US-based health club chain Orangetheory Fitness has signed a deal to expand its concept in southern England with 70 studios set to open over the next decade – including 30 in London.

The company has signed a franchise agreement with 3 Kings, which will also be taking over three of the four Orangetheory studios currently in the UK. There are three London studios in Enfield, Islington and Aldgate, as well as one in Winchester, Hampshire.

Orangetheory plans to renovate the studios it takes over and open an additional three to five new sites within the next 12 months. 3 Kings will be led by Jamie Weeks, an area developer and owner of studios in Oregon, Tennessee, South Carolina and Georgia in the US. By the end of this year, Weeks will own 20 studios in the US.

Michel Gahard, Amanda Goolsby and Jason Zavasnik will be leading the development in London and southern England for the ownership group.

Dave Long, Orangetheory Fitness co-founder and CEO, said: "When we were looking for a master franchisee for a market with so much potential, we knew we required a partner with diverse and proven business expertise and professionals who deeply shared our corporate values and mission. Jamie has truly got it all, which is evident through his rapid studio growth in the US, and we're confident he will bring the same level of passion to the UK market.”

Weeks said: “As I began to research more about the state of the fitness industry in London, I knew without a doubt that Orangetheory’s unique workout was perfect for the city and its surrounding markets.”

Orangetheory, which launched its first studio in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, US, in March 2010, currently has more than 620 studios in 45 states and 12 countries.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=z5Q4M_O

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**SRA unveils new five-year strategy**

Demonstrating the economic and social value of sport and growing the volunteer force are among the key objectives in the Sport and Recreation Alliance's (SRA) new strategy.

The Heart of an Active Nation is the body’s blueprint for the 2017-21 period, and has a heavy focus on how to improve and demonstrate the positive aspects of grassroots sport.

The value of sport was a key pillar in the government's sport strategy, and the Alliance is intent on reinforcing that focus through a number of initiatives.

Continued on back cover

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**Crouch to deliver Elevate keynote**

Sports minister Tracey Crouch MP will deliver this year's keynote address at Elevate, one of the UK's largest cross-sector events focused on tackling physical inactivity.

Speaking alongside representatives from Public Health England, CIMSPA and Greater Manchester Leisure and Cultural Trusts, the minister will discuss how the industry can transform the delivery of physical activity through new ways of working.

The session will examine how the sector can work innovatively and collaboratively to be more productive, efficient and profitable, while also meeting social and community priorities.

Tracey Crouch, sports minister since 2015, delivered the government’s sport strategy 18 months ago.

Elevate aims to address the root cause of physical inactivity with experts from the sector, academia, healthcare, government and sports performance attending the two-day event.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=l9W3S
Rugby boost for Newcastle

Newcastle will land a €17.4m windfall after being selected to host three European rugby union finals in May.

St James’ Park, the home of Newcastle United FC, will host the European Champions Cup and Challenge Cup finals, while Newcastle Falcons’ Kingston Park Stadium will stage the European Rugby Continental Shield final.

All matches will be played across the weekend of the 10-11 May 2019.

The bid to host European rugby’s showpiece weekend was put together by Newcastle City Council, NewcastleGateshead Initiative, Newcastle United FC and Newcastle Rugby Ltd. Mick Horgan, the latter’s managing director, said the announcement was “great news for rugby in Newcastle and the wider North East region”.

“The hard work starts now to deliver a truly memorable finals weekend,” he added. “It’s not just three finals to look forward to, but also a Rugby Village fan park and various community events in the lead up.”

Huddersfield project gathers pace

KSDL, the firm that operates Huddersfield’s John Smith’s Stadium, has lifted the lid on the ambitious £65m leisure project planned for the surrounding area.

A “state-of-the-art” outdoor ski slope, constructed by West Yorkshire firm Briton Engineering, will make up a significant part of the 250,000sq ft (23,225sq m) of leisure space being mapped out.

A bowling alley, indoor trampoline centre, retail outlets, restaurants, a kids adventure facility and a 150-room hotel are also included in the proposal for HD One.

Forbes added: “We were resolute in those ambitions as we worked to secure this top tier tournament for our city, and showcase what we have to offer. It will bring thousands of fans from across Europe to the North East, and with them a welcome boost to our local economy.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=s6u9p_O

The slope will be built into the “natural wooded hillside” and will be open 365 days per year. Briton Engineering’s Snowflex technology will be used to make the terrain softer and more challenging than comparable slopes, said Leader of Newcastle City Council Nick Forbes said the bid was part of the local authorities “vision to make Newcastle the Great North City”.

Forbes said the bid was part of the local authorities “vision to make Newcastle the Great North City”.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n2u8A_O

Davies said the site was in a ‘really good location’ for leisure

Davies. The firm is responsible for the largest outdoor ski slope in Ankara, Turkey.

Davies revealed that while the slope was designed for community use and will be affordable for regular families, his company has been “working tirelessly” to earn the endorsement of the British Ski and Snowboard Federation. “It is the best opportunity of becoming an approved centre of excellence of some kind in the north,” he said.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n2u8A_O
ASA rebrands and sets strategy

To coincide with the publication of its new four-year strategy, the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) has rebranded as Swim England. The move comes a week after the governing body unveiled Jane Nickerson as its permanent chief executive.

After spending eight months in the interim chief executive position, Nickerson will now be expected to deliver the outcomes outlined in the Towards a Nation Swimming blueprint.

The strategy has outlined six key targets: to provide strong leadership; to substantially increase the number of people able to swim; grow the number and diversity of people regularly swimming; creating a “world-leading” talent system; improving the workforce; and the strengthening of “organisational sustainability”.

Covering the 2017-2021 period, the strategy takes into account all of the organisation’s disciplines, including indoor and outdoor swimming, diving, water polo and synchronised swimming.

Nickerson said it was “absolutely the right time” to undergo the rebrand, but the governing body was still retaining its ASA name as its “constitutional brand”.

“It has a 150-year history and we’re not throwing that away. The ASA logo is part of the Royal Standard – it’s the only NGB allowed that,” Nickerson told Leisure Opportunities.

Details: http://lei.sr/a=K7q7U_O

Swim England wants to grow the number and diversity of swimmers

Minister backs mental health charter

Tracey Crouch, the minister of sport, has urged sector bodies and organisations to sign up to the Sport and Recreation Alliance’s Mental Health Charter on the initiative’s second anniversary.

The MP for Chatham and Aylesford included improved mental health as one of the key outcomes in the government’s Sporting Future strategy, and has endorse the Charter, which provides sporting organisations with best practice.

Crouch said the document complements the work government is trying to do, and “encouraged any organisation not already a signatory to sign up.”

“Participating in sport and physical activity can have a huge benefit on a person’s mental wellbeing as well as their physical health,” she said. “This is why we made mental health one of the key outcomes of the government’s sport strategy with public funding made available to projects that can deliver on this front.”

Since the Charter’s launch two years ago, 260 organisations have signed up and “committed to making their activities more open and accessible to everyone.”

The steering group of the Mental Health Charter said it was important to “continue to raise the profile of sport and recreation’s role in helping to promote positive mental wellbeing.”

It added: “The Charter was established to bring sport and recreation organisations together to tackle the stigma that surrounds mental health. Sport and recreation has a responsibility to challenge this stigma and we will keep working with organisations to help them put in place good mental health practice.”

Details: http://lei.sr/a=4j7M9_O

Mental health is a key part of the government’s sport strategy, unveiled by sports minister Tracey Crouch in December 2015

Irish sport benefits from increased investment

Sport Ireland has distributed €10.8m (£9.2m) between 58 national governing bodies as part of its latest investment decisions. The money will be split into core grants, specifically aimed at administration, participation programmes, coach development, hosting events, implementing strategic plans and the employment of professional staff.

Governing body funding is part of a wider €20m investment in sport as a whole.

On top of grassroots funding, €7.2m is going to be ploughed into elite sport as Ireland prepares for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

Details: http://lei.sr/a=b5v6P_O

Paul Thomas was appointed in April 2016

Sport Wales chair sacked by Welsh government

Paul Thomas, chair of Sport Wales, has been sacked by the Welsh government less than a year after taking the role. Vice chair Adele Baumgardt has also been told by minister for social care and public health Rebecca Evans that her services are no longer required, and that the sports quango needs “fresh leadership”.

The positions of Thomas and Baumgardt have been under the microscope for some time. The pair were suspended, alongside the rest of the Sport Wales board, in November after Evans revealed “a significant breakdown of some interpersonal relationships”. While the rest of the board was reinstated, Thomas and Baumgardt will not be returning.

In a statement, Evans said: “I have informed both the chair, Dr Thomas, and the vice chair, Adele Baumgardt, that I am terminating their appointments with notice. While both individuals have had the interests of sport in Wales as their priority, and have exhibited energy and dedication, I consider there to have been an irretrievable breakdown in relationships within the leadership of the board of Sport Wales.”

Details: http://lei.sr/a=U7h6d_O
A REVOLUTION IN SOCIAL FITNESS

MX4 is the latest turnkey group training solution, exclusive to Matrix, that includes 156 ready made 30-minute workouts for your gym. That’s 3 unique workouts of 12 exercises per session, drawing on the 4 key areas cardio, strength, power and endurance, for every week of the year. Get ready for the social fitness revolution...

With currently no companies in the UK occupying a dominant market share in the group training sector, the benefits for gym owners are all up for grabs! The MX4 Training Solution is ideal for health clubs and independent fitness studios seeking to drive revenue by differentiating their group training offering in a way that’s easy to deliver, cost effective, whilst attracting, engaging and retaining members.

The MX4 Training System draws on many of today’s biggest trends in fitness, from group training, high intensity interval training (HIIT) and strength training to use of wearables, Yoga and personal training. It’s a “social fitness” solution that allows today’s gym user to tap into a community – a club within their club – to truly transform and enhance their fitness experience and keep them focused on reaching their fitness goals.

What is MX4?

MX4 comprises two main components - a COMBINATION of at least two different modalities of Matrix-exclusive equipment AND original programming led by a trained MX4 coach.

Matrix-exclusive products featured in the MX4 Training System include the Connexus Functional Training System, Rower, S-Drive Performance Trainer and Krankcycle.

And we have also teamed up with a select group of world-renowned functional training innovators to offer the very best in functional training accessories.

But it’s the programming, uniquely developed by our expert fitness professionals here at Matrix, which creates a signature group exercise experience that members will invest in and commit to more frequently.

Put simply, Matrix products sold without MX4 programming is not MX4.

“MX4 is not ‘just’ circuit training. It’s programming. The workouts throughout the year follow a system called undulating periodisation (UP). This is similar to the way athletes train for an event but with UP we can deliver this in a group ex environment without the need for a specific start/finish date. This approach also ensures that people can join MX4 sessions at any time during the month or year and slide straight into the workouts.”

“MX4 is pre-planned and is the only programme I have seen which has an entire year of programming workouts designed from day one. Why is this important? Well, if you create sessions in isolation or ad-hock, the chances are they will either have a narrower, less specific set of outcomes than a system that has been planned and formulated around a specific set of goals and significant timeline or worse, pose no actual benefit to the gym member whatsoever.”

Steve Barrett, Director of Global Group Education & Training at Johnson Health Tech. Co., Ltd.
The MX4 Training System perfectly bridges the gap between membership and personal training, benefiting the gym owner, the PT and ultimately, the gym member.

The Gym Owner

The MX4 Training System was created for customers who asked for support, guidance and solutions to grow their group training business and quickly generate a return on their investment in Matrix group training products.

Think of MX4 as being the ‘software’ that maximises the potential of Matrix ‘hardware.’

MX4 is more than just another workout. Our comprehensive package includes an implementation guide, exercise library, signature programming and innovative marketing materials and will ensure a facility’s MX4 launch doesn’t go unnoticed.

The Gym Member

And members benefit from results-driven programming, group dynamics to keep them motivated and personal coaching from specialist trainers to help them stay focused on fitness goals.

The unique programming incorporates stations that enhance the four aspects of fitness: endurance, strength, power and cardio, which ultimately creates a sense of community, providing the camaraderie and motivation the member needs.

The PTs

The key objective of the MX4 Training System is to help trainers and instructors develop safe, effective programmes that help their members get results.

MX4 is designed to support the instructors, providing them with full training and ongoing world class programming so that they spend less time behind a desk and more time focusing on coaching and empowering their members in MX4 sessions.

Matrix group training products used in MX4 can be adjusted quickly for efficient transitions from one station to the next, always maintaining a high intensity level.

The beauty of the MX4 Training Solution lies in its simplicity. It doesn’t have a specific type or demographic of person who uses it. It’s a straightforward, flexible training solution with universal appeal, able to accommodate people new to exercise whilst also simultaneously challenge the elite athlete.

For more information on MX4 the new Group Training solution from Matrix Fitness and how it could benefit your facility, visit matrixfitness.co.uk or contact us at Matrix Fitness on 01782 644900.

matrixfitness.co.uk
Shelved IPO cost Pure Gym almost £7m, sources say

Pure Gym's planned initial public offering (IPO) that was abandoned last year cost the group £6.8m, according to sources. The cost was because the operator had “two runs at it,” which involved “a lot of work,” sources told Leisure Opportunities. Pure Gym was considering floating on the stock market in early 2016, but the planned IPO was put on ice in July 2016 due to uncertainty caused by the vote to leave the European Union. On 30 March 2017, Pure Gym announced that revenues rose by 28 per cent to £159.9m last year, up from £125.2m in 2015.

In 2015, when the Gym Group floated, its IPO-related costs were £7.6m.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=G4k3A_O

Budget and boutique gyms boost fitness market

Low-cost gyms and boutique operations helped the European fitness market grow in 2016 as membership numbers and revenues increased, EuropeActive research has revealed.

Health or fitness memberships increased by 4.4 percent to 56.4m last year, with market value growing 3.1 per cent to €26.3bn (£22.5bn, US$28.1bn).

With 10.1m members, Germany strengthened its position as the country with the highest membership, surpassing the 10m mark for the first time last year. The UK (9.1m), France (5.5m), Italy (5.3m) and Spain (4.1m) completed the top five markets in Europe in terms of membership, according to the European Health and Fitness Market Report 2017.

The McFIT Group (1.5m members), Basic-Fit (1.21m) and Pure Gym (0.82m) were leading operators in terms of membership. Clever Fit (0.55m) and Health and Fitness Nordic (0.54m) completed the top five. The top 30 European club operators account for 12.7m members, representing 22.5 per cent of all memberships.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=R3w5P_O

20 million adults ‘physically inactive’

More than 20m UK adults are increasing their risk of heart disease and costing the health service as much as £1.2bn each year because of physical inactivity, a British Heart Foundation (BHF) report has revealed.

The Physical Inactivity and Sedentary Behaviour Report found that 39 per cent of adults are failing to meet government guidelines for physical activity.

The 10-page report revealed that around 11.8m women across the UK are insufficiently active, compared to around 8.3m men. Women are also 36 per cent more likely to be classified as physically inactive than men.

In England, 39 per cent of adults – around 16.8m – are physically inactive, while the figure for Northern Ireland is 46 per cent.

The rest of the UK doesn’t fair much better. In Scotland, 37 per cent of adults are physically inactive, while 42 per cent of the adult population in Wales do not meet the recommended activity levels.

According to the report, around 60 per cent of adults are unaware of the government’s physical activity guidelines. The government recommends that adults take part in at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a week and strength activities on at least two days a week.

Dr Mike Knapton, associate medical director at the BHF, said: “Physical inactivity is one of the most significant global health crises of the moment. Levels of physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour in the UK remain stubbornly high, and combined these two risk factors present a substantial threat to our cardiovascular health and risk of early death.

“Making physical activity easier and more accessible for all is of paramount importance if we are to reduce the burden of inactivity.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=M3w2z_O

Grylls debuts fitness programme

Explorer Bear Grylls has launched his branded indoor fitness programme in London at trampoline park provider Oxygen Freejumping.

Bear Grylls Fitness offers a programme of high intensity exercises which will feature a multi-storey obstacle fitness course at Oxygen’s site in Croydon.

Oxygen Freejumping, which has six trampoline and activity parks – and a further two under construction – already features Bear Grylls Fitness at its sites in Manchester and Derby. Over the next two years the partnership will be seen throughout Oxygen’s chain, set to be 30 parks by the end of the summer 2018.

Grylls said: “Our goal is to help people build the strength, flexibility and fitness to empower them to live their adventures to the max. Whether it’s climbing a mountain, completing a charity obstacle race or simply playing sports with our kids, we all have goals and adventures that inspire us.

“Bear Grylls Fitness is about training you to move with speed, agility, balance and strength. We pride ourselves on being the ultimate in functional fitness - designed to empower you to be fit for all of life’s adventures.”

Oxygen Freejumping chief executive, David Stalker, added: “Our sites are more than just trampolining as they are centres for freerunning, fitness programmes, aspiring gymnasts and of course huge numbers of people just looking to have fun at events, dodgeball leagues and freejumping sessions.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=fsv24_O
ClassPass adds premium charges

ClassPass members can now visit their favourite studio as many times as they want by paying a premium on top of their monthly membership.

Previously, the studio subscription service allowed members to attend the same studio up to three times per month. The new feature means that once a member has reached a studio limit, they will have the option to book another class using one of their allotted monthly classes plus a premium.

The extra charge per class will vary at each studio and prices will be based on demand. The change is to offer members “a more flexible and versatile membership”.

ClassPass works with more than 8,500 boutique studios and its business model is based on members paying a flat-rate monthly fee in return for boutique exercise classes at a discounted rate, offered by operators who have signed up with the platform.

In November, ClassPass moved to discontinue its unlimited membership plan and capped the maximum number of visits its members could make to its network of boutique studios to 10 per month.

In the UK, its higher rate package of 10 classes per month costs £105. The other two packages are five sessions per month at £55 and three classes per month at £35.

Payal Kadakia, ClassPass founder and executive chair, said: “While we know our members love discovering new studios, we have also seen them want a way to establish a routine at some of their favourite studios.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=6psv8_O

Exercise quango rebrands as EMD UK

Exercise, Move, Dance Partnership (EMDP) – the national governing body for group exercise – has rebranded itself as EMD UK.

The rebrand includes an updated vision, which is “a healthier nation through exercise”, and a new mission, which is “to increase participation in group exercise by supporting teachers and organisations to deliver excellence”. As part of the rebranding a new website has been launched: www.emduk.org.

The rebrand coincides with increased investment from Sport England. The grassroots quango awarded EMD UK funding of £1.76m for 2017-19, almost double the amount received for the equivalent period of the previous funding cycle.

The larger fund will be split into two cycles, with £1.76m allocated between 2017-2019, and the remainder handed out between 2019-2021. EMD UK represents 60 organisations, including well known brands such as British Military Fitness and Boxercise, to lesser known ones like Burlexercise.

EMD UK received more funding from Sport England for 2017-21

EMD UK chief executive Ross Perriam said: “This increase in funding reflects the government’s focus on group exercise. There is a real push to get inactive people exercising. The funding will get used to target inactive groups – getting them active – finding out what the barriers are in getting people active. We want to make group exercise accessible.”

EMD UK group is currently working on a trial with a hospital to get inactive patients, in the recovery phase, to exercise.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=C4j7Y_O

Virgin Active owner scraps London listing due to Brexit

South African investment group Brait, which owns a controlling stake in Virgin Active, has scrapped plans to transfer its registered offices from Malta to the UK, and list in London, due to Brexit.

An announcement on the company’s website said: “While the board remains convinced of the long-term benefits to the company of a transfer to the United Kingdom and a premium listing on the London Stock Exchange, in light of the uncertainty introduced by the timing and form of Brexit and the potential impact on capital markets, the board has determined not to proceed with the transfer and premium listing at this time.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=h4F6Z_O

Pulse Fitness kits out £6m youth zone in the Wirral

Pulse Fitness - the dedicated equipment arm of the Pulse Group - has supplied and installed fitness gear at a new £6million youth facility in the Wirral called ‘The Hive’.

The centre has 26 studios with Series 2 cardiovascular equipment and pieces from Pulse’s strength line. Equipment is inclusive fitness accredited so all members can take part. The centre also boasts a climbing wall, boxing ring, dance studio, skate park, and offers employability and mentoring programmes. The Wirral Youth Zone, also known as ‘The Hive’, is a purpose-built centre for people aged eight to 19 – and up to 25 for those with disabilities.

Youth zones offer activities and services to help raise the aspirations, improve the health and wellbeing, and enhance the prospects of young people.

This is the seventh youth zone in the UK, with centres planned to open in Chorley, Preston, Barking, Croydon, and Barnet over the next two years. Pulse has been working with national charity OnSide Youth Zones for seven years.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=A7b4j_O
I n 2015 (the latest available full-year data), the UK’s tourism deficit (the difference between how much inbound visitors spend and how much Brits spend abroad) rose to the second highest level ever. The deficit was £16.9bn in 2015, and £20.5bn in 2008, but it fell during the years of the recession to around £13.7bn each year. It then increased very significantly in 2015 – by over £3bn, making up a large slice (17.6 per cent) of the UK’s overall balance of payments deficit.

Getting the deficit down is less about persuading Britons to spend their leisure money at home instead of abroad and much more about tapping into the enormous potential of markets such as China. The Chinese will make up 20 per cent of the world’s foreign tourists by 2023, says a report by Amadeus, and the number of Chinese families able to afford overseas holidays will double in the next 10 years.

Deloitte’s *Tourism: jobs and growth* report predicts that our tourism deficit will turn into a surplus in 2023, for the first time in 40 years, largely thanks to the Chinese.

What can we do to make the best possible impression on Chinese tourists and ensure they spread the word back home? Signs and announcements in Mandarin at airports and train stations are a good start. UK hoteliers should employ Mandarin-speaking staff. Hoteliers can also display cultural sensitivity by assigning rooms ending with ‘8’ whenever possible (denoting fortune) and avoiding room numbers with ‘4’ (associated with death).

The Chinese love visiting our historic cities, but not always for obvious reasons. They come to Cambridge, for example, to visit an inscribed stone in the grounds of King’s College. It reads (in Chinese): “Gently I’m leaving, just like I gently came,” a line from ‘A second farewell to Cambridge’, a poem taught to every child in China, written by Xu Zhimo, who studied at King’s College in the 1920s.

To make the most of the rise in Chinese tourism, innovative hoteliers will want to do their research to gain a greater understanding of Chinese culture.

### Irish castle hotel gets major makeover

Adare Manor, an historic luxury castle hotel in County Limerick, Ireland, is currently undergoing one of the country’s most expensive restoration, renovation and expansion projects, and is scheduled to reopen in September 2017.

Set in 842 acres of parkland, the Neo-Gothic property has been owned by Irish multi-millionaire JP McManus since 2015; McManus also co-owns Sandy Lane in Barbados.

The transformation, which has been spearheaded by lead architects ReardonSmith in collaboration with local architect Michael Healy and interior designers Richmond International, will include a world-class spa, situated in a secluded sanctuary within the existing Manor House.

An indoor swimming pool overlooking the River Maigue is one of the spa’s outstanding features; additional facilities include five treatment rooms, a fitness centre, relaxation area, hair salon and manicure and pedicure stations. Spa consultants are Cork-based Peigin Crowley and Diahann Buckley. Adare Manor has announced it will partner with prestige skincare brand La Mer, making it the only La Mer Spa in the UK and Ireland, and one of 11 La Mer spas worldwide.

According to Colm Hannon, CEO of Adare Manor, “the new spa will offer exclusive treatments that will embody luxury.”

*Details: http://lei.sr?ta=d6J3u_O*

### Ibis design embraces UK weather

The Ibis Styles Manchester Portland hotel has reopened after a major design overhaul inspired by the British weather – both good and bad.

Located in the centre of Manchester in the northeast of the UK, where the weather is famously unpredictable, the Ibis Styles launches a range of brightly decorated weather-themed rooms that reflect “everything from splashing in water puddles to basking in the summer sun”.

Inside the Victorian-era, public areas feature oversized umbrellas, deckchairs and sunglass sculptures, while the 229 rooms are designed along the themes of sunshine, raindrops and breezes, for example.

The bar and restaurant have been similarly updated, featuring additions like table football.

The Ibis Styles Manchester Portland hotel, with Ibis just one part of the Accor conglomerate, now offers visitors to Manchester a budget option that stands out from the crowd.

“Adding the fully-refurbished Portland Hotel to our ever expanding portfolio of Ibis Styles perfectly highlights the strength of our proposition and reinforces the brand as the benchmark in the economy segment,” said Karelle Lamouche, senior vice president of AccorHotels UK.

“In keeping with the Ibis Styles brand, the interior has now been brought to life expertly through unique and creative storytelling and playful design features, which provides our guests with a sense of fun and experience.”

*Details: http://lei.sr?ta=w1c2p*
THE STAGE
A variety of live performances and keynote talks will be delivered on The Stage - a platform to share ideas, stimulate innovations and inspire.

NEW INNOVATORS
Those interested in new approaches will find the latest thinking, technology and innovations from those who challenge the status quo. 

GROUP EXERCISE
This area will enable you to speak to brands that offer group exercise classes. Many will be demonstrated within the Stage programme.

FACILITIES
Discover new management software, flooring solutions, audio, access control, hygiene, energy management and more by talking direct to the suppliers.

EVIDENCE BASE
A selection of research will be shared over the two days via the Evidence Base. 

PERFORMANCE PATH
Performance Path will focus on the solutions which have helped athletes and sports people achieve their goals. 

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The UK’s largest physical activity trade event
EXHIBITION FLOORPLAN
SEMINAR PROGRAMME
The Seminar Programme, including 38 sessions and 150+ speakers, features 4 seminar streams throughout the 2 days:

FOUR SEMINAR STREAMS:

1. Physical Activity for Health and Wellbeing
2. Future Performance
3. Inclusivity: Creating an Active Nation
4. The Business of Physical Activity

NEW IN 2017
Research Uncovered will host leading academic institutions and organisations. Supported by NCSEM England

TechLab has been curated to highlight some of the very latest technologies to make a positive impact on physical activity levels. 

Supported by Active Lab

Technology Walk
Technology Walk presents the latest developments in fitness technology including wearable devices, data management and other software. 

Central Hub
Lead supporters of Elevate will host the central meeting place during Elevate, this area is designed to encourage cross-sector pollination.

Active Aquatic
Active Aquatic will present the latest in pool and open water swimming, equipment, research, monitoring and performance.

Supported by EIS

Skills Pavilion
Dedicated to those who are responsible for raising standards and delivering education.

Supported by CIMSPA

Full exhibitor list & seminar programme now online - elevatearena.com
Art-inspired cruise ship spa to offer Elemis treatments

Luxury cruise line Silversea has announced details of the new Zagara Beauty Spa on board its flagship vessel, Silver Muse.

Zagara melds its Italian heritage with a mind and body philosophy to nurture wellbeing. The spa menu features UK-based Elemis' Biotec facials, Elemis' Thousand Flower Detox Wrap and the Amethyst Crystal Sound Bath Healing Treatment. Blending artistry through visual and experiential elements with holistic therapies, the spa's aim is to create peace and beauty at every touchpoint – from the Mood Room, where music, video and lighting is personalised, to infused treatment oils and teas.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=j2b7B_O

‘Do wellness well or not at all,’ says ESPA’s founder

Susan Harmsworth, founder of ESPA, believes if you can’t do wellness well, then you shouldn’t do it at all.

Speaking exclusively to Leisure Opportunities, Harmsworth said that wellness can mean many things to many people, depending on the type of facility, its geographical location and the wider culture. “It’s difficult for the consumer to differentiate between the many meanings of a word that is not clearly defined,” she said.

“Today’s consumers are educated, and their expectations are very high, so you can’t afford to play around with wellness,” she continued. “Consumer confusion is dangerous for the industry, and if you’re going to deliver a product or treatment, it could be the core offer, they will analyse the needs of the market. “The future of Lanserhof to the UK market. “Our primary goal is to have a spa in the UK, which is the fastest-growing market in Europe,” he continued.

“It makes sense to open here, especially because of Brexit. If we want to be the leading medical spa brand in the world, we really need to have a presence in the UK.”

The brand will be searching for two kinds of location; an urban health centre in one of the “best areas of London”, and a resort not more than an hour’s travel from London.

Speaking about potential treatment programmes, Behrens confirmed that while the Lans Med Basic Programme will always be the core offer, they will analyse the needs of the market in order to adapt and expand as required.

Behrens also said that existing employees will be sent to the new location, “to bring the spirit of Lanserhof to the UK market.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=S7X4c_O

Lanserhof plans entry into UK

In the latest issue of Spa Business (1, 2017), Lanserhof’s chief marketing officer Nils Behrens revealed that the new medical spa resort “will be the core offer, they will analyse the needs of the market. “The future of Lanserhof to the UK market. “Our primary goal is to have a spa in the UK, which is the fastest-growing market in Europe,” he continued.

“It makes sense to open here, especially because of Brexit. If we want to be the leading medical spa brand in the world, we really need to have a presence in the UK.”

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=S7X4c_O

National Spa Week reveals sponsors

National Spa Week 2017, which runs from 30 October to 5 November, has announced two major sponsors – Aromatherapy Associates and Groupon.

National Spa Week is the annual flagship PR and communications event run by the UK Spa Association (UKSA), the official not-for-profit trade body for the UK spa industry.

It is the only UK event of its kind that unites the spa and salon industry to increase consumer awareness around the health benefits of regular treatments and spa attendance.

Last year, more than 300 spas and salons joined forces to provide introductory offers on treatments, the target for 2017 is to get over 1000 UK spas and salons involved.

This year’s theme will once again be ‘Spa for everybody and mind.’ The idea is to educate the public that going to a spa or salon shouldn’t be viewed as a one-off annual luxury, but a regular and essential investment in physical and emotional wellbeing, just like gym attendance. The UKSA is driving the campaign.

“We surveyed the 320 participating spas and salons in 2016 to find out how effective National Spa Week had been,” said Charlie Thompson, chairman of the UKSA. “Over 40 per cent felt they saw additional client footfall and sales because of National Spa Week.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=W4M1k

Charlie Thompson says all UK spas would benefit from National Spa Week
Born in Turkey, Global Wellness Day is celebrated on the 2nd Saturday of June every year with complimentary activities around the world.

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Seabird centre plans £5m update

The Scottish Seabird Centre has unveiled its plans for a new visitor centre at its site in North Berwick, near Edinburgh.

The £5.5m proposal would continue the work of the Seabird Centre, an educational destination that enables guests to engage with and learn about wildlife. However, the charitable conservation centre, which opened in 2000, is currently struggling to keep up with visitor demand.

The project, dubbed the National Marine Centre, will promote educational and conservation initiatives based around the local ecosystem, as well as working on nationwide programmes and sharing research with environmentalists and visitors. Marine birds will remain at the heart of the mission.

Architects Simpson and Brown, who designed the existing attraction, are collaborating with exhibition designers Event Communications on the new plans. An advisory group of experts and academics, including researchers and scientists, is being consulted on the types of marine exhibits that will be on show.

The plans include an education centre, interactive exhibitions, a new welcome area, shop, dining facilities and panoramic observatory. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is helping support the project through the preliminary stages, and offered £3.5m funding if it goes ahead.

“As a conservation and education charity, we welcome 4,000 school children a year,” said project director Grace Martin.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=R3W9m_O

Queen opens £2m elephant exhibit

The Queen has officially launched a new £2m elephant centre at Whipsnade Zoo in Bedfordshire, UK, feeding a banana to one of the herd to signify the opening. The Queen is patron to the charity.

The new centre, which features 30 acres (12 hectares) of outdoor paddock space, is a 7,500sq ft (750sqm) state-of-the-art home for the zoo’s elephant herd.

Whipsnade’s herd of elephants was previously housed in an ordinary barn, opened by Prince Philip – who accompanied The Queen for the opening of the new centre – around 20 years ago.

Designed to replicate the feeling of being on safari, the enclosure uses timed lights and nets which automatically drop down at intervals to feed the animals. The barn is also filled with one-metre deep soft sand flooring and six reclaimed, giant oak trees.

Within the new centre, special microphones also pick up “infrasonic” sounds used by elephants to communicate which cannot be heard by human ear. These soundwaves will appear on an electronic screen, which sits above the newly opened enclosure.

The Zoological Society of London (ZSL), which manages Whipsnade Zoo, is currently involved in more than 50 conservation efforts around the world, promoting elephants and peaceful relations with humans.

The zoo’s new elephant centre officially opened to the public on 12 April.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=J5A5V_O

World zoos body appoints conservation expert as CEO

The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) has hired a new CEO, who will run the organisation and its relationship with its 300 members around the world – including those in the UK.

Cress, who believes zoos have an increasingly important role to play, spent the past six years with the United Nations Environment Programme, where he was involved in initiatives to battle the illegal wildlife trade and encourage sustainable development to protect local ecosystems.

With the UN, Cress was programme coordinator for the Great Apes Survival Partnership. The role involved finding partners and overseeing implementation, fundraising, and public awareness projects.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=J7r8U_O

Jorvik attraction re-opens following 2015 flooding

Jorvik Viking Centre, in York has re-opened following a £4m refurbishment project.

The renovation works were necessary following devastating floods that hit the north of England in December 2015, causing untold damage to homes, buildings and infrastructure.

After being affected by the floods, Jorvik invested in a major redevelopment to upgrade and re-imagine the visitor experience, while staying true to its unique offering, where guests feel fully immersed in what life was like in the Viking era, and learn about the archaeology of the actual site, which dates back to AD960.

“What was found on this very site changed everyone’s understanding of the Vikings in Britain,” said Sarah Maltby, the attraction director.

“This latest incarnation of Jorvik incorporates the latest technology and interpretative techniques to share the incredible depth of knowledge in an accessible way that immerses the visitor in the sights and sounds of the Viking city.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=d2r6f_O
TOURISM

UK ranks fifth on tourism report

Spain has been ranked top of a global tourism study measuring sustainable development of the travel and tourism sector, with the country identified as having the most competitive national economy in the world.

Conducted by the World Economic Forum, the 2017 edition of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index focuses on ensuring the sector’s sustained growth in an uncertain security environment, while preserving the natural environment on which tourism depends.

With the report in its 11th edition, Spain was ranked highly across 14 categories, receiving a score of 5.4 out of 7, with its tourist service infrastructure ranking second overall, also finishing second for cultural resources and business travel.

Great Britain finished in fifth place in the index, scoring 5.2 out of 7 and remaining one of the most-visited nations in Europe and Asia, though its decision to leave the European Union could affect this in the coming years. According to the report, Britain has the second least competitive prices in the world for tourists. Following the triggering of Article 50 and starting the Brexit process, it is predicted that this will likely worsen.

Britain also ranked 18th on the list for visa requirements which is expected to worsen under the terms of the EU split and free movement regulations.

A number of terror attacks affected France – which came second to Spain – with the country ranking 67th in terms of safety and security.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n2K5f_O

Elizabethan bus tour for London

A London sightseeing company has launched a multi-sensory bus tour designed to take schoolchildren back to circa 16th century, where they’ll learn about the Black Death, Shakespeare and the gunpowder plot.

The interactive bus tour, operated by Golden Tours, features costumed character guides and a variety of sights, sounds and smells used to recreate what life was like in the city hundreds of years ago.

Children will use different stimuli to learn about what people ate, drank and wore.

The experience is designed for school-age children, bringing to life the “gory details” of the time, including what the skin of a plague victim would have been like. The tour passes London’s great landmarks and attractions, including Shakespeare’s Globe, Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament and St Paul’s Cathedral.

The programme was devised in partnership with Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and educational professionals and the attraction-style experience has been recognised by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom.

“Shakespeare’s London is an inspiring way for children to engage with Shakespeare outside of the classroom and is the closest thing to time travel,” said Mikesh Palan, managing director at Golden Tours.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=D9W4u_O

The "Bard on a Bus" tour brings London’s heritage to life
PROPRIETY

Sculpture park set for £3m gallery

Construction has commenced on a new £3.8m visitor centre for the famous Yorkshire Sculpture Park; one of northern England’s most popular tourist attractions.

The project, located in the city of Wakefield, has been billed by architects Feilden Fowles as “the practice’s most prestigious cultural commission to date.”

The park, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary, welcomes around 500,000 visitors every year. It hosts permanent and temporary sculptures, including work by the likes of Henry Moore, Andy Goldsworthy, David Nash, James Turrell and Ai Weiwei.

Scheduled for completion at the end of March 2018 and opening in the summer, the new centre will enhance the visitor experience at the southern entrance to the park. The low-rise building comprises a 140sq m (1,500sq ft) restaurant, a 125sq m (1,340sq ft) gallery space, an 80sq m (860sq ft) public foyer and a 50sq m (538sq ft) shop.

The building will be embedded in the hillside within a former gritstone quarry. Emerging from the ground. The approach elevation will be constructed of layered, pigmented concrete, creating a sedimentary patina that relates to the sandstone bedrock. A concrete saw-tooth roof veiled in translucent GRP panels will create a soft north light for the display of artworks inside.

A low energy control system using unfired clay bricks will power the centre, provide a passive humidity buffer and maintain pleasant conditions within the gallery. According to the architects, “this is combined with a highly insulated envelope and natural ventilation.” Details: http://lea.sr?a=D7d2u_O

An artist’s impression of the rugby stadium’s redeveloped North Stand

Headingley Stadium secures funding

Redevelopment work on Headingley Stadium may finally begin after a funding agreement for the £40m work has been agreed.

Plans to improve the adjoining North and South stands for Headingley Cricket Ground and the rugby league stadium have been in the pipeline for some time, but with minimal local authority funding a financial package had been hard to come by.

Now, both Yorkshire County Cricket Club and Leeds Rhinos have struck a deal with a “financial institution” to make the ambition a reality. Leeds City Council has put forward a £4m grant for the redevelopment.

There had been concerns that the work would not be finished in time for the ground to host matches from the 2019 Cricket World Cup. While those fears have not quite been quelled, Yorkshire CCC chief executive Mark Arthur said it was a “significant step in securing international cricket at Headingley.”

“Yorkshire County Cricket Club will continue to work hard to ensure that all remaining funds are in place to ensure that the redevelopment is completed in time for the Cricket World Cup in 2019,” he added.

Leeds Rhinos chief executive Gary Hetherington said the proposal was a “critical development” for the club, which had spent six years planning it.

Details: http://lea.sr?a=25d8C_C_O

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A huge increase in demand for children’s swimming lessons in China has opened the door for the Swimming Teachers’ Association (STA) to help the government with training and standards.

The organisation has signed a partnership agreement with the recently-formed China International Swimming Teachers’ Association (CISTA), an organisation which has been set up by the Chinese government in order to educate local swimming teachers and lifeguards.

Demand for swimming lessons has surged since the Chinese government scrapped its one-child policy in 2015, resulting in a baby boom.

As a result, new facilities and swim schools are being built across the country, accelerating the need for qualified instructors.

The partnership will see CISTA offering the “full spectrum” of STA qualifications, including swimming teaching, disabilities, lifeguarding, pool plant, first aid and CPDs. With the support of the STA, CISTA will aim to offer “bespoke consultancy services” for new swim school start-ups and existing aquatic businesses.

Dave Candler, STA chief executive, said the opportunity for swimming in China – with a population of 1.3bn people – was “immense”.

“If it’s truly great to be able to partner CISTA at the very beginning of their historical journey,” Candler added.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=y5H3F_O

China is currently experiencing a boom in young swimmers

Les Mills and CIMSPA sign deal

Les Mills fitness instructors have the opportunity to gain CIMSPA continuing professional development (CPD) points as a result of the two organisations agreeing a new partnership.

The group fitness provider has become the first CIMSPA skills development partner to have its entire group exercise training offer fully endorsed by the chartered institute.

CIMSPA’s recognition covers 14 group exercise products of Les Mills, including Bodypump, and includes module, refresher and advanced instructor training.

Les Mills instructors will be able to gain CPD points when completing qualifications and refresher training.

The CPD system set up by CIMSPA forms part of its plan to “professionalise” the workforce across the UK’s sport and physical activity sector. Most members are required to complete 10 CPD points per membership subscription year.

Jean-ann Marnoch, Les Mills head of instructor experience, said the organisation’s CIMSPA endorsement would contribute to “driving up standards for group exercise in the fitness industry going forward.”

CIMSPA chief executive Tara Dillon added that the partnership ‘demonstrates Les Mills’ clear commitment to helping CIMSPA professionalise the fitness industry.”

“I’m looking forward to welcoming many of the 10,000 Les Mills instructors into membership,” Dillon said.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=q3U2r_O

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Location: South-east, UK

Supervisor
Company: Coral Reef (Bracknell Forest)
Location: Bracknell, UK

Membership Sales Advisor
Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Trowbridge, UK

Sports Assistant
Company: Enable Leisure & Culture
Location: London, UK

Activities Coordinator
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Fareham, Hampshire, UK

Membership Sales Consultant
Company: énergie group
Location: Fareham, Hampshire, UK

Customer Service Advisor
Company: GLL
Location: Bath, UK

Personal Trainers
Company: The Gym Group
Location: London Vauxhall, UK

Sports Development and Physical Activity Manager
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Hampshire, UK

Gymnastic Coaches
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Sunderland, UK

Franchise Opportunities
Company: Premier Sport
Location: Nelson, UK

Head of Operations
Company: University Of Warwick
Location: Coventry

Spa Receptionist
Company: Coral Reef (Bracknell Forest)
Location: Bracknell, UK

Personal Trainer
Company: The Hurlingham Club
Location: Fulham, London, UK

Receptionist
Company: Coral Reef (Bracknell Forest)
Location: Bracknell, UK

Freelance Tutor
Company: The Training Room
Location: Various locations, UK

Head Dance Teacher
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Fareham, Hampshire, UK

Gymnastics Coach
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Fareham, Hampshire, UK

Group Exercise Instructors
Company: Everyone Active
Location: London, UK

Fitness & Wellbeing Manager
Company: Bluecoat Health Club
Location: Horsham, UK

Receptionist
Company: Coral Reef (Bracknell Forest)
Location: Bracknell, UK

Recreation Assistant
Company: Coral Reef (Bracknell Forest)
Location: Bracknell, UK

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

Swimming Instructors
Company: Swimming Nature
Location: Various locations, UK

Personal Trainers
Company: Matt Roberts Personal Training Company
Location: London, UK, UK

General Manager
Company: Xercise4Less
Location: Various

Impact Sales Consultant
Company: Xercise4Less
Location: National role, UK

Personal Trainer
Company: Xercise4Less
Location: Various locations, UK

Trainee Personal Trainer
Company: The Gym Academy
Location: Nationwide, UK

Beauty Therapist
Company: Harrogate Borough Council
Location: Harrogate, UK

Therapists
Company: FACHEGYM
Location: London, UK

Spa Operations Manager
Company: Stapleford Park
Location: Leicestershire, UK

Beauty Therapists
Company: Lifehouse Spa and Hotel
Location: Frinton-on-Sea, UK

Beauty Therapists
Company: Lifehouse Spa and Hotel
Location: Frinton-on-Sea, UK

Head of Rides Engineering and Estates
Company: Oakwood Theme Park
Location: Pembrokeshire, UK

LZ Visitor Services
Company: Zoological Society of London
Location: London, UK

Head of B2B Marketing
Company: Farah Experiences
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

Head of Sales Operations
Company: Farah Experiences
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

HSE Director, Farah Experiences
Company: Farah Experiences
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

Operations Manager
Company: The Eye Brand
Location: Orlando, United States

General Manager
Company: Continuum Attractions
Location: Oxford

Direct Marketing Manager
Company: Farah Experiences
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

CRM and Cross-Park Support Manager
Company: Farah Experiences
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

CRM Digital Manager
Company: Farah Experiences
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE

Audio Visual Technician
Company: Madame Tussauds
Location: Orlando, United States

Marketing Analyst
Company: Merlin Entertainments Grp
Location: New York NY, United States

Guest Experience Host
Company: Legoland Discovery Centre
Location: Chicago IL, United States

Guest Experience Host
Company: Sea Life
Location: Minnesota, United States

Retail Manager
Company: Legoland Discovery Centre
Location: Boston, United States

Catering Assistant
Company: GLL
Location: London East, UK

Cafe Assistant
Company: GLL
Location: Cambridge, UK

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National Fitness Day countdown

ukactive will start its countdown to National Fitness Day 2017 by unveiling a line-up of events at consumer exhibition This Morning Live next month.

The show, which takes place on 18-21 May at the NEC in Birmingham, is being run in partnership with ITV and will feature food, fashion, beauty and lifestyle areas, as well as a health and fitness section inspiring women on how to integrate an active lifestyle into their everyday routine.

Health, fitness and lifestyle experts, including Dr Zoe Williams, Max Lowery and Faisal Abdalla, will be joining regular television presenters Philip Schofield, Holly Willoughby, Ruth Langsford and Eamonn Holmes at the event.

Launching the countdown at the exhibition is part of ukactive’s mission to ensure National Fitness Day 2017, which will take place on 27 September, reaches more people.

Last year’s event saw more than one million people get active, as UK gyms and leisure venues opened their doors offering free physical activity taster sessions.

ukactive, which hopes to expand on last year’s 18,000 events, will once again launch its #fitness2me social media campaign to help promote the day.

Steven Ward, ukactive executive director, said: “Last year was our biggest event yet.“It’s a fun day with a serious message and the goal is to spread the fun of fitness and the exhilaration of movement to make more headway in overcoming the UK’s physical inactivity crisis.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=W6p3H_O

SRA unveils new five-year strategy

Continued from front cover

The SRA has pledged to make sure the sector has access to quality research proving its efficacy in this respect, as well as using its influence with government to “make sure the full economic contribution of the sector is recognised and supported”.

In terms of sport’s social impact, the Alliance will continue to back schemes, such as its Mental Health Charter, which emphasises the positive impact sport and recreation has on mental health.

Volunteering has been earmarked as an important aspect of the sector going forward, particularly the accessibility of opportunities for people from underrepresented backgrounds, such as disabled people, those from ethnic minority backgrounds, or people living in more deprived parts of the nation.

Developing opportunities for children and young people in sport and recreation, as well as supporting members to futureproof their own operations, make up the four key objectives of the strategy. On the latter, the Alliance has committed to furthering its engagement with its members and delivering “high-quality commissioned work”.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=P8p6T_O