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Investment group SinoFortone is to provide £100m in funding for the theme park and resort development, the London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH) announced during the four-day state visit of China’s President Xi Jinping.

Continued on back cover

Chinese firm puts £100m into Paramount resort

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Continued on back cover

Center Parcs plans £167m Irish resort

Center Parcs has submitted a formal planning application for a new £167m village in Ireland, which would be the leisure resort operator’s first venture outside the UK.

Having been bought earlier this year by Canadian property giant Brookfield, Center Parcs is eager to maintain the momentum from the successful launch of its Woburn Forest resort in June 2014.

The Ireland resort – to be named Center Parcs Longford Forest – would be developed on a 395-acre site in Newcastle Wood, County Longford. Holder Mathias Architects are behind the plans, reprising the role they played in the development of Woburn Forest.

The resort will include water rides and a nearby lake

Center Parcs Longford Forest is designed to feature 470 lodges and 30 apartments nestled into the natural surroundings, offering more than 100 family activities and the Subtropical Swimming Paradise. Continued on page 13
Green light for Lord’s development

Planning permission has been granted for the largest phase of the £200m redevelopment of Lord’s cricket ground.

Work can now begin on the South-Western Project – the second phase of a wider masterplan raising the ground’s overall capacity to more than 30,000. The existing Tavern and Allen stands will be demolished and rebuilt as a single 5,200 capacity structure designed by sports architects Populous.

Other key components of the scheme include the construction of a new Thomas Lord Building with a street-fac- ing reception and a Tavern Pub to serve spectators. The ground’s Grace Gates area will also be enhanced to create a more pedestrian-friendly public realm.

According to Marylebone Cricket Club, which owns Lord’s, work will be begin in Q3 2019 at the earliest, as the venue will host the ICC Cricket World Cup earlier that year.

Construction work on phase one of the masterplan for the ‘Home of Cricket’ is already underway. The £21m redevelop- ment of the Warner Stand, also designed by Populous, began in September and will be completed in time for the 2017 season. The new-look stand will hold 2,922 spec- tators and feature a semi-translucent roof.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=R7Z4G_O

Olympic legacy lives on at Royton centre

A Sport England-funded Olympic legacy swimming pool takes centre stage at the newly-opened Royton Leisure Centre in Oldham.

Sport England awarded a grant of £134,000 from the Olympic Facilities Legacy Fund for the construction of the new six-lane, 25m pool, which features the same design as one of the Olympic training pools. To monitor usage of the pool and maximise uptake, Gladstone is supplying a range of software solutions including a specially developed access control system, which allows specific facility usage to be collected via a touchscreen at turnstiles.

“The pool at Royton Leisure Centre will ensure that the legacy of London 2012 con- tinues to thrive in Oldham,” said Charles Johnston, property director at Sport England.

“Legacy pools have the potential to benefit thousands of people and I am really pleased that the local community in Royton and surrounding areas will be able to fully benefit from this highly innovative scheme.” The pool is part of the new £8m centre, which was funded by Oldham Council and will be run by Oldham Community Leisure. Willmott Dixon led construction of the project, working to plans from GT Architects.

Away from the pool, the gym contains 80-stations of Technogym kit, spanning CV, strength and functional equipment, in addition to two exercise/dance studios.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=E6Azn_O

Oldham Council leader Jim McMahon (left) and OCL’s Stuart Lockwood
IAKS honours sports architects

Sports architects Siegfried Hoymann, Bill Stonor and Geraint Jones are among the first inductees to the newly established IAKS Hall of Fame for leisure architects.

Launched to mark the 50th anniversary of IAKS (International Association for Sports and Leisure Facilities), the Hall of Fame honours architects, designers and those working in leisure for their services to architecture and facility development.

In total, 12 people – most of them architects – were named as the inaugural members of the group and all have connections to IAKS.

Bill Stonor – who together with Harry Faulkner-Brown set up his own practice in 1962 and has been an active IAKS member for decades – described his inclusion as a privilege.

“After 54 years with Faulkner-Browns Architects, pushing the frontiers in sports architecture in the UK and beyond, it is indeed an honour to enter the IAKS Hall of Fame alongside the authors of the 1960s Golden Plan for Sport for Germany,” he said, referring to the inclusion of Gert Abelbe and Willi Weyer.

The Hall of Fame announcement was made at the IAKS Congress in Cologne last month. Described as the “who’s who of the sports facility industry,” the event attracted nearly 500 attendees from 50 countries.

Details: http://lei.s7a=y6n9A_O

£8.2m Lottery fund to tackle inactivity

Sport England has announced that the latest tranche of National Lottery funding will see £8.2m put towards helping disadvantaged communities get active.

More than 124,000 people will benefit from the scheme, which will use sport and physical activity to help tackle social problems affecting young people, women and ethnic minorities.

“The 46 projects receiving National Lottery funding today all have compelling plans to use sport as a way of improving the lives of thousands of people,” said Sport England’s director of community sport, Mike Diaper. “We know that people who live challenging lives face the biggest barriers to getting active – this fund is about breaking the barriers down.”

Designed to encourage sport for social good, the fund has relaxed its rules to enable less well-off communities to apply for funding. Normally, Sport England requires organisations to co-fund a proportion of their project, but where projects relate to areas of social disadvantage and the majority of the targeted participants live in the local authority ward, this condition can be waived.

Since 2013, more than 200 projects have already received funding, helping to get 350,000 people active to date.

Projects receiving a share of the National Lottery funding include Getting the Inactive Active; the Jason Roberts Foundation; as well as a new Be Active project which will help people with mental health problems in Swindon.

Details: http://lei.s7a=S9G8h_O

The Jason Roberts Foundation has received a £150,000 funding slice

Hall of Famer Siegfried Hoymann (left) with IAKS MD Klaus Meinel

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Global gym revenues increase by 5.3 per cent

The international health club market saw revenues grow by 5.3 per cent last year, according to the latest Industry Data Survey (IDS) from IHRSA.

The figure, which almost exactly mirrors the growth seen in the UK last year, adds further credence to the notion that fitness is edging its way into the mainstream.

The findings showed fitness-only clubs (as opposed to multi-purpose offerings) were the biggest drivers of this growth, increasing revenue by 8.9 per cent. Given their continued global momentum, it can be inferred that low-cost gyms with a stripped-back approach to fitness accounted for the bulk of the gains.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Q6X7d_O

Active Nation announces Stuart Martin as new MD

Active Nation has promoted Stuart Martin to become the leisure operator and charity’s new managing director.

Tasked with driving Active Nation towards growth and a more exciting proposition, Martin takes up the role vacated by John Oxley, who left to join rival operator Places for People Leisure earlier this year. Martin has spent the last four years working as part of the charity’s senior team as group commercial manager. Prior to joining Active Nation, Martin held national group roles with Everyone Active and Aura, where he worked on the development and delivery of their fitness propositions.

“As a charity we are on a mission to persuade the nation to be active and I strongly believe that this has never been more important than right now,” said Martin.

“As an organisation we’ve got a strong strategic plan for growth across the sector so that we can work with more local authority partners and influence the activity rates of more communities.”

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

Wearables are ‘top fitness trend’

After years of hype and expectation, wearable technology will finally take its place in the mainstream of fitness in 2016.

That’s according to the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) which has named wearable technology as the number one fitness trend for 2016 in its annual foresight report.

Now in its tenth year, The Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends has recently tipped body weight training and HIIT among its top trends. For the latest report, the ACSM turned to wearable technology, which is expected to triple in value over the next 10 years, according to a research forecast by IDTechEx.

“Weearable technology has overtaken activities like body weight training and high-intensity interval training to claim the number one spot in this year’s survey,” commented the lead author of the report Walter R. Thompson, Ph.D. “Consumer interest in fitness technology may signal that the low-cost, DIY exercise trend we have seen recently is waning.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Q6V5N_O

PHE: Blueprint for fitter schools

Public Health England (PHE) has published new guidance for educators and exercise providers on how to boost physical activity in the nation’s sedentary schools.

PHE launched the briefing on the same day as it held EAED15 – an event to examine the progress made in tackling physical activity since the Everybody Active, Every Day framework was launched last year.

The new guidance aims to help schools capitalise on the links between regular exercise and academic success, while at the same time helping to narrow the gaping chasm between recommended levels of activity and what is currently achieved. The document, What Works in Schools and Colleges to Increase Physical Activity?, highlights that only 21 per cent of boys and 16 per cent of girls aged 5-15 years old meet the recommended guidelines of at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity every day – with participation figures continuing to fall.

The report highlights the physical, mental and social benefits of regular physical activity at school and evaluates various principles which can help to achieve this.

According to PHE, the briefing is designed to give an overview of the evidence about what works in schools to increase physical activity among children and young people. It aims to inspire the reader through practical examples. It also highlights links to Ofsted inspection criteria and signposts to useful sources of support.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=4g8z6_O
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HEALTH & FITNESS

Members hit back at Watchdog

Hundreds of Xercise4Less members have come out in support of the low-cost gym chain after the company came in for criticism on the BBC consumer rights show Watchdog.

Gym users tweeted their support in the wake of a Watchdog investigation into cancellation procedures at some of the 32 Xercise4Less health clubs.

The programme highlighted five cases where members’ cancellation orders hadn’t been processed, leading to direct debit payments continuing to be taken from their accounts. In one instance where a member had cancelled her direct debit payment, the outstanding amount was passed on to an asset recovery service.

In a slightly less clear-cut case, one member was aggrieved to have signed up for a gym which hadn’t yet opened.

Xercise4Less has apologised and refunded all of the members affected, adding that “human errors do, very occasionally, occur.” Meanwhile, the gym chain’s 250,000 UK members rallied round in support, with hundreds taking to Twitter to share their experiences.

“We would like to thank everyone who has offered their support on our social media channels over the last 12 hours, we have been truly overwhelmed by the amount of positive comments,” Xercise4Less CEO Jon Wright told Leisure Opportunities. “I can only apologise unreservedly to the very small number of members who have had difficulties cancelling their membership. These cases have now been resolved with full apologies and refunds. We have over 250,000 happy members and we will continue to improve our services as we expand throughout the UK. “Details: http://lei.sr?la=U8pqU_O

In the future, the success of fitness equipment suppliers will depend on the strength of their software, rather than the physical kit itself.

That’s the view of technology entrepreneur, Philipp Roesch-Schlanderer – founder and CEO of fitness supplier eGym – who believes the ability to regularly update gym kit remotely to keep pace with digital advances will give companies the edge.

He said gym equipment will still need to be made to high standards, but will largely be driven by the software that supports it, in the same way that the bulk of the iPhone’s functionality comes from its apps. One of the biggest benefits, he adds, is that data-driven gym kit will provide operators with unprecedented insights into their members’ behaviour patterns.

“With the constant advancement of technology, we see that hardware is largely becoming the conduit for ever-updated software, and one of the biggest benefits of this is that it allows you to improve your equipment in a very cost-efficient way,” Roesch-Schlanderer told Leisure Opportunities. “There are huge opportunities for digitisation in the gym market, with software-driven kit able to provide enhanced data profiles of users that operators can use to shape the member journey and take action when members show signs that they are about to leave. All of this functionality means that ultimately the customer can enjoy a greater experience.” Details: http://lei.sr?la=A23yU_O

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UK Pool & Spa Expo 2015

The Pool & Spa Expo is back, and while some annual events seem to come around quicker and quicker each year, this one actually has. In a few short weeks, the UK Pool & Spa Expo will be back at the NEC from 22-24 November, a good four months ahead of the previous dateline.

So why the change of date?
Claire Saunders, event director explains: “With change comes progress. In order to move forward, stay abreast of what is best for the industry and break new ground, we must adapt. The new dates come into line with global events. It allows us to stand apart from any other show in the UK and is therefore perfectly placed for companies to showcase their newest products.

Staying at The NEC was an obvious choice, with the rail, road and air transport links arriving right on site, it makes the ideal location for both domestic and international exhibitors and visitors. And with the new Resorts World, the social scene opens up a whole new networking arena (plus a luxurious choice of hotels, bars and restaurants).

What else is staying the same?
Pool & Spa Scene remain the official media partner for the show. “The support we receive for the show from Christina and the girls at Pool & Spa Scene is fantastic,” says Lauren King, sales & marketing manager for team UKPS. “Christina knows the industry inside out and her panel forum last year was an unmitigated success with visitors spilling out into the aisles to hear what the experts had to say. We’re really looking forward to seeing who is on the panel this year.”

The Pool & Spa Awards run by the magazine have also moved to be timed with the expo and will run on the second night of the event. Alongside the panel forum, there will also be seminars on safety and energy efficiency, as well as the opportunity to gain your Certified Pool Operators certificate at the on-site two day course.

So what’s new?
Aside from the date change, the event team have been working hard and getting the right balance of exhibitors into this year’s show. With rumblings about the event having become a ‘spa show,’ they have certainly captured that side of the market, so this time around special attention has been paid to the pool companies and how to make sure there is a good balance of each.

Doughboy, Desjoyaux and Sundance will be leading this particular parade with a number of ancillary companies giving the support that will attract not only pool seekers, but also owners and upgraders. Jo Downs Glassware, Pool-dek by Stage Systems and The Brio Group are all newbies this year, but many old favourites also return.

With free parking, free wifi and most importantly free tickets to the show, it is clear that UK Pool & Spa Expo are doing everything to bring value to both visitors and exhibitors of the wet leisure industry. We are excited about this latest strategy, which will help them to become the right choice for pool & spa professionals in the UK and around the world.
Spa debuts in 13th century castle

Red Carnation Hotels’ Ashford Castle in Ireland has unveiled a new five-treatment room spa and gym, marking the completion of a two-year restoration and enhancement programme at the castle.

The Spa at Ashford Castle is inspired by the location and history of the iconic building, parts of which date back to the 13th century.

“The opening of the spa is the final piece in the puzzle of the phenomenal restoration and renovation that Ashford Castle has undergone since we became part of the Red Carnation Hotel collection in spring 2013,” said general manager Niall Rochford.

A striking new bronze conservatory, designed by French architect Phillipe Bonino, houses an indoor resistance pool with views across the Lough Corrib and featuring sea shell chandeliers. A Tree of Life mural, by South African mosaic artist Jane Du Rand, stretches across an entire wall of the pool area. Drawing inspiration from Irish folklore, the mural centres around an oak tree, which Celts believed was a cosmic storehouse of wisdom and whose acorns were considered good luck. Decorated in a range of muted greys, earthy greens and creams, the spa also features a hammam, steamroom, manicure and pedicure area, relaxation suite and outdoor terrace with views over the lake.

Treatments include hot stone massages, aroma and marine therapy, facials, scrubs and wraps. Product houses are Voya, Elemis and Red Carnation Hotels’ BAfrica.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=3v7T7_O

An ornate mural stretches across an entire wall of the pool area

Champneys opens detox spa extension

Champneys has opened a new Detox and Wellbeing spa in Tring, England, in celebration of its 90th anniversary.

The new detox spa offers a selection of water-based personalised treatments inspired by the foundations of ancient spiritual cleansing and using seawater, algae and marine minerals to stimulate and cleanse the body and mind.

“People today want to completely relax and cleanse themselves at weekends,” owner Stephen Purdew told Leisure Opportunities.

“This is a serious spa experience.”

The detox spa includes vichy showers, hydrotherapy, wraps, dry floatation, oxygen infusions, Kneipp foot bathing, thalassotherapy pools, manual underwater massage, pressotherapy, an iPulse slimming solution, marine mud and aromatic oil floatation, salt steam inhalation room and a relaxation room.

Visitors also have the option of adding a detox package to a traditional spa visit, visit the detox spa for the day, or stay for overnight packages starting at two nights.

A Voyage of Discovery programme lasts 2.5 hours and includes a six-step programme to detox, improve circulation, promote wellbeing or help slim and tone. A personal consultation with a therapist helps decide on treatments during a five-step saltwater and mineral experience.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=e7w4t_O

The new detox spa offers a selection of water-based treatments
Cornish Pasty museum planned near St Austell

First, the Cornish pasty was granted protected status by the EU in 2011, and now the popular meat-filled pastry dish is on track to get its own visitor attraction.

The ‘Cornish Pasty museum’ is the brainchild of Malcolm Ball, CEO of established market operations group WMC Retail Partners, a company that has Old Spitalfields and Shepherd’s Bush markets in London on its books.

WMC is leading the venture and looking for partners for the proposed attraction, which would be sited at the Par Stadium Retail Park, near St Austell – just a few miles from the Eden Project. Details: http://lei.sr?a=F3r3x_O

UK’s oldest coaster back in business

The Scenic Railway – the premier attraction of heritage theme park Dreamland – has finally reopened to the public 12 years after the UK’s oldest rollercoaster shut down.

Originally opened in 1920, the Grade II listed Scenic Railway fell into disrepair when Dreamland closed its doors in the mid-2000s and was badly damaged from an arson attack in 2008.

Dreamland reopened its doors in June with most rides operational. The mile-long Scenic Railway, which has previously been described as ‘the heart’ of the heritage attraction, remained closed however, with restoration ongoing. Originally designed by Sir John Henry Iles who bought the site in 1919, the restored ride is nearly identical to when it first opened, bar modifications made for both operational and safety reasons.

Creative designer Wayne Hemingway MBE is behind the £18m restoration of the theme park. The Heritage Lottery Fund also part-funded the venture – awarding a total of £5.8m to the Dreamland Trust.

Since its reopening, Dreamland has proved popular with the seaside town of Margate enjoying a mini resurgence, noted by a 50 per cent increase in bed occupancy and a 25 per cent increase in visitor tickets to the nearby Turner Contemporary. According to Dreamland, the majority of visitors are based in London, with more than third of those coming through its doors hailing from the capital. Details: http://lei.sr?a=9f3b3_O

ATTRACTIONS

Disney brings the page to life with AR colouring app

Disney has developed a way to live map colour from a 2D colouring book onto an animated 3D model using augmented reality.

A video released by Disney shows tests where if you view specially-designed images through an app, the character you draw comes to life in an augmented 3D virtual space. The technology can recognise boundaries in a similar way to a QR code reader but can also recognise the drawing itself and the colours applied to it, even if the image moves. An app-enabled device will be able to move 360 degrees around the character, which is created by mapping each pixel on the 2D drawing to each surface pixel on the 3D animation.

ETH Zurich and the Swiss university EPFL, worked with Disney on the development, which could be implemented into future visitor attractions as part of an immersive experience. The research team is now taking the idea beyond drawings and looking at how it can apply the revolutionary new technology to musical and educational experiences. Details: http://lei.sr?a=Eaz8V_O

New home for Scotland Yard crime museum

Following its debut last month as a temporary exhibition inside the Museum of London, plans are in the works to set up a new public institution to display Scotland Yard’s infamous ‘Black Museum’, a collection of criminal evidence from the Metropolitan Police Service.

The permanent museum is being set up by the Metropolitan Police Service in conjunction with the Museum of London and will offer a unique collection of artefacts including evidence from notorious crimes and criminals such as the Acid Bath Murderer, the Great Train Robbery, the Kray’s and the Millennium Dome diamond heist.

First established in 1875, the Black Museum was created as an education tool for police officers and invited guests. Part of the collection went on display to the public for the first time last week, in what will be an initial six-month run as The Crime Museum Uncovered.

“The new museum will show how London’s police force has, since its formation, responded to the challenging demands of serving one of the biggest cities in the world,” said Stephen Greenhalgh, deputy mayor for policing. “It is an opportunity to tell the stories of not only the criminals, but the police officers who investigate these crimes.”

No costs for the project have been revealed and no official dates have been set. However, London mayor Boris Johnson will confirm the museum’s location by the end of the year, with funding being sought from both public and private sponsors. Details: http://lei.sr?a=R9x3R_O

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The Scenic Railway rollercoaster first opened in 1920

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HOTELS

Center Parcs unveils Irish resort plans

Continued from cover

Center Parcs Longford Forest, which would be the operator’s sixth resort, is expected to feature a range of restaurants, shops and café.

The resort is also due to feature a strong wellness offering. A spokesperson told Leisure Opportunities that the planned Aqua Sana spa would be similar in content to the Woburn Forest version – but slightly smaller in scale.

“We have many years’ experience of providing high quality family short breaks in the UK and I’m extremely excited by the prospect of bringing our fantastic brand to Ireland,” said Center Parcs CEO Martin Dalby. “The submission of our planning application is a key milestone as we begin the next chapter in our 28-year story.”

The planning application outlines the impact that the project could have on both County Longford and the national economy, including adding £717m to Ireland’s GDP over a 20-year period. It states that the resort’s location in the heart of Ireland would ensure excellent transport links for families from both north and south of the border.

Longford County Council will now undertake a five week period of consultation, during which time the plans will be on public display. Subject to receiving satisfactory planning permission, Center Parcs Longford Forest could open to guests in 2019. Details: http://lei.sr?a=D5f8h_O

Art’otel on board for Battersea hotel

Lifestyle hotel operator art’otel has signed a deal to operate the 160-room hotel at the heart of London’s £8bn redevelopment of Battersea Power Station.

The hotel will sit within a building designed by Foster + Partners. Progress is being overseen by the Battersea Power Station Development Company (BPSDC) and the hotel will be managed by art’otel’s parent company, PPHE Hotel Group, when it opens in early 2019.

Art’otel beat off competition from a number of leading hotel brands from around the world to secure the contract. BPSDC chose the brand for its “art-inspired vision”, which envisaged the hotel featuring public galleries, lounges and cafes showcasing artworks from around the world.

BPSDC has revealed that skyline floors in the hotel will provide panoramic views leading up to the roof garden, which has been designed by James Corner Field Operations – the creative team behind the New York High Line. Here, a dramatic rooftop pool will allow swimmers to take in views of the power station’s iconic chimneys and the surrounding London skyline.

Boris Ivesha CEO of PPHE Hotel Group said: “As a company we take pride in opening hotels, restaurants and bars in areas which are embarking on new urban and community journeys and the Battersea Power Station project is a spectacular example of this.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=X9x3e_O

The hotel will offer more than 100 indoor and outdoor family activities

The resort will feature an infinity pool offering views of the London skyline

The hotel is to feature an infinity pool offering views of the London skyline

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=X9x3e_O
Prime Minister David Cameron has declared that the UK will extend multiple-entry visas for Chinese visitors to two years from six months.

The move was announced during the recent UK visit of China President Xi Jinping and reiterates Britain’s commitment to attracting wealthy Chinese tourists.

The number of Chinese visitors to the UK increased by 28 per cent (year-on-year) in the first six months of 2015 and Chinese visitors are also some of Britain’s highest spending, shelling out an average of £2,688 each, per visit.

Despite this, Britain lags several European rivals in attracting Chinese visitors. Efforts to boost these figures have been hampered by the various visa complications that have arisen due to UK falling outside of the Schengen Area – whereby one visa enables Chinese visitors to travel around the whole of continental Europe.

The new visa extension is the UK’s latest in a long line of initiatives to overcome these issues and attract more Chinese tourists.

Spafinder Wellness 365 has released part one of its annual State of Wellness Travel Report, revealing that the highest percentage of travel agents in the survey’s eight-year history expect growth in wellness travel for the current year.

Survey findings show the wellness travel sector is expanding in directions beyond luxury spas and in more far-flung global regions.

The annual survey of North American and European agents also revealed that, for the first time, Asia ranked as the fastest-growing global wellness travel destination, and that Thailand and Costa Rica topped the list of many countries agents identified as getting “hotter.”

“The survey confirms what we have recognised for several years,” said Spafinder Wellness COO John Bevan. “Growth in wellness travel is outpacing traditional travel as people recognise the importance of healthier options. The hospitality and travel industries must pay attention to the fact that this is a travel sector that will continue to grow and cannot be ignored.”

About half of agents reported that 20 per cent or less of the wellness-focused travel they book is primarily spa-focused. Just one in five agents said that more than 50 per cent of the wellness travel booked is primarily focused on spa experiences.

Wellness travel poised for big growth
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Diggerland gains approval for fifth UK theme park

Diggerland’s continued expansion across the UK has taken a big step forward after plans for a new £5m site at The Valley in Evesham, Worcestershire, were approved by the local council.

First established in 2000, Diggerland recently made the leap overseas, opening its first franchised theme park in the US. Currently operating in four UK locations – including Devon, Durham, Kent and Yorkshire – the new Diggerland at The Valley is set to open 2016 after Wychavon District Council granted permission for the five acre development.

Overlooking the River Avon, Diggerland will be set within 125 acres (50,000sq m) of Evesham County Park green space and will also comprise a garden centre, factory outlet, farm shop and miniature steam railway. The recently rebranded park is also soon to offer a shopping village, cafes, restaurants, cycle tracks, climbing walls and picnic areas.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=E2q3f_O

Dementia-friendly £15m hub to debut in spring 2016

Work is moving forward on a new £15m lifestyle facility in Crewe, with spring 2016 slated as the opening date.

The 7,800sq m (83,959sq ft) two-storey building is expected to become a central hub for the community of Crewe, bringing seven different services under one roof. As well as sport and fitness facilities, the Lifestyle Centre will be home to Crewe’s new town library, Family Services centre, a cafe and office space. There will also be day-care facilities for adults with learning disabilities, including autism, sensory impairment, complex needs and a dementia garden.

Architects Pozzoni were appointed by Cheshire East Council and Kier Construction to put together the design plans for the centre, after detailed consultation with the existing user groups in addition to the local planning authority.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=E2q3f_O

Brighton i360 enters final build stages

Locals in Brighton have taken their first proper look at Marks Barfield Architects’ Brighton i360 vertical cable car, following the removal of the structure’s jacking tower.

Standing 162m (531.5ft) high on Brighton beach, the i360 will be the UK’s tallest visitor attraction outside London when it is completed in summer 2016. It has been designed and engineered by the team behind the London Eye.

With the tower structure now finished, workers are adding the last pieces of cladding, while Mackley Construction firm is completing work on the attraction’s base building. The 100m (328ft) high crane used on the project, nicknamed “T-Rex”, has been taken away.

Following the removal of the jacking tower, the attraction’s chief executive, Eleanor Harris, said: “Now that you can see it, you can get a real sense of why the i360 is the slimmest tall tower ever built in the world; it is a real marvel of engineering.”

When it opens, up to 200 visitors at a time will be able to enter the i360’s glass pod with views slowly unfolding as it rises to the top of the tower. The fully enclosed, aerodynamically shaped glass viewing cabin is ten times the size of the capsules on the London Eye.

While work on the i360 is on schedule, the project has suffered some hitches. In August it was revealed that the tower would no longer feature a wind turbine powering the cable car, after concerns were raised that high winds could cause the structure to move.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=S83P9_O

Innovative £44m centre offers dual-use

A new £44m complex combining Consett Academy with a new leisure centre, which will be shared by students and the public, is up and running.

Financed by Durham County Council, the two venues occupy a new single building designed by Seymour Harris Architecture which is located in the heart of Consett on the town’s former football ground.

As a shared building, the leisure centre and academy have their own distinct main entrances at either end of the building, while internally they are separated by secure lockdown doors. Although the public and academy students and staff use the building concurrently, they are separated at all times.

“Significant expertise and effort has gone into the careful design and development of this new concept, ensuring a high quality and sustainable facility is developed to meet the needs of all those involved and local residents,” said Steve Howell, head of culture and sport at Durham County Council. Consett Leisure Centre, which replaces the neighbouring Belle Vue Leisure Centre and swimming pool, is being managed by Leisureworks – the region’s trust for sport and the arts.

Facilities at the new centre include the largest pool provision in County Durham

Details: http://lei.sr?a=S4V6s_O
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SkillsActive has not only been exceptionally busy across the UK but has been working collaboratively with partner organisations internationally and especially in Europe. The UK skills landscape remains at the forefront of “good practice” as we strive to enable more in our sectors to be better skilled and better qualified. We have been at the forefront and one of the founding members – as well as board members – of the European Association of Sport Employers (EASE), covering all employees and employers in the three main segments of sport as defined by Brussels: active leisure, not for profit and professional sport.

Following on from successfully contributing to a variety of European projects and representing our UK stakeholders in Europe over the years such as Training 4 Volunteers and the V-Sport+ project, 2015 has been a busy year of collaborations as well. It has seen SkillsActive contribute to the development of the Health and Safety Guidelines by the European Sport Social Partners, as well as projects such as the ESSC Sport or Universal Fitness Innovation and Transformation (UFIT) project which was recently launched.

We are working with Europe Active on the Promoting Physical Activity and Health in Aging project and with EOSE on making recommendations towards the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in the sport sector. SkillsActive have also played a leading role along with EOSE on the European desire for a Sector Skills Council.

Early November will exciting as we are attending the MOVE Congress and hope to bring back exciting new ideas and best practice to the UK to help to unlock the potential of physical activity research, discover fresh approaches to grassroots sport activities and facilities, build a compelling case for support, and find out how we can help to “MOVE” the physical activity agenda forward.

**Active Training Awards finalists revealed**

Finalists have been announced for the 2015 Active Training Awards, which are due to be presented on Thursday 26 November at the Crowne Plaza in Marlow. Organisers ukactive and CIMSPA are placing an added emphasis on technology this year to reflect the industry shift towards facilitating modern learning methods, and this has featured a rigorous application process.

To reach this stage, each entrant has undergone two assessments, including an initial submission, a presentation to a panel of experts, or an online feedback survey of their learners and employers.

Many of the shortlisted candidates will go through a final stage of assessment before the awards night. Following the assessment process, all entrants will receive an individualised feedback report with detailed feedback from each stage of assessment, including strengths and areas for development.

“The high number and calibre of entrants in this year’s Active Training Awards is testament to the sector’s commitment to its workforce and personal and professional development,” said Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA. “I have been so impressed by the fantastic entries this year; it’s going to be interesting to see who comes out on top in each category.”

To view the full list of nominees for this year’s awards, visit the link at the bottom of this article.

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=X5G8u_O](http://lei.sr?a=X5G8u_O)

**Apprentices learn ‘The Macdonald Way’**

Privately-owned UK hotel group Macdonald Hotels & Resorts has welcomed its first spa apprentices, who are working towards a standardised beauty step programme – “The Macdonald Way” – in partnership with the International School of Beauty Therapy.

The apprentices recently attended a two-day interactive induction workshop which was held at the Macdonald Craxton Wood Hotel and Spa under the leadership of Jeanette Jones, Macdonald Hotels’ managing director of leisure and spa.

“It has been very exciting and a great pleasure to welcome our first apprentices to the programme, and I’m hoping this will give them the confidence to become the finest spa therapists,” commented Jones. “I have been massively impressed with their knowledge and passion for the industry, and I am really looking forward to seeing them progress making full use of the tools and procedures that we have now put in place.”

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=p4H5C_O](http://lei.sr?a=p4H5C_O)
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“As a direct result of CREW training our fund pot for “Gems of the Jungle” at £5000 in August went through the roof and we amassed a further £18,000 in just six weeks. Brilliant!” (summer season 2011)

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- experience delivering community based sports and activities
- excellent communication, IT and administrative skills

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<tr>
<td>Spa Therapist</td>
<td>Celtic Manor Resort</td>
<td>Newport, South Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spa Therapist</td>
<td>Elenis</td>
<td>Mayfair, London, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elemis Spa Coordinator</td>
<td>Elenis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elemis Spa Therapist</td>
<td>Elenis</td>
<td>Mayfair, London, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Front of House Manager</td>
<td>The Grove</td>
<td>Watford, Hertfordshire, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spa Attendant</td>
<td>Donny House</td>
<td>Worcestershire, UK</td>
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<td>Beauty Therapists</td>
<td>Center Parcs Ltd</td>
<td>Whinfell, Cumbria, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Manager - Holistic Spa &amp; Wellbeing Centre</td>
<td>Elenis, Celtic Manor Resort</td>
<td>London, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spa Directors</td>
<td>WTS International</td>
<td>East Coast, Midwest and Far West, United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Therapists / Beauticians</td>
<td>Baisong d’Etre</td>
<td>Cairo, Egypt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spa and Wellness Director</td>
<td>Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group (MOHG)</td>
<td>Taipei, Taiwan</td>
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<td>Spa Therapists</td>
<td>Lifehouse Spa and Hotel</td>
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<td>Retail Manager</td>
<td>Warwick Castle</td>
<td>Warwick, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aquarist</td>
<td>Castelnuovo del Garda, Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visitor Welcome Manager</td>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Calke Abbey, Ticknall, Derbyshire, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial Manager</td>
<td>Legoland Discovery Centre</td>
<td>Michigan-Auburn Hills, United States</td>
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<td>Facilities Maintenance Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visitor Services Manager</td>
<td>King Richard III Visitor Centre</td>
<td>Leicester, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonal Hotel Receptionist</td>
<td>Chessington World of Adventures</td>
<td>Chessington, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studios Artist Supervisor</td>
<td>Madame Tussauds</td>
<td>California-San Francisco, United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Sales Operations Guest Services Asst.</td>
<td>The Eye Brand</td>
<td>London, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park Operations Manager</td>
<td>Banham Zoo</td>
<td>Norfolk, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations Officer</td>
<td>West Midland Safari and Leisure Park</td>
<td>Bewdley, Worcestershire, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing Executive</td>
<td>Cornwall’s Crealy Great Adventure Park</td>
<td>Cornwall, UK</td>
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<td>Missouri-Kansas City, United States</td>
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<td>General Manager</td>
<td>Madame Tussauds</td>
<td>New York-New York, United States</td>
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£100m investment for Paramount

Continued from front cover

The £100m investment from China’s SinoFortone Group will support the ongoing development of the Paramount Resort and offers a strong vote of confidence in the project.

The multi-billion-pound London Paramount Entertainment Resort will include a theme park, waterpark, events spaces and hotels, plus other infrastructure that will be located in Ebbsfleet, North Kent. The leisure development was cleared for fast-track development following its categorisation as a “project of national significance” by the UK government in May last year.

With London Paramount’s newly-revised opening date of 2021, it’s thought that SinoFortone – a joint venture between the Shenyang-based engineering, procurement and construction enterprise Liaoning Fortone Group and Hong Kong-based property developer Sinolink Holdings – will bring its expertise in construction to the table.

The central areas of Paramount London were initially scheduled to open to the public in Q2 2020 but have been pushed back due to planning delays. Details: http://lei.sr?a=m6FqO

London Paramount is expected to create 27,000 jobs

Hosain Rahman envisions a future where health trackers are ingested and monitor things like circulation, levels of nutrition and individual organ function.

The implications for health and wellness are endless, with in-body devices able to provide a far more accurate picture of any number of ailments and conditions. This would help wellness professionals to provide far more tailored programmes for their clients in the gym or spa, for example. The Spa Business Handbook, identified ‘invisible wearables’ as an up-and-coming trend in its 2015 edition, noting wearables would become more natural and less obtrusive. Details: http://lei.sr?a=QyK6D_O

The world has gone wearable tech crazy over the past couple of years, but Jawbone CEO Hosain Rahman believes the future of health tracking will place gadgets inside the body.

The burgeoning wearable tech market is expected to triple in value over the next decade, according to a research forecast by IDTechEx, although initial uptake has not been as fast as some analysts expected.

“The first thing you have to crack though is actually getting people to wear it,” said Rahman – whose wrist-worn Jawbone health tracker was one of the forerunners of the first wearable tech wave. “If you can keep it on all the time, the amount of information you get about the user is staggering.”

But the amount of information that can be collected by a wearable pales into comparison with the amount that could be tracked by a device inside the body, added Rahman, who envisions a future whereby trackers are ingested. Some devices will “pass through you,” he said at the recent Code/Mobile conference, while others could stay in your bloodstream while others could stay in your bloodstream ingested. Some devices will “pass through you, ” said Rahman – whose wrist-worn Jawbone health tracker was one of the forerunners of the first wearable tech wave. “If you can keep it on all the time, the amount of information you get about the user is staggering.”

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