New £25m Stonehenge visitor centre plans unveiled

By Pete Hayman

English Heritage has unveiled designs for the proposed new £25m visitor centre at Stonehenge after submitting a planning application for the scheme to Wiltshire Council.

The facility, which is to be built 1.5 miles (2.4km) to the west of the historic site at Airman’s Corner, has been designed by London-based architects Denton Corker Marshall to be environmentally sensitive to its surroundings.

A pair of single-storey structures – one glass and one timber – will be built to house exhibitions, a café, a shop and toilets, while a low-key transit system similar to the one used at Cornwall’s Eden Project will also be provided.

Existing car park and visitor facilities at the World Heritage Site will be removed and returned to grassland under the plans, as well as the closure of the A344 and byways within the site to motorised vehicles. A minimal security facility and emergency toilets will remain.

Wiltshire Council will launch a further public consultation as part of the planning process for the scheme, which has been backed by the government and will receive funding from English Heritage, the Highways Agency and the DCMS.

English Heritage’s Stonehenge project director, Loraine Knowles, said: “The new centre is designed to blend into the World Heritage landscape which visitors will pass through on their way to the stones. "It will provide enhanced opportunities for education and interpretation and have first class facilities in keeping with Stonehenge’s status as a world-renowned attraction.”

Developer submits Battersea Power Station plans

Treasury Holdings UK hopes to transform the derelict site with £5.5bn scheme

By Pete Hayman

Plans for a £5.5bn mixed-use redevelopment of Battersea Power Station in south London have been submitted to the local authority by developer Treasury Holdings UK.

Wandsworth Council will now decide whether to grant planning consent for the redevelopment of the 40-acre (16.2-hectare) site, which has remained derelict since closing during the 1980s after a series of failed attempts to regenerate the iconic Grade II*-listed building.

The site has remained derelict since closing during the 1980s

A masterplan for the site – drawn up by architect Rafael Viñoly – includes 700,000sq ft (65,032sq m) of restaurant and retail space, a hotel and a conference centre.

A riverside park, an extension to the Riverside Walk through to Battersea Park and public access to restored historic areas of the power station are also proposed, as well as office space and more than 3,700 residential units.

Rob Tincknell, Treasury Holdings UK’s managing director, said: “It is a plan that, vitally, will finally deliver this important site’s regeneration and create a vibrant new urban quarter for London.”

Golf and rugby set for Olympics

Golf and rugby union sevens will be included in the programme for the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, following a vote by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The IOC’s executive board had recommended the inclusion of the two sports, which held off competition from five rival bids after an extensive evaluation by the Olympic Programme Commission earlier this year.
UK attractions report healthy summer

Visitor numbers to ALVA member sites boosted by increase in "staycation" trend

By Pete Hayman

An increase in the number of British residents opting for "staycations" this year has helped boost visitor numbers at some of the UK’s leading visitor attractions by 3.4 per cent.

New figures published by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) has shown that most sites have also reported an increase in retail and catering spend between 1 May and 31 August, compared with the same period in 2008.

Between June and August, the National Portrait Gallery in London reported a 23 per cent increase in visitor numbers, while the National Trust (NT) also saw more people visit its properties during the summer.

Luke Whitcomb, NT member and visitor marketing director, said: "At property level there’s been a real drive this year to focus on the visitor experience."

ALVA, which represents 42 visitor attractions, said many of its members saw an increase in foreign visitor numbers, despite a 9 per cent fall in inbound tourism numbers during the early months of 2009.

Robyn Broke, ALVA director, said: "It is most reassuring to see that the ‘staycation’ trend predicted by ALVA’s members has translated into profitable business as it is vital for Britain that our tourism industry thrives, allowing it to maintain employment opportunities and to provide economic growth.*

Government plans major asset clear-out

By Pete Hayman

The Tote bookmaker and the Channel Tunnel rail link are among a number of assets that are set to be sold off by the government in a bid to reduce the UK’s national debt.

New plans announced by Prime Minister Gordon Brown aim to raise around £16bn from the disposal of state-owned assets in order to make in-roads into relieving the country’s financial burden – estimated to reach £175bn by the end of the year.

The Prime Minister unveiled the proposals in a speech to economists in London, which will see the government attempt to sell the Tote bookmaker for the first time since it decided to hold onto the company in October 2008.

Attempts to sell the Tote had been shelved in October 2008

Brown said: “We plan a sale of assets to deal with our debt issues and I’ve said today that £16bn of assets will be sold within the next two years.

“That includes, of course, the student loan book, the Dartford Tunnel, the Channel rail link; it includes the Tote and includes other facilities and a property portfolio that will be announced over the next period of time.*

However, the measures have been criticised by the Liberal Democrats for trying to sell assets at a time when the full market value will not be achieved, while also not doing enough to deal with the long-term deficit.

Vince Cable, Liberal Democrats treasury spokesperson, said: “Selling off what is left of the family silver is not going to solve the long term problem of Britain’s structural deficit.

“With the Government acknowledging just 12 months ago that market conditions were not right for the sale of the Tote, concerns must be raised that this dramatic turn around is due to political rather financial considerations.*
FIFA official warns England to improve 2018 bid

By Pete Hayman

FIFA vice-president Jack Warner has warned England’s bid to host the 2018 World Cup that it needs to do more to earn the right to stage the tournament.

Warner, who is also president of the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football, accused the English bid of “creeping along” and not making the most of its strengths.

According to The Guardian, Warner said: “I think England are creeping along. It’s better than standing still but I would

Wembley Stadium is to be the centrepiece of England’s bid

have thought they would be galloping by now.

"I have seen many other bids, and, while England has all the attributes to be a worthy host country, I am not convinced they are making the most of those attributes."

However, Football Association chair Lord Triesman told the Leaders in Football event in London that England had learned from its abortive bid to secure the 2006 event.

Triesman said: “We have spent what must seem like a quiet period listening and learning from the football family worldwide. I don’t regret that. But I take the point that we now need to put what we have learned to good use as we use our great assets effectively."
**IN BRIEF**

**Nexum reports decline in summer sales**
- Nightclub operator Nexum has reported a 1.3 per cent drop in its first half like-for-like sales. Reporting the company's figures for the six-month period to September 2009 Nexum's chief executive, Paul Kinsey, said the results were encouraging in a tough climate. "Gross margin was only slightly down against the previous year," he said. "This was a very pleasing result in a market where heavy discounting is now routine.

**Ladbrokes launches £275m cash call**
- Ladbrokes has unveiled plans to raise £275m through a new rights issue after reporting a 58 per cent decline in profits for the three months to 30 September 2009. The company has revealed that all employees will have their salary frozen until 2011 and that it would not be paying out a final dividend in 2009 after blaming a lack of Premier League draws for its third quarter slump. It is expected that the proposed cash call will enable Ladbrokes to reduce its debt, which stood at £962m at the end of June 2009.

**Sports results hit William Hill Q3 results**
- Bookmaker William Hill has blamed an uncharacteristic lack of draws at the start of the Premier League season for a 3 per cent decrease in revenue for the 13 weeks to 29 September 2009. However, the third quarter decline has failed to halt a 3 per cent increase in overall revenue for the year to date, while online revenue increased by 56 per cent, compared with the same period in 2008. William Hill said that reduced costs and higher-than-expected turnover meant that it had not changed its expectations for the full year.

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**BAA announces Gatwick Airport sale**

£1.51bn deal to be primarily used by UK airport operator to reduce existing debt

By Pete Hayman

Airport operator BAA, which owns seven UK airports, has announced it is set to sell Gatwick Airport for £1.51bn after it secured a deal with investment firm Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP).

The proceeds from the sale, of which £55m will be dependent on future traffic performance, will be mainly used by the Spanish-owned company to pay part of its existing £9.6bn debt.

GIP, which also owns a 75 per cent stake in London City Airport, is expected to complete the acquisition of Gatwick Airport in December, subject to European Union merger regulation clearance.

Colin Matthews, BAA chief executive said: "Gatwick and its people have long been a central part of BAA and we are proud of the airport's development as one of the world's leading international airports. "BAA is changing and today's announcement marks a new beginning for both Gatwick and BAA. We wish Gatwick well for the future and are confident that the airport will flourish under new ownership."

Gatwick Airport was put on the market in September 2008 before the Competition Commission (CC) had completed an investigation into UK airport market competition. However, the decision to sell the airport has coincided with the start of BAA's challenge against the CC ruling that ordered the operator to sell both Gatwick and Stansted, along with either Edinburgh and Glasgow, in the interests of passengers and airlines.

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**Praesepe nets new acquisitions**

By Martin Nash

Gaming group Praesepe is set to complete its third acquisition in four months with the £6.3m (US$9.9m, 6.7m euro) purchase of nine Adult Gaming Centres (AGCs) and four Family Entertainment Centres (FECs) from Case Concepts.

All of the AGC sites will be re-branded under the Cashino marque. The FEC sites, which include Weston-Super-Mare and Burnham-on-Sea in Somerset and Ilfracombe in Devon, as well as sites in South Wales, will continue to trade under their current brand names while they are assimilated into the group. The latest acquisition – which provides around 780 gaming machines – was completed on 19 October. This latest acquisition takes the number of Praesepe-owned sites to 54, expanding its geographical reach into south west England and representing the company's first involvement with the FEC sector.

CEO Nick Harding said the deal will expand the firm's portfolio

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**Gala in £540m equity deal**

Beleaguered bookmaker and bingo firm Gala Coral is set to cancel £540m of debt in exchange for 50 per cent of its equity. Gala Coral’s owners – the private equity firms Candover, Cinven and Permira – are in advanced talks with two investment groups, Intermediate Capital and Park Square, with a deal expected by the end of October.

The company has amounted debts of £2.6bn and the new agreement would mean that shareholders would not have to pump extra cash into the firm.

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Barrow Council teams up with Pulse Fitness

Barrow Borough Council has signed a 30-year income share deal on Park Leisure Centre in Cumbria with leisure equipment provider Pulse Fitness. According to the North West Evening Mail, the £1.3m deal will see Pulse Fitness maintain the centre on the proviso the council can buy out the company. As part of the contract, the all-weather pitch at the facility will be converted into six five-a-side courts and a 60x40-metre pitch.

One-to-one training still top fitness trend

A report into the trends in personal fitness training by IDEA Health and Fitness has revealed one-to-one training and small group exercise are the most popular forms of exercise among gym members. The worldwide membership organisation for exercise professionals, has published the results of its 2009 IDEA Personal Training Fitness Programs and Equipment Trends Report. The survey shows that one-to-one personal training is still the most popular fitness trend with 98 per cent of respondents reporting that they offer it to their clientele.

EHFA reaches 7,000 member landmark

The European Health and Fitness Association (EHFA) has continued to expand its membership base and now represents 7,000 facilities across 22 countries. Two more national associations have also joined EHFA as members – the Danish DFHO and the Spanish FNEID. EHFA executive director Herman Rutgers said: “We have very ambitious plans in order to get more people active and we need the support from all the stakeholders in the European industry to make things happen.”

London baths set for 2010 reopening

Marshall Street Baths currently undergoing major £25m refurbishment scheme

By Tom Walker

Westminster City Council (WCC) has confirmed that the Marshall Street Baths in central London will reopen in 2010.

Redevelopment work on the site, which has been closed since 1997 due to safety fears, began in August 2008. The £25m revamp is being carried out by Marshall Street Regeneration company.

SG Interior Exterior is acting as the construction manager for the project and it will continue to oversee and carry out the build and restoration of the listed features for the regeneration of the site.

The new-look facility has been designed by Finch Forman in collaboration with Fulcrum Consulting and design firms PSL Structural Projects and Lucking & Clarke LLP.

When it reopens, Marshall Street Baths will include a fully restored main pool, a new fitness club and health suite with sauna and multi-purpose dance and exercise studios.

WCC has already signed a management agreement with Nuffield Health, which will manage the new facilities on behalf of the council once the work has been completed.

The scheme will also see 52 homes built, which have been designed by Munkenbeck and Partners architects, of which 15 will form part of an affordable housing scheme.

WCCs cabinet member for adult and community services Ed Argar said: “The redevelopment of this iconic site is not only of historical significance but also of importance to the thousands of residents, businesses and visitors that it will benefit, right in the heart of the West End.”

Fullwell Cross work complete

Fullwell Cross Leisure Centre in Ilford, London, has undergone a £350,000 redevelopment.

Alliance Leisure completed the revamp for Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure, the trust which runs the centre on behalf of the London Borough of Redbridge.

Cosmurf Construction delivered the project which included the creation of a new two-floor 180sqm (1,938sq ft) 42-station fitness suite. The new gym space has replaced the café with the addition of a mezzanine floor.

FIA confirms Deane’s departure

By Tom Walker

After some speculation, the Fitness Industry Association (FIA) has confirmed that chief executive officer Andrée Deane has left the organisation.

In a short statement, a spokesperson confirmed that Deane parted company with the FIA in July, but did not offer any reason for her departure.

A spokesperson for the FIA said: "Andrée has served the fitness industry and the association for many years and we wish her well in the future. This is the only statement which will be issued on this matter and the FIA would like to stress that any other comments attributed to the 

Deane became the face of the industry at government level chairmain or any of the board members have not been issued by the FIA."

Deane joined the FIA in 1999 and was responsible for its public affairs strategy. Before her departure, she had become the face of the industry at government level and spear-headed consumer campaigns.
New leisure centre for Kettering

Plans have been lodged with Kettering Borough Council for a new leisure centre at Grange Estate in Desborough. If approved, phase one of the leisure centre will include a 125sq m (1,345sq ft) gym and changing rooms, which will be complemented by two outside play areas, a multi-use games area and a four-court badminton sports hall. The second phase will include four additional changing rooms for external users, two squash courts, a 173sq m (1,860sq ft) fitness club and two junior football pitches.

Kirklees unveils new SHOKK Activity Area

Kirklees Active Leisure has unveiled a new £250,000 SHOKK Activity Area at Whitcliffe Mount Sports Centre in Cleckheaton. The new facility, which has been funded by NHS Kirklees, includes a Wireless Dance Mats System, Traverse climbing wall, Target wall, Wushu martial arts tower and Vew-Do balance boards. An additional four portable dance mat sets are being used by schools on a rolling basis throughout the Kirklees area.

GLL takes over Hillingdon facilities

Sports trust Greenwich Leisure (GLL) has taken over the management of four facilities on behalf of the London Borough of Hillingdon. As of 1 October, GLL operates Highgrove Pool, Queensmead Sports Centre, Hayes Pool and Hayes Stadium Sports Centre. The partnership with Hillingdon Council will see £4.5m invested in the centres over the next decade. A further £1m will be invested in the new £15m Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre, which will also be managed by the trust when it opens in early 2010.

A new campaign designed to get 100,000 people more active through dance ahead of the London 2012 Olympics has been launched by the Department of Health (DH).

The Dance Champions Group will comprise ex-Strictly Come Dancing judge Arlene Phillips, ex-Come Dancing presenter Angela Rippon, professional dancer Darren Bennett and group chair Rod Aldridge.

Public health minister Gillian Merron said: “Our Dance Champions are some of the best known and leading talents of the dance world, but you don’t have to be a professional to enjoy dancing and feel the positive effect it can have.”

Dance Champions Launches Dance Champions Campaign

A new campaign designed to get 100,000 people more active through dance ahead of the London 2012 Olympics has been launched by the Department of Health (DH).

The Dance Champions Group, which forms part of the Dance4Life initiative, will see the Dance Champions Group travel across the UK to entice people to take part in free mass-participation events.

The Dance Champions Group will comprise ex-Strictly Come Dancing judge Arlene Phillips, ex-Come Dancing presenter Angela Rippon, professional dancer Darren Bennett and group chair Rod Aldridge.

Public health minister Gillian Merron said: “Our Dance Champions are some of the best known and leading talents of the dance world, but you don’t have to be a professional to enjoy dancing and feel the positive effect it can have.”

Free taster sessions, a Dance Summit and a dance directory website are also planned.

Dance can improve your health

DW Sports Fitness Carlisle site to open in January

A new DW Sports Fitness health club is set to open in Carlisle in January 2010, six months after it was scheduled to open as a JJB club.

The Carlisle site is set to include a swimming pool, a fitness suite, an exercise studio, a Ki studio for yoga and Pilates, changing rooms and a members’ lounge and bar.

The company is also set to open sites in Canterbury, Tunstall, Bangor (Northern Ireland), Poole and Milton Keynes.

DW Sports Fitness was formed when Wigan Athletic Football Club chair and former chair of JJB Dave Whelan bought JJB’s 50-plus fitness clubs in March this year.

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In my last column, I talked about how any new government’s treasury team would be running a careful eye over departmental budgets in an effort to identify and eliminate any expenditure they considered to be providing a poor return on the public investment. With this in prospect, it is important to position tourism as being a solution to the financial situation.

Of course, in addition to cutting costs, any new government may also be forced to consider increasing taxation. This could be through targeting specific products and services where the government thinks the increases will not be strongly opposed, such as “sin” taxes on things like cigarettes and alcohol. Aviation is increasingly being seen as falling into this category.

When Air Passenger Duty (APD) was first introduced in the UK, rates were low. However, the rates have increased significantly since 2006, first doubling in 2007 and, in 2009, being replaced by a new charging scheme that will see APD increase by 140 per cent for European visitors and by up to 325 per cent for long-haul visitors in the space of just four years.

While this has increased revenue to the Exchequer, recent work by the Tourism Alliance has estimated that APD will reduce expenditure by tourists to the UK by £1.35bn per annum.

The risk is that tourism-related services, such as aviation, could well be seen as easy targets in the new government’s search for revenue. After all, tourists don’t vote.

KURT JANSON is policy director at Tourism Alliance

Brits shun summer trips abroad

ONS statistics reveal 12 per cent drop in overseas travel during 2009

By Pete Hayman

New figures released by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) have shown that Britons have continued to take less holidays overseas in the three months to July 2009.

According to the latest International Passenger Survey, the number of visits abroad by Britons fell by 1 per cent to 14.9 million, compared with the previous three months, while seasonally adjusted figures revealed a 12 per cent decline to 62.6 million in overseas travel during the 12 months to July 2009.

However, the inbound tourism market has now stabilised despite a long-term decline in visits to the UK. In the three months to July 2009, the number of visits into Britain increased by 2 per cent to 7.7 million, although figures for the 12 months to July 2009 were down by 9 per cent, at 30.3 million, compared to the previous year.

Despite the increase in the number of visitors during the three-month period, the ONS has reported a 3 per cent decrease in tourism expenditure by overseas residents to £4bn, while UK residents’ expenditure on visits overseas has fallen by 6 per cent to £7.6bn compared with last year.

Ryanair withdraws all airport check-in desks

By Martin Nash

Ryanair check-in desks are no longer available at any airport from which the Ireland-based low-cost carrier operates. Passengers now have to check-in online – at a fee of £5 or €5 – and those who wish to check in luggage will have to use special ‘bag drop’ desks. The cost of checking in a single bag for a return flight is rising to £30, with a second now costing £70.

Michael O’Leary, Ryanair’s chief executive, said the measures were designed to save the airline around £46m a year.

Irish Sea ports combine to attract cruise ships

Six Irish Sea ports have joined forces as part of a new €1.2m (£1m, US$1.8m) venture designed to attract more cruise ship passengers to Wales and Ireland.

The Celtic Wave project – comprising Anglesey, Milford Haven and Swansea in Wales, and Cork, Dublin and Waterford in Ireland – will provide a significant economic boost to each destination.

Led by the Isle of Anglesey Council, the scheme has secured funding from the European Regeneration Development Fund through the Interreg 4A initiative to promote cross-border co-operation.

The Celtic Wave scheme will market itself as an eco-friendly proposition, encouraging operators to sail around the ports to cut costs and carbon emissions.
BISL Conference 2009
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SPORT & LEISURE
THE DECADE AHEAD

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Go to www.bisl.org to book online or contact Amanda Fry
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A £23m stadium is to be built at Copeland Athletics Stadium in Hensingham, west Cumbria. According to Whitehaven News, the new Cumbria Academy of Sport will comprise a 14,000-capacity stadium linked via a concourse to a leisure centre offering a competition swimming pool, a four-court badminton hall, a gym, internal and external climbing walls and two dance studios.

A shop, café and conference facilities will also be built. The trustees of the academy have hired an as yet unnamed Manchester-based architect to design the stadium, which is scheduled to open within the next three years.

Leeds United fails in training ground bid

Leeds United Football Club (LUFC) has failed to re-acquire the Thorp Arch training facility after it was unable to secure the full support of the local authority ahead of a 15 October deadline. Leeds City Council was poised to purchase the site for £6m and lease it back to LUFC, but the deal fell through due to “uncertainties” that couldn’t be resolved by the deadline. However, LUFC has confirmed that it will remain a tenant at Thorp Arch for a further 20-year period under the terms of its agreement with the site’s current owner, Barraway Limited.

Six councils to extend free swimming pledge

Six local authorities are set to extend free swimming schemes to young people after the government revealed that around £1m worth of funding was still available as part of the £140m initiative. Councils in Barnet, Hertfordshire; Broxtowe, Nottingham; East Hampshire; Mansfield; Plymouth and Reading will now give thousands more young people the chance to swim for free, taking the number of councils now offering free swimming to under 16s to 197.

£1.1m Welsh judo centre set to open

The new £1.1m Welsh National Judo Centre will open to the public at the Welsh Institute of Sport in Cardiff on 29 October. Facilities at the centre, which was built by Welsh construction company Jehu Project Services, will include international competition-standard facilities as well as a sports science and medicine centre. Philip Carling, chair of Sports Council of Wales, said: “Having a dedicated facility for judo in Wales will make a huge difference.”

Funding boost for Durham University sports plans

Plans for the £6.7m refurbishment and development of new sports facilities at Durham University’s Maiden Castle centre have received a grant from Sport England.

The funding body has contributed £500,000 towards the scheme as part of its new Sustainable Facilities Fund, which aims to help establish a lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The plans have received £0.5m

Durham University’s Sporting Futures project includes a new indoor rowing tank, a fencing piste, indoor cricket nets and a performance analysis suite, as well as new facilities for disabled athletes and an extended sports hall.

The scheme, which is scheduled for completion in October 2010, is set to benefit the 90.2 per cent of university students participating in sport, as well as helping the institution’s outreach work.

A university spokesperson said: “We’ve invested heavily in delivering high performance, participation and outreach.”

School sport creates “new benchmark”

DCSF study reveals English schools offer an average of 19 sports in PE lessons

More than half of all English school pupils took part in at least three hours of sport a week last year, according to research published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

The government’s PE and Sport Survey 2008-09 has reported that schools are offering an average of 19 sports as part of their PE lessons, with yoga, circus skills and cheerleading increasing in popularity.

Nearly all English schools offered football and dance during the academic year, while there has been an increase in institutions offering cycling (50 per cent), golf (42 per cent) and rugby league (34 per cent).

However, the study has revealed a fall in the number of schools providing hockey, fitness, canoeing and rugby union when compared with 2007-08, although longer-term trends have remained stable. The research also showed that 69 per cent of pupils took part in intra-school competition during the 2008-09 year.

According to the DCSF, the report has “set a new benchmark” for ensuring that schools offer at least five hours of sport each week.

New Cumbria Academy of Sport proposals announced

A £23m stadium is to be built at Copeland Athletics Stadium in Hensingham, west Cumbria. According to Whitehaven News, the new Cumbria Academy of Sport will comprise a 14,000-capacity stadium linked via a concourse to a leisure centre offering a competition swimming pool, a four-court badminton hall, a gym, internal and external climbing walls and two dance studios.

A shop, café and conference facilities will also be built. The trustees of the academy have hired an as yet unnamed Manchester-based architect to design the stadium, which is scheduled to open within the next three years.

By Pete Hayman

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DC Leisure signs squash court deal

England Squash & Racketball (ESR) is to invest £40,000 in upgrading squash courts at public leisure centres operated by management company DC Leisure. The revamp of courts is part of a new partnership deal between ESR and DC Leisure which will also see ESR deploy 23 development coaches and eight regional coaches at DC Centres. The scheme forms part of the national governing body’s long term strategy to increase participation in the two sports by 65,000 new participants over four years and increase footfall through public squash courts.

Kildare leisure centres officially opened

Two new swimming pool facilities in Athy and Naas, County Kildare, Ireland, have been officially opened by Martin Cullen, the Irish minister for arts, sport and tourism. The K Leisure Swimming Pool complexes in both towns will be operated by Kildare Sports and Leisure Limited, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Kildare County Council. K-Leisure Athy boasts a 25m swimming pool with moveable floor, a family changing area, a spectator area, sauna and steamrooms, an aerobics studio and a fitness suite equipped by Technogym. The Naas facility also includes a learner pool.

IN BRIEF

Wembley Arena gets 2012 events

Wembley Arena will be used as a venue for two sports at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games after the Olympic Board decided against a temporary facility. A planned temporary venue on North Greenwich Peninsula was to host the badminton and rhythmic gymnastics events, but 2012 organisers now intend to use the existing North London arena for the sports. The relocation of the events are subject to approval from the sports’ respective world governing bodies. Paralympic archery and Olympic and Paralympic shooting events during 2012 will be held at the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, with the Olympic Delivery Authority due to submit a planning application in the next few weeks.

Cumbria pool scheme moves forward

Designers have been appointed for a new swimming pool project in Milom, Cumbria. Cambridge-based architects Saunders Boston have been awarded the contract for the facility to replace the town’s current pool at a local school. The project is being led by the Milom and Haverigg Economic Development Group.

GCCC submits stadium revamp plans

Bristol’s County Ground to boast 20,000-seat capacity as part of £10m scheme

A planning application for the proposed £10m redevelopment of the County Ground in Bristol has been submitted by Gloucestershire County Cricket Club (GCCC) to the local authority.

Bristol City Council will now decide whether to approve the proposals, which are designed to ensure the venue is able to comply with the England and Wales Cricket Board’s criteria for one day international status beyond 2011.

GCCC intends to increase the County Ground’s seating capacity to 20,000 as part of the proposals, which also feature a new media centre, improved conference facilities, an upgraded public gymnasium and an upgraded education facility.

The club is also planning to include student accommodation for 350 people in order to help fund the scheme, which has been reduced from 550 following the results of a public consultation with local residents.

A spokesperson for GCCC said: “These proposals are crucial to retaining our one day international status beyond 2011 and essential for the future viability of the club. We have received some very positive feedback to our plans from the majority of those consulted.”

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**IN BRIEF**

**Restoration work starts at Dover Castle**
- A £250,000 conservation scheme led by English Heritage to repair brickwork on defences on the northern side of Dover Castle in Kent is now underway. Work on the castle’s Spur, which has been heavily fortified since the 13th century, is being carried out by London-based David Ball Restoration. Passages known as caponiers were constructed during the Napoleonic War to provide flanking fire along the ditches around the Spur, two of which will now undergo work expected to take 13 weeks to complete.

**New bid to prevent football museum move**
- Lancashire County Council (LCC), Preston City Council (PCC) and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) have joined forces to keep the National Football Museum in Preston. In September, Manchester City Council confirmed that it was in talks with trustees of the museum over the possibility of relocating the attraction to the Urbis centre in order to safeguard its future. However, trustees will now consider the LCC, PCC and UCLAN proposals, which will provide immediate investment and features plans to increase visitor numbers and revamp exhibition spaces.

**Aberdeen wheel plans approved**
- Plans for a temporary 40m (131.2ft)-high observation wheel in the Castlegate area of Aberdeen have been given the nod of approval by the local authority. Aberdeen City Council has approved the proposals put forward by Great City Attractions, which will own and operate the wheel located between the Mercat Cross and the corner of King Street and Castle Street.

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£15.7m RBGE visitor centre unveiled

The new John Hope Gateway facility features a number of interactive experiences

**By Pete Hayman**

A new £15.7m visitor centre has officially opened at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) in Scotland, which is designed to enable visitors to explore a wide range of plants.

Construction of the John Hope Gateway, which has been built at the west gate entrance to the garden, has taken more than two years to complete and boasts a Botanics Shop and the Gateway Restaurant offering views across the site.

A new reception, an interpretive area, a Real Life Science Studio, a teaching classroom, a private meeting room and welfare facilities have also been included in the biodiversity and information centre, which gives visitors a chance to view the work of RBGE through interactive experiences and activities.

Visitors will be given the chance to learn more about biodiversity

A £10m contribution from the Scottish Government Rural and Environment Research and Analysis Directorate provided the majority of funding for the construction of the new visitor centre, which has used a range of sustainable materials.

The remaining £5.7m was raised by a number of funding bodies, including a £3.2m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, as well as contributions from trusts and corporate and voluntary donations.

Cumbernauld-based contractor Xircon delivered the facility, which has been named after John Hope, the 18th century teacher and botanist who was RBGE’s regius keeper – the most senior member of staff at the gardens – between 1761 and 1786.

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Eureka! names new London chief

**By Tom Walker**

Eureka!, the national children’s museum based in Halifax, Yorkshire, has appointed a director for its planned second site in London.

Simone Crofton, the former chief executive of London’s Borough Market, has been tasked with leading the development of a Eureka! in the capital.

Crofton will lead the project development in terms of concept and content planning, working with existing members of the Eureka! management on the attraction.

She will also be responsible for developing a business plan and designing a campaign to secure the funds required to open the museum.

Eureka! is planning to open a second facility in the capital

Although in its early stages, Eureka! London is envisioned as a large scale, readily accessible children’s museum based in the capital’s centre.

Eureka! chair David Jackson said: “Eureka! London is part of our vision to make these extraordinary opportunities for play and learning available to children throughout the UK.”

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Wave Loch nets Flow House deal

Water ride manufacturer Wave Loch is to launch a new visitor attraction concept called Flow House in early 2010 in Bedford.

Wave Loch has signed a joint venture deal with Bedford-based Bodyflight, which operates an extreme-sport venue close to the town centre. The Flow House will include a large FlowRider and will complement existing facilities at the Bodyflight site, which include an indoor skydiving tunnel and a fitness club.

The Bedford site will be jointly operated by Bodyflight and Wave Loch, but according to Simon Palmer, operations and development director, future Flow Houses can be delivered in a number of ways.
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IN BRIEF

All Seasons brand arrives in London

A accor has introduced its budget hotel brand All Seasons to the UK with the opening of the All Seasons Southwark Rose in London. The move follows Accor’s acquisition of the Southwark Rose hotel in 2003.

As part of the rebrand, Accor has added 21 bedrooms to what had been an 84-bedroom hotel.

Christian Rousseau, managing director for economy hotels at Accor, said that this was stage one of a broader expansion of the All Seasons brand.

Costa continues to boost Whitbread

A pub and hotel operator Whitbread has posted a 3.1 per cent increase in revenue for the six months ending 27 August 2009 after Costa Coffee continued its recent strong performance.

The coffee shop chain saw a 20.6 per cent increase in revenue for the first half of 2009, compared with the same period last year, while growth at the Premier Inn hotel business remains stagnant due to a 9.2 per cent fall in RevPAR.

Beach Huts Resorts concept set for roll-out

A scheme by Beach Huts Resorts to create luxury beach hut developments across the UK is to begin in Whitley Bay. Each of the 21 huts will sleep four to six people.

Although similar in appearance to a conventional beach hut, the properties boast a separate bedroom, a fully fitted kitchen, a bathroom and a 24-hour concierge service.

Financial director Darren Baker said: “Over the past 20 years cheaper package holidays have caused a huge decline in demand for the domestic holiday and short breaks, with the financial effect on coastal towns being simply devastating.”

★ HOSPITALITY

Carluccio’s optimistic over prospects

Italian restaurant chain eyes up further growth after surpassing board expectations

By Pete Hayman

Carluccio’s, the UK-based chain of Italian restaurants, plans to continue its 2010 opening programme, despite admitting that consumer spending is set to remain affected by the economic downturn.

It comes as the company revealed that it is set to report pre-tax profits above expectations for the year ending 27 September 2009, which included the opening of five UK outlets and its first Dubai site.

A further two stores are set to be opened in Dubai during 2010, although plans to grow its Irish portfolio have been affected by economic difficulties and poor lease terms.

A spokesperson for Carluccio’s said: “The board maintains its positive view of the long-term prospects for the business. Notwithstanding this, the board recognises that pressure on consumer spending will remain for some time with trading conditions for the sector remaining challenging.

“Stores will be financed out of internally generated cash flow and the board believes that the company’s strong positive cash position has the potential to allow an accelerated roll out when opportunities arise in a weaker property environment.”

TYF offloads Welsh ‘eco hotel’

TYF Activity and Education Group has sold the Twr-y-Felin Hotel in Pembrokeshire to hotel operator Retreats Group for an undisclosed sum.

The Grade II-listed hotel is located in a former corn mill within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and boasts 12 bedrooms, a separate four bedroom cottage and a 26-cover dining room.

TYF Activity opened the hotel in November 2007 and marketed the site as Wales’ first ‘organic hotel’.

TYF had secured organic certification from the Welsh Organic Scheme for the site and at the time of the official opening vowed to pursue ethical buying practices.

Capital’s eateries report growth

Nearly half of London restaurants reported an increase in profits

By Pete Hayman

A new survey of more than 200 London eateries has revealed the sector is showing signs of growth after nearly half saw an increase in profits in September.

According to Business Link’s monthly Restaurant Barometer, 25 per cent of eaters in the capital had seen an increase in consumer spend and a 46 per cent rise in customer numbers, when compared with August.

However, many London restaurants are still reporting a decrease in consumer spend and profits, when compared with the same period in 2008.

Ashley de Safrin, business adviser for the hospitality sector at Business Link, said: “These results show that the restaurant sector continues to remain resilient in the face of the economic climate, with 75 per cent of respondents remaining profitable in this time.”
Tootsies forced to enter administration

Clapham House withdraws funding and support from "unprofitable" burger chain

By Martin Nash

Upmarket burger chain Tootsies has entered administration after its parent company, Clapham House Group, withdrew support and funding.

The other parts of the group, namely the Gourmet Burger Kitchen and The Real Greek businesses, are unaffected by the move and will continue to trade as normal.

Clapham House acquired Tootsies in May 2006 but has blamed the "current economic outlook and the prolonged downturn in trading" for its decision to pull its support and funding from Tootsies.

The Clapham House board also said that it saw little hope of the business generating a profit in the foreseeable future.

Administrators BDO has sold 11 of the 21 units currently operated by Tootsies to Giraffe Concepts for £2.5m, but also remains confident of securing the sale of the remaining 10 units as soon as possible.

Clapham House Group chair David Page said: "We have taken these steps with great regret, having spent considerable time researching alternative strategic options for Tootsies. We believe that this is the best course of action to protect shareholder value whilst minimising job losses."

Giraffe Concepts operates around 30 restaurants, predominantly in London and south east England, as well as five franchises at three UK airports.

Rafayel to open hotel on Battersea's Left Bank

By Helen Patenall

A new 65-bedroom hotel called Rafayel is to be built at the new Falcon Wharf Development in Battersea, London.

The eco-friendly five-star hotel will also offer 15 apartments, a 120-cover waterfront Banyan Riverside restaurant, a bar, a café and meeting and conference facilities, as well as the Rafayel Wa Michi Wellbeing Spa operated by Content and Wellworld Spas.

Ike Latif of design and development company Latis said: "The concept of the hotel on the capital's new Left Bank in the culturally prosperous environ of Battersea is a key step forward in formalising the renaissance of Battersea."

IHG launches first Indigo properties outside London

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) has signed two new Hotel Indigo properties in Glasgow and Liverpool, the first outside London.

The brand has 27 hotels in North America and has started its global roll out of 59 further properties, with the opening of Hotel Indigo London Paddington in January 2009.

Hotel Indigo Glasgow is scheduled to open mid-2010 with 96 bedrooms and will be situated within a converted bank building on Waterloo Street.

It is the latest IHG property to be franchised by Chardon Management which also operates other IHG brands including seven Holiday Inn and four Holiday Inn Express hotels in the UK.

There are seven existing IHG hotels in Glasgow: one Crowne Plaza, three Holiday Inn and three Holiday Inn Express hotels.

Contact Tim Nash
Tel +44 (0)1462 471917
timnash@leisuremedia.com
Manchester live music venue reopens

Band on the Wall opens its doors after five year, £4m redevelopment programme

By Pete Hayman

One of Manchester’s most iconic live music venues has reopened to the public, following a £4m scheme to transform the centre.

Band on the Wall closed in 2004 to allow work to get underway on the refurbishment of the jazz and world music venue, which also played a central role in the city’s punk scene during the 1970s.

The revamp, which was carried out by operator Inner City Music, included the installation of a new sound system, audio-visual and sound studios, education suites and improved disabled access, as well as work to increase the audience capacity to 300.

Arts Council England (ACE) contributed £2.5m in order to complement financial support from Manchester City Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Eddie Thomas, music officer at ACE, North West, said: “Through this investment, Band on the Wall is able to not only build on its reputation as a lynchpin venue on the national touring circuit but also offer new high-level support, development opportunities and information for artists, audiences and young people alike.”

£3m Cultural Olympiad disability scheme launched

By Pete Hayman

A £3m programme has been launched in a bid to provide disabled and deaf artists with an opportunity to develop artwork as part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

Unlimited, one of the UK’s largest disability arts schemes, aims to enable talented artists to create a range of artwork leading up to London 2012.

The three-year programme, which also aims to introduce disabled and deaf artists with audiences to commissions at arts venues, festivals and the Games itself, is split into two sections; the first will provide a £1.5m fund for commissioning new work, while the second will offer support to artists in order to develop their talent and skills, as well as exhibiting their creations.

Funding has been provided by the Olympic Lottery Distributor, while Arts Council England, the British Council, the Scottish Arts Council, Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and London 2012 also contributed.

New art scheme inspired by Sunderland revamp site

Local residents in Sunderland are to be given the chance to take part in a new art project inspired by the proposed regeneration of the city’s Sunniside area.

Pupils from the Hudson Road Primary School have already been working with artist Dawn Lehrer on the Site Verify scheme, which is centred around a former shop fitters due to be demolished as part of redevelopment plans.

Members of the local community are being invited to the city’s thePlace venue every Saturday during October to attend workshops and create art work as part of a rolling exhibition inspired by the Sunniside proposals.
SPORT AND LEISURE STATISTICS
FORECASTS FOR THE SPORT AND LEISURE INDUSTRIES

The Sport Industry Research Centre publishes two annual reports, Leisure Forecasts and Sport Market Forecasts. These reports provide valuable insight into future market trends.

Both publications are essential references for industry practitioners, consultants and researchers.

Leisure Forecasts
This publication identifies the way in which economic trends, new technologies and new consumer priorities will shape the leisure industry over the next five years. It is divided into two sectors, leisure in the home and leisure away from home, providing analysis for 24 distinct leisure markets.

Sport Market Forecasts
This publication is produced in conjunction with Sport England. It provides detailed economic information on consumer spending for the entire sports market. It is divided into sport goods and sport services, providing economic analysis for 10 sport markets.

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IN BRIEF

Revamp work starts on Sunderland park

A Sunderland park – first opened a century ago – has now closed to allow construction work to get underway on a £3.3m restoration of the site. The regeneration of Barnes Park, which first opened in 1909, is scheduled to take 18 months and will include the installation of play spaces for disabled and able-bodied people of all ages. Historic features will be restored, while the scheme will also see the creation of a sensory garden designed to cater for the needs of visually-impaired people and the regeneration of the lake area.

Natural environment "critical to prosperity"

A new report published by Natural England has revealed that investment in the natural environment is "critical" to the long-term economic prosperity of Britain. The No Charge? Valuing the Natural Environment study claims that the natural environment contributes billions of pounds to the UK economy, while also identifying savings that can be made by looking after the countryside. According to the report, investment in schemes designed to reduce the levels of greenhouse gas emissions from farming by 11 per cent has resulted in carbon savings of around £180m.

Scottish forest bid for Dark Sky status

Forestry Commission Scotland has submitted its application to see whether Galloway Forest Park in south west Scotland meets the International Dark-Sky Association’s (IDA) criteria for stargazing. IDA will now decide if the park’s skies are considered dark enough to be awarded Dark Sky status along with the three existing Dark Sky Parks, which are all located in the US.

Six parks to share £18m HLF funding

A range of refurbishment schemes across the UK in line to receive Lottery cash

By Pete Hayman

Six parks across the UK are set to be transformed after being handed a share of an £18m funding package from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund.

The cash injection has been made through the Parks for People initiative, which aims to support a range of projects to restore and improve public parks throughout Britain.

Stewart Park in Middlebrough has received a grant of more than £4.3m to help fund a scheme to provide a new visitor centre, an education venue and a shop, as well as training workshops and two public event spaces.

Improvements will be made to lakes, paths and woodland and a vocational training centre with a café will also be opened to teach horticultural, conservation and catering skills.

Queens Park in Bolton, Lancashire, has been awarded nearly £4.3m to fund a new community pavilion with café and the refurbishment of a Grade II-listed lodge, while Stamford Park in Tameside, Greater Manchester, has netted nearly £4m to preserve historic buildings and monuments.

Spinney Hill Park in Leicester (£2.6m), St James’ Park in Southampton (£1.1m) and Howard Park and Gardens in Letchworth Garden City (£1.8m) were also among the parks to receive funding.

Trent Vale £2.8m funding bid receives green light

By Pete Hayman

Plans for a £2.8m initiative to celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of the River Trent have been handed a funding boost by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The Trent Vale Landscape Partnership (TVLP) has been successful in its bid to secure a £1.6m grant from the HLF, which will be used for a range of schemes between Newark, Nottinghamshire, and Gainsborough, Lincolnshire.

Work on the three-year project is set to get underway in 2010, including the creation of heritage trails, the conservation of hundreds of hectares of wildlife habitats and improvements to riverside moorings.

Led by British Waterways, the TVLP comprises a number of public bodies, such as Lincolnshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Natural England.

Rob Fitzsimons, Trent Vale development manager, said: "Thousands of people will be able to get involved in events, activities, training and much more over the next three years. This is the culmination of four years hard work."

Des Gallagher, HLF casework manager for the East Midlands region, added: "The Trent Vale contrasts the natural beauty of meadows and tidal reaches of the River Trent with the distinctive industrial heritage of the East Midlands."

Wildlife habitats are to be preserved as part of the new initiative
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EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Hartlepool’s main leisure centre Mill House is coming to the end of its economic life expectancy and Hartlepool Borough Council and its partners are seeking to replace this with an exciting new facility. Working with the local community we see its replacement as making an important contribution to health, social inclusion and the local environment.

Hartlepool Borough Council has carried out an initial feasibility study which sets out a vision for the future and now seeks commercial advice on the most effective options for delivering a mixed use leisure led development in the Mill House area of the town centre.

The new facility is part of a wider plan which brings together a variety of sporting, recreational and commercial interests which could include a hotel, shops, housing and link with the football club and local brewery that both have facilities on the site.

The development of other commercial interests is a key part of the overall affordability of the project.

We are interested in hearing from suitably qualified commercial agents who will be able to work with the in-house Building Consultancy and build on the work already completed.

Potential agents must be able to demonstrate a proven track record in a variety of areas including delivering innovative partnerships and identifying investment and funding opportunities for leisure and sports facilities.

An application pack and further details on this project can be obtained from Colin Bolton, Building Consultancy Manager.
Tel: (01429) 523399
E-mail: colin.bolton@hartlepool.gov.uk.
Closing date for expressions of interest Friday, 6th November 2009.

Expressions Of Interest

Supply and Installation of Fitness Equipment at GL1 (Gloucester Leisure Centre)

Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust are seeking expressions of interest from suitable qualified companies to supply and install Fitness Equipment for the refurbishment of the Horizons Health & Fitness Gym at GL1 in Gloucester.

Please apply for the Tender Documentation, no later than 12 noon on the 9th November 2009 to: Cathy Daley, Operations Director, Aspire Sport & Cultural Trust.

Email address cathy.daley@aspiretrust.org.uk

Please Note:
Aspire are looking for a leasing agreement, therefore only companies that can offer this facility need apply.
**Odyssey Trust unveils £100m Belfast plans**

Plans for a £100m mixed-use development on the site surrounding Belfast’s Odyssey Complex have been submitted to the Northern Ireland Planning Service. The Odyssey Trust has unveiled its masterplan for the project, which was designed by Dublin-based architects HJ Lyons in partnership with planning consultants Turley Associates to further integrate the Odyssey site with central Belfast.

**Grosvenor pulls out of Preston scheme**

Preston City Council (PCC) has announced that plans for a £700m regeneration scheme will go ahead as planned, despite the withdrawal of one of the property companies behind the project. Grosvenor has decided to pull out of the joint venture with Lend Lease in order to focus on a larger portfolio of smaller developments. However, Lend Lease has confirmed that it will continue to work with PCC on the scheme, which was called in by the government earlier this year due to the scale and nature of the proposals.

**Tenants’ action group plots pubco rebellion**

An action group of tenants and leaseholders is planning a mass “beercott” of pubcos Punch Taverns and Enterprise Inns in a protest against the tied business model. The Pub Revolution group is proposing that tenants withhold rent from the pubcos and break the terms of their leases in what it calls “a bid to ensure the survival of pubs across the country and to put an end to the pub companies”.

**Conran set to roll out café chain**

Restaurateur Sir Terence Conran is reportedly planning a new chain of English cafés after he told the Evening Standard that he “planned to put an English café on the corner of every high street in London”, following the success of his Albion café in Shoreditch.

Albion specialises in British food, serving dishes such as fish and chips and shepherd’s pie, and Conran has already negotiated leases on sites in Victoria, Regent’s Park and Covent Garden.

He said he was drawing inspiration from Carluccio’s, the Italian café chained founded by his sister Priscilla and her husband Antonio Carluccio.

Conran told the paper: "If you look at Albion, it is in many ways a British version of Carluccio’s, with a small shop and a café."

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**Green light for major film venue plans**

British Film Institute to receive cash boost to fund National Film Centre scheme

A new National Film Centre is set to be created on London’s South Bank after the government and London mayor Boris Johnson both approved funding for the plans.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown confirmed that the British Film Institute (BFI) will receive £45m from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, as well as a £5m contribution from the London Development Agency.

The £166m National Film Centre will boast five cinema screens showcasing the best of British and world cinema, as well as providing space for cultural events and exhibitions.

Plans include the exchange of programmes and knowledge with partners across the UK, which will draw on and update the BFI National Archive, as well as using regional archives and the Mediatheque network.

BFI director Amanda Nevill said: "We will be creating something that doesn’t exist anywhere else in the world, precisely because we can. It will build on the BFI’s 75 year legacy, bringing together the greatest collections of film on earth with all the excitement and stimulation of emerging cinema into the most creative and inclusive programmes.

"We are a step closer in our ambition to inspire and excite audiences everywhere in a new digital Britain."

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**Council secures L&G agreement**

Plans for the redevelopment of Northampton’s Grosvenor Centre could be set to move forward after the local authority secured a deal with Legal and General (L&G).

Northampton Borough Council said that it was a “significant early step towards planning the redevelopment”, which will include doubling the size of the Grosvenor Centre, the restoration of historic pedestrian access across the town and new open and covered shopping areas.
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An early evening LPF seminar to be held at the offices of: Cushman & Wakefield LLP, 43/45 Portman Square, London W1A 3BG on Wednesday 11th November 2009

CONTENT:
The seminar will give an overview of the attractions market, the differences between Public and Private sector attractions, and the rise of free entry business models. We’ll also look at Merlin’s branding and portfolio, how they choose locations for each brand, how their development decisions are made, where they prefer freehold or leasehold, an insight into their ROI expectations and what the future holds for Merlin.

SPEAKERS:
Nick MacKenzie, Managing Director of Property and Development Group, Merlin Entertainments Group
Andrew Winterbottom, Chairman & Design Director, Saturn Group

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An early evening LPF seminar to be held at the offices of: Cushman & Wakefield LLP, 43/45 Portman Square, London W1A 3BG on Wednesday 11th November 2009

CONTENT:
The seminar will give an overview of the attractions market, the differences between Public and Private sector attractions, and the rise of free entry business models. We’ll also look at Merlin’s branding and portfolio, how they choose locations for each brand, how their development decisions are made, where they prefer freehold or leasehold, an insight into their ROI expectations and what the future holds for Merlin.

SPEAKERS:
Nick MacKenzie, Managing Director of Property and Development Group, Merlin Entertainments Group
Andrew Winterbottom, Chairman & Design Director, Saturn Group

PROGRAMME

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**LEISURE LADDER**

**CK Academy**

CK Academy provides training and qualifications for the health and fitness industry. It has also introduced a range of lifestyle programmes delivered through spas.

**GEORGINA JUPP**

Managing director

What is your day to day role?
My day to day role is promoting CK Academy in the sectors we work with, overseeing the best team of staff and developing new ideas.

What has been the high point of your career so far?
Deciding to go all out for what I believe in and leaving the safety of paid employment to set up CK Academy.

How would you describe yourself?
Passionate, committed to our industry and solution focused.

How would your critics describe you?
Impatient, a hard task master and a perfectionist.

What keeps you motivated?
Knowing without a doubt we DO make a difference whether with our GP programming or developing newcomers to our industry and most of all working with the best team in the industry!

What would you have done differently?
Not tried to hold on to everything, be clearer about those things I do well and bring on others who have the skills I lack or don’t enjoy.

What ambitions do you have?
To position us as the leader in training and qualifications – particularly in developing partnership between healthcare and the fitness sector as well as in the development and delivery of effective lifestyle intervention programmes.

What’s your advice for up-and-coming management?
Go the extra mile. So often it doesn’t take much to stand out from the crowd, it requires thriving on responsibility, the ability to motivate and a desire to achieve.

**LORRAINE NICOL**

Case manager

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**People News**

- Alan Davey, chief executive of Arts Council, has been elected the new chair of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA). Davey will take over the post from Risto Ruohonen, the director general of the Finnish National Gallery, IFACCA, an international network of national arts funding agencies, aims to share knowledge, create understanding and strengthen the capacity of arts councils and culture agencies.
- Premier Training International has unveiled Mark Botha as the company’s new global sales and marketing director. Botha joins Premier from Leisure Connection, where he has worked as the company’s sales and marketing director since January 2006. Botha will be responsible for all areas of sales and marketing. One of his main tasks will be to drive forward of the organisation’s business-to-business and international training division using the National Academy of Sports Medicine training resources and tools.
- LA fitness is strengthening its team with the appointment of Karen Shotbolt as its new HR director. Shotbolt joins as a director on the LA fitness operating board following seven years as UK HRD at Select Service Partners, the international catering and retail group. Working from the group’s Doncaster HQ, Shotbolt will be responsible for more than 4,500 LA fitness employees across more than 80 gyms.
- Sara Sowden has been appointed as the new fitness manager at the new Club and Spa at Hoole Hall, the multi-million pound purpose built gym and spa which officially opens on Monday 2 November. Sowden has joined Hoole Hall from Old Hall Country Club in Chester, where she worked as a gym manager.

**Training**

news & jobs at www.leisureopportunities.co.uk

To continue my development as my yoga teaching skills. To train and develop new members of our team as our business grows.

What advice do you have for people wanting to work in the leisure industry?
You need to be passionate, enjoy working with all types of people, and be prepared to update your skills regularly.
It is true to say that the UK needs to change its ideas about post-16 education and training, and that the recession has brought that aspect into sharper focus. A new inspection framework from Ofsted will reflect the need for a fresh look at skills and how young people acquire them.

As a sector, hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism has the capacity to make a real difference for those who may have struggled with conventional learning, and offers ample opportunity to increase vocational skills, as well as the ‘functional’ skills of numeracy, literacy, team work and initiative.

For employers, a more highly skilled workforce will mean higher productivity and, in the private sector, greater competitiveness. In the current climate, it’s a chance to help ensure survival and a preparedness to take advantage when the upturn comes.

Inspectors will have more chances to talk to employers and learners and, therefore, more weighting will be placed on the responses that these groups give. Both groups will also be able to respond via email prior to the inspection process. This will help colleges take into account local skill levels and demand, and the extent to which individual programmes increase the learners’ vocational skills and employability.

The inspectors will also be able to vary their visits so that the frequency will be more ‘proportionate to risk’; a relief for the well-organised and efficient colleges and a warning for those who consistently fail to deliver. Crucially, while all will now be considered for inspection every year, those who are not reaching the required standards will have the chance to rectify faults and raise the impact of improvement quickly.

A sample of outstanding performers will be selected annually, ensuring that all providers are inspected at least once every six years. It’s also important to note these inspections can happen at any time and with short notice, normally two to three weeks.

Inspectors will now also be able to take into account the different size and range of provision offered, thus determining the composition of the inspection team and will allow for more specialists to be involved.

Whatever this initiative delivers, it has to be fair for all with the learner taking centre stage, rather than the organisational framework that has dominated in the past.

ASA has identified five environments that aim to improve coaching

New framework unveiled by ASA

Four-year scheme to establish new coaching system

By Luke Tuchscherer

A new framework to provide a world class coaching environment for England’s teachers and coaches has been launched by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA).

The ASA’s Coaching System Team launched the scheme – which aims to develop a “new coaching system” – at its annual conference.

The ASA said that teachers and coaches across all disciplines and the wider coaching workforce will benefit as a result of ‘The ASA Development Framework for Teaching and Coaching in England 2009-2013’ scheme, which will focus on five environments: beginners, talent development, high performance, participation and potential participants.

The national governing body said that previous systems have had the education and qualification of coaches as their main focus, whereas “the new framework is all about developing the potential of participants by creating coaches who can promote learning through ownership, awareness and responsibility”.

New tool from Sports Leaders UK

Sports Leaders UK has unveiled a free teaching tool developed to celebrate the London 2012 Games.

Katherine Merry – bronze medal winner for the 400m sprint at the 2000 Sydney Olympics – was part of the team launching the tool at this year’s Leisure Industry Week (LIW) held in Birmingham in September.

The new Sports Leaders UK resource is designed to give young candidates wanting to work in active leisure and sport the opportunity to explore the values of the games and understand how they impact everyday life.

The new resource will be offered as a free download via the Sports Leaders UK website for schools, colleges, local authority sports development teams and other organisations registered with Sports Leaders UK.

Changing the inspection system for the better

Ofsted framework will ensure institutions offer improved skills across the sector

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Whatever this initiative delivers, it has to be fair for all with the learner taking centre stage, rather than the organisational framework that has dominated in the past.
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We believe in quality training! So should you!

With over 15 years experience as a fitness training provider, we know a thing or two about what makes an elite fitness professional. Our mission is simple – to improve the standards of people working in the fitness industry – one that has been founded on a dedication to providing bespoke quality training packages. Whether you’re a manager of a gym chain, an individual looking for advanced courses or you’re just starting out in the fitness industry, we can help you or your staff with our range of outstanding courses. Just visit us online or give us a call to discuss your needs – and we’ll do the rest.

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- Opportunity to work with BASES accredited staff;
- Situated between the mountains of Snowdonia and the sea, one of the prime university locations for pursuing sport and outdoor activities;
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  - Applied Sport and Exercise Physiology
  - Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology
  - Sport and Exercise Psychology with diagnostic science
  - Exercise Rehabilitation
  - Applied Sport Science and Outdoor Activities

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www.bangor.ac.uk/sport
or contact Admissions School of Sport, Health and Exercise Sciences, Bangor University, LL57 2PZ
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L2 Gym Instructor Course - September 2009

Interested in any of the following courses?
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31 days to PT success

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The support you need to excel!

0845 0944 007
Chronic Respiratory Disease Exercise Instructor Course

BLF bursaries are now available for the January 2010 intake of this innovative distance learning course.

Developed by Loughborough College, the University Hospitals of Leicester and the British Lung Foundation (BLF), with funding and input from Rotherham PCT, the course has been submitted for endorsement at level 4 on the Register of Exercise Professionals. It covers:

- Physiology and pathology of respiratory disease
- Management of chronic respiratory disease
- Responses to exercise and exercise prescription
- Managing breathlessness
- Referral pathways

The BLF bursary, funded by Air Products, is available to exercise professionals who meet the following entry requirements:

- Level 3 equivalent qualification as recognised by REP’s
- A current valid first aid certificate
- Endorsement from a local pulmonary rehabilitation team
- 100 hours practical exercise instruction over the past year, with some experience of working with clients with COPD/respiratory disease
- Current CRB disclosure form

Instructors taking up a bursary will be expected to work with local Breathe Easy support groups to set up exercise classes within the community.

For more details or an application pack please log on to www.lunguk.org/supporting-you/blf_active/ or contact Danielle Smreczak using the details below

e: exercise@blf-uk.org
t: 020 7688 5618
w: www.lunguk.org

Reg. charity of England & Wales - no. 326730. Charity reg in Scotland - no. SC038415
Director of Sport

This senior post offers an exciting opportunity to lead one of the top ranking Departments of Physical Recreation and Sport in UK higher education.

The Department of Physical Recreation and Sport promotes sporting opportunities in support of the whole University community, encouraging participation in activities relating to recreational sport and health promotion through to university-level and elite sporting competition. The Department oversees a substantial and heavily utilised element of the University estate, servicing a wide variety of activities, sporting and non-sporting, beneficial to the campus community.

Sport has a prominent role in the life of the University – both in the UK and at its international campuses. The overall performance of the University’s 77 representative teams has been consistently ranked within the top 10% in the British Universities and Colleges Sports Championships over the past two decades. In June 2009, the University underlined the unique opportunities available to its students by holding its first Tri Campus Games, involving teams of athletes from its campuses in Nottingham, China and Malaysia.

The University will be implementing an ambitious five-year strategy for sport and is seeking a dynamic individual to lead this development. The Director of Sport will lead a large team of staff and manage high quality provision across a range of facilities on three campuses and neighbouring sites. Candidates must have proven experience of staff management, successful delivery of complex services and a track record of national-level sporting leadership.

Minimum salary will be £55,259 per annum.

It is a condition of this post that satisfactory enhanced disclosure is obtained from the Criminal Records Bureau.

Informal enquiries may be addressed to Mr Stephen Dudderidge, Director of Student Operations and Support, tel: 0115 951 5758.

For more details and/or to apply online please access: http://jobs.nottingham.ac.uk/JK32388. If you are unable to apply online please contact the Human Resources Department, tel: 0115 951 3262 or fax: 0115 951 5205. Please quote ref. JK/32388.

Closing date: 19 November 2009.

This post is open until filled - review of applications from 19 November 2009.

Sports Facilities
Development Officer

Grade SO1/2 £24,646 - £28,636
37 hours per week

This is an exciting opportunity to work in a vibrant city and influence the quality of service provided by a range of sports facilities.

The ability to develop partnerships with facility operators is a key requirement to ensure continuous improvement in the facility programmes.

The successful applicant will have proven experience in both facility development and sports development.

Good communication skills combined with experience of budgetary control and computerised data systems will all be needed to work on your own initiative.

There will also be the chance to assist in the review of the future management arrangements for a number of Sports facilities which will take place shortly.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Check.

Closing date: 16th November 2009

For further details and to apply online visit our website or contact Farida Begum on 01273 292085 or email farida.begum@brighton-hove.gov.uk to request documents by post. CV’s will not be accepted.

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/jobs
Opportunities...

With a substantial amount of facilities throughout England and Wales we continue to grow our sports, community and Leisure services on behalf of Local Authorities. A sustainable and profitable business, with leadership of the PFI/PPP Leisure market, we have an established reputation for high quality management, customer focused service provision and a flexible approach to community needs. We continue to deliver and develop our services and our staff and are looking for enthusiastic and professional people to join our team and take the next step on their career path:

CENTRE MANAGERS:

Ladywell, Lewisham  
**Salary: up to £30,000**  
Ref: CM/LDW/0610  
Situated in the London Borough of Lewisham this contract runs four of the prime sport and leisure facilities within the area. Ladywell is a large wet and dry facility and with recent substantial investment in the Wavelenghts and Ladywell Centres, has provided additional Up-to-date services for the local communities.

The Role:  
The Centre Manager takes overall responsibility for the effective management and operation of one of our centres. Reporting to the General Manager this is a position that allows you to develop your skills and reputation whilst increasing, profitability and enhancing safe and enjoyable usage of the facilities. You will have responsibility for the production of your own financial forecasts and budgets, and it is a requirement that QUEST standards are achieved and exceeded.

It is probable that you will hold a degree or equivalent qualification but it is essential that you possess excellent communication and client liaison skills. You will be allowed the freedom to manage and develop your staff efficiently to meet the customer and operational requirements of the contract; we want you to have your own developed, dynamic and responsive team through open communication and good management. It goes without saying that a customer service approach is a necessity.

These positions offer a fantastic opportunity for an individual to grow and drive the business forward within a progressive company.

If you believe you have the knowledge and competencies required for these positions, please apply on-line now! Alternatively send a letter of application and full CV to: Sarah Moseley, Human Resources Administrator, Little Bowbrook, Walton Road, Hartlebury, Worcestershire, DY10 4JA. E-mail: recruit@parkwood-leisure.co.uk

Closing date: Friday 6th November 2009

These Centres are managed in Partnership with your Local Authority  
All positions require a CRB disclosure. Parkwood Leisure is an equal opportunities employer

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Coaching Network Officer (Kent) - Part of the national Coaching Development Manager Network

**£24,877 - £28,839 pa**  
This post is for a fixed term to March 2011, subject to confirmation of external funding

Do you have a passion for coaching? Do you believe that coaching is one of the key drivers to sporting success? Would you like to play a role in developing a world-leading coaching system in England?

University of Kent, in partnership with Kent Sport, is pleased to offer this new position as part of a national initiative to establish a co-ordinated network of coaching development professionals. Funded by Sport England and supported by sports coach UK, we are seeking to recruit a dedicated officer to support coaching needs across Kent and Medway.

The Coaching Network Officer will be responsible for developing a network of support for local coaches at community level. Working closely with the Governing Bodies of Sport and key regional and local partners, the successful applicant will be a dynamic individual and an expert in networking, with a flair for developing and maintaining mutually beneficial partnerships with a range of agencies and organisations. Due to a unique collaboration with the Higher Education Institutions in Kent and Medway, there will be a particular emphasis on identifying and maximising opportunities for supporting this work both by and within higher education.

The position will be based at the University of Kent in Canterbury, but as the work will require extensive travel throughout Kent and Medway, candidates will need their own transport. This is a full time position to March 2011 (subject to external funding), with an immediate start. The post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Further information is available from our website: [http://www.kent.ac.uk/jobs/](http://www.kent.ac.uk/jobs/) or telephone 01227 824145.

Closing date for completed applications: Wednesday 11 November 2009.

Interview date: Thursday 26 November 2009.

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Kent has over 18,000 students at locations including our acclaimed Medway Campus and our postgraduate centre in Brussels. With a £350m Estates Strategy and new academic appointments throughout the University, we have a clear investment strategy for our future.
North Riding County Football Association is seeking to recruit a Senior Football Development Officer to implement a strategic development programme within the County.

This position reports directly to the County Development Manager and the role encompasses the following areas:

- Line managing externally funded Football Development Staff
- National Game Strategy delivery:
  - Growth and retention- Increasing and sustaining player participation
  - Raising standards – creating a safe and positive environment
  - Better players – developing better players with a focus on the 5-11 age group
- Workforce – developing and delivering a robust workforce plan for coaches, referees, young leaders, referees, welfare officers and volunteers

To apply you need to be of graduate calibre and have experience in sports development and an understanding of the FA’s National Game Strategy. You need to be passionate about and committed to the development of football at a local level. You must be able to work under pressure, handle multiple priorities and meet deadlines.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate both team working and the ability to work unsupervised.

Candidates should also have excellent interpersonal/communication/presentation skills. You need also to have a current driving licence and also be able to work evenings and weekends.

This post is a fixed term contract until 30 June 2011 with a view to it being extended. For further information on the role and a job description please phone Steven Wade 01642 717774 or find details on www.northridingfa.com.

To apply, please send a CV and covering letter detailing how you meet the demands of the post, with details of your current salary and your salary expectation for the role marked ‘Private and Confidential’ to: Tom Radigan, North Riding County FA, Broughton Road, Stokesley, Middlesbrough, TS9 5NY

The deadline for applications is 12 noon on Friday 20th November 2009. Interviews will take place on Monday 7th December 2009.

North Riding County FA are committed to equality of opportunity and welcome applications from all sections of the community.
C A N  D O

We’re passionate about providing residents with better, more customer-focused services than ever before. There’s real, positive change under way in this vibrant, diverse and extremely accessible Borough. And if you share our refusal to settle for second best, there has never been a better time to join us.

SPORTS OPERATIONS MANAGER - PARKS AND CULTURE

P04, £37,851 - £40,506 Ref: R23232
This is an exciting opportunity to join the newly formed Community Sports Team. You will play a significant part in the delivery of excellent community sport and will have the responsibility to manage, plan and develop the work of the Council’s sports facilities and operations section to ensure services and facilities are promoted, enhanced and delivered in a cost effective and efficient manner.

Hammersmith and Fulham’s Community Sports Team is seeking to appoint an enthusiastic, committed and motivated individual who has experience in operational sports management. You will have good communication and IT skills and be able to develop sound partnerships with a range of internal and external organisations. Applicants must be able to demonstrate their commitment to customer care and equal opportunities and will excel as part of a team, working to meet targets and deadlines.

SPORTS BOOKINGS OFFICER - PARKS AND CULTURE

Sc4, £20,460 - £22,422 Ref: R23233
This is an exciting opportunity to join the newly formed Community Sports Team. You will play an important part in the delivery of frontline services.

Hammersmith and Fulham’s Community Sports Team is seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and motivated individual who has experience in sports bookings or administration. You will have good communication and IT skills and be able to demonstrate your commitment to customer care. You will possess excellent numeracy skills with an eye for detail, be able to work on your own initiative, be able to cope with competing demands as well as the working flexibly as part of a small team.

Both of the above posts will require a Criminal Records Bureau clearance.

GROUNDINGS MAINTENANCE MONITORING OFFICER - PARKS AND CULTURE

PO1, £31,152 - £33,306 Ref: R23234
We are looking for a self-motivated and pro-active individual with relevant Grounds Maintenance monitoring experience. You must have excellent communication skills to assist the Council in making our Parks and Open spaces safe, welcoming, fun and enjoyable places to visit.

You would be entrusted to:
• Administer and monitor Grounds Maintenance contracts within Hammersmith and Fulham’s Parks and Open Spaces, H&F Homes and Education sites
• Contribute to a customer focused quality park service
• Help manage, develop and enhance the specification, monitoring and contract processes.

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Closing date for all posts: 5pm, Monday 16 November 2009.

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E-mail: jbowley@nottingham.roko.co.uk  Tel: 0115 9827799

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Bushey Country Club

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Closing Date: Monday 2 November 2009

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**Study backs mayor’s Thames Estuary airport plans**

New report finds “no insoluble issues” to halt proposals for the construction of a new £40bn floating airport

By Peter Hayman

A report has concluded there are no major issues preventing plans for the construction of a £40bn floating airport off the Essex and Kent coasts in the Thames Estuary.

London mayor Boris Johnson commissioned the Thames Estuary Research and Development Company (TERDC) study into the proposed airport, which could feature up to six runways to prevent the need to expand Heathrow Airport and meet increased demand.

According to the RSPB, the study fails to deal with a number of concerns, including the increased likelihood of birdstrike affecting aircraft.

RSPB reserves on the estuary coast could be at risk from the plans

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**£36m Surrey Sports Park set for January opening**

By Tom Walker

A £36m sports centre is set to open at the University of Surrey in Guildford in January 2010.

The Surrey Sports Park is to boast an eight-lane Olympic-sized swimming pool with spectator seating and a 120-station fitness suite supplied by Life Fitness, which used its Journey system in the design of the fitness suite, which intends to stop students “getting bored quickly.”

Rob Jones, development manager of Life Fitness, said:

“We are very excited about the opening. The correct product mix and layout is very important as students often want to pop in for quick gym sessions in between lectures and get bored quickly.*

Other facilities will include a 12m climbing wall, three multi-purpose sports halls, squash courts, eight outdoor tennis courts, three artificial turf pitches, 10 football/rugby pitches and two multi-purpose exercise studios.

Life Fitness will equip the gym and increase the longevity of their exercise sessions”.

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**Work begins on Basildon centre**

Construction work has started at the site of the £36m Basildon Sporting Village in Essex, which will boast the county’s first Olympic-sized swimming pool when complete.

Community Solutions for Leisure has been appointed by Basildon Council to build the complex, which is set to open in 2011.