has taken on a new challenge – giving 130-year-old cue sports business Rileys a makeover. He speaks to Ian Freeman about his plans for the company

In these challenging times for the leisure industry, turnaround consultants are everywhere – just turn around and you'll see one.

But what makes Maurice Kelly different is his range. In a leisure career spanning 16 years, he's been responsible for wide range of businesses – tenpin bowling, nightclubs, theme parks, roadside services and fitness clubs are just a few of the strands that have played a part in the work of this disarming, erudite Ulsterman.

In July 2007, Greenhill Capital Partners Europe and JO Hambro Capital Management acquired the Rileys chain of 160 snooker and pool clubs from the ailing Georgica PLC for a reported £30m. A year later, Kelly got the call.

"Maurice was retiring," he says – Kelly has the quirky habit of referring to himself

in the third person. "We were headed for France. I'd found a school for my son and we were four weeks away from moving."

Deciding to swap Morzine in the Alps for Milton Keynes in Bucks, Kelly began to look at Rileys from a classic turnaround position. With the business 50 per cent geared, Kelly focussed on getting operating costs under control.

But, just eight weeks later, the debt provider for the acquisition, the Icelandic bank Kaupthing, went under. "Where in the rulebook does it tell you what to do when your bank goes bust?" Kelly asks. Rileys' working capital of around £2m was also provided by Kaupthing and, in a depressing double-whammy, the company's banker was RBS.

Rileys' other big debt was rent. "Everyone focuses on bank debt" Kelly

says, "but businesses with leased properties are now negotiating rents based on deals that were done in the property boom. The rents we were paying were simply not commercially viable."

The oft-criticised process known as pre-pack administration – selling the assets of a company, usually to its directors, immediately after putting it into administration – seemed a viable option. Thus Valiant Sports was formed, in March this year, as a partnership between the two original investors and Kelly.

"We bought £18.5m of debt for £3.5m" says Kelly, "and I went from being an employee with some equity, to owning 30 percent of the business. My life has changed significantly. The degree of concentration and focus you have when you put almost everything you've saved



Kelly has taken the Rileys chain down from 160 sites to 130, closing those where landlords refused to negotiate more favourable rents.

"SOMETHING GOOD HAS TO COME OUT OF THE RECESSION, AND THE 50 PUBS A WEEK THAT ARE CLOSING ARE NOT THE FOCACCIA AND CHARDONAY BARS, THEY'RE WHERE THE POOL AND DARTS TEAMS PLAY. THAT REPRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR US"





into a company is very significant. Maurice is not a gambler, despite appearances to the contrary. I'll only bet on a horse if I'm riding it and I know this horse well!"

Kelly answers critics of pre-pack concisely. "With a consumer-facing business like Rileys, the longer it's left hanging out there the more likely it is to be wounded. The administration meant we could save 1,300 jobs – what do critics think the alternative would have been?"

"To pre-pack with the intention of causing collateral damage to suppliers is immoral, but, on day one, we took on any debts we had and told suppliers we would carry them forward. What we needed to do was not carry loss-making clubs. We negotiated with all our landlords and achieved a good percentage reduction from most of them, which has given the company a new lease of life."

A small batch of recalcitrant property owners dug their heels in, resulting in the closure of 30 of Rileys' 160 clubs, and Kelly exchanged a head office that was costing £1m a year for one at £50,000 just a mile away. Company-wide redundancies amounted to a head-count of just under 300 and a lean new top team now includes several former First Leisure executives, people who Kelly happily admits to having "nicked whenever they became available."

The Rileys clubs offer a range of cue sports including Pool, American Pool and snooker. Darts and poker are being added to extend the operation

A TURNAROUND CAREER

The hard-earned leisure business experience Kelly's now drawing on as Rileys CEO began at Granada, which he joined in 1993 from senior roles in fashion retail. Initially regional manager of the leisure and media behemoth's bowling operation, Kelly was kicked upstairs three times in his first nine months and ordered, by Granada bosses Sir Gerry Robinson and Charles Allen, to ready the company's leisure businesses for sale. His turnaround career had begun.

As operations director of Granada Entertainment, Kelly controlled the American Adventure and Camelot theme parks, Granada Studios Tour, 16 night-clubs and 22 bowls. With bowling sold, in 1995 to Allied Leisure and the nightclubs also on the move, life for Kelly was getting simpler – until the Forte acquisition.

Appointed managing director of the combined entertainment group, Kelly found himself running ten companies. It was the early days of the health and fitness boom and, among his portfolio of leisure assets, Kelly had inherited more than 90 fitness clubs inside Forte hotels.

"I went to Gerry and Charles and told them I felt that fitness was a fantastic market" he says. "I persuaded them to let us separate out the health clubs, to pay rent to the hotels and then to drive membership sales."

The success of this plan resulted in a move for Kelly to the company's roadside business. His time there, part of which was spent assuring government that an M&S at a service station would not cause traffic chaos on the motorway, brought Kelly up to eight years at Granada.

"Maurice was clearly never going to replace Gerry or Charles, and I got itchy feet," he says. A call from serial entrepreneur Stelios (now Sir Stelios) Haji-Ioannou resulted in Kelly's dotcom moment and a role as CEO of easyEverything, the Greek tycoon's ill-fated internet café venture. "Everyone had slow access then and it didn't seem possible that you could carry the internet in your pocket like you can now," Kelly ruminates.

In 2002 Kelly was parachuted in to run up-market fitness chain Esporta, then a listed company suffering from two profit warnings. He set about a turnaround, including building up the sales teams, and the company was sold after six months to venture capitalist Duke Street. "The shareholders were delighted, but they didn't want Maurice around any more, which was fair enough" he says.



Traditional darts in a separate, stylish area with Winmau boards is now being trialled and will be launched in 10 Rileys bars shortly

A few years and some time at a golf business (Crown Sports) later, Kelly was on the path to his alpine retreat when Rileys beckoned. "We want to redefine this business," he says, and has already set about doing just that by introducing darts.

"We're true sports bars, not just a bar with television," he says. "We are bloke-world-in-a-box – the primary reason for coming to us is for you and your mates to earn bragging rights over each other by playing competitive indoor sport, and then you can have a drink and watch sport on TV. Something good has to come out of the recession, and the 50 pubs a week that are closing are not the focaccia and chardonnay bars, they're where the pool and darts teams play. That represents an opportunity for us.

"There aren't many pubs that can accommodate 12 darts boards and 20 pool tables, and cope with those sports at county level. We're not out to kill the local pub, but we're there if you want a serious, competitive game."

Traditional darts in a separate, stylish area, with Winmau boards, proper oches and electronic or manual scoring is now being trialled, and will be in ten clubs shortly – eventually, 100. Rileys' members pay a peppercorn £1 per hour per board.

"For so long, snooker and pool had been under-invested, and that, combined with the smoking ban and changes to machine legislation, led to an erosion of our business," says Kelly. "Snooker's no longer in decline, although the number of people playing remains flat. Secondary spend is under pressure, however, that said, our profitability is significantly up.

"OUR NEXT MOVE WILL BE TO LOOK OUT FOR OTHER GOOD LEISURE BUSINESSES IN SECTORS I UNDERSTAND, THAT HAVE BEEN UNDER-MANAGED. BOWLING, GOLF AND FITNESS ARE ALL POSSIBILITIES AND I KNOW WHERE THE BODIES ARE BURIED IN MOST OF THE CHAINS"

MAURICE KELLY – PROFILE

Favourite book: *The*

Lord Of The Rings

Play: The musical *Wicked*

TV show: *The West Wing*

Hobby: Skiing, watching rugby and playing the guitar, which I've been doing since I had hair and an earring!

Film: *Field Of Dreams*

Food: 'Ulster Fry' (fried soda bread, fried potato farl, egg, bacon and sausage)

Time of year: Autumn

Place to visit: Morzine, in the French Alps, and Barcelona, where I have an apartment

Best piece of advice ever given:

Gerry Robinson said that when you go into any of your businesses, think about what you'd change if you were buying it.

a huge screen and surround sound. "A saggy banner outside with 'See Sky Sports here' just isn't going to move the dial any more," Kelly says. "Everyone has big TVs now – we're competing with people's sofas." And club entrances are being cleaned up "so we don't look like minicab offices any more."

Poker represents a challenge for Kelly. "We ran 'hard' poker which was bringing customers into the mix who weren't open, sociable and relaxed," he says. He hopes a planned partnership with fun poker operator Redtooth will achieve his aim of discouraging "high rollers in eye shades."

Acquisition-wise, Kelly feels there's not a lot to go for in their current business. "Our next move," he says, "will be to look for other good leisure businesses in sectors I understand, that have been under-managed. Bowling, golf and fitness are all possibilities, and I know where the bodies are buried in most of the chains! And caravan parks, and maybe night-clubs. And budget hotels," he goes on, eyes sparkling. "In this country, they've been victims of their own success and allowed the differential between their pricing and that of three-star hotels to become blurred. [French budget hotel chains] Formule 1 and Ibis are much more disciplined with their pricing.

"Turnarounds," says Kelly, "are what Maurice loves, and we have a group of executives here experienced at running a variety of leisure businesses. Who knows what the future holds?" ●

"The smoking ban has affected us hugely, but it's our job to fix that," says Kelly. "We're safe havens in the war-zone that the British high street can be at worst – it's a place where kids can see grown-ups behaving properly."

NEXT MOVES

Future plans for Rileys include 'fan zones', which will be in place in time for next year's football World Cup, with

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Close Up



Outcome



Incident

Name: Mary Jones Received: 07 / 12
DOB: 03 / 08 / 56 Date
County: [REDACTED] Race
Age at time of offense: 53 Ha
Weight: 100st Eyes: GRNY MR
Native County: [REDACTED]
Prior Occupation:
Prison record:

EVIDENCE IDENTIFICATION

Date: _____ Time: _____ Case No: _____
Test For: BALLISTICS FIREARMS TOXICOLOGY
 TRACE OTHER

Classification: _____
Name: _____ (Please use in your photos)
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Reference: _____
No. _____ Color: _____ Sex: _____

RIGHT HAND			LEFT HAND	
1. Thumb	2. Index finger	3. Middle finger	4. Ring finger	5. Little finger

Impressions taken by: _____ Date acquired: _____ Subject's signature: _____
Direction of roll (if rolled): _____
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Does the UK need a tourism development bank?

With SMEs in the tourism sector struggling to secure loans to invest in their businesses, some industry players, like VisitScotland's Philip Riddle, are calling for the creation of a tourism development bank. Andrea Jezovit asks whether it's a good idea

In LM Q3 09, VisitBritain chairman Christopher Rodrigues discussed the potential of a tourism development bank for supporting industry jobs and business development.

"Tourism is a business of 200,000 SMEs and many are having difficulties securing loans to invest in their businesses," Rodrigues wrote. "A tourism development bank—a joint venture between the public sector and the private sector (the banks)—would focus on supporting investment finance into the industry

in line with a national tourism strategy. Banks would provide the funds, and government would provide guaranteed repayment of loans and support for an interest cap on them."

It's not a new concept — countries such as Austria have already implemented such banks. VisitScotland has been examining the Austrian model, with Philip Riddle urging the Scottish and UK governments to follow suit. But with money tight, is a tourism development bank really the best solution?

Tourism is the most competitive industry in the world, with over 200 other countries competing for the same visitors. Travel and tourism account for 10 per cent of world GDP, eight per cent of jobs and 12 per cent of investment. For Scotland that means over £4bn in revenue for the country every year and employment for 200,000 people.

Tourism is already regarded as one of Scotland's foremost industries and I believe that, in the face of the current economic climate, we must start preparing for the future upturn now in order to prevent a lack of short term investment leading to Scotland struggling to compete.

That's why VisitScotland is discuss-



Philip Riddle
Chief executive
VisitScotland

ing with the Scottish government and industry partners a possible mechanism to work together to increase investment into tourism. We believe that by aligning private sector development with public sector support we can get funds flowing to unleash the growth potential of the visitor economy.

The industry holds a lot more potential than is currently being realised and we need more focus on areas that will drive sustainable economic growth, such as investment in infrastructure,

investment in quality and a drive to reduce seasonality and make better use of existing capacity. A tourism bank, as demonstrated by successful European models, can help achieve these goals through providing long term loans financed by the private sector and supported by the Scottish government.

I believe this kind of proactive approach can help to minimise the impact of recession within Scotland and help to prepare our visitor economy for the post recession period.

The tourism sector is unlike any other industry. In deciding to travel to a destination, the visitor is, in essence, purchasing an experience that comprises a range of products and services — a hotel, restaurants, attractions, public services and facilities such as beaches or parks. As a result, each tourism business is dependent upon the standard of services and facilities provided by other businesses in order for the customer to purchase their product.

This interdependence can cause real problems when a business comes to make decisions regarding investment. The owner of a hotel may decide that it's pointless to invest heavily in refurbishing, for example, if the standard of surrounding tourism facilities is poor.



KURT JANSEN
Policy director
Tourism Alliance

As a result, the destination as a whole loses and every business waits for the other to make the first move. Any business that decides to be the first mover will have a difficult time getting a loan as the lender will look at the visitor numbers for the destination and say that the figures don't add up.

The solution is the establishment of a tourism investment bank that can work with groups of tourism businesses and the local authority to help fund the redevelopment of all aspects of the tourism experience. Providing co-

ordinated funding of tourism clusters allows a destination to provide a step change in the quality of the whole tourism experience.

The development of destinations through the funding of cluster tourism projects by a dedicated tourism development bank has been successfully achieved in a number of overseas countries. Its use in the UK would provide tired destinations with the opportunity to reinvent themselves and provide the high quality products and services required by modern visitors.



In an economic squeeze, when money is so tight, what would be the point of a tourism development bank? Readers with long memories will remember that the government has been involved in funding tourism development initiatives before. Past schemes include the English Tourist Board's (ETB's) Section 4 Development Grant Aid Scheme. The ETB evolved a team of experts who understood tourism projects. Regional tourist boards submitted applications and administered the scheme, with grants being decided by the ETB.

As the scheme was winding up, there were worries about funding being unavailable from the banks either because the specialised nature



KEN ROBINSON

Chair Tourism Alliance and
Tourism Society Think Tank

of tourism businesses wasn't properly understood, or because there was a funding gap between the limited amounts available on overdrafts, and larger projects where loans could be secured on assets. As a board member of ETB, I met with the Bank of England, and plans envisaged that £10m of public funds clawed back from successful grant aided enterprises would be used to combine with £40m from banks to create a £50m investment fund. But political will withered.

Now the situation is worse and the need greater. Any worthwhile scheme must be available to the many, not just the lucky few. What would help most? Probably the availability of tourism-specific expertise to validate bank investment decisions. But if public funding is to be committed it must be on an open, competitive, carefully monitored process. Public funding could leverage commercial funding. The previous Section 4 scheme's 80 per cent/20 per cent mix looks reasonable.

Tourism is an important and internationally competitive business and therefore there is no government that should not provide support. However, where to focus this support is a long running debate covering five main areas of intervention: marketing; training; financial support; direct investment; and research and statistics.

There are few new questions in respect of mature industries like tourism. In 1993, as the country began to recover from the last major recession, Deloitte conducted a detailed review for the UK government to determine which EC countries were the most successful in supporting their tourism industry. The 'winners' were France, Portugal and Ireland, all three of which



NIGEL BLAND

Associate partner, Corporate Finance
Deloitte

offered significant fiscal incentives to the sector but didn't offer subsidised or soft loans. The other factor that stood out was their consistent, clear and coherent tourism policies.

One of the main reasons governments then (and now) are cautious of industry specific soft loan schemes is the difficulty in ensuring that such money reaches the genuinely borderline investments. To achieve this you need skilled people in place within an effective operating framework. By the time this is achieved and significant

start-up costs have been incurred, the debt markets and economy should have improved, reducing the need. Further, there are already government schemes in place – such as the Enterprise Finance Guarantee, which facilitates SMEs in raising bank debt – so perhaps another scheme is not the answer.

History seems to show that governments are most effective in intervening in tourism by providing a competitive tax environment and facilitating destination marketing. Perhaps the best strategy is to focus on these areas. ●

piano man

If you were in London between 23 June and 12 July, you might have noticed the city was a little different. In 30 spots across town, from Carnaby Street to the Millennium Bridge and Liverpool Street Station, queues formed around an unexpected addition to the cityscape – each site now sported a multicoloured piano painted with the words 'Play Me, I'm Yours'.

Locals and tourists, young and old, all waited patiently for their turn to serenade passers-by with tunes from the attached songbook, or to just plonk out Chopsticks. Spontaneous singalongs were held, bands shot piano-side music videos and citizens who wouldn't have otherwise spoken shared laughs. By the end of the event, 300,000 people had experienced the pianos, with over a thousand video and photographic memories shared via a dedicated online community, streetpianos.com – the overwhelming consensus there is that the event was a great success.

Luke Jerram is the man behind the idea. The installation artist, who brought the pianos to London with the help of Sing London and the City of London Festival, has had all sorts of big ideas that have translated into massive public art works, engaging people in cities around the world. Aside from 'Play Me, I'm Yours,' which has also appeared in Sydney, Sao Paolo, Birmingham and Bury St. Edmunds, Jerram has been touring 'Sky Orchestra', an event that sees hot air balloons fly over a city at dawn playing music intended to influence inhabitants'



PHOTO BY SEAN MALYON

Luke Jerram, the artist who brought street pianos to London in a work called 'Play Me, I'm Yours', has been making a living taking art beyond galleries and bringing it to citizens' doorsteps through large-scale temporary public artworks. He speaks to Andrea Jezovit



dreams; he's also invited the public to immersive installations in underground tunnels in Bristol and Birmingham.

Jerram, who's colourblind and has a background in science and engineering as well as art, is interested in creating works that affect unusual perceptual territories in viewers, and his installations, created for museums and galleries, are ambitious and participatory too – for example, 'Dream Director', created using original research from sleep psychologist Chris Alford of the University of West England, gives guests the chance to sleep over at a museum in 'Dream Pods', each themed to play a different set of music and sounds – again aimed at influencing the



PHOTOS BY LUKE JERRAM

■ The 'Play Me, I'm Yours' street pianos have appeared in Sao Paolo (above left) and Sydney (above right)



subject's dreams. He also uses his creative prowess as a consultant, generating ideas for organisations from the Science Museum to the Royal Shakespeare Company.

"I've got 30 sketchbooks on the shelf, and each of the sketchbook is full of about 100 ideas," Jerram says. "I'm interested in the way the world works and I can spend my time exploring little avenues of perception. Ideas just sort of appear. I think everyone has those ideas, it's whether you write them down and whether you carry them out that makes the difference."

THE SONG BEGINS

The idea for 'Play Me, I'm Yours' came through Jerram noticing how strangers in cities rarely speak, even when bumping into each other every week at the launderette or bus stop. The project debuted in Birmingham in 2008 when a promised Sky Orchestra fell through at the last minute following an incorrect weather forecast; Jerram still had to fulfill his promise to deliver an artwork to 100,000 people across the city, and thought of the pianos as a solution. Installing them was fraught with challenges – Jerram's appendix burst just prior to the installation, meaning he couldn't oversee it, and the March rain and cold endangered the pianos. "Birmingham was certainly an experiment, and we learned lessons there about how to protect the pianos from the weather, the best time of year to do it and what works in terms of promotion and the website," Jerram says.

The São Paulo event in October 2008 saw people who had never even seen a real piano before come from miles away to queue for one, and 'Play Me, I'm Yours' was considered the highlight of the Sydney Festival in January 2009, reaching over 200,000 would-be pianists. But Jerram thinks the London event has been the most successful, citing the surprisingly long queues and piano-side music videos created by local musicians.

Jerram installed the pianos around London himself with the help of a piano removal company, enlisting the producer, Sing

London, to help choose the locations, which

were a mix of high profile spots attracting lots of pedestrians and hidden corners the public may not have visited before. A piano tuner was hired to make a stop at each of the 30 sites daily, and each piano was given a local custodian to watch over it and cover it up in the rain. Jerram managed the website, where the public could report problems like out of tune keys and missing stools. "We really struggled to get funding, so we did everything for £14,000, which isn't very much considering you're reaching 200,000 to 300,000 people. It's very good value for money," Jerram says.

Following the international media coverage that accompanied 'Play Me, I'm Yours' in London, Jerram has had requests to bring the pianos to cities all over the world, from Florence to Norwich to New York to Toronto; he's currently in negotiations to bring the event to North America next summer, and is actively looking for producers and arts festivals who are interested in taking on the project. Jerram has also established a fund to enable the project to be presented in less wealthy cities around the world; São Paulo's Mostra SEC des Artes festival was the first organisation to take advantage of the fund, making the event possible in a region where a used piano costs \$1,000. (The pianos were later donated to community groups.)

BEYOND GALLERIES

Jerram feels cities need more large-scale public artworks like 'Play Me, I'm Yours', noting that the gallery system in the UK often isn't successful in bringing art to a diverse audience. "I quite like that rather than expecting the public to come into an

The multicoloured pianos appeared in 30 locations around London, including a site on Harrow Road (above)



PHOTOS BY THIERRY CHOUDE

art gallery, I can take artwork to their door," he says. "We should be doing more artwork in the public domain, but not necessarily the permanent sort of dodgy architectural artwork you see scattered about a city as it gets regenerated. With more live art events and temporary art works, you're going to reach a larger number of people, it's going to be better value for money, and you can have a large impact on people's lives."

But putting on events like these in cities isn't easy – there's lots of red tape, as Jerram has found. His team had to apply for music licenses for the 30 'Play Me, I'm Yours' locations in London, filling out dozens of forms and putting up public notices for each individual site; the absurdity of music licensing laws for the pianos was discussed in the House of Lords. "I think this idea of music licenses has only been enforced quite recently. Last year in Birmingham we did it without permission or licenses, but I don't think we'd get away with that now," Jerram says, noting that he'll be going through the process again for the pianos' next stop in Bristol in September.

It wasn't Jerram's first time running into bureaucracy; he experienced a nightmare-ish three months of negotiations, forms and risk assessments as he attempted to get permission for his first tunnel artwork in Bristol in 2006, and then there was the last time the Sky Orchestra flew in the UK, in Stratford-upon-Avon in 2006 – the civil aviation authority complained and investigated all Jerram's balloon pilots for flying too low over the city. "It was all a bit of a disaster, but we're back on course now, so I'm hoping we can fly again soon," he says, noting there's a possibility the work may be performed over London next year.

Simply going ahead with a work without permission, as Jerram has done in the past with Sky Orchestra, can often be the easier option, he admits. "Sometimes it's easier to apologise for something you've already done than to ask permission. The way [a city council] is set up is going to make an artist's life difficult, so what they need to do is not clamp down too heavily on artists who do something without permission. There's an element of common sense that has to be used as well."

UP NEXT

Despite the challenges of realising his public artworks, Jerram hasn't been fazed – he's currently looking forward to unveiling two new major works in the near future. 'First Breath', set for early 2010, will see two weeks of searchlights piercing the night sky around Bristol, each situated near the home of a family that has just welcomed a new baby; the locations will change



Jerram (above left) has taken 'Sky Orchestra' (above), a work involving musical hot air balloons, around the world.

to a new set of homes each day. Jerram, who's been working on the project for three years

after being inspired by the birth of his first child, will be looking to prenatal groups and local hospitals to help build a database of expectant couples, who will be able to choose the light's distance from their homes. He's also working on 'Resonance', a specially-designed architectural space that will sing and resonate with the wind without any electrical power or amplification.

The work, which has received a major grant from EPRSC and is being developed with the support of the acoustic engineering departments at the University of Southampton and Salford, will be constructed next year, with a tour of windy hills beginning in 2011.

Also soon to be complete is one of the highlights of Jerram's recent consultancy work for the Royal Shakespeare Company – an artwork envisioned by Jerram which will be embedded in the architecture of the company's new theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, set for completion in late 2009. The work, which Jerram proposed along with 14 other ideas after he was enlisted to come up with ways the company could connect with the community, will see members of

the public embed objects, letters and artworks in glass cases and miniature doors built into the theatre's walls. Over the next hundred years, these works will be hidden and revealed as curtains and posters are put up and removed, and walls are painted.

Jerram is also currently busy consulting with the Polish Cultural Institute on ways the organisation can promote Chopin and his birthplace of Poland during Chopin 200, a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the composer's birth happening in London next year. He hopes to create a major artwork for the event, which may involve a return of the street pianos; for now, he's been filling scrap paper with possibilities – his favourite part of his work. "I love generating ideas," he says, "But then with a project like the pianos, it's so wonderful when you actually see what happens – the journey of them coming alive with everyone across the city playing them." The thousands of Londoners with happy memories of outdoor singalongs and spontaneous jam sessions would undoubtedly agree. ●

I love generating ideas. But then there's finally seeing the artwork on the street.

With a project like the pianos, it's so wonderful when you actually witness the journey of them coming alive, with everyone across the city playing them.

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the writing's on the wall

Hosting Banksy's biggest ever exhibition was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Bristol City Museum. Director Kate Brindley tells Kathleen Whyman how the controversial collection was set up in secret

"I couldn't believe it. I thought it was a joke," says museum director Kate Brindley, recalling the moment she received a call suggesting a collaboration between the notorious Banksy and the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery.

As the anonymous graffiti artist has built a career on subverting institutions, it's little wonder Brindley was shocked by Banksy's suggestion, particularly as his political artworks are sought after by museums and galleries internationally. However, it soon became clear to Brindley that the irony of collaboration and richness of context were what appealed to Banksy—and not only did he want to work in his hometown, he particularly wanted to work with the museum. "Once it was apparent it was real, we grasped the opportunity with both hands," she says.

THE BIG DRAW

The Banksy Versus Bristol Museum exhibition, which ran from 13 June to 31 August, showcased more than 100 Banksy works including sculptures, stencils and oil paintings. In true Banksy style, some were sneakily added after opening. A few of the larger pieces replaced regular artefacts – a burned-out ice-cream van stood where the museum's enquiry desk usually is – while others were integrated with the art gallery displays. One of Brindley's favourite works, *Flights to Cairo*, features an Easyjet billboard juxtaposed onto a reproduction of a Claude Lorrain landscape. "It's brilliant," enthuses Brindley. "I really enjoy his sense of humour and the way he put the work in the art gallery. He clearly knew the building very well."

Other exhibits included a model of Stonehenge made from portable toilets, a sculpture of a riot police officer astride a child's rocking horse and an animatronic display featuring chicks as chicken nuggets. Numerous art works were hidden among the museum to encourage visitors to seek them out—for example, a realistic stuffed rat wearing sunglasses and a rucksack was planted in the museum's natural history section.

THE SECRET SEVEN

Banksy's anonymity is part of the brand, so it was vital the exhibition was kept secret until the day it opened. "It's about him launching into the public realm with no trail. He'll just appear, as he always does," explains Brindley. The circumstances demanded contractually and conceptually that no details were released or the offer would be immediately withdrawn. Consequently, only Brindley and six other members of the management team were aware of the covert project initially. They worked with Banksy's team, never with Banksy directly – although he oversaw the installation, staff were unaware of who he was among the crew – and developed the idea from autumn 2008 to June 2009. Most exhibitions take between 18 months and two years to set up, but this one had a much quicker turnaround, partly due to a need to avoid exposure and partly due to Banksy's resources and organisation.

The museum closed for two days during the set up. At this point more staff had to be told about the exhibition, although Bristol city council was still kept in the dark. Ensuring the secrecy of the project was protected was perhaps the biggest challenge for Brindley. "There was a lot of rumour mongering," she recalls. "He has a huge following, and a couple of times there were frighteningly accurate allegations on the internet. We had to deny it and be as vague as possible." Brindley couldn't even boast about the partnership in an interview for the job of director of museums and galleries in Middlesbrough, which she has taken since the Banksy exhibition opened. "It was frustrating but worth it," she says. "We all had to be very faithful to the project because it was so serious to him and his agent."

ABOUT BANKSY

Banksy is a quasi-anonymous English graffiti artist. He's believed to be from Bristol, UK but there is substantial public uncertainty about his identity and personal and biographical details. His graffiti started appearing during the late 1990s. His street artworks, which combine graffiti writing with a distinctive stenciling technique, are often satirical, tackling topics such as politics, culture and ethics.



Banksy's works 'Flights to Cairo' and 'How do you like your eggs?' (opposite page) were part of the exhibition, which drew 400,000 to the Bristol City Museum (above)

BANKSY VERSUS BRISTOL MUSEUM – LIZ TERRY

We made the two hour drive to Bristol fully aware that we'd be facing a three hour queue and went armed with water and newspapers to join the line which filled a street adjacent to the museum and snaked halfway round the block.

Museum researchers polled visitors to find out distances travelled. Many were from far away - some from overseas:

I've never experienced a more good natured or diverse crowd – families with

toddlers, couples young and (very) old, heavily pierced and tattooed teenagers – all standing in the sun together.

Once inside, the treats began. The ground floor was dedicated to Banksy's artwork and installations, while the upper floors presented 30 further works scattered throughout the permanent collections - you had to search to find them.

Although the ground floor was extremely satisfying, the scattered

artworks were the real genius of the exhibition, as they opened up this dusty and traditional museum in ways I doubt have ever been seen before.

The sight of the tattooed and pierced teenagers self-consciously clomping through and diligently searching the ceramics collection to find a Degas-style figure wearing a gas mask or the mineral gallery to find a dildo stalactite will stay with me for a very long time.

ART ATTACK

Brindley appeared on Radio 4 the morning the exhibition opened; soon, journalists from international media were flocking to the museum, along with enough visitors for a four-hour queue.

While most people are delighted by Banksy's work, some view him as vandal and feel he shouldn't be revered. Brindley welcomes the feedback. "I'd expect that from the way he's developed his practice," she says. "He's got a very political element to his work. Debate is inevitable and good and healthy. Art should have debate around it. I've never shied away from controversy. When you show challenging works people can take it badly or engage with it positively. That's part of the role

of a public museum and gallery. We don't want people to feel offended, but if there was no debate it would be very diluted."

The exhibition attracted 400,000 people, many of whom probably wouldn't have visited otherwise. Even in the final days there was a three-hour queue to get in. "The response was overwhelming," says Brindley. "We knew it'd be popular but were still delighted by the numbers of people from all over the world."

Brindley's aware that the exhibition will be hard to trump, both for the museum and for herself. "This will be a difficult achievement and experience to beat," she says. "But I'm privileged to have enabled Banksy to give a great and lasting gift to his home city, plus give enjoyment to so many visitors." ●

british cinema boom

Despite the recession, British cinema chains are on the verge of a record-breaking year – and with the rise of new 3D technology, some industry players believe this is only the beginning. Matthew Goodman reports



It's been a terrific year for British cinema – and not just in front of the camera. *Slumdog Millionaire*, by Brit director Danny Boyle, may have swept the Oscars, but for those screening the movies – the cinema chains – 2009 could be record-breaking.

According to Screen Digest, an industry consultancy, annual box office takings are on course to smash through the £1bn barrier for the first time. "Cinemas are doing extremely well," says Screen Digest's David Hancock. "Takings are at a level no one was forecasting."

Admissions, probably a better way of measuring attendance trends, are also on the rise. For the first six months of this year, the number of tickets sold is 14.5 per cent up on the same period in 2008. With 83.5 million admissions in the first half of 2008, the UK is enjoying its best performance for nearly a decade.

Combined with the advent of 3D technology, it's got the bosses of Britain's largest exhibitors sensing a new era for cinema. "There's a chance this could be the biggest year in modern British history," says Tim Richards, chief executive of the Vue chain. "Last year was great; this year is phenomenal."

STRONG RELEASES

There are a number of reasons why 2009 is proving such a bumper year. Operators acknowledge that a strong release schedule is fundamental to their success. Without films that

people want to see, cinemas will do unimpressive business.

A film that takes more than £10m at the UK box office is deemed to be a noteworthy hit, and there have been several releases this year to comfortably smash through that barrier, such as the latest Harry Potter film, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, the aforementioned *Slumdog*, and the Star Trek reboot.

Industry executives argue the strong slate of releases has been given added potency because of the current economic environment. Steve Wiener, chief executive of Cineworld, says people make sacrifices during a recession. "They don't have money to spend on extravagant holidays. People tend to stay closer to home." This means that they're more likely to spend money on entertainment representing good value for money, with a night at the cinema arguably meeting that need better than most alternative leisure activities. Travel agents' loss is cinema's gain.

Allied to the economics is the emotional rationale; a movie allows people to forget about their problems, at least for a couple of hours. Luke Vetere, marketing director of Odeon, the UK's biggest chain, says: "People enjoy the cinema during times of economic downturn; it's a form of escapism. We saw exactly the same thing in the early 1990s."

Vetere says cinemas have also upped their game, too, making the modern multiplex a far more attractive proposition than the smoke-filled flea pits of days past. "We have a growing number



Pixar's *Up* is one of over a dozen 3D films to be released by the end of 2009; significantly more are planned for 2010



Cinema chains such as Cineworld (above) are investing in upgrading their screens to make them 3D cap

of Costa coffee bars at our cinemas, and we're the biggest franchisee of Ben & Jerry's ice cream in the world," he claims.

Wiener, who founded Cineworld with one multiplex site in 1995, talks of a cinema boom over the last 15 years, which has seen the cinema industry shift from smaller city centre sites to larger, more modern out-of-town complexes offering more comfortable seating and better quality of sound and image.

This combination of factors is also attracting new demographic groups of customers. Richards says baby boomers are being persuaded to come back to the cinema, with appealing releases and a more comfortable environment in which to watch them. "The baby boomers are the fastest growing segment of the market," he says. "Some of them haven't been in a movie theatre for twenty years. They like what they see."

GOING DIGITAL

Perhaps the last piece of the jigsaw is the evolution of projection technology, which is allowing movie houses to convert to digital. This is freeing them up to offer a greater array of programming, be it different types of film other than the latest Hollywood blockbuster or more unusual experiences such as opera and concerts. It could also permit other activities, such as playing computer games on the big screen.

Perhaps most strikingly, the technology is allowing the industry a fresh stab at introducing 3D films. Unlike previous attempts in the 1950s and early 1980s, when 3D was regarded as too gimmicky and clunky, many movie industry insiders think the new technology is vastly superior to its predecessors and is here for good. Richards says: "I have no doubt that all big popcorn-and-Coke blockbuster movies of the future will be in 3D."

His industry colleagues are similarly excited. Wiener, for example, isn't exaggerating when he likens the advent of the format to the introduction of colour or sound, arguing that the

3D releases are great for exhibitors, who are able to charge a premium to customers watching the 3D version of a film versus those seeing it in its 'flat' format. Customers don't seem to mind

change could be as significant as those two technologies were in their day. Vetere says: "Given the level of investment [in 3D], we believe it's here to stay – it's definitely not a flash in the pan."

By the end of this year, there will have been more than a dozen films put out in 3D, with significantly more promised in 2010. Such releases are great for the exhibitors, who are able to charge a premium to customers watching the 3D version of a film versus those seeing it in its 'flat' format. Experience to date suggests that where a film is released in both 3D and regular versions, the former will generate three times the revenue of the latter. Customers don't seem to mind. "We've had very few complaints," Wiener says, arguing that customers seem happy to accept the principle of paying a little extra for the new format.

Such economics have persuaded the cinema chains to invest heavily to upgrade their screens to make them 3D capable. All have announced plans over the past few months to convert as many screens as they can. It's not cheap – to install the necessary projection equipment costs more than £50,000 per screen – but experience shows that it's worth it. "A movie released in 3D plays bigger and longer [than its 2D counterpart]," says Richards. If that continues to be the case, the next few years promise to be more exciting than any Hollywood blockbuster. ● *Matthew Goodman is a business journalist at The Sunday Times*

Good Advice

Three leisure industry consultancies tell us about a recent project they've helped lead to success

consultancy pmpgenesis

client County Durham Sport

Pmppgenesis has been working with County Durham Sport since 2008 to help develop an understanding of the sport and physical activity needs across the county. The initial commission to develop a sub-regional sports facilities strategy came on the back of completing the regional sports facilities strategy on behalf of Sport England North East.

County Durham wants to be viewed as a first class county for sport and community recreation. To achieve this, an understanding of the quantity, quality and accessibility of its existing sports facilities was needed. pmpgenesis helped develop a sub-regional sports facilities strategy, setting out the baseline position of the county's facilities and clearly establishing future requirements.

The work involved talking to national governing bodies of sport, local authorities and other key sports providers to understand their facility needs.



Young volunteers at County Durham Sport's July coaches conference

The strategy helped Durham County Council, the new unitary authority established in April 2009, gain a clearer contextual view of sports facility provision. It also allowed the authority to take a fresh look at sub-regional and local planning for facilities management and development services, as well as the need for specialist facilities and performance venues.

consultancy TrioPlus

client BABA

In the lead up to the Beijing Olympic Games, UK Sport's Mission 2012 process highlighted concerns about amateur performance boxing. Issues were raised about governance and the overall climate boxers and coaches operate in.

Post-Olympics, it was agreed that significant change was needed to ensure the best possible return on the potential multi-million pound investment ahead of London 2012. So, in October 2008, UK Sport decided to transfer responsibility for the Boxing World Class Programme to the newly reconstituted British Amateur Boxing Association (BABA).

Following UK Sport's decision at the end of 2008 to provide an investment of £8m for the programme, ahead of 2012, TrioPlus director Alex Newton was commissioned to work with newly-appointed BABA Chair, Derek Mapp, in a three-month interim management role. In the absence of a programme director, the brief was to lead, guide and manage the programme through a period of change and establish an effective and efficient independent organisation.

Given the levels of funding from UK Sport, it was critical to ensure appro-

BABA has taken over responsibility for the Boxing World Class Programme from UK Sport

appropriate governance and management structures were in place to provide logistical and operational support, to ensure the programme could meet its grant conditions – particularly compliance – with an independent assurance

process commissioned by the funding agency and scheduled for April 2009.

A key part of meeting the brief entailed the instigation of effective governance systems and procedures, including financial accounting and budgets, against which the programme could be measured and monitored by the newly formed man-

agement board and the funding agency.

To meet the UK Sport Assurance Process, appropriate policies and procedures were developed and implemented to ensure compliance with legal company requirements and grant funding conditions. To ensure efficiency, an IT strategy was created to address data management and communication.

With the organisational systems and structures in place, BABA was able to meet all the requirements of the independent audit. The key issues highlighted in Mission 2012 have been addressed, and the programme is on a solid footing to deliver its 2012 medal targets.



On completion of this strategy, pmpgenesis was retained by County Durham Sport to do further facilities planning work to inform Building Schools for the Future (BSF) proposals. This resulted in a short paper identifying opportunities presented by the BSF programme to meet shortfalls in facility provision and indicative cost implications. pmpgenesis also carried out some preliminary feasibility assessments in relation to two facility development projects in the former districts of Chester-Street and Wear Valley.

The sub-regional facilities strategy identified a gap in swimming provision in the (former) North of Easington District. In late 2008, pmpgenesis undertook a feasibility study on behalf of the County Sports Partnership and the district council on the development of a new pool. As a result, a bid has been made to next year's county council capital pot to fund the development of a swimming facility in one of the most deprived areas of County Durham.

In June, pmpgenesis embarked on a physical activity data mapping project involving a detailed literature review and the development of a database to identify



and record physical activity programmes and projects across the four sub-regions in the North East. This information, which identifies gaps in provision and good examples of what increases participation, is being used to develop a Physical Activity Strategy for County Durham. This will help County Durham Sport, NHS

Coaches conference attendees experienced a number of workshops

County Durham and partners coordinate their long-term approach to sport and activity, and will set the context for future investment in physical activity interventions across the county.

consultant **Hall Aitken**
client **myplace**

Myplace is a £270m government-funded programme, providing world-class places for young people and launched in 2008 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

The youth-led programme provides young people with new opportunities and is a tool in tackling anti-social behaviour.

Over a three-year period, the Big Fund (distributing the money on behalf of DCSF) is investing in providing a support team that will function as the backbone in the set up of ambitious projects driven by youth participation and ideas.

Hall Aitken was chosen to head a support service team consisting of partners Gleeds, Bearhunt, Burness, YMCA England and a variety of young consultants, mentors and national agencies.

To ensure that a project such as this is using its resources and assets to gain the biggest impact, Hall Aitken

and partners provide a number of support services, these include:

1. Identifying and celebrating lead practice
2. Using the 'secrets to success' as a benchmark and showing how they can be transferred to individual projects
3. Focusing on embedding lead practice into projects and encouraging the shar-



myplace provides activities for young people through projects such as skate parks (above)

- ing of ideas and experiences
4. Evaluating the project's impact and tracking to what extent lead practice has been embedded.
5. Creating tailor-made support packages to meet the individual needs of

each project.

6. Attracting sponsorship and funding on a national and local level.

7. Supporting project strategy—legal issues, business planning, project management and research and analysis.

Tools include a website for learning and the sharing of stories and ideas, as well as an annual myplace festival, regular events, workshops and seminars, customised advice, a mentoring service, exchange visits and news updates.

myplace continues to grow and is endorsed by ambassadors including Sir Steve Redgrave, social entrepreneur Lord Andrew Mawson, and stars of the stage and screen. Hall Aitken and the team will

continue to provide support that allows for growth in the number of young people involved in community activities.

Torbay Council is aiming to open a skate park and a drama studio as part of the project and this could play a key part in engaging young people in physical activity and sports, and providing opportunities to build participation locally. ●



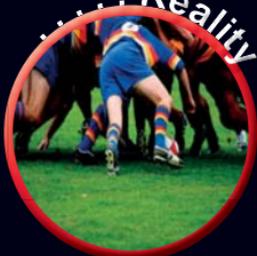
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Wilsonconsultancy **Strategic Leisure**client **City Authorities/UEFA European Championships**

Strategic Leisure was appointed to provide specialist consultancy support, advice and project management to help in the redevelopment of the Kiev Olympic Stadium in the Ukraine.

Strategic Leisure was given a brief by clients Kiev City Authorities and UEFA European Championships to help deliver a modern, well-designed, compliant and sustainable venue, to host the 2012 UEFA European Championships.

The Olympic Stadium is Ukraine's most important sporting venue, and the centrepiece of the country's proposed plans for the 2012 European Championships which are being joint hosted with Poland.

The stadium is a national landmark and, because it has heritage site status, the plan is to completely overhaul the stadium, rather than build a new venue. The design for the updated facility has been delivered by German architects GMP, who undertook the conversion of the Berlin Stadium ahead of the World Cup in Germany in 2006.

The modernisation of a building which was designed in the 1930s has proven a significant challenge for the Ukrainian organisers, who are keen to ensure that the stadium is not only a strong competitor to host the final of the Championships, but also that it will continue to act as a centrepiece of the city of Ukraine, attracting investment and sustainable development.

In order to conform to the rigorous UEFA requirements for match day accommodation, Strategic Leisure was

appointed to lead a team of UK specialists, including architects DLA, to assess the current masterplan. The team had to ensure its compliance and suitability for hosting not just football matches, but also track and field athletics.

This involved a review of the plans and proposals to highlight areas where operational problems might arise; and input in the design and layout of the stadium bowl and access and positioning of ancillary facilities, including toilets, catering outlets and other units.

Strategic Leisure was also required to identify ways that the venue could generate secondary income to ensure it would become a valuable and well used asset for the city of Kiev.

This involved a desktop market appraisal, which included an assessment of the need for hotels; the health and fitness sector; the restaurant market; conferencing; and community sports.

Strategic Leisure was also asked to deliver a sustainable business plan, based on the company's market appraisal, together with recommendations on a proposed management structure for the stadium in legacy mode.

Using the information from the market appraisal, Strategic Leisure produced a business plan which highlights the potential for income generation from certain operations. The consultancy also made recommendations on the best management approach, emphasising the need to employ the best to ensure the stadium becomes globally competitive. ●

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How healthy are health clubs?

In 2008, the health and fitness club industry generated an estimated US\$68.2bn in revenue, serving nearly 117,500,000 members at over 122,000 facilities worldwide. This represents solid growth across the board from 2007, when 108,059 clubs served 106,774,500 members and brought in US\$61.5bn. It also keeps the industry on track to meet the IHRSA-led goal of 120 million health club members by 2010.

In the midst of uncertain economic times, the global health and fitness industry has proved to be resilient. In the US, industry revenues totalled US\$19.1bn in 2008, an increase of three per cent over 2007. The total number of US health clubs increased by one per cent in 2008, up from 29,636 to 30,022. Health club memberships in the US totalled 45.5 million in 2008, a decrease of 2.4 per cent from 2007. Nonetheless, existing members drove increased revenues as non-dues-related sales improved by four per cent.

GLOBAL INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Non-dues revenue, along with membership retention, has been climbing in the Canadian fitness market, as more members utilise personal training, spa amenities and other services. In Latin America, especially Brazil, the fitness industry has been growing steadily, as business owners improve their fitness operations and consumers' willingness to pay for memberships increases.

Health and fitness is also increasing in importance in Europe, as more Europeans show a willingness to invest in their own health. While consumer spending on health has increased, the fitness industry does compete for the discretionary income of health-conscious consumers. The European health club market generated US\$33.3bn in 2007 (the most recent year for which non-US data is available), an increase of 16 per cent from 2006.

The health club industry continues to expand at an impressive rate, according to IHRSA's 2009 Global Report. IHRSA senior editor Kristen A Walsh discusses the findings

Club units also rose 8.6 per cent, with memberships growing 4.6 per cent.

As Europeans recognise the role fitness clubs play in improving health, the market has encountered opportunities for growth through government regulation and investment. Industry transactions have increased over the past few years through consolidation, private equity investment, and management buy-outs/buy-ins. Investors are attracted to the industry's robust growth rates and profit potential.

In spite of the fluctuating nature of the Asia-Pacific, the region's potential for growth remains promising. Revenue from the market decreased by 12.5 per cent from 2006 to 2007, while the total number of health club facilities grew 31 per cent from 10,094 to 19,590 locations. During that same period, membership increased 21 per cent, from 13.2 million to 16 million. The fitness market is fragmented in several Asia-Pacific countries, with many operators offering basic facilities at rock-bottom prices and select leading clubs providing additional amenities to justify premium prices.

All in all, the worldwide health club industry made advances in 2008. While 2009 is proving to be a challenging year for health club operators, the industry's first quarter performance – which has proven it to be recession-resilient – indicates that it should fare better than many other sectors of the global economy.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS

A surprising number of IHRSA facilities report they're holding their own, while a few are actually experiencing some growth. The most common observation is that while selling new memberships has become more difficult, current clients are holding on to their memberships and are increasing their club usage.

Most clubs responding to a February 2009 IHRSA survey

GLOBAL MARKET SIZE AND SCOPE

Continent	Total Industry Revenue (USD)	Total Number of Clubs	Total Number of Members
Europe	\$33,292,523,912.00	46,736	40,685,750
North America	\$22,699,904,000.00	35,759	53,438,100
Asia	\$8,575,700,000.00	16,390	12,974,000
Australia	\$2,207,000,000.00	3,200	3,010,000
South America	\$1,365,760,000.00	19,638	6,002,000
Africa	\$26,419,683.00	750	1,379,525
Total	\$68,167,307,595.00	122,473	117,489,375



In 2008, the health and fitness industry generated an estimated US\$62.8bn in revenue

reported making some minor changes due to the recession:

- increasing the focus on customer service
- discounting enrollment fees
- offering shorter-term memberships
- increasing marketing and advertising
- creating new promotions
- increasing focus on profit centers
- offering club services to non-members
- reviewing staffing schedules and hours
- closely managing expenses
- postponing equipment purchases, but maintaining capital expenditures

For many club operators, the recession has had a silver lining. "Right now, we see incredible opportunities for international growth," says Jeff Klinger, CEO of Anytime Fitness, which recently opened its 1,000th facility, making it the world's largest 24-hour, co-ed fitness franchise in terms of open facilities. Before the end of 2009, Klinger predicts the company will have more than 30 clubs in Canada and will open its first clubs in Italy and India. Additional international expansion plans include several European countries, the Middle East and Asia.

Holmes Place opened five clubs in 2008 and has six more scheduled. "We're also analysing possible acquisitions," says Nick Coultts, CEO of Holmes Place Iberia. "More opportunities are coming up because people have run out of cash."

"We're well capitalised, and we've been able to take advantage of a soft real estate market and lower construction costs," says Jim Rowley who, along with Mark Mastrov, left 24 Hour Fitness and launched UFC Gym. The company plans to open five to 10 clubs by the end of this year.

In addition, many clubs are reporting increased usage by members who have more time on their hands and want to take control of their health and relieve the stress and anxiety that accompany an uncertain economy. In this regard, health club memberships are proving to offer unbeatable value to regular users.

"Some people, of course, will cancel their membership dur-

ing periods of financial belt-tightening, but there will also be those who buy one instead of other more expensive recreational options and/or vacations," says Casey Conrad, president of Communication Consultants, based in Rhode Island, USA.

In the meantime, health club operators are finding ways to cut costs without adversely affecting the member experience.

"In many cases, clubs have been successful in offsetting flat, or slightly reduced, revenues through significant expense savings," says Rick Caro, the president of Management Vision, a consultancy based in New York. "Those clubs that focus on all of the right things now – the member experience, better systems, tighter cost controls, effective marketing and sales, the fragile member, adequate financial resources, etc – will be poised for greater success once the economy strengthens again."

LOOKING AHEAD

The fitness industry may prove to be one of the "recession's top winners," according to financialweek.com. The publication designated the sector as one of its six winners. "With more people focusing on achieving healthier lifestyles, the health and fitness club industry is expected to increase 2.2 per cent in 2009," Ibis senior analyst George Van Horn told financialweek.com. "As baby boomers pass through their 40s and 50s, health-care costs are forecast to rise dramatically, creating an incentive for insurers to promote preventive practices, like hitting the gym."

Recent data suggests that the pace of deterioration is slowing. According to the Blue Chip Economic Indicators survey of private economists, released in April, the US economy is set to emerge from recession in the second half of this year as consumer spending and the housing sector recover. Health club companies around the globe are prepared to take advantage.

"The resiliency of the health and fitness industry, led by operators and entrepreneurs, positions it strategically for the future," said Jay Ablondi, IHRSA's Executive Vice President of Global Products. "While these aren't ordinary times, the fact remains there's simply no better industry in which to work or invest." ●

The 2009 IHRSA Global Report is available at www.ihrsastore.com

We ask four leisure industry caterers and their clients about their work together and greatest achievements

cooking up success

PHOTO: ISTOCK.COM/RICH LEBDO

As GL1's on-site hospitality company, Caterleisure has been involved with a range of events, from concerts to large sporting occasions.

The company has catered for the UK National Synchronised Swimming Championships for the last two years, and worked on its largest and first international event this year – the European Junior Synchronised Swimming Championship.

We talk to Caterleisure operations manager Adrian Pace and Aspire operations director Cathy Daley about what it was like putting on the event.

How did you work together?

Pace: The leisure centre assisted us greatly with logistics, including ensuring that the right areas, equipment and staff were available. Communication was a vital part of the planning process. We had numerous meetings between the event organiser, the client and our on-site catering manager, and we communicated any updates or changes as soon as they happened. It was also important for us to know exactly what the client wanted and to make sure we were able to deliver.

What special considerations were there?

Daley: The balance of the food and nutritional consideration for the international athletes, the dietary requirements of indi-

Caterleisure Group

The venue: Gloucester Leisure Centre (GL1)
The client: Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust

viduals and the logistics of feeding 450 athletes and officials two meals a day! Each meal had 2.5 hour servings to fit in with training and competition schedules. We also had to maintain a full catering service for spectators and everyday leisure centre users. We produced 5,500 meals for the event.

What were the results?

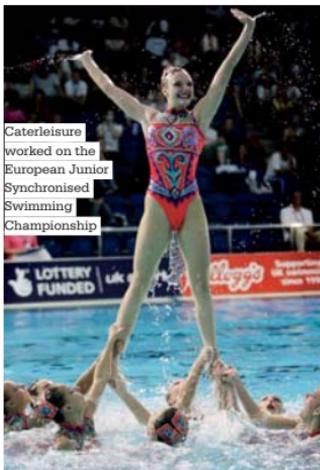
Daley: The results were a resounding success, receiving accolades from LEN and the ASA events team, as well as from athletes from the participating nations.

What were the biggest challenges?

Pace: Catering for the likes and dislikes of people from over 30 countries. We managed to overcome this by having a well-researched and constructed menu to cover the majority of the athletes. We dealt with individual requests as efficiently as possible. In one instance, we had to cater for an extra 70 people, which we managed within 30 minutes.

The most important thing was to make sure everyone got fed. Because of our good communication with the event organisers

Caterleisure worked on the European Junior Synchronised Swimming Championship



and excellent teamwork on the catering side, we were able to produce enough food to feed everyone. We were also asked to increase numbers by an extra 50 per cent sitting, and managed to do this by immediately adjusting menus and food orders.

Considering the size and scale of the event we didn't actually have any major problems, as everything was planned right down to the last detail, and contingency plans were in place.



Digby Trout created the afternoon tea service for the Orangery at Kensington Palace

Digby Trout, which falls under the Elior umbrella, has been running the 175-seat waiter service restaurant at the Orangery at Kensington Palace for years; the caterer has also been running the 225-seat New Armouries Restaurant at the Tower of London since it launched in 2001, and began providing services for Hampton Court Palace's 225-seat Tiltyard Café and 80-seat Privy kitchen in 2004. Digby Trout also runs kiosks at Hampton Court Palace and the tower, and caters for evening events. HRP recently renewed Digby Trout's contract for another two years.

We speak to Jody Lucatello, Digby Trout's manager for HRP and HRP director of communications and development Danny Homan about the partnership.

What considerations need to be taken into account in the catering?

Homan: Every palace has a different set of target audiences. There are more families at the Tower of London, and more locals who lunch at Kensington Palace, but the palaces also attract considerable income from tourists, particularly from Europe and the Far East, so certain audience groups' preferences are taken into account.

How important is catering as an income stream for HRP?

Homan: It's really important – as a charity, HRP doesn't receive any government

Digby Trout

The venues: Kensington Palace, the Tower of London and Hampton Court Palace
The client: Historic Royal Palaces (HRP)

or crown funding so we rely entirely on the income we earn through visitors.

How were the menus put together?

Lucatello: We created bespoke food using historical connections and ties with HRP representing four periods – medieval, Tudor, Georgian and Victorian – as well as keeping British classics such as fish and chips.

We work very closely with Marc Meltonville, the food historian, and Hampton Court Palace. Marc has a wealth of information! He translates old English cookery books, researches time periods, and works with us incorporating historical recipes into our sites. We cook and taste the recipes together, and sometimes slightly modify them so that the modern palate can enjoy these very strong dishes!

All the Georgian soups are made with meat stocks and are really hearty, so we always offer a vegetarian choice on the side. We let the visitors sample the soup as well. Tudor sausages were created using historical recipes, and beef and King's Ale pies using HRP King's ale.

What about the Orangery tea service?

Lucatello: We first determined where we wanted to be in the marketplace, and who

the competitors are. We researched, shopped and dined and believe our afternoon tea service is right for the environment and surroundings.

We looked at the whole experience, and why people come to this destination for afternoon tea. We also have fully trained staff with regards to tea knowledge, and even a tea master on site. Finally, we were the first restaurant to serve Tregothnan tea – the first tea ever grown in England. We sent staff down to Kent to get trained on how the tea is produced, and how to pour the tea on site, with regards to time allowed to steep, etc.

What new innovations have you launched recently?

Lucatello: Summer ice cream tricycles with fresh British ice cream from Exmoor; expanded summer menus for the Orangery; and an expanded ice cream parlour and terrace at Hampton Court Palace. Hog roasts at Hampton Court are in the planning.

What are your future plans for the venues?

Homan: One of our best operations is our French pastisserie-themed Paul kiosk outside the Tower of London, and we'd like to roll that out across the whole group as soon as possible. We also have a site underneath Tower Bridge which we're looking at developing into a destination mid-priced restaurant. We hope to open that within the next 18 months, and we'll go to the market again to find an operator for it.

Lindley Group

The venue: Welford Road
The client: Leicester Tigers

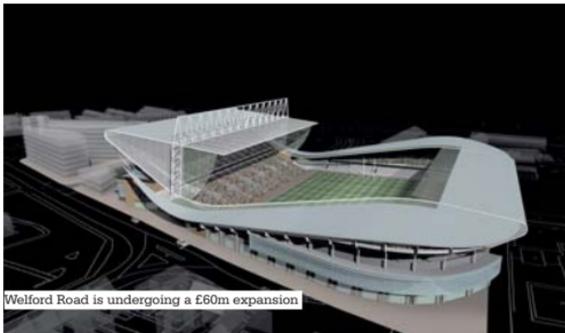
Lindley, which has been working with Leicester Tigers since 2000, recently signed a £40m contract to provide public and corporate hospitality catering for the rugby club for another 11 years. Welford Road is undergoing a £60m expansion that will see a new stand open next season and stadium capacity increasing from 17,500 to 30,000; Lindley has been part of the planning process and as part of the agreement is investing £1.25m in a new state of the art kitchen for the new stand. We speak to Lindley chief executive Alex McCrindle and Leicester Tigers' managing director David Clayton.

How did you start working together?

Clayton: There had been an element of dissatisfaction with our existing caterers and we'd been receiving some complaints from fans and clients, so when the contract came up for renewal in 2000 we had to get it right from the outset and so we wanted a catering company that knew what they were doing and could hit the ground running. Both Lindley's reputation within the sports industry and my experience of working with Lindley when I was at other clubs brought them into the frame.

What does the operation involve today?

Clayton: On match-days, we offer a diverse range of food in the executive and corporate dining areas, and we're also catering for thousands of fans on the public concourse where the requirements are very different. When it comes to event catering, it's very much about tailoring the catering to suit the clients' needs.



Welford Road is undergoing a £60m expansion

What's been the biggest challenge?

McCrindle: Having to allay any concerns that the club had at the start of the contract nine years ago. Because of their previous experience of contract caterers there was a certain amount of nervousness to overcome within the club. We had to prove ourselves quickly and demonstrate that we could deliver beyond expectations.

How have you worked together to achieve catering success?

McCrindle: We've set operating standards that we adhere to so it was fairly straightforward to put those in place. The task played very much to our core strengths of being able to provide high quality food and service in a short time window.

We review the menus with the club each season and if they don't like something, they tell us and we come up with alternative options. Consistency of delivery is also important, and this is down to the team based at Leicester Tigers. During the nine years we've worked with the club we've only had two managers.

Clayton: Lindley is fully integrated as part of the Leicester Tigers management team. They aren't regarded as a separate entity or third party supplier – they're effectively one of us. We also have an 'open book' policy – we're fully aware of what Lindley are

trying to achieve and they're aware of what we're trying to do. Lindley is involved in all of our planning meetings and we work together to develop the strategy for developing the business.

Is catering an important income stream for the club?

Clayton: Absolutely! Public concourse catering is something our supporters expect us to provide, but the revenue we receive from catering also gets invested back into the club, so it makes a significant contribution towards future development.

What are your future plans?

McCrindle: We're working on broadening the choice of food on offer and creating a 'food mall' within the stadium, with bespoke eateries. For example, Tigers Spice, a curry house; Tigers Pizzeria, offering handmade pizzas; and Tigers Bakery, which will provide pies and pasties.

Kiosks will feature state of the art equipment so they won't just be serving up the usual burgers and hot dogs. Match-goers will be able to choose from pork and apricot or lamb and mint burgers, or ciabatta rolls filled with griddled chicken. We'll also offer a range of traditional hand-pulled local ales on a much greater scale than any other rugby or football stadium.

CATERING NEWS

Azure wins Murrayfield contract

Azure, a division of Elixir UK, has secured its first national stadium contract for the Murrayfield Stadium.

The caterer will be providing event and matchday hospitality services at the Scottish stadium, along with conference and banqueting services, public catering services, public bar service and internal catering services for the 67,000-capacity venue.

Azure is working on innovative menus and food offers, and will place a new focus on the quality and local sourcing of food product, says Azure



Murrayfield

managing director Adam Elliott.

"For matchdays, the challenge is to raise the quality of the product and service," Elliott says, adding that the aim for non-matchdays is to take a larger share of Scotland's conference and banqueting market.

New caterer for the British Library

Peyton and Byrne has taken over as caterer for the British Library, adding the venue to its portfolio of museum and gallery clients.

The caterer is now responsible for the upper ground floor café, first floor restaurant and terrace, a grab and go outlet on the piazza and a take-out coffee bar, as well as conferences and banqueting and the provision for the library's 2000 employees. As part of Peyton & Byrne's changes to the site, the café is undergoing a redesign, with completion set for September.



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Sodexo Prestige has been providing catering for Goodison Park (above) since 2006. The stadium has a range of dining facilities (below)



Sodexo Prestige

The venue: Goodison Park
The client: Everton Football Club

Sodexo Prestige has been providing conference, events and hospitality services, as well as matchday public catering, at Everton Football Club's Goodison Park since 2006. We hear from Andrew James, regional director for Sodexo Prestige in the North, and Everton FC chief executive Robert Elstone

What catering needs did Everton FC have before enlisting Sodexo?

Elstone: Before Sodexo, the catering service provision at Everton was problematic and our 'product' inconsistent. We regularly faced service level issues and complaints about the quality of food.

How did you work together to come up with a plan for the catering services?

James: A Sodexo project team worked closely with the club's catering department throughout the year prior to the contract starting, looking at the existing operations, listening to what the client wanted and agreeing standard operating procedures. The team also liaised with existing staff, lounge members and fans to ascertain the club's catering needs.

Elstone: In order to produce an effective and ongoing plan to realise our aims, we meet regularly with Sodexo to review performance and confirm priorities. We have daily dialogue and an integrated team, which is aided by Sodexo absorbing key staff from our existing team. We jointly implement regular customer feedback projects and ensure we adapt and learn from customer needs.

What does the operation involve?

Elstone: The operation currently involves all matchday fan catering. It also entails all matchday hospitality from our Boardroom



and a £5,500 per season lounge package to a cafeteria-style service in a £1,000 per season package. Sodexo is also involved in the non-matchday sale of the venue and delivery of a variety of non-matchday packages, as well as the provision and servicing of the club's business meeting needs.

There were a number of special considerations that Sodexo had to take into account when taking over the catering operations, including the provision of the club's exclusive beer partner (Beer Chang supplied by ThaiBev) on draught, which has been a key challenge that Sodexo has had to overcome. In addition, the configuration and size of catering kiosks is a constraint Sodexo has had to work around.

Is catering an important income stream for Everton FC?

Elstone: Catering represents about five per cent of the club's annual income. It's very important financially and as part of our matchday service to our fans and clients.

What's been the biggest challenge?

James: The initial concern of the existing staff, fans and lounge members being able

to adapt to a new Sodexo regime. However, new menus, new food styles, improved service, stronger management and better business controls overcame this initial apprehension. The quality of the match day catering is now being recognised, with industry awards over the last two years including the Stadium Experience Official Football Hospitality Awards 2008, at which Sodexo was recognised in nine categories.

Is it difficult to be innovative with stadium catering?

James: Sodexo is always exploring and implementing innovative ways to fill the conference and banqueting lounges on non-match days. The only restriction we have at Everton is that the pitch area and stand seating can't be used for any other activity than football to protect the turf.

What are your future plans?

Elstone: We have well-advanced plans to move to a new venue. But if these don't materialise our challenge will be to drive more revenue out of the existing venue. This will mean a review of the above challenges to see which we can economically resolve. ●

Building sustainability into business

Kraft Foods, parent company of The Kenco Coffee Company, is continually working to reduce the environmental impact of its activities



Preventing pollution and promoting the sustainability of the natural resources upon which it depends, while providing high quality products that meet the needs of its consumers.

Kraft Foods approach to sustainability focuses on the areas which have the biggest impact on its business: energy reduction and efficient resource use, ethical sourcing of commodities and packaging reduction and recyclability.

UK Manufacturing Initiatives

A primary focus for the company has been on issues related to product manufacturing, such as reduction of air emissions, water effluence and solid wastes. At Kraft Foods' Banbury coffee production site, where soluble coffee is manufactured, 85% of the plant's electrical energy requirement is generated on site by Combined Heat and Power units (CHPs), while the company has invested heavily in technology to remove coffee grounds from the waste water stream used in the production process before it returns to the local municipal treatment works. The site is also ISO 14001 certified.

Sustainability in Product Sourcing

The company is committed to producing quality coffees long into the future. Agriculture can have a significant environmental, economic and social impact and for this reason Kraft Foods works closely with its agricultural supply base. The

company's initial focus has been in the areas of coffee and cocoa.

Sustainably Farmed Coffee

Kraft Foods has been working in the area of coffee sustainability for 15 years, having a series of country based projects as well as being a contributor to the Common Code of the Coffee Community project, a global initiative which seeks to define sustainability in the coffee sector. Since 2003, Kraft Foods has been work-

ing and social improvements. Coffee farmers learn to improve coffee quality while reducing costs, becoming more efficient and building self sufficiency.

Now 75% of beans for the entire Kenco freeze-dried coffee range are sourced from Rainforest Alliance Certified™ farms and the company's intention is to move its entire coffee portfolio to be sourced from Rainforest Alliance Certified™ farms by 2010.

Ethically Sourced Hot Chocolate*

The Kenco Coffee Company was the first UK manufacturer of hot chocolate products to source its cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified™ farms. The company has worked with the Rainforest Alliance to open up new supplies from certified sources in West Africa since 2006. The entire Suchard Aaway From Home portfolio contains cocoa sourced from Rainforest Alliance Certified™ farms.

Other initiatives

By using indirect distribution and routes to market we are also helping to minimise the environmental impact of transportation.

Finally, The Kenco Coffee Company is proactive in the area of paper cup recycling, being a founder member of The Paper Cup Recovery and Recycle Group whose aim is to find a practical solution to the disposal of paper cups in the UK.

Overall, Kraft Foods is continually working to improve its performance in this important area for further information go to www.kencocoffeecompany.co.uk.

For further information on the Rainforest Alliance visit www.rainforest-alliance.org

* From May 2006 the cocoa in Suchard Hot Chocolate is sourced entirely from Rainforest Alliance Certified™ farms

We have a long term sustainability strategy and have set aggressive goals

Steve Yucknut, Vice president, sustainability, Kraft Foods

ing with the Rainforest Alliance, a leading independent non-profit environment organisation, and has helped advance the availability of coffee from Rainforest Alliance Certified™ farms into the mainstream. Kraft Foods' focus on sustainable sourcing has helped to drive growth in the number of Rainforest Alliance Certified™ farms. The programme assures consumers that the products they are buying come from farms that meet demanding standards for environmental, economic



More than ever, customers are turned off by a rip-off approach to charging, and turned on by establishments that deliver quality and value. Being valued by your customers means they'll choose you whenever the opportunity arises.

How to become valued for value

Handled the right way, providing value for money and winning the trust of guests needn't mean sacrificing revenue

I had lunch the other day at Howard's House to show off my new venture to old pal Ken Robinson, chairman of the Tourism Alliance. He quite liked Howard's House – we had lunch in the garden. He then rang me back in the afternoon to tell me that the lawyers he was meeting in Salisbury used to enjoy Howard's House but thought the dining room was a bit cool and boring these days. (It just goes to show what I thought was elegant and relaxing is cool and boring to some important customers!) Always see it through the eyes of the guests.

'Talk in the language of the listener' has long been Ken's mantra. This point as well as the observations from his lawyers made me think again about communication. It's not what we say, it's what they hear or read that matters.

See it through the eyes of your guests

These are unsettled times. The expenses furore at Westminster, the complete breakdown in confidence in the financial community; these have reinforced deep suspicion in consumer's minds. It's worth remembering this whenever we approach communication with potential visitors or guests. Talking the talk won't do it, we have to walk it and mean every word we say. It's important we deliver value for money in every aspect of our offering.



We mustn't chisel away at our credibility with extra charges here and there. These confirm the suspicious mindset that lurks close to the surface in every guest.

The 'do as you would be done by' test

The simple rule about any expression or offering you might wish to make – particularly anything to do with pricing and charging – is 'if you wouldn't like it, they won't like it'. My advice is to avoid making any charges which smack of exploitation.

We stayed recently at the four star Haven in Sandbanks, and they charge £3

for each delivery to the room (not, in my mind, four star room service). However, I accepted it until they forgot to deliver a bottle of water along with the bottle of wine. They then promptly charged me an extra £3 for the additional forgotten delivery. Not good guest relations. With much the same short-sighted thinking, they've also ceased to deliver a turn-down service. Of course, they'll supply it when you ask, but the whole approach doesn't envelop the guest in a comfortable sense of welcome and goodwill.

Don't make the recession depressing

It's my observation that the English leisure market is doing quite well. Part of that is the 'staycation' factor, but it's also to do with the fact that eating, drinking, celebrating life's little triumphs and tribulations and generally trying to make the best of life continues despite the economic climate. However, the mood has changed. Even in the finest restaurants and most luxurious hotels, the giddy spirit of excess which ruled up to the middle of last year has almost completely evaporated. Guests are looking for value and they'd like it delivered with a smile.

The most important factor in operating with a healthy revenue stream, but also making guests feel well handled and not exploited, is the added value approach. It works with rooms – free upgrades wher-

THE VFM CHECKLIST

- 1 Don't rack up the prices to show savings. Charge fair market prices and stick to them.
- 2 Don't discount – add value. Deliver fully on expectations and you won't need to slash the price.
- 3 Buy well, charge fairly. In the cur-

rent climate, in most commodities and supplies, it's a buyer's market. Good attention to buying discipline will enable you to charge a fair price and keep a full margin.

- 4 Don't exploit their difficulties, be helpful. Don't try and make money

when guests have problems. Help them out and they'll be back.

- 5 Use your team as ambassadors. The leisure business is a people business and people talk. If your team is fully on side and trusts you, you can rest assured they'll tell your customers.

Gold star for VFM and a cheery welcome on a wet day!

The Old Granary at the Quay, Wareham

A torrential downpour on a summer's day found us outside the Priory at Wareham. Sadly, despite their best efforts, they couldn't fit us into the dining room, particularly with my mother and her wheelchair (stupidly, we hadn't booked and the Priory is ever popular). We managed to perambulate down to the quayside and get through the door of the Old Granary without getting too soaked. Although it was only 11:45 AM, they were quite happy to sort us out a table for lunch, to clear access to the



disabled loo and to generally make us feel completely at ease and welcomed. (The experience of taking wheelchair guests to restaurants and leisure attractions always adds an interesting new dimension.)

They were engaged in a fascinating exercise in restructuring the food displays in the cabinets around their charmingly modernised interior, and the sight of the energetic staff moving pasta, various oils and other goodies into various structures made for an entertaining half hour. Amid all this, they cheerfully served us coffee, went to get us soya milk when asked and made sure we were well set up for lunch. Lunch itself was straightforward but delightfully fresh, and the excellent

The excellent service offered to us was also extended to the other guests who staggered in from the rain to find out that the sunshine that day was inside, not outside

ever possible, small touches such as fruit and a decent sized bottle of water, along with bathrobes in place rather than grudgingly delivered when asked for. Above all, a smiling sense of recognition from all staff, will do the trick. The odd complimentary canapé and civilising touches in dining (such as bread, oil and butter without charging) again help. (The Haven, incidentally, has also withdrawn nuts and olives from its cocktail bar, although you can buy a packet of crisps - again, this sends the wrong signal.)

The right principle to work on is to charge a fair price with no extras that delivers value. High prices and exploitative practices lead to resentful guests and resentful guests usually demand discounts. Once a discount is given, it's very hard to take it back on the next occasion. A fair price and a no-discount policy will actually deliver a better rate and revenue return than an exploitative price with frequent discounting. Again, 'if you wouldn't like it, they won't like it' applies. In these times, pricing is governed by the market, not by adding up all the costs!

Developing a VFM culture

Value for money is something every customer is looking for. Pay rises, bonuses

or even interest income on savings and investments are but hazy memories for most of us. The market therefore considers the question of value much more than in the recent past. If you and your team consider each aspect of your service or product offering on a value basis, and can justify the price charge by the value delivered, you have a good basis for a strong relationship with your customers. Consumers are canny and fully understand that good things cost money. They simply don't want to be over-charged.

In such matters, thorough briefing and training for the service team pays dividends. If your staff understand the level of service and quality they're offering and are proud of it, they'll defend any queries with natural conviction. If they think some of your prices and practices are a rip off, they'll find it hard to hide their feelings. More than ever, a VFM culture means having the confidence to confide in your staff, trust them, and motivate them to meet their sales and service targets.

It's also important in a VFM culture to ensure your customers have got the message and are on side. Formal questionnaires or informal chats will give you that information readily. In a rip off culture, it doesn't ever do to ask 'did you

The Old Granary team offered cheerful, professional service

service offered to us was also extended to the other guests who staggered in from the rain to find that the sunshine that day was inside, not outside.

If all establishments managed to operate with the *joie de vivre* and professional friendliness of the team at the Granary, English summer weather would cease to be a problem. The Priory's loss may be the Granary's gain. We shall certainly be back.

enjoy it? Did you think it was good value?' The answer's obvious and the question best avoided. In the VFM culture, simply asking whether people feel fairly treated and properly served helps communicate that we're all on the same side. Talking to our customers is always the best way to find out what they really think. Being fair-minded in response to any complaints is always the easiest way to get them to come back. If you don't talk to your customers, you can rest assured they'll be talking to each other. If they haven't got the right message, that can be very dangerous indeed.

Take pride in offering value

Whether you're a hotel, restaurant or leisure operator, value is a concept that can be communicated. If you ensure your website, brochures and, most of all, personal welcome all communicate the fact that you're proud of offering a value for money service, it will reassure people. Actually delivering it on every visit will bring them back, and they'll tell their friends. Probably the best role model in terms of value for money (as opposed to cheapness and discounts) is the Waitrose operation. In hard times, quality and value will still find a market. ●



Parliament is away on summer recess, but there are a number of government announcements and manifestos the sport and leisure sector should watch – especially as parties prepare for the upcoming general election. In her last column as BISL chief executive, Brigid Simmonds investigates



WHERE NEXT?

As I write my last column as BISL chief executive (I'm handing over the reins to Andy Sutch), little seems to have changed since I began writing for *Leisure Management* some 15 years ago.

The theme is still regulation – too much, and too many unintended consequences; and with parliament now away on summer recess until October, not much action! Ministers and their officials are doing their best, but as we slide towards a general election which must take place before June 2010, autumn will see increased activity in writing manifestos, and it's important that the sport and leisure sector feeds in ideas and influences the policy for a new government (from whichever political persuasion) for the next five years.

As ever, the end of term sees a tumble of government announcements. There are a couple of interesting ones on the planning side. Firstly, a consultation on a new planning policy for 'Development and Coastal Change' which aims to be complementary to PPS 25 (Development and Flood Risk). It mainly looks at areas likely to be affected by coastal erosion, but helpfully states in the planning principles that there needs to be recognition of activities such as recreation and tourism that require a coastal location. The consultation on the draft PPS 15 (Planning for the Historic Environment) is important because it will affect not only historic properties but also developments in the vicinity. There is clear acknowledgement of the contribu-

tion that the historic environment can make for regeneration, encouraging tourism and enhancing the quality of the environment and the region's sense of place, but it will be important that those with historic properties or developments within sight of them look to the English Heritage consultation and their 'living draft' guidance which will accompany the PPS.

For anyone with a gaming machine on their property, it's important to look at the HM Treasury consultation on a Gross Profit Tax to replace the Amusement Machine License Duty (AMLD). Many will be aware that betting shops operate their tax regime on GPT, and there has been a recent row with bingo, who found in the Budget that the Treasury had removed VAT on interval games, but also raised GPT from 15 per cent to 22 per cent. If AMLD plus VAT equalled a new GPT rate, the proposed change might not be so difficult. But the Treasury consultation says they wish to replace the sliding scale of AMLD, which is different for different machines, with a flat rate – so if you're in a betting shop with a B2 machine, you'll pay the same rate of GPT as a Category C or B3 machine in a sports club.

The argument put forward would be that the lower turnover machine in the sports club would pay less tax, but the consultation also suggests that AMLD is a barrier to market and that removing it will allow lower turnover machines in more places. This seems a direct contradiction to government policy on gambling, which has looked to restrict the number of machines in



HM Treasury has launched a consultation on the taxation of gaming machines



The government's National Cycle Plan will be published in the autumn and aims to promote cycling as a mainstream form of transport

places that aren't heavily regulated. The introduction of the Gambling Act saw the removal of gaming machines in fish and chip shops and near taxi ranks on this basis. The other major drawback of GPT is that without AMLD, operators do not pay VAT and therefore can't offset the VAT against other business costs. Apart from the complications of working out how this might affect a business, which is hard for small and medium sized business, the inability to reclaim VAT is likely to have a major effect on businesses at a time when many are struggling to remain viable.

PLANS, STRATEGIES AND PAPERS

Looking towards manifestos, the government announced 'Building Britain's Future', the government's draft legislative programme for 2009/10. This gives a list of 11 bills which will be announced by the Queen in her speech in November, but are currently out for consultation! The Ageing Society Strategy will include how public services can help people continue to participate in sport, whatever their age. The consultation on Local Democratic Renewal puts forward proposals on devolution of power, stronger roles for city-regional government and the local government's 'duty to involve'. The Active Transport Strategy is due in autumn, along with a National Cycle Plan which sets out the role of local authorities, public transport providers, employers and schools in delivering a 'cycling revolution'. There's also a Families and Relationships Green Paper, and a National Skills Strategy which considers how higher education and further education can promote enterprise—this will be published as a White Paper focusing on skills investment, strengthening work incentives and strengthening links with employers at local level.

It may be worth looking at some of these bills more closely, as they do provide insight into the government's priorities for the future. At the same time, the Liberal Democrats have launched 'A Fresh Start for Britain' as part of their manifesto process, and it will be interesting to watch the Conservative Party over the summer recess, as already a number of senior shadow ministers are making major policy speeches.

The key will be party conferences. For the Liberal Democrats, in Bournemouth; for the Labour Party, in Brighton; and for the Conservatives, in Manchester. Here, we'll pick up some ideas for a general election campaign, and even though parliament returns in October it will be short session before the prime minister is forced to call a general election for a fresh mandate to continue. With the state of the economy, my bet would be on May. BISL will be putting together its manifesto over the autumn and if you wish to contribute, make contact with Andy Sutch. *Business In Sport and Leisure (BISL) represents the interests of private sector companies in the sport and leisure industry. Its working groups cover liquor licensing, gambling, planning and property, tourism and sport. For further information call 020 8255 3782 or visit www.bisl.org*

New chief executive for BBPA

Following her departure from BISL, Brigid Simmonds has been appointed as the new chief executive of The British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) and takes up her role on 7 September.

Commenting on the appointment she said: "I am delighted to be joining the BBPA. The pub is a hugely important British institution, at the heart of the nation's community and social life, and beer is our national drink. I very much look forward to working with the industry to promote the positive role pubs and beer play in our economy, community and the daily lives of millions of people throughout the country. I relish the opportunity to take forward the agenda on socially responsible drinking and communicate the benefits of a product which is second to none."

Michael Turner, chair of the BBPA said, "I am delighted that Brigid is joining us. She brings with her a wealth of experience of working in, and on behalf of, the leisure industry and is very well versed in the many issues and challenges facing our sector. She has an excellent reputation and track record of working closely and effectively with ministers, officials and parliamentarians. I feel confident that Brigid will unite the industry, drive the agenda and continue the recent work of putting the BBPA on the front foot."



Strategic commissioning offers new possibilities for leisure and cultural services, so it's vitally important that managers invest time in understanding the principles, says CLOA's John Bell

BIG OPPORTUNITY

The recent cabinet reshuffle provided a welcome boost for our sector. Andy Burnham, the new Secretary of State for Health, stated that the NHS should spend money to help people get – and stay – fit as a long term insurance policy for treating obesity-related diseases such as diabetes and heart conditions. He has gone on record saying he has a personal commitment to embed the promotion of physical activity in NHS culture.

CLOA was privileged to have Andy Burnham as headline speaker at the annual general meeting on 26 June. Speaking there, he also agreed that a strong case could be made for investment in arts and culture as part of the

public health agenda. These timely and welcome statements offer a new window of opportunity for leisure and culture. The opportunity is there not only to improve the dialogue with primary care trusts but also to embrace the strategic commissioning agenda, which will be increasingly used to allocate resources in local government.

COMMISSIONING

Commissioning is at the heart of the government's desire to improve the health and wellbeing of communities and transform services for individuals. Primary care trusts have the objective of becoming 'world class commissioners'.

The organisational competences

necessary to implement world class commissioning are being translated into a local authority format that will give added impetus to strategic commissioning in local government and their partnerships with agencies such as police, Connexions services and the third sector. Managers of leisure and cultural services will need to understand strategic commissioning principles if they're to play successfully on this new field and secure the resources for their services.

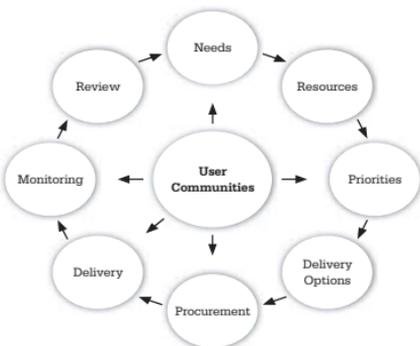
STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING: Culture, health and wellbeing in Wigan

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust have

FIGURE 1 WIGAN'S LEISURE SERVICES - FUNDING

Community Services Fee (Wigan Council)	£17m
Admissions and receipts	£6m
Other	£8m
Total	£31m

FIGURE 2 STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING AND OUTCOME-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY



Rodney Hill, chief executive of the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust, commissioned a review in 2008 to explore strategic commissioning



Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust's vision is 'Getting Wigan Active and Improving People's Lives', emphasising physical, mental, creative and community activity. Events to promote this aim have included the Mini Olympics (above) and the Hot on the Streets Festival (below)

utilised strategic commissioning to re-position leisure and cultural services and open up new opportunities.

All Wigan's leisure services were transferred to a charitable trust in 2003. The reasons weren't purely financial but aimed to provide a new strategic and operational context for the services. Funding is from a mix of sources [figure 1].

The trust's vision to 2012 is 'Getting Wigan Active and Improving People's Lives'. Active is defined as:

- physically active
- mentally and creatively active
- active in our community and as citizens

Rodney Hill, chief executive of the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust, commissioned a review in 2008 to explore the opportunities presented by strategic commissioning. The outcome of the review was to provide a new context for the trust from April 2009: 'Strategic Commissioning and Outcome-Based Accountability'. It can be seen from the IDEa Commissioning Model [figure 2] that this concept builds on previous models of strategic planning and performance management.

In Wigan, the 11 'core competencies' of world class commissioning have been

translated to reflect local requirements. The key innovation in Wigan has been the creation of a joint single commissioning agency between the council and the PCT with a strategic commissioner for culture, health and wellbeing.

Strategic commissioning has opened up new opportunities for the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust.

- The trust's trading arm has won work in adjacent councils
 - Acquisition of their own landscaping business (£400,000 turnover)
 - PCT work totalling some £3m year and growing
 - A contract to manage leisure services for a district council in North Yorkshire
- Strategic commissioning offers similar opportunities to local authority-based leisure and culture. For example:
- Extending into new service areas such as adult social care – the personalisation agenda
 - Collaborating with other councils at sub-regional level and delivering services jointly

The use of strategic commissioning in public services is likely to be extended, and all leisure managers will need to invest time in understanding the con-



cept's principles and in creating new opportunities for their services.

The author wishes to acknowledge the work of CLOA members Roger Pontefract and Rodney Hill in the preparation of this article.

For more information on strategic commissioning, visit www.idea.gov.uk

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*Lighting Design: Focus
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PLASA 09

Audio, video and lighting technologies are key elements in the re-innovation of public and retail spaces – and the market is offering more performance per pound year on year than ever, along with a growing emphasis on energy efficiency.

These technologies will be on show at PLASA, where over 300 manufacturers and suppliers of professional audio, lighting, AV, stage engineering and systems integration will gather to meet new customers from 100 countries. There will be a plethora of interesting ideas to see among the hundreds of new products on offer.

GETTING CONNECTED

This year's event will offer a new way of accessing expertise in this increasingly complex field. PLASA Connect is a new focus on developing business opportunities for the industry's service providers and consultants, and helping managers of public and private projects meet potential suppliers. Using the powerful research and database resources of RH Consulting via a scheduling website (www.plasashow.com/connect), PLASA Connect will allow project managers and other stakeholders to connect with and arrange to meet new service-based suppliers – including audiovisual consultants, installers and rental companies. Supplier and customer will have the opportunity to meet in the PLASA Connect Lounge – an exclusive new feature at PLASA09.

The service is being offered to a range of sectors including hotel groups, building services companies, houses of worship, council chambers, theatres and arts centres, performing arts schools, IT service companies and environmental health officers – many of whose managers have audiovisual requirements yet may not be regular visitors to PLASA09.

COMPACTNESS IS KING

The digital revolution that has helped reduce the cost of technologies as diverse as computer-controlled audio systems, LED lighting and digital signage looks set to continue. The growing integration of control, lighting, video and sound data into unified systems can reduce the need for complex and bulky cable runs to remote locations. Digital signals can be carried on standard Ethernet cable, while a duplicate of this cable may be run at little extra cost to provide redundancy should one fail.

Digital is also the key to system integration – in which audio, video and lighting can share a common control system and custom-designed touch screens that allow non-technical staff to select pre-set 'modes' for different types of operation.

Parallel to this is the trend to 'greening' the entertainment technology galaxy. Many more manufacturers are placing a focus on energy efficient products from LED lighting to digitally-networked audio that eliminates bulky and expensive



The audio-visual industry is gearing up for its UK showcase at Earls Court in the shape of PLASA09 (13-16 September). Mike Lethby gives an insight into this year's exhibition

show details

Dates:

13 September 2009
– 16 September 2009

Location:

Earls Court, London

Contact:

www.plasashow.com

Opening Times:

10am - 6pm (Sun - Tues)
10am - 5pm (Wednesday)



copper cable. A new wave of large format LED screens, some in lightweight 'mesh' form, allow large areas of visual effects or signage to be created with relatively low energy consumption. Similarly, projectors are becoming steadily more efficient, just as the popularity and imaginative use of digital cinema in non-standard locations is growing.

SOUNDS CLEAR

In audio, the benefits of digital technology are widespread. For commercial installations, these can include miniaturisation and easy-to-use remote control of audio systems in shops, malls, sports centres and other public spaces. Loudspeakers and amplifiers can self-report problems to their own control system over fire-resistant, redundant networks. Benefits include easy maintenance and ability to combine entertainment, information and voice evacuation functions over one system, while complying with health, safety and fire evacuation regulations.

And spaces both old and new that suffer acoustically from excessive echoes that make announcements hard for the public to hear can benefit from new generations of small, high-tech loudspeakers that can very capably overcome the issue. They also bring the benefit that the architect's grand design is less likely to be sullied by the sight of multiple loudspeakers.

If your main reason for visiting PLASA09 is to learn more about these technologies, visit www.plasashow.com for the PLASA education and learning programme. Entrance to most sessions is free to registered visitors (and pre-registration online comes with a 50 per cent discount). The programme follows last year's format of two seminar theatres, one for exhibitor-led sessions, the other for industry-wide special interest sessions. "The education and learning programme has been developed directly in response to visitor's requests," says PLASA Events' Sophie Atkinson. "People want to expand their horizons in this fast-moving field and there will be opportunities that suit everyone." ●



In the past decade, lighting technologies have developed at a phenomenal pace. Early adopters were perhaps lured by some misleading promises on fixture longevity and brightness. The LED-based light fixtures were temperamental, and only a limited number of off-the-shelf control systems could be used to control the lights.

However, in the past couple of years the situation has changed dramatically. LED technologies have matured to have both proven reliability and longevity, and are also much easier to install and control. With the current generation of fixtures from the big suppliers, one can now be confident that equipment specified and installed today will not appear primitive or, even worse, obsolete in years to come. Both the lighting designer and the end client can be confident that their respective designs and investments of today will look good for many years.

The improvements mean today's LED technology can be an important component of innovative lighting designs and interactive technologies which can create new and inspiring environments or breathe new life into existing spaces.

A RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTENT

When Ridley Scott visualised the year 2019 in his film *Bladerunner*, advertising-laden building façades dominated the city skyline. The technology illustrated didn't yet exist in 1982, when the film was released, but similar large scale media façade installations have become a reality since. For years I've been advocating that building façades be treated as both architectural and digital surfaces on the condition that the media content not be used solely for digital advertising. Some advertising and corporate branding colours are fine, but the focus should be on the beauty and added visual value a media façade can bring.

Operating as both an architect and a lighting designer, I believe we can successfully marry digital content with architecture. The resulting media façades should be designed to be

BRIGHT IDEAS

LED has come a long way – today, it's the technology behind some of the most experimental and innovative building lighting schemes. Cinimod Studio's Dominic Harris looks at some of the most exciting ways it's been used across the leisure sector

complimentary to the building and its surroundings. As anyone who has visited Hong Kong will know, simply putting lots of colour changing LEDs on a building can end up being to the detriment of the visual landscape. This kind of neglect of lighting content should be avoided at all cost.

THE SPECTACLE

In the mid 1990s, people began using LEDs to create large scale media surfaces, initially found in high profile spots such as New York's Times Square, and at major concerts including U2's 'Popmart' tour in 1997, created by London designer Mark Fisher. Today, LEDs can be found almost everywhere, embedded within buildings, chandeliers and cars.

My own company, Cinimod Studio, is currently involved in a number of architectural and art lighting consultancy projects for clients looking to create unique digital lighting installations and media façades. A common thread to our work is the belief that architecture and lighting design should be considered jointly as an integrated design element in order to reap the maximum benefit and visual impact. Two of our recent projects, the Snog frozen yogurt shops and the UFO for artist Peter Coffin, serve as examples of the innovative use of LEDs to create highly visual lighting installations that provide memorable experiences.

At the Snog frozen yogurt shop in London's Soho, a corner site has become a new neighbourhood landmark, known for its 'bubbling ceiling'. This lighting feature is comprised of 700 glass globes of very bright and controllable coloured light, which



PHOTO: COURTESY RUBREA / ARS ELECTRONICA



together create a volumetric swirling of colour within the shop. What's perhaps most rewarding about the feature is the response it generates. Customers and passers by regularly stop to take photos and videos of the store, generating a never-ending supply of free advertising on social networking sites such as Facebook, Flickr and YouTube.

For the UFO project, we created a 7m diameter structure laden with 3,500 controllable lights and flown on a single strop line under a helicopter. In May 2009 we flew it over the beaches of Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, where an estimated 500,000 people gathered to watch this strange, high-altitude art performance. It was a hugely ambitious project but we succeeded, and met the primary goal – the flight of a large UFO over a major metropolitan area. What we'd really done was create one of the biggest flying LED artworks. On reflection, and thinking back to the future depicted in *Bladerunner*, perhaps our technologies are getting us dangerously close to realising the dystopian future of flying billboards and the commercialisation of building façades.

What these two projects have proven is that the technology and production abilities exist to integrate LEDs and feature lighting into almost any environment. The next step is to ensure that the content played through these lights, no matter where they are, is relevant and appropriately controlled.

INTERACTIVE AND LIVE CONTROL

It's not surprising that some of the most experimental and innovative building lighting schemes can be found at art galleries and cultural institutions. I take the examples of two Austrian buildings: the Kunsthaus in Graz by Peter Cook and Colin Fournier, and the Ars Electronica Centre in Linz by Andreas Treusch. Both are landmark projects, designed expressly for art-driven content to be displayed across their media façades.

In the Kunsthaus, a low resolution media screen has been embedded within the undulating plexiglas cladding of the build-

(Opposite page) The Kunsthaus's media façade acts as a digital canvas.

(Above, clockwise from top left) Cinimod Studio's LED UFO; the Snog frozen yogurt shop's 'bubbling ceiling'; the Ars Electronica Centre's low resolution media façade

ing. This lighting system, called 'BIX' and developed by Berlin designers realites:united, uses 930 circular fluorescent lamps as the pixels across the façade. These can be controlled for brightness only – there is no colour control. This low resolution media display was conceived as a 'communicative display scheme', and is used by visiting artists as a digital canvas, ensuring content is always fresh and helping establish

the media façade as an integral part of the building.

The Ars Electronica Centre (AEC) features a low resolution media façade in colour, and covers over 5,000sq m. The media façade and its tight integration within the architecture create a striking yet sympathetic highlight within the Linz cityscape.

Earlier this year, YesYesNo, a UK design studio, was commissioned to create a new software system for generating live content for the AEC façade. The studio created a new drawing tool that enabled them to draw across the three dimensional surface of the display, as well as allowing live data feeds from the internet to be used to generate live content. In one particularly beautiful example, a data stream reporting the condition on the surface of the sun was used to create live visuals.

To achieve this, YesYesNo used an open source software system called OpenFrameworks as the engine to drive the system, which allowed them to rapidly prototype a set of novel content creation and display tools. In the true spirit of open source software, they released their new tools to the public with the hope it would enable more people to interact and utilise other media façades as a public resource and art performance canvas.

Both the Kunsthaus and the Ars Electronica Centre projects serve as compelling examples of the benefits of bringing creatives and artists into the design process to provide innovative control systems. In the coming decade, we'll be increasingly accepting such media façades as 'another' piece of the visual environment, so we should all work on ensuring that their content and physical manifestation is beautiful and relevant. ●

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LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK
22-24 Sept 2009 NEC, Birmingham UK



LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK 2009

Leisure Industry Week celebrates its 21st birthday this year. We take a look at the highlights of the show, which takes place in Birmingham this month

Birmingham's NEC once again plays host to Leisure Industry Week (LIW) this year, with 13,000 visitors and 350 exhibitors from across the leisure industry expected to attend.

The show, which takes place from 22-24 September, is split into seven dedicated sections: Leisure Facilities, Eat & Drink, Health & Fitness, The Licensed Business Show, The Sport Show, Pool & Spa, and Attractions Expo.

"For anyone in the leisure industry, this is the must-attend event of 2009," says Jonny Sullens, event director of LIW. "We've introduced new features, new seminars and recruited some of the industry's most credible speakers to make sure that, whether you're at LIW to exhibit, buy, network or learn, you will not be disappointed."

sport and fitness

Health & Fitness at LIW attracts a wide range of attendees, including private independent gyms and health clubs, multi-site operators, local authorities, trusts, schools, colleges and universities,



New seminars have been introduced this year



personal trainers and fitness instructors. There's also a diverse range of exhibitors, from equipment suppliers to leisure training experts and consultants.

The Sport Show will incorporate an exhibition, live demonstrations and an extensive education programme. The event will support Sport England's pathways for 'Grow, Sustain and Excel', with three core themes: increasing participation, developing infrastructure and improving performance. A wide range of industry specialists are represented within the exhibitor line-up, including installers of outdoor and indoor sports surfaces, architects and consultancies, sports equipment suppliers, governing bodies of sport and national delivery agencies, and training/coaching providers.

The Sports Networking Village, meanwhile, will provide visitors with the chance to discuss issues relating to building facilities and pathways to accelerate talent development, increasing participation and accessing funding for facility development.

Governing bodies and delivery agencies taking part include Volleyball England, British Gymnastics, British Judo, Sports Coach UK, Sports Leaders, UK Athletics, The Amateur Rowing Association, The Rugby Football Union, British Cycling and the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation.

In addition to governing bodies, the show and conference will also work in partnership with organisations from the education sector, including the Association for Physical Education (AFPE) and British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS).

Leisure Industry Week 2009

Venue: NEC, Birmingham

Dates: 22-24 September 2009

Opening times:

Tues 22 September, 10am-5pm

Weds 23 September, 10am-5pm

Thurs 24 September, 10am-4pm

Contact:

Pre-register for the show at www.liw.co.uk

SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

ACTIVE AREAS

Special features and demonstrations across the three days of the show include:



The Astral Pool: A commercial swimming pool on the show floor, which will host live demonstrations

Gatorade Sports Beach Festival: The indoor beach in The Sport Show will host a range of live sporting demonstrations, in partnership with the Urban Beach Tour, including sessions from Volleyball England, the RFU and the UK Football Association. Olympic silver medallist Roger Black MBE will also join Fit For Sport on the Urban Beach on Tuesday 22 September, to announce the results of the 2009 Fitter Schools Challenge.

Astral Pool: A commercial swimming pool within Pool & Spa, this area will also showcase a range of pool, swimming and wet area products – from ceramic and glass tiles, to showers and saunas.

Demonstrations in the pool will include Rookie Lifeguard, the Royal Life Saving Society UK's children's water safety programme, and presentations will also take place, including awards from Zoggs and Karen Pickering, the ASA and Aquasphere.

Boxing Training and Equipment Zone: Demonstrations and advice on how operators can incorporate boxing training into their facilities. There will also be a Pilates Body and Mind Zone and a Pole Fitness Arena.

The Lucozade Sport Fitness Arena: Supported by FitPro, this arena hosts group fitness training demonstrations from leading training providers. Fit For Sport will display some of the Fitter Schools UK Challenges and multi-sport Kids' Camp activities on Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 September.

The SHOKK Activity Area: The SHOKK team will offer demonstrations on how to motivate and enthuse young people through progressive physical activity. The emphasis will be on fun, as master trainers provide circuit sessions to give users the full SHOKK treatment.

British Gymnastics will have a dedicated demonstration area, with displays of cheerleading, pre-school gymnastics, team gymnastics, aerobic and acrobatic gymnastics – around six performances will run each day. Louis Smith and Beth Tweddle have also been invited along to sign autographs.

INCLUSIVE ZONE

The Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) is developing and managing The Inclusive Fitness Zone, which will offer advice and showcase accredited equipment to enable operators to provide inclusive facilities.

Sue Catton, national director for the IFI, says: "The success and impact that was achieved with the creation of the Zone at LIW last year made it an easy decision for the IFI to get involved again."

"The combination of inclusive fitness equipment, and the expertise of the team, enables operators to discover how they can create an inclusive environment."

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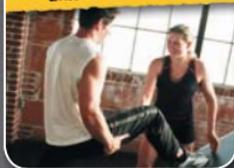
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The National Exercise Referral, Rehab & Activity Conference: Results of the world's largest child obesity study

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

There will be seminars and conferences at LIW from leading organisations including Sport England, the FIA, the SkillsActive Group, the National Academy for Sport and Active Leisure, ISRM, SPATA, IQL UK, REPs and The Wright Foundation.

These will offer information on the issues facing the leisure industry, with advice and discussion on how to solve these problems and encourage best practice. Many organisations – including the FIA and The Wright Foundation –

have also chosen LIW as the platform to release campaign and research results.

the national sport conference

The theme of The National Sport Conference is 'Innovation in Sport: Delivering the 2012 Legacy for Community Sport'. Sponsored by Knight, Kavanagh & Page, and supported by SAPCA and Sport England, keynotes will come from leading figures in sports policy and programmes. These include Sue Tibbals, CEO of the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation, Linda Plowright, CEO of Sports Leaders UK, and Margaret Talbot, CEO of the Association of Physical Education. Olympic medallist Duncan Goodhew will also speak at the conference on 'The Changing Culture of Swimming', where he will explore the government's recent free swimming initiative.

SAPCA will host day three of the conference, with a series of workshops

including one – 'Innovation in Sport and Leisure Facilities' – chaired by Chris Trickey, SAPCA CEO. Other speakers include John Eady from KKP and Duncan Wood Allum from Capita Symonds. Sport England's workshop will be used to provide an update on its Innovation Fund and how this can be used to engage new partners into community sport.

independent operators unite (iou)

Creative Fitness Marketing will host a free programme specifically designed for operators of independent health clubs and gyms. Taking place on Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 September, and sponsored by Cybex, it will address ways for independent operators to cut costs and increase revenue.

There will also be practical tips on the best ways to boost your health club operation and retain members, with examples from successful businesses across the world. A networking event will also take place, free to all attendees, on the Wednesday evening.

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The Youth Activity People

"MoreActive4Life is an integral part of our members' engagement programme; it's fitting we outline the impact of this industry-wide initiative at the industry's leading show."

David Stalker, FIA

the national health & fitness conference

Supported by IHRSA and sponsored by Matrix, the theme of these free seminars is 'Maximising Opportunities in this Challenging Environment.' Running across the three days of the show, the keynote presentation will be given by Roger Black on behalf of Fit for Sport.

The subsequent line-up includes some of the leading names in the health and fitness sector. Doug Miller will look at creating unique promotions to sell more memberships, while IHRSA's Hans Muench will share international health club success stories. Other presenters include Nic Jarvis, Tor Davies, Glen Rankin and Ray Algar.

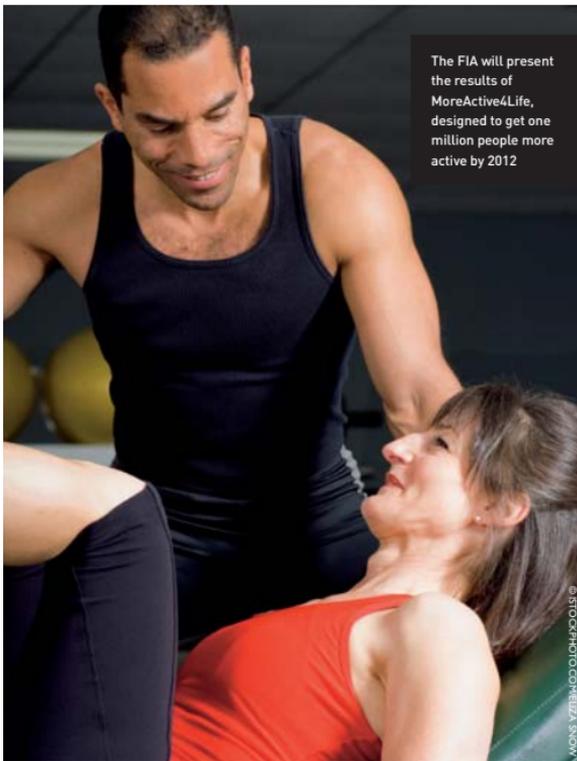
The FIA will also announce the results of its MoreActive4Life campaign – a campaign that's been running alongside the government's Change4Life campaign, with the aim of getting one million more people more active by 2012.

"MoreActive4Life is an integral part of our members' engagement programme; it's only fitting that we outline the impact this industry-wide initiative had on consumers at the industry's leading show," says David Stalker, FIA COO.

national exercise referral, rehab & activity conference

Dr Kenneth Cooper, founder of the Cooper Institute in Dallas, will announce the results of the world's largest child obesity study at this conference, hosted by The Wright Foundation. The study is currently working to reduce obesity levels among some 2.68 million children in the US, with results expected to show that improved academic performance, increased school attendance and fewer disciplinary incidents are associated with higher levels of fitness.

The Wright Foundation will now pilot a similar scheme in the UK, encouraging 10,000 primary school kids to take part in three hours' physical activity a week.



The FIA will present the results of MoreActive4Life, designed to get one million people more active by 2012

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Other seminars include:

- REPS National Convention, in partnership with the FIA, takes place on Thursday 24 September.
- The SkillsActive Group seminars: The Annual SkillsActive Health & Fitness Training Provider Forum takes place on Tuesday 22 September; Cost Effective Workforce Development Solutions is being run by the National Skills Academy, part of the SkillsActive Group, on Wednesday 23 September; and Careers in Active Learning and Leisure will be held on Thursday 24 September.
- The ISRM CPD Seminar takes place on Wednesday 23 September, covering European Standards relating to the design of swimming pools and fitness equipment.
- SPATA's three presentations will look at current construction trends, with a guide to the design and construction process. Plus a presentation from Duncan Goodhew on the 'Changing Culture of Swimming.' Tuesday 22 September.
- The IQL UK. Advice for pool operators on surviving the crunch without cutting corners on safety. A series of presentations will look at how to comply with new and existing legislation, plus tips for improving revenue streams and a presentation of new industry research. Tuesday 22 September.
- UK Strength & Conditioning Association. Sports Performance seminar including practical demonstrations on the show floor. Tuesday 22 September.



reddot design award

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THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Smarter training for better results with the new Suunto Fitness Solution

For decades, Suunto sports instruments have been used by divers, adventurers and athletes. Having established a reputation for reliability and authenticity, the Finnish brand is now taking this precision and inspiration to the health and fitness club industry for the first time, with its new Fitness Solution.

what is the suunto fitness solution?

The Fitness Solution displays up to 72 participants' heart rates on screen with colour-coded training zones. This allows instructors to guide their class members and adjust the session intensity accordingly due to the real-time feedback. At the end of each class, Fitness Solution generates personal workout reports with an exercise summary and guidance for future sessions. These reports are automatically sent to each participant via email and an overall group report is also generated for the instructor.

what are the benefits to health clubs using fitness solution?

Fitness Solution is a differentiator – it gives health clubs the lead over competitors by offering an additional cutting-edge, premium service that will appeal to existing members and attract

new people to join. Clubs can engage more with their members, offering them a higher-level of service with the immediate personal performance reports and combining this with more interesting group sessions – a simple way to encourage longer member retention rates. Fitness Solution will also see club revenues increase significantly through Suunto heart rate belt and monitor sales. From a member perspective, members will leave the club feeling an increased level of satisfaction through being able to train smarter and seeing enhanced results. Fitness Solution reports will ensure members feel motivated to return to classes and encourage others to join. It also makes group exercise sessions more fun and rewarding! Benefits for instructors mean that classes are consequently run more efficiently with training intensity being managed very effectively. Fitness Solution also allows instructors to have the satisfaction of engaging with individual class members on a more one-to-one level. Again, this results in longer instructor retention due to increased support and the appeal of working with the latest technology. Fitness Solution doesn't have to be enjoyed purely in a class environment. As well as the range of other benefits of Fitness Solution, club members also have the flexibility to use the system when working out individually on the gym floor.

Fitness Solution gives health clubs a competitive edge by offering a premium, state-of-the-art service

why heart rate training?

Heart rate training ensures members are achieving their fitness goals in a safe and effective way. Fitness Solution inspires and guides club members and instructors, providing them with reliable information on training intensity. It also allows members and instructors to track individual improvement and therefore plan more efficiently together for future sessions.

global popularity

"With over 150 installations in Europe already, we're confident that Fitness Solution is going to see a significant uptake in quality UK health clubs," said Steve Newell, key account manager for Suunto, Europe. "And, with partners such as Mood Media onboard, we believe we're able to bring a new dimension to these operators with immediate results."

getting started

Installation is quick and simple and starting up the Solution is a matter of clicks each time. What's more, maintenance of the system is minimal, needing very little input from the club. For more information, please contact Simon Timmins at Suunto on +44 (0)7712863764 / +44 (0)1276 404 800 or simon.timmins@amersports.com

NEW PRODUCTS

- **Aquasphere** will launch the new Kayenne goggle at LIW, which offers swimmers increased visibility, allowing them to look up and down with ease.
- **Cybox International UK** will showcase the FT-450 cable column, designed to span the gap between resistance machines and traditional cable machines. It will also display its highly successful new CV range, the 750 series, which combines function and form.
- **Escape** will showcase a new speed-training line, comprising ladders, speed belts and cones.
- **FitPro** will launch the ViPR (Vitality, Performance and Rehabilitation). Available in a range of weights and sizes and offering a wide choice of exercises to challenge any ability level, the ViPR can be carried, tilted, dragged, thrown, flipped, stepped on and rolled for the ultimate in functional full-body training.
- **Life Fitness** will showcase its customer solutions programme, as well as the new Optima strength series.



FitPro will launch the ViPR at LIW



Pulse will introduce the latest software for its Dance Machine dance mat system



Matrix: UK launch of the G7 strength line

- **Matrix** will officially launch the 7 Series CV kit, G7 strength series and the MX circuit at LIW. It will also demonstrate the Tomhawk 5 series bike with new Myride console.
- **Pulse** will showcase a wide range of new products, including a new version of the AbsSolo machine that includes a reps counter. The latest software for its dance mats, iDANCE v2, will also be launched. Featuring the latest in graphics and music, the Dance Machine dance mat system will be demonstrated by the world dance champions, who can dance at speeds of up to 25 steps a second.
- **SHOKK** will launch its new functional training programme, The SHOKK Speed System (SSS). The programme is designed to develop core skills in young people, making them better all-round athletes, as well as helping to educate them about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- **Triple Edge** will demonstrate the BodyCarver for the first time to a UK

audience. This piece of fitness equipment offers skiers, snowboarders, surfers and wakeboarders the chance to work out and condition themselves indoors before tackling the great outdoors.

- **Trixter** will introduce the new X-bike Interactive, an exercise bike with patented X-Bar technology which integrates with the Sony PlayStation Network for individual, multi-player and online racing capability.
- **ZigZag** will launch a number of new products, including the Espresso Youth Bike. Riders must pedal to take part in more than 30 different tours. All bikes have internet connectivity, so riders can tap in to an online community and compete in real time with their friends and family, wherever they may be.

Trixter X-bike: Sony PlayStation integration



EXHIBITOR NEWS

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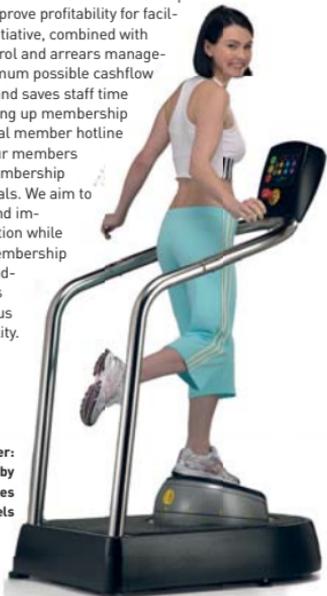
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FREE DIRECT DEBITS are a part of Belmont's special programmes to bring down the cost of membership fee collection and improve profitability for facility operators. This initiative, combined with specialist credit control and arrears management, ensures maximum possible cashflow for Belmont clients and saves staff time in tracking and chasing up membership payments. Our special member hotline means we talk to your members for you regarding membership enquiries and renewals. We aim to maximise revenue and improve financial retention while maintaining good membership relationships. Our end-to-end service leaves operators free to focus on running their facility.

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Clubs for the Cure invites health and fitness clubs worldwide to open their doors to the public this holiday season to find the cure for ALS: Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. The 12 Days of Fitness Program is a global grassroots campaign that demonstrates the health and fitness industry's commitment to helping more people become more active, more often for a great cause. Participating clubs will be inviting their communities to experience the benefits of 12 consecutive days of fitness for a donation of £20 to ALS. For more information or to register your club, please visit www.clubsforthecure.com

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Do you want 250+ new members? Creative Fitness Marketing has helped more independent clubs than any other marketing company in the world over the last 19 years, helping them to realise their market potential – as such, they are co-ordinators of the Independent Operators Unite event at LIW. Through their six-week multiple exposure campaigns, incorporating over 20 advertising media, they help clubs to achieve an average bottom line boost of £50k – all without the club having to outlay a penny. It's by targeting the hard to reach de-conditioned and corporate markets that CFM helps to, in many cases, double the net profit of the club. In 2009 alone, CFM has signed over 20,000 long-term direct debit members to independent clubs in the UK, despite the economic slowdown. Isn't it time you got a bigger piece of the membership pie?

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As concern grows over the increasingly poor health statistics of the British public, Biospace InBody analysers, distributed exclusively by Derwent Healthcare, is a technologically advanced body composition analysis tool offering fitness facilities, healthcare professionals and schools the ability to instantly and accurately assess their clients and pupils' physiological make-up. Easy to use, InBody provides a comprehensive body composition report in just 60 seconds. Unlike other analysers, this is the only technology to provide Direct Segmental Measurements through an eight-

The Biospace InBody body composition analyser: Able to issue a comprehensive report in just 60 seconds





Escape Fitness, distributor of Reebok kit, helps operators add innovation and flare into their studio programming

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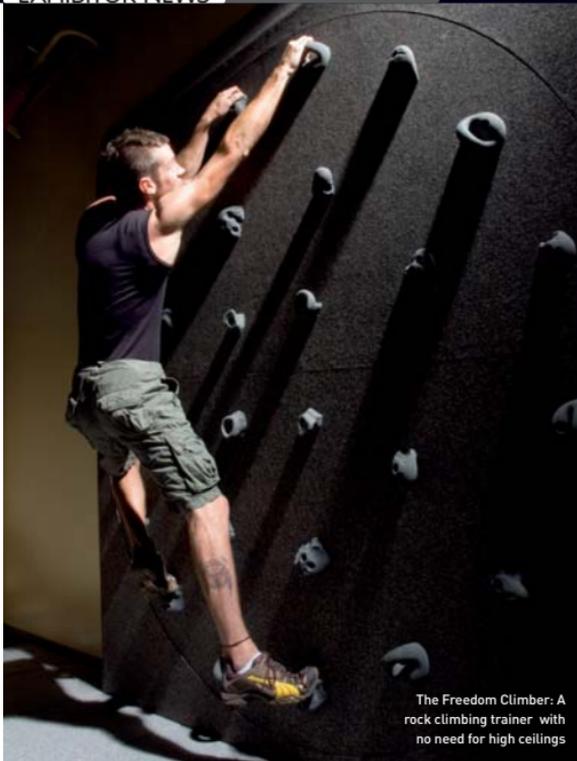
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Health and Fitness

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Health and Fitness**Hippo Leisure Products Ltd**

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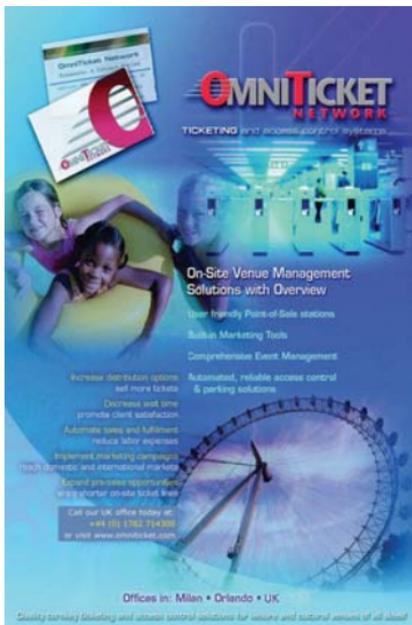
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Our company has been established since 1988 and specialised in the fishing industry. Due to the decline in the fishing industry we are now supplying an increasing number of customers in various industries, such as Sport & Leisure which has become an important part of our business and also Transport & Waste Disposal.

We are now the main supplier of Braided Polyethylene and Knotless Polypropylene netting, twine and all kinds of rope nets in Flame Retardant and Non Flame Retardant for indoor /outdoor play areas.

Our newest products are POLYESTER ANTICLIMB NETTING- Flame Retardant and KNOTLESS POLYPROPYLENE CARGO NETS

For further details please contact Mick Hall on
01472 241289
e-mail: netting@renco.co.uk
www.renco.co.uk

Innovative Leisure Ltd

+44 (0)116 288 7263

www.innovativeleisure.co.uk

Innovative Leisure is the exclusive UK and European distributor of a wide range of interactive, family attractions suitable for use in venues including theme parks, resorts, safari parks, zoos, farm parks, FECs, science centres, schools, adventure centres and more. Our products offer fun, physically challenging activities suited to most age groups, including climbing walls and towers, DigiWall, Water Wars water balloon game, Coconut Tree Climb, Rope-A-Phobia high ropes course and modular climbing panels.

Attractions Expo

International Play Company

+1 604 882 1188

www.iplayco.com

International Play Company Inc is a high quality manufacturer of children's soft contained play structures, rope courses, climbing walls, custom theming, laser tag arenas, toddler play systems, ballistic ball arenas and shooter games and outdoor playgrounds. We design, manufacture and install for many businesses such as Family Entertainment Centers, restaurants, casinos, fitness clubs, day cares, bowling alleys, schools, amusement parks, churches, hotels and resorts, shopping centres, race tracks, museums, aquariums – anywhere children might visit!

Leisure Facilities

TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

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Oldham Community Leisure Limited
August 2009

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www.legendware.co.uk

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www.legendware.co.uk

Legend is a leading supplier of leisure management software to public leisure centre operators and trusts, private health clubs, universities and hotels. Legend works with clients to maximise benefit from the system. From EPOS to cash management, membership, web bookings and fast track kiosks, BACS processing, sales/retention marketing, energy reduction, management reporting – Legend delivers straight out of the box. Legend is a scalable solution to suit standalone centres to the largest multi-site operators. Easy to use, it is delivered in an all-inclusive package including 24/7 helpdesk support and free upgrades. Just ask our satisfied customers!

Health and Fitness

Life Fitness

+44 (0)1353 666017
www.lifefitness.co.uk

Life Fitness, the leading global fitness equipment manufacturer, will be showcasing The Journey™ exercise experiences system at Leisure Industry Week 2009. This utilises its broad range of equipment to create unique customer destinations. Part of the products on display will be the new Optima Series strength line, which incorporates elements of style and simplicity into a comprehensive range of durable space-saving equipment. Visit us on stand number HF3 to find out more about The Journey™ and the Optima Series, and to see how Life Fitness is committed to providing long-term business support and bespoke solutions to its customers.

Health and Fitness

Matrix Fitness Systems

+44 (0)1782 749100
www.matrixfitness.co.uk

The Matrix goal is to produce commercial fitness equipment that stands out and sets new industry standards. We are dedicated to product innovation and engineering solutions based on our customers' needs. Solid construction, enhanced ergonomics and exquisite lines mean Matrix equipment fits the human form and captivates the human eye. Several new and exciting products will launch to the UK market at LIW: The 7 Series CV range is redefining the user experience, with integrated TV screens featuring Vista Clear Technology for the most vibrant picture available, iPod compatibility and FitTouch touch-screen technology. The new G7 Strength series delivers effective strength training for the widest range of users. Introducing a stylish new low level design and refined ergonomics, the series also boasts a range of convenient user features, such as the integrated rep counter and Action Specific Grips. The MX circuit line, comprising nine pieces of hydraulic equipment, offers a safe, efficient and easy workout solution for people of all abilities. Also showcasing at LIW is the Matrix Tomahawk S Series bike with new MyRide 3wave training system, providing users with a personal indoor cycling experience. With Matrix, you can expect more. Visit stand HF7 to find out why.

Health and Fitness

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Aid member retention

Add a new element to personal training

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International Patent Application applied for- PCT/GB2009/000336



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VT Training is the largest work-based learning provider in the UK, providing training, support and development to learners across a wide range of industry sectors. VT Training has 19,000 learners, working in partnership with over 6,000 employers across the UK.

VT Training deliver nationally designed Apprenticeship and NVQ courses for employees in the Active Leisure industry. These programmes enhance existing skills through a combination of training and assessment.

Alongside the government funded Apprenticeship programme and Train to Gain courses we also offer commercial short courses to improve the skills of your staff.

To find out more about the wide range of courses available to you and your staff, contact us now on: Freephone: 0800 731 8199. Email: training@vtplc.com



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LIW
Stand A234



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Mood Media Ltd

☎ +44 (0)1689 882 200

🌐 www.moodmedia.com

Getting members in the right mood: There are many tools to assist membership retention and the music used for classes and gym areas is certainly one of them. Giving members the freedom to select their own video, TV or music channel helps to make their workout as enjoyable as possible. Interactive notice boards are also a useful tool to ensure your members are getting the best service possible. Mood Media works with leisure operators such as Nuffield Health, LivingWell, Leisure Connection and Parkwood Leisure. Services include audio-visual equipment, installation, service, touch-screen class timetables, cardio theater and video.

Health and Fitness

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Health and Fitness

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Health and Fitness

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EXHIBITOR NEWS

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Pellikaan's portfolio includes more than 500 swimming pools

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OmniTicket Network will develop tailored made systems to each client's individual specification. All installations are custom built to provide each venue with a wide range of options. OmniTicket Network is the solution of choice for venues of all sizes, with a proven track record in the most well-known and demanding venues. Our clients include some of the most prestigious venues in the world: Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, Drayton Manor Park, Kew Gardens London.

Not selected

Pellikaan Construction Ltd

+44 (0)20 8392 9355
www.pellikaan.com

Over 900 leisure centres with more than 500 swimming pools in Europe: an impressive portfolio. Pellikaan specialises in designing and constructing commercial buildings and sports facilities. During more than 60 years, Pellikaan also completed hundreds of schools, wellness centres, hotels, offices, shops, day care centres and industrial buildings. The company has the experience and expertise to design, co-ordinate and complete every aspect of sports and leisure projects. Pellikaan can be involved from the very first design of a scheme, or work with the client's architect to fine-tune the drawings and carry out the construction works. The vast know-how and experience are a large asset to any project team and have led to all UK projects being handed over on-time and on-budget. You can visit Pellikaan on stand F160.

Leisure Facilities

Physical Company Limited

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Physical Company is proud to be continuing the expansion of various innovative products across the complete spectrum of fitness and wellbeing. Collect a 2009 Catalogue from our stand to guarantee you are up to date with the latest functional fitness trends such as Bosu, Gliding, Kettlebells, TRX, Bender Ball and Agility, Quickness and Reactivity. Be ahead of the game, find your solutions to your retention battle and inspire your members and staff.

Health and Fitness

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FT FINANCIAL TIMES

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Attractions Expo

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Health and Fitness

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EXHIBITOR NEWS

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Inclusive Fitness Initiative accreditation, signifying people with disabilities can enjoy independent use. This year, Power Plate International launches its new pro-motion cable resistance technology. Its flexible cables offer consistent resistance while optimising the transfer of vibrations, to combine a traditional resistance workout with Acceleration Training exercise.

Health and Fitness

Precor

+44 (0)1276 404900

www.precor.com

Precor's multi-award winning 'Adaptive Motion Trainer' (AMT) has just celebrated the second anniversary of its launch, and the widespread popularity of this machine has never been more evident. With a successful, proven track record, and thousands of units now installed in over 60 countries, the AMT has created a new category of CV equipment, in much the same way as Precor's trailblazing cross-trainer did in 1995. The AMT effectively combines the most attractive elements of both the treadmill and the cross-trainer – providing a zero-impact workout that's as different and challenging as every individual user wants it to be. The extremely user-friendly features of the AMT means that users can begin enjoying natural movement within seconds of stepping onto the machine, and the freedom of stride length and variety of resistance levels continually challenges both the beginner and the advanced member.

Health and Fitness



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Pulse

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PULSE SET TO INSPIRE THE LEISURE MARKET. To find your inspiration at LIW 2009, visit Pulse on stand H148. The stand will be packed full of inspirational ideas and innovative services to help leisure operators plan, build, equip and operate fun, modern, sustainable and profitable leisure facilities. The "Be Inspired" theme of the Pulse stand is intended to help those attending the show to find inspiration on how to improve and maximise their leisure facility offering in the current climate, with the help of the Pulse range of proven leisure services and solutions. At the show, Pulse will be launching new products, unveiling new product developments, presenting the latest leisure concepts for juniors, swimming, fitness and soccer and lots, lots more. Leisure operators will be amazed at the many competitive and cost-effective solutions Pulse can provide.

Health and Fitness

QubicaAMF

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QubicaAMF is dedicated to providing customers with the best bowling and entertainment products available, creating facilities that serve customers better and generate consistently higher returns. We offer a complete line of equipment and services to suit any budget, whether you're building a typical bowling centre, an FEC or entertainment facility. Our coin operated, mini-bowling solution, HIGHWAY 66, appeals to bowlers of all ages and skill levels and can add excitement to your venue without the maintenance, space or expense of conventional bowling. SKILLER, meanwhile, simulates target shooting with soft air weapons for a real shooting range experience. www.qubicaamf.com

Attractions Expo

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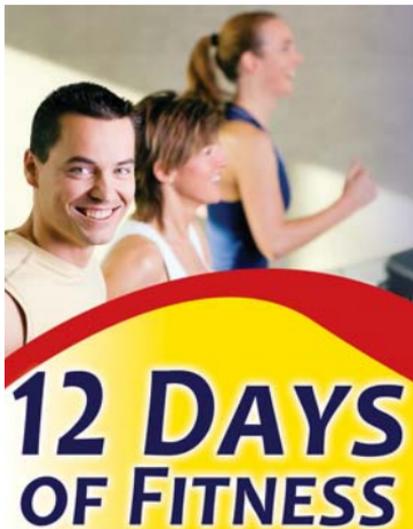
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* Dr Melvyn Hillsdon is the world's leading independent researcher into membership retention and author of the FIA retention research.

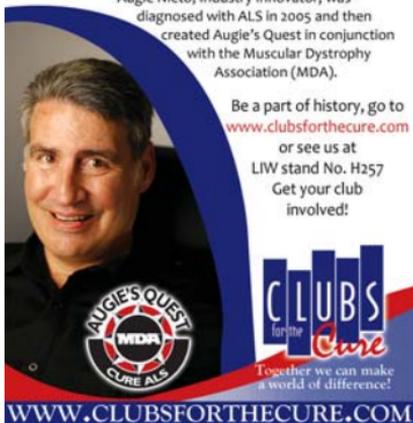


12 DAYS OF FITNESS

The **12 Days of Fitness** for Augie's Quest is a **global campaign** that unites the Health and Fitness Industry and helps raise money for Augie's Quest to find a cure for ALS. The 12 Days of Fitness programme brings people to your club and helps everybody become more fit whilst raising money for a good cause. This December, open your doors to the public by selling a '12 Days of Fitness' pass for a £20 donation. It is a fantastic way to **generate prospects** and **sell memberships** during the holiday season and help **Augie's Quest** Find a Cure for ALS.

Augie Nieto, industry innovator, was diagnosed with ALS in 2005 and then created Augie's Quest in conjunction with the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

Be a part of history, go to www.clubsfortheure.com or see us at LIW stand No. H257 Get your club involved!



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Renco Nets was established in 1998 and is a supplier to various industries. We are now main suppliers of BR, PE, PP Knotless Netting, Twine and all kinds of rope nets in flame retardant and non flame retardant for indoor and outdoor play areas. Our latest products are Polyester Anticlimb Netting – Flame retardant and knotless Cargo Nets. Come and see us on Stand A172 to discuss your netting requirements.

Leisure Facilities

Retention Management

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Health and Fitness

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FREE RETENTION WORKSHOP - This is an interactive and stimulating workshop that covers the latest research into leisure industry retention and reveals the processes proven to improve retention. The workshop is aimed at owners, directors and managers. COME TO OUR STAND or BOOK ONLINE WWW.THERETENTIONPEOPLE.COM/LIW WE NEED YOU to take part in a worldwide research study into the effect of emails on retention. Learn more at our Stand or WWW.THERETENTIONPEOPLE.COM/TRPEMAIL

Leisure Facilities

Sales Makers International

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🌐 www.salesmakers.com

Sales Makers International is a sales and marketing company co-founded by Doug Miller, assisting clubs in selling and retaining more members. We will be showcasing our new internet product, www.joinonline247.com. This allows clubs to simply sell memberships online with a link to an existing website, host an online store, booking system and also communicate instantly to members – and it does so without going through an email or even opening a web browser. We do all the production and it's available with NO contract, a one-year contract and a 'commission only' two-year contract. Stop by and see the Future of Making Sales – TODAY! Additionally, Nic Jarvis, Lexie Griffiths, Glenn Rankin, Duncan Green, Steve Jack (presenters at LIW) will be at the stand – so stop by and talk to the experts.

Health and Fitness



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Renco Nets: Provides nets for indoor and outdoor play

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www.SCIFIT.com

While SCIFIT continues to be the leader in upper body exercise, it is excited to have achieved the Medical CE class IIa on not only its upper body series, but on eight of its other products. SCIFIT set the industry standard for upper body exercise and now has more to offer the marketplace, with fully IFI-accredited and CE versions. Looking forward, SCIFIT continues to develop unique products to help meet the needs of individuals worldwide.

Health and Fitness

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Leisure Facilities

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🌐 www.sportstada.com

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The Sport Show

Suunto

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🌐 www.suunto.com

Suunto will be showcasing its latest Fitness Solution that promises to bring a new dimension to UK health clubs. The innovative heart rate monitoring system will offer immediate benefits to health club members, with real-time feedback and personalised workout reports automatically emailed after group exercise classes or individual workouts on the gym floor. For club owners and operators, the solution provides new business opportunities by offering increased member services and products through heart rate belt and monitor sales. The cutting-edge, premium service also encourages longer member retention through increased interaction. Fitness Solution displays up to 72 participants' heart rates on-screen, with colour-coded training zones. This allows instructors to guide and motivate their class members and adjust the session intensity accordingly. For more information, check out www.suunto.com or visit us at stand HF8 in the FIA Active Area, next to Precor.

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Leisure Facilities

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Trixter offers the only indoor exercise bike to mimic the body's natural movements, for an exciting and durable piece of kit with motivating and engaging programmes. Users experience a full body workout and burn up to 55 per cent more calories on the Trixter X-Dream Fitness Bike, compared to conventional exercise bikes. This year, Trixter launches the X-Bike Interactive, which incorporates patented X-Bar™ technology and integrates with a leading games console. It offers individual and multi-player racing capability for a challenging and fun workout. The laterally-moving handlebars offer realistic movements.

Health and Fitness

Trixter's X-Bike: Laterally-moving handlebars offer realistic movement and help users burn more calories

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02

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03

On average 80% of the people who use the Group Fitness studio are women

04

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05

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06

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07

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EXHIBITOR NEWS



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Health and Fitness
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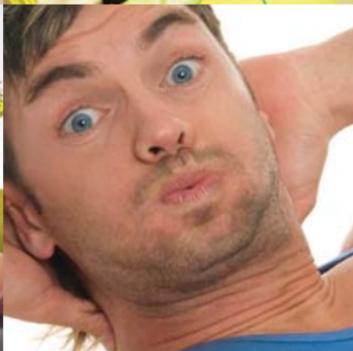
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For more information visit www.yorkfitness.com

boxercise aids retention

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For more information, or to contact any of these companies, log on to www.leisure-kit.net and type the company name under 'keyword search'

amazon leisure fulfils all your business needs

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For more information visit www.amazon-leisure.com



For more information visit www.hattrickmarketing.com

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Hattrick offers an outsourced marketing department function to a range of businesses in the leisure, hospitality and retail industries.

The Hattrick team likes getting to know its clients, getting to the point and getting on with things, dedicating themselves to a challenge. They like inspirational ideas, being busy, and getting the job done well! But, most of all, they like making money for their clients.

Hattrick believes that quality wins out in the long run, and this reflects in the company's planning and design work. Hattrick believes in working with its clients to get the best out of every campaign it does!



quality supplies from jordan fitness

Jordan Fitness has been supplying quality free weight, studio and performance equipment and flooring to the fitness industry, as well as direct sales, for more than 18 years.

It now designs, manufactures and stocks over 700 products, with new products being launched all the time.

New products for 2009 have included new-look rubber dumbbells and rubber barbells, double-grip medicine balls, Tornado balls, higher specification Fit balls with a burst rating of over 1000kgs, and Powerbags. With Jordan, you will always find high quality commercial products, competitive prices and excellent customer service.

For more information, please email sales manager Zak Pitt: zak@jordanfitness.co.uk

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ab audio visual leads the way

AB Audio Visual continues to lead the way with bespoke audio visual solutions for the health and fitness, spa and hospitality sectors.

AB has vast experience in the design of audio visual and lighting components to all aspects of the

leisure market. It provides a high level of service and specification, meeting all budget requirements, whether the project is a new-build or a refurbishment of an existing facility.

Its current projects include the new Hoolle Hall Spa and Village Hotel in Solihull, West Midlands.

For more information visit www.abaudiovisual.co.uk

alliance leisure leads the way



Alliance Leisure works with local authorities, trusts, educational and corporate establishments wanting to improve or expand their leisure facilities. Its track record spans 82 facilities, at a capital value of more than £50m, with four core products that can be used together or independently:

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4. Sales and marketing

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For more information visit
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Brighton's luxurious De Vere Grand Hotel, an iconic landmark that dominates Brighton seafront, has chosen to install Dorgards throughout the hotel. These allow fire doors to be held open, automatically releasing them should the fire alarm sound.

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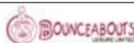


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Party Starter

Steven Hoyte helps bring carnivals alive – working out of the UK Centre for Carnival Arts, he passes along his skills as a costume designer, helping newbie revelers take their whimsical creations to the parade route. He talks to Andrea Jezovit

What's your role?

I work out of the UK Centre for Carnival Arts (UK CCA), and I'm a carnival artist who deals with design – costume, body costume structures and a bit of float design. We do various workshops at the centre and up and down the country, working with local carnival groups. We mentor them – they'll make costumes for the Luton International Carnival, then they'll perform there, and we'll try and get them to do some kind of touring as well.

What's a typical workshop like?

A typical lesson might be just giving someone a taster – we'll do something like a hat-making class. It depends on the time. During longer workshops, people tend to draw something they want to create, and we put a frame together for them for a larger structure, and they can decorate it and we help them along. It's great – what you see on paper suddenly becoming an actual 3D figure, and making it come alive.

What's the craziest creation that's ever come out of one of your workshops?

We've had things like dragons on motor-bikes – mythical things mixed with real life things. We've taken elements like weather, sun and snow, and looked at them in a different way. Rather than just raining rain, it can rain all sorts of things, from autumn leaves to diamonds and shapes to stones.

What kinds of challenges do you run into during the workshops?

Understanding what people want or what they want to do. I'm not trying to take their idea away from them. So it's a matter of me trying to turn their idea into reality and keeping it as close to what they want as I can, rather than trying to install what I'm thinking into what they're creating.

What's your favourite part of being a carnival artist?

I work from the UK CCA, but I also have my own band, Rampage. In Rampage I'm head of logistics, so I go out and find material for costumes, put them together and take them apart, take care of repairs. I help everyone dress, but I don't



Profile

Steven Hoyte fell into carnival arts – his daughter used to do carnival with the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association, and dropping her off there one day in 2001 he was called inside to help and got caught up in the work. Hoyte learned skills from others in the group, and by the next year was running the band and designing and making their costumes. He joined the UK CCA and Rampage in 2003.

wear a costume. Our band consists of 40 revelers in costume and seven or eight people wearing large structures, and they'll all participate on a route around a carnival, dancing all the way. Nothing's going to stop them. If it rains, they party even harder. That's the vibe we give off once we're at a carnival and what people see in us. Every year, starting with Luton in May, we'll do about 15 carnivals up until September.

What's the most interesting production your band has put on?

Last year we took three queen structures to the Leeds Carnival queen show and

won first, second and third place. And I think the winning queen was one of the best structures we've ever done. It was a dragon walking through a mythical garden, and everywhere she stepped she burnt the grass, so behind her you had the grass and it went from green to copper to red and actually burnt looking.

Is it challenging to create all the costumes?

Now it's getting a lot easier. But at first, yes, it was difficult, because we worked in a certain kind of material that was breaking. So every year we re-source – somebody goes out and looks for new materials we can use so we can get lighter and at the same time taller. A structure can go to the same height as a double decker bus, anything higher than that would be a problem with bridges and telephone wires around. If I work solid, it might take me a week to 10 days to do one really large structure.

Every year we have to take it to another level because people are expecting to see us. So we have to have that wow factor. To us it's pointless if we can't beat last year's collection. ●

Diary Dates

22-24 SEP 2009

Leisure Industry Week (LIW)

NEC, Birmingham, UK

Attracting thousands of leisure professionals and over 350 key suppliers, LIW is the ultimate leisure industry event. Highlights include high-profile speakers, live demos, education and conferences.

Contact Chris Brown

Tel +44 (0)20 7955 3968

Fax +44 (0)20 7955 3986

Email CJBrown@cmpi.biz

www.liw.co.uk

22-24 SEP 2009

Mini ScareCON

NEC, Birmingham, UK

This mini conference includes a full-scale scare attraction and seminar talks on how to turn any existing attraction into something extra scary for Halloween and beyond.

Contact Michael Bolton

Tel +44 (0)7712 440361

Email michael@scareattractions.co.uk

www.scareattractions.co.uk

23-26 SEP 2009

SPATEC North America Fall

Ritz-Carlton Lake Las Vegas, US

SPATEC is a three-day forum of one-on-one meetings between corporate spa owners, directors and design/management companies and leading spa suppliers and vendors.

Contact Rob Shannon

Tel +1 603 529 0077

Fax +1 603 484 9154

www.mcleaneventsinternational.com

30 SEP - 02 OCT 2009

Euro Attractions Show

Amsterdam RAI International

Exhibition and Congress Centre

Owned by IAAPA, EAS is Europe's largest attractions industry event.

Contact David Lee

Tel +1 703 836 4800

Email dlee@iaapa.org

www.iaapa.org

30 SEP - 03 OCT 2009

HOTEC Europe 2009

Intercontinental Aphrodite

Hills Resort, Cyprus

HOTEC is a three-day meeting forum of pre-scheduled appointments between suppliers and key decision makers in

the hospitality industry to do business, exchange ideas and build relationships in a relaxed environment conducive to business discussions.

All attendees stay at the same five-star resort so networking takes place during meals, the social program, the supplier showcase and team-building event.

Contact McLean Events

Tel +44 (0)20 8547 9830

Email events@mcleaneventsinternational.com

www.hoteceu.com

05-08 OCT 2009

2009 ISPA Conference & Expo

Hilton Austin and Austin Convention Center, Texas, US

This year's conference will include a lively panel and discussions from experts, looking at trends and issues facing the spa industry.

Contact ISPA events

Tel +1 859 226 4326

Fax +1 859 226 4445

Email ispa@ispastaff.com

www.ispaconference.com

07 OCT 2009

Visitor Attractions Conference (VAC) 2009

Queen Elizabeth II Conference

Centre, London, UK

A national conference organised by the attractions industry, for the industry, featuring a programme of conference sessions and seminars to industry players up to date and help you them new directions for their businesses.

Contact Conference Secretariat

Tel +44 (0) 20 8743 3106

Fax +44 (0) 20 8743 1010

Email info@vac2009.co.uk

www.vac2009.co.uk

14-16 OCT 2009

Hotel Investment Conference Asia Pacific (HICAP)

InterContinental Hong Kong, China

As the premier forum for communication for the hotel investment community in Asia Pacific, HICAP brings strategic insights to investors, financiers, developers and leading industry professionals about the developments, changes and opportunities in the region.

Contact Harriet Lewis

Tel +1 714 540 9300

Email marketing@burba.com

www.HICAPconference.com

22 OCT 2009

Tourism Society Annual Dinner

House of Commons, London, UK

The Tourism Society's annual black-tie dinner and networking event will begin with a champagne reception, followed by a three-course meal.

Contact Daniel Moriss-Jeffery

Tel +44 (0)20 8661 4636

Fax +44 (0)20 8661 4637

Email daniel@tourismsociety.org

www.tourismsociety.org

22-25 OCT 2009

9th IHRSA European Congress

The Burlington Hotel, Dublin, Ireland

Featuring presentations from business leaders from within and outside of the industry. Participants will be able to network with industry suppliers and operator colleagues from across Europe.

Tel +1 617 951 0055

Email ihrsameetings@ihrsa.org

www.ihrsa.org

30 OCT - 03 NOV 2009

ITF Worldwide Coaches Conference

Palau Velodrom Lluís

Puig, Valencia, Spain

The theme of this year's conference is 'Developing Competencies for Elite Players and Coaches', and issues related to high level player development, professional tennis, applied sport science for top coaching and coaches' education will be explored.

Contact Miguel Crespo

Tel +34 96 348 61 90

Fax +34 96 348 6190

Email coaching@itftennis.com

www.itfcoachesconference.com/2009

03-04 NOV 2009

The Sleep Event

Business Design Centre, London, UK

An exhibition showcasing inter-products for the hotel industry, including furniture, lighting, flooring, beds, bathrooms, technology and entertainment solutions, fabric and artwork. It attracts hotel owners, operators, investors, developers, designers, architects, consultants and their suppliers.

Contact Chris Pomphrey

Tel +44 (0)20 7921 8408

Fax +44 (0)20 7921 8450

Email interiors@ubm.com

www.thesleepevent.com

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