CIMSPA team in place to drive transformation

The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) has appointed a team to restructure the organisation in line with the plan approved by members.

The team is comprised of interim chief operating officer Tara Dillon supported by Spencer Moore and Ben Gittus, who have joined from the Amateur Swimming Association and SkillsActive respectively.

They will report to CIMSPA trustee and ukactive CEO David Stalker, who began the business review in June 2013.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=B7v5n

Olympic Park opens to public after £300m investment

East London’s Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park has officially opened to the public following its redevelopment after the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Stretching across 230 hectares (568 acres), the site is the biggest new park to open in Europe for 150 years. A programme of music, sports and arts ran throughout the weekend to mark the opening.

More than £300m has been invested in the park since the closing ceremony of the 2012 Paralympic Games. The works in the park have been overseen by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC).

Parts of the park have already been accessible to the public, including the “northern half” which houses the Lee Valley VeloPark, touted as the UK’s foremost cycling facility.

The southern half - South Plaza - covers the size of 16 football pitches and sits between the Zaha Hadid-designed aquatics centre, the Olympic Stadium and the ArcelorMittal Orbit - the UK’s tallest sculpture.

The site has has more than £300m worth of investment with future developments still planned

As well as the iconic sporting facilities, the park includes interactive fountains, waterways, landscaped gardens and children’s play areas with giant swings and climbing walls.

The waterways that stretch up to the centre of the Park will be used for transport including water taxis, kayaking and other water based activities, while along the waterways future developments will include floating restaurants and cinemas.

Sustainability has been at the heart of the park’s design.

Using the London 2012 Games’ infrastructure as inspiration, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is seeking to provide a “pioneering model of urban regeneration” by promoting sustainable lifestyles through sustainable infrastructure.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=w2V5Q

Maria Miller resigns as culture secretary

Maria Miller has resigned as culture secretary after a lengthy row over expenses, with the tourism industry expressing its sadness at the departure of a “strong representative.”

After intense media speculation over her position, Miller sent a letter of resignation to Prime Minister David Cameron.

In response, Cameron thanked her for serving in the cabinet and expressed the hope that she would be able to return “in due course.”

Miller had been at the centre of a row about expenses claimed to pay the mortgage of a house she owned in Wimbledon.

The Basingstoke MP was cleared of funding a home for her parents at taxpayers’ expense, but was told to repay £5,800 of the expenses she claimed.

Previously, independent parliamentary commissioner for standards Kathryn Hudson had recommended she repay £45,000, but this was overruled by the Commons Standards Committee. Continued on back
**SPORT**

**Spurs hope for stadium move by 2017**

Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (Spurs) is hoping to have its new stadium ready for the start of the 2017-18 season.

The proposed £8,000-capacity stadium, which forms part of the ambitious Northumberland Development Project in North London, has received initial planning permission – but it is understood the club still needs to secure additional funding to cover construction costs.

In a statement, Spurs chair Daniel Levy said the club had now identified those properties it intends to sell to raise cash and that a tender for the stadium will be launched later this year.

“We’ve undertaken a review of our property holdings in order to determine the essential core properties required to deliver the new stadium, with non-core properties – that are excess to requirements – being sold and the proceeds used to pay down debt secured against those properties,” he said. “The Northumberland project is a major development that will present ongoing challenges and subject to these challenges being manageable we anticipate going out to tender for construction late this year which will make a stadium opening date of summer 2017 feasible.”

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=p7E5g](http://lei.sr?a=p7E5g)

**Olympic athletes’ commission joins forces with PFF**

The British Athletes Commission (BAC), which represents more than 1,500 of Britain’s Olympic and Paralympic athletes, has joined forces with the Professional Players Federation (PFF).

Set up in 2004, BAC’s mission is to ensure that UK athletes in world class performance systems train and compete within a “fair, supportive and transparent system”. The organisation is a funded partner of UK Sport.

The new partnership aims to strengthen the position of BAC athletes within professional sport in the UK.

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=Y7E4M](http://lei.sr?a=Y7E4M)

**FA to allow artificial pitches in the FA Cup**

The Football Association (FA) is to allow the use of 3G artificial pitches in every round of the FA Cup, starting from next season (2014-15).

Until now, artificial playing surfaces have not been allowed beyond the competition’s first round proper.

The announcement is the latest endorsement given to artificial pitches by the FA, which is increasingly calling for clubs of all levels to install non-grass pitches in order to allow more community football to take place and to help in poor weather.

FA general secretary Alex Horne said: “Clubs are seeing the benefits of using 3G surfaces across the football pyramid and clubs who play on those surfaces can now retain home advantage in the competition.”

He added that the community aspect played a part in the decision, too. “3G pitches are a very useful asset and capable of delivering 50 plus hours per week as compared to a natural turf pitch which can deliver perhaps five hours per week,” he said.

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=M5e6a](http://lei.sr?a=M5e6a)
£9.6m invested in sustainable sport

A total of 28 community sports projects will become more environmentally sustainable thanks to the latest round of Sport England’s Improvement Fund.

Now in its second cycle, the Improvement Fund is aimed at medium-sized sport projects and facilities, awarding capital grants worth between £150,000 and £500,000 to initiatives that seek to “improve the quality and experience of sport”.

The second round prioritised sports projects that will deliver savings by making facilities more efficient and sustainable.

Sport England estimates that a typical sports club spends around 30 per cent of its running costs on energy, and about £10,000 each year on electricity alone. By making changes to become more sustainable, it is hoped clubs can reduce their energy bills by 10-20 per cent.

Projects to receive funding include Taunton Vale Sports Club, which has been awarded £273,000 to refurbish its existing hockey pitch and install LED lighting across the club, as part of improvement works costing £500,000.

Lighting for the clubhouse, indoor sports hall, tennis and netball courts, football area and floodlighting across the hockey pitch, will all be upgraded to LEDs. The project – one of the first of its kind for sports clubs – will reduce light spillage affecting local residents from the outdoor lights, reduce maintenance costs as well as reducing energy consumption in the clubhouse.

Other bodies to receive funding include Southwark Council which has been awarded £252,000 to improve the energy efficiency of Peckham Pulse healthy living centre.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=t6D3S

Castleford Tigers reveals new stadium plans

Super League rugby club Castleford Tigers has revealed detailed plans for a new 10,000-capacity community stadium in the town.

To be located close to the Junction 32 of the M62 motorway, the stadium will form part of a £135m mixed development project proposed by London-based developers Lateral Property Group (LPG). The stadium would also be funded in its entirety by the retail development.

Designed to meet Super League requirements, the stadium will provide administration, changing facilities, restaurants and hospitality areas, with a mixture of both seating and standing terraces.

LPG has entered into talks with Wakefield Council over the Junction 32 plans, which also include a major retail development, a new 50-acre county park and a number of leisure spaces.

Philip Lunn, MD of Lateral Property Group said: “This is a major scheme for the area on a site which has impressive transport links.

“In addition to delivering this new stadium for Castleford Tigers, the enabling retail development could bring a massive boost to the local economy.”

LPG has appointed Leeds-based GMI Construction as the principal contractor for the scheme, subject to planning approval.

It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2015 and the new stadium would be ready for the 2017 season, with the retail opening later that year. Details: http://lei.sr?a=r4x4U
Correlation between activity levels in mothers and children

The more active a mother is, the more active her child is likely to be, according to new research published in *Pediatrics*.

Researchers from Cambridge and Southampton Universities worked together for the study, which observed the patterns of 354 mothers and four-year-olds over a period of seven days.

Experts used heart rate monitors combined with an accelerometer to measure levels of physical activity, with the results showing a direct, positive association between physical activity in children and their mothers.

Having collated the results, scientists were able to show that for every minute of moderate-to-vigorous activity the mother undertook, her child was more likely to take part in 10 per cent more of the same type of activity. Details: [http://lei.sr?a=G7Z5G](http://lei.sr?a=G7Z5G)

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**Disregard ‘feelings’ over obesity**

A leading leisure industry medical advisor has said doctors need to ditch concerns about hurting obese patients’ feelings and be more proactive in prescribing exercise and weight management programmes.

Dr Davina Deniszczyc, GP and medical director of well-being for Nuffield Health, was commenting on a new report that found as many as six million overweight UK citizens could be at risk of life-threatening illnesses as they’re unaware of the extent of their obesity.

The research from Nuffield Health – the UK’s largest healthcare charity – found nearly half of clinically obese patients (44 per cent) say they have no concerns that they are at risk of serious illness or premature death due to their weight.

The study of 3,126 UK adults found ignorance of the health risks surrounding obesity was the key reason for this laissez faire attitude. More than two thirds of respondents were unaware that being obese increases the risk of developing types of cancer, liver disease and conditions like osteoarthritis.

As many as six million people in the UK could be at risk from obesity “As healthcare professionals, we need to prioritise the health of our patients over the risk of them having ‘hurt feelings’ caused by a frank and open conversation about their weight,” said Dr Deniszczyc.

“It’s vital that people have information to make informed decisions. While we need to increase access to clinically recognised weight management programmes, some people may simply benefit through structured information, goal setting, an exercise regime or through tackling the root cause of their obesity.”

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=J4U9j](http://lei.sr?a=J4U9j)

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**ukactive wants CIMSPA watchdog role**

ukactive CEO David Stalker has outlined his organisation’s credentials to serve as watchdog for the national physical activity plan suggested in a report from the All-Party Commission on Physical Activity.

The report – launched by a cross-party group of politicians including Tanni Grey-Thompson – sets out clear recommendations to tackle the growing physical inactivity epidemic in the UK.

It calls for a National Plan of Action to tackle declining levels of physical activity, backed by all sectors and political parties.

It also recommends establishing an independent body to have oversight and ensure accountability for the plan and Stalker believes ukactive – which highlighted the extent of the inactivity crisis in a high-profile report – would be a suitable candidate for the role.

“ukactive is uniquely positioned to be able to be a delivery partner and effectively manage the evaluation of a national plan, so of course we’re open to discussions,” said Stalker in a statement sent to Health Club Management.

Stalker also warned that tackling inactivity must take an all-encompassing approach, adding: “We must be cautious that the youth demographic aren’t seen as the main driver in overturning what is a societal problem that really does need to be tackled holistically.” Details: [http://lei.sr?a=J6n5S](http://lei.sr?a=J6n5S)

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**Bannatyne’s puts £850,000 into north east club upgrades**

Bannatyne’s Fitness has invested £850,000 into four of its north east health clubs as part of a major upgrade to workout equipment.

The investment comes after The Bannatyne Group recently announced a £92m deal with M&G Investments for the turnover of a major upgrade to workout equipment.

The company has turned to providers Technogym to replace cardio -vascular machines at Coulby Newham, Ingleby Barwick in Stockton, plus Darlington and Durham.

The company has invested £250,000 at Coulby Newham and £300,000 in Darlington, while Ingleby Barwick has benefitted from a £180,000 investment.

Colin MacGillvray, north east regional manager at Bannatyne Fitness, said: “Continually investing in new workout equipment is hugely important because it ensures members are always able to access the very best and most up-to-date equipment to help them achieve their personal fitness goals.” Details: [http://lei.sr?a=Z8y4D](http://lei.sr?a=Z8y4D)
DC Leisure now ‘Places for People’

Leisure operator and developer DC Leisure has rebranded as a social enterprise called Places for People after being acquired by the property management and development group of the same name.

DC’s merger with the not-for-dividend organisation marks the first time a leisure provider has joined forces with a housing provider and the outfit says its core mission is to create active places and healthy people. The financial details of the deal have not been disclosed.

Places for People Leisure Management will now be the new industry facing brand replacing DC Leisure Management. It will continue to provide leisure facilities and tender for outsourced leisure management contracts, while aiming to drive leisure participation through the building of new centres and improving existing facilities.

Steve Philpott, chief executive of Places for People Leisure, and CEO of DC leisure for the past decade, said: “This rebrand enables us to highlight what we can offer in the future as a community-minded organisation bursting with passion and enthusiasm to get communities more physically active.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=T5A4D

Regular exercise helps to combat dementia

A series of recent studies have added credence to the notion that physical activity is far more effective than mental exercises, such as crosswords or puzzles, in staving off dementia.

A recent study from the University of Pittsburgh showed the immediate positive effect brisk outdoor walks had on the brains of middle aged and elderly men and women, compared to those who were inactive.

Focusing on those aged 55 to 80, researchers found that the regular workouts increased the size of the hippocampus of the men and women who exercised by walking for 40-minutes three times a week expanded by up to two per cent.

Whereas the brain usually shrinks with age by around one per cent per year, the brains of the men and women who exercised for 40-minutes three times a week expanded by up to two per cent.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=V9n6c

Workington’s £9.4m leisure centre plans unveiled

Allerdale Council has revealed images for Workington’s new £9.4m leisure centre.

If given the go ahead following a planning application submission on 14 April, the centre will include a 25m eight-lane swimming pool with spectator seating, a four-court sports hall, soft-play area, 100-station gym, a spinning studio, climbing wall, artificial pitch, two squash courts and a café. The centre will also feature spa facilities including a sauna, steamroom and spa pool.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=P4E7D
Finding new customers is expensive.

Emailing your current customers the right way can increase your revenue.

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A 5% increase in customer retention using email marketing can increase a spa's profitability by 75%.

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Sources:
ISPA 2011 U.S. SPA INDUSTRY STUDY
http://searchengineland.com/
SpaBooker Promote Companion Guide

With SpaBooker’s Promote you can use emails saved in your database to automatically invite customers to book another appointment. Contact us today (866.966.9798) to keep your customers coming back.
£90m Torbay plans gain approval

Torbay Council and Torbay Development Agency granted planning permission for a £90m luxury resort and flats development on the site of the existing Torquay Palace Hotel in Torbay in March.

Mapstone Developments are consulting GJR Architects to create the 137 apartments – a mix of flats and duplex units – with 270 parking spaces, private spa and leisure facilities.

Divided into four blocks of flats in a gated, concierge-serviced community linked to the hotel, these apartments will finance a £20m staged redevelopment of the entire hotel complex.

Accommodation within the hotel will be increased to 160-bedrooms with an extra penthouse storey. New luxury spas, restaurants and swimming pools are included in the Palace Hotel’s expansion plans, as well as an extension of their 28-acre site to include Ansteys Cove and a stretch of Redgate Beach.

“This is a new phase for the Palace Hotel to respond to the changing needs of the tourism market,” said Paul Uphill, MD of the Palace Hotel.

Work on the project may start as early as summer, enabling the reopening of Redgate Beach after it was closed off for 15 years following submergence.

The exact sum of money being lent to developers – The Trevor Osborne Property Group, CP Holdings plus Danubius Hotels – has not been disclosed and the completion date for the development has been pushed back to 2016.

“The county council, High Peak Borough Council, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund all share our determination that, after 10 years of working together, we must get contractors on site to restore the heart of Buxton in a way that the whole community deeply desires,” said developer chair, Trevor Osborne. Details: http://lei.sr?a=2A4g9

Champneys closes underperforming day spas

Spa operator Champneys closed its day spa in Bath, UK, on 31 March after six years of trading. Its day spa in Brighton will also shut its doors on 22 April due to underperformance.

Owner, Stephen Purdew, explained the company will be focusing on developing its four destination spas and its six remaining day spas in Chichester, Enfield, Guildford, Milton Keynes, St Albans and Tunbridge Wells.

He added that the development of the company’s online retailing is important for the brand’s growth, but the decision to reduce its portfolio of day spas – as part of a strategic business portfolio review – highlights the wider challenges facing day spa operators. “Like any other retail outlet on the high street, we’re subject to the vagaries of the economy, changing customer demographics and local parking restrictions,” he said. “As a result, unfortunately, these locations have not been as successful as we’d hoped.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=E2A8q

Hoteliers misunderstand the spa industry: McCann

Sheila McCann, general manager of the Chiva-Som destination spa in Thailand, has said that most hoteliers don’t fully understand the spa industry because of their backgrounds.

Most come up through food & beverage or the rooms division,” said McCann, speaking to the Spa Handbook. “They don’t take spas seriously enough as an operation to ever really enable the full business potential, although, thankfully this pattern is starting to change.”

McCann also said that having a spa person on board at a hotel brings a new dimension of understanding about the emotional needs of hotel guests.

For more from Sheila McCann, the Spa Handbook is available online here: http://lei.sr?a=AgOre and a full interview with Sheila McCann can be viewed online here (p53-55): http://lei.sr?a=P34aj

Historic Lido in Reading to undergo structural repairs

Renovations to the roof and structure of a historic Grade II-listed lido in Reading may take place while delays in the planning process of a £3m (US$4.9m, €3.6m) spa complex continue.

Redevelopment of the King’s Meadow Baths into a spa has attracted significant interest since the council selected the complex as its preferred choice for the renovation in October, putting a 250-year lease out to tender.

A separate application has been submitted to the council, which would allow minimal work to be carried out. Details: http://lei.sr?a=j7Ty9

Buxton Crescent spa scheme gets council loan extension

Derbyshire County Council announced that it is extending a multi-million pound loan to developers for the completion of The Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa in February.

The Council stepped in to save the delayed redevelopment of Buxton Crescent into a £35m (US$57.9m, €42m) luxury 79-room hotel and spa.

The exact sum of money being lent to developers – The Trevor Osborne Property Group, CP Holdings plus Danubius Hotels – has not been disclosed and the completion date for the development has been pushed back to 2016.

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New £11.5m attractions tell untold stories of Royal Navy

A new £11.5m trio of exhibitions have opened in Hampshire telling the “untold stories” of the Royal Navy.

The attractions – based at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and in Gosport – aim to give the public an insight into life at sea protecting British interests around the globe.

The £4.5m HMS Hear My Story permanent exhibition tells the tales of 1,000 men and women who have worked in the Senior Service in the past century.

The museum is also opening its temporary exhibition Racing To War: The Royal Navy And 1914, which charts the Anglo-German naval arms race.

The third exhibition has seen the £7m restoration of HMS Alliance, with the rusting submarine transformed into a gleaming example of 20th century engineering. Details: http://lei.sr?a=N4j8W

British Museum is world’s second-most visited

London’s British Museum is now one of three in the UK capital to be among the top 10 most visited museums in the world, alongside the National Gallery and the Tate Modern.

6.7 million people came through the British Museum’s doors in 2013 – a 20 per cent increase on the previous year – which has now overtaken New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, only beaten by Paris’ Louvre that saw 9.3 million people visit the attraction.

It should also be noted that several of the attractions – particularly those listed in London – offer free entry, while others listed are able to draw in huge crowds despite charging notable entrance fees. For example, a visit to the Louvre can range from between €12-16 ($16-22, £10-13) per person.

Puy du Fou-style park coming to UK

French theme park Puy du Fou has announced it will partner with Auckland Castle in the UK to create its first international location.

The historical re-enactment park has signed a deal with the Eleven Arches Trust to create a visitor attraction in County Durham.

The new concept will be based on the Puy du Fou, which has both a theme park – The Grand Parc – and a spectacular night show – the Cinéscénie. It will aim to bring regional and national history to life.

The project will be rolled out in two phases. The first features the launch of an 80-minute night show in 2016 in the style of the Cinéscénie. The show will run as a not-for-profit venture, with Puy du Fou assisting in the creation and staging of the show as an official partner.

The second phase of the development – a theme park – will open in 2020. Construction will cost £80m ($134m, €97m) and although smaller in size and scale than Puy du Fou at 115 acres, the new park will aim to attract 800,000 visitors a year. It will be a commercial venture. Details: http://lei.sr?a=U2h3Z

British heritage gets £30m funding injection

The Heritage Lottery Fund has announced £30m of funding towards 10 diverse projects across the length and breadth of the UK.

The former North British Rubber Company HQ in Edinburgh, birthplace of the Wellington boot, was the big winner during this round of funding, gaining initial support of £4.9m, including a development grant of £500,000.

The site at Castle Mills will be regenerated as a creative hub for Edinburgh, turning the listed building into a modern visual arts centre incorporating a printmakers, art centre, cafe and a learning centre.

St Albans Cathedral in Hertfordshire was handed the second-highest amount of funding, receiving initial support of £4.2m, including a development grant of £391,800. The funding will allow the cathedral, which has been a site of continuous worship and pilgrimage for over 1,700 years, to undergo much-needed conservation work. Details: http://lei.sr?a=g3M9A

MA says London biased funding system is ‘broken’

The Museums Association (MA) has said the current system for museum and arts funding is “broken”, condemning Arts Council England for “ignoring” a recent report.

A report has been submitted by the MA to the parliamentary committee, outlining problems faced by regional museums in reference to Rebalancing Our Cultural Capital, which said that funding is skewed towards London.

The MA says the report presents the opportunity to talk about the imbalance in funding and how it can be addressed. Details: http://lei.sr?a=f4X3T

People will have to pay to visit the Meridian Line

The historical re-enactment shows at the Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth – based at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and in Gosport – aim to give the public an insight into life at sea protecting British interests around the globe.

The third exhibition has seen the £7m restoration of HMS Alliance, with the rusting submarine transformed into a gleaming example of 20th century engineering. Details: http://lei.sr?a=N4j8W

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BUILDING BETTER SPORTS AND PLAY
The employment paradox

PETER DUCKER
is chief executive officer of the Institute of Hospitality

In a recent Financial Times (FT) article, David Fairhurst, chief people officer at McDonald’s Europe, warned that we face a future of stunted growth unless employers do more to bring marginalised groups such as young people and older workers into the labour force. Fairhurst said McDonald’s is already starting to feel the effects of what he called the ‘workforce cliff’.

“The workforce is shrinking at both ends of the spectrum,” he told the FT. “There aren’t enough young people coming into the labour market and too many older people are leaving it.” His comments coincide with a report by the European Commission that says that after 2021 the European workforce is set to shrink by about 0.5 per cent each year.

So why is McDonald’s unable to attract staff when there is high unemployment across Europe, particularly amongst the young?

One answer may be that people, whatever their age, simply do not want to work for McDonald’s. But then recruitment problems are reported by companies of all types.

So where does the problem lie? Many in our industry think it is with young people themselves because they don’t have the same work ethic as previous generations. In a survey on the Big Hospitality website, the largest number of respondents (41 per cent) placed the blame with young people, compared to 20 per cent who thought business owners needed to be more proactive in attracting young talent and 17 per cent who thought that our education system was to blame.

The contributing factors to our skills shortages and high youth unemployment are varied and complex. One factor is that vocational jobs continue to be seen as lower in status in our society. But blaming young people is not going to help.

Once we have successfully attracted new entrants, we need to nurture them, motivate them and support them with career-long learning, giving them a feeling of belonging and a sense of identity. This is the support that we provide to our members. Joining the Institute of Hospitality also makes good financial sense; according to research, members of professional institutes earn 37 per cent more over their lifetimes than those who are not.

Bill Shankly hotel plans revealed

The company behind the opening of the Titanic hotel in Liverpool’s city centre, has proposed plans to redevelop the council-owned Millennium House to become a Bill Shankly-themed apart-hotel and museum in a £15m ($25m, €18.1m) scheme.

Signature Living is proposing a 250-bedroom hotel, complete with a museum dedicated to Shankly and 17,500sq ft (1,625sq m) of office space.

The building would house Signature Living’s head office, while the Lifestyles Gym currently based in the property would undergo an expansion and be leased back by the council under the proposals.

Bill Shankly was a Scottish footballer and manager and is best known for his time managing Liverpool, which he led to 11 titles including three first division wins in the 1960s and 70s.

“Liverpool’s sporting heritage is celebrated throughout the world, but we do not have a major football attraction in the city centre,” said Liverpool mayor Joe Anderson.

“These proposals would change that, providing a permanent tribute to one of our most famous footballing heroes, filling a gap within our tourism market, and attracting visitors from across the globe.”

“This really is something people would not be able to experience anywhere else in the world. A hotel celebrating the life and times of Bill Shankly would complement the raft of cultural attractions on the William Brown Street, and further boost our tourism offer in this part of the city.”

Plans were discussed at a council cabinet meeting on 4 April with a planning application to be lodged later this month.

Details: http://lei.sr2a=Q6e5Q

Andy Murray’s luxury Scottish hotel opens

Andy Murray’s Cromlix luxury hotel in Perthshire, Scotland, has opened for business following the tennis player’s £1.8m purchase of the property in February 2013.

The five-star Cromlix Hotel, located near Murray’s home town of Dunblane, features five suites, ten bedrooms, a spa, restaurant and meeting rooms. There is also the Chez Roux restaurant overseen by French chef Albert Roux and run by award-winning executive head chef Darin Campbell, offering locally-sourced produce.

In addition, the site boasts landscaped grounds, plus a tennis court and practice wall in the Wimbledon colours of purple and green.

“We are delighted that one of our greatest sportsmen – Andy Murray – has entered the tourism game and I’m sure he will be a terrific ambassador for the industry,” said Mike Cantalay, chair for VisitScotland.

“The Cromlix is bound to be a huge draw for visitors from all over the world, generating the kind of excitement that Andy creates on court. I am positive this venture will be a resounding success and we wish the team all the very best.”

Cromlix House was built in 1874 as the family home for the Edens, who own the surrounding 2,000 acre estate.

The hotel is being managed by Inverlochy Castle Management International and has created 40 new jobs for the area.

Details: http://lei.sr2a=F3y3D
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Media Partners:
Where Now for Domestic Tourism?

KURT JANSON
is policy director of Tourism Alliance

Since the financial crisis domestic tourism has overtaken a long-term trend of declining at 2 per cent per annum to register growth of over 5 per cent per annum. A large part of this reversal is obviously due to the twin impacts of reduced discretionary expenditure by UK residents and the fall in the value of the pound making it more expensive to holiday overseas.

The net result has seen domestic tourism revenue grow by 24 per cent from £18.6bn in 2008 to £23bn in 2013 and tourism-related employment accounts for a third of all new jobs over the past three years.

The question is, therefore, with the UK economy expected to grow at the fastest level of any G7 country during 2014, what is going to happen to domestic tourism?

As the economy has recovered, the Pound has started to strengthen. Over the past year the pound has risen by 9 per cent against the dollar and by 4 per cent against the euro. The expectation is that it will strengthen further as the economy continues to grow and the Bank of England starts to increase base interest rates.

This strengthening of the pound, combined with a more optimistic view of the economy by UK residents suggests that people will start to look to take more holidays overseas.

However, there are a number of factors that will mitigate against any dramatic switch from the staycation to the overseas holiday. Foremost among these is that wages will take some time to catch-up with the cost of living increases that most families have incurred since 2008. Second, prior to the crisis, savings rates in the UK were close to zero – now they are over 5 per cent, and people will still be cautious in their expenditure for some time. Finally, for the last five years the domestic tourism industry has been able to showcase itself to people who would normally holiday overseas, and many of these will continue to take more domestic holidays.

So while we shouldn’t expect to see domestic tourism expenditure continue growing at the rates we’ve seen during the recession, we shouldn’t expect to see it revert back to pre-recession levels either.

Tourism hotspots like London benefited from above average spending conditions and by the contribution of overseas ‘rest of world’ markets. This was despite reports from hotels and shops of a 17 per cent drop in spending from Russian visitors – among the top five biggest-spending tourists – amid political unrest in Ukraine.

ONS figures show the three months to February remain in the black, with visits up five per cent and nominal spend up 21 per cent year-on-year.

“The strong results continue to prove that tourism has a key role to play in the wider success of the British economy,” said VisitBritain chief executive Sandie Dawe. “Tourism may not be a tangible product, but it’s a major export earner for this country which VisitBritain sells overseas. Last year earnings topped a record £24 billion, which is more than crude oil and cars.”

Mike Saul, head of hospitality and leisure at Barclays, said: “The increasing number of overseas visitors year on year bears testament to the enduring appeal of the UK as a tourist destination.”

“The sector continues to gather strength supported by generally favourable macro-economic conditions and by the contribution of overseas trade bodies,” Details: http://lei.sr?a=H2d4X

Record tourism spend in February

International visitors spent a record £1.3bn across Britain in February 2014, representing a 45 per cent increase on February last year, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

In what is traditionally one of the quieter months, visits in February were also up nine per cent in February 2014, with holiday visits posting double digit growth (25 per cent).

Visits from Europe were the main driver of overall visit growth, followed closely by ‘rest of world’ markets. This was despite reports from hotels and shops of a 17 per cent drop in spending from Russian visitors – among the top five biggest-spending tourists – amid political unrest in Ukraine.

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Chris Hadfield fronts Irish tourism campaign

Tourism Ireland is harnessing star power to fuel its latest marketing campaign by recruiting famed Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield to front a series of online videos.

The spaceman – who became a YouTube sensation last year after recording David Bowie’s Space Oddity at the International Space Station – has starred in a series of four short films where he visits some of Ireland’s top attractions to encourage viewers to take one small step for man and follow in his footsteps.

The resulting videos are called ‘An Astronaut’s Guide to the Island of Ireland’ and will be promoted around the globe by Tourism Ireland.

The first film features Donegal and the spectacular scenery of the Inishowen Peninsula, starting point of the Wild Atlantic Way.

The other three films, which launched on 26 March, feature the popular attractions of Titanic Belfast and the Guinness Storehouse, as well as footage of Chris learning to play hurling at the GAA clubs of Na Fianna in Dublin and Cushendall in Co Antrim.

All four films, and the accompanying feature articles, will be promoted on Tourism Ireland’s website, Ireland.com, as well as shared across Facebook, Twitter and the organisation’s YouTube channel. Details: http://lei.sr?a=D5u5b

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Chris Hadfield is promoting Irish tourism in a series of online videos
Bournemouth University were overjoyed with the planned refurbishment of their Sports facilities which all parts being rejuvenated but the designs and estimates showed that their tired sports hall was going to have to wait.

The client asked Kier Construction one more time if anything could be done with the question passed on to Gerflor whilst exhibiting at Ecobuild in 2011. Gerflor had decided that the show was going to be the springboard for massive new innovations, one being Tarafl ex™ Ecofit™. Whilst older sports surfaces had always led to large refurbishment costs, the new Eco-fit system gave Kier a great message to take back to Bournemouth University.

Both the University and Kier were trusting of the Taraflex™ brand. Used at every Olympic Games since 1976 and with over 60 Million Square metres installed globally, Tarafl ex™ had both the elite sporting preference looked for by high level University Sport whilst also offering top level protection needed by players.

Rick McEvoy, a senior project manager for Bournemouth University commented “We were suitably impressed when visiting a neighbouring school which had the same solution one year prior. We set the bar high, challenging the sub-contractor to produce an even better finish than our neighbours, on this they delivered. The Sport M Performance looks immaculate and feedback from users of the facility is excellent. The BU Sport department now have excellent facilities including the sports hall which matches other facilities all around our campus.”

Tarafl ex™ ECO-FIT™ can be installed directly over existing sports surfaces, reducing cost, project down-time and impact of land fill.

The refurbishment of the sports area had to include a new sports hall floor but we questioned if the budget would allow. Anything more than a treating of the old Granwood surface was looking unlikely.

Rick McEvoy (Senior Project Manager, Bournemouth University)
English Heritage backs £35m leisure plans for Hippodrome

Ambitious proposals to redevelop the Grade II listed Brighton Hippodrome into a £35m leisure complex have been backed by English Heritage, which said this could be the “final chance” to save the 117-year-old structure.

Alaska Development Consultants, working on behalf of an institutional client of Helix Property Advisors, has submitted a planning application to Brighton & Hove City Council to redevelop the theatre into a leisure complex housing an eight-screen Vue cinema and four restaurants.

An independent feasibility study, carried out at the council’s request, concluded this was the only viable option for the building against other proposals including a casino and a theatre.

However, Alaska’s plans have met opposition from groups including the Theatres Trust – which wants to see the building return to its former use as a performance space – while a petition started in October to keep the site as a performance space – while a petition started in October to keep the site as a performance space, attaining 1,000 signatures.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=9a4d9

Hopes dashed for Barry Island leisure redevelopment

Proposals to transform a Barry Island attraction into a multi-million pound mixed use development were thrown out by the local council, just days before the annual Barry Island Pleasure Park fairground opened for Whitmore Bay’s summer season.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council said the permanent redevelopment scheme – which it initially backed two years ago – had no “realistic” way of moving forward, but added it is eager to speak to the site’s co-owners over alternative leisure options.

Under the proposals put forward by development agents Asbri Planning, 4,738sq m (51,000sq ft) was to be given over to leisure – including a cinema, indoor attractions and restaurants – within the 1.9 hectare (4.7 acre) mixed use scheme.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=v6P2D

Lakeside leisure proposal given green light

A multi-million pound leisure development at Lakeside shopping centre in Thurrock has edged closer to construction, after council officers granted outline planning consent.

The 225,000sq ft (20,935sq m) proposal, previously quoted by intu as costing £100m, would create a series of outdoor spaces, including a town square focal point. This would be surrounded by a wide range of leisure facilities – including bars, restaurants, a hotel, bowling alley, health club, night club and comedy venue – spread over two levels, with developer and Lakeside owner intu currently in discussion with potential tenants. Architects 3D Reid are responsible for the design.

The public spaces created by the development have been proposed as a host site for farmers’ and Christmas markets, street theatre, music shows and live screenings of big sporting events throughout the year.

Building on the leisure development could start as early as 2015, with a view to opening in 2017.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=k3B5e

Laing O’Rourke for Etihad Expansion

Manchester City Football Club (MCFC) has appointed construction group Laing O’Rourke to build the expansion of its Etihad Stadium.

The extension works, designed by architects Populous, are expected to cost £50m and will be undertaken in two phases.

The work will result in the venue having a capacity of 60,000 (up from the current 48,000) - making it the second largest in the English Premier League behind Old Trafford (capacity 75,811), home to local rivals Manchester United.

The first phase of construction, which will be completed in time for the 2015-16 season, will see Man City’s South Stand expanded by around 6,000 seats. The second phase, development of the stadium’s North Stand, will then complete the transformation.

Tom Glick, chief commercial officer for MCFC, said: “The expansion of the stadium is a hugely significant moment for us. “The waiting list for the expanded Etihad is already close to capacity and we look forward to seeing a sell-out 54,000 seat stadium as we open the 2015 season.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=E2B9x

Aberdeen city centre to undergo £107m redevelopment

New look plans have been revealed for Aberdeen’s city centre on the site of the former City Council headquarters.

Muse Developments has been selected as Aberdeen City Council’s development partner for the £107m joint project, which will see the site transformed to include 175,000 sq ft (16,258sq m) of sustainable offices, and mixed-use leisure facilities including a new civic square, plus a 125-bedroom, four-star Marriott hotel and space for retail and restaurants.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=X2g7g
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Premier Training International has teamed up with fitness brand Pure Gym to provide its graduates with guaranteed employment, giving students a definitive pathway into the working world.

The Pure Premier Diploma in Fitness Instructing and Personal Training package allows graduates the opportunity to become a freelance personal trainer with Pure Gym, the UK low-cost fitness chain currently in the process of merging with The Gym Group, giving them the opportunity to build their personal training client base and gain hands on experience in the sector.

The package includes a Premier Diploma in Personal Training, one-day studio cycling course and an online total pad-work course.

“This is a fantastic opportunity for people wanting to enter the industry as it enables them to follow a specific employment pathway straight into work with Pure Gym,” said Paul Dorkings, sales director at Premier Training International.

“"It is a pleasure to be working with Pure Gym and we’re really looking forward to watching our graduates grow into exceptional fitness professionals,” he continued.

Pure Gym has more than 60 health clubs across the UK with plans to expand to more than 100 during 2014. Premier graduates will work on the gym floor and take group exercise classes as part of their licence agreement as a freelance personal trainer. Details: http://lei.sr?a=J7B9r

The Bowes Museum in County Durham hopes to serve as a launchpad for the next generation of museum industry workers after winning a major funding grant for graduate training.

The fine arts museum has been awarded £454,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under its Skills for the Future programme, which will go towards training the industry’s next generation and help to fill key skills gaps in the sector.

The award will fund the Conservation in Action project, which aims to utilise the museum’s valuable collections and experienced conservation team to offer a number of twelve-month paid internships over a five-year period, beginning this summer.

Graduates will have the opportunity to learn on the job, bridging the gap between academic training and meaningful practical skills.

The project will cover aspects such as surveying, preventative conservation, staging of temporary exhibitions, supervision of volunteers and interaction with other museums; fostering independence, confidence and decision making.

“"This project will assist the museum by allowing us to use our collections more extensively and further develop our recent progress in conservation,” said Jon Old, conservation manager at The Bowes Museum.

“It will also offer one of the best opportunities available for conservation graduates to gain hands-on experience of working in a museum environment while gaining key skills in their sector.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=1j7B9r

Premier offers guaranteed employment

Art museum scheme secures key funds
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Dianne Eade, Newquay Zoo
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Company: Everyone Active  
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Location: Long Eaton, UK

Club Manager  
Company: énergie group  
Location: Bradwell, UK

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Company: Powerleague  
Location: Various, UK

Spa / Beauty Therapists  
Company: Bedford Lodge Hotel  
Location: Suffolk, UK

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Company: Zen Lifestyle  
Location: Edinburgh, UK

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Company: Resense Spa  
Location: worldwide

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Company: House of Enspa  
Location: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Bio Sculpture Educator  
Company: House of Enspa  
Location: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Ticketing, Revenue and Yield Manager  
Company: English Heritage  
Location: Swindon & Amesbury

Project Manager  
Company: National Trust  
Location: Workhop, UK

Group Commercial Experiences Manager  
Company: Science Museum  
Location: London with regular travel.

Operations & Technical Mgr - Doctor Who Experience  
Company: BBC Worldwide  
Location: Cardiff, UK

General Manager  
Company: National Trust  
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Location: Warwick, UK

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Company: Original Bowling Company  
Location: Basildon, Essex

Attraction Duty Manager  
Company: The Bournemouth Pier / Rock Reef Ltd  
Location: Bournemouth, UK

General Manager  
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General Manager Designate  
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Location: UK wide, UK

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Javid appointed new culture secretary

Sajid Javid has been appointed as new secretary of state for culture, media, sport and equalities, replacing Maria Miller who resigned last week.

He joins the cabinet having previously occupied the ministerial role of financial secretary to the treasury.

Javid is a muslim and became the Conservative party’s first British-Pakistani MP when he was elected as member for Bromsgrove in 2010.

Javid pursued a successful career in banking, before taking an estimated 98 per cent pay cut to become an MP.

His appointment was warmly received by top Tories, with several – including Lord Ashcroft, George Freeman and Andrew Griffiths – tweeting their approval.

The move also elicited a positive response from the Sport & Recreation Alliance, which tweeted to Javid’s official account: “Congrats on new appointment. From your CASC work we know you get sport.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=29j5m

Hadrian’s Wall Trust to dissolve after funding disappears

Hadrian’s Wall Trust – which oversees maintenance of the wall and adjoining visitor centre – is to close down within six months after finance for the project evaporated, leaving funding support for the World Heritage Site mired in uncertainty.

Following an internal review, the trustees decided that current arrangements for the site were “unsustainable”. A number of organisations are attempting to generate funds for the attraction though nothing is set in stone. Details: http://lei.sr?a=fsy7g

Southwest rail reconnected to rest of UK

Dawlish’s storm damaged railway line has reopened, reconnecting the south west rail service with the rest of the UK following an estimated loss of £50m in tourism income alone during the closure.

A section of track was swept away with part of the sea wall in early February, cutting off the service linking Cornwall and much of Devon with the rest of the UK. The track has been rebuilt two weeks ahead of schedule at a cost of £35m – a relatively small amount compared with the estimated losses for the region.

Sir Tim Smit, founder of Cornwall’s Eden Project, told Radio 4’s Today programme: “We get viewed by the capital as if it’s still at the old days of the Cornish Riviera, with a few nice things to do for people who’ve got wealth to come down and have holidays, but actually it’s a really thriving place. I mean, it’s one of the hubs of the creative industries in Britain. Yet you wouldn’t know that the way we’re talked about.”

Prime Minister David Cameron, who travelled to Dawlish to mark the reopening, hailed it as “a great day” and said the south-west of England was “open once again”. Details: http://lei.sr?a=Ny8v