Whelan confirms £83.4m deal for JJB fitness clubs

By Pete Hayman

Dave Whelan, the founder and former owner of the JJB Sports group, has acquired back the troubled company’s nationwide chain of fitness clubs in a £83.4m deal that will form part of his new DW Sports Fitness venture.

Under the terms of the agreement, Whelan, who sold his remaining stake in JJB in 2007, will buy back 53 of JJB’s 55 facilities, with Irish properties in Dundalk and Limerick excluded from the transaction. JJB’s inaugural MiFit combined dry fitness club and superstore at Llanishen Retail Park in Cardiff is also included as part of the acquisition. The MiFit site will be among the properties to be relaunched under the DW Sports Fitness brand. It is hoped that the deal will ensure the future of the embattled JJB Sports company, which now plans to enter into a company voluntary arrangement (CVA) to secure improved terms with all its landlords.

The deal was announced on the same day as Dave Whelan revealed that the home of Wigan Athletic Football Club, the JJB Stadium, would be renamed the DW Stadium from 1 August as part of his new venture.

DW Sports Fitness marketing director, Winston Higham, said: "In this changing retail landscape, DW Sports Fitness is an authentic sporting goods retailer offering a broad assortment of brand name sporting goods. *This product offering operating alongside state-of-the-art fitness clubs with innovative equipment offers an exciting customer experience.*"

Council approval for £35m Basildon Sports Village

New facility set for 2010 opening after Basildon Council backs design proposals

By Pete Hayman

Plans for the construction of a new £35m sports and fitness complex in Basildon, Essex, have been given the green light by the local authority.

Basildon Council approved the designs for Basildon Sporting Village, which has already been designated as a potential pre-Games training camp for the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

The new facility is set to include a 50m competition-sized swimming pool with a moveable boom and seating for 400 spectators, a learner pool, an eight badminton court-sized sports hall and a 500-station fitness suite with changing facilities and a fitness assessment and referrals room.

A gymnastics centre incorporating a specialist main hall, a training hall and changing facilities will also feature as well as a multi-purpose studio, function rooms and a climbing wall. There will also be six floodlit five-a-side football pitches and a new 750-seat athletics stand.

Plans for the complex were initially approved in principle in April 2008, and village is set to be completed in 2010.

Alton Towers set for new ride

Plans to replace the Corkscrew rollercoaster at Alton Towers with a new thrill ride have been given the green light by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

Currently known only as ‘SW6’, the new 20m (65.6ft) high roller coaster is set to be 2.7m (8.9ft) lower than the Corkscrew and contain a unique element to ensure that it is as iconic as its predecessor, which was Europe’s first double-loop coaster.

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Whelan has acquired a total of 53 sites including MiFit in Cardiff

The new facility will include an Olympic-sized swimming pool

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More green to beat recession blues?

Government called upon to increase investment in urban parks and public spaces

By Pete Rayman

Natural England and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) have said that the government should help tackle the recession by investing in more green spaces for towns and cities. Ahead of chancellor Alistair Darling’s budget statement on 22 April, both organisations have said that funding should be diverted away from road-building schemes to provide new parks, trees and open spaces, which will also help combat climate change.

According to Natural England and CABE, the creation of new, greener infrastructure in urban centres will lead to new, sustainable private-sector employment opportunities, as well as improving the areas where people live and work to attract increased investment.

It is also argued that just 10 per cent of the government’s £10bn road-building and widening budget would pay for 40 new parks, 500,000 new street trees, 1.5 million sq m (16.1 million sq ft) of green roofs and 1,000 miles of green routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

The call comes as Natural England and CABE brought together a number of leading figures from green planning schemes, including Olympic Park design partner George Har- greaves, across the world for an event on open spaces in London last week.

Fitness First to upgrade clubs up to IFI standards

By Jon Wallace

Health club operator Fitness First is to make 24 of its sites more accessible as part of the group’s strategy to increase the number of disabled members.

The group is one of the first commercial operators hoping to commit to the schemes, set up by the IFI (Inclusive Fitness Initiatives) and the NSF (National Sports Foundation).

The scheme will include a revamp of the 24 clubs. Disabled access routes and ramps will be added to allow easier access to the buildings, and IFIs will be installed at each club to help members move between floors.

John Gamble, Fitness First managing director, said: “We are thrilled with the IFI in modifying selected clubs in order to accommodate disabled people.

“Fitness First is committed to making the world a fitter place with no exclusions and we are pleased to be making these changes with immediate effect. It is a landmark step forward for the fitness industry and we are proud to be the first major health group to offer them”.

The IFI scheme will include creating more accessible areas at clubs.

Global tourism industry to be hit hard in 2009

By Tom Walker

The global tourism industry is expected to contract rapidly during 2009, while the effects of the recession could result in millions of jobs cut.

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), reporting its annual outlook on the industry, predicts that the global GDP generated by tourism will fall by 3.5 per cent during 2009.

It also expects 1.9 per cent of all jobs directly in the tourism and travel industry to be cut during 2009 – which translates to more than 10 million jobs could be lost overall, when sectors that rely on tourism are also considered. In the WTTC’s annual report, Jean-Claude Baumgarten, president and CEO, said that the industry had suffered a significant deterioration during the second half of 2008, and faced a bleak forecast.

“The present downturn has been sudden and deep, with little hope of an early recovery,” he said. “Real investment spending in the sector contracted globally for the first time since 2001 and 2002 and corporate travel spending growth halved.”

£10m funding for rural sports projects

Sport England investment aims to tackle issues raised in the Active People Survey

By Tom Walker

Sport England has set up a £10m investment fund as part of efforts to improve sporting provision for people living in rural areas.

Rural communities is the first of Sport England’s “themed rounds” of funding, as it looks to tackle issues raised by the Active People Survey, published in December 2008.

The minimum grant available will be £10,000, but according to a spokesperson, Sport England is looking to favour “high value, high impact projects” to maximise the effect of the support.

“People in rural communities are the focus of the first round (of funding) because we know they face particular barriers to participation in sport, such as reduced choice in the sports available to them,” he said. “Small and declining local populations and higher costs, for instance, can hinder sustainable local provision.”

The funding will be made available for applications on 1 April, while the second round of themed funding will be announced by 1 September. Stuart Burgess, chair of the Commission for Rural Communities, said: “I hope the funding will bring forward many creative ideas that will help overcome barriers rural people face in taking part in sport.”

Global tourism industry to be hit hard in 2009

The expected drop in tourism revenue, however, could have a devastating effect on industries reliant on tourism. WTTC predicts that more than 10 million jobs could be lost overall, when sectors that rely on tourism are also considered. In the WTTC’s annual report, Jean-Claude Baumgarten, president and CEO, said that the industry had suffered a significant deterioration during the second half of 2008, and faced a bleak forecast.

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**Tone Leisure boosts fitness offering**

Three Taunton Deane centres are subjected to a £0.7m redevelopment project

*By Tom Walker*

Sports trust Tone Leisure has completed its £0.7m redevelopment project to extend fitness facilities at three leisure centres in the Taunton Deane area.

Work began on Wellington Sports Centre, Wellsprings Leisure Centre and Blackbrook Pavilion at the end of August 2008. Wellington Sports Centre has seen an extension of the gym to create a 240sq m (2,583sq ft), 45-station fitness suite. While Wellsprings Leisure Centre has converted an under-used steam and sauna area into extra gym space to create a 375sq m (4,036sq ft), 70-station fitness suite.

£400,000 was also invested at Blackbrook Pavilion, to convert two squash courts and a studio into a 350sq m (3,764sq ft), 75-station fitness suite. The former gym has been turned into a new studio.

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**New martial arts scheme**

Leisure Connection has launched a fitness and health-living programme for five to 16-year-olds in an effort to get more youngsters physically active.

The Harpers Strike programme, developed in association with Danny Ball and Liam Richards – a structured martial arts and pre-choreographed routines suitable for all ability levels. Divided into three age groups, the classes offer guidance on how to eat and live healthily.

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**Epic replacement for Elsmere**

*By Helen Patenall*

The outdated Epic Leisure Centre in Elsmere Port, Chester, is to be replaced by a new facility, designed to boost its membership base.

According to a detailed feasibility study by consultants Strategic Leisure, the centre is in such a bad state of repair that the potential benefits of a complete refurbishment have been ruled out. Strategic Leisure has.linspaceed two possible sites now subject to public consultation.

Public consultations have begun on the proposed centre

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**Future of the aging Afan Lido under consideration**

Neath Port Talbot Council has announced that the 50-year-old Lido in Aberavon Seafront is to be either refurbished or replaced. Council leader Derek Vaughan said in his budget speech that the council plans to look at options for securing top-class facilities for the Afan Lido in the future.

*The Afan Lido is an aging leisure attraction,* he said. *It is important that any issues are addressed sooner rather than later.

*The complex is coming to the end of its natural lifetime and it is wise to make a planned approach for its future, which will make it fit for purpose, energy efficient and cost effective.*

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**Lincolnshire plans to give leisure a lift**

The council strategies to improve its offerings and locals’ physical activity levels

*By Tom Walker*

North East Lincolnshire Council plans to invest £1.5m on improving existing sport and health facilities in the area after a survey revealed that only 25 per cent of the adult community undertake physical activity.

The council’s Leisure Review showed that the region suffers from low levels of community participation in regular sport and physical activity compared with national statistics and that the area’s existing public facilities are outdated and require investment to bring them up to standard.

The gloomy findings have forced the council to propose a leisure refurbishment project in collaboration with its current and one new facility in 2006, in return for 70 per cent of the revenue money generated by the refurbished facility. Further loans totalling £230,000 also helped keep the facility afloat.

It is speculated that Competitions Line may now buy out Lightwater Leisure Centre and create a new trust to operate it. Surrey Heath Borough Council has confirmed that it is currently discussing the centre’s operating future with Competitions Line and its administrators.

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**Lightwater ruled insolvent as negotiations fail**

*By Helen Patenall*

Lightwater Leisure Centre in Surrey has gone into administration, despite a recent £2m revamp designed to boost its membership base.

Operator Lightwater Playing Fields Association was recently ruled insolvent by the High Court after negotiations with Competition Line for a £97,000 loan collapsed.

Prior to the final talks, Competition Line had supplied the operator with a development grant to fund improvements to the gym and sports facilities in 2006, in return for 70 per cent of the revenue money generated by the refurbished facility. Further loans totalling £230,000 also helped keep the facility afloat.

It is speculated that Competitions Line may now buy out Lightwater Leisure Centre and create a new trust to operate it. Surrey Heath Borough Council has confirmed that it is currently discussing the centre’s operating future with Competitions Line and its administrators.
HLF support for heritage attractions

Three major schemes receive first round passes in bid to secure share of £19m

By Pete Hayman

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has announced that three UK heritage attractions have received a significant funding boost after being awarded a first-round pass.

Lincoln Castle, the National Railway Museum (NRM) in York, and the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, have all received development funding that could lead towards a potential application for a share of nearly £19m.

The NRM has received £200,000 to fund detailed proposals for an application worth £6.8m to help fund a complete overhaul of its Great Hall, the main exhibition space which houses the Flying Scotsman and the Mallard. A development grant of £227,640 has been awarded to Lincoln Castle, which houses one of only four surviving copies of the Magna Carta, and aims to receive £16m to improve visitor facilities and regenerate the castle’s surrounding areas.

Whitworth Art Gallery will also receive £152,000 to fund proposals that could lead to an eventual grant of £15m, to go towards the extension of the learning and gallery areas and a new entrance.

Paultons Park unveils £1m ride

By Caroline Wilkinson

Family attraction Paultons Park in Hampshire has launched a new £1m ride, while a new children’s water park will be opening later this year.

The ride, called EDGE, comprises a giant rotating disc able to accommodate up to 40 seated people and reaches heights of 15m (49.2ft) and speeds of up to 43mph (69.2kph) on 92m (301.8ft) of track with a ‘cameback’ hill.

Opening this Easter, Water Kingdom – a 8,500sq ft (789sq m) young children’s splash park – will feature more than 20 ways of getting wet, including water jets, giant tipping buckets and a super soaker.

“We always look to add something that will appeal to all our guests, whatever their age” said Stephen Lorton, commercial director. “While the EDGE complements other larger rides at the Park, Water Kingdom is specifically designed for smaller children.”

New heritage park for Margate

The Dreamland Trust is to unveil its plans to establish the world’s first heritage amusement park in Margate, Kent, on the site of the former Dreamland Amusement Park.

Levit Bernstein Architects, together with Paris-based theme park designer Jean-Marc Toussaint, is behind designs for the proposed £12m attraction, which will be built around the Grade II-listed scenic railway, one of the oldest rollercoasters in Britain.

The trust, which administers the Save Dreamland Campaign, first unveiled plans for the amusement park in 2007, which will include some of the last surviving examples of well-known rides.

Minimum wage, maximum enforcement.

From April 2009 the National Minimum Wage will be enforced with a new penalty system.

The punishment for breaking the law will be an automatic fine of up to £5000, while the most serious cases could face an unlimited fine.

These changes to the law will help prevent deceitful employers from being undercut by dishonest competitors.

For more details call the National Minimum Wage Helpline in confidence on 0845 6000 678 or visit businesslink.gov.uk/nmw

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Gosport set for £11m leisure centre

Four developers shortlisted by the local authority to build proposed new complex

By Caroline Wilkinson

Gosport Borough Council has shortlisted four developers for its proposed £11m leisure centre to replace its existing Holbrook Recreation Centre. The council is expected to make a decision by December 2009 on who will build the facility, which will offer a 25m, six-lane swimming pool and teaching pool, a 200-seat spectator area, and a four-court sports hall.

A fitness suite with 60 to 100 stations, a sauna and steam-room and a floodlit synthetic sports pitch will also be included, as well as a crèche, a soft play area, a café, a function area and dry and wet changing rooms.

Derbyshire Dales leisure scheme moves forward

By Pete Hayman

Plans for a new £12m leisure centre in Matlock, Derbyshire, have taken a step forward after Derbyshire Dales District Council confirmed it is seeking a contractor to build the new community facility. The council hopes to appoint a contractor by the autumn to allow work to get underway on the new Central Area Leisure Centre on a brownfield site called The Dimple.

The plans include a 25m pool and a new fitness suite.

Economic downturn halts Filey leisure centre scheme

By Pete Hayman

Plans to build a purpose-built sport and leisure centre in Filey, North Yorkshire, which will include an indoor swimming pool, a multi-purpose sports hall and outdoor pitches, have been put on hold by Scarborough Council due to the economic downturn and the reduction in its Lottery funding to £500,000 for 2012.

According to the Filey & Hunmanby Mercury, chair of Filey Sports Partnership, David Martin, said: “What annoys me is that every study has been done and paid for, but at the end of the day we see all developments going somewhere else. Ten years down the line we’re no further forward.”

Council to study centre revamp plans

Carlisle leisure centre set for major refurbishment in partnership with university

By Pete Hayman

Plans for the major redevelopment of a Carlisle leisure centre have taken a step forward after the city council agreed to contribute £50,000 towards the development of a detailed feasibility study.

Carlisle City Council, together with the University of Cumbria and Carlisle Leisure, have drawn up an outline proposal for the Sands Centre scheme, which is set to include a new multi-court sports hall and a 25m swimming pool.

Teaching facilities and specialised sports fitness testing and performance assessment areas could also form part of the project, with the university seeking a new base for its sports science degree course.

The full financial cost of the plans is yet to be determined, although it had been anticipated that if the revamped centre does not include a pool, the project would cost in the region of £7m, with the university contributing between £3m and £4m.

The council’s decision to approve a detailed feasibility study, which is expected to take three to four months to carry out, now means that a transport assessment and business plan can be carried out, which will also reveal the full cost of the scheme.

Calderdale pools plans submitted

By Pete Hayman

Details of designs for new swimming pools in Sowerby Bridge and Brighouse, West Yorkshire have been submitted for planning approval by Calderdale Council.

The council has already appointed Willmott Dixon, to build the new £10.5m facilities, which are part-funded by the sale of Leeds-Bradford International Airport in 2007.

Both complexes, which have been designed by Saunders Botton, will include a 25m swimming pool, a learner pool, a fitness studio and a multi-purpose room.

The new pools form part of council plans to replace existing facilities in the area, and if the designs are approved, it is hoped that work will get underway in the summer. The pools are scheduled to open in late autumn 2010.

Gosling Sports Park

Work has begun on a new tennis bubble at Gosling Sports park in Welwyn Garden City to cover four outdoor tennis courts, allowing them to be utilised all year round. The new facility will mean that, upon opening in April, the sports park will offer the most indoor courts on a single site in the country. Sport England awarded Gosling a grant of £6.4m for the project, with further funding coming from the Hertfordshire LGA.

IAAF unveils new Diamond League

Plans for a new global elite athletics league have been launched by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) as part of a bid to enhance the sport’s worldwide appeal. Starting in 2010, the IAAF Diamond League will replace the existing Golden League and incorporates 12 meetings across the world, including IAAF British Grand Prix, the Reebok Grand Prix New York and the China Golden Grand Prix. Three further meetings are currently on standby, and the final composition of the league is expected to be confirmed by the end of the year.

Inverness leisure pool reopens

Leisure pool facilities at Inverness Leisure’s Bught Park complex in northern Scotland have reopened following the completion of work to repair damage caused by a fire in September 2008. The blaze in the centre’s plant room also forced the closure of the competition pool, which reopened in November, while dryside facilities including two climbing walls, a climbing wall, fitness suite and two multi-use sports halls were unaffected.
Chelsea Club launches new luxury spa

By Tom Walker

The Chelsea Club, a members only health club at the Stamford Bridge football stadium in London, has opened a luxury spa.

Operated by Chelsea Football Club, the new 500sq ft Escape Spa opened earlier this month and boasts four treatment rooms, a manicure and pedicure area, a relaxation area and an infrared sauna.

Treatments on offer include a range of facials, massages, reflexology, reiki and body wraps as well as waxing and nail treatments.

The treatments at the spa use Elemis and ONLY YOURE products. According to Lisa Butterworth, spa manager, the therapists at Escape Spa have been trained up by the products houses to administer the treatments, but the spa also has an ongoing training programme for its staff.

The spa is part of the Chelsea Club and aims to attract both members of the health club as well as the general public.

Facilities at the adjacent, 40,000sq ft gym include a 25m swimming pool, 36 cv stations, a free weights room, two group exercise studios and three fitness rooms.

Harbour Spa opens doors at Christchurch Hotel

By Tom Walker

Christchurch Harbour Hotel in Dorset, UK has completed an £8m redevelopment project which included the construction of a health and beauty spa.

Called the Harbour Spa, the facility has five treatment rooms, a 14m swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool, a relaxation area, salt grotto, a sauna, rain showers and crystal steamroom.

The spa will use Guinot and ESPA products in its holistic treatments. The spa also boasts a fitness suite, which includes 11 stations of Cybex CV and resistance equipment and a group exercise room.

Hotel guests receive a complimentary membership for the spa for the duration of their stay, but the spa is also opened to members. Memberships start at £58.50 and the number of members has been capped at 300 to retain the spa’s tranquility.

Other facilities at the adjacent, 64-room, privately owned hotel include a restaurant operated by Gary Rhodes.

Organic Monitor reveals predictions for 2009

Research and consulting company Organic Monitor (OM) has released its 2009 trend predictions on specialist industries. OM predicts that the organic food and drink markets will continue to grow throughout this year, but will slow in countries most affected by the global economic slowdown.

Elsewhere, global sales of natural cosmetics are increasing by more than US$1bn (£0.73bn, £0.6bn) a year.

Healthy market growth in this sector is expected for 2009, with mainstream retailers such as supermarkets, drugstores and pharmacies being the majority growth drivers.

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New art gallery planned for Hastings

Jerwood Gallery set to house collection of 20th and 21st century British artwork

By Pete Hayman

Plans to create a new contemporary art venue in Hastings, East Sussex, have been formally submitted to the local authority by the Jerwood Foundation.

If Hastings Borough Council approves the scheme, the Jerwood Gallery will house the foundation’s collection of 20th and 21st century British art, as well as acting as a regional venue for the Jerwood Visual Arts programme.

Designed by HAT Projects, the seafront building will boast more than 500sq m (5,382sq ft) of gallery space, a sculpture courtyard, an education space and a café with terrace, as well as a research and archive facility and offices.

Environmental sustainability is also a feature of the scheme, which was awarded a £2m grant from the government’s Sea Change programme. Arts Council England, the South East England Development Agency, the Hastings Foreshore Trust, and East Sussex County Council are also involved in the scheme.

Alan Grieve, chair of the Jerwood Foundation, said: “The art gallery and community facilities proposed for the Stade would be the best possible uses for this important site.”

Arts and Business unveils new UK-wide strategy

By Luke Tuchscherer

Arts and Business (A&B), the consultancy that aims to foster partnerships between business and the arts, has unveiled new measures designed to address the development, learning and best practice needs of cultural organisations throughout the UK in view of the current economic climate.

The organisation’s new plans include bespoke training pathways; new sources of private investment; and an increased campaign and lobbying presence.

Verity Haines has been appointed as A&B’s new national arts director, and will be responsible for the scheme’s implementation.

“I admire the way A&B has led the creation of a mixed economy approach to cultural funding in the UK and want to help our cultural partners grow and deepen their support from the private sector,” she said.

Refurbishment for Carmarthenshire craft centre

Work is set to get underway on the £430,000 revamp of the West Wales Centre for Crafts in St Clears, Carmarthenshire, in a bid to establish a regional hub for the industry.

New workshops, incubator units, meeting rooms and activity space are planned for the Pentre Road venue, as well as a refurbished gallery, a new craft retail area and a café, which will sell local produce.

Carmarthenshire County Council expects work to get underway next month, and hopes that the facility will provide a platform for local artists and craft makers, as well as developing and nurturing the culture of the local region.
London hotels are in for a rough ride

Room rates and RevPAR are predicted to plummet during the course of 2009

By Caroline Wilkinson

The continuing economic problems could cause a record 25.6 per cent decrease in RevPAR for London’s hotels as occupancy levels and room rates continue to decrease, according to a new PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) report.

The professional services firm has revealed that occupancy in the capital is set to fall to 69 per cent, the lowest it has been since 1992, while room rates have also decreased to £100.31 – levels last seen in 2005.

According to the PwC report, room rates and RevPAR for each quarter will continue to deteriorate over the course of the year, with the second quarter set to show a marked downturn. PwC’s baseline forecast for the decrease in RevPAR is 18.9 per cent.

Robert Milburn, PwC’s hospitality and leisure leader, said: “The scale of the decline in quarter two partly reflects a strong performance in the same quarter for last year. But it’s also the case that in Q4 of 2008, corporate Britain sat up and realised just how bad things were going to get. “Given that hotels normally lag the cycle by two quarters, we are likely to be on the cusp of the worst few months of the year for hotels, London, in particular, is likely to suffer.”

Accor unveils its battle strategy

The number of empty hotel rooms is expected to rise in 2009

By Tom Walker

Accor, the French hotel operator, has revealed details of its new strategy to reduce the effects of the global downturn on earnings after seeing a fall in profits.

Announcing its full-year results for 2008, the company reported a 3.5 per cent fall in operating profits, with fourth quarter business particularly hampered by difficult trading. Measures identified by Accor, which operates the Ibis, Etap and Novotel brands, include a €125m (£111.7m) reduction in spending on hotel refurbishment schemes, while its expansion budget will be reduced by €100m (£89.4m) from 2011 onwards.

However, Accor said it still plans to open 30,000 new rooms over the coming year, with a further 35,000 new rooms planned for 2010.

Guoman reopens historic hotel

Historic property has undergone a £16.3m revamp

By Pete Hayman

A historic London hotel, used by the secret service during the First World War, has been relaunched by Guoman Hotels following the completion of a £16.3m refurbishment.

The Grade I-listed Royal Horseguards hotel, located on the Embankment, has undergone a full revamp of its 280 bedrooms to bring it up to five-star standard.

Construction work has included the addition of a new Guoman Club Lounge and a conservatory restaurant overlooking the River Thames, as well as a £1m revamp of the meetings and events space at One Whitehall Place, adjacent to the hotel.

Guests will now have the chance to go on a guided tour of the historic site, which is also home to the National Liberal Club and the Gladstone Library, as well as one of the largest free-standing marble staircases in Europe.

The Royal Horseguards is the latest addition to Guoman’s London portfolio, along with The Cumberland, The Tower and Charing Cross.

IHF calls for more sector support

The Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) says that if an Irish government recapitalisation scheme does not deliver an increase in funding for the hospitality sector, 60,000 jobs will be at risk.

The IFH has called for an increase in credit facilities to provide extra working capital as part of the scheme.

New proposals outlined by the IFH include the easing of tax payment requirements, including commercial rates in a bid to reduce the risk to lending agencies. The federation also suggested that if banks fail to provide sufficient lending within the next four months, the Irish government should intervene to help the industry.

Tips and service charges could cost the industry greatly

The new tipping law is certain, but timing will determine the industry’s survival

TIPS and service charges are once again a contentious issue for the industry – this time, with government involvement.

BERR (the Department for Business and Regulatory Reform) has announced it will prevent the proceeds of the service charge being used to make up the national minimum wage.

Following a consultation document issued by BERR, the BHA has been in negotiation with ministers, expressing our concerns at its potential impact on the industry at a time of recession – when increased costs could tip a business into administration.

BERR says that the proposal will affect up to 3,000 of the UK’s 25,000 hospitality workers and will cost the industry between £6.6m and £47m annually. Apart from the fact that these are staggeringly vague estimates, we believe that they are entirely incorrect.

The BHA is arguing that the changes could affect as many as 73,000 hospitality workers and is more likely to cost as much as £450m, which could potentially lead to 45,000 job losses. What is extraordinary is that the government, at its own admission, is proposing to introduce legislation that could cost the restaurant industry as much as £67m a year at a time of deepening recession. If the BHA’s estimate is correct, we are actually talking of a cost increase 10 times greater than even the government is suggesting.

If the 55,000 service and quick food restaurants in the UK, under 20 per cent is group-owned. Attacking the groups for trying to hold back the legislation is an easy target, but the damage will be done to the greater number of independent restaurateurs who are operating on the edge of profitability.

Indeed, independent research estimates that 600 businesses than thousands of pounds a month could spell failure for some. Despite our concerns, it is certain that the legislation will go through; the main question now is when will it be introduced? BERR has proposed October this year – just at a time when the recession might be at its deepest point. The BHA is arguing for a delay until at least April next year in order to help the industry survive. Incidentally, we believe that restaurants should be open with customers and explain how the proceeds from tips and service are distributed to staff.
New linear parkland set for Padiham
Council-led scheme will transform a disused railway into new foot and cycle path

By Helen Patenall

A £1.22m linear park is to be built on a derelict railway line in Padiham, Lancashire. The 10-month project will create a 2.4km (1.5-mile) surfaced footpath/cycleway with new access points and a central parkland area featuring extensive wildflower grassland and more than 1,000 native species trees and 8,000 shrubs.

The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA)-funded initiative, spearheaded by Lancashire County Council’s REMADE in Lancashire Team, forms the first part of Sustrans Connector’s ambitious East Lancashire loop project. In December 2007, Sustrans won £50m from the Big Lottery Fund’s Living Landmarks: The People’s Millions competition, after receiving substantial public backing for its bid to create 70 walking and cycling initiatives across the UK.

Peter Foster, regional director for Sustrans, said: “When this route opens later this year it will provide an attractive path for walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users, and horse riders alike. “The works underway will turn what was once a litter-strewn site into a useful and pleasant route to get people where they need to go.”

The project was developed in partnership with Burnley Borough Council and Padiham Town Council, in consultation with local residents.

Tip to be transformed into new park

By Luke Thuescher

Kirkharle Estate, Northumberland, is set to receive a makeover using 270-year-old land is set to receive a makeover using 270-year-old

Kirkharle in line for Capability Brown makeover

Kirkharle Estate, Northumberland, is set to receive a makeover using 270-year-old plans first developed by the legendary garden designer, Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown. Brown, who earned his nickname from the way in which he used to comment on the ‘capabilitas’ of an estate, was behind the design of some of Britain’s most iconic gardens – including Stowe, Chatsworth House, Blenheim Palace and Kew Gardens – in his lifetime between 1716 and 1718.

It is rumoured that the plans that will be used at Kirkharle, which was the garden designer’s hometown, were among the first Brown ever conceived and had been forgotten about until they were rediscovered in 1980.

The 270-year-old plans were only rediscovered in a desk in 1980 hiding in a desk owned by the estate’s current landowner, John Anderson. Anderson has already transformed the estate, which he inherited in a grant of £4,000, and Natural England are backing the scheme, which includes blocks containing new beech, Scots pine, shrubs and herbs, as well as a serpentine lake.

The former railway will be completely revamped as part of plans after receiving substantial public backing for its bid to create 70 walking and cycling initiatives across the UK.

“In 1716, Capability Brown took the opportunity to submit a planning application for the project, while also offering no response to a demand issued by the council last November for £3,000 owed in consultant’s fees.

The project was developed in partnership with Burnley Borough Council and Padiham Town Council, in consultation with local residents.

Weymouth developer to be wound up

Council successful in High Court bid after company fails to start pavilion scheme

By Pete Hayman

Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (WPBC) has been successful in a legal battle with a developer that failed to start work on the redevelopment of Weymouth Pavilion in Dorset.

Howard Holdings, which was selected from a shortlist of three companies as the preferred developer for the pavilion scheme, was issued with a winding-up order by the High Court on 19 March. WPBC said that it had no option but to seek legal action after Howard Holdings failed to submit a planning application for the project, while also offering no response to a demand issued by the council last November for £3,000 owed in consultant’s fees.

The decision of the court takes it a step closer to clarifying the future of the site. We are still completely committed to the development of the pavilion, and will continue to seek a successful development.”

WPBC is now set to inform the developer’s backer, Europa, that it intends to terminate the development agreement. Europa will be given three months to decide whether it wishes to take up the option of taking over Howard Holdings’ existing development plans for the Pavilion.

Howard Legg, WPBC brief holder for partnership and special projects, said: “The decision of the court takes us a step closer to clarifying the future of the site. We are still completely committed to the development of the pavilion, and will continue to seek a successful development.”

The council still intends to pursue the redevelopment of the site

New golf resort set for Angus

By Caroline Wilkinson

Architects have been appointed to transform the Café Royal on London’s Regent Street into a five-star hotel as part of a £750m facelift of the area.

Israel investment firm Atrio Group, leaseholder of the site, has seen David Chipperfield Architects to convert the building into a 2,500sq m (26,909sq ft), 160-room hotel. When complete, the property will form part of The Quadrant, a 93,000sq m (£1 million sq ft) mixed-use development, including seven new blocks, adjacent David Gosling.

Café Royal architects appointed

Café Royal is part of a wider £750m development

The project comprises the renovation of the listed interiors, while an interpretation of the original Ten Room as a new double height foyer will be reinstated. Five other historic rooms will be converted to large VIP suites.

The Café Royal scheme is part of a wider £750m development

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Management & Operation of a New Leisure Centre

Thomas Hardy Leisure Centre, Dorchester

West Dorset District Council is developing plans to deliver a replacement wet and dry leisure centre at the Thomas Hardy School in Dorchester that will include a 25m six-lane swimming pool. The Council is seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from suitable leisure management contractors including existing NPDOs and private sector operators to enter into a contract to manage and operate the new facility and deliver the Council’s wider objectives for the leisure centre.

It is envisaged that the Contract will for a term of 10-15 years (with the possibility of a longer contract) with a proposed date for the award of Contract in November/December 2009. The Council considers that the existing staff will transfer under the possibility of a longer contract with a proposed date for the award of Contract in November/December 2009. The Council considers that the existing staff will transfer under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE) and that the Code on Workforce Matters may apply.

Interested organisations can request an information pack and prequalification questionnaire from: Jon Carney, Senior Consultant, Strategic Leisure, 3rd Floor, Rutherford House, Warrington Road, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 6PG.

The closing date for the return of completed prequalification questionnaire is 28th April 2009 12pm. The successful contractor will be selected through a formal tender process under EU negotiated procedures. OJEU Ref Number: 2009-023786.

Potential Partners must complete a Pre Qualification Questionnaire and demonstrate a proven successful track record in a variety of areas including delivering innovative partnerships to be included on the Council’s select list. The successful contractor will be selected through a formal tender process under EU negotiated procedures. OJEU Ref Number: 2009-023786.

The successful contractor will be asked to meet the client needs with full support should the Code on Workforce Matters apply.

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For further details, visit www.warwickdc.gov.uk or telephone 01926 895 550.

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Disney Store UK signs woodland deal

New partnership with the Woodland Trust aims to raise funds for ‘Magical Wood’

By Peter Rayman

Disney Store UK and the Woodland Trust have announced the launch of a new partnership that aims to raise funds for the creation of a new 50-acre (20.2-hectare) woodland to be called The Magical Wood.

The Magical Wood will form part of the new 858-acre (347.2-hectare) Heartwood Forest near St Albans, Hertfordshire, which was purchased by the trust last year and is set to become the largest new native forest in England.

From 2 April, Disney Stores will start selling reusable shopping bags featuring Winnie the Pooh and Piglet, with £1 from each sale to be donated to the ‘Woodland Trust’. Meanwhile, the Disney Store will also start charging for regular bags, with all profits going to the trust.

Karl Mitchell, director of development at the Woodland Trust, said: “By working with one of the world’s favourite brands, we aim to inspire thousands of children to look after the environment, as well as create a fantastic woodland for generations of children to come.”

The partnership will also help to support the trust’s attempts to manage more than 10,000 woods around the UK.

Summer launch for Fitness TV

By Tom Walker

A new television channel, offering viewers the opportunity to exercise at home 24-7, will be launched on the UK’s digital platform in June. Fitness TV will be aired for free on Sky and has an ambitious target of attracting 600,000 viewers a week by the end of its first year.

The content of the channel, which is being launched by Media Fitness, will include daily workouts designed to appeal to a variety of viewers – from regular gym members to people who might find attending a gym daunting.

Luan Underwood, managing director of Media Fitness, says the company does not look to compete with gyms and health clubs, but instead to complement the sector.

“We are positioning the channel as an additional workout option, not as a replacement to gyms, fitness and wellbeing classes,” she said.

“The channel’s revenue stream will come from advertising, sponsorship, merchandising and a range of online activities.”

New search for green apprentices

Housing minister Margaret Beckett has unveiled a new £1m government initiative designed to increase the number of horticultural apprentices devoted to sustaining parks and green spaces in England.

Local authorities across the country will offer people of all ages the opportunity to apply to the scheme, which will look to recruit 47 apprentices that will ensure boxing techniques are used correctly. The course is delivered through video and staged progression, followed by an online exam.

Levels Two and Three will be delivered face-to-face, launching in autumn and winter respectively, and are only available for people who have completed Level One. These two levels focus on developing advanced choreography using defence, movement and head movements.

When completed, trainers will be fully accredited and able to deliver boxing sessions.

RBS cuts back on sport sponsorship

Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) intends to halve the amount it spends on sports sponsorship by 2010 in a bid to cut costs, after reporting a loss of £24.1bn in 2008 – the largest in UK insurance company, Hibernian Aviva, own naming rights to the stadium, which is currently undergoing a £411m (€83.8m) redevelopment, as well as investing in both the FAI and IRFU’s grassroots initiatives. Phillip Browne, IRFU chief executive, said: “We believe that in the difficult economic conditions we are now going through, Aviva Stadium will be of huge benefit to the economy as a whole. Previous research shows that an Ireland v England rugby international game has an economic impact of up to €90m (£94.6m).”

Celebrating the progress of apprenticeships

The success of these schemes play a vital role in promoting the leisure sector

SkillsActive was delighted to take part in National Apprenticeship Week in February. The week-long celebration, launched by the Learning and Skills Council, promoted apprenticeships through a number of events across England that demonstrated the skills, expertise and commitment of apprentices within the sport and active leisure sector.

It was particularly heartening to see the willingness of employers to get involved by hosting an event or attending one. I believe this demonstrates how far we’ve come with developing sector apprenticeships. The respect that they have gained by employing an apprentice is a testament to the success of the programme itself, and the calibre of our 4,000-plus apprentices we have working and studying within the sector.

Apprenticeships have a crucial role to play in workforce development; they deliver career-led training and qualifications and keep staff engaged, committed and loyal in an industry renowned for high staff turnover. Apprenticeships also attract public funding alongside employer investment, and give people a structured and relevant learning programme, which encourages a long career in the sector.

Since its inception in 2005, the Young Apprenticeship programme in this sector has rapidly grown from a small pilot scheme to attracting over 15 per cent of Young Apprenticeship funding and more than 1,000 places nationally.

With employers and the English National Apprenticeship Awards coming up in July, I am really keen to build on last year’s success of having apprentices from our sector nominated for awards, with two of them actually winning.

I was delighted to witness Luke Powers, a young man from installable tiles, London, win the Young Apprentice of the Year Award, and Mark Brooks from Solihull be Highly Commended in the Personal Achiever of the Year Award – the first time for our sector.

I urge employers to get involved with this year’s awards and get nominating their apprentices. Winning awards demonstrates the vital role our sector play in the health and wellbeing of the nation, not to mention its contribution to the economy as a whole, which is particularly important in these unstable times.

For more information about the 2009 National Apprenticeship Awards visit: www.apprenticeships.org.uk/awards

STEPHEN STUDD is chief executive of Skills Active
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the UK’s leading health and fitness specific qualifications
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L3 PT award  Discounts for Local Authorities
Sports conditioning  Corporate rates
Circuits  Business development and
One day workshops  Team training
Level 2 Gym Instructors Course starting Feb 2009
VISIT WEBSITE FOR DATES OF ALL COURSES
Call 01482 636733  collin.hewick@shunsley.eri.net
www.southhunsleysports.co.uk

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Chronic Respiratory Disease Exercise Instructor Course

BLF bursaries are now available for the May 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 3 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 REPs
- A current valid first aid certificate
- Endorsement from a local pulmonary rehabilitation team

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

To Advertise: +44 (0)1462 431385 E: leisureopps@leisuremedia.com

www.focus-training.com

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Do you have what it takes to work in the sporting county?

Nottinghamshire is celebrating record success in Beijing and we are determined to build on it.

Nottinghamshire County Council’s award winning sports service has been at the heart of efforts to develop sport for three decades. After a restructure of our team, and following further investment from the County Council and key partners, we have a bright future ahead. You could be part of it.

If you have the drive, flair, creativity and dedication to make a lasting difference to Nottingham sport we want you to join us.


You will play a central role in our work to widen access to sport to more people from different backgrounds in the county. You will understand the barriers facing many sections of the community that prevent their involvement in sport and will have experience of designing and implementing strategies to overcome them.

You will have excellent organisational and interpersonal skills, experience of producing reports, project plans, and presentations, project management experience, a proven track record of successful partnership working with sports agencies, and will possess a sound knowledge of sports development and sports policy. Building on our track record of achieving Beacon status for our work with hard to reach groups, this is an opportunity to make a real difference to sport in the county. Previous applicants do not apply.

Ref: ESC/0802/AM Closing date: 17 April 2009

An enhanced CRB check will be required for these posts. You will need access to a car for business purposes, as well as a willingness to work some evenings and weekends.

Disabled applicants who meet the essential shortlisting requirements will be guaranteed an interview. Job share scheme available. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we expect all staff to share this commitment and undergo appropriate checks.

Application forms and job descriptions are available on-line at www.nottingshire.gov.uk/jobs or from the Employee Services Centre via e-mail: jobs@nottsc.gov.uk stating job title and reference number and asking for the post code.

Alternatively, please telephone: 0844 9808080 (8am - 8pm Monday - Friday, 8am - 12 noon Saturday).

Minicom available during office hours tel: (01623) 434993.

The County Council is committed to safeguarding and will actively seek to ensure through its recruitment processes that it does not recruit people who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults.

Facility Operations Manager Blagrave Recreation Centre £26,294

This is an exciting opportunity for an individual who enjoys working with the community and local partners to take a leading role in delivering the anticipated success of a new sports centre. The position requires the holder to lead, direct and supervise the leisure service staff to ensure that the service provided is of the highest quality and means or allows access to sports, fitness and leisure activities needed and appreciated by the local community.

Managing and developing a comprehensive community programmes, ensuring staff effectiveness, budgetary control, performance monitoring, service review and planning are all major elements of the challenging role of the Operations Manager.

In addition, health and safety management, equipment maintenance, human resources responsibilities and implementing local sales and promotions activity will further enhance the role.

You will need a sound practical knowledge of sports and leisure service delivery and be able to demonstrate commitment and flexibility in abundance.

If you have also the vacancies, in the first instance, please send a current CV and covering letter to kam@portregis.com

Closing Date: 17th April 2009

For an application form please contact:
Company Head Office Caludena House, Hay Street, Perth, PH1 5HS Tel: 01738 492440 or apply online at www.liveactive.co.uk

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Active Schools Co-ordinator, Lockerbie (Ref: 10/542) £26,331 – £28,850

This key appointment supports current, and develops, new opportunities for children to participate in regular, frequent, safe and fun physical activity and will involve partnerships with relevant local and national agencies. You will cover three secondary schools in Annandale and Eildale for period up until 31 March 2011. You will develop physical activity and sport programmes for children with additional support needs throughout the region.

Educated to degree level in a relevant discipline, you will have extensive experience engaging with children and young people through sport and physical activity in education, health and/or community leisure. Experience of managing projects in these areas is essential, as is a proven experience of developing partnerships.

You will be appointed under SIC conditions for local Government employees to allow flexible deployment in relation to holidays and other out of school commitments.

In formal enquiries to Christopher Topping@pk.gov.uk

Leisure and Sport Development Officer, Wigton (Ref: 18/456) £23,082 – £25,551

Developing a Sports Development Programme throughout the community, you will work with colleagues in the Council and with external agencies. Improving the quality and quantity of sports provision, you will help increase participation in the local community.

With excellent communication skills and the ability to motivate, you will have experience in budget management, marketing, report-writing, event and project management and promotion. To be successful you must be an effective team player and sport is essential and full membership of Rajasthan or BRM. Experience in leisure and sport development desirable.

In formal enquiries to: Harry Hay, Leisure Services Manager, Wigton - (01505 333 300).

Closing date for both posts: 10 April 2009.

For all jobs apply online or tel 01378 260009 quoting the job title and reference number or contact Jobcentre Plus.

Duty Manager (Stevenson Building) – Female Only

£19,645 – £23,449 (plus £2,104 enhanced rates for weekends and £2,160 shift allowance per annum).

The Sport and Recreation Service has an extensive range of sport and recreation facilities for use by a range of groups, including schools, the local community and local clubs.

You should hold at least an HNC in Leisure Management or other recognised qualification together with relevant experience working in an indoor sports facility (wet & dry) and experience of managing people. You must hold a National Pool Lifeguard Qualification, with the ability to lead, direct and supervise a team of operational staff.

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If you are unable to apply on-line please contact us on 01747-857800 quoting Ref 00906.

Closing date: 10th April 2009

We are looking for a dynamic, highly motivated Duty Manager/Games Coach

Assisting in the day to day running of the outstanding facilities at Motcombe Park Sports Centre. This post would suit an experienced Recreation Assistant wishing to step into management. Lifeguard qualifications are necessary to work effectively and collaboratively with partner organisations including schools, council services, local clubs and groups, contractors and of course, the local community as a whole, then Perth and Kinross Leisure would be pleased to hear from you.

It is essential that you are educated to at least HNC level or hold a professional course, the local community as a whole, then Perth and Kinross Leisure would be pleased to hear from you.

If you also have the skills and personal and professional qualities that are necessary to work effectively and collaboratively with partner organisations including schools, council services, local clubs and groups, contractors and of course, the local community as a whole, then Perth and Kinross Leisure would be pleased to hear from you.

...
This exciting role is to manage and coordinate the planning and implementation of a programme of inter-school competitions across two school sports partnerships (SSPs) in the London Borough of Sutton, using the National Schools Competition Framework as the basis.

We are looking for a self-motivated, organised, lively and innovative physical education/sport development professional with excellent communication skills and the ability to work strategically across a number of the borough’s primary, secondary and special schools. You will be working closely with the South London Competition Manager and SSP Partnership Development Managers across the Carshalton Boys and John Fisher School Sport Partnerships, and will facilitate links with key strategic partners including Sports Development, Pro-Active South London, National Governing Bodies of Sport and community providers.

The successful candidate should be prepared to attend occasional evening meetings. You must be able to drive and provide a car for work purposes. A CRB check will be required for this post.

Application packs are available online at www.harrismerton.org.uk or contact Janette Bragginton on 020 8623 1000. For an informal discussion about this post please contact Nicola Ryan, Senior Competition Manager on 020 8623 1028 or 07983 387 827 or email ryanj@harrismerton.org.uk.

Completed application forms should be returned to Harris Academy Merton, by 5pm Tuesday 21st April 2009.
**Exciting opportunity for an experienced Fitness Manager to work with us at a prestigious corporate site.**

You will have strong leadership and communication skills. Applicants must have an upper 2.1 degree in Sports Science, PE and be passionate about what they do. Successful candidates will be required to demonstrate time management skills, multi-tasking and the ability to prioritise.

**Qualifications**

- Degree and/or experience in assessing, you want to earn circa £26K+
- Must have Holistic Assessment qualification
- Experienced in assessing
- Computer skills
- Good relationship management skills
- Experience in completion of L3 & L4 assessments
- Must have a driven, hard working and have a passion for fitness.

**Purpose**

- Conduct fitness assessments and member inductions
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**Information**

- We have a 2 year contract with annual leave. 21 days sick leave, 15 days
- Experience of teaching exercise classes to a high standard
- Minimum of one year's experience in a similar role
- Excellent customer care skills and a
- YMCA Gym Instructor/Fitness Trainer or equivalent. (Level 2 REPS)•
- Experience of teaching exercise classes to a high standard•
- Good knowledge of Gym and Class instruction•
- Minimum of one year's experience in a similar role•
- Experience of teaching exercise classes to a high standard•
- Good knowledge of Gym and Class instruction•

**Closing date:**

- 8th April at 12noon.
- You will have strong leadership and communication skills. Applicants must have an upper 2.1 degree in Sports Science, PE and be passionate about what they do. Successful candidates will be required to demonstrate time management skills, multi-tasking and the ability to prioritise.

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### FITнес ADViser

#### WestMinster Gym

**£17,000+**

We are looking for a full-time fitness adviser working 40 hours per week. Monday to Friday, on a shift basis. The role will require gym supervision, fitness assessments and one-to-one inductions, as well as covering reception, membership sales and day-to-day operations.

**Advantageous skills required:**

- YMCA Gym Instructor/Fitness Trainer or equivalent. (Level 2 REPS)
- Excellent customer care skills and a flexible approach to teamwork
- Minimum of one year’s experience in a similar role
- Good knowledge of Gym and Class instruction

The ideal candidate will also possess:

- YMCA/RSA Exercise to music
- Personal Trainers Qualifications
- Experience of teaching exercise classes to a high standard
- Experience in the voluntary sector
- Knowledge of Health and Safety Policies

This is an opportunity to work within one of the most famous landmarks in London. The Westminster Gym is situated within the Parliamentary Estate and serves a wide range of staff within both Houses. After an initial probationary period, the successful candidate will have the opportunity to Personal Train and teach classes within the facility at an enhanced rate of pay.

Jubilee Hall Clubs is an independent charitable trust operating 4 clubs in central London, and, as an accredited Investor in People, is committed to the training and development of all staff so that they can realise their potential.

Interested candidates should send a CV to: Yinka Ogunleye, THE GYM, 30 The Piazza, Covent Garden, London, WC2E 8BE or yinkaj@jubileehallclubs.co.uk.

**Closing date:**

- Friday 17th April 2009.

**Interviews:**

- Week commencing 20th April 2009.

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### La Roche Health and Fitness

La Roche Health and Fitness is the premier Health Club in Maidstone and are seeking a level 3 fitness instructor/personal trainer to join our team. You will be ambitious, results driven, hard working and have a passion for fitness.

If you are interested in the position please send your CV to: lebaron@larocheleisure.co.uk.

**Helping you to a healthier lifestyle**

[w www.larocheleisure.co.uk](http://www.larocheleisure.co.uk)
Peoples’ Place project secures £2m funding boost

By Tom Walker

The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCFS) has awarded a £2.1m funding package towards the construction of the Peoples’ Place project in Sheffield, Yorkshire.

Designed as an activity centre for 13-to-19-year-olds, the Peoples’ Place aims to bring young people together and prevent anti-social behaviour by providing a range of cultural and sporting activities.

To promote physical activity, an outside fitness trail, artificial football pitches and a free-to-access health and fitness club. To cater for youths with artistic interests, the centre will offer recording studio technology.

The project is led by Sheffield City Council and coordinated under a joint working group called The Sharrow Partnership. Andrew Sanger, spokesperson for Sheffield City Council, said: “Young people have been put in the driving seat in leading this bid that reflects the improvements they wanted to see.”

The Peoples’ Place will aim to attract the region’s young teenagers

Latest figures reveal cinema visits at record high

By Tom Walker

UK cinemas sold more than 53.6m tickets during 2008, the highest figure since 1969, according to the latest annual report from the Film Distributors’ Association (FDA).

The report revealed that big-budget movies such as Mamma Mia! and The Dark Knight helped British cinemas attract more than 50m visits for the first time in 40 years.

“A £5 cinema ticket is good value at times when people are looking to cut back on discretionary spend,” he added. The news follows figures published by the UK Film Council earlier this year, which showed that box office takings for the UK and the Republic of Ireland totalled £949.5m, an increase of 5 per cent on the previous year and the highest since records began in 1989.

More than 53m tickets were sold at UK cinemas in 2008

A FDA spokesperson said the lousy summer weather boosted figures, but that figures also reflect the sector’s robustness.

CV to open No.20 in Soho

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The 60-cover outlet, designed by interior architect Lesley Purcell of Mamma Mia! and The Dark Knight helped British cinemas

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