A review undertaken by Lord Davies of Abersoch has urged FTSE 100 firms to aim for at least 25 per cent female board representation by 2015.

The report also recommended that FTSE 350 companies set their own “challenging targets” in order to ensure more talented businesswomen can achieve top boardroom roles.

Former government minister Lord Davies said: “Radical change is needed in the mindset of the business community if we are to implement the scale of change that is needed.”

Visitor numbers at leading UK attractions remained at 2009 levels during 2010, according new figures from the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA).

ALVA's annual report shows that there was a marginal 0.38 per cent increase in its members' visitor figures during 2010. However, most attractions are optimistic that they will experience a bumper year with nearly 90 per cent of respondents expecting their visitor numbers to increase or remain the same during 2011.

A large indoor destination snow resort could be created on the site of the 2012 media complex in the heart of London’s Olympic Park.

Acer Snowmec said that it had submitted an expression of interest to the Olympic Park Legacy Company for the Snow in the City project.

A consortium led by ASL Developments has chosen Gensler to draw up plans for the scheme, which is said to deliver five Olympic legacy promises. Proposals include a 28,500sq m (306,771sq ft) snow sports complex, which will cater for alpine skiing; cross country skiing; skier cross; boarder cross; and freerider skiing.

A snowboard park with an Olympic-sized super-pipe and bobsleigh, skeleton and luge runs will also be provided, as well as ice skating and curling facilities. Snow in the City will also feature a sports academy; a sporting injuries clinic; an office and media centre; a three-star hotel; and other leisure facilities.

Acer Snowmec signalled its interest in transforming the London site

Report calls for more female board members

PETE HAYMAN

A review undertaken by Lord Davies of Abersoch has urged FTSE 100 firms to aim for at least 25 per cent female board representation by 2015.

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Former government minister Lord Davies said: “Radical change is needed in the mindset of the business community if we are to implement the scale of change that is needed.”

£9m sports village for York university

PETE HAYMAN

The City of York Council has approved plans for a new £9m sports complex as part of a wider expansion of the University of York’s Heslington East campus.

York Sports Village will feature a competition-standard eight-lane, 25m swimming pool and a learner pool; a 100-station gym; and a full-size 3G astroturf pitch. Three further five-a-side football pitches are also planned as part of the new Space Architects-designed venue.

A limited liability partnership company called York Sports Village will operate the complex, with any surpluses to be ring-fenced for reinvestment into the facilities.

It is hoped that York Sports Village will open in 2012.

The masterplan for the development also features a second phase to include a 150-station computerised fitness suite; floor space for classes such as yoga; three treatment rooms; and a sauna and steamroom.
**SPORT**

**MCC appoints Lord’s developer**

**MARTIN NASH**

Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) is to begin exclusive talks with property company Almacantar over a planned 300,000 sq ft (27,870sq m) residential scheme at the Nursery End of Lord’s cricket ground in St John’s Wood, London.

Keith Bradshaw, secretary and chief executive of MCC said: “We have been impressed with the quality of [Almacantar’s] submission, which demonstrates a high degree of inventive thinking; something entirely appropriate for such an iconic venue as Lord’s.

“We will now work with them through the exclusivity period to shape the emerging proposals so that we can refine the financial model before presenting back to committees.”

The MCC’s Herzog and de Meuron-designed ‘Vision for Lord’s’ masterplan would see Almacantar acquiring the leasehold of a 3.5 acre (1.42ha) residential plot from the MCC for around £100m and the proceeds being used to update the cricket ground.

Seating capacity would increase by 7,500 to 36,900, while an underground cricket academy and a cricketing museum are also planned.

Almacantar’s vision features a residential scheme at the Nursery End.

**Ruling protects free-to-air World Cup matches**

**PETE HAYMAN**

FIFA World Cup and UEFA European Championship matches will remain on free-to-air television in the UK.

It follows a ruling by the General Court of the European Union, which said member states could prevent pay broadcasters securing the rights to screen the events “in certain circumstances” in the interest of the public.

World Cup and European Championship matches are currently part of the UK’s list of “protected” events for free-to-air broadcast.

**Work completed on London 2012 velodrome**

**PETE HAYMAN**

A new 6,000-seat velodrome, which is due to host indoor cycling and BMX competitions during the 2012 Games, has become the Olympic Park venue to be completed.

Team GB cyclists took to the Velopark’s track to help mark the occasion, with the venue now due to be handed over to the Olympic and Paralympic organisations for the installation of Games overlay.

Construction work started on the new velodrome in March 2009, with renowned designer Ron Webb overseeing the design and installation of the track. ISG built the new VeloPark, while the design team incorporated Hopkins Architects, Expedition Engineering and BDS.

Olympic Delivery Authority chair John Armitt said: “The architect, engineers and contractor have worked together to produce a stunning and sustainable building.”

Team GB cyclists took to the track to mark the completion of the facility.

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

Ashton – a contributor to policy and thinking at BISL over the past few years – will succeed David Teasdale.

Teasdale said: “Keith brings to this post a breadth of vital experience and creative energy. He is the right person to lead our Sport Group efforts to Grow the Market in challenging economic times.”

Birmingham City Football Club (BCFC) has unveiled new visions of how its St Andrew’s stadium could look in future if it is redeveloped.

GMI Construction in conjunction with WCEC Architects; Populous and Buckingham Group; and Jak Design have all devised ideas for a potential revamp.

According to the Premier League club, the redevelopment of St Andrew’s could be the most “financially prudent option” with average attendances of less than 25,000.

Alliance Leisure has agreed a four-year partnership with Innovative Leisure, the supplier of high ropes courses.

The deal will help Alliance Leisure to diversify the range of facilities that it offers to help drive up participation and will see Alliance Leisure work with high ropes sites to enhance staff and facility performance.

It also plans to use its marketing knowledge and the resources of Closer To The Edge to roll out staff development, training and promotional campaigns.

De Montfort University (DMU) in Leicester will invest in a new £8m leisure centre designed by S&P Architects.

Plans to build the centre were given the final go-ahead by the university’s finance and HR committee and approved by the board of governors.

Leicester City Council’s planning authority has already given the green light for the project following its committee meeting on 18 January.

The two-storey building, which will be open to the public, boasts a 25m, six-lane swimming pool, eight courts for sports such as basketball, badminton, netball and five-a-side football, a health club, multi-purpose studios, a climbing wall and a café.

S&P Architects have designed the DMU’s proposed new leisure facility.

Work on the centre will begin in April and is due to completed in July 2012. It will be built on Western Boulevard, next to the current John Sandford Sports Centre.

Rotherham United Football Club has unveiled its final plans for a new 12,000-seat stadium on the former Guest and Chrimes foundry site.

Designed by S&P Architects, the stadium scheme will be project managed by Gleeds and is to be delivered by GMI Construction. Work is due to start on site in May/June.

Under the plans, the proposed west stand will accommodate exhibition and banqueting facilities for a combined total of 600 guests, as well as offices, a newsroom and security.

S&P Architects have designed the DMU’s proposed new leisure facility.

The Surrey Canal scheme will breathe new life into a part of Lewisham buildings and will offer around 500,000sq ft (46,452sq m) of multi-purpose space for a wide range of activities.

Plans have been drawn up by Studio Egret West, while Envac’s underground vacuum waste system has been awarded a £3m waste handling contract for the scheme.

Renewal, the regeneration agency, is behind the Surrey Canal: London’s Sporting Village scheme, which will feature a new community based around a regional centre of sporting excellence.

Millwall Football Club’s home stadium, the New Den, is included in the 30-acre (13.5-hectare) Surrey Canal site and is in line to benefit from an improved setting under the plans.

Renewal is proposing to introduce 2,500 new homes; a vibrant new public area and open spaces; and community facilities, in addition to the sports village. Meanwhile, the sports facilities will be housed in four separate

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Southampton leisure centres to be ‘protected’

PETE HAYMAN

Southampton City Council (SCC) has committed to protect its libraries and leisure centres, despite having to find savings of £25m in 2011-12.

The council said that new partnerships and technology meant that it had been able to ensure it would not have to cut back on its leisure and library services.

Last October, SCC agreed a 15-year lease with operator Active Nation to take over the running of city leisure venues in a move that will save £400,000 a year.

Life Fitness equipment is now Facebook-compatible

Life Fitness takes virtual trainer into social media

TOM WALKER

Life Fitness has announced that its Virtual Trainer has been made Facebook compatible, with a smartphone app also planned.

When a user uploads a workout to the Life Fitness Virtual Trainer, a “prompt” will appear to also post the update to that user’s Facebook wall, with a link for friends to view the details of the workout.

By sharing their results, exercisers can receive motivational messages and encouragement from friends to help them achieve their health and fitness goals.

Local backing for £31m Redcar leisure scheme

PETE HAYMAN

Plans for a new £31m leisure and community facility in Redcar have received the support of local residents, following a public exhibition and consultation.

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council is proposing a purpose-built venue as part of the scheme, which will feature a six-lane, 25m swimming pool and leisure pool.

Plus3 Architects and S&P Architects have worked on the design of the venue, outline plans for which have now been submitted. A decision is expected in May.

April reopening for Gateshead complex

TOM WALKER

Gateshead Council has announced that Dunston Leisure Centre is to reopen on 11 April, following a multi-million pound refurbishment.

S&P Architects are behind the design of the 12-month revamp, which has included the provision of a new gym; two studios and enhanced swimming facilities.

Dunston Leisure Centre’s steamroom, sauna, and squash court access have also undergone a series of improvements, along with changing rooms and the building’s entrance.

The work has formed part of the council’s wider £36m investment in leisure facilities, which has also included refurbishment and new-build schemes across the local area.

Gateshead Council cabinet member for culture Linda Green said: “This investment is providing really first class facilities for local people as well as a great base for competitive swimming in the borough as a whole.”

KKP to conduct Solihull referral scheme review

PETE HAYMAN

Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) has been selected to undertake a review of the DocSport exercise referral scheme in Solihull.

The leisure consultancy will analyse data from the programme in order to assess the number of people to have taken part since it was launched seven years ago.

It is thought that the DocSport review will demonstrate the initial and ongoing impact of the programme on the health of participants, while outlining strengths and weaknesses.
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Greenwich Leisure to run RBBC leisure facilities

PETE HAYMAN

Greenwich Leisure (GLL) is to take over the operation of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council’s (RBBC) leisure facilities.

Nuffield Health has agreed in principle to transfer the community fitness business to GLL in order to focus on its clinical services and public health provision.

GLL will take on the management contract for Banstead Leisure Centre, Horley Anderson Leisure Centre and Donyngs Recreation Centre from 31 March, along with 10 other RBBC-owned locations.

Willmott Dixon to build new St Albans complex

PETE HAYMAN

St Albans City and District Council has appointed Willmott Dixon to build the new Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre.

Michael McNamara & Co had been named as the council’s preferred contractor for the S&P Architects-designed development last year, but went into receivership before contracts were signed.

However, the council has now signed a contract with Willmott Dixon in order to move forward with the £24.7m demolition and rebuilding of Westminster Lodge.

Council targets for new Basildon venue operator

PETE HAYMAN

Basildon Council has announced that the operators of a multi-million pound sports complex due to open in April will have to meet a number of performance targets.

Community Solutions for Leisure (CSL) will be tasked with attaining Quest accreditation by May 2012 and will also have to improve participation rates.

The council has confirmed that financial penalties will be imposed if CSL fails to meet the conditions, which also include customer service requirements.

Pure Gym to open London clubs

PETE HAYMAN

Budget health club operator Pure Gym has announced that it is to open five new sites in the UK - including its first two locations in London.

The group’s expansion into the capital will be marked with the unveiling of new clubs at Kennington and Wandsworth, with both south London sites due to open at Easter.

In addition to its London plans, new clubs are to open in Warrington, Cheshire; Aberdeen; and at Edinburgh Ocean Terminal, which will see Pure Gym increase its portfolio to 15.

The chain’s Aberdeen site is due to open at the end of February; the Warrington club is set to launch in early March, followed by the Edinburgh Ocean Terminal site.

Pure Gym chief executive Peter Roberts said: “One of our biggest challenges is to identify and procure the most suitable sites by continuing to lease buildings from both private and major institutional landlords.

“With a strong product offer and funding in place to grow the brand, we are looking forward to delivering ambitious expansion plans for the UK in 2011.”

TAG appoints Jane Taylor as operations manager

TOM WALKER

TAG, which focuses on training disadvantaged 18-24-year-olds for employment, has appointed Jane Taylor as its operations manager.

Prior to joining TAG, Taylor played a key role within LA Fitness’s Business Services Team. She will be responsible for managing the delivery of the TAG programme.

Commenting on her appointment, Fred Turok, founder and president of TAG said: “Jane’s appointment is crucial to the future success of TAG.”

Cannock leisure revamp to start in April

PETE HAYMAN

Work on a multi-million pound refurbishment scheme at Chase Leisure Centre in Cannock, Staffordshire, is to get underway in April.

Cannock Chase District Council has appointed Derby-based GF Tomlinson as its main contractor for the scheme, following the completion of a tender process.

Due for completion in 2012, the scheme will include a 25m competition-standard swimming pool with boom and moveable floor; a 150-station gym; and a dance studio.

A 200-seat spectator gallery overlooking the pool and a changing village are also proposed as part of the modernisation, with both swimming pools to be closed for 14 weeks.

Saunders Architects LLP carried out the initial designs for the scheme. Horsley Huber Architects will now work alongside GF Tomlinson going forward.
Retail Business Technology Expo is a brand new event focusing on business solutions and technology for the retail and hospitality industries. Retail Business Technology Expo will combine an exhibition offering a comprehensive range of solutions with a free informative and interactive education programme incorporating seminars, workshops, and inspirational features, plus a host of networking opportunities and hospitality – all under one roof.

The event is free to attend and is being planned specifically for all members of the team responsible for influencing purchasing decisions for technology. These include IT directors and staff in retail, hospitality, travel and leisure within the UK and Europe, as well as management dealing with operations, business development, finance, marketing, security and other areas in which technology is crucial.

“Meeting the widest range of suppliers face to face, listening to case studies from other retail organisations and networking with industry peers at a major event is going to be an invaluable addition to the retail calendar,” says Stuart Nelmes, head of IT & Technical Services for Nandos and a member of the Retail Business Technology Expo Steering Committee.

Networking
As well as the wide range of leading vendors exhibiting a variety of solutions and products, visitors can look forward to numerous networking opportunities, and more than 80 educational, inspiring, independent seminars (all free to attend).

The seminars include an IT Directors A-Team Panel Q&A, with Chily Fachler, IT director, Blacks; Ian Woosey, group IT and e-commerce director, Carpetright; Robert Teagle, EMEA IT director, Starbucks Coffee EMEA; Joshna Patel, affiliate manager, Red Letter Days; and Kevin Edwards, strategy director, Affiliate Window. The panel will discuss new technologies that have entered the market this year and debate how to best work with them. They will also take a look at the current state of the voucher code marketplace and offer insights from Red Letter Days as they discuss the technology they’ve developed to work with voucher code sites in a controlled way. Helena Andreas, head of retail for the Vodafone Group, will also explain how Vodafone uses the latest technology to bring its brand message alive.

“Retail Business Technology Expo is a great opportunity for the whole retail industry to witness all aspects of business and technology under one roof,” says Robert Teagle, EMEA IT Director, Starbucks Coffee EMEA B.V. “The Expo themes are aligned with many of the challenges and issues retailers face today, and so the show provides an excellent forum to learn, discuss, challenge and unravel these topics with industry leaders, peers and experts.”
More than £8m of funding has been made available for museums and galleries to bid for by the government, as part of its new strategy to match philanthropic donations. The DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund, financed equally by the government and the Wolfson Foundation, has been set up to improve displays, increase access and enhance public spaces.

Culture minister Ed Vaizey said: "It is often the major, one-off philanthropic donations that make the headlines, but the myriad of grants and improvements that the fund supports are just as vital to museums and galleries." The Fund was originally set up in 1990 and ran for five years, distributing £19m to more than 200 projects across England. Awards from the fund have often acted as a catalyst for further funding, which has been particularly useful for smaller museums.

Its current incarnation was launched in 2001 and has, to date, awarded £28m to 217 projects over an eight-year period. The last allocation was announced in August 2009.

More than 3.5 million people visited exhibitions and events at Ireland’s cultural attractions in 2010 – an increase of 7 per cent in the previous year. Figures were boosted by the reopening of Dublin’s Natural History Museum in April, while the National Gallery of Ireland hosted two major exhibitions. Among the attractions to report “significant” increases was the National Library of Ireland, where visitor numbers were up by 34 per cent on 2009.

Irish attractions post visitor number growth

Pete Hayman

More than 3.5 million people visited exhibitions and events at Ireland’s cultural attractions in 2010 – an increase of 7 per cent in the previous year.

Figures were boosted by the reopening of Dublin’s Natural History Museum in April, while the National Gallery of Ireland hosted two major exhibitions. Among the attractions to report “significant” increases was the National Library of Ireland, where visitor numbers were up by 34 per cent on 2009.

Foyles Flying Boat Museum and the Science Gallery, Dublin, saw numbers grow by 39 per cent and 29 per cent respectively.

Ireland’s minister for tourism, culture and sport, Mary Hanafin, said: “The diversity of the exhibitions and events that the cultural institutions offer is outstanding and is part of what defines us as a nation. It is clear that they will continue to form a major part of the tourism attraction on offer.”

New underwater ride for Legoland Windsor

Pete Hayman

LEGOLAND Windsor has announced that it is to unveil its new £8m Atlantis Submarine Voyage attraction this summer.

Travelling aboard custom-built, 14-seater LEGO-themed submarines, families will voyage into a 1,000,000-litre (220,000gal) tank featuring more than 50 species of rare sharks, rays and tropical fish.

Nearly 100 bespoke LEGO bricks and features are being hand built to bring Atlantis to life, equating to around 2,683 hours of work.

Bristol and Barcelona aquariums join forces

Tom Walker

Bristol Aquarium has announced that it is to be twinned with one of Europe’s largest aquariums as part of a new initiative.

The Harbourside wildlife attraction has announced plans to set up a twinning deal with Spain’s Barcelona Aquarium.

As part of the new agreement, the Bristol and Barcelona attractions will work closely together on a variety of captive breeding programmes and aquarium staff from both sites will make regular visits to share information and new ideas.

New vision of Mary Rose Museum unveiled

Pete Hayman

An image of how the new Mary Rose Museum will look when it opens in autumn 2012 has been unveiled by the Mary Rose Trust and architects Pringle Brandon.

Located at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, the new attraction will feature a walkway that will enable visitors to view the hull of Henry VIII’s former flagship.

Work on the preservation of the ship’s structure will enter its final stage later this year, when the sprays used to conserve the Mary Rose’s timbers are turned off.

Edinburgh Castle tops Scottish attractions list

Pete Hayman

New research has confirmed that Edinburgh Castle – operated by Historic Scotland – was the most visited tourist attraction in Scotland last year, according to new statistics published by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions.

The historic castle saw visitor numbers grow by 1 per cent to more than 1.2 million and overtook Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum as Scotland’s number one visitor site. Visitor numbers to the Glasgow attraction fell 21.75 per cent to 1.07 million.
£8m grant for Manchester gallery

PETE HAYMAN

Multi-million pound proposals to extend the University of Manchester’s Whitworth Art Gallery have secured an £8m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The £12m MUMA-designed development will see the attraction’s public space doubled in size, which is poised to open up 396sq m (4,263sq ft) of new gallery space.

A North Wing will house a landscape gallery, exhibiting Whitworth Art Gallery’s most important artworks, as well as a study centre for visitors to learn more about the works. Meanwhile, a promenade gallery will connect with the South Wing, which will incorporate a new café and a learning studio opening into a new art garden.

On the first floor, exhibition spaces will be revamped and the Edwardian staircases are to be opened up. Three large barrel ceiling exhibition galleries will also provide more space.

Sara Hilton, the head of the HLF North West, said: “Whitworth Art Gallery will be revitalised, creating new spaces that will allow more of these magnificent collections to be shared with the public.”

Northern Ireland arts participation increases

PETE HAYMAN

A study from Northern Ireland’s Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has reported an increase in arts participation.

The statistics were revealed in the Experience of the Arts in Northern Ireland: Findings from the Continuous Household Survey 2009-10 – DCAL Research Findings research.

More than three quarters of respondents (76 per cent) said that they took part in arts activities and events during 2009-10, compared with 71 per cent in 2008-09.

£6m renovation for Swansea art gallery

PETE HAYMAN

Swansea Council has revealed plans for a £6m revamp of the city’s Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, which is expected to take two years to complete.

A new 50-seat lecture and screening room is proposed as part of the development, which will see the gallery close later this year to allow work to be carried out.

Structural work is due to commence in early 2012, with other improvements to include more space for the display of collections, a new social space and an extended shop. Enhanced access to all contemporary and collection galleries and a new IT resource space is also being planned, along with a purpose-built library and research room.

Funding for the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery scheme has been provided by the Arts Council of Wales; the Welsh Assembly Government; and Swansea Council.

Councils move to secure Burnham theatre’s future

PETE HAYMAN

Burnham and Highbridge Town Council (BHTC) is to take over the running of the Princess Theatre, Burnham-on-Sea.

Subject to legal work and the completion of a condition survey, the authority is to enter into a 125-year lease agreement with Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) to run the venue in April.

A transitional subsidy of £90,000 will be provided by SDC to BHTC to ensure work can be carried out to improve the theatre and increase its usage.

2014 refurbishment for Glasgow cultural venues

PETE HAYMAN

Two cultural venues in Glasgow are to be redeveloped in time for the 2014 Commonwealth Games after more than £1m worth of funding was announced by the Scottish Government.

Scottish Opera has been awarded £605,000 to help push forward with plans for a revamp of the city’s Theatre Royal.

Meanwhile, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra has secured £413,000 towards the redevelopment of its new home at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.

Work starts on £3.4m Rotherham youth centre

PETE HAYMAN

Work is now underway on the construction of a £3.4m flagship youth centre in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, as part of the national Myplace programme.

Chantry YMCA is leading the project with the support of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and other local organisations. Construction work is due for completion by October.

Facilities at the new youth hub will comprise a graffiti art room; an IT suite; a cinema; and a performance hall.
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**HOTELS**

**Gulliver’s to build new £4m hotel**

**PETE HAYMAN**

Gulliver’s Theme Parks is to commence construction work on a new £4m hotel at its Warrington location – part of a five-year expansion plan.

It is anticipated that the DRJ-designed property will create 30 construction jobs and a further 55 roles when it opens in late 2011.

Gulliver’s has confirmed that a footpath has been closed for the duration of the construction phase, although it plans to reopen a section upon completion.

Julie Dalton, the attraction chain’s managing director, said: “Our Milton Keynes site successfully moved into the short-stay market with the opening of our campsite last year, so we’re excited to be able to offer tourists from the North West and beyond the option to enjoy a great value short break with us too.

“As more and more families opt for UK-based holidays and short breaks Gulliver’s is well-placed to offer a great value and fun-packed solution.”

Gulliver’s operates three attractions at its Warrington location, along with sites in Matlock Bath and Milton Keynes.

**Dylan Thomas hotel plans receive £230,000**

**PETE HAYMAN**

A hotel synonymous with poet Dylan Thomas – Browns Hotel in Laugharne, Carmarthenshire – is to be given a new lease of life.

The £330,000 Welsh Assembly Government grant will help owner Nigel Short transform the Grade II-listed property into a 15-room boutique hotel, with a further £62,500 contribution from Cadw.

Work is due to start on the scheme next month, with the new-look hotel scheduled to open its doors in Easter 2012.

**Hotel groups report strong trading in 2010**

**PETE HAYMAN**

InterContinental Hotels Group chief executive Andrew Cosslett has welcomed an ‘excellent year’ for the company, after it saw global RevPAR increase by 6 per cent during 2010.

In its preliminary results for the full year ending 31 December, the Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn owner also saw a 22 per cent growth in operating profit compared with the previous year.

Cosslett said: “After a slow start to the year, the industry staged the sharpest recovery in its history, exceeding all expectations.”

Meanwhile, Millennium and Copthorne reported a 47 per cent increase in pre-tax profits for the year ending 31 December.

The group said changes at operating level had helped boost trading for the year, with total revenue up by 10 per cent and RevPAR growing by 14 per cent compared with 2009.

‘As more and more families opt for UK-based holidays and short breaks Gulliver’s is well-placed to offer a great value and fun-packed solution.’

Gulliver’s operates three attractions at its Warrington location, along with sites in Matlock Bath and Milton Keynes.
New spa hotel development proposed for Carmarthen

Pete Hayman

An independently-owned spa hotel could be built in Carmarthen after the Welsh Assembly Government agreed to sell a 7.5-acre (3-hectare) site to Gryphon Leisure.

The luxury 100-bedroom property would be developed in two phases – subject to planning permission; the first of which comprising 60 rooms opening by 2013.

A further 40 rooms would be added under the second stage, which would be completed a year later. A bespoke health spa and function suite are also mooted.

Qhotels invests in Norton Park spa improvements

Tom Walker

UK-based hotel operator Qhotels is investing £100,000 in carrying out improvements to the spa at its Norton Park Hotel in Sutton Scotney in Hampshire.

When it reopens in March, the spa will include ten treatment rooms, a relaxation area, swimming pool, sauna, steamroom, ice fountain and a nail bar as well as an experience shower.

Each treatment rooms will have its own shower and guests can also use the hotel’s fully-equipped health and fitness suite.

Steiner signs Sainsbury’s deal for Mandara

Tom Walker

Steiner Leisure, which owns the Elemis, Mandara and Bliss brands of spa products, has agreed a distribution deal for its new Mandara Spa range with UK supermarket chain Sainsbury’s.

The new Mandara Spa products will be available from 14 March and will follow the opening of the UK’s first Mandara-branded spa at London’s Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel in February.

The Herb House spa launches

Pete Hayman

Lime Wood in Lyndhurst, Hampshire, has unveiled The Herb House – a new 22,000sq ft (2,044sq m) spa located across three floors.

Offering a wide number of holistic and ayurvedic-inspired therapies, the new spa incorporates eight single treatment rooms and a private double treatment room with steamroom and garden.

The Bath House double treatment room with indoor pool and steamroom; a Caldarium; a hydropool; The Mud House; and The Massive Forest Sauna are among the facilities at the Herb House.

Elsewhere, a rooftop herbary with sun deck and meditation area; the Outdoor Steaming Hot Pool; and a Technogym-supplied fitness area are also on offer, in addition to an indoor swimming pool opening onto a sun terrace.

Four different brands are used in the treatments at The Herb House, such as Voya, Nude, Tri Dosha and farming company Daylesford Organic’s Bamford range.

The spa, which opened in December, was designed by David Collins Studio and complements the 29-bedroom Lime Wood hotel.

Fish pedicure safety to be investigated

Tom Walker

The use of toothless Garra rufa fish to perform pedicures at spas is to be probed by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) and environmental health officers.

The treatment has become popular in the UK and a number of operators, such as London-based Aqua Sheko and Appyfeet, base their entire business model on the Garra rufa treatments.

A spokesperson for the HPA told Leisure Opportunities: “The agency is currently investigating if there are any potential risks of infection associated with the commercial use of fish spa pedicures.

“Alongside colleagues in environmental health, Health Protection Scotland and the Steiner Leisure, which owns the Elemis, Mandara and Bliss brands of spa products, has agreed a distribution deal for its new Mandara Spa range with UK supermarket chain Sainsbury’s.

The new Mandara Spa products will be available from 14 March and will follow the opening of the UK’s first Mandara-branded spa at London’s Park Plaza Westminster Bridge hotel in February.

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Urban Retreat launches At Home franchise

Tom Walker

Spa operator Urban Retreat, which has sites at Harrods and Harvey Nichols, has launched a new franchise model offering beauty therapists the chance to become franchisees and deliver Urban Retreat treatments at clients’ homes.

Speaking to Leisure Opportunities, the founder of Urban Retreat, George Hammer, said: “What we’re doing is harnessing all the good parts about being a mobile therapist and creating an up-market offering rather than a discount, cheap offering.”
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A number of global landmarks are to ‘go green’ on St Patrick’s Day to mark the launch of Tourism Ireland’s EUR28m (£23.7m) overseas marketing campaign.

Among the landmarks due to turn green on 17 March as part of the initiative is the London Eye; Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa; the Sky Tower in Auckland, New Zealand; the Manneken Pis, Brussels, Belgium; and the Empire State Building in New York, US.

Tourism Ireland is also planning a number of other promotional events in a number of UK cities and across other key markets such as North America, France and Germany to help attract more visitors to Ireland.

Niall Gibbons, the agency’s chief executive, said: “People across the world instantly identify St Patrick’s Day with Ireland and that heightened profile allows us to put the Ireland holiday experience in the spotlight.

“Our message this year is that there has never been a better time to visit Ireland, with better-than-ever value from industry partners here and great things to do and see.”

BAA refused appeal against sell-off ruling

BAA has been refused permission to appeal a Competition Commission ruling requiring the sale of two airports by the Supreme Court.

In March 2009, the operator was told to sell Gatwick, Stansted and either Glasgow or Edinburgh airports. Despite selling Gatwick, it successfully challenged the ruling at the Competition Appeal Tribunal in late 2009.

The commission fought back last October, however, after the Court of Appeal overturned the tribunal’s verdict.

VisitBritain and Emirates launch campaign

Tourism agency VisitBritain and airline Emirates have launched a new joint-funded marketing campaign aimed at the UK’s growth markets.

Britain: A Tradition of Luxury will be rolled out in China, India, UAE and Singapore, and is aimed at attracting more affluent international travellers between the ages of 35-55 years old.

The multi-channel initiative aims to promote the luxury experiences currently on offer in the UK, including press advertising, internet marketing and direct emails.

VisitBritain director of marketing Laurence Bresh said: “Whether these visitors have a passion for rubbing shoulders with the British elite at Royal Ascot, shopping at Harrods, taking a journey on the Orient-Express or a stay at the May Fair London, we have many luxurious experiences just waiting to be enjoyed.”
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Southampton waterfront developer appointed

Morgan Sindall Investments (MSI) has been named as Southampton City Council’s (SCC) preferred developer for the Royal Pier Waterfront scheme.

SCC has appointed MSI following discussions with its development partners, Crown Estate and Associated British Ports - the joint owners of the site.

MSI chair Ernie Battey said: “This key site provides the opportunity to position Southampton at the forefront of internationally recognised waterfront schemes.”

NSC grants Tropicana development rights

North Somerset Council (NSC) has awarded the exclusive rights to develop the Tropicana site in Weston-super-Mare to the Nightingale Group.

The developer has secured exclusivity status for a six-month period, although the council’s procurement process will continue in line with European Union regulations.

Nightingale Group – working with FaulknerBrowns Architects, Serco and DTZ – proposes a new indoor water park with play pool, leisure waters and rides.

Council secures £350m Bournemouth revamp deal

Bournemouth Borough Council has announced that a new public-private partnership has been established to launch a £350m regeneration of the Dorset town.

Morgan Sindall Investments has reached a deal with the council for The Bournemouth Development Company, which will be a Local Asset Backed Vehicle.

Over the next 20 years, the partnership is expected to help provide new family attractions; shops; public realm improvements; and housing for the resort.

Hearing into Tipperary scheme

An Bord Pleanála, the Irish state planning authority, has launched an oral hearing into plans for a EUR450m (£385.3m) leisure scheme in County Tipperary.

North Tipperary County Council has already approved Richard Quirke’s proposals for The Tipperary Venue, which will be sited near the village of Two-Mile-Borris.

However, independent TD for the area Michael Lowry confirmed that objections from An Taise and three others had prompted An Bord Pleanála to hold the hearing.

A 500-room hotel with resort-style casino; an academic reconstruction of the White House as it was in Washington, US, in 1829; an 18-hole golf course; a racecourse with a National Hunt track, sprint track, all-weather track and greyhound track; and a 15,000-seat entertainment venue are proposed.

£50m mixed-use scheme for Coventry

Coventry’s former Royal Mail Sorting Centre is to be transformed as part of a major £50m development led by Barberry Developments.

The West Midlands-based group is working alongside Coventry City Council (CCC) on the plans, which also includes adjoining properties and will cover a total area of 3.5 acres (1.4 hectares).

A 20,000sq ft (1,858sq m) leisure facility with swimming pool is being proposed as part of the mixed-use scheme, along with a supermarket; non-food retail units; and landscaping.

Barberry Developments director Henry Bellfield said: “Following the closure of the Royal Mail Sorting Office this part of the city centre is in desperate need of new investment and redevelopment. The plans we are currently working on are hugely exciting and will create hundreds of jobs for local people.”

CCC cabinet member for city development Linda Bigham added: “We are looking forward to seeing Barberry’s plans for this development, which should improve the connection between the city centre and the canal basin.”

Nine Elms regeneration scheme approved

A hotel, restaurants and bars are to be created as part of a comprehensive revamp of the a Nine Elms industrial estate in London.

The plans, which also feature more than 750 new homes; cafés; offices; shops; and a crèche, were given the green light by Wandsworth Council’s planning application committee.

Located close to the Battersea Power Station site, the majority of the Tideway site is set to be opened up to the public and will feature a park and improved riverside walk.
VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is seeking expressions of interest from parties wishing to establish leisure/tourism operations at Porthkerry Country Park in Barry or Cosmeston Lakes Country Park in Penarth.

Our interest lies with operations which both respect the important natural assets, including conservation designations, and at the same time enhance the visitor experience.

Companies who wish to submit proposals are advised to view the advert on www.sell2wales.co.uk and follow the instructions within the advert.

Closing date: 12 noon, 6th April 2011.

INVITATION TO LET BY INFORMAL TENDER FOR THE DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF A TREE BASED HIGH ROPE ADVENTURE COURSE FACILITY.

The London Borough of Enfield is seeking suitably qualified and experienced companies who have the knowledge, capacity and a proven track record to tender for the design, supply, installation and operation of a tree based high rope adventure course facility in Trent Country Park in Enfield, North London. The Park comprises of 413 acres, has an ideal woodland environment, excellent transport links by road and public transport and already has a good level of visitors.

Please note that the successful Tenderer will be expected to finance the facility, obtain any Planning Consent, operate and maintain the tree based high rope adventure course facility and any associated infrastructure required.

The completed facility will be let to the operator for a period of 20 years.

Companies to submit an interest by Friday 18th March. Tender documents will be sent out on Monday 21st March.

CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF TENDER SUBMISSIONS 12 noon Friday 6th May 2011

If you would like the opportunity to tender for this facility, please email: tina.heather@enfield.gov.uk or call Tina Heather on 020 8379 3313

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Leisure Review of 2010 and the prospects for 2011

at the offices of Jones Lang LaSalle, 22 Hanover Square, London, W1A 2BN
Tue 15 Mar 2011 6.15pm
Hosted by: Jones Lang LaSalle

We will be giving an overview of the main activity in the leisure sector last year and discussing trends in the industry and what has been affecting it.

We will also be looking at the prospects for the coming year.

Programme
6.15pm - Registration
6.30pm - Speakers
7.15pm - Panel discussion with Q&As
7.45pm - Refreshments and networking
8.30pm - Close

Speakers
Rob Howarth, is Director of Leisure Agency at Jones Lang LaSalle.
James Welch, Cortex Partners.
Polly Troughton, Chairman of the Leisure Property Forum and Property Director of X-Leisure

Fee
£45 + VAT LPF Members
£55 + VAT LPF Members’ guests
£90 + VAT Non-members

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Opportunity to purchase flume slide from Medina Leisure Centre, Newport, Isle of Wight

In preparation for the 2011 Island Games the Council’s Leisure Services section will be removing the flume slide (pictured below) from the main pool at Medina Leisure Centre.

The slide is 2.7metres tall (top of hand rail 3.7m) and 31 metres long including the aqua catch. The slide is made of fibre glass and has metal supports that fix into the pool surround. There are also two spare sections that enable the slide to enter the pool tank rather then using the aqua-catch. The stairs to gain access to the slide are made of stainless steel with plastic footplates and clear perspex infill’s on the banister.

It is currently planned to decommission the slide and for it to be removed from poolside by a local contractor between 9th and 13th May 2011

The Council invites offers for the purchase of the slide – to include all fixtures and fittings – with the successful company removing the slide from site no later 27th May 2011

Deadline for receipt of offers: Noon of Friday 29th April 2011

For further information on the slide or to arrange a viewing please contact paul.broome@iow.gov.uk tel: (01983) 523767

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**TRAINING**

**Sector ‘more open’ to public workers**

**PETE HAYMAN**

New research from Barclays Corporate has found that the hospitality and leisure industry is “more open” to hiring ex-public sector workers.

The Barclays Corporate Job Creation Survey 2011 polled 500 executives across a range of sectors, looking at attitudes towards job creation and the economic outlook. While 38 per cent of businesses stated they were either ‘quite’ or ‘very’ interested in taking on ex-public sector workers, the figure among hospitality and leisure firms was 45 per cent.

More than half of the participants from within the hospitality and leisure sector also indicated that jobs will be created in the coming year, albeit at a low or unskilled level.

Barclays Corporate’s Mike Saul said: “The leisure industry has shown it are more interested in employing public sector workers than the general business population.”

**SkillsActive fails in Playwork bid**

**TOM WALKER**

SkillsActive has revealed that it has failed to secure the coalition government’s backing for its Playwork scheme.

In a statement, the sector skills council for active leisure said it had been informed that its bid to deliver the project – entitled Improving outcomes for children, young people, and families – to the Department for Education has been unsuccessful.

SkillsActive CEO Stephen Studd said: “As the sector skills council responsible for working on behalf of the playwork sector, and ensuring it has the right people with the right qualifications working within it to support children’s play, it is disappointing to receive the news that our bid was unsuccessful.

“Recent correspondence with ministers has confirmed the coalition government’s commitment to positive learning outcomes for children and young people, which outlines the importance of our role to have the best possible workforce behind the sector.

“We are fully committed to our work within the playwork sector and are currently applying for future funding to support our work.”

**April opening for new Telford Tennis Centre**

**PETE HAYMAN**

A new tennis centre – featuring four indoor and four floodlit, all-weather outdoor courts – is to open in Telford, Shropshire, in April.

Telford and Wrekin Council confirmed that Firstpoint Tennis Coaching has secured a contract to deliver a flagship coaching and competition programme at the facility.

Community outreach sessions will also be delivered by Firstpoint in conjunction with Telford Community Tennis Club at Bowring and Hartshill parks.
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Interviews: w/c 21 March 2011

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- build relationships and work in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure that the strategic objectives of Bolton Community Leisure are achieved
- ensure all aspects of the business are effectively managed in order to provide high quality standards of service to customers
- adopt a pro-active approach to the development of the contract ensuring continuous improvement
- ensure Company health and safety policies and procedures are implemented & appropriate arrangements / procedures are in place
- ensure compliance with legal requirements, e.g. health and safety legislation, employment law
- ensure actions are taken as a result of audits, events or performance
- develop and deliver the contract plan, centre strategy and business plan for the contract and ensure these are monitored and updated as required
- drive all commercial aspects of the contract including marketing and sales and maintain knowledge of competition and local demographics
- ensure environmental awareness across the contract and energy management processes are in place
- contribute to our strategy to reduce utility consumption and carbon footprint

Qualification level required will preferably be an appropriate formal qualification applicable to general business or leisure industry operations.

You must be mature, able to remain calm under pressure, have a high personal integrity, be motivated, open, honest with an outgoing personality and be self-confident within a customer driven work environment.

If you are a team player with excellent communication skills, and feel that you could contribute to the ongoing Leisure success please contact Michael Mooney, Contract Administrator at Horwich Leisure Centre, Victoria Road, Horwich, Bolton BL6 5PY.

Tel: 01204 334488 ext 209. Email to michael.mooney@leisure.serco.com

Closing date: Friday 25 March 2011

Serco is an Equal Opportunities Employer and invites applications from all sections of the community.
For more details on the following jobs visit www.leisureopportunities.co.uk or to advertise call +44 (0)1462 431385

Operations Director
Salary: £Competitive + benefits
Company: Legoland Windsor
Location: Windsor, UK

Become a Nutritional Therapist
Company: Premier Training International Ltd
Location: Nationwide, UK

Partnership Manager
Company: Serco Leisure
Location: Bolton, UK

Duty Manager
Salary: £17k - £18k PA
Company: ACACIA FITNESS
Location: Dartford, UK

General Manager
Salary: Dependend on experience + excellent achievable bonus
Company: Fitness First
Location: Herts / Beds / Bucks, UK

Trustees / Directors
Company: English Federation of Disability Sport
Location: Nationwide, UK

Head of Runway Visitor Park
Salary: c.£43,500 pa plus benefits
Company: Manchester Airport
Location: Manchester, UK

Senior Park Ranger (Healthy Towns Programme)
Company: Dudley MBC
Location: Dudley, UK

Experienced Spa Therapist
Company: Foxhills Health Clubs
Location: Ottershaw, UK

Become a Gym Instructor
Salary: - Company: Focus Training
Location: Nationwide, UK

Recreation Manager
Company: Leisureforce
Salary: upto £1,800/- / month tax free
Location: Muscat, Oman

Recreation Manager
Company: Leisureforce
Salary: upto £2,500 - month tax free
Location: Saudi Arabia

Attention Personal Trainers
Company: Club Training
Salary: £30k-£60k
Location: Nationwide Opportunities

Healthy Lifestyle Team Leader (Maternity cover)
Company: City of Lincoln Council
Salary: £31,137 - £33,981
Location: Lincoln, UK
Closing date: 09 Mar 2011

Business Development Manager
Company: Gloucester County Cricket Club/BS7
Location: Bristol, UK
Closing date: 11 Mar 2011

Swimming Teacher
Company: Virgin Active
Salary: £6 - £20 per hour
Location: London / Moorgate, UK

Regional Aquatic Manager
Company: Community Swimming
Salary: £25-30,000 (Dependant on experience and location)
Location: Nationwide, UK
Closing date: 14 Mar 2011

Lifeguard
Company: Virgin Active
Salary: TBC
Location: Gloucester, UK

Regional Managers
Company: Sported
Location: Various, UK
Closing date: 14 Mar 2011

Duty Manager (full-time - 37hrs/week)
Company: Leigh Sports Village
Salary: £17,616 - £20,198
Location: Wigan, UK
Closing date: 15 Mar 2011

Personal Trainers Wanted!
Company: YOUR Personal Training
Salary: OTE £40-60K
Location: Various (see details) UK
Closing date: 15 Mar 2011

General Manager
Company: Fitness First
Salary: Dependant on experience + excellent achievable bonus
Location: Herts / Beds / Bucks, UK

Booking Clerk
Company: Community Swimming
Salary: £15,000 to £16,500 (Dependant on Experience)
Location: Loughborough, UK
Closing date: 16 Mar 2011

Approvals and Verification Coordinator
Company: CYQ
Salary: £21,311 - £24,111
Location: Central London, UK
Closing date: 21 Mar 2011

Show Hosts
Company: Mecca Bingo
Salary: £8.00 per hour
Location: Dagenham, UK

Swimming Teacher
Company: Virgin Active
Salary: Competitive Salary + Benefits
Location: Streatham, UK

Football Administrator / Account Manager
Company: Champion Soccer Ltd
Salary: £15k - £19k
Location: Northern office: Leeds / Southern Office: Woking, UK
Closing date: 01 Apr 2011

Fitness Instructor
Company: Gym 64
Salary: £7.00 per hour
Location: Dunfermline, UK

Freelance Personal Trainer
Company: The Gym Group
Location: Leeds, UK
Closing date: 12 Apr 2011

Gym Courses: Unique all-round learning experience
Company: Soho Gyms
Location: Waterlo, London
Closing date: 13 Apr 2011

Trainee Personal Trainer / Fitness Instructor
Company: The Training Room.
Salary: £20K-£30K OTE
Location: Nationwide, UK
Closing date: 31 May 2011

Trainee Tutor
Company: The Training Room
Salary: Starting salary is £14k
Location: Nationwide, UK
Closing date: 24 Jul 2011

Become an Exercise to Music Instructor
Company: YMCA Fitness Industry Training
Location: Nationwide, UK
Closing date: 31 Oct 2011

© CYBERTREK 2011
Foxhills in Ottershaw Surrey are looking for the following staff to join our lively team in our fabulous Healthspa.

HEAD SPA RECEPTIONIST
The successful applicant will be someone looking for a long term role. Possess strong customer service skills with genuine drive and ambition to meet sales targets and can work unsupervised. You will be providing support and co-ordinating a team of receptionists and therapists in a busy environment. For this role we need someone with some genuine drive and ambition and a generous amount of common sense and initiative with good computer, communication and administration skills.
They will need to be well presented at all times and with an excellent phone manner.
Daily duties will include answering the main telephone, greeting members, booking clients in for treatments and looking after the general well-being and motivation of our members.
Spa background or knowledge of this industry would be an advantage and preferred.

EXPERIENCED SPA THERAPIST
We are looking for an experienced therapist who possesses NVQ Level 3 with a minimum of 4 to 5 years experience, including a variety of massages and treatments such as Aromatherapy, Deep Tissue and Swedish. A spa background and Bemis trained would be highly beneficial and desirable.
The right applicant must have a strong work ethic, a passion for the Spa industry, excellent customer service skills and an efficient manner to retail our range of home care products. A wonderful opportunity awaits the right candidate.
For both positions you will be covering various shifts working 5 days out of 7 we offer full use of facilities, uniform and free meals on duty.

For more details on Foxhills please view our website at www.foxhills.co.uk

If you wish to work in a Spa that is as bright as you?

MASSAGE & BEAUTY THERAPIST
SPA ATTENDANT
FREELANCE THERAPISTS
Coworth Park is the Dorchester Collection’s new 70 room country house hotel and spa. The ground breaking eco-luxury Spa at Coworth Park is an architectural wonder, partially submerged in the Spa’s landscape, its upper floor takes in breathtaking views of the surrounding English parkland.

We have an exciting opportunity for a full time multi skilled massage and beauty Therapist with a minimum qualification of NVQ3 and experience in a luxury spa or salon. We also require a Spa Attendant to join our team of Spa professionals. In this role you will be responsible for the perfect presentation of all spa areas.

To ensure the Spa provides the finest service to our guests we are looking for passion, personality and a flexible approach in our team members who are required to work shifts and weekends.
We also accept applications from freelance therapists (multi skilled or specializing in massage) to work weekends and occasional weekdays.

Would you like to work in
a Spa that is as bright as you?

Operations Director
£Competitive + benefits
An amazing opportunity has arisen for a high energy, fast-paced attractions specialist with the drive and determination to lead our operations team to unrivalled success in the 2011 season and beyond.
You will be responsible for creating and delivering the operations strategy which in 2011 includes a worlds first, Atlantis Submarine Voyage (launch date May 2011). Areas of responsibility will include Admissions, Customer Services, Entertainment, Park Cleanliness, Rides & Attractions, Security and Uniform.
You will be highly motivated with a passion for the leisure/attractions industry and proven experience in leading large teams to deliver exceptional results within a large theme park or similar environment.
Benefits include private health care, pension scheme, company car, life assurance, 25 days holiday, numerous employee discounts and, of course, free entry to all Merlin Attractions worldwide.

So if you’re interested in this exciting opportunity, please email katy.grele@legoland.co.uk attaching your CV and a covering letter stating current salary details.
Closing date: 18 March 2010

TO BOOK Call: +44 1462 471747 and start getting applications for your jobs IMMEDIATELY!
Denbighshire County Council has secured £1.17m from the Welsh Assembly Government towards the redevelopment of Rhyl’s Apollo Cinema.

New seating, fully 3D-enabled auditoria and improved digital technology are to be provided as part of the EWA Architects-designed scheme, which will also rejuvenate the surrounding area.

The public areas of Apollo Cinema will be upgraded to boast concession outlets, while two new terraces will also be created and made available to the public.

Improvements to the promenade area will include the overhaul of a car park outside the cinema and Skytower, as well as an enhanced public realm and an entertainment plaza.

Jocelyn Davies, Welsh deputy minister for housing and regeneration, said: “This project will provide a catalyst for investment and attract other businesses to West Rhyl.”

**Ladbrokes plots £50m investment in technology**

Ladbrokes chief executive Richard Glynn has revealed plans for a £50m investment in the development of the bookmaker’s ‘technological capabilities’ over the coming year.

The group is also proposing to ‘re-energise’ its brand as part of efforts to put the customer at the heart of its business and the implementation of its eCommerce platform.

In its results for the year ending 31 December, Ladbrokes reported a 1.3 per cent increase in net revenue and a 20.1 per cent increase in operating profit compared with 2009.

Work starts on Leeds Arena scheme

A groundbreaking ceremony has taken place to mark the start of construction work on the new multi-million pound Leeds Arena.

BAM Construction has been appointed to deliver the Populous-designed venue, having already carried out preparatory work at the city centre’s Claypit Lane site.

When complete, the new arena will be able to accommodate 13,500 spectators and is designed to ensure seats are no more than 68m (223ft) from the centre of the stage.

Leeds City Council executive member responsible for city development Richard Lewis said: “This is a very exciting phase of what is a hugely important £60m construction project for Leeds. The arena will bring an additional one million visitors to the city, add around £25.5m per year to the city’s economy and create around 450 construction jobs, as well as a number of apprenticeship and work experience opportunities.”

In December, however, developer Montpellier Estates filed a claim for deceit against the council with regards to the procurement of the venue.

**£1.17m for Rhyl regeneration plans**

Rhyl’s Apollo Cinema and surrounding area are in line for a renovation. RhyL’s Apollo Cinema and surrounding area are in line for a renovation.