Fitness First to sell 67 UK clubs

Fitness First is to sell 67 of its UK gyms and has initiated a Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA) as part of a restructuring process.

The CVA – supervised by KPMG – is designed to allow the group to restructure lease agreements with landlords.

According to KPMG, the main components of the CVA include the continued trading of all Fitness First clubs, with 57 gyms retained at current rents paid monthly for three years, rather than quarterly.

A further five gyms will be retained at a reduced equivalent monthly rate of 65 per cent over the three-year period before returning to market-based rent. The leases to 18 other UK facilities will remain unaffected.

The clubs being sold – including sites in Birmingham, Chelmsford, and Stevenage – are expected to be transferred to other operators in “most cases”, with members able to move contracts to the new owners at no extra cost.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=PoZ4h

FIA supports ‘Women TRY Sport’ campaign

The Fitness Industry Association (FIA) has offered its backing to the ‘Women TRY Sport’ campaign, which is designed to promote and improve sporting opportunities for women.

The initiative aims to give focus, direction and exposure to the potential offered by women’s sport as a powerful motivator for women.

FIA CEO David Stalker said: “We are very much looking forward to supporting the campaign and help combat the rising levels of women leading sedentary lifestyles.”

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=h6e8w

Malaysians to buy power station site

A joint venture between Malaysian-based developers SP Setia and Sime Darby Property has been named as the preferred bidder for the Battersea Power Station site in London.

The companies have entered into an exclusivity agreement with joint administrators and joint receivers from Ernst and Young to acquire the site in a £400m deal.

Planning permission for a major £5.5bn redevelopment designed by Rafael Viñoly had been approved in 2011, before the site’s previous owner was placed into administration.

The site was marked by international property consultancy Knight Frank in order to secure a new owner for the power station.

The deal provides a brighter future for the iconic site

SP Setia and Sime Darby Property are planning to transform the landmark Battersea Power Station with a “sustainable multi use real estate regeneration project”.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=F0M3l

Sunesis Leisure will allow for a range of facilities

Willmott Dixon has announced its plans to launch a new leisure sector version of its standardised build concept this summer.

Sunesis was unveiled last year in collaboration with Scape - a company owned by six local authorities to provide “various tools” to increase efficiency in the public sector.

The leisure version will allow for the development of a wide range of facilities, including swimming, indoor sports and aerobics, as well as spa and therapy areas.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=d8h2n

Fitness First is offloading the 67 gyms as part of a restructuring move

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50m pool planned for Nottingham

Nottingham is to get its first 50m swimming pool under plans for a £13.5m overhaul of Harvey Haddan Leisure Centre – the final part of the local authority’s wider leisure improvement strategy.

A fitness suite, a health suite and multi-use spaces for dance and movement activities are also proposed for the centre, with the revamp to complement the outdoor athletics stadium and pitches.

Since 2004, Nottingham City Council has embarked on its Leisure Centre Transformation Programme. Financial allocations made available as part of the strategy and the sale of the Beechdale site will support the funding package for the Harvey Haddan Leisure Centre scheme.

NCC portfolio holder for leisure, culture and tourism David Trimble said: “This proposal marks the final phase of our long term programme to provide new, modern leisure centres and facilities for Nottingham people. “This ambitious strategy has delivered significant improvements across the city and attendance figures and revenues have increased at all those leisure facilities where improvements have been completed.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=S0D2g

Green light for Gloucestershire CCC stadium plans

Bristol City Council has backed Gloucestershire County Cricket Club’s plans for the redevelopment of its County Ground home.

Working with Linden Homes, a comprehensive revamp is proposed – including the demolition of the Mound and Jessop stands.

Plans for the leisure centre marks the final part of NCC’s wider strategy

A new-look pavilion will incorporate a modern media centre and the County Ground will benefit from the installation of 7,500 permanent seats. A number of new residential apartments are also proposed.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=i7w1Q

Minister: ‘Coaches key to legacy success’

Sports coaches will play a critical part in creating a sports legacy after the London 2012 Games, according to sports minister Hugh Robertson.

Speaking at the annual UK Coaching Summit on 28 May, Robertson said the Games provide a chance “like never before” to raise the profile of sports coaching. He said: “Behind all great athletes there stands a great coach. However, we need more people to take on these roles both voluntarily and professionally.

“After the Games, there will be many people inspired to take up sport. Clubs, national governing bodies and coaches need to be prepared to help those coming into their sports.”

According to Sports Coach UK figures, there are more than 1.1 million people involved in coaching in the UK – around 76 per cent of which are made up of volunteers.

The two-day 2012 UK Coaching Summit is hosted by Sports Coach UK and supported by Sport England and UK Sport.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=H8P8i

Hugh Robertson: “Behind all great athletes there stands a great coach”
FA’s youth football plans backed

Football Association (FA) shareholders have voted in favour of proposals for a new player development pathway that is set to transform youth football in England.

The plans – approved by 87 per cent of shareholders – include a mandatory 5v5 format for U7s and U8s, and a 9v9 format for U11s and U12s to be phased in by 2014-15.

The smaller-sided formats will enable children to play on appropriate size pitches and goals to allow for greater participation in the game.

The new framework has also been designed to help young players develop greater technical skills, while benefiting from a more “child-friendly” approach to competition.

Nick Levett, national development manager for the national governing body, said: “After 138 roadshows nationwide, it was fantastic to get the endorsement of the majority of the grassroots football community.”

To read more on the FA’s youth development proposals and the extension of the National Game Strategy, see Sports Management 2011 Issue 2, p38: http://lei.sr?a=E6O8E

Details: http://lei.sr?a=x7s1n

£3.5m funding boost for grassroots rugby in Wales

The Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) has announced an “immediate cash injection” worth £3.5m to improve grassroots rugby across Wales – both on and off the pitch.

All of the funding comes in addition to the budgeted activity already planned in its five-year rolling business plan and is targeted at grassroots community clubs.

WRU chief executive Roger Lewis said: “Our focus with this new funding is firmly targeted at the foundations and the future of rugby in Wales.”

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=u6o6s

Public exhibition for new Hertfordshire facility plans

An exhibition of plans for a new facility at Cotlandswick, Hertfordshire, has been launched by St Albans City and District Council and DC Leisure Management.

Residents in London Colney have been given the opportunity to comment on proposals for the new centre, which include a 60-station gym and an exercise studio.

A single court sports hall and synthetic turf pitches will also form part of the Pozzoni-designed leisure centre.

Meanwhile, 50 per cent of the Cotlandswick site will remain as green open space.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=I5x3d

Premier League revenues continue to grow

The combined revenue of the 20 English Premier League clubs increased by 12 per cent to a new record high of £2.3bn for the 2010-11 season.

The latest Annual Review of Football Finance compiled by Deloitte’s Sports Business Group revealed that broadcast revenue growth was a primary factor behind the latest increase in clubs’ revenues.

Broadcast revenue rose 13 per cent to nearly £1.2bn in the first year of a new three-year cycle, with overseas broadcast deal values fuelling the growth.

Commercial revenue was up by 18 per cent – mainly among those with a larger global profile – and total matchday revenue also grew 4 per cent, although more than half of the 20 Premier League clubs reported a decline.

The 21st Annual Review reported further growth in combined revenues.

The Annual Review of Football Finance also found that more than 80 per cent of revenues were being spent on wage costs – up 14 per cent in 2010-11 – and has taken the league’s wages-to-revenue ratio to a record 70 per cent.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=4s1n1

Details: http://lei.sr?a=x7s1n

RCP among Scottish Design Award winners

Edinburgh’s Royal Commonwealth Pool (RCP) – unveiled in March after a £37m revamp, has been named among the winners at the Scottish Design Awards 2012.

The S&P Architects-designed project involved stripping back the A-listed building’s shell and rebuilding the facility. It was the winner of the Re-use of a Listed Building category.

S&P Architects worked with Buro Happold on the RCP scheme, which was also nominated in two other categories.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=V3Q2g

Derry City Council green light for Brandywell Stadium plans

The £10.3m redevelopment of Northern Ireland’s Brandywell Stadium has moved forward after Derry City Council agreed to progress to the next stage of the process.

Members of the development committee backed the project at a special meeting, which now enables a full business case to be submitted to the Northern Ireland Executive.

A new-look 5,100-seat Brandywell Stadium complying with UEFA Category II regulations is at the centre of the proposals.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=v4koU

The plans will allow for greater participation in the game at youth level

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Pozzoni have drawn up plans for the new facility

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Digital legacy service
Sponsor to launch in July

A new online resource offering the public an easy way to find sporting opportunities will launch in July as part of digital legacy plans for the 2012 Olympic Games. 
Sponsor will be delivered by SportEngland and the Fitness Industry Association (FIA) and is to be fully operational in time for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

According to David Stalker, chief executive of FIA, Sponsor will make searching and finding physical activities as simple as other consumer friendly online services.
Read more: http://lei.sr?a=y6V4I

North Kensington leisure centre plans submitted

Plans for a new leisure centre and academy in North Kensington, London, have been submitted to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

London-based Studio E have drawn up proposals on behalf of the local authority, having been selected from a shortlist of six design practices late last year.

The leisure centre element will feature a 120-station fitness suite with the option to partition the space; a room for group cycling classes; and two fitness studios.
Details: http://lei.sr?a=go6D

New exercise therapy room for Lincoln leisure centre

A exercise and consultation room has been unveiled at Lincoln leisure centre, following a £30,000 investment by the City of Lincoln Council and Active Nation.

The Birchwood Leisure Centre room was created using existing budgets and equipment with funding from NHS Lincolnshire to offer a space for low-impact sessions.

Three Power Plate machines have been installed, while the exercise therapy and consultation room also includes a private exercise space and a consultation area.
Read more: http://lei.sr?a=I4D0X

Further growth for Gym Group

Low-cost fitness club group The Gym Group has reported an “outstanding year” in which it saw continued turnover and membership growth despite a “flat market place”.

During the year to 31 December 2011, the chain expanded its portfolio from 10 to 16 gyms and has continued its expansion to more than 20 sites currently in operation.

Turnover increased by 88 per cent from £7.2m to £13.5m over the 12-month period, while a 67 per cent growth in membership numbers took The Gym Group to 96,000 members.

Moving forward, the operator is to accelerate its UK rollout and is expected to reach 35 sites either open or in the fit-out stage by the end of December this year.

The Gym Group’s facilities contain a range of equipment – such as free weights, resistance machines, as well as rolling out virtual classes across its estate.

John Treharne, CEO of The Gym Group, said: “Our plans are supported by a strong pipeline of new sites, the cash generative nature of our model and a robust capital structure.”
Details: http://lei.sr?a=y6V4I

John Treharne expects the operator to have 35 sites open or in fit-out by 2013 and group cycling machines.

UK health/fitness sector worth £3.86bn

The fitness industry increased its total market value by 1.4 per cent to £3.86bn during the year to March 2012, according to the 2012 State of the UK Fitness Industry report.

The figures mean that – over the past three years – the sector’s total market value is up 2.4 per cent, while there has been an increase of 3.6 per cent in membership and a 1.8 per cent growth in the total number of facilities.

At the end of March 2012, 12.1 per cent of the UK population were registered as members of a health and fitness club or publicly-owned fitness facility – compared with 11.9 per cent in March 2011.

A total of 163 new public and private facilities opened during the year to 31 March 2012 – an increase on previous years (149 in 2011; 122 in 2010; and 114 openings in 2009).

The report is compiled by independent analysts, The Leisure Database Company.
Read more: http://lei.sr?a=k8k1r

Active IQ Academy announces EFW partnership

Active IQ Academy has partnered with Ener- gie Fitness for Women (EFFW) – the specialist female-only fitness and weight loss centre – in order to provide eLearning resources.

From May, EFW have been using Active IQ Academy eLearning to deliver the Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Instructing Pre-designed Exercise Sessions to all its UK staff.

The partnership will help EFW ensure that all staff are qualified to Level 2 and are included on the Register of Exercise Professionals.
Read more: http://lei.sr?a=Z4BoT
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New wellbeing scheme revealed

A new £37m programme has been launched to improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life for nearly 170,000 older people across the UK.

dallas – delivering assisted living lifestyles at scale – will examine new methods of using "innovative" products and services in order to create more independent lifestyles.

Four consortia tasked with operating the new initiative, which has been developed by the Technology Strategy Board, have secured £25m of government funding.

The consortia have also made contributions towards the dallas programme, along with funding from the National Institute for Health Research and the Scottish Government.

Year Zero will provide an online application allowing individuals to manage personal health information and Liverpool’s Feelgood Factory will encourage people to plan their futures. Living It Up will develop solutions to allow Scottish communities to adopt healthy lifestyles and the UK-wide i-Focus scheme offers services to help people feel more comfortable at home.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=l3l4y

Report: Exercise ‘no help for depression’

A study conducted by the University of Exeter and published in the British Medical Journal has claimed that regular exercise offers ‘no benefit’ in treating depression.

The NHS-funded study saw 361 patients being given help to boost their activity levels, in addition to receiving therapy or anti-depressants.

All patients had fewer signs of depression after a year, but there was no difference between the exercising and non-exercising groups.

The results call into question current NICE guidelines drawn up in 2004, which suggest sufferers should do up to three exercise sessions a week. The study, however, is in contradiction with other studies on the subject of exercise and mental health.

David Stalker, Fitness Industry Association CEO, said: "It's important to note that this is just one of countless studies into the complex relationship between exercise and depression."

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=X2Z6f

Gosport leisure centre to close earlier than planned

Gosport Borough Council (GBC) has revealed that Hampshire’s Holbrook Leisure Centre will shut on 30 June – earlier than initially planned – due to “serious damage” to its roof.

GBC said the £35,000 cost of replacing the centre’s roof could not be “justified”, with Holbrook Leisure Centre to be replaced by the new Gosport Leisure Park in early 2013. The new complex – to be operated by DC Leisure – will comprise a 70-station gym and is currently being built by Willmott Dixon.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=I7r0A

Details: http://lei.sr?a=8s5S2 (.pdf)

The Fitness Industry Association (FIA) has entered into a partnership agreement with the Meditation Foundation.

As a result, the Meditation Foundation will support FIA initiatives with GPs, healthcare providers, educational institutions and community groups.

The deal will look to provide FIA members with the chance to experience a core “Meditation and Mindfulness for Health and Wellbeing” programme that can be used as an additional revenue stream.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=x8s1H

The foundation will support the FIA’s initiatives

FIA in partnership with Meditation Foundation

Leisure upgrades part of Strabane’s three-year plan

The upgrade and modernisation of three leisure facilities across Strabane, Northern Ireland, forms part of the local authority’s new three-year corporate strategy.

Strabane District Council has committed to a £12m capital development programme between 2012 and 2015, which will improve provision for local residents and visitors.

Riversdale Leisure Centre, Derg Valley Leisure Centre and Melvin Sports Complex are the three leisure facilities earmarked for improvements through the strategy.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=T0w9E

IHRSA chair Art Curtis joins Cybex as director

US-based supplier Cybex has appointed Art Curtis, chair of The International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA), to its board of directors.

Curtis, 62, has held a variety of senior athletic club industry executive positions over the past 30 years. His tenure as chair of IHRSA comes to an end on 30 June.

Curtis said: “The board has built a strong company in Cybex, and I’m looking forward to learning from them as we work together in the coming weeks and months.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=85S2 (.pdf)
New spa offer in Village rebrand

The new Viva Urban Spa concept has been unveiled as part of a relaunch of De Vere Village - the mid-market UK hotel operator now called De Vere Village Urban Resorts.

In collaboration with ESPA and Dermalogica, the concept will take “the spa product out of the typical treatment room” and into hotel bedrooms.

Custom-built treatment rooms will still feature as part of Viva Urban Spa, but it will also allow for in-room head and shoulder massages. Meanwhile, De Vere Village Urban Resorts is trialling its Spa bedrooms in St Davids, which will mirror the atmosphere of the spa and include in-room ESPA products.

De Vere Village Urban Resorts chief executive Robert B Cook said: “The spa business in the UK is having its dose of airline flu and is deep into its transition from a luxury proposition for the Laboutin heeled to almost an everyday necessity.

“The days of the lavish spa retreat serving exotic fruit pulps and gourmet food are dying out fast. Spa is like diffusion in fashion - people want spa in the form that suits them best.”

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=L7w6T

Expansion for Aromatherapy Associates

Product house Aromatherapy Associates has acquired consulting firm Spa Strategy.

Aromatherapy Associates president Geraldine Howard said the acquisition will enable the company to expand its services by providing a spa and wellbeing consulting service to its customers.

“I have wanted to add a spa consulting service to our business for some considerable period,” said Howard.

“Finding the right partner to work with was essential to ensure we provide our spas with not only the finest quality award winning products, signature menus and treatments, but also business development recommendations and highly skilled support to help our partners get the very best from their businesses.”

Spa Strategy managing partner Elaine Fenard will remain a shareholder and managing partner, working with Aromatherapy Associates to grow both aspects of the business.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=g5j6k

Macdonald Hill resort opens new-look spa

Macdonald Hill Valley Spa, Hotel and Golf in Whitchurch, Shropshire, has reopened its spa following a £500,000 redevelopment.

The resort’s new-look Vital Health and Wellbeing Club spa now incorporates eight treatment rooms, a new mud therapy area and a larger relaxation area, along with a spa lounge that offers healthy refreshments.

Other facilities at the resort include two championship-standard golf courses, three restaurants and bars and a health club.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=c2GoD
**HOTELS**

Bulgari opens new London hotel

Bulgari Hotels and Resorts has launched its latest luxury property in the Knightsbridge area of central London – the 85-bedroom Bulgari Hotel and Residences, London.

Facilities include a 2,000sq m (21,528sq ft) spa area, which offers ESPA treatments and is guided by a holistic concept inspired by Asian and European traditions.

The spa – located over two floors and crafted from onyx, teak and Vicenza stone – features 11 private treatment rooms and a double spa suite with a steamroom and a whirlpool.

A nail salon; a 25m swimming pool; and a 150sq m (1,615sq ft) fitness area also form part of the spa, health and beauty area, which is open to exclusive members and hotel guests.

Elsewhere, the hotel boasts a private 47-seat screening room with cinema-quality vision and sound and a library of more than 500 films; II Bar; II Ristorante; and meeting facilities.

Antonio Citterio, Patricia Viel and Partners designed the new central London property in conjunction with Squire and Partners. The developer is Prime Development.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=3s0P

£160m overhaul proposed for Celtic Manor Resort

Celtic Manor Resort near Newport, Wales, is to boast 10 new luxury chalets and 40 apartments as part of a £160m redevelopment announced by owner Sir Terry Matthews.

The introduction of one of the longest zip-wire attractions in Europe will also form part of the project, although further details will be confirmed at a later date.

Earlier this year, the resort opened a new health club and a range of family attractions following a combined £1.05m investment.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=OoM9Q

YOTEL in pursuit of North America growth

YOTEL has entered into a partnership with US-based The John Buck Company to help drive forward the UK-based hotel concept’s growth in North America.

A dedicated real estate fund platform focused on growing the brand in the region has been established, which follows the opening of YOTEL’s first city hotel in New York.

The two companies – along with long-term partners IFA Hotels and Resorts and Kuwait Real Estate Company – have joined forces to raise funds for the venture. The US$250m (EUR200m, £162m) private equity fund aims to help in the acquisition and development of more than US$650m (EUR521m, £421m) worth of YOTEL hotels over the next three years.

As co-general partners of the fund, YOTEL and The John Buck Company will identify, buy, develop and redevelop sites in select cities. Read more: http://lei.sr?a=D829U

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**PHILIPPE ROSSITER**

is chief executive of the Institute of Hospitality

Research from The Mind Gym has found a disturbing disparity between the perception of restaurant staff of the service they provided, and their customers’ opinion: “80 per cent of employees described their delivery of customer service as ‘superior’, but only 8 per cent of their customers agreed!”

When shown such facts, employees were twice as likely to blame the organisation rather than accept responsibility themselves. Researchers said that employers need to focus on “getting employees to pay attention” because guest satisfaction increases the more attention is paid by staff. A further study by the Disney Institute confirmed that the main reason customers leave is down to contact with “indifferent” staff.

So what can be drawn from this research? Both business operators and employees need to address the problem rather than deny its existence. Businesses should ask: how much interest in guests are staff showing? Does the work-load allow staff time to spend with customers? Have employees received proper training in engaging with customers? Other research has also demonstrated that if staff indifference is evident, it will be costing the business valuable custom, and profits!

What do the Edinburgh International Conference Centre, ISS Facilities Services at the Open University, British Legion’s Poppy Break Centres, food service company BaxterStorey and Morag’s Lodge at Loch Ness all have in common? Not much company BaxterStorey and Morag’s Lodge at Loch Ness all have in common? Not much

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**Details:** http://lei.sr?a=3s0P

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**Details:** http://lei.sr?a=OoM9Q

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**Details:** http://lei.sr?a=D829U
Maintaining good hydration is **key for gym users getting results**

Generating sustainable revenue is **key for successful gyms**

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July opening for Novium museum

The Novium, a new £6.9m museum developed around the remains of a Roman bath house in the centre of Chichester, West Sussex, is to open its doors on 8 July.

Keith Williams Architects are behind the design of the attraction, which has been built by Vinci Construction UK and project managed by Robinson Low Francis.

Work on The Novium – named after the city’s Roman name of Noviomagnus Regni – started in late 2010 in order to provide a replacement for the former Chichester District Museum.

The attraction has been constructed on piles, rather than foundations, in order to preserve the archaeology below the building. The public galleries are located on three floors.

In addition to the remains of the Roman baths, The Novium will boast the Chilgrove Mosaic; the Jupiter Stone; and other historic artefacts within its exhibition galleries.

Event Communications worked on the design of the exhibits, with the main fit-out contract awarded to The Hub. Appleyards also worked on the scheme.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=N6b6O

High ropes course to open in Bournemouth

BH Live, the leisure and cultural trust that is currently responsible for operating facilities across Bournemouth, is set to launch a new high ropes adventure course at Littledown Park on 16 June.

Altitude is located within the 47-acre (19-hectare) park and will incorporate a 5m (16ft) confidence course; a 10m (33ft) high ropes course; and a 50m (164ft) zip wire over Littledown Lake.

The attraction will also boast a climbing wall, while visitors will be able to take a “leap of faith” on the Power Fan Descender drop – an 11.5m (37.7ft) vertical drop. Closer to the Edge has worked with BH Live on the attraction’s planning, course layout, recruitment and staff training.

BH Live chief executive Peter Gunn said: “Altitude is a brand new and exciting Bournemouth attraction with huge appeal to residents, visitors and community groups.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Y6g7v

New-look archaeology museum opens in Cambridge

Cambridge University has announced the reopening of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, following the completion of a £1.8m redevelopment programme.

Home to one of the UK’s most significant collections detailing the history of humanity, the museum was shut for 18 months in order to undergo its “radical transformation”.

RHP Architects designed the refurbishment, which also involved graphic designers Lucy or Robert and exhibition designer At Large.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=7R2y2
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**ARTS & CULTURE**

**Tate Britain reaches £45m revamp fundraising target**

Tate has reached the £45m fundraising target for its Tate Britain Millbank Project, which is designed to conserve and upgrade a number of the art attraction’s galleries.

Caruso St John Architects have designed the project, which started in early 2011 and includes the reconstruction of nine galleries in the south part of the building.

Among those to contribute towards the Tate Britain Millbank Project is the Heritage Lottery Fund (£4.9m) and Tate Members, who provided a donation worth £1m.

*Details: [http://lei.sr?a=x7w8D](http://lei.sr?a=x7w8D)*

**The gallery’s photography space will be renamed £193,000 for SNPG’s Photography Gallery**

The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation has announced funding of US$300,000 (£193,000) for the Scottish National Portrait Gallery’s (SNPG) Photography Gallery over the next three years.

As a result, the space at the Edinburgh gallery is to be renamed the Robert Mapplethorpe Photography Gallery.

US-born Robert Mapplethorpe established his foundation 10 months before his death in 1988. It has since supported exhibitions at a number of art institutions.

*Details: [http://lei.sr?a=03K9T](http://lei.sr?a=03K9T)*

**Creative Scotland in investment portfolio overhaul**

Creative Scotland has announced the results of a review into its investment portfolio, which will see nearly 50 arts organisations lose out on regular funding support from April 2013.

The agency has overhauled its portfolio as a result of changes in the way it receives income, with its share of Lottery revenue to rise from £18m in 2010 to £32.3m in 2014.

Creative Scotland is withdrawing its two-year approach to flexibly-funded organisations, following a review of its investment model.

*Details: [http://lei.sr?a=l6m3K](http://lei.sr?a=l6m3K)*

**Plans for tax relief cap on donations axed**

The Art Fund is among a number of groups to welcome George Osborne’s decision to drop plans to introduce a cap on tax relief on donations of more than £50,000.

HM Treasury’s cap would have also applied to gifts worth 25 per cent of a charity’s income and was designed to prevent individuals using available reliefs to avoid tax.

However, Osborne said: “We will proceed next year with a cap on income tax reliefs for wealthy people, but we won’t be capping relief for giving money to charity. It is a great honour to be working with Herzog and de Meuron and Ai Weiwei, the design team behind Beijing’s Bird’s Nest Stadium.

“In this exciting year for London we are proud to be creating a connection between the Beijing 2008 and the London 2012 Games.”

*Details: [http://lei.sr?a=k7O6g](http://lei.sr?a=k7O6g)*

**Serpentine opens 2012 Pavilion**

The Serpentine Gallery in London has unveiled the Herzog and de Meuron/Ai Weiwei-designed Pavilion - the 12th commission in the art attraction’s annual series.

This year’s Pavilion - part of the London 2012 Festival - enables visitors to go beneath the Serpentine lawn to explore the “hidden history” of the gallery’s previous 11 commissions. A total of 11 columns represent previous structures, while the 12th supports a floating roof 1.4m (4.6ft) above the ground. Design features of the Pavilion include cork cladding.

International spa company ESPA is sponsoring this year’s Pavilion, which is operating as a public space and as a venue for the gallery’s Park Nights programme of events and talks.

Serpentine Gallery director Julia Peyton-Jones and co-director Hans Ulrich Obrist said:

“[The cap] would have had a detrimental impact on all charities and their causes.”

*Details: [http://lei.sr?a=C5n1a](http://lei.sr?a=C5n1a)*

The gallery’s photography space will be renamed

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**Creative Industry Finance scheme launched by ACE**

Small- to medium-sized businesses working in London’s cultural sector can now apply for funding under a loan scheme launched by Arts Council England (ACE).

Creative Industry Finance will offer loans of between £5,000 and £25,000, with East London Small Business Centre to operate the programme in the capital.

London is the first stage of the new ACE scheme, with a second area to be announced in due course. It aims to benefit artists, performers and other sector businesses.

*Details: [http://lei.sr?a=j7R4M](http://lei.sr?a=j7R4M)*

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The Photographers’ Gallery at 16-18 Ramillies Street in central London
The UK tourism sector contributes more to the economy than car manufacturing or mining, according to research from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).

The report – sponsored by American Express and compiled by Oxford Economics – found that the travel and tourism sector’s worth to gross domestic product (GDP) last year was worth £101bn.

The figure is 6.7 per cent of the UK’s total GDP – compared with 2.3 per cent for car manufacturing; 1.9 per cent for mining; and 4.1 per cent for chemicals.

Meanwhile, travel and tourism in the UK is expected grow at a faster rate than the overall economy over the next decade.

WTTC president and CEO David Scowsill said: “We have always known that travel and tourism is a vast contributor to economic growth. These figures bear out just how significant our industry is for the UK.”

However, Scowsill added that air passenger duty and high VAT rates are making the sector uncompetitive and called on the government to “sit up and take notice” of its potential.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=G6x7R

UK travel/tourism’s growth is expected to outpace the overall economy in London and is the first phase of a €500,000 (£404,000) Games-time campaign. Tourism Ireland’s Niall Gibbons said: “The Olympic Games present a unique opportunity to showcase the island of Ireland.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=a8Y3r

UKinbound has called on the government to make “immediate and significant cuts” to visa application processing times to drive future growth.

It comes as the organisation revealed the results of its first Business Barometer, a new survey carried out alongside Qa Research to gauge members’ level of business.

According to the results, UKinbound members fear that bookings and visitor numbers will decline due to the “prolonged and drawn out visa process” for tourists.

UKinbound chief executive Mary Rance said: “Despite wanting to come to the UK, [tourists] are travelling to France, Germany and Italy where tourist visas are easier to obtain. These countries are reaping the rewards while our government sits back believing that the Olympic legacy alone will continue to grow visitor numbers.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=p5V7C

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=p5V7C
An end to the staycation trend?

ANDREW WADE
is a partner at
Lawrence Graham LLP
and a director of the
Leisure Property Forum

It is impossible to avoid the endless speculation about whether Greece will leave the euro – the so-called ‘Grexit’. And what about Spain and Portugal, or even Italy? Will the Eurozone retreat to a hardcore group of countries centred round Germany? Of course, no-one knows, and the European Union does have a habit of muddling through. But what if it is different now – how will this affect the leisure sector?

While the Treasury is said to be busy scenario planning, it seems much of business is currently watching and waiting. But we can make some likely assumptions.

Whether we see the re-introduction of the drachma, peseta, lira and others, these currencies are likely to suffer a rapid and drastic devaluation against the euro and the pound – the only quick way for these countries to restore international competitiveness. This assumes that the pound will remain strong, which should still be the case as long as the government’s deficit reduction plan.

It also means that many visitors from those countries would find it prohibitively expensive to come to the UK. If there was a mass exit from the euro, this would see lower visitor numbers – leading to lower hotel occupancy rates and less business for restaurants and other attractions.

However, it would be much cheaper for UK residents to holiday in the usual Mediterranean ‘hotspots’ – and packages there may suddenly seem far better value than the UK ‘staycation’ holidays that have become so popular in recent years. So whatever your business, like the Treasury, it is as well to do some scenario planning now.

PROPERTY

Minoan Group ‘confident’ over Crete plans

UK-based Minoan Group has expressed confidence over the future of its proposed development on the Greek island of Crete, despite the ongoing political uncertainty.

In March, the group lodged an application to be included in the Fast Track process – a framework to accelerate projects considered to be in Greece’s long-term interest.

However, May elections failed to yield a new government in Greece and a second election is now taking place on 17 June, which the group said had delayed the process.

A spokesperson said: “Greece is currently awaiting the outcome of a second election, to be held in June, inevitably slowing almost all bureaucratic processes.

“However, the Minoan Group board remains confident that the project’s full potential will be realised in due course."

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=N6S6D

Swindon ‘hub’ vision moves forward

Swindon’s Oasis Leisure Centre has been transferred to a private operator in the next phase of a £65m scheme to develop a major new “regional leisure hub” for the town.

Oasis Operations Ltd has taken control of the facility under a deal between Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and Moirai Capital Investments signed earlier this year.

Leisure specialists S&P Architects are involved with the design of the new hub, which is to include an indoor ski slope, an indoor arena and a water park at North Star.

Oasis Leisure Centre will also benefit from improvements – including the replacement of its iconic dome - as part of the project, which will be undertaken over the next 12 months.

Moirai has secured four long-term leases to the Oasis and former Clares site from SBC in a bid to drive forward the development, which could attract up to 4 million visitors a year.

SBC cabinet member for leisure and strategic transport Keith Williams said: “The transfer is a very important milestone in our bid to transform Swindon into a regional hub.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=V7fjP

HMV Group agrees deal to sell Hammersmith Apollo

HMV Group has agreed to sell Hammersmith Apollo Limited – the owner and operator of London’s Hammersmith Apollo – to Stage C in a deal worth a total of £32m.

The sale remains subject to shareholder and banking approvals, while Stage C will need the backing of regulatory authorities. It is hoped the sale will be completed by late August.

Stage C is owned by AnSCO Music Club – a division of AEG – and getgo Consulting GmbH, part of CTS Eventim AG.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=G4kJ6u

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Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

Invocation to Tender

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is a world-class visitor destination with Naval Heritage attractions of national importance. The partners in the Dockyard have agreed a common strategy and now wish to appoint a suitably qualified consultant or consultancy team to develop a five-year visitor experience development plan as part of the implementation of that strategy.

Further information can be obtained from Emma Nash, National Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, HM Naval Base (PP66), Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 3NH. Emma.nash@nmrn.org.uk or 02392 727574.

The closing date for tenders is 13th July 2012.

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Boost for heritage sector skills projects

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has announced additional funding worth £13.6m for 51 skills projects through its Skills for the Future and Training Bursaries schemes.

Nearly 790 new placements are to be delivered as a result of the funding, representing 700 years’ worth of paid training opportunities for those looking to enter the sector.

Among the projects set to benefit from the latest investment are the digitising of archives and the conservation of historic gardens, supporting both traditional and contemporary skills.

Skills for the Future, which offers work-based training in a range of areas, received £9.5m of funding to support 43 projects across the UK.

SkillsActive launches ActiveAmbition

SkillsActive has launched its new ActiveAmbition initiative to drive growth by professionalising the active leisure sector and improving standards.

The initiative also aims to raise the aspirations of current and prospective employers and employees through effective skills development.

ActiveAmbition has been part-funded by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills through the Employer Investment Fund. It will see SkillsActive work with employers, trade associations and stakeholders over the next two years.

The new scheme will expand on the work undertaken on the skills protocol within leisure. James Emmett, head of employer engagement at SkillsActive, said: “It is widely recognised that upskilling existing and new employees is vital to the growth of the sector.

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Luxury hotel introduces ‘customerize’ training scheme

Independently-owned boutique resort The Vineyard at Stockcross in Berkshire has introduced a new training initiative called Customerize. The scheme is based on ‘customer psychology’ – the understanding of guest behaviour and the mind-set of guests.

The training will offer staff the tools to adapt and maximise their personal effectiveness, while increasing secondary spend and repeat visits through the creation of customer experiences and customer service in all areas.

Details: http://lei.sr/?a=W6c0l

Th e programme aims to improve standards in the UK’s leisure industry

“ActiveAmbition represents a framework to provide improved skills delivery for the industry, building on the work undertaken by operators during 2011 to create the Skills Protocol and the subsequent report by the Skills Protocol Employer Leadership Group,”

Details: http://lei.sr/?a=C8D4z

It gives me great pleasure to write this as the new SkillsActive CEO at what is an exciting time as Olympic fever grips us all! SkillsActive is evolving into a more tenacious and resourceful company, while remaining true to our goal of a better skilled workforce. I sincerely thank my colleagues for their sustained efforts.

We can be very proud of our many recent achievements, not least The Mayor’s Legacy project – completed in March with more than 8,000 people receiving e-learning intervention for disability training and more than 13,000 training places completed.

ActiveAmbition (see right) will help to drive business growth by professionalising the sector. It will connect more than 170 leading employers to solutions through activepassport and a network of approved training providers, all within a single qualifications framework. SkillsActive will continue to work with employers, trade associations and stakeholders to create and maintain appropriate skills protocols.

We will continue to represent the entire sector and lobby on its behalf. A recent example of this is evident in the petitioning of government by our caravanning sector colleagues, who fought to reduce VAT on caravan holiday homes. MPs responded quickly, enabling the industry to continue its invaluable work for British tourism.

More than 25 Awarding Organisations have offered their commitment to work with us to ensure all qualifications meet the needs of the sector. With this continued support and new initiatives waiting in the wings, I am confident that SkillsActive will ensure the sectors in which we operate continue to work with employers, trade associations and stakeholders to create and maintain appropriate skills protocols.

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FeelGood Supervisor and Assistants, Leisure in Hyndburn, Accrington, UK
Football Head Coach (School and Community Club), Greenhouse, London, UK
Area Sales Managers, Fitness Systems, South, Midlands and the North of England, UK
Customer Services Manager, Harlow Leisure Zone, Harlow, UK
Fitness Instructor, Jubilee Hall Trust, Westminster, UK
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Personal Trainers, The Gym Group, Colchester, UK
Holistic Therapist (Full time), Ushvani, London, UK
Membership Sales Manager, Vale Resort, Wales, UK
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Fitness Manager, Vale Resort, Wales, UK
Personal Trainers, The Gym Group, Norwich, UK
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Sports Officer, GLL, Mile End, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, UK
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General Manager, GLL, North London, UK
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Part-time Lifeguards, Everyone Active, Pitsford, UK
Swimming Teacher, Everyone Active, Fareham, UK
Part-time Lifeguard, Everyone Active, Wickford, UK
General Manager, Everyone Active, Studley, Warwickshire, UK
Recreation Assistant, GLL, Camden Borough, UK
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Personal Trainer, Énergie Group, Various locations, UK
Gym Manager, Pure Gym Limited, Dundee, UK
General Manager, GLL, Greenwich, UK
Leisure Assistant (Lifeguard), GLL, East London
Swimming Teacher, Everyone Active, Cambridge, UK
Leisure Assistant, GLL, West London, UK
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Holyhead marina plans approved

A joint venture between Conygar Investment Company and Stena Line Ports has been given the green light to proceed with a marina scheme in Holyhead, North Wales.

Isle of Anglesey County Council approved the plans, which include 50,000sq ft (4,645sq m) of space with marine-related retail, leisure, restaurants and a hotel.

A 500-berth marina and a residential element is also part of the scheme, in addition to the provision for amenities and visitor attractions.

According to Conygar, the development of the waterfront area will enhance and revitalise the town in a “sustainable manner” – such as attracting an increased number of visitors.

The joint venture is looking to transform Holyhead through the project

A spokesperson said: “The development will act as a catalyst to attract further investment into the Holyhead area.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Q4T4O

2012 Games offers ‘significant boost’ for Brand Britain

New research carried out by professional services provider Deloitte has found that London 2012 is generating a “significant boost” for Brand Britain among overseas residents.

A survey of 6,000 people found that 80 per cent of those from China and India’s growing middle classes feel more likely to want to visit Britain as a result of this summer’s Games.

More than 76 per cent of respondents from China and India associate the Games with the UK – higher than residents elsewhere.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=m6x3b

Green light for Neville’s new OTSC

Ex-Manchester United Football Club captain Gary Neville has been given the green light for the development of a new mixed-use complex near the club’s stadium in Manchester.

AEW Architects are behind the design of the new 10-storey Old Trafford Supporters’ Club (OTSC), which is to be located at the junction of Wharfside Way and Sir Matt Busby Way.

The 8,000sq m (86,115sq ft) building will incorporate a 139-bedroom hotel with associated facilities; public space for use by OTSC members and spectators; and a club shop.

Steve Burne, managing director of AEW Architects, said: “We’ve worked with Gary Neville on several projects and are delighted the application for the supporters’ club has been approved - this is a genuine chance for Gary to give something back to the fans.

“A lot of time was invested in the design stage so that we could be sure the building will provide a true match day experience.

“It is a project that will attract attention from around the world, and one that draws on our experience in the hotel and leisure sectors.”

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=W1D3Z