Birmingham City Council (BCC) is working on a project with Intelligent Health’s Dr William Bird, to show the value of parks in getting people active. The council’s Active Parks initiative launched last spring, to complement its citywide Be Active programme, which offers use of leisure facilities free to residents at allocated times during the day. According to BCC’s Karen Creavin, inactivity costs £20m a year.

“Independent evaluation has shown that for every £1 we spend, £21.30 is returned to the system,” she said. Details: http://lei.sr?a=6W7D9

JD Sports launches into health club sector

Retail megabrand JD Sports has announced its entry into the British gym market with the launch of the new JD Gyms brand.

The inaugural site – a former Fitness First club – is set to open in Hull on 28 February following a £1m refurb. The 1,950sq m (21,000sq ft) club will be equipped by Technogym and Freemotion, with around 70 Technogym CV stations complemented by Technogym strength kit, Freemotion’s Live Axis cable-based circuit and free weights.

The clubs will also have functional zones featuring training rigs, where members will be able to take part in bootcamp-style sessions.

Group exercise classes will take place in a 185sq m (2,000sq ft) studio; there will also be a separate group cycling studio.

A DJ booth will add a buzz to the gym floor, while the whole club will be given a sporty feel with a running track motif worked into the interior design. Membership will cost £15–20 a month, including classes.

Active Parks scheme to begin in Birmingham

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ukactive highlights extent of inactivity

Increasing physical activity levels by just one per cent a year would save the UK economy £1.2bn over the next five years, according to a new report from industry body ukactive.

Turning the tide of inactivity combines data analysis with public spending figures obtained under the freedom of information act (FOI) to produce an overview of the challenges faced in combating inactivity.

FOI figures show English local authorities will spend only £330m tackling inactivity in 2013/14, against £637m (2,000 per cent more) spent on sexual health. This is a mismatch when costs are compared, as the most recent estimate – by Professor Kevin Fenton of Public Health England – suggests that inactivity costs approximately £10bn a year, while the Family Planning Association estimates costs for sexual health at £12.05bn. Details: http://lei.sr?a=s2F8h

With the recent launch of ventures such as Reebok Fithub – Reebok’s retail outlets in London which offer not only active opportunities to try out products in store, but also free on-site fitness classes – fitness clearly holds great potential for sporting brands looking to grow their footprint and further drive their credibility in the physical activity arena.

JD Sports’ recent financial results, which highlighted a buoyant performance – particularly in its sporting division – are thought to have put the company into a particularly strong position to expand its brand into new markets.

In addition to its JD Sports shops, the company owns a number of high street brands including Blacks, Millets, Kooga and Scotts. Details: http://lei.sr?a=s2F8h

An artist’s impression of the first JD Gym, due to open in Hull later this month

Inactivity is linked to several leading causes of death of Public Health England – suggests that inactivity costs approximately £10bn a year, while the Family Planning Association estimates costs for sexual health at £12.05bn. Continued on back cover
Sport England eyes funding overhaul

Sport England has set out its “new, tougher” plans for the funding of six key sports as part of plans to ensure investment results in increased participation at grassroots level.

All six sports – basketball, tennis, swimming, table tennis, squash and fencing – will see changes in the way they will receive their funding from Sport England.

Taking a new “mixed economy” approach to delivery of basketball, Sport England is increasing the overall investment earmarked for the sport, committing an additional £2.3m between 2013 and 2017.

This is in recognition of its wide appeal to young people and its ethnically diverse participation base.

However, Sport England said it is “not confident” in England Basketball’s ability to increase the numbers of people playing the sport, so has reduced its investment into the national governing body.

At the same time it will invest in other providers including the British Basketball League Foundation and Reach and Teach in a bid to strengthen the marketplace and support alternative ways to get more people playing basketball.

Sport England CEO, Jennie Price said: “There are some tough messages here for national governing bodies. If they don’t grow participation we will reduce their funding, and we won’t make long term investments until we have confidence in their ability to deliver.

“This is exemplified by our new approach to basketball: increasing our investment to over £9m, but reducing our reliance on the national governing body and investing more in community organisations.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=P2d2V

Training at pro clubs tackles male obesity

A recent study has suggested that football participation in professional environments could be a good method to get men to lose weight.

The Scottish study published in The Lancet looked at 374 overweight football fans who were invited to take part in a 12-week programme of training sessions at their local football club. A year later, the participants had lost and successfully kept off around 11lb (5kg) each compared to the control group of overweight men put on a waiting list for the programme.

All 748 men that participated in the study were offered healthy eating advice and weight-management tips, but only half were invited to professional football clubs for the weekly training sessions.

Thirteen clubs – many of which were Scottish Premier League teams – took part including Aberdeen, Celtic, Dundee United, Dunfermline, Rangers, and St Mirren.

Co-author Prof Kate Hunt said: “Football is a very popular sport in many European countries and the use of professional football clubs to deliver a health behaviour intervention for overweight men is highly innovative.

“Participants enjoyed being with other men like them, with a shared interest in football and similar health issues to address. They loved having the opportunity to spend time at the club.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=X3j4d
Oldham targets televised sports

Oldham Council has unveiled plans for a new £15m flagship leisure facility in its town centre, with hopes the complex could attract major televised sporting events.

The new Oldham Sports Centre, at the junction of Manchester Street and St Domingo Street, would replace the existing Lord Street facility in 2015 if planning is approved.

Oldham’s council leader Jim McMahon says the centre would represent a significant upgrade to current sporting facilities and shows how Oldham Council is being proactive in regenerating the borough – despite financial challenges.

“The new Oldham facility would have the correct specifications to attract major regional competitions in some sports,” he says.

“It would also be able to host much larger events than ever before, like Sky Sports boxing, and put us on the national sporting map.”

Proposals developed with construction firm Willmott Dixon will form the basis of a planning application in early February for the development at the junction of Manchester Street and St Domingo Street.

McMahon added: “Providing an Olympic legacy for our residents is a big priority for Oldham Council. It is about raising the aspirations of Oldham residents and improving their facilities as well.”

The plans include a 25m pool, separate learner pool, sauna, steamroom, changing village, eight court sports hall, 80 station gym, spinning studio and a four-rink indoor bowls hall. Details: http://lei.sr?a=T5V5S

Plans submitted for Bristol surfing lake

Bristol could get its own surfing lake next year if plans put forward by The Wave: Bristol get the thumbs up from South Gloucestershire Council.

The £6.4m scheme includes a 300m by 150m surfing lake, which would produce 120 perfect 1.6m waves each hour. This is enough for experienced surfers to get a 20 second ride.

It would use Wavegarden technology, which apparently feels like an ocean break. After public consultation, a swimming lake was also added.

The team behind the project wants to provide an experience which brings surfing, nature and education together. It is intended to encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to be outdoors, exercise, have fun and get in touch with nature.

More sites are expected to follow once this one is up and running.

Co-founder, Nick Hounsfield, said: “We’ve been overwhelmed by the positive response from the public ever since we first started talking about the project. I think people now really understand that this is not a one-dimensional project, but it offers a range of positive opportunities which will benefit both local and wider communities.”

The council’s decision is expected at the end of March. Details: http://lei.sr?a=P3uw7

EU ruling could see clubs able to claim back VAT

A landmark ruling in the European courts could mean that sports clubs in the UK might be able to claim back VAT on fees levied on non-members.

The European Court ruled in favour of Bridport and West Dorset golf club, which was seeking to reclaim VAT it was charged on green fees to non-members. The ruling means that all not-for-profit golf clubs will be eligible to claim back VAT that has been paid by non-members on their green fees.

The ruling could also impact on other not-for-profit clubs offering casual pay and play.

Since the 1990s, charges for playing sport at not-for-profit clubs have been exempt from VAT, but HM Revenue & Customs restricted these exemptions to club members. Details: http://lei.sr?a=w2Z5e

Loughborough University invests fitness development

Work is underway at Loughborough University to build a brand new £5.6m health and fitness centre with capacity for 5,000 members.

The complex, which is being built by the construction company Kier, will contain state of the art equipment from fitness specialists Technogym.

Spanning 900sq m (2,952sq ft), the gym will feature over 80 pieces of cardio-vascular equipment and more than 50 fixed and free weight stations, alongside a core stretching area.

The development will also house two fitness studios and a new sports hall capable of providing four badminton courts, plus basketball, netball and volleyball facilities.

The sports hall and fitness complex will each have separate changing rooms, as well as a lounge and break out areas.

Aside from improving sports provision, the investment is also hoped to help the university reach its ambitious target of having 75 per cent of its students partaking in physical activity at least three times a week. Details: http://lei.sr?a=v4Fqy
**HEALTH & FITNESS**

**GLL in line to acquire £10m Islington leisure contract**

Aquaterra looks likely to lose out to Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) for the £10m contract to run Islington's leisure services.

The company has run the local leisure services for more than a decade and its current contract was set to run until March 2018, but the Town Hall called it in last March to search for a better deal.

GLL hosts 38 million visitors a year across the 151 leisure centres that it manages.

"Aquaterra have done a very good job, but we believe this deal with GLL is really brilliant," said council leader, Richard Watts. "We will get all these improvements and, instead of us paying someone to run our leisure, GLL are confident they can make a profit.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=E8P6d

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**Fitness First to invest £270m**

Fitness First is investing £270m over the next three years in bringing its global estate in line with its new philosophy.

The gym chain, which has 189,000 members in the UK and 377 clubs worldwide, has worked with Professor Stuart Biddle of Loughborough University, UK, to understand motivation, in a bid to turn new year resolution recruits into long-term gym goers.

Biddle has identified that keeping up a new exercise regime, requires more than simply will-power: "Most think motivation to exercise is down to willpower, but it goes much deeper, as we need to meet psychological needs to maintain the habit. If key things can be put in place in order to meet those needs, then our new year's resolutions have a much greater probability of success."

Motivation comes down to three specific psychological needs: seeing signs of improvement and feeling competent; feeling like we have a choice of what we are doing and feeling a sense of belonging in the surroundings.

Fitness First has already started investing to meet these needs.

The 82 clubs in the UK will benefit from new technology, better trained staff and a number of new workouts and services. This includes a growing focus on functional training, with 'freestyle' small group sessions taking place on the gym floor.

Twenty London clubs have been refurbished and rebranded, with plans to complete 34 this year and the rest of the estate by 2016.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=h3D3V

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**Kinesis Gym launches at former cinema site in Eltham**

A new independent gym has been opened in the Grade II Listed Coronet Cinema site in Eltham, south London.

The former Art Deco cinema, which was in use for more than 60 years before its closure in 1999 – has undergone a £500,000 restoration and is home to the new Kinesis Gym and Fitness Centre.

The 9,000sq ft (836sq m) facility features 60 pieces of cv and resistance equipment from Cybex and occupies two floors of the English heritage building.

A number of the site’s original features have been restored in the rebuild, including a glass staircase tower, Art Deco moulds and windows, lighting and a 1930s style reception and café.

Property development company iPro managed the transformation of the Coronet site, a mixed-use development which included new apartments and shops alongside the new fitness centre.

Dan Suggars will manage the facility while brother Matthew will work as a personal trainer and will run the catering operation.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=G6w7E

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**Lower ethnic minority BMI measure: NICE**

UK medical advisory body NICE has suggested that local authorities should modify screening protocols for ethnic minorities, to act as an early warning sign against weight-related illnesses to which these groups are more susceptible.

In its latest set of local government public health briefings, NICE called for BMI thresholds to be lowered for people from black, Asian and other ethnic minority groups more prone to chronic conditions, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

NICE highlights that these groups are up to six times more likely to be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes or stroke, than those in the wider population, plus 50 per cent more likely to die from cardiovascular disease.

For ethnic minority groups, NICE argues that the obese category - which indicates the greatest risk of weight related ill-health - should be a BMI score of 27.5 or more, rather than the current 30-plus.

The body believes the adjustment would allow for quicker intervention by medical professionals, reducing the risk of diseases, while also providing economic benefits.

"As well as improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, taking effective action now also reduces future demand on health and social care services by enabling people to remain as independent as possible," said Professor Mike Kelly, Director of the Centre for Public Health at NICE.

However, the BMI system has been criticised for its accuracy, as it doesn’t distinguish between fat and muscle.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=U5Q4K
The economic case for investing in health as a means to achieving long-term growth took centre stage at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2014, in a session titled ‘Health is Wealth.’

The discussion of health at the annual meeting of world leaders from the public and private sectors marked a shift in the perceived relationship between health and economics.

Traditionally, the four-day meeting in Davos, Switzerland, has focused on the world economy, with attendees predominantly comprised of business leaders and politicians. But in recent years, the forum has widened its scope to discuss pressing environmental and social issues, with health forming a key tenet of this year’s theme The Reshaping of the World: Consequences for Society, Politics and Business.

“That we’re here at Davos and this topic has been featured as heavily as it has been is the big story,” said Francis S. Collins, director of the US National Institutes of Health, who called People significantly underestimate the amount of activity they do according to a Norwegian study. However, it’s not BMI which causes people to exaggerate, but sex, age and education.

The study, Comparison of Self-reported versus Accelerometer-Measured Physical Activity, assessed 1,751 people from 19 to 84 years, in 10 regions of Norway.

Of these people, 47 per cent were overweight or obese.

Each participant used an accelerometer to measure their activity levels, as well as filled in a questionnaire to estimate how much they had done.

The difference between self-reported and measured sedentary time and vigorous intensity physical activity was greatest among men with a lower education level and for men aged 65 and over.

Although men reported 47 per cent more moderate to vigorous physical activity than women, there was no difference between the sexes in the accelerometer findings.

Men reckoned they had spent 439 minutes sitting around, compared with 565 minutes shown by the accelerometer and women guessed at 401, compared with 535 minutes.

The study showed men were more likely to exaggerate than women: they reported 56 additional minutes of walking and moderate exercise than the accelerometer showed, while women reported an extra 52 minutes.

Men reckoned they had spent 439 minutes sitting around, compared with 565 minutes shown by the accelerometer and women guessed at 401, compared with 535 minutes.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=7f2M6

Arianna Huffington moderated the discussion in Davos, Switzerland
**GSWS bolsters its board with two additional members**

The Global Spa & Wellness Summit (GSWS) has appointed global tourism expert Jean-Claude Baumgarten and Mexican entrepreneur Gina Diez Barroso de Franklin to its board of directors.

Former president and CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) Baumgarten brings a vast amount of tourism experience to the role, having also held various executive positions during a 30-year tenure at Air France.

Diez Barroso de Franklin, meanwhile, has been a pioneer in real estate, design, the arts and education since creating Mexico City-based Grupo Diaq in 1990.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n8J8j

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**Body Bliss launches new aromatherapy alchemy app**

Natural product manufacturer Body Bliss has introduced a new app designed to integrate custom aromatherapy alchemy into spa treatments and spa retail.

The Aroma Design Bar with Intentional Aromatherapy App allows users to create a custom blend, which in-spa ‘Alchemistas’ will then make up for them to use as part of their spa treatment.

In the recently-released SpaFinder Wellness 365 Top Ten Global Spa and Wellness Trend Forecast, “Aromatherapy: Scent With Intent” was highlighted as a top trend for 2014, naming Body Bliss as an innovator.

“Body Bliss formulas are designed to capture the heart of the individual,” said Body Bliss founder Nick James. “Our blends hold a specific intention encoded in the formulation.”

**Bath ad campaign targets spa goers**

A new marketing campaign highlighting Bath as the ultimate ‘detox’ location has been launched, with both print and online advertising aimed at encouraging visitors to the area during January and February.

Targeting an audience of up to two million readers across London, Birmingham and South Wales, the campaign is designed to capture the heart of Bath’s spa heritage whilst emphasising the city’s relaxing and rejuvenating properties.

Funded by Bath Tourism Plus (BTP), the Government’s Regional Growth Fund and 10 of Bath’s top hotels, the campaign hopes to attract couples and female friends and relations who are looking for a ‘pick me up’ after Christmas.

Taking £20,000-worth of bookings in its first two weeks, the offer is built around a spa break package that can only be booked on the visitbath.co.uk website. The package includes one night’s accommodation at one of Bath’s 3, 4 or 5 star hotels, together with a four hour session at Thermae Bath Spa.

Chief Executive of BTP Nick Brooks-Sykes said: “The importance of this campaign is that it is targeting a valuable London audience as well as our key catchments of the Midlands and South Wales to visit in a period which is traditionally quieter for businesses. I am delighted that so many hotels are supporting the move.”

Marketing Manager of Thermae Bath Spa, Peter Rollins added: This is a really good initiative at a time of year when all of us can benefit from new business. The campaign has demonstrated the opportunities of marketing Bath as the UK’s premier spa destination.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n9j9g

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**CDC highlights risk of disease in spa pools**

A new report from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that disease outbreaks tied to water often happen after people use spa pools or spas.

Published in the CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, the paper reveals that between 2009 and 2010, there were 81 outbreaks – defined as two or more people who visited the same location, at around the same time, becoming sick – and 1,326 cases of illness in the United States linked to recreational water exposure (pools, lakes, spa pools, etc), according to information reported from 28 US states and Puerto Rico.

According to the report, 18 of these outbreaks (22 per cent) were linked with spa pools or spas and roughly 40 per cent occurred in February or March, with many of these stemming from hotels.

One of the most common illnesses linked with spa pool/spa outbreaks is an infection with the bacterium Pseudomonas aeruginosa.

Healthy people can develop Pseudomonas aeruginosa infections, including ear infections or skin rashes, after exposure to spa pools which have not been properly chlorinated, according to the CDC.

Most recreational-water outbreaks occurred in the summer months: of the 57 outbreaks in treated facilities (such as pools), 25 took place in July or August. Details: http://lei.sr?a=J4W9y
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This is a pivotal time for hospitality and tourism

The clock is ticking – and loudly. May 7th 2015 may seem light years away, but in campaigning and lobbying terms the countdown has begun towards the next general election. 2014 has got off to a fast pace and the hospitality and tourism industry will have just six short months to make a significant impact. This is because in June 2014 the key political parties will each be making the finishing touches to their manifesto.

At the last general election, hospitality and tourism was not featured in any of the manifestos. Not once. Now, more than ever, we have a shot at inclusion. Thanks to the efforts of the industry, led by the BHA, key initiatives such as the Olympics and the Big Conversation have helped us to build unprecedented political capital over the past three years.

Our mission is to ensure that the UK hospitality and tourism industry receives recognition as best in the world. We also, as a collective, need to look to the long term future, aiming to future-proof our industry.

Over the coming months our mission will and must be to make our goals a reality. The time is now upon us. We have a unique and unprecedented opportunity to make our voice heard. We, as a collective and unified industry, must now:

- Continue to work collectively and as one voice: one fine example is the campaign to ensure tourism is positively referenced in the campaign manifestos of all three political parties for the general election.
- Inspire the next generation: join the Big Hospitality Conversation, the biggest job creation drive the industry has ever known – and work with us to achieve the target of creating 300,000 new jobs by 2020.
- Contact your local MP: lobby your local MP; encourage them to find out more about our industry by spending a day with you and your workforce.

This is a pivotal moment for the hospitality and tourism industry; the time for action is now. By standing shoulder to shoulder and making our collective voice heard, the hospitality and tourism industry has a chance to make a difference not only for now, but for future generations.

HOTELS

Dorsett readies its first EU hotel

Dorsett Hospitality International is to open its first hotel in Europe, inclusive of a progressive spa and wellness centre, following the announcement of its new four-star Dorsett Shepherds Bush property, which is to be introduced in May 2014.

The spa at Dorsett Shepherds Bush will be home to four treatment rooms offering non-invasive, results-driven face and body treatments, which will be open to both guests and local residents.

The centre is to draw influence from the benefits of holistic, Chinese treatments, which seek to relax and revive spa users. The spa is also set to feature two nail stations offering a variety of hand treatments, with therapist services being offered to users.

A steamroom and sauna are planned for the facility, as well as a specialist infrared sauna, which is thought to help treat sprains, strains and arthritis, while also seeking to aid pain management.

The sauna uses infrared heaters to emit light experienced as radiant heat, which is absorbed by the surface of the skin, as opposed to the method of conduction and convection from heated air used in traditional saunas.

For those looking to exercise during their stay, access to the hotel’s gym is available on a 24-hour basis through the use of a swipe card.

The hotel is set in a Grade II listed building, originally known as The Shepherds Bush Pavilion and formerly a cinema built in 1933.

Under its landmark glass roof, the seven-storey hotel will offer 317 Chinese-inspired bedrooms, including 187 standard Dorsett rooms and 24 suites. Dorsett’s own in-house design team will work on the interior, with a focus on producing a hotel with a comfortable, contemporary setting for guests.

Details: http://lei.sr/a=W8m4r

US hospitality concepts take off in London

With London in the midst of an American entrepreneurial invasion, Leisure Opportunities takes a look at some of the US concepts taking the capital by storm.

Hotelier Ian Schrager has returned to London after 15 years with the opening of the London Edition in Fitzrovia, said to be inspired by the traditional country manor and the quintessential London private gentleman’s club.

A short distance away, ‘ultra luxury’ Dallas-based hotel management company Rosewood Hotels has opened the Rosewood London in High Holborn.

With 262 guestrooms and 44 suites, the hotel occupies a Grade II listed Belle Epoque building which previously housed the Chancery Court Hotel and underwent a £85m (US$130m) renovation, prior to reopening.

More than 35 years after he moved to New York, Londoner Keith McNally returned to the UK to open Balthazar London with Richard Caring in February 2013. The restaurant is modelled on the original Balthazar in Manhattan, New York and serves traditional French bistro food in the old Theatre Museum in Covent Garden.

Alex Calderwood’s boutique hotel chain, Ace Hotels, opened its first European site in Shoreditch in September 2013. The 258-bed property includes vintage and re-purposed furniture, flea market curios, original artwork and retro touches.

Details: http://lei.sr/a=p9r3G

UFI IBRAHIM is chief executive of the British Hospitality Association

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Read Leisure Opportunities online: www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/digital

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Tourism shines with record year

The British tourism industry is on course to achieve a record tourist spend of £2.0bn for 2013, but a new European ruling could slow this momentum according to industry leaders.

Office of National Statistics figures released on 17 January for up to the end of November 2013, suggest Britain needs just £700 million of tourist spend in the soon to be released December numbers, to hit an overall figure of £2.0bn – a sum never before reached in a calendar year.

Considering Britain has seen an average December spend of £1.3 billion over the last five years, this is highly likely.

The figures were hailed by VisitBritain Chief Executive Sandie Dawe as proving the organisation’s ‘GREAT’ campaign is “turning spectators into visitors.”

Yet for many in the industry, celebrations will be muted.

A recent European Court of Justice ruling could damage this growth and force British companies to relocate overseas, says the Tourism Alliance.

The ruling states that business-to-business sales of tourism packages are now subject to a form of taxation known as TOMS (the Tour Operators Margin Scheme) whereby companies are taxed on their gross margin.

The impact of this will be to increase the prices that UK and overseas visitors pay for a holiday in the UK.

However, this tax will not apply to overseas companies that sell UK holidays. Therefore, the most likely survival route for British travel companies is to relocate overseas, taking jobs and growth out of the UK economy.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Z3H8d

UK tourists splash £2,000 on 2014 trips

The average British holiday-maker is expected to fork out £2,000 on vacations this year, with 85 per cent planning to spend either the same or more than they did in 2013, according to a recent study.

With the UK economy starting to show signs of resurgence, the findings from leisure research specialists Conlumino – compiled for Webloyalty – suggests consumer confidence is also on the up.

But while the news will bring cheer to travel agents, it may not bode well for the UK tourism sector, with the popularity of ‘staycations’ expected to wane.

Of the 2,000 UK consumers surveyed, 19.8 per cent stayed in Britain for their holidays in 2013, while only 16.9 per cent intend to repeat this in the year ahead. Day trips also look likely to suffer, with only 20.3 per cent of respondents planning to take one in 2014 – a 4.2 per cent fall from 2013.

It seems consumers are more likely to take their new-found confidence abroad. Around 24.2 per cent of people took a beach holiday overseas last year – but 26.2 per cent plan on taking one this year. Meanwhile, city breaks abroad are also expected to prove more popular, with consumers reporting a 1.3 per cent increase in uptake.

Of the participants, 68 per cent said they planned to take some sort of holiday this year. But Brits were divided on how they like to take them. A small majority of people prefer to take several short breaks through the year, while the remaining ones will opt for one long two week break in the summer. Details: http://lei.sr?a=F7P4w

Mail Rail on track for new lease of life as an attraction

Plans are afoot to take a disused underground mail line in London and transform it into a tourist attraction.

The London Post Office Railway – known as the Mail Rail – was approved by an Act of Parliament 100 years ago and in its heyday would carry 12 million postal items a day between Whitechapel and Paddington, but it was shut down a decade ago.

Plans include using a converted mail train to carry passengers through a section of the 6.5m (10.5km) underground network in tunnels 7ft (2.1m) in diameter for a Mail Rail experience as part of a new £22m British Postal Museum charting 400 years of social and communications history.

For the proposal to be successful, £2m must be raised by the end of March by the team behind it to secure Heritage Lottery Funding.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=S3K9E

Visit York hopes to tempt Chinese visitors

Visit York has embarked on a new drive to boost bookings from Chinese tour operators by producing a dedicated sightseeing and shopping guide in simplified Mandarin.

The ‘Shop & the City’ itinerary presents a 5-star three day stay in York, taking in shopping on the Shambles, top attractions, afternoon tea options and fine dining.

The launch of a Mandarin-language guide to the city is also planned. This will be distributed via five major incoming airlines, VIP airport lounges at London Heathrow, Stansted and Manchester, through tour operators specialising in the Chinese market, as well as in hotels in London, Manchester, Leeds and York.

Michelle Brown, marketing manager at Visit York said: “Of the one million overseas visitors we welcome each year, China is now our 10th largest market, having moved up nine places in the last 10 years. Research tells us York’s visitor offer is perfect for Chinese visitors and ticks all the boxes when it comes to what the Chinese are looking for in a UK holiday.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=gsx7h

Visit York appeals to Chinese visitors with Mandarin guides

For the proposal to be successful, £2m must be raised by the end of March by the team behind it to secure Heritage Lottery Funding.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=S3K9E

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=gsx7h
**Aerospace Centre coming to Bristol**

The first images of Bristol’s new Aerospace Centre have been unveiled by the team behind the project.

The designs by architect firm Purcell depict the multi-million pound heritage museum and learning centre which will be dedicated to the rich aviation history of Bristol.

The centre will create a permanent home for Alpha Foxtrot 216 – the last ever Concorde to take to the skies – and will also include refurbished World War One aircraft hangars, which will be transformed into a heritage museum, learning suites, archives and workshops.

The centre will also bring together the Bristol Aero Collection which includes a number of collections and artefacts of the aerospace industry.

A number of aerospace companies, including BAE Systems, Airbus and Rolls-Royce, have pledged their support for the project which has been estimated to cost £13.5m.

**NPG’s Nairne salutes museums and galleries**

Museums and galleries have been hailed as one of the “engine rooms” of Britain’s cultural industries by Sandy Nairne – director of the National Portrait Gallery (NPG) – after statistics showed the cultural sector generates over £8m an hour for the economy.

Government figures released last week show that the UK’s creative industries – which include the film, television and music sectors – are worth £71.4bn per year to the economy.

These industries as a whole grew by almost 10 per cent in 2012, outstripping all other sectors, and Nairne believes cultural attractions played a central role in the success. “Museums and galleries are one of the engine rooms of the cultural industries,” he told Attractions Management magazine. “They offer crucial source material for artists, designers and innovators of all kinds. And as great magnets for visitors to Britain, they contribute a very direct uplift to the UK economy.”

The ability of strong attractions to stimulate tourism makes them a central tenet of the culture sector at a time when Britain is bidding to cement its economic recovery.

Culture Secretary Maria Miller enthused about the creative industries’ potential to “showcase Britain to the world” and Nairne thinks the international reputation of the country’s museums and galleries played a role in driving the growth.

“For some years the UK has reaped the advantage of being one of the centres of the knowledge economy,” he adds.

“Like our universities and the BBC, our arts and cultural institutions are trusted worldwide.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=k3t8V

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**Final designs revealed for Northumberland’s Sill project**

The final designs have been revealed for The Sill, Northumberland’s proposed £11.2m national Landscape Discovery Centre and Youth Hostel, which aims to boost the scenic north east England region’s tourism economy and provide educational facilities.

Following months of public consultation, whereby more than 1,700 people submitted design ideas for the project, the final designs have been displayed at an event led by partners Northumberland National Park Authority and the Youth Hostels Association of England and Wales.

The centre, designed by architects Jane Darbyshire and David Kendall, will house education facilities, five external activity areas, serviced office accommodation for outdoor activity businesses, plus retail and cafe areas for local produce.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=v9C8A

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**Bombay Sapphire to launch gin tour experience**

Bombay Sapphire Gin Distillery is building a visitor centre alongside its first production facility, which will open in Hampshire in the autumn.

The site, on the banks of the River Test, will marry historic buildings with contemporary architecture. As well as bringing a derelict paper mill – which formerly housed one of England’s most significant bank note paper making facilities – back to life, the site will feature cutting edge architecture from designers of the Olympic cauldron, Heatherwick Studios.

Plans have been drawn up for two glass houses, which will be home to the 10 botanicals from which the gin is distilled.

Guests will be able to find out how the gin is made, explore the distillery and attend cocktail classes. Other engaging visitor experiences are also planned.

The site will include function space, a cafe and a shop. Bombay Sapphire is hoping to attract 100,000 visitors a year.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=f9z7x
UK Pool & Spa Expo is the largest National event for the UK’s commercial pool & spa sector.

The CPO* certification program will be available to Pool & Spa visitors in a blended format where students are guided through the handbook using the Pool Operator Primer online course, followed by a day of classes held on Day 1 of the Expo (20th February 2014). This fusion course is a fast-track route to gaining the sought after CPO* certification.

TO SIGN UP CALL 01483 420 229

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info@ukpoolspa-expo.co.uk or call + 44 1483 420 229
Oldham Council announces new sports centre for Royton

Oldham Council has unveiled plans for a new sports centre in Royton, which is slated to open in autumn 2015, coinciding with the closure of an existing facility.

The designs include a six lane 25m swimming pool, plus a learner pool, an 80-station fitness gym and two dance studios.

A planning application will be submitted next month. Baseline specifications for the new centre were approved in March 2012, but officers were then asked to further consider the potential mix of facilities to provide a lasting Olympic legacy.

Oldham Council leader, Jim McMahon, describes it as: “A fantastic leisure facility that will be fit for future generations.”

Willmott Dixon won the tender to build the facility in October 2012, following its successful delivery of a series of academy school building projects across Oldham, as well as its track record in the leisure sector.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Ekd3N

Coleshill Leisure Centre development underway

Work started this week on a new leisure centre in North Warwickshire. The £4.2m Coleshill Leisure Centre is the result of a partnership between the borough council and The Coleshill School, which are funding it with the help of England Squash and Racketball.

The centre, which will replace an old swimming pool, will include a four court sports hall, two squash courts, a fitness suite and dance studio.

Mayor of North Warwickshire, Dominic Ferro says it is exciting to see work start: “The end result will be a much needed facility, which will provide a range of leisure, health and fitness opportunities both for residents and visitors to the town and for the students at the school.”

Wates Construction is building the site, and throughout the works has agreed to involve the school in engagement projects to support their education. The centre is slated to open in the autumn.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=6R5Y5

Chinese investor buys London’s Ram Brewery

Chinese state-owned property firm Greenland Holding Group has bought the Ram Brewery site in Wandsworth, West London – home of Britain’s oldest brewery – as part of a £600m development.

The 7.75 acre (3.14ha) site, previously held by real estate developer Minerva, will be converted into 661 new homes, plus a brewing museum and microbrewery under plans approved last year by Wandsworth Council.

The project includes a 36-storey landmark residential tower designed by EPR architects, providing 166 new flats and 9,500sq m (102,257sq ft) of commercial space, featuring shops, cafés, bars and restaurants.

Beer had been brewed continuously on the site from the 16th century up until its sale to Minerva in 2006. A small brewing operation was maintained during the company’s tenure to preserve the Ram site’s status as the country’s longest-running brewery.

Greenland has projects in 65 Chinese cities, invested in a number of developments in New York and Los Angeles last year and has also entered the Australian market. Its move into London follows rival Chinese developer Wanda’s decision to spend £700m on a luxury hotel and apartment building on the South Bank of the Thames.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=r5x8H

Cardiff Council reveals £9m pool plans

The under-threat Splott pool in Cardiff could be replaced with a completely new facility as part of Cardiff Council’s plans to create a £9m community hub at the site.

The proposed hub will include a 25m swimming pool, full-service health club and changing facilities for indoor and outdoor use – as well as a multi-purpose community hall, flexible meeting spaces, training rooms and community café.

Plans also include a full range of community and partner services, such as a library and neighbourhood learning services.

The ageing Splott site was earmarked for closure in late 2012, but opposition from local residents lead to a public consultation in May 2013.

As part of the proposal, the existing pool would still close to make way for a new facility. Any new development contract is also set to include community benefit clauses to bring employment and training opportunities, with the new hub due for completion early in 2016.

Lynda Thorne, Cardiff Council’s cabinet member for communities, housing and neighbourhood renewal, said: “The proposal to develop a new community hub in Splott shows what can be achieved by thinking imaginatively about the opportunities to invest in our local communities.

“We are facing tough financial times and so now, more than ever, it’s vital that we act to protect local services by thinking innovatively and boldly by making decisions that achieve the best value and best outcomes for our citizens.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=r5x8H

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The London Borough of Enfield

INVITATION TO LET BY FORMAL TENDER FOR THE
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF A NINE HOLE,
PAR 3, GOLF COURSE IN OAKWOOD PARK.

The London Borough of Enfield is seeking a suitably qualified and experienced Operator to tender for a concession to operate and maintain an existing Nine Hole, Par 3 Golf Course in Oakwood Park, Enfield, North London. Specific information will be available within the tender documentation.

The Park itself has been awarded Green Flag status and is used by a wide variety of ages with different interests. The Park is a popular destination with good pedestrian access and excellent transport links (both buses and trains). The London Underground Piccadilly Line runs from Kings Cross and Central London and stops at Oakwood Station which is just a short walk away.

The successful tenderer shall operate and maintain the Premises under a management agreement for a period of three (3) years (with the Authority’s option to extend the agreement in increments of one year up to a maximum period of two (2) years).

DEADLINE FOR TENDER SUBMISSIONS IS 12 Noon, 19th February 2014.

For further information or to register your interest, please visit the London Tenders Portal on www.londontenders.org.

Click on current opportunities, drop down menu choose – London Borough of Enfield, click on search, and select the relevant contract.

All tender submissions to be submitted via the London Tender Portal as detailed above.

For general queries, call Tina Heather on 020 8379 3313 or email tina.heather@enfield.gov.uk.

The Council is not obligated to accept any proposal and may cancel this procurement exercise at any stage.

www.enfield.gov.uk
The apprenticeship programme was initially trialled at centres run by Everyone Active on behalf of Bristol and Plymouth City Councils. Apprentices who take part in and complete the 12-month programme earn qualifications as Level 2 swimming teachers with further opportunities to work within Everyone Active. “The scheme was developed in order to nurture young talent and improve the skills deficit,” said Harvey Gosling, group training manager for Everyone Active. “There is clearly talent out there but there has been a barrier to entry in the past. High quality training is paramount for our own swim scheme so working with the IOS to offer this programme in a further 42 centres will ensure more highly capable and well trained individuals will gain access to the industry.”

Details: http://lei.sr/a=d4t4m
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Dianne Eade, Newquay Zoo
Head of Finance, Human Resources and Administration
GLL are seeking ambitious graduates who are committed to developing a career in operational leisure management to join the 2014 Trainee Managers Scheme in September.

Our challenging two year training scheme for graduates includes practical work experience in all aspects of leisure provision. You complete front line placements within a structured programme in year 1 and supervisory placements in year 2 as well as statutory, management and modular training throughout the two years. You will also experience working within a central support team.

The scheme is nationally recognised within the industry and aims to produce the General Managers of the future for GLL. Many of our current General and Assistant Managers came through the Trainee Manager Scheme.

You MUST BE:

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- Continuous training and career development

Our scheme is recognised as one of the best in the industry. If you are aiming for a career in operations management, and have the integrity and drive to make a real difference, this would be the scheme for you.

We would like to hear from you!

To apply for the scheme or for more information about a career with GLL and to see all our current vacancies and register for regular job updates please visit our website on www.gll.org/careers

GLL are London’s largest operator of leisure centres now operating in over 115 diverse leisure centres across London, the South of England and York. This includes the management of the Aquatics Centre and the Copper Box, following the Olympic and Paralympic Games. GLL is the UK’s largest Leisure Trust and London’s most successful Social Enterprise. As a worker owned and controlled organisation, we offer opportunities and benefits for exciting career development and personal growth.


GLL are an equal opportunities employer and applications are encouraged from all sections of the community.

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Lakes Aquarium is a small visitor attraction on the southern shore of Lake Windermere in the picturesque tourist area of the Lake District. Encompassing a fresh water aquarium, two retail outlets and two catering outlets, the attraction is an established fixture in the local tourism offer and attracts approximately 100,000 visitors per year.

The attraction is owned and operated by Parques Reunidos, one of Europe’s largest leisure and attraction operators who specialise in the tourism/leisure sector. Parques Reunidos currently operates 71 parks around the world and attracts over 25.8 million visitors annually.

We are currently seeking an Operations Manager, dedicated to giving our visitor’s a great experience. Reporting to the UK Director you will lead the team on site, ensuring that the park is operating safely, efficiently and profitably whilst providing the best possible customer service to our visitors.

Prospective candidates will ideally come from an environment where health and safety and customer service are paramount. The role will involve motivating and managing the team, visitor services, personnel, finance, reporting and facilities management. The ideal candidate will also have the ability to self-motivate and problem solve and enjoy working in a challenging environment. IT literacy, planning, presentation skills and the ability to work to tight deadlines are essential.

You will be an experienced senior leisure professional, an accomplished and experienced team leader, combining business awareness with the ability to organise yourself and your team and communicate at all levels.

Please send a detailed CV and covering letter explaining why you wish to be considered for this post to James Eels, Operationarium, Pier Approach, Bournemouth, BH2 5AA or by email to james.eels@reallive.co.uk

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICANTS: 24TH FEBRUARY 2014
Job Description on application.
Health and Fitness Manager
Company: Loughborough University
Location: Loughborough, UK
Marketing Coordinator
Company: Tonic Leisure
Location: Taunton, UK
Lifeguard
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Studley, Warwickshire, UK
Sales Manager
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Saltburn-by-the-Sea, UK
Centre Manager
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Portsmouth, UK
Phoenix Centre Manager
Company: Help For Heroes
Location: Tidworth, UK
Duty Manager
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Oxfordfordshire, UK
Health and Fitness Manager
Company: Sentinel Leisure Trust
Location: Lowestoft, UK
Personal Trainers
Company: The Gym Group
Location: Various locations, UK
Community Sports Activator
Company: Trust Thamesmead
Location: London SE28, UK
Duty Manager
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Solihull, UK
Full Time Lifeguard
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Stratford Upon Avon, UK
Personal Trainers
Company: Pure Gym Limited
Location: Various locations, UK
Part Time Lifeguard
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Shipston on Stour, UK
Sales Advisor
Company: GLL
Location: South Oxfordshire, UK
Freelance Personal Trainer
Company: Everyone Active
Location: North Wembley, London
Full Time Sports Attendant
Company: Aberdeen Sports Village
Location: Aberdeen, UK
General Manager
Company: The Gym Group
Location: Sheffield, UK
Customer Service Advisor
Company: GLL
Location: Walthamstow, UK
Battle Back Recreational and Adventurous Training
Company: Help For Heroes
Location: Edinburgh, UK
Development Officer
Company: Sefton Council
Location: Liverpool, UK
Membership Sales Advisor
Company: Anytime Fitness
Location: London, UK
Sports Centre Assistant
Company: Bryanston School
Location: Dorset, UK
Camp Leader
Company: Nottinghamshire YMCA
Location: Nottingham, UK
Assistant Customer Service Advisor
Company: GLL
Location: Horley Leisure Centre, UK
Site Manager
Company: Nottinghamshire YMCA
Location: Nottingham, UK
Health and Physical Activity Development Officer
Company: Nottingham City Council
Location: Nottingham, UK
Aquatics Development Manager
Company: Coventry Sports Foundation
Location: Coventry, UK
Duty Manager (Part Time)
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Oxfordshire, UK
Sales Advisor
Company: GLL
Location: Chesham Leisure Centre, UK
Fitness Instructor (Part Time)
Company: Central London, UK
Personal Trainers
Company: The Gym Group
Location: London Colindale, UK
Assistant Fitness Instructor
Company: GLL
Location: Romford, UK
Cleaners
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Fareham, UK
Recreation Assistants
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Fareham, UK
Assistant Customer Service Advisor
Company: GLL
Location: Ruislip, London, UK
Personal Trainer
Company: Matt Roberts Personal Training Company
Location: Belgavia, UK
Manager - Sports
Company: Norwood
Location: London, & South East, UK
Chief Executive Officer
Company: Celtic Leisure
Location: Neath Port Talbot , Wales
Centre Manager
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Southend Leisure, UK
Front of House Receptionist
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Ealing, Brent & Harrow, UK
Membership Sales Advisor
Company: énergie group
Location: Harrow, UK
Lifeguard/Swimming Teacher
Company: Stonyhurst College
Location: Stonyhurst, Clitheroe, UK
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Community Sport Officer
Company: GLL
Location: Walthamstow, UK
Fitness Instructor
Company: 3d Leisure
Location: London, UK
Activity Manager
Company: Embassy Summer
Location: various, UK
Fitness Apprentice
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Company: The Gym Group
Location: Sheffield City, UK
Customer Service Advisor
Company: GLL
Location: London Borough of Barnet
Assistant Manager
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Location: Northolt, UK
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Location: Beckenham, UK
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Company: Fitness Systems
Location: Nationwide, UK
Group Exercise Instructor
Company: GLL
Location: London Borough of Barnet
Membership Sales Advisor
Company: Branson Golf & Country
Location: Burton upon Trent, UK
Freelance Personal Trainer
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Watford, UK
Group Exercise Instructor
Company: GLL
Location: London Borough of Barnet
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Company: Motcombe Park Sports
Location: North Dorset, UK
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Company: Parkwood Leisure
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Location: Eastbourne, UK
Personal Trainer
Company: énergie group
Location: Various locations, UK
Sales and Retention Manager
Company: Kirklees Active Leisure
Location: Huddersfield, UK
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Company: énergie group
Location: Oxfordshire / Bucks / Herts
General Manager
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Shipston On Stour , UK
Tutors and Assessors
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Location: Middle East, UAE
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Location: Malta

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Company: Parkwood Leisure  
Location: Worcester, UK

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Company: énergie group  
Location: Bethnal Green, London, UK

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Company: GLL  
Location: Didcot, UK

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Company: Hilton Worldwide  
Location: London Wembley, UK

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Company: énergie group  
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Location: Various locations, UK

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Location: Bethnal Green, UK

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Location: Farnborough, UK

Gym Manager  
Company: énergie group  
Location: Farnborough, UK

Fitness Instructor  
Company: 3D Leisure Ltd-HO  
Location: Marlow, UK

Promotional Staff  
Company: énergie group  
Location: Farnborough, UK

Fitness Instructor  
Company: 3D Leisure  
Location: Telford, Shropshire, UK

Membership Co-ordinator  
Company: Everyone Active  
Location: Shipston on Stour, UK

Studio For Hire  
Company: énergie group  
Location: Farnborough, UK

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Company: Ten Pilates  
Location: Central London, UK

Front of House positions  
Company: Ten Pilates  
Location: London, UK

Deputy Buildings Manager  
Company: Circus Space  
Location: London, UK

Product Manager  
Company: Les Mills  
Location: London, UK

PR and Social Media Manager  
Company: Les Mills  
Location: London, UK

Customer Experience Manager  
Company: Les Mills  
Location: South West, UK

Merchandising Manager  
Company: Les Mills  
Location: London, UK

Experiential Manager  
Company: Les Mills  
Location: London, UK

Beauty Therapist  
Company: Ponds Parcs  
Location: Woburn Forest, Millbrook

Freelance Personal Trainer  
Company: Everyone Active  
Location: Acton, London, UK

Territory Manager  
Company: Les Mills  
Location: Russia

Assistant Manager  
Company: Powerleague  
Location: Various locations, UK

Fitness Instructor/Personal trainer  
Company: 3d Leisure  
Location: East Croydon, UK

Customer Service Advisor  
Company: GLL  
Location: Marshall Street Leisure Centre

Assistant Manager  
Company: 3d Leisure  
Location: Glasgow, UK

Apprentice - Recreation Assistant  
Company: GLL  
Location: Chiltnn, UK

Centre Manager  
Company: NRG GYM LTD  
Location: Watford, UK

Graduate Trainee Manager Scheme  
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Location: Bermuda

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Location: St Albans, UK

Personal Trainer/Owner  
Company: Your Gym  
Location: Nationwide, UK

Personal Training diploma  
Company: Leisure Industry Academy  
Location: Various, UK

Tutor  
Company: Leisure Industry Academy  
Location: Nationwide, UK

General Managers  
Company: truGym  
Location: Various locations, UK

UK wide Trainee Personal Trainers Required  
Company: The Training Room  
Location: Nationwide, UK

Operations Manager  
Company: Xercise 4 Less  
Location: Nationwide, UK

Membership Consultant  
Company: Xercise 4 Less  
Location: Nationwide, UK

Sales and Marketing Manager  
Company: Xercise 4 Less  
Location: Nationwide, UK

Personal Trainer  
Company: Xercise 4 Less  
Location: Nationwide, UK

Personal Trainer  
Company: Logic Trainers  
Location: Nationwide, UK

Marketing Executive  
Company: Polin Waterparks  
Location: Turkey

Business Development Manager  
Company: VOYA Products Ltd  
Location: UK wide, UK

Spa Receptionist  
Company: Dorchester Collection  
Location: London, UK

Senior Spa Receptionist  
Company: Dorchester Collection  
Location: London, UK

Senior Spa Therapist  
Company: Dorchester Collection  
Location: London, UK

General Manager  
Company: Kamalaya Wellness Sanctuary & Holistic Spa  
Location: Koh Samui

Beauty Therapists (level 3)  
Company: Lifehouse Spa & Hotel  
Location: Thorpe Le Soken, Essex, UK

Designer, Theming  
Company: Polin Waterparks  
Location: Turkey

Head of Commercial  
Company: The Royal British Legion  
Location: Staffordshire, UK

Senior Project Engineer  
Company: Polin Waterparks  
Location: Turkey

Senior Mechanical / Civil Engineer  
Company: Polin Waterparks  
Location: Turkey

Engineer, Product Development  
Company: Polin Waterparks  
Location: Turkey

Duty Managers, New Coronation Street Attraction  
Company: Continuum  
Location: Manchester

Assistant Director, Operations  
Company: National Trust  
Location: Yorkshire and the North, UK

Regional Sales Manager  
Company: Polin Waterparks  
Location: Turkey

Events Managers - Permanent  
Company: English Heritage  
Location: Dover, Bristol & York, UK

Visitor Experience Manager  
Company: RNU  
Location: South East and Anglia, UK

Events Manager  
Company: English Heritage  
Location: West Park, Bedfordshire, UK

Attractions Manager  
Company: Yesterday’s World  
Location: Great Yarmouth, UK

Group Commercial Experiences Manager  
Company: Science Museum  
Location: London, UK

Head of Visitor and Retail Services  
Company: House of Commons  
Location: London, UK

Head of Commercial  
Company: Zoological Society  
Location: London, UK

Whipsnade Zoo Commercial Manager  
Company: Zoological Society  
Location: Dunstable, UK

Sales and Events Manager  
Company: Crealy Park  
Location: Exeter, UK

Operations Manager  
Company: Lakes Aquarium  
Location: Windermere, UK

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Complainers embrace social media

More than a third of US consumers take to the internet to exact revenge following a poor service experience, according to a recent study.

The research by call centre solutions provider NewVoiceMedia finds that 34 per cent of the 2,030 adults surveyed air grievances across social media, internet forums and review channels after receiving poor service.

The figure rises to nearly 60 per cent among 25- to 34-year-olds, the group increasingly referred to as ‘digital natives’ due to the ubiquity of the internet during their lifetime.

Although the bulk of older respondents still prefer more traditional channels for complaining, such as telephone and email, the generational shift towards social network-based complaints poses a significant set of challenges for companies to overcome.

“Not long ago, customers would only be able to tell friends and family if they were dissatisfied with service they’d received,” said NewVoiceMedia CEO Jonathan Gale, who commissioned the research. “While this is damaging to a brand, it’s not nearly as powerful as when customers take their complaints online; particularly as consumers are increasingly turning to the internet to read about others’ experiences before choosing a product or supplier.”

Aside from the evolving channels for complaints, the survey also records that good service has an equally profound effect on consumer loyalty.

Seventy per cent said it had a considerable influence on their willingness to stay with a service, while 69 per cent said good customer service would lead them to recommend a company to others.

Inactivity report highlights class divide

Continued from front cover...

The report defines inactivity as carrying out fewer than 30 minutes of at least moderate intensity physical activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more in the previous 28 days.

It highlights the impact of socio-economic status, finding that in the most deprived areas, one in three people fail to raise their heartbeat for just 30 minutes a month, compared to one in four in the most affluent areas.

The most deprived local authorities account for 13 of the 15 least active areas in England. These areas record an extra 100 premature deaths per 100,000 people per year compared to the 15 most active areas – which are predominantly affluent.

“Our report shows people in deprived areas are more likely to suffer a premature death because of lack of physical activity,” says ukactive chairman Fred Turok.

Affluent areas have over double the number of leisure facilities compared with the most deprived, while the least active areas have a third fewer leisure facilities per person.

However, the report says providing more facilities isn’t always the answer – in some cases fewer, high quality, well-designed leisure facilities have effective driven up activity levels.

Details: http://lei.sr/a=9jX5U

Manchester has the highest rate of inactive adults at 40 per cent