Chester Zoo welcomed more visitors during 2016 than any other UK zoo in history, with just short of 1.9 million people flocking to see the Cheshire attraction’s collection of 20,000-plus animals. A high in the zoo’s 85 years of existence, a total of 1,896,401 people visited the zoo last year – 12 per cent more than the previous record, achieved in 2015.

The zoo, which is ranked the sixth-best zoo in the world on TripAdvisor, has had a bumper couple of years, thanks to £40m Islands Expansion.

Continued on back cover
**SPORT**

**Everton plans move forward**

Everton FC’s quest to build a modern new stadium is making “solid progress on many fronts”, supporters were told by the club’s executive board.

During Everton’s annual general meeting (AGM), chief executive Robert Elstone revealed that design work, viability studies for transport and planning, and an “evidence-based” business plan had all been completed. Last September it was revealed that Meis Architects were working on the design of the stadium.

Elstone said that while there were “significant remaining issues” to resolve, everyone was “optimistic about the new stadium prospects”.

“It’s an optimism founded on solid progress on many fronts, most encouragingly, progress in our partnership with Liverpool City Council and its willingness to explore options to support our efforts to find the money to make the stadium viable – the biggest challenge we’ve always faced,” he added.

Joe Anderson, the mayor of the city, addressed the meeting, telling delegates that Everton’s plan “had the full support” of the city council. However, Elstone concluded with the caveat that before the project could move forward, the Premier League club needed to “find the answer to the uncertainties” and “work through the unknowns”.

Everton has long had the ambition to relocate from its current Goodison Park home in a bid to grow. Those efforts were supercharged since former Arsenal shareholder Farhad Moshiri acquired a 49.9 per cent stake in the club.

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=t2J2d_O](http://lei.sr?a=t2J2d_O)

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**Team GB delivers gymnastics boost**

The success experienced by Team GB’s gymnastic squad at the Rio 2016 Olympics has contributed to further growth in grassroots participants.

Recreational club participation grew by 13 per cent in 2016 (28,000), adding to the 100,000 extra people taking part since the 2012 London Games.

A further 1,500 individuals have signed up to British Gymnastics’ disability programme.

The boost in numbers has required the national governing body to complete work on 40 facility development projects, boosting club and satellite club capacity by 10,000 across the country. Improvements were made with the help of a £1m Sport England grant.

Interest in the sport received a major boost during and following a stellar Rio Games, where five medals were won and the likes of Max Whitlock and Bryony Page became household names.

Jane Allen (centre) said 2016 had been the sport’s “best year ever”

Jane Allen, chief executive of British Gymnastics, called 2016 “a monumental year – our best ever”.

“The sport and our organisation is going through an incredible period,” she added.

“It started with the countdown to the highly-anticipated Rio 2016 Olympic Games, it peaked with truly monumental medal results and finished with fantastic achievements to celebrate from right across the organisation.”

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=F2U7p_O](http://lei.sr?a=F2U7p_O)
£15m for Scottish indoor courts

SportsScotland and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) have teamed up to launch a £15m development project to double the number of covered courts in Scotland.

The ambition is to increase the number of courts protected against the weather from 112 to 225 over the next five to 10 years, with the "end objective" of boosting participation in tennis.

Michael Downey, the chief executive of the LTA, said the governing body wanted to capitalise on "an historic year for British tennis".

In 2016, Andy Murray won his second Wimbledon and Olympic titles, while his brother Jamie became the first British man to become world number one doubles player.

"We must create a lasting legacy with a purpose-built plan for Scotland," Downey added.

"This investment will make tennis more accessible in the years to come, bringing certainty of play to a climate that sees on average 200 days rain a year and in a country that is under-resourced versus the rest of Britain and other European nations when it comes to the number of covered tennis courts per capita."

The projects is being undertaken in collaboration with Tennis Scotland, although the £15m investment will be split evenly between the LTA and sportscotland.

Bids for the funding will begin being considered in April 2017, and is stage one of the LTA's community-based funding programme.

Details: http://lei.srla=j3Y3v_O

Sports minister Tracey Crouch said sports governing bodies will be able to bid for further funding to address other markets

Clubs with 'inaccessible stadiums' face legal action

The government will back the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) if it wishes to use its legal powers against Premier League football clubs not complying with stadium accessibility requirements, according to sports minister Tracey Crouch.

Crouch told a DCMS Select Committee that "a lot of work needs to be done" across all sports to make venues more accessible for disabled people, but stressed that football must "take the lead" due to the level of resources in the game.

In 2015, Premier League football clubs made a commitment to make their grounds more user-friendly for people with impairments, and comply with the Accessible Stadia Guide by August 2017.

Details: http://lei.srla=W6V2_O

Sport England slashes NGB funding

A number of national governing bodies (NGB) have had their public funding slashed as a result of Sport England shifting its focus to engaging the inactive.

The grassroots sports quango revealed the first round of its 2017-2021 funding decisions for NGBs to reach and engage their "core market". Just under £88m will be split between 26 governing bodies over the next four years, with £17.3m to be split evenly between the LTA and sportscotland.

Awards are split into core market, talent and mass market.

Under the previous funding system, the Whole Sport Plan, NGBs were expected to have absolute oversight over participation in their sports. Now, they will mainly be responsible for retaining those who regularly take part in their sport already.

Badminton England – which is still reeling from UK Sport's decision to completely cut its elite funding – will receive £7.25m, less than half of the £18m it was handed over the previous four-year cycle.

Cycling has also lost a significant amount of funding compared to the £32m it was handed over the last four-year cycle, with £17.3m to play with over the next four years.

Around £20m of funding has also been lost by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), which will have £7.6m to put towards its core market and talent pathways.

However, all governing bodies will be eligible to bid for further Sport England funding to target other types of customers, such as those who are less active, so feasibly funding pots could be increased.

Details: http://lei.srla=v6K9Z_O

Sport venues hit by £30m Manchester council cuts

 Several sport facilities in Manchester, such as the National Cycling Centre, Taekwondo Centre and Squash Centre, may be forced to share back office services as the city council attempts to save £30m.

Manchester City Council announced a raft of cuts as part of its 2017-2020 budget review after central government's financial settlement fell £1.2m short of what was anticipated.

Sport and leisure were not immune to the cuts, with the council attempting to find £100,000 of savings by merging the operations of facilities such as the National Cycling Centre, Taekwondo Centre and Squash Centre in East Manchester, which are run by the Eastlands Trust.

Wythenshawe Forum, which has a swimming pool, gym and sports hall, may also have to reduce its own back office operations as part of the cuts.

Elsewhere, Manchester City Council will reduce grounds maintenance in community sports pitches by £25,000.

Details: http://lei.srla=C599d_O
Jump In to expand after securing Santander funding

Indoor trampoline group Jump In is planning to establish several new sites across “affluent” parts of the UK after securing a funding package via Santander’s Growth Capital. The company is keen to expand to London, Poole, Harrogate, Scotland and the West Midlands and is expecting to open an arena in Aberdeen in early 2017.

Jump In has an existing estate of four arenas in Slough, Tonbridge, Warwick and Enfield, which offer jumping, fitness and free-running classes for adults and children. The expansion project is expected to take place over the next 12-18 months.

Vernon West, executive chair at Jump In, said the funding enabled the operator to “reap the benefits of scale” and “increase competitive strength”.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=p9e8p_O

Everyone Active trials modular gym concept

Sports and leisure operator Everyone Active is trialling a modular gym in Plymouth before deciding whether or not to provide gym users with a permanent solution.

The operator, which manages Plympton Swimming Pool on behalf of Plymouth City Council, has invested more than £200,000 in the new facility. The structure has been added to the swimming centre and is in place for an initial five-year period.

However, if it proves successful Everyone Active will discuss a permanent solution with the local authority.

The gym is fully air-conditioned and has been equipped with Technogym kit.

David Greenwood, Everyone Active’s contract manager, said: “This is the first time Plympton Swimming Pool will offer a gym and we’re very excited to see it open.

“The new gym looks fantastic and we’re confident it’ll go a long way to encouraging more people to get active in different ways.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=N3R4K_O

Physical activity levels ‘not improving’

Levels of physical activity among boys in England continue to be worse now than compared to seven years ago, with girls showing a very slight improvement during the period, according to an NHS health trends survey.

Figures released by NHS Digital show that the proportion of boys meeting physical activity recommendations fell from 28 per cent in 2008 to 21 per cent in 2012. It remained at the lower level in 2015, at 23 per cent.

Among girls there was no significant change in the proportion meeting physical activity recommendations over the seven-year period, with 19 per cent in 2008 and 20 per cent in 2015.

According to chief medical officer recommendations, children under five years of age, who are able to walk unaided, are advised to be active for at least 180 minutes (three hours) per day. Children aged 5 to 18 should be at least moderately active for at least 60 minutes every day. It is also recommended that vigorous intensity activity, including muscle and bone-strengthening activities, should be undertaken at least three days each week.

Among boys, the decrease in the proportion meeting recommendations was particularly pronounced in the 13 to 15 age group, where 28 per cent of boys met current guidelines in 2008, compared with 14 per cent in 2012 and 15 per cent in 2015.

The proportion of girls aged 13 to 15 meeting recommendations also fell over the period, from 14 per cent in 2008 to 8 per cent in 2012 and 9 per cent in 2015.

However, estimates exclude both activities during school hours and active travel to and from school, potentially underestimating the proportion of young children meeting the recommendations.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=6C4n9_O

Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) has grown its network of Better-branded gyms with the purchase of FitSpace – strengthening its position in the low-cost market.

The purchase of the eight-strong nationwide chain brings the number of standalone Better gyms to 17. Better is the customer brand of GLL, a leisure social charitable enterprise.

The budget gym market is dominated by private providers, but GLL plans to prioritise social value over profit, with an emphasis on increasing participation, and maintaining accessibility and affordability.

It will target younger, older and less traditional gym users so more people can benefit from affordable access to physical activity.

Mark Sesnan, GLL managing director, said: “The growing network of Better Gyms brings a fresh name to the high street and proves that a charity can compete very successfully with the private sector in leisure.

“Better still, instead of shareholders, it’s our customers who profit from our social enterprise. All our surpluses are reinvested into our facilities to help get people of all backgrounds, ages and communities more active, more often, thus helping address some of the deep problems in our society today, such as inactivity and child obesity.”

The new facilities added to the Better Gym portfolio are in Bournemouth, Bradford, Holloway, Lincoln, Mitcham, Nottingham, Sheffield and Woolwich.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=f0Z8H_O

Children's physical activity levels are a particular concern
exhibition centre cologne

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Half of GP referrals ‘unsuccessful’

Half the number of people advised by NHS practitioners to go on exercise programmes to get fit end up dropping out within three months, research has concluded.

Researchers at the University of Northumbria found that the dropout rate within exercise referral schemes (ERS) was 50 per cent, most of which occurred in the first six weeks. Between April 2009 and April 2014, a total of 6,894 people in the South Tyneside area had their ERS data analysed.

Findings, published in the Journal for Public Health, showed that 1.4 per cent (98) did not start the programme. At six-week assessment, 37.8 per cent (2,608) had dropped out, and by the final assessment at 12 weeks, 50.03 per cent (3,449) had left the scheme. This meant 49.97 per cent (3,445) completed the programme.

Those completing the scheme were on average 51 years of age, whereas the average age of those dropping out was 46 years old. Those who smoked, were younger, or had serious and complex health conditions, were more likely to drop out of the scheme. The study said: “This highlights the complexity of ERS adherence, suggesting that different subgroups of participants require different approaches to increase physical activity levels, or may not be suitable for ERS in isolation. Further investigation into why these participants are more likely to drop out is required.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=V7Y4A_O

Pure Gym signs deal with PT Academy

Pure Gym sites across the UK will be used as training centres after the operator signed a partnership deal with fitness education company PT Academy (PTA).

The gym operator and education company have launched the Pure Gym Academy, which will see Pure Gym open up its 170 sites to train new personal trainers and fitness instructors. The deal will see an increase in the number of PTA courses available nationwide.

Courses will initially be run by more than 40 Pure Gym assessors, with the opportunity for more staff to become assessors. Newly qualified personal trainers, completing PT Academy level 2 and 3 courses, will be able to run their businesses from Pure Gym sites.

Laura Fortune, Pure Gym product director, said: “We’re delighted to be working with the PTA, providing centres for high-quality fitness training courses to take place as part of the Pure Gym Academy.

“We’re committed to helping the public incorporate exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle and this partnership will enable personal trainers to develop their skill set and pass their fitness knowledge on to members.”

Adam Kiani, PTA founder, added: “PT Academy has a genuine passion for fitness education and our tutors, mentors and assessors are amongst the best in the industry.

“As the leading gym operator in the UK, Pure Gym is the ideal partner to allow us to continue to roll out our personal training courses nationwide and provide new opportunities to students keen to break into the world of personal training.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=A4w7d_O

ukactive bolsters board with new directors

ukactive has broadened the experience of its 10-person board by appointing four new non-executive directors as it aims to boost its influence in the physical activity sector.

Adrian Packer, Sarah Kendall, Peter Bonfield and Phil Rumbelow, who have all joined on three-year terms, come from different sectors and backgrounds.

The appointments are the latest part of the not-for-profit health body’s ongoing mission to improve its governance structure and build on recommendations from a comprehensive review of the organisation by management specialist Portas Consulting in 2014.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=4Zsh8_O

Staff take over leisure provision in Flintshire

Staff at local authority leisure centres in the Welsh borough of Flintshire have come together to take over facility operations from the council – a move that will result in the development of a new gym.

Staff members have created an employee-led mutual – or Community Benefit Society – that has put together a business plan to run the centres, which combine leisure, sport and library facilities.

Following the move to take over operations, the Community Benefit Society expects to invest £2m to boost the leisure provision in the area.

The money will go towards the building of one new gym facility and the refurbishment of two existing gyms.

In addition, Flintshire County Council will make a £1m capital investment to improve the overall condition of the building.

It is anticipated that moving to a Community Benefit Society model will save the council £500,000 in the first year.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Xiijj
SPA & WELLNESS

Small changes can achieve big results

Now is the perfect time to set your business goals, review what you could have done better and make changes.

This time of year can bring an influx of new clients, but don’t think of this as a one-off uplift. Your goal should be to convert every new customer into a regular repeat client.

So it’s time to be proactive, starting with the basics. Ensure that you have the right promotional activity in place, the correct stock levels for treatments and retail sales, fine tune your booking procedures and consider implementing staff incentives to keep everyone at the very top of their game. That goes for you, too. Don’t be lulled into a false sense security that results in a dip in standards. Maintain a professional approach at all times and resist any temptation to cut corners.

But don’t stop there, this time of year is perfect for hosting winter evening events. Get creative with referral offers by putting together winter warmer pick-and-mix packages to meet the needs of your clients while also introducing them to new treatments that they might not have considered previously.

It amazes me how many salons do not recognise the benefits of offering customer consultations. It is well documented that businesses that offer consultation services achieve much higher retention rates because they are meeting customers’ needs and expectations while keeping them aware of the latest products and trends.

Having done all you can to offer the best experience possible to customers both old and new, all that’s left is to go the extra mile by offering them loyalty incentives to keep them coming back whatever the season.

This attention to detail will help your salon to stand out from the competition and ensure that a hot summer leads to year-round growth.

Paula Perkins launches spa consultancy

Former ESPA director of spa development Paula Perkins has launched a new spa and beauty consultancy based near London.

Paula Perkins Spa Consultancy (PPSC) will provide services for the creation and development of new facilities, working alongside architects and interior designers and providing essential guidance for a refurbishment. As well as this PPSC will assist with the pre-opening and training requirements for a new launch and reviewing existing businesses’ strategies and ways to improve ongoing performance.

Initially, the company will focus on the UK and Europe, however, Perkins told Leisure Opportunities: “I would be open to any location dependent on the project.”

Perkins, who describes herself as having been “intrigued by health, wellbeing and beauty probably as early as the age of three or four”, has been in the industry since 1987, when she studied health and beauty. She followed this by studying aromatherapy, reflexology, advanced massage and numerous training courses in industry brands during her time as a practising therapist, senior therapist and spa director in the UK, Dubai and Bermuda.

Perkins joined ESPA International in 1998 as part of its spa consultancy team and has held many roles and responsibilities since, from creating and developing new spas to pre-opening, recruiting and guiding existing operations.

Perkins told Leisure Opportunities the projects she’s most proud of at ESPA are The Spa at Corinthia London, Gleneagles and Grand Hotel Tremezzo.

Details: http://lei.srta=z9G2t_O

FaceGym opens beauty studio

Facial treatment and skincare firm FaceGym, founded by spa consultant and Spa Junkie columnist Inge Theron, has opened its first flagship studio in central London.

Spread over two floors and based in the city’s affluent Chelsea district, the new studio offers a range of non-invasive facial treatments using a mixture of facelifting techniques and technological solutions, including lasers, ultrasound, radiofrequency and cryotherapy.

“The creation process has been a wonderful trip down memory lane, looking at old-school remedy and amazing DIY recipes used by the sirens of the seventies,” Theron told Leisure Opportunities. “We have updated the magic with a potent dollop of science, powerful new ingredients and guaranteed efficacy.”

Until now, FaceGym has operated out of the Selfridges department store in London’s West End and Neville, a hair and beauty salon in the city’s Belgravia area. Its USP is its facelift and ‘facial workout’ techniques, which it describes as “ultimate natural face lift” using “vigorous knuckling movements and high energy whipping strokes to stimulate blood circulations, collagen production and cell renewal to lift, tone and tighten the face.”

The flagship studio offers these types of treatments as well as a mixologist-led skincare bar, which will incorporate an “open beauty lab” concept using natural ingredients.

Details: http://lei.srta=N69gh_O
Visit SPATEX 2017 and opportunities will knock!

SPATEX 2017, the UK’s leading pool, hot tub, spa and sauna exhibition is the event of the year for anyone involved in the water leisure industry. Make a date with SPATEX: Tuesday 31 January to Thursday 2 February 2017 at the Ericsson Exhibition Hall, Ricoh Arena, Coventry.

What is SPATEX 2017?
Now in its 21st year, SPATEX is the UK’s largest dedicated water leisure exhibition. With 100 plus exhibitors, from all corners of the globe, SPATEX brings together everyone in the wet leisure business under one roof.

Who is SPATEX aimed at?
Everyone who is involved in the provision or operation of water leisure facilities. Each year SPATEX attracts a high level of visitors, including leisure operators, local authorities, leisure centres, hoteliers, health clubs, spa owners, architects and many more.

What will SPATEX give you?
See the UK’s largest showcase of products and innovations. Featuring all the major manufacturers and suppliers, SPATEX is a shop window for everything under the wet leisure umbrella from wet and dry safety flooring, spas, water play features, pool enclosures to energy saving chemical control and heating and ventilation units. A vast proportion of the many innovative new products launched at SPATEX are geared towards commercial operators and are seen for the first time at SPATEX. It’s a fantastic opportunity to discover new technologies.

Update your professional skill set, with SPATEX’s double programme of seminars and workshops – there’s no greater source of free industry education and training in wet leisure in the UK. An experienced line-up of experts tackle a whole variety of topics, with particular reference to the commercial sector.

A comprehensive new programme is planned for 2017. Highlights include the latest guidance on Legionnaires’ disease and cryptosporidium on Wednesday 1 February in Arena One at 10.15. Plus, some more unusual topics will be explored.

Speakers include Wasps Rugby Club deputy chair Nick Eastwood

Specialist international personal injury lawyer at Irwin Mitchell, Simon O’Loughlin, will talk all things legal, and discuss the process of pursuing a civil case and proving negligence, among other things (Wednesday, 1 February 12.30-13.00).

Wasps Rugby deputy chair, Nick Eastwood will deliver a keynote speech on Tuesday 31 January at 2pm in Arena 2 on Increasing Your Profitability – maximising leisure facilities and building a brand: the Wasps story.

Following much interest in the national press, owner and managing director of Gartenart Swimming Ponds and board member of the British Association of Natural Swimming Pools, Tim Evans, has been invited to give an introductory talk on swimming ponds and natural swimming pools on Wednesday 1 February (12.30-13.45) in Arena Two.

Further details on these and all the other seminars and workshops can be found at www.spatex.co.uk. Attendees of the workshops receive CPD points and certificates of attendance.

If you have a technical query and would like to be pointed in the right direction, please come to the SPATEX welcome desk at the entrance of the Ericsson Exhibition Hall and we will be happy to help.

For further information on the speakers visit www.spatex.co.uk

Visitor registration is FREE and SIMPLE at: www.spatex.co.uk

We look forward to welcoming you to SPATEX 2017 at the Ericsson Exhibition Hall, Ricoh Arena, Coventry CV6 6GE. Over 2,000 free on-site car parking spaces. For further information, please contact Michele or Helen in the SPATEX office T: 01264 358558 E: helen@spatex.co.uk or michele@spatex.co.uk
**ATTRACTIONS**

**TEA to bring SATE event to the UK in May 2017**

The Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) has confirmed it will host a SATE Europe event in the UK later this year.

Taking place on 4-5 May at the National Motor Museum in Beaulieu, the conference will bring together attraction industry professionals, academics, attractions operators and owners to discuss the future for cultural visitor attractions.

The event will look at how museums and historic houses best tell their stories, ask if we should integrate the experience into the architectural space or reinvent it in a new visitor attraction and delve into the challenges theme parks are facing in a culturally-rich visitor attraction landscape. Details: http://lei.sr?a=Qw7a_O

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**Welsh farm attraction plans £10m expansion**

A Welsh farm attraction in Pembrokeshire has announced plans to invest £10m to build on-site accommodation for its guests, who will be able to choose from a variety of styles of tepees and lodges.

Folly Farm, a family-friendly adventure and animal park near Tenby, submitted a planning application for the Holiday Village expansion to help it keep up with current demand and add to the local tourism offer. Planning permission has been granted for a total of seven lodges, 29 wagons, 43 caravan sites and more than 35 tents, including bell tents and yurts.

Guests will have a choice of luxury glamping or staying in a cosy themed timber lodge on the 11-hectare (27-acre) site, which will be divided into a safari-themed zone, a fairground-themed zone and a farm-themed zone.

Folly Farm opened in the late 1980s and currently consists of a 90-species zoo, amusement park and petting farm.

The attraction welcomes almost half a million visitors every year. Details: http://lei.sr?a=T8q6N_O

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**Scouting Museum plans revealed**

A big tent festooned with neckerchiefs will be the centrepiece of a new museum dedicated to the international Scouting movement.

Architecture studio Tate Harmer has won a competition to design the £6m project, which will be located at Gilwell Park in Chingford, east London – the “spiritual home” of the UK branch of the Scouting Association, and the place where first Scout leaders were trained in 1919.

The museum’s exhibition space will explore the history of the movement and the story of Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of scouting, with artefacts on display including his Rolls Royce, caravan and work papers.

The Scouting Association is applying for Heritage Lottery Funding for the project. If the plans receive planning approval, construction is expected to complete in 2020, with part of the facility open a year earlier to celebrate the organisation’s centenary.

The Scouting Museum’s colourful design is intended to create a celebratory feel for visitors to the attraction, including international Scouting visitors.

The neckerchiefs lining the 1,600sq m (17,200sq ft) coated polyester structure symbolically represent the various troops on the site and all those across the world.

“The concept is to provide a space for celebration – a place that is rooted in Scouting history, but also looks towards its future,” said lead architect Jerry Tate. “The new Camp Square will be at the beating heart of Gilwell Park and the Scouting movement.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=Mzjrj_O

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**‘Dippy’ ready for UK tour in 2018**

Dippy – the iconic diplodocus that has welcomed visitors to London’s Natural History Museum (NHM) for more than 37 years – is embarking on a tour of the UK following the museum’s decision to replace the replica dinosaur with a blue whale skeleton.

The 21.3 metre-long dinosaur, with 292 replica bones made of plaster, has been in the museum’s collection for more than 112 years.

Installed in the museum’s Hintze Hall in 1979, Dippy will start its tour in February next year, visiting a number of cultural locations, including Dorset County Museum, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery; Ulster Museum; Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow; Great North Museum, Hancock, Newcastle upon Tyne; National Assembly for Wales and Number One Riverside in Rochdale, with the tour culminating in July 2020 at Norwich Cathedral.

NHM, which is currently renovating its exterior grounds, has plans to cast Dippy in bronze upon its return to the museum and place it as an outdoor installation in its gardens. The museum is currently masterminding how it will move the enormous blue whale skeleton, beached in 1891 in Ireland, from its mammals gallery – a decision reflective of a new strategy at NHM to reinvent the way it displays and disseminates information and resources to engage better with a modern audience. Details: http://lei.sr?a=f3k3Q_O

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**Folly Farm**

Folly Farm is located in Tenby in Pembrokeshire

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**Dippy**

Dippy has been a feature at the museum for more than a century
Wang to redesign landmark hotel

The Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group has commissioned interior designer Joyce Wang to lead a multi-million-pound restoration of its European flagship, the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London.

Wang – who previously oversaw the recent renovation of The Landmark Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong – will create the overall design concept for the Edwardian hotel’s 181 rooms, suites and public areas. She has taken her inspiration from the building’s park-side location and the glamorous role it played in the early 20th century’s Golden Age of travel.

Art Deco-inspired features, including carefully curated artworks and custom-designed furniture, will result “in a warm and inviting environment” throughout the hotel. In addition, the building’s famous façade will be revitalised.

Meanwhile, hospitality designer Adam D. Tihany has been appointed to oversee the redesign of the hotel’s “next-generation” spa, which will complement a recently installed contemporary pool and fitness area.

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Shakespeare draws record numbers

A record number of tourists visited the five historic houses of William Shakespeare in 2016 to mark the 400th anniversary of his death.

In total, more than 825,000 people attended the attractions in the playwright's birthplace of Stratford-Upon-Avon in Warwickshire over the year, topping the record set in 2014 of 820,000 – his 450th birthday.

The record figures have been driven by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT), which marked 400 years of Shakespeare's creative legacy with a number of significant milestones – including events to celebrate the return of his will to Stratford-upon-Avon for the first time since it was written.

The trust also reopened Shakespeare's New Place – his family home from 1597 until he died in 1616 – which has welcomed almost 50,000 people since it opened in August.

"2016 has shown that Shakespeare’s works are perhaps more relevant today than they have ever been in helping us to understand the world around us, release our creativity and create conversations between everyone regardless of our age, background or ability," said SBT CEO, Dr. Diana Owen.

“We want to continue to share our expertise and the joy of his works with new audiences, and we’re working on innovative initiatives for 2017 and beyond with a range of partners.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=d6N4p_O

Sport ‘key’ for day-trip income

National tourism quango VisitEngland is hoping to capitalise on a bumper year of sport to boost the amount spent by day-trippers beyond the record £45.3bn generated over 2016.

The DCMS arm’s-length body has highlighted events such as London’s hosting of the 2017 World Athletics Championships and World Para Athletics Championship in July and August as good opportunities to bring in income from day trips.

Other sporting events highlighted were the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy, which is being played at cricket grounds in Cardiff, London and Birmingham, and the ICC Women’s Cricket World Cup final, which will be hosted at Lord’s Cricket Ground. England’s flagship football competition, the Premier League, will also celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Over the first 11 months of 2016, England experienced the highest number of day trips since 2011, with 1.35bn visits. Domestic trips were up 14 per cent on the same period in 2015, with spend up 7 per cent.

“IT’s great to see more people getting out and exploring the huge range of quality destinations and tourism products on offer right across the country,” said VisitEngland chief executive Sally Balcombe.

Other attractions that VisitEngland expects to bring significant day trip income are: the new Hadrian’s Cavalry Exhibition; the British Museum Experience moving from London to Liverpool; and a vast blue whale skeleton coming to the Natural History Museum from summer 2017.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=H5E4b_O

Details: http://lei.sr?a=H5E4b_O
Supporting the FM world for 20 years

Well known for providing a personalised and personable environment for delegates and suppliers, the Facilities Management Forum is celebrating 20 years as the event for FM professionals during 2017.

By hand-selecting suppliers to match delegates’ requirements, genuine relationships are built not only on mutual interest to create business together, but strengthened by the multitude of networking opportunities throughout the course of both days - and after the event.

Salisbury, Iron Mountain, LCC Support Services, AGF Fire Protection, Hamworthy Heating, Gallagher, C&M Waste Management and other reputable suppliers from across the FM industry will host a series of face-to-face meetings with attending delegates throughout the course of the event, discussing their products and services, whilst sharing their expertise and knowledge.

Delegates include senior executives from Facilities, Procurement and Property Managers and Directors from a vast amount of client bases; Links of London, Britvic Soft Drinks, Unilever, Dunelm, Police Mutual, Weetabix, DKNY, Charities Buying Group, Thames Valley Police, The Children’s Trust and more. They are all looking to discuss traditional areas such as health & safety management/training, building maintenance and refurbishment and cleaning, in addition to trending topics such as computer aided FM, energy and waste management, plus recycling.

Included for each delegate is the opportunity to attend a dedicated FM seminar programme led by gurus from across the industry.

January’s line-up looks sure to inspire conversation with topics including technology trends in the industry, space management, HVAC systems and energy efficiency, supplier and contract management, procurement and value creation.

Following a compelling first day of meetings and networking, attendees will gather in the evening for an informal night of connections at the evening gala dinner, plus entertainment.

To find out more information on this event, or the 20th anniversary event which takes place in July, please contact Luke Webster on 01992 374074 or email l.webster@forumevents.co.uk to find out how you can be involved.

For more information on their full portfolio of events, please visit their website at forumevents.co.uk
In this ever changing environment, all companies need to source sustainable FM services, products and solution providers that offer the best value for money.

At the FM Forum, you can find your next partners quickly and efficiently. Through a series of pre-arranged face-to-face meetings, networking and seminars, we provide the ultimate platform to create new business relationships between FM professionals and industry product and service providers.

For further information, please contact Mick Bush on 01992 374100 or email mick.bush@forumevents.co.uk
Fairhurst gets stadium project

Fairhurst Design Group, the architect behind Salford’s MediaCityUK and Manchester United’s training ground, has been appointed to design Grimsby Town FC’s ambitious new stadium development.

The Manchester-based studio has overseen the design of the 14,000-capacity stadium and surrounding development, which includes an ice rink, leisure facilities and housing.

Extreme Leisure, the sports brand founded by entrepreneur Alistair Gosling, is partnering with the League Two football club on the £55m project. A rendering released by Extreme Leisure shows what appears to be several community or training football pitches adjacent to the stadium, but Extreme Leisure declined to comment on the exact nature of the leisure facilities until 18 January 2017, when North East Lincolnshire Council presides over a report about the development.

Full planning permission is yet to be submitted, according to a council spokesperson. A section of the local community in Grimsby have been critical of the decision to propose the stadium for the Peaks Parkway area of the town – south of the town centre – but in an interview with Leisure Opportunities earlier this year, Gosling said he was certain the venue would be “at the heart of the community”.

North East Lincolnshire Council will put some funding towards the development, although a spokesperson told Sports Management that the level of investment was yet to be determined.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=ZgH5d

Pop up ‘biophilic gym’ for London

Landscape architect Lily Jencks has designed “the world’s first biophilic gym” for fitness concept Biofit.

Described as “an organic gym concept for big city life,” the pop-up health club will operate in west London from 9 January to 3 February 2017.

With a brief to “bring the outside world indoors”, Jencks has created an environment where gym-goers can work out amid natural vegetation, colours, materials, shapes, scents and sounds.

Biofit – founded by health and fitness entrepreneur Matt Morley in 2015 – has been inspired by tech companies such as Apple and Google, which are bringing air-purifying plants and natural landscaping into their offices to reduce employee stress and improve productivity levels.

“Our society needs to calibrate our relationship with the natural world, which is leading to a surge in this kind of biophilic, nature-inspired design,” said Jencks.

“This gym project is about living more intimately with the green living world.”

Describing Biofit’s philosophy, founder Matt Morley said: “To counteract the effects of a sedentary, 21st century lifestyle, Biofit integrates mobility work into every session to restore range of motion and protect the joints from injury. We also use play to practice new movement skills in a fun, interactive way.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Q8U8t_O

Government confirms plans for new towns

The government has unveiled details of plans to deliver more than 48,000 homes across England in 14 new garden villages and three new garden towns.

The decision to green light the new settlements expands on the Conservative government’s garden village initiative, revealed by former British chancellor George Osborne last year.

The three new garden towns – defined as developments of more than 10,000 homes – will be created in Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire, Taunton in Somerset and Harlow & Gilston on the Essex and Hertfordshire border. New planning freedoms are set to be offered for all garden developments, and the move could open up plenty of opportunities to create new leisure buildings and projects.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=wyQz9f_O

Yorkshire clubs urge swift decision on Headingley

Yorkshire County Cricket Club and rugby league club Leeds Rhinos have pleaded with the local council to make a quick decision on their planning application to redevelop Headingley Stadium.

Leeds City Council is set to hold a planning committee meeting this month (January) and both clubs are asking for an outcome following the meeting.

In November, the clubs revealed that redevelopment work had to be put on hold after it failed to secure the appropriate planning permission. Work was then scheduled to begin this month.

The decision to postpone has caused concern that the stadium – which homes both the cricket ground and rugby league pitch – would not be completed in time to host several key international fixtures set for the venue – such as matches from the 2019 Cricket World Cup and 2021 Rugby League World Cup.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=f8a9Y_O
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We start 2017 with some great news for the sector. Thanks to the combined efforts of CIMSPA and DCMS, the Advanced Apprenticeship for Sporting Excellence (AASE) has been rescued. Following several meetings, the Department for Education (DfE) has agreed to continue with the current AASE arrangements until March 2018.

The programme is designed to help young people aged 16 to 18 combine education and sport. It’s aimed at athletes who have a realistic potential of achieving excellence in their sport but who also want to continue with their education.

In a statement, the DfE said: “This short-term measure is mindful of the need for a solution which covers recruitment and funding for AASE in 2017-18. Sustainable successor arrangements for AASE, which fit into government’s policy on post-16 education, skills and apprenticeships, will need to be worked up for April 2018 onwards. Discussions on this and on how sport fits into the development of technical skills, as part of the skills plan, continue between government and sport sector representatives. We will provide further details on arrangements in due course.”

On the subject of post-16 education, we discussed our concerns about the impact of the post-16 skills review and apprenticeships in another constructive meeting with DfE. They were impressed by our work in setting up an employer led Professional Development Board and our achievements in developing professional standards. They recognise the size of our sector and the impact it has on wider government agendas, however they will not move from their plan of grouping occupations with common knowledge and skills.

They are willing to work with us to find a mutually beneficial solution and we are due to meet with the DfE this month.

This is a positive start to 2017 and illustrates how CIMSPA is working on behalf of the sector to benefit all those working in sport, leisure, fitness and physical activity.
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Katie Smith, Visitor Services Manager, Heritage Services, the Roman Baths

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Full-Time and Part-Time Operations Assistants (Lifeguards)

We are looking for full time and part time Operations Assistants who are flexible, committed and enthusiastic to join our small team and assist in the day to day operation of this dual purpose facility. A current National Pool Lifeguard Qualification would be desirable but not applicable as training will be provided.

Freelance Private Swimming Teacher

Candidates applying for this position must have the following: minimum ASA level 2 qualification, relevant insurance, friendly and outgoing personality, excellent communication skills, commitment and passion. In return, you will work on a self-employed basis with the opportunity to expand your client portfolio through the Harrow School Sports Club membership base. Harrow School Sports Club offers access to significant pool time during the day and in the evenings, with a competitive rental system and introductory rates that mean your success as a freelance private swimming teacher is in your own hands.

Application packs are available to download from the School’s website by going to www.harrowschool.org.uk/Work-At-Harrow and clicking on the vacancy, or by contacting the HR Department on +44 (0)20 8872 8314 or recruitment@harrowschool.org.uk.

If you have any queries or would like further information regarding a position, please email HR or call them on +44 (0)20 8872 8314. The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and all successful applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post with any past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. Harrow School is an equal opportunities employer.

ASA level 2 qualification, relevant insurance, friendly and outgoing personality, excellent communication skills, commitment and passion. In return, you will work on a self-employed basis with the opportunity to expand your client portfolio through the Harrow School Sports Club membership base. Harrow School Sports Club offers access to significant pool time during the day and in the evenings, with a competitive rental system and introductory rates that mean your success as a freelance private swimming teacher is in your own hands.

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Recreation Assistants
(Lifeguards)
Company: GLL
Location: Various locations, UK

Personal Trainers
Company: énergie group
Location: Various locations, UK

Football Development Officer
Company: Westminster County FA
Location: Kendal, Cumbria, UK

Group Sales and Marketing Manager
Company: 360 Play
Location: Milton Keynes, UK

Senior Leisure Assistant
Company: Inspiring healthy lifestyles
Location: Selby, UK

Swimming Lesson Manager
/Aquazone Manager
Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Kettering, UK

Customer Advisor
Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: North Somerset, UK

New Business Support Officer
Company: Royal Life Saving Society
Location: Worcester, UK

Personal Trainers
Company: The Gym Group
Location: Various locations, UK

Team leader
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Aylesbury, UK

Facilities Technical Manager
Company: Water Babies
Location: Honiton, Devon, UK

Membership consultants
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Basildon, UK

Fitness Instructor
Company: truGym
Location: Chatham, UK

Project Manager
-Apprenticeships
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Yoga Instructor
Company: YMCAfit
Location: Nationwide

Sports Assistant
Company: University of Bath
Location: Bath, UK

Personal Trainer
Company: YMCAfit
Location: Nationwide

General Managers
Company: The Gym Group
Location: Various locations, UK

Centre Manager
Company: Tone Leisure
Location: Wellington, Somerset, UK

Head of Parkwood Outdoors
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Worcester, UK

Assistant General Manager
Company: The Gym Group
Location: London Charing Cross, UK

Senior Leisure Assistant
Company: Harlow Leisurezone
Location: Essex, UK

Leisure Assistants
Company: Harlow Leisurezone
Location: Essex, UK

Membership consultants
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Sutton-in-Ashfield, UK

Duty Manager
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Melton Mowbray, UK

Interim Accountant
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Worcester, UK

Digital Campaign Executive
Company: Royal Life Saving Society
Location: Worcester, UK

Older People’s Activity Co-ordinator - Swindon
Company: GLL
Location: Swindon, Wiltshire

Lifeguards
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Various locations, UK

Fitness Instructor
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Various locations, UK

Crew Member / Fitness Instructor
Company: énergie group
Location: Loughborough, UK

Fitness Motivator
Company: Everyone Active
Location: London, UK

Casual Fitness Motivator
Company: Everyone Active
Location: London, UK

Duty Manager
Company: Redgrave Sports Centre
Location: Marlow, UK

Recreation Assistant
Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: South Northants, UK

Receptionist x 2
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Nottingham, UK

Membership Consultant
Company: Link4Life
Location: Rochdale, UK

Lifeguard Apprentices
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Waltham Abbey, UK

Swimming teachers
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Various locations, UK

Sales manager
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Carshalton, UK

Sales manager
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Watford, UK

Membership consultants
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Various locations, UK

Assistant Swimming Teacher
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Bristol, UK

Commercial Director
Company: Absolutely Leisure
Location: Maidenhead, UK

Leisure Operations Manager
Company: The Swinton Estate
Location: Swinton Estate, nr Ripon, UK

Director of Sport
Company: Glasgow Life
Location: Glasgow, UK

Team leaders (Wet)
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Loughton, UK

Systems Assistant
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Worcester, UK

Regional Partner Manager
Company: Move GB
Location: London, UK

Purchase Ledger Assistant
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Worcester, UK

Duty Manager
Company: Simply Leisure Ltd
Location: West Glamorgan, UK

Active Forests Coordinator (Sport)
Company: Forestry Commission
Location: Wrinlatter, Braithwaite, Keswick, UK

Self Employed Fitness Instructors
Company: Highgate School
Location: London, UK

General Manager
Company: The Gym Group
Location: Manchester Fallowfield, UK

Assistant General Manager
Company: The Gym Group
Location: Altrincham, UK

Lifeguard
Company: Oxford Brookes University
Location: Oxford, UK

Recreation Assistants
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Various locations, UK

Commercial Manager
Company: The Flintshire Leisure Society
Location: Flintshire, UK

Group Exercise Instructor
Company: GLL
Location: Belfast, UK

Duty Manager
Company: Achieve Lifestyle
Location: Surrey, UK

Operations Manager
Company: Achieve Lifestyle
Location: Surrey, UK

Duty Manager
Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Newbury, UK

Service Manager – Leisure
Company: Gedling Borough Council
Location: Nottingham, UK

Operations Manager
Company: Lee on the Solent Tennis, Squash and Fitness Club
Location: Hampshire, UK

General Manager
Company: JD Gyms
Location: Batley, West Yorkshire, UK

Fitness Instructor
Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Northamptonshire, UK
Cuts could create ‘cultural cold spots’

Funding cuts at a local level could result in “cultural cold spots” across Britain, according to the results of a recent government inquiry. According to the report, there has been a 20 per cent reduction in spending by local authorities between 2010 and 2015, with further cuts expected through to 2020.

Further to this, “downward pressure” on local authority budgets is expected to continue, with the key Revenue Support Grant expected to halve from £1.5bn in 2015 to £0.4bn in 2020.

Released in December, Countries of Culture: Funding and support for the arts outside London found that the biggest cultural impact of local authority cuts would fall where offerings were already weakened.

The inquiry called for a better regional balance of culture funding, with a significant disparity between London and the rest of the UK. London received the bulk of government funding for the arts despite being in a better position to raise alternative revenue than locations outside of the English capital.

The report calls for a better ‘regional balance’ of culture funding

“We are concerned that the largest sums of money that Arts Council England allocates, through grant in aid, are still disproportionately given to London-based National Portfolio Organisations and Major Partner Museums, even if many of them tour the country or collaborate with regional and local cultural organisations,” said the report.

“We recognise London as a leading cultural asset, but would like to see a better regional balance for ACE grant-in-aid expenditure.”

Details: http://lei.st?u=h8n2k_O

Chester Zoo breaks attendance record

Continued from front cover

According to the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA), Chester Zoo is also the UK’s most visited paid for visitor attraction outside London, with a report last year ranking it 12th out of the UK’s most visited destinations.

Starting this month (January), the zoo will embark on a new phase of improvements to its exhibits – a £7m investment to enhance the habitats of its animals.

Developments will include a new behind the scenes Bornean orangutan area in the zoo’s Realm of the Red Ape exhibit and improvements to its Monkey House.

A new outdoor space will also be created to accommodate a pair of two-toed sloths, as well as a new habitat for the giant anteater to run alongside the existing capybara home.

Islands will also gain new additions with a new walkthrough bird aviary, a new home for the zoo’s two sun bears, and a Malayan tapir exhibit.

The investment is in line with the zoo’s philosophy of ‘always building’ – continually investing in animal habitats that follow the principles of animal wellbeing.

Details: http://lei.st?u=W3K6b_O

Nearly 1.9 million people visited Chester Zoo last year – a 12 per cent increase on the year before

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