

Gloucestershire stadium plans receive council backing

By **Pete Hayman**

Gloucestershire County Cricket Club (GCCC) has been handed a boost after planning officials at the local authority backed plans for a major renovation of the County Ground, Bristol.

Two planning applications submitted for the redevelopment of the club's Nevil Road venue – due to be considered on 10 March – have been recommended for approval by officers at Bristol City Council.

The council's development control (north) committee will determine the fate of the proposals, which include increasing the County Ground's seating capacity by 4,000 to



Plans include increasing seating capacity at the ground to 20,000

20,000 and the creation of a new media centre.

Improved conference and hospitality facilities, an upgraded BS7 fitness club to include a swimming pool and

enabling development of accommodation units for 350 students form part of the plans.

The redevelopment has been designed to meet England and Wales Cricket Board standards

for hosting international matches and help to secure the long-term future of the venue, which has been used by GCCC since 1888 and has hosted one day international fixtures since 1999.

GCCC chair Rex Body said: "It is difficult to stress the importance of the proposed developments to our long term future in Bristol, not only for the county team and the club as a whole but also for our surrounding community.

"We have also worked particularly hard to design in transport and access measures which we believe will actually improve the traffic situation for our immediate neighbours."

Grange Paddocks reopens after £1.89m upgrade

Additions at SLM-run centre include 85-station fitness suite and exercise studio

By **Tom Walker**

Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, has reopened following the completion of a £1.89m renovation.

The redevelopment work at the Everyone Active centre, funded by East Herts District Council (EHDC), started in May 2009 to provide a new 85-station fitness suite and exercise studio.

The centre's gym, which has been enlarged from a 26-station facility, also provides a



The centre is operated by SLM on behalf of the council

new studio space for dance classes, as well as offering pilates, yoga and body pump courses. Precor has supplied

the equipment along with Power Plate and Trixter.

Designs for the new-look gym were drawn up by HCD Architects on behalf of SLM, which operates the centre in behalf of the council. Contractor Phoenix carried out the renovation work.

Linda Haysey, EHDC's executive member for community development, leisure and culture, said: "Whether you want to lose weight in the gym or get fit with a group class, the new facilities are both top quality and affordable."

Regeneration boost for Barry

The Welsh Assembly Government has announced that Barry, South Wales, is to become a focus of regeneration efforts after designating the local area as a new Strategic Regeneration Area (SRA).

Barry is the seventh SRA to be established and will see the town benefit from a long-term strategy to revamp the area using procedures pioneered as part of the Heads of the Valley initiative.

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Jobs under threat as council cuts loom

BBC research shows leisure facilities and the arts at risk from reduced spending

By Pete Hayman

New research by the BBC has revealed that at least 25,000 jobs will be under threat over the next five years as local authorities across England face having to reduce spending.

A survey of English councils by BBC English Regions showed more than 70 per cent predict spending cuts of between five and 20 per cent by 2015 in a bid to meet budget shortfalls.

The study was sent to all 150 English top tier and single tier authorities – metropolitan and London boroughs, unitary authorities and county councils – and received 93 responses.

More than 60 councils were prepared to suggest that leisure facilities, arts and culture and libraries are considered to be the services most at risk.



Leeds City Council is one of the authorities to forecast job losses

While most councils were less willing to forecast possible job losses, eight local authorities – City of Bradford, Kirklees, Sheffield, Stoke-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Leeds and Surrey – suggested that more than 1,000 positions may have to be removed over the next five years.

Tony Travers, director of the Greater London group at the London School of Economics, told the BBC: "The scale of job reductions... suggests tens of thousands of posts are likely to be lost... it seems likely there will be a sharp cut in council jobs in 2010 and for some years after."

£10.8m funding to kick-start Salford makeover

By Pete Hayman

Plans for the redevelopment of Salford's Chapel Street area have received a boost after the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) agreed to invest nearly £10.8m to kick-start the scheme.

NWDA's investment will enable public infrastructure work to be carried out in order for the mixed-use development to move forward, which will eventually generate more than £650m in private investment.

The first phase of work now set to get underway, which is due to be completed in the autumn, includes junction improvements and highway reconfiguration work to direct traffic away from the area.

Stage Two will include new street furniture, lighting and



Plans will eventually lead to the transformation of Salford

signage, the planting of new trees and widened footpaths, as well as the creation of public squares at Salford Cathedral and St Phillips Church.

The regeneration project covers a 17.4-hectare (43.8-acre) area in the heart of the city centre and will eventually include the creation of 390

hotel rooms and 220,000sq m (2.4 million sq ft) of space for retail and leisure developments.

Led by Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company (CSURC) and English Cities Fund, the project has received nearly £9m from the NWDA and £1.79m from the European Regional Development Fund.

NWDA director of land and property Paul Lakin said: "The Chapel Street area has huge potential but needs significant public investment to create the type of environment which is essential to attract high levels of private investment."

CSURC chief executive Chris Farrow added: "[This funding] allows us to get on and deliver what the local community has been telling us they want – to revitalise the historic heart of the city."

Three projects earmarked for HLF cash

Cardiff, London and Halifax schemes awarded development grants by funding agency

By **Pete Hayman**

Three major redevelopment projects across the UK are in line to receive a share of more than £1m after being awarded first-round passes by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Schemes in Cardiff, London and Halifax, West Yorkshire will be handed funding towards the development of more detailed bid proposals, with more than £22m earmarked by the HLF.

St Fagans National History Museum near Cardiff has been awarded £450,000 as part of its bid for £8.7m towards plans to revamp the attraction, including a new National Archaeology Collection.

Storage space, modernised galleries and the creation of a Green Pavilion to allow visitors to watch archaeologists at work



Piece Hall in Halifax received £7m towards the creation of a piazza

also form part of the St Fagans proposals to create a "world class museum of learning".

Nearly £240,000 has been provided to help Piece Hall in Halifax secure £7m towards the development of a European-style piazza at the site's Grade I-listed courtyard, along with a

new space to examine the role of the Hall in Yorkshire's history.

The Treasury Galleries at London's Science Museum has received £346,200 towards a full grant worth more than £6.3m, which will fund the renovation of four floors to be used as new galleries.

UEFA report reveals Premier League clubs' debt

By **Pete Hayman**

English Premier League clubs account for more debt than the rest of Europe's leading clubs put together, according to a new report by the Union of Football Associations (UEFA).

UEFA's European Club Footballing Landscape research has revealed the combined debt of the 20 English Premier League clubs was €3.8bn (£3.4bn) in 2008 – 56 per cent of the continental total.

The study also showed that English clubs' assets of €4.3bn (£3.8bn) are worth nearly half



Arsenal FC took on debt to help fund the new Emirates Stadium

– 48 per cent – of the total figure for the 732 clubs licensed by Europe's governing body for football during the 2007-08 season.

According to UEFA's report: "One thing is clear, the level of bank and commercial debt is strongly connected to the size of the asset base, with long-term debt typically linked to stadium ownership."

"In some cases this is because new debt is used as the most efficient and available source of funding for a new stadium development (e.g. Arsenal Football Club), but in others it is because the already built assets provide security for commercial lenders who may not offer financing without this long term asset."

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IN BRIEF

Hertford facility unveils revamped gym

► A new 85-station fitness suite has been unveiled at Hartham Leisure Centre in Hertford, Hertfordshire, following the completion of a £1.62m overhaul of the facility. East Hertfordshire District Council funded the project at the centre, which is operated by Sports and Leisure Management under its Everyone Active brand. Work included extending an existing 42-station fitness suite to incorporate a wider range of Precor and Trixter equipment on the first floor of the centre, while a dedicated PowerPlate room and a group exercise room were also created.

New equipment for Barnet outdoor gym

► Four new pieces of Wicksteed all-weather equipment have been installed as part of an free outdoor gym at Oak Hill Park in East Barnet, north London. Barnet Council initially provided three stations – a surfer, a leg press and a space walker – at the £6,000 gym in February 2009, which is designed for use by people of all ages and abilities. However, the Friends of Oak Hill Park was successful in its bid for funding from the Milly Apthorp Trust to install a further three exercise stations, with the council financing the fourth.

Derbyshire leisure centre to be revamped

► The Victoria Park Leisure Centre in Ilkeston, Derbyshire, could be in line for nearly £3m-worth of improvements. According to the Ilkeston Advertiser, the work will include a new gym and disabled facilities, plus improvements to the centre's pools, changing rooms, car park, lighting, reception area and roof. Plans were given the green light by Erewash Borough Council on 4 March.

Work starts on new Cox Green facility

£1.3m Berkshire leisure centre set to boast a 42-station gym and dance studio

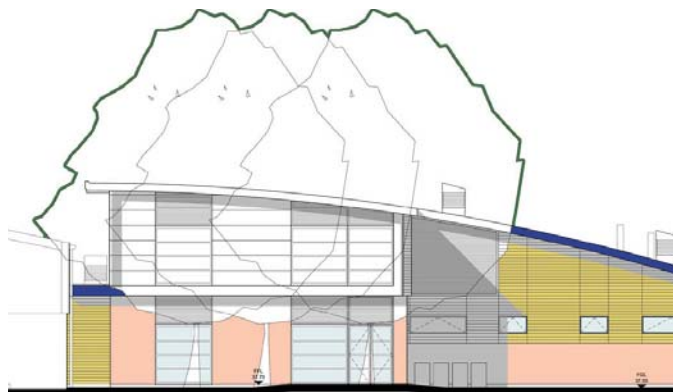
By **Tom Walker**

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) has confirmed the start of construction work at the new £1.3m Cox Green Leisure Centre in Maidenhead, Berkshire.

Work on the facility, which is situated adjacent to Cox Green School on Highfield Lane, is expected to be completed by September and will be funded by a Football Foundation grant and developers' contributions.

A new 42-station Bodyzone fitness suite equipped by Precor, a first-floor multi-purpose dance studio and four changing rooms will be among the centre's facilities, along with changing rooms for people with disabilities and for officials and referees using nearby football pitches.

Swindon-based construction company EW Beard is delivering the venue, which has been



An impression of how the new Cox Green Leisure Centre will look

designed by Datchet-based architects Edgington, Spink and Hyne. Existing facilities, including a small Bodyzone gym, badminton courts and climbing wall will remain open during the construction period.

Cox Green School headteacher Ian Hylan said: "As well as benefiting the local community, this centre will be a great asset for all Cox Green, Lowbrook Primary and Manor Green

pupils, and will provide facilities for our new creative and media diploma course."

RBWM's lead member for adult and community services, Simon Dudley, added: "The new leisure centre stems from the council's consultation with residents, community groups and site users and will offer great opportunities for local people to keep fit and healthy – right on their own doorstep."

£2.5m boost for Gravesham gyms

More than £2.5m has been earmarked for Gravesham's leisure facilities after the local authority agreed a new 10-year contract with operator Gravesham Community Leisure.

Cascades Leisure Centre in Gravesend, Kent, will benefit from a new 720sq m (7,750sq ft) fitness suite boasting 144 stations of Pulse Fitness equipment.

Meanwhile, Cygnet Leisure Centre in Northfleet has already unveiled a new 410sq m (4,413sq ft) fitness suite, with 72 stations, which is also equipped by Pulse Fitness.

Revamped Camden centre opens

By **Pete Hayman**

Mornington Sport and Fitness Centre in Camden, North London, has reopened to the public, following the completion of a £650,000 scheme to improve the facility.

Camden Council and operator Greenwich Leisure worked in partnership on the project, which included the creation of a new fitness area with easy line facilities for elderly residents and people with disabilities.

The centre now boasts a total gym space of 510sq m (5,490sq ft) – comprising a 146sq m (1,572sq ft) upper area and a 364sq m (3,918sq ft) basement area – equipped



Camden councillors try out the centre's new fitness equipment

by Technogym and boasting more than 100 stations.

Improvement work also included the addition of The Zone, a new purpose-built activity area for young people boasting virtual technology football, basketball and a techno-gym with equipment supplied by Veqtor.

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What does this mean for Sport and Active Leisure?

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To find out how these new vocational qualifications are right for your business, please visit:

www.businesslink.gov.uk/vocationalqualifications

IN BRIEF

New cricket pitches for Lewisham parks

► Lewisham Council has approved a £600,000 plan to construct new cricket pitches at two parks – Hilly Fields and Mayow Park – within the south-east London borough. Local social enterprise Envirowork Lewisham is leading the ParkSport Lewisham project in partnership with the council and sports activity provider Teachsport, with funding already secured from the Big Lottery Fund and the London Marathon Charitable Trust.

Trump submits detailed £1bn golf masterplan

► US billionaire tycoon Donald Trump has submitted a detailed masterplan to Aberdeenshire Council for the development of his new £1bn golf resort on the Menie Estate, Scotland. Trump International – Scotland was granted outline planning permission for the project by the Scottish Government in December 2008, despite the local authority rejecting the proposals in December 2007. The detailed masterplan for the land at Menie has been drawn up by Gareth Hoskins Architects and provides a framework for the overall development of the site. Designs for the championship golf course, developed by Dr Martin Hawtree, have also been submitted.

Irish elite sport funding announced

► Ireland's high performance athletes will receive a share of €8.35m (£7.3m) after the Irish Sport Council (ISC) unveiled "ambitious plans" for each sport over the coming year. Nearly €5.3m (£4.6m) will be invested in Performance Plans – devised by performance directors for each sport providing specific elite campaigns to cover training, competition requirements, sports science and medical support.

£10m cash injection for rural sports

Sport England funding to help efforts to drive participation as part of 2012 legacy

By **Pete Hayman**

Efforts to increase the number of people playing sport in rural communities have been given a boost after Sport England revealed which schemes will receive a share of £10m.

More than 500 applications were received by the funding agency as part of its Rural Communities initiative, which is the first of Sport England's themed rounds aimed at delivering a sporting legacy from the 2012 Olympics.

Research conducted by the organisation revealed that two-thirds of English local authorities with the lowest participation rates are in rural areas. One of the largest grants has been awarded to The



The funding aims to increase physical activity in rural communities

SportsHub@Treviglas in Newquay, Cornwall, which has received £1.675m to provide new sports facilities for more than 15,000 people living in rural communities.

Nearly £600,000 has been awarded to Devon Active

Villages, which aims to get 13,000 people across Devon taking part in a range of various sports, while a similar scheme in Derbyshire, comprising 12,000 people 60 villages and over the next three years, has netted £601,952.

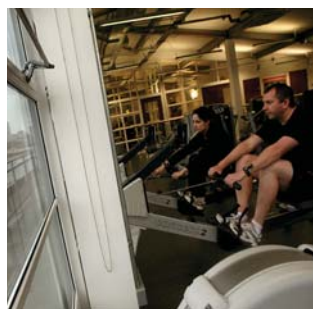
£2.39m Surrey Docks revamp scheme completed

By **Tom Walker**

The Surrey Docks Watersports Centre in Rotherhithe, Southwark, has benefited from a £2.39m redevelopment.

Funded by Southwark Council, the centre now boasts a health and fitness club with exercise and dance studios.

The redevelopment has seen the upper floor extended to house a spacious gym overlooking the water, and the ground floor space has been



The centre on the river Thames

reorganised to provide three studios and a new club room. Fusion Lifestyle, the leisure

trust which operates the centre on behalf of the council, is also in the process of improving the centre's disabled access standards so it will gain Inclusive Fitness Status (IFI accreditation).

Councillor Lewis Robinson, executive member for culture, libraries, leisure and sport said: "The subsidised prices at Surrey Docks Watersports Centre make it one of the most affordable and accessible places for Londoners to go sailing."

Cardiff venue set for new snowsports development?

A new snowsports centre could be established at Cardiff's International Sports Village (ISV) after the local authority backed plans to appoint a company to run the proposed facility.

Cardiff Council's executive committee approved recommendations urging the "procurement of a developer/operator to design, build, fund and operate" both a new permanent ice rink and the planned snow facility. A report put before the committee said: "The council has had an expression of interest in regard to a snow facility at the ISV site, which is said to relate to a specialist operator. That approach is still being examined and is subject to a proposed Memorandum of Understanding."

£13m Rushden leisure plans submitted

FaulknerBrowns-designed Manor Park Leisure Centre to replace Pemberton centre

By **Pete Hayman**

East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) has announced that it has submitted detailed plans for the new £13m Manor Park Leisure Centre, which is set to be built in Rushden.

Working in partnership with Rushden Town Council, the centre is poised to include a six-lane, 25m swimming pool and teaching pool, dance/exercise studios and a fitness suite, as well as a six-court sports hall.

Leisure water facilities – such as jets and fountains – and flexible space for a crèche, theatre activities and community events are also set to form part of the FaulknerBrowns Architects-designed Manor Park Leisure Centre.



When complete, the complex will include a 25m swimming pool

Plans for the venue, which is intended to replace the town's existing Splash Leisure Pool and Pemberton Centre, also provide details on how Rushden and Higham Rugby Club will be accommodated at Manor Park.

ENC is contributing up to £11m towards the project, while

an additional £2m has been invested as part of the government's Growth Fund through the North Northants Development Company.

East Midlands Development Agency has also agreed to contribute £800,000 through Northamptonshire Enterprise.

England Squash deal for Fusion

England Squash and Racketball (ESR) has agreed a deal which will see the governing body deploying its coaches at publicly-owned leisure centres in the south east of the country.

The deal, with leisure trust Fusion Lifestyle, will also include a 'pay and play' scheme allowing amateur players using the public courts operated by Fusion to become a member of ESR and take part in coaching initiatives. The agreement is the second national partnership that ESR has secured – a similar deal was struck with DC Leisure last year – and forms part of ESR's long term strategy to increase participation in the two sports.

Ipswich pool upgrade underway



Crown Pools will benefit as part of a wider IBC swimming initiative

By **Pete Hayman**

Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) has announced that construction work has started on a £3.5m revamp of Crown Pools in Ipswich, Suffolk, as part of a wider investment in swimming.

The venue is set to receive new changing rooms, a reception area and an improved pool plant as part of the first phase of the revamp,

which follows a £479,000 scheme at the city's Fore Street Pool last year.

A new pool cover is also set to be installed to retain heat and reduce water evaporation at Crown Pools, which IBC has said is expected to stay open for the duration of the work.

Further work to improve Crown Pools as part of phase two of the scheme is expected to get underway in April 2011.

IN BRIEF

£2.7m boost for Castle Point leisure facilities

► Castle Point Borough Council (CPBC) has announced that a number of its leisure facilities are in line to receive a share of £2.7m towards renovation work. Waterside Farm Leisure Centre in Canvey Island, Essex, will net £1.3m to help fund work to improve the venue's lifespan by up to 30 years, which is set to include improvements to the roof, doors and windows. Nearly £724,000 will be invested in upgrade work at Runnymede Pool in Thundersley, which will benefit from repairs to boilers, pipework, windows and doors, while £76,000 will be spent on improvements to the Paddocks.

Medal hailed a 'funding success'

► John Steele, chief executive of UK Sport, has hailed Amy Williams' gold medal at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics as an example of how targeted investment can deliver results. Commenting on Williams' success at the skeleton event, he said: "British Skeleton received a record £2.1m of lottery and exchequer funding for Vancouver through UK Sport and led by performance director Andi Schmid, they provide a great example of a sport working in partnership to achieve success on the world stage."

'Forgotten borough' slams 2012 organisers

► Organisers of the 2012 Olympics have been criticised for making Barking and Dagenham the 'forgotten borough' of the London Games by the local authority. Liam Smith, leader of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham council, said the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games had failed to provide the area with any benefits.

IN BRIEF

New powers for lap-dancing clampdown

► Local authorities across the country will be able to set a cap on the number of lap-dancing venues within a particular area as part of new powers confirmed by the Home Office. From 6 April, councils will be able to consider a wider range of objections to new 'sexual entertainment' clubs, while existing venues will be forced to apply for a new licence within six months. The new powers follows lobbying by the Local Government Association group to close a loophole in the 2003 Licensing Act.

Council approves AECC financial package

► Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre (AECC) has been given more time to repay a £7.5m loan as part of a new package approved by the local authority to help secure the venue's future. The venue now has until 2017 to pay back the amount it owes to Aberdeen City Council after officials agreed to a raft of measures, designed to ensure the centre remains open amid concerns over its finances.

UK holiday parks set for strong 2010

► Pontin's and Butlins are in line for a successful summer after both companies reported an increase in bookings for 2010. Economic concerns continue to affect Britons' holiday choices, with Pontin's posting a increase in summer bookings of more than 22 per cent during January. Pontins chair Graham Parr said: "With the winter seeing some of the worst weather in more than 60 years and retailers reporting their worst January trading for more than 15 years, it is no surprise that people see the need to plan ahead for holidays at a price that offers outstanding value for money."

Pubs to be hit by gambling tax change

Quiz and gaming machines targeted as part of new HMRC reclassification plans

By **Martin Nash**

In a response to government plans to change the taxation of pub quiz and games machines like *Cluedo*, *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* and *Monopoly*, the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) says it believes tax revenues gained from the move will be far outweighed by the tax lost.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) aims to reclassify Skills with Prizes (SWP) machines as gambling machines, which will make them liable for gaming machine tax. It also wants to make the tax retrospective for the last three years.

SWP machines have always been recognised as distinct and different from gambling machines such as fruit machines. Gambling machines, where chance is the deciding factor on whether a player wins a cash payout, have always



Quiz games are to be grouped together with gambling machines

been covered by Amusement Machine Licence Duty.

The BBPA calculates that, with an estimated 35,000 SWP machines being used in the UK, the cost to the industry of the proposed tax will be £85m, or £2,500 per pub.

It argues the move will result in fewer people playing SWP machines for entertainment and more people playing fruit machines to gamble, while also

putting pubs – currently closing at the rate of 39 a week – under further threat.

Brigid Simmonds, chief executive of the BBPA said, "The perverse result of this tax change will be to switch more people onto gambling as quiz machines are switched off across Britain.

"That cannot be a sensible or sustainable public policy outcome for government."

Merlin flotation 'still an option'

Visitor attraction operator Merlin Entertainments has confirmed that plans for a flotation on the London Stock Exchange are still "under consideration".

The group, which owns Alton Towers, the London Eye and Legoland, said it does not expect to reach a decision over its future, following claims it had suspended flotation plans.

In a statement, a Merlin Entertainments spokesperson said: "All options, including an IPO, remain under consideration, but the group does not expect to reach any conclusion in the near future."

New-look Silverstone approved

By **Pete Hayman**

Formula One Management has given the green light for Silverstone Circuits to stage the 2010 British Grand Prix on the new £5m Arena Grand Prix Circuit at the venue.

Most of Silverstone's existing straights and high-speed corners have been retained as part of the redevelopment scheme, although a new section has been added after Abbey Corner to take drivers towards Becketts and into an Arena Complex.

Work is due for completion in March, which has also included the construction of elevated viewing banks and the relocation of existing grand-

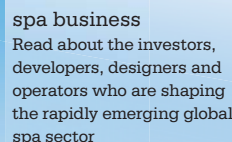
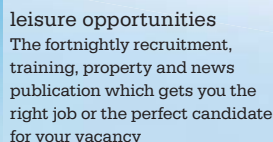
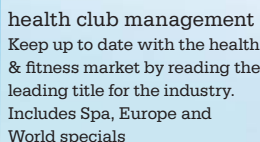
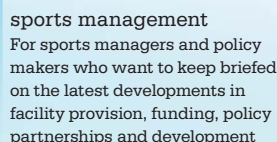
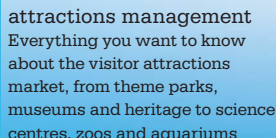


The reworked circuit is part of a wider overhaul of the venue

stands in a bid to boost the venue's spectator experience.

Silverstone Circuits managing director Richard Phillips said: "Some will miss not seeing F1 cars accelerating through Bridge, but we have to move with the times and continue looking at ways to improve the overall experience."

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IN BRIEF

Macdonald hotels to open in Windsor

► Macdonald Hotels and Resorts is to open a new 120-room hotel in Windsor, Berkshire. The contemporary townhouse style hotel will be built on the site of the former Caley's department store, what was the smallest of the John Lewis Partnership shops and one of the oldest. Several of the buildings which the store occupied in the town's High Street were listed properties and part of the new hotel will sit within the listed section and retain some of its features. It closed in 2006. Scheduled to open in August this year, the new hotel will join Macdonald's existing portfolio of around 50 hotels and resorts across the UK and Spain.

Listed hotel sold to chef Ockelford

► The Grade II-listed Mill House Hotel and Restaurant in Ashington, South Downs, has been sold to entrepreneur and chef Richard Ockelford in a deal worth around £475,000. The boutique hotel, which only has nine bedrooms, dates back to the 1650s and was forced to close in July 2009 after running into financial difficulties. Agents Knight Frank acted on behalf of the previous owner on the deal.

IHG reveals cautious outlook as profits fall

► InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) has revealed it expects trading conditions to remain challenging until the business market picks up after operating profits declined by a third during 2009. Compared with the previous year, the hotel company saw operating profits fall from US\$549m (£356m, €406m) to US\$363m (£236m, €269m) but admitted it had seen signs of improvement during the fourth quarter of the year.

Future bright for London restaurants

Operators expect an increase in takings and plan to hire more staff during 2010

By **Pete Hayman**

A new survey of more than 300 restaurants across London has revealed that more than half of the capital's eateries expect to see an increase in takings during 2010, compared with figures for last year.

Despite tough trading conditions, nearly 90 per cent of those questioned as part of Business Link's *Restaurant Barometer for London* said they are planning to maintain or increase staff levels over the coming months.

However, poor weather conditions during January meant that many owners - 49 per cent of participants - reported a decline in takings, when compared with the same period last year.



According to Business Link, restaurateurs can expect a boost in 2010

Ashley de Safrin, business advisor for the hospitality sector at Business Link, said: "Despite a slow January, prospects are looking up for the restaurant sector.

"2010 should give rise to increasing trade through more targeted marketing and

innovation by restaurant owners and operators.

"Success in 2010 will mostly be about innovation and development. For example, the 2010 World Cup is fast approaching and restaurants will have the perfect opportunity to be inventive."

Green light for Harrogate hotel

Hotel operator Puma Hotels has been given the green light to develop a new 107-bedroom lodge property in Harrogate as part of a revamp of the Harrogate International Centre (HIC).

Harrogate Borough Council has approved the scheme, which will see the hotel element directly linked to a new 3,400sq m (36,597sq ft) exhibition venue as part of the first phase of the planned HIC redevelopment.

The property will also provide improved access to the HIC from the four-star Barcelo Majestic Hotel, which is also operated by Puma Hotels and is set to be extended by a further 85 bedrooms.

M&C buoyed by strong Q4



The group operates more than 100 properties around the world

By **Pete Hayman**

Hotel operator Millennium and Copthorne (M&C) has received a boost after pre-tax profits for the fourth quarter of 2009 more than doubled, when compared with 2008.

Despite posting a 20 per cent decrease in pre-tax profits for the full-year, the UK-based group said that it had exceeded market expectations in its results for the 12 months

ending 31 December 2009.

M&C - which operates more than 100 hotels around the world - also revealed that it had been "encouraged" by early trading for the current year, but admitted it was "too early to predict the trading performance for 2010".

Chair Kwok Leng Beng said: "For the year as a whole the results are very pleasing owing, in large part, to tough, prudent and analytical management."



The 70-bedroom Verta is located on the River Thames in Battersea

Von Essen handed keys to Verta

Hotel's unique selling point is private helicopter pad

By **Tom Walker**

Von Essen hotels has completed the handover from Weston Homes of the Hotel Verta development and the new London Heliport terminal in Battersea, London.

The new 70-bedroom flagship hotel, von Essen's first in London, is scheduled to open in the summer of 2010 following a final fit out.

The project was initially scheduled to open in June 2009, but has been delayed several times due to problems in the excavation of the site.

Verta, the seven-storey hotel, will feature a subterranean spa and a rooftop restaurant. The spa, covering two levels below the boutique property, includes treatment rooms, a hydrotherapy pool and a sanarium.

Hotel Verta forms part of the £150 million Bridges Wharf development and, according to the group, will be the first integrated hotel heliport solution in Europe.

The property, part of the Bridges Wharf development, is von Essen's 30th hotel and also the group's biggest hotel by room numbers.

ABode to open new Chester property

Boutique hotel operator ABode will open a 85-bedroom hotel at the HQ mixed-use complex in Chester, Cheshire later this year.

The property will be the group's first new-build and will become the sixth ABode to open in the UK, following sites in Glasgow, Manchester, Exeter, Canterbury and Chelsea, London.

The interior of the hotel has been designed by

Plumtree Mee and include bespoke art collections created by celebrity photographer, Brian Aris.

Facilities at the hotel will include a 76-cover Michael Caines Champagne Bar and Restaurant ABode, owned by entrepreneur Andrew Brownsword, plans to develop a portfolio of 15 luxury hotels in strategic locations. The company is looking to open its seventh site in Salisbury.

The power of new media - and how to use it

While the web offers countless opportunities, it can also pose threats to operators

Modern media is both a blessing and curse to the hospitality industry. One benefit is the ease with which hoteliers and restaurateurs are now able to communicate with their customers and potential customers. The days when hotels sent out hundreds of expensively printed brochures on request are fast disappearing as customers trawl websites for the same information, which can be provided at a fraction of the cost to a wider audience.

In 15 years, the internet has revolutionised the way in which people can access information, to the industry's immense advantage. Websites can be up-dated regularly, special offers can be introduced and withdrawn at the touch of a button, and rooms can be booked on-line in an instant.

But, of course, other developments appear which may not be so welcome. One of these is the emergence of social networking sites and, in particular, TripAdvisor. In many ways, the good hotelier should have no problem with this. Indeed, it is incontestable that such sites serve a useful purpose in advising and guiding potential guests about the style and quality of hotel accommodation. Accurate reviews are helpful to both the hotel (negative comments can highlight unnoticed lapses in the operation of a hotel) and also for the potential guest who is seeking reliable information about a property.

Few hoteliers have any objection to this, but the flip side centres on the dubious motives of some of those who contribute to TripAdvisor. How truthful are all the comments made – favourable or unfavourable? How do we know for sure that customers making adverse comments have actually stayed at the hotel? Are anonymous comments justified? How accurate, for example, was TripAdvisor's latest list of the ten dirtiest hotels in the UK? And, from the customer's point of view, how do they know that any favourable comments have not been made by the hotelier himself or by his friends? Such sites – and new ones are on the way – suggest that they will become even more important in the future. TripAdvisor alone has more than 25m user generated reviews and generates £500m of corporate business a year. The website's influence will undoubtedly grow.

All the more reason, I suggest, for some degree of control to be introduced. At a meeting of hospitality associations in Barcelona there was concern about the way the sites operated. All agreed there should be some standards of authentication.



BOB COTTON is chief executive of the BHA. *Leisure Opportunities* is a member benefit of the BHA, for your free copy call 01462 471932

IN BRIEF

Champneys Marbella to launch in early 2011

► UK spa group Champneys has teamed with the development company Casa Nita SL to extend its offering to Marbella, Spain. Champneys Marbella will be set on a mountainside location and contain both a spa retreat and residential apartments. Fully operational by early 2011, spa facilities will cover 32,291sq ft (3,000sq m) and include 25 treatment rooms and an outdoor swimming pool. The development is situated minutes away from the Mediterranean Sea and around a 15 minute drive from the centre of Marbella.

0 Spa retreats planned for 2010

► Organic spa company 0 SPA London has unveiled its rollout plans for 2010. Incorporating both a range of products a total of eight spas, including a flagship facility on New Bond Street, the 0 SPA London brand will be further extended with five new spa sites planned to open in the first part of 2010. Founded by entrepreneur Darryl Preston, the 0 SPA London concept is based on organically- and ethically-sourced products and associated spa treatments.

Luxury spa for Hensol Castle to open in 2011

► A luxury new spa facility designed by Schletterer Wellness and Spa Design will open at Hensol Castle in Wales, UK, in 2011. Situated within The Vale Grounds, the spa will be part of a new hotel being built and both will boast views over the nearby 26 acre lake. With 19 treatment rooms in total, there will also be a large thermal treatment offering, including a herbal bath, sauna, salt inhalation room, foot reflexology basins and a floating pool. There will also be an indoor swimming pool.

International rollout for Molton Brown

Group seeking to open spas across EMEA and US markets by the end of the year

By Sarah Todd

Following an intensive two-year repositioning period, Molton Brown has revealed its plans to extend its new spa concept to flagship branded and independent hotels around the world.

The group's inaugural and flagship day spa version – with a new design concept, treatment menu and products – launched in Manchester, UK, in August 2009. The Manchester site supersedes the company's first retail day spa, which opened at Bluewater in Kent, UK, in 2001, and offers the same experience to the Manchester site but to the original design concept.

Molton Brown is now planning to actively approach



The company launched its inaugural day spa version last August

exclusive, carefully-selected hotels around the globe and is planning to open three day spas within the EMEA region in 2010 with a US rollout towards the end of 2010.

Following these two markets, the Asia Pacific region will

follow in early 2011. The new day spa's treatment menu has been designed to offer something for every taste, although Molton Brown will also consider creating signature treatments with its partners where the need arises.

Bannatyne unveils refurbished Carlisle spa facility

By Tom Walker

Bannatyne Health Club in Carlisle has announced a programme of investment in excess of £75,000, including a major redevelopment of its Sensory Spa.

Enhancements at the spa will include a new relaxation room with four specialist water beds, as well as a new dual treatment room where couples and friends can enjoy a range of relaxing and rejuvenating



Duncan Bannatyne (right) at the spa's new dual treatment room

treatments. The new spa facilities will be introduced following a redesign of a section of the health club's

interior. The new additions will complement the spa's three existing treatment rooms and its nail bar.

Applications available for ISPA Foundation scholarship

The International Spa Association (ISPA) Foundation has opened the application process for the Mary Tabacchi Scholarship.

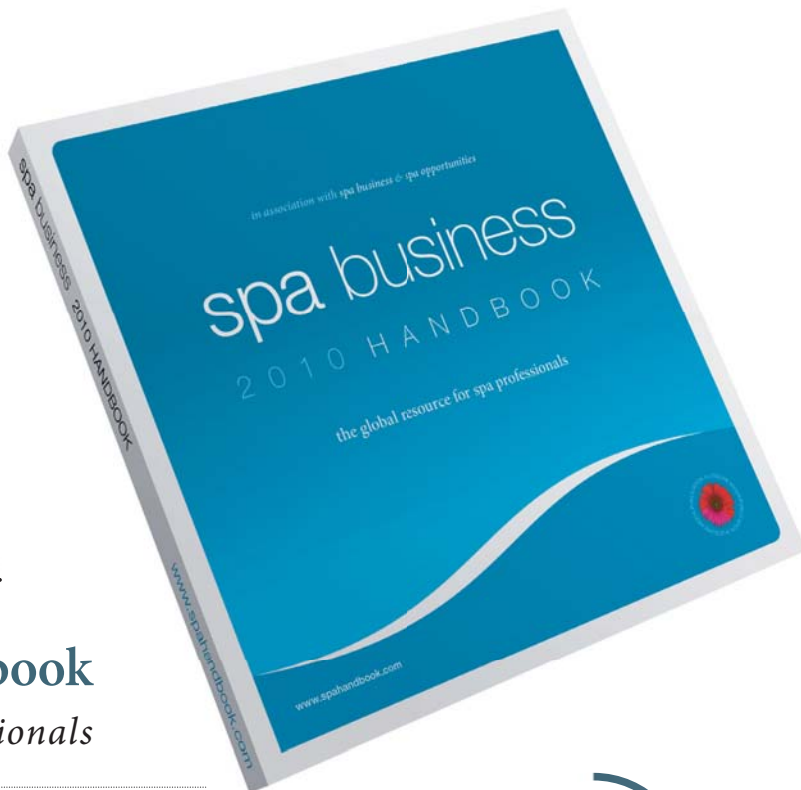
The scholarship was created in 2006 and named in honour of Cornell University Associate Professor Mary H. Tabacchi. It is open to all students interested in spa manage-

ment, and the recipient will receive US\$2,500 (1,805 euro, £1,577) towards their education.

ISPA Foundation president Jeff Kohl said: "With spa employment on the rise, it is vital that we provide the best education and opportunities for the next generation of spa industry leaders."

Get your copy of the new Spa Business Handbook

The *Spa Business Handbook* is the ultimate reference guide for the international spa market. Published in January 2010 as a comprehensive resource for operators and suppliers worldwide, it will be read by key decision makers including leading hotel and spa operators, suppliers, developers, consultants and other experts. It will also be distributed at key spa events.



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IN BRIEF

VisitBritain launches 'Cities' campaign

► National tourism agency VisitBritain has launched a campaign called 'Cities', linking up with British Airways and easyJet to offer low cost flights from twelve European countries to ten cities across Britain. Cities' is designed to build on this, placing emphasis on Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, London, Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-Gateshead and Oxford to raise awareness of the wide range of experiences and cultures they can offer, plus driving incremental business in the low and shoulder seasons.

Digital fitness channels merge

► Body in Balance TV and Fitness TV have merged their businesses to form a new venture called Media Health and Fitness. The company will retain the two channel platforms currently occupied by the two channels on Sky (SKY 275 and 282). Mark Wood, former chair and CEO of ITN, will head the new company. He said: "The combined business is a great launch pad to build a global brand in health, fitness and lifestyle content and develop an e-commerce and merchandising portal."

Morecambe FC reveals new stadium name

► Morecambe Football Club has revealed that its new £12m stadium is set to be called the Globe Arena after the Coca-Cola League Two club secured a five-year sponsorship deal with Globe Construction. The 6,000-capacity venue is being built by the Warrington-based firm on a 5.3-hectare (13-acre) site in the Lancashire town's Westgate area. Plans will also include an outdoor multi-sports facility with FA-standard artificial training pitch.

Cricket clubs confirm global franchise

India's Rajasthan Royals to lead international Twenty20 alliance of domestic clubs

By **Pete Hayman**

Domestic cricket clubs from some of the world's major cricketing nations have formed a new international Twenty20 franchise – Royals2020.

Led by India's Rajasthan Royals, the new alliance will feature the Hampshire Hawks (England), Trinidad and Tobago (West Indies) and Cape Cobras from South Africa. Cricket Victoria (Australia) has also been approached.

The new franchise will see the Hampshire Hawks re-brand as the Hampshire Royals in the Friends Provident T20 and new 40-over competitions during the 2010 English county season.

Increased commercial opportunities, access to some of the world's emerging talent



Hampshire Hawks (batting) will form part of the global franchise

and reciprocal player links are among the benefits outlined as part of the new venture.

Rajasthan Royals co-founder and chair Manoj Badale said: "This is a major innovation in world sport, and it represents a great opportunity for the clubs, but also an opportunity for

fans and sponsors to be part of something totally unique."

Rajasthan Royals CEO Sean Morris, added: "The opportunity to be part of a global brand is a unique one across all sports, and will enable us to take advantage of the changing landscape in cricket."

US approves BA/AA venture

British Airways (BA) and American Airlines (AA) have been given the green light to proceed with plans to form a new transatlantic alliance, which could lead to decreased ticket prices.

The US Department of Transport (DOT) has supported an application for antitrust immunity for the two carriers, as well as oneworld partners Iberia Airlines, Finnair and Royal Jordanian Airlines.

According to the DOT, the alliance will create competition for the existing Star Alliance and SkyTeam alliance but accepted the move could hinder on competition for some routes from London Heathrow Airport.

Football League to target families



The marketing campaign will see 200,000 tickets being distributed

By **Pete Hayman**

The Football League is to launch a marketing campaign targeting families as part of a strategy to attract a more diverse range of spectators at league clubs.

The Football League has teamed up with national tabloid newspaper *The Sun* to offer families of four the one-off opportunity to

purchase a family match ticket for just £9.50.

The deal, involving 200,000 seats at stadiums all over the country, is being touted as the UK's biggest-ever family football tickets promotion.

Tickets for more than 100 matches scheduled between 6 February and 17 April will be made available to choose from, with savings of up to £60 per family on full-price tickets.

Ireland's tourism sector "in crisis"

Operators see revenue falls after dramatic decrease in inbound figures

By **Pete Hayman**

Ireland's tourism industry is "in crisis" due to a fall in inbound visitor numbers and a decrease in revenue during 2009, according to the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF).

Speaking at the launch of the federation's annual report for 2009 at its annual conference in Galway, chief executive John Power said hoteliers are finding it increasingly difficult to cope with tough trading conditions. According to the IHF, total tourism revenue for 2009 decreased by 17 per cent, compared with the previous year, while new figures from the Central Statistics Office revealed an 11.6 per cent fall in inbound visitor numbers.

Power said: "Throughout the year, our members struggled to deal with decimated revenues caused by the combination of lower prices, excess capacity and low capacity utilisation rates, further intensified



Which way out of trouble for Irish tourism?

by the fact that their costs had not significantly reduced or even adjusted to the economic reality on the ground.

"As a vital indigenous industry, it is vital that tourism receives the recognition and support which it merits given its scale and overall contribution to the economy."

The tourism sector and VAT

The UK is still suffering from heavy-handed taxation



KURT JANSON is policy director of Tourism Alliance

The UK has, for some considerable time, had VAT rates on tourism products and services that were much higher than the European average. A study in 1998 by the British Tourism Authority put the taxation paid by overseas visitors at 18 per cent (VAT of 17.5 per cent and Air Passenger duty that averaged £10). The UNWTO's Tourism Tax Barometer in 2004 found that visitors to the UK were taxed the second highest in the world.

The danger at the moment is that the disadvantage faced by the UK tourism sector has been masked by the economic downturn. With the Pound down against the Euro and UK resident fearful of losing the jobs, the UK tourism industry grew by around 3 per cent in 2009 and the UK's tourism deficit declined from 20bn to around 15bn as people took a "staycation" rather than an overseas holiday. This figures will give politicians the false idea that the UK tourism sector is in a pretty healthy state. As the economy gradually improves and the exchange rate with the Euro comes back into balance, most of the people who holidayed in the UK last year will begin to look overseas again and the tourism deficit will grow accordingly. Only this time the deficit will be even bigger than before due to the reduced cost of visiting France and Germany and the increased cost of staying in the UK.

So it's vital to fully understand the impact of VAT rates on tourism if we are to emerge from the recession with a competitive tourism sector.

No new runway planned for Gatwick Airport



Gatwick currently operates two terminals

By **Martin Nash**

The new owner of London Gatwick – the UK's second largest airport – has ruled out a second runway for the foreseeable future.

Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP), which also owns a majority share in London City Airport, bought Gatwick from BAA in December 2009 in a deal worth £1.51bn.

GIP chair Sir David Rowlands, said he had "not a shred of interest" in developing a second runway at the airport. Gatwick's current runway handled nearly 30 million passengers during 2009.

Stena Line confirms £200m Scotland proposals

Passenger ferry operator Stena Line has confirmed its intention to move from Stranraer to the new Loch Ryan Port as part of a £200m scheme to boost Scottish tourism.

The project is expected to reduce crossing times between Scotland and Northern Ireland, while also pushing forward plans for the regeneration of a

26-acre (10.5-hectare) waterfront site in the Dumfries and Galloway town.

Announcing the scheme, Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond said: "Relocation of the port to the new Loch Ryan Port will aid tourism with faster crossings between Scotland and Northern Ireland and help the regeneration of Stranraer as a major marine leisure area."

IN BRIEF

New operations boss for Drayton Manor

► Drayton Manor theme park in Staffordshire has appointed a new park operations manager. David Bromilow, who began his career at Blackpool Pleasure Beach before working for Magic Harbour theme park in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, US and then as a consultant, most recently worked for insurance company SLE Worldwide as risk control manager.

Weston square revamp set for final phase

► North Somerset Council has announced the start of construction work on the final phase of a £3.9m scheme to transform Weston-super-Mare's Pier Square area. The first stage of the project, which has included the creation of a new road to link Marine Parade with Carlton Street and provide improved connections between the seafront and town centre for drivers, is due for completion this month. Work due to be carried out as part of the latest phase will include the closure of the road from the resort's Grand Pier to Regent Street and the landscaping of the area with new seating and shrubs.

HLF support for Thinktank museum

► Thinktank, Birmingham's science museum, has progressed to the next stage of its bid for nearly £1m from the Heritage Lottery Fund after receiving a first round pass. The attraction has been handed £105,000 to help draw up detailed plans as part of its bid for full Lottery support, which is earmarked for the creation of a new exhibition celebrating innovation and ingenuity across the city. The new exhibition will comprise around 1,200 items from the museum's collections.

Jorvik Viking Centre reopens in York

New gallery and upgraded Viking-age village formed part of the £1m refurbishment

By **Tom Walker**

The Jorvik Viking Centre in York has reopened to the public, following a £1m refurbishment.

An entirely new gallery has been added and the replica of a Viking-age village has been upgraded. A number of new artefacts, discovered during diggings at the city's Coppergate district, have also gone on show.

Sarah Maltby, director of attractions at York Archaeological Trust, which operates the site, said: "The main thrust of the refurbishment this time is to have a reassessment of the archaeology at Coppergate from which the centre grew more than 25 years ago.

"This enables us to relook at who the Vikings were, why they came here, and what evidence they left for us to piece together to determine



Television presenter Tony Robinson at the launch of the galleries

what we think Viking-Age York looked like."

Visitors can also get up close to some of the 1,000-year-old timbers which once formed the wall of a Viking house and see, for the first time, some more of the unique objects discovered at the ancient site.

The main contractor for the project was RMA, while other companies involved in the

project included Ohio, US-based Life Formations (animatronics), Clockwork Digital (AV presentations), mechanical and electrical consultants White Young Green and Glass Bending UK.

The project has taken nine months to complete with the onsite build taking place between November 2009 and February 2010.

Deadly new attraction for Cheshire

By **Martin Nash**

Dozens of the animal kingdom's most dangerous creatures are to take up residence in Cheshire.

They will be occupying a new attraction called Venom at the Blue Planet Aquarium near Ellesmere Port and include everything from black widow spiders and venomous lionfish to stinging jellyfish and vipers.

Among a series of new displays is Tarantula Tower, where visitors will be able to step inside a perspex tower surrounded by more than 50 giant spiders. Venom will be divided into three sections featuring marine creatures, spiders and insects, and reptiles.

Other displays will be home to stonefish, considered to be



Giant tarantulas are among the species featured at Venom

one of the world's most lethal fish; venomous vipers including the eyelash viper and the white lipped tree viper; scorpions; giant tarantulas; golden web spinning spiders and assassin bugs. The new feature contains so many potentially dangerous creatures that staff at the aquarium have had to undergo emergency first aid training.

Education centre set for Exeter

A new multi-million pound outdoor education centre is set to be created in the heart of Exeter, Devon, after the local authority agreed to commit £2.7m towards the scheme.

Devon County Council plans to fund the £5.7m Haven Banks Outdoor Education Centre partly by proceeds from the sale of Exeter Airport.

The council has already contributed £170,000 towards securing planning consent for the development, while final negotiations are being carried out on the lease for the facility.

The centre will offer facilities for people with disabilities and minority groups and individuals, including a climbing wall and activities such as archery.

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IN BRIEF

£2.5m refurbishment for Buxton arts centre

► High Peak Borough Council has announced the start of work on a £2.5m scheme designed to transform Pavilion Arts Centre in Buxton, Derbyshire. The Paxton Suite will be refurbished to create a 462-seat arts centre, with 369 seats in the main auditorium complemented by a further 93 seats in a new Studio Theatre. Retractable seating will be installed to enable the entire suite to be used for a range of purposes as part of the project, which is being led by the council along with Buxton Opera House.

New art gallery to open at Horsham Museum

► Horsham District Council has announced that a new public art gallery is scheduled to open at the town's museum on 1 April. Horsham Museum will house the gallery in a Jacobean and Georgian space, which will give visitors a chance to view artwork accumulated by the museum over the past 100 years, as well as work by local artists. The attraction's craft gallery will also be enhanced to provide space for crafts, ceramics and sculpting, with work dating back up to 200 years set to be put on display alongside contemporary pieces.

Llantrisant arts venue reopens its doors

► An arts and design venue in Llantrisant, South Wales, has reopened after it was forced to close in December 2009 when the company that ran it entered liquidation. Rhondda Cynon Taf Council – owner of the Model House Craft and Design Centre – has been working along with tenants on efforts to rectify problems with the building's roof and outer walls. The council had been seeking to reopen the venue due to the economic benefits it brings to the town.

DCMS unveils City of Culture shortlist

Four cities selected from 14 prospective candidates by independent judging panel

By **Pete Hayman**

Four cities – Birmingham; Derry/Londonderry; Norwich and Sheffield – have been shortlisted to become the first UK City of Culture in 2013.

A total of 14 candidates put themselves forward as part of a Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)-led contest before the four shortlisted bidders were recommended by an independent judging panel.

Shortlisted cities will now be handed full and final guidance to help submit final documentation by the end of May.

Culture minister Margaret Hodge said: "Huge congratulations to the four cities in the final running for the 2013 UK City of Culture."



Birmingham is among the cities vying for the City of Culture title

It's a testament to their hard work – and dedication to culture – that they've come so far in what has proven to be a very tough competition."

Phil Redmond, chair of the DCMS' independent judging panel, added: "The panel had

both a stimulating but difficult task in suggesting the shortlist as all 14 bidders had realised impact of becoming the UK's first City of Culture and what that would bring, not least the media exposure that would accompany it."

Royal relaunch for Sheffield's Crucible Theatre

By **Pete Hayman**

Sheffield's Crucible Theatre, which is regarded as the home of the World Snooker Championships, has been officially reopened by HRH The Earl of Wessex following a £15.3m transformation.

A special ceremony was held on 18 February to mark the relaunch of the theatre, which has benefited from an overhaul of the auditorium to include a thrust stage and seating.



An Enemy of the People's cast with HRH The Earl of Wessex

New front-of-house areas with a box office have been

created as part of the refurbishment, while a remodelled bar area, improved accessibility for disabled users, improved dressing rooms and an enhanced studio theatre also formed part of the scheme.

Dan Bates, chief executive of Sheffield Theatres, said: "Now re-open, the theatre will once again be of huge benefit to the public with an excellent set of new facilities and new programme of dynamic and exciting work."

Council announces Thornton Little Theatre renovation

Wyre Borough Council (WBC) has confirmed that Thornton Little Theatre in Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire, is set to benefit from a £220,000 revamp and expansion.

The refurbishment will be carried out ahead of a new management partnership with the Paul Nicholas School of Acting, which will use

the venue as its national headquarters and is set to host more community activities.

Improvements at the venue will include the construction of a new entrance, a foyer and a multi-use function room, which will be used for small meetings or to provide additional theatre changing facilities.

Work starts on Lichfield park revamp

Restoration scheme will form part of wider initiative to transform the city's parks

By **Pete Hayman**

Work has started on a £3.5m scheme to restore and improve Beacon Park in Lichfield, Staffordshire, as part of a wider local authority-led programme to transform the city's parks.

The Lichfield Parks Project, a joint venture between Lichfield City Council and Lichfield District Council (LDC), has received funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund's Parks for People initiative.

A new café, a refreshment kiosk, a bowls and education pavilion and new play areas for children of all ages will be created as part of the project, as well as the restoration of the park's listed structures.

The Casey Group has been appointed to carry out work as part of the scheme, which will



Work to restore the park will be carried out by the Casey Group

also result in the transformation of Minster Pool and Walk and the Garden of Remembrance.

LDC's cabinet member for development services, Neil Roberts, said: "It's so important we preserve our historic green spaces for future generations. Restoring our city parks will help to attract even more

visitors to our district, boosting local shops and businesses, which is so important, especially during the current economic climate."

HLF funding for Lichfield's Beacon Park was confirmed in April 2009 as part of a £3.9m package to help fund the wider Lichfield Parks Project.

IN BRIEF

New pathways for Stoke country park

▶ Natural England has officially unveiled four new country walks and an outdoor classroom facility at Park Hall Country Park in Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent. Walks around the park and the Hulme Quarry National Nature Reserve all link to the site's visitor centre, with a number of routes offering walkers one of three different distances. Short routes range between 0.25-1 mile (0.4-1.6km); medium routes between 0.7-2 miles (1.1-3.2km) and longer routes between 1.6-3.2 miles (2.6-5.1km) on each of the four walks.

Eastbourne park set for £60,000 upgrade

▶ Eastbourne Borough Council has approved plans to invest £60,000 towards a programme of work to improve the biodiversity and appearance of Hampden Park's Decoy Pond. The funding has been made available as part of the council's capital works programme for 2010-11, which will go towards efforts to improve the water quality and enhance the pond's natural habitats.

Council unveils Thames Promenade plans

▶ Reading Borough Council (RBC) has unveiled plans to create a new gateway into the town's riverside parks as part of a wider scheme designed to improve Thames Promenade. The council's parks and open spaces team is looking to attract more visitors with a range of new and improved features as part of its Thames Parks Plan, which could include a pleasure boat mooring platform and a new picnic area. A tree planting programme and new entrances to the riverside parks also form part of the proposals, which have generated an "encouraging response".

Lincolnshire country park receives museum status

By **Pete Hayman**

North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) has revealed that Normanby Hall Country Park near Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, has been awarded museum status due to the historic nature of some of its features.

The park's Walled Garden and Coach House are among the attractions that have led to the classification of the newly-renamed Normanby Hall Museum and Country Park, which already includes a Farming Museum.

Normanby Hall's farming attraction provides visitors with the opportunity to explore rural life in North Lincolnshire through a series of reconstructions, while the new Grass Roots exhibition for 2010 will enable visitors to explore the



Normanby Hall includes a walled garden and a farming museum

development of grass-cutting technology over the course of the last two centuries.

Christine O'Sullivan, NLC cabinet member for sport, leisure and culture said: "Many people who visit Normanby Hall or the Park often don't realise they have visited a museum, but they have.

"Sport England is currently carrying out an Active People telephone survey in the area, and some questions may ask residents about the museums they have visited.

"So it is worth remembering that if you have ever visited Normanby Hall, you have visited a museum."



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Borough Council of
Wellingborough

Management & Operation of The Castle Theatre Wellingborough Council

Wellingborough Council is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from suitable organisations for the management, promotion and operation of The Castle Theatre; a multi-purpose arts and public entertainment venue. The facilities include a 500 capacity Main Auditorium, Lounge, Studio, Art Gallery and Bar/Restaurant.

The Council wishes to attract innovative proposals for the future management of the facility and the delivery of services. The Council is willing to provide a contract for a period of ten years (with the possibility of an extension).

The Council considers that the existing staff at the facility will transfer under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). Although the Code on Workforce Matters and Pensions Direction are thought unlikely to apply, bidding organisations should comply with the principles set out in the Cabinet Office Statement of Practice for Staff Transfers in the Public Sector.

Bidding organisations must complete a Pre Qualification Questionnaire and demonstrate a dynamic and proven successful track record in the operation of an arts venue in order to be included on the Council's tender list. The successful bidder will be selected through a negotiated tender process.

Interested organisations can request an information pack and pre-qualification questionnaire from:

Jon Carney, Senior Consultant, Strategic Leisure,
3rd Floor, Rutherford House, Warrington Road,
Birchwood Science Park, Warrington WA3 6ZH.
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The closing date for the return of completed questionnaires is 12 noon Friday 30th April.



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An early evening LPF seminar, tour and demonstration to be held at:

The Theatre in the London Aquarium, Westminster Bridge Road,
London SE1 7PB on Tuesday 20th April 2010

CONTENT:

An early evening seminar which includes a tour of the London Aquarium, a 4D show of the London Eye and a flight on the London Eye with wine and canapes. The seminar itself will cover a history of the London Eye and an analysis of its financials, its performance and the related property issues of the attraction. There'll be a review of the London market - what is working and what is not and how Merlin are keeping Tussauds, The London Dungeon and its other attractions fresh and relevant for tomorrow's visitors. The seminar will conclude with an assessment of what are the real opportunities for Visitor Attractions during the 2012 Olympics.

SPEAKER:

David Sharpe, Director for London Midway Attractions, Merlin Entertainments. David is arguably the most experienced operator of visitor attractions in London. After 25 years in the hotel industry he joined The London Eye Group at its inception, being brought in by BA to head operations prior to opening in 1999.

PROGRAMME

6.00pm Registration 8.30pm Finish

Fee: £45.00 + VAT LPF members
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£90.00 + VAT non members



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3D set to be a magic number?

Digital revolution points to a rosy future for UK cinemas



NEIL RICHMOND
runs property consultancy Neil Richmond & Co and acts for many of the UK's cinema operators

Following its release in December last year, UK box office takings for James Cameron's *Avatar* have now reached £90m, which means that it has outperformed the previous highest grossing UK films by 30 per cent.

Principally exhibited in 3D format, the film's special effects have whet the appetite of movie-goers right across the country. With further 3D releases due out this year, we can expect cinema admissions for the year to outstrip the 2009 level of 173.5m. Given the explosion in the number of 3D films being released and the premium price at which seats for 3D films are sold, the industry expects that this year it will build on the 2009 record gross box office figure of £944m.

Digital projection relieves exhibitors of the restrictions of traditional 35mm projection formats and opens up the new world of non film based products such as 'live' music and sporting events. Most importantly it is essential for 3D output.

As delegates at the LPF seminar titled *Cinema: the digital revolution* heard earlier this month, it is no wonder that most of the UK operators are investing heavily in upgrading their cinema estates with digital facilities. With the help of some oversized blue aliens, it looks like the sector continues to come out on top in its battle with increasingly sophisticated home entertainment media.

CABE backs Battersea proposals

Masterplan for £5.5bn redevelopment receives advisory body's support

By Pete Hayman

Rafael Viñoly's masterplan for the £5.5bn redevelopment of London's Battersea Power Station site has been backed by the government's architecture advisory body.

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) said plans for the 40-acre (16.2-hectare) site, submitted by developer Treasury Holdings UK in October, has achieved an "impressive amount within the constraints of the building".

Battersea's Grade II*-listed power station building is at the heart of plans to overhaul the area, which include a hotel, community facilities and a conference centre.

A riverside park and an extension to the Riverside Walk through to Battersea Park also form part of the proposal, which have been reviewed by CABE six times.



Rafael Viñoly drew up the new masterplan

A CABE spokesperson said: "CABE has reviewed the scheme six times – which is unusual – but this iterative process has resulted in improvements at each stage, including the complete removal of a controversial tower in the original proposal."

Plans submitted for £65m Aldershot project

By Pete Hayman



A new seven-screen Cineworld is proposed

Citygrove has submitted plans to Rushmoor Borough Council for the development of a new £65m cinema and restaurant complex in the heart of Aldershot, Hampshire.

The London-based group – the council's development partner – is planning to build a new seven-screen Cineworld cinema, a range of restaurants and a 91-bedroom hotel as part of the WestGate scheme.

A full retail impact and capacity survey has also been submitted to the council.

Watford Colosseum revamp proposals approved

Plans for the redevelopment of Watford Colosseum have been given the green light by Watford Borough Council.

Existing single-storey extensions to the venue, which comprise the box office, a bar, a cellar, a bottle store and a storage room, will be demolished as part of the

scheme, along with dressing rooms at the rear of the main auditorium.

A new extension will provide a ground floor entrance and foyer, incorporating a café/bar, a new box office and access to the first floor foyer. A smaller first floor extension will form a foyer and bar area.

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PEOPLE NEWS

- John Swinney, the Scottish cabinet secretary for finance and sustainable growth, has confirmed the appointment of Dr Michael Cantlay as the new chair of VisitScotland. Cantlay, who is currently chair and managing director of William Glen, is set to replace Peter Lederer and will be tasked with leading the national tourism agency in its bid to increase revenue growth.
- A new enlarged senior management team has been unveiled by the Football Association (FA) to encourage increased involvement in making decisions to help develop the English game. The national governing body's 20-strong senior management team, which will be led by chief executive Ian Watmore, aims to extend the range of perspectives when it comes to implementing its 10 policy priorities for 2010. Continued support for the 2018 World Cup bid, the construction of a new National Football Centre and the creation of a Women's Super League are among the main priorities for the FA over the forthcoming year.
- Businessman Ishan Saxena has been named as the new chair of Queens Park Rangers Football Club after Flavio Briatore confirmed that he had stepped down from the role. Briatore, along with Formula One supremo Bernie Ecclestone, acquired the club three years ago and have revealed that they will remain as shareholders of the club. The Mittal family has also increased its stake in the club.
- Nigel Holl, the current director of England Netball has been appointed chief executive of Scottish Athletics. He takes over from Geoff Wightman, the former British international marathon runner, who is leaving to take up a new role as the first managing director of British Road Running.

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IAN COTGRAVE managing director

How did you get to this point in your career?

I left school at 16 years of age and ended up in the MOD working on building services. I took three years out in 1983 to do a degree in mechanical engineering, got a job as general manager for an interiors company, built up a leisure portfolio and left in 1994 to start up Createability.

What is your day-to-day role?

I have overall responsibility for the day to day running of the company. The role is varied and includes dealing with staff and contractors as well as selling and presenting to clients.

What has been the high point

of your career so far?

Taking the plunge to run my own company. I wanted the opportunity to manage the whole process from selection of specialist contractors to delivering the project.

How would you describe yourself?

I am extremely motivated, honest and call a spade a spade. I don't suffer fools gladly and expect total commitment from my staff. I treat people how I would expect them to treat me.

How would your critics describe you?

Hard task master, uncompromising, works hard, honest.



Can sometimes get too involved in the project and finds it hard to let go.

Any advice to up-and-coming management?

Work hard, be honest about what you do and don't wait for opportunities to come to you, go out and seek them.

Who do you admire?

Sir Alan Sugar. He's brutally honest and driven to succeed.

CHRIS SHARP surveyor

What attracted you to the leisure industry?

The fact that the mentality of companies working in the leisure industries was more oriented towards building relationships with clients rather than cutting costs regardless of the outcome.

What is your day-to-day role?

I am in charge of assessing costs and variations, placing contract orders, paying subcontractors, reporting contract progress and valuations. I also liaise with site managers and contract managers to keep track of site issues that might have a financial impact to the contract.

What are the advantages of working in the leisure sector?

As well as being one of the more buoyant markets in these troubled times, the leisure industry provides new challenges every day with each leisure centre requiring a different approach to achieve the client's aspirations

And the disadvantages?

While refurbishing and extending leisure centres, the building is usually occupied by both staff and the general public which makes segregating working areas from user areas difficult.

What are your ambitions?

I would like to manage a team



of surveyors looking after multi million pound contracts or potentially become a commercial director overseeing all aspects of the construction phases including progress, costs and technical details.

What will your next move be?

I am currently working to become chartered through the CIOB, which I think will be key progressing my career in leisure.



Cuts could affect institutions including the Birmingham Museum

Birmingham to axe 2,000 jobs...

Culture and leisure among sectors to be hit by cuts

By **Tom Walker**

The largest local authority in the UK, Birmingham City Council, is to axe 2,000 jobs – many of which are understood to be in sports, culture and leisure. The council announced the job cuts as it attempts to plug a £75m hole in its finances, which it attributes to previous overspend in areas of social care.

In its budget report, the council said it will finalise its "detailed workforce plans" by the start of the financial year in March and that it is likely that

there will be a reduction of up to 2,000 posts.

The council added that maintaining leisure, sport and cultural properties was "particularly challenging", as the services received no funding from central government. The trade union UNISON reacted angrily to the council's plans.

Dave Prentis, UNISON general secretary, said: "This is a massive number of job cuts, and the council cannot be serious. These job cuts could force the city into a downward spiral and result in shops and businesses suffering."

...while Future Jobs reaches 'landmark'

Progress towards the creation of 10,000 new jobs in the cultural and sports sectors, under the Future Jobs scheme, has passed the halfway mark, according to culture secretary Ben Bradshaw.

Nine months after plans were first announced to fund employment for young people who might otherwise be unable to find work, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has secured

funding for more than 6,500 positions – 4,200 in sport and the remainder in the cultural sector.

On a visit to Future Jobs Fund recruits in Leicester, Bradshaw said: "Jobs in the cultural and sports sectors can be hard to come by. It's often the case that supply of potential employees outstrips demand, so it can be particularly hard for young people with little experience."

Changes in vocational training structure

Qualifications hoping for public funding need to sit on the new credit framework

As we move through to spring, there is a very real feeling that 2010 is a year of change for the qualifications, skills and training arena. By the end of December this year, all accredited vocational qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland will need to sit on the new Qualifications and Credit Framework if they are to be eligible for public funding. Plus, they will each have an assigned level (from entry to Level 8) and a credit value (the size of the qualification relating to learning hours). This is a significant change for vocational qualifications in the sector, and something employers have wanted for a long time.

In preparation for this, and as part of the national vocational qualification reform programme, we have been working closely with our employer groups to review and rationalise the 1,000 or so vocational qualifications previously available to the sector, down to around 300. This much needed streamlining will make the qualifications easier to understand, and more importantly, access. The national programme of reform states that all new vocational qualifications should focus on choice, clarity and confidence – making the qualifications landscape clearer.

For a customer-facing sector, predominantly based on technical and vocational skills and qualifications, our employers need a qualified workforce that has the best training on the market, and the confusion has been around what constitutes the best and where can employers go to access it.

The rationalisation is the first step. The second is to ensure that our National Skills Academy is always the first port of call for quality assured training. And the third is being aware that all new qualifications that may be eligible for public funding need to be approved of by us – and ultimately our employer expert groups. With more than 663,000 paid employees working across the UK, a further two million volunteers, and an annual contribution on average of £8.6bn to the economy, the qualification reform is going to have a real impact on sport and active leisure. Employers need to have confidence that they are being offered the most relevant qualifications, in the most flexible way and be clear about what they can expect their employee to gain by undertaking a vocational qualification.

Working together, the reform will simplify this, and the new Qualifications and Credit Framework will ensure that the qualifications on offer will properly meet the need of those working or wanting to work in the sector, and vitally employers.



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in turn developing better service, membership retention and growth.
You work out the rest!*

*Focus are freezing the VAT increase for 3 months
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Call Now 0333 9000 222 or 01204 388330*



www.focus-training.com



Chronic Respiratory Disease Exercise Instructor Course

BLF bursaries are now available for the May 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

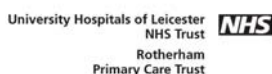
The BLF bursary, funded by Air Products, is available to exercise professionals who meet the following entry requirements:

- 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**





Knowsley Council

DIRECTORATE OF WELLBEING SERVICES

Leisure & Culture Services – Management Positions

Deputy Head of Active Leisure

£37,206 - £39,855 • Ref: REC01694

Area Active Leisure Manager

£31,754 - £34,549 • Ref: REC01696

Health & Fitness Manager

£27,849 - £29,236 • Ref: REC01695

Get Active Team Manager

£27,849 - £29,236 • Ref: REC01697

Knowsley is committed to improving people's lives through Sport and Physical Activity. With strong strategic partnerships, an investment of over £25m in sports and leisure facilities and seven new Learning Centres, Knowsley offers excellent Sports and Physical Activity opportunities to its community and beyond.

All of this investment requires excellent strategic and operational management and as such we are seeking to recruit a highly motivated and dedicated Management team to lead the Active Leisure Services into the future.

To meet the standards required for these positions, you must have management experience in leisure or related management, as well as an ability to write and deliver strategies and a track record of leading and motivating staff.

You should demonstrate experience of managing resources, business planning, partnership working, performance management and monitoring and evaluation systems.

Knowledge of the leisure sector - especially sales, retention and customer service - is essential, together with a comprehensive understanding of developing services and attracting external funding.

Your extensive communication and organisational skills and your flexibility to find innovative ways to deliver projects and initiatives to meet key priorities, will make you an excellent candidate for this position, which requires strong leadership and team working skills.

For an informal discussion, please contact Derek Jones, Head of Active Leisure on 0151 443 3470.

Applications from all sections of the community are positively encouraged to ensure that our workforce reflects the communities in which we work.

Knowsley MBC is a smoke free working environment.

Closing date: 19th March 2010.

For an application form download it from our website at www.knowsley.gov.uk or for a hard copy please ring 0151 443 5000 or e-mail: recruitment@knowsley.gov.uk



Learning & Employment Co-ordinator Sport & Recreation

Salary: From £22,421 (Maternity Cover)

Company: Catch22 South East Training

Location: Portsmouth

Covering maternity in the first instance, you will be a competent and qualified trainer/assessor familiar with apprenticeship standards in the level 1 & 2 Operational Services; level 3 Leisure Management; level 2 Fitness Instructor and level 3 Personal Trainer awards. This will also include a working knowledge of Technical Certificate and Key Skill delivery at levels 1 and 2 in literacy and numeracy. You should hold an A1 assessor qualification and NVQ 3 Personal Trainer award or equivalent as a minimum.

To apply online: <http://www.catch22.org.uk>

Alternatively, an application form and job description is available from Fiona Brown at Catch22 South East Training, Unit 8: Ground Floor, Acorn Business Park, Northarbour Road, Portsmouth. PO6 3TH. Tel. 02392222804

Closing date: 09/04/10 Interviews: 16/04/10

For any further questions, please contact Sean Penney on 07793918548



MATRIX

AREA SALES MANAGERS

NORTH EAST & SOUTH WEST REGIONS

Matrix Fitness Systems UK is part of the Johnson Health Tech Group – one of the world's largest and fastest growing fitness equipment manufacturers.

We are rapidly emerging as a major player in the supply of commercial equipment in the UK, with a business growth of 95% in 2009. In order to continue our expansion and to meet the needs of a highly competitive and rapidly changing market, we are looking to increase our team. We therefore seek two highly motivated self-starters, with the drive and enthusiasm required to make a tangible difference in further developing the sales of our equipment, associated services and solutions within the North East & South West regions.

You will therefore possess:

- A proven track record within a professional & consultative sales environment.
- A strong customer-focus with a problem-solving approach.
- Experience within the Health and Fitness industry.
- Excellent inter-personal and relationship building skills.
- Good PC (Word, Excel and PowerPoint) and project management skills.
- Good academic background (ideally educated to degree level in Sports Science or similar, but minimum 2 A' levels).

If you have clearly demonstrated excellence in your career to date and you are ready for the next challenge, then please send your CV and covering letter to Dave Thompson:

HumanResources@matrixfitness.co.uk



WILDERN LANE, HEDGE END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 4EJ.

Duty Supervisor - Full time (111 Hours worked over a 3 week rolling shift)

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a fitness professional to join our team working for a large public leisure centre. Two years experience within the fitness industry is preferred and an NPLQ would be advantageous. You will have a drive for success, a passion for excellent service and want to work in a stimulating organisation, building on an existing part of the community. Leadership skills are a must as are flexibility and commitment. Salary £14,136 plus a 14% shift allowance and 24 days annual holiday.

Casual Class Instructors

We have a variety of vacancies for Qualified Instructors for our Fitness and Swimming Classes and Personal Training. For full details of the classes, the schedule and the hourly rates of pay please visit our website as detailed below.

Applications should be on Hampshire County Council forms, individual CV's will not be accepted. Application forms can be downloaded from the school website www.wildern.co.uk where you can also find further details of the above vacancies and the shift pattern. Further details about the Leisure facilities can be found at www.wildernleisurecentre.co.uk.

Applications can be e-mailed to recruitment@wildern.hants.sch.uk or sent by post for the attention of Mrs F Mitchell, Personnel Department, Wildern School, Wildern Lane, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 4EJ.

Wildern School is committed to safeguarding children.

Closing Date: 22nd March



PORTSLADE SPORTS CENTRE

requires a

Deputy Manager

Salary £22,500 - £24,500

Portslade Sports Centre is a thriving dual-use facility with two sports halls, a fitness room, aerobics area, squash courts, a snooker room, a floodlit astro turf pitch and social facilities.

This is a "hands on" position. The Deputy Manager will be involved in every aspect of the running of the Centre, including the organisation and leading of sports sessions for children and adults. The ability to coach a sport to a good standard would be an advantage, as would a good knowledge of current Health & Safety regulations.

Applicants should have a leisure or teaching qualification preferably to degree level and/ or appropriate work related experience.

If you think you can meet the challenge, telephone 01273 411100 for an application form and further details.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS FRIDAY 19TH MARCH 2010

BECKENHAM CRICKET CLUB

Multi-Sports Club Manager

An attractive salary package with performance based bonuses will be offered

This is a unique and exciting opportunity for an experienced, self motivated, enthusiastic person to take charge of north-west Kent's premier multi-sports Club encompassing Cricket, Tennis, Hockey, Squash/Racketball, a Running section, three Vets Football Teams and two Netball teams, as well as a vibrant Social section... are now looking for the right candidate to take the club to the next stage focusing on customer satisfaction and club development.

The successful candidate should have a relevant management degree and applicable qualifications or have significant experience to manage budgets, marketing, and health and safety. They will need a proven track record of business transformation and will have a wide knowledge of the industry to take the club forward. A strong personality with entrepreneurial spirit and high standards are essential.

Applications will be by CV and Cover Letter only. Job Description and Person Specification are available from www.beckenhamcricketclub.co.uk
Closing date: 5pm 22nd March 2010

For further information contact: Club Administrator Beckenham Cricket Club
Foxgrove Road Beckenham Kent BR3 5AS
Ph: 020 8650 0266 E-Mail: clubmanager@beckenhamcricketclub.co.uk

All Saints Academy

Houghton Road, Dunstable LU5 5AB
Principal: Mr Tom Waterworth BA MA

ALL SAINTS
ACADEMY

ASPIRE STRIVE ACHIEVE

All Saints Academy opened in September 2009 and will move into purpose-built buildings in September 2012.

We offer a unique opportunity for the right candidate to shape and develop a new Academy with serious ambition for its students. If you are hard working, enthusiastic and want to make a huge difference to the lives of our students, then please apply immediately. In return, we promise you excellent CPD, great career opportunities and the once in a lifetime chance to transform the life chances of the people we serve.

Partnership Development Manager (1 Year Maternity Cover)

**Salary Teachers MPS + TLR 2c or NJC Scale 41-46
(dependant on qualifications and experience)**

We are seeking to appoint a committed physical education and sport enthusiast to take on the role of Partnership Development Manager within the Chiltern School Sports Partnership. This is a 1 year maternity cover starting as soon as possible but between 17th May to 1st Sept 2010.

This is an exciting opportunity to be involved in the sports development within the school structure as we build towards London 2012. As Partnership Development Manager you will oversee all of the work of the Chiltern School Sport Partnership and related PE and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP) within the area. This is a key time for the partnership in the build up to meeting national PSA targets set for the summer of 2011. The role will involve the day to day running of the partnership, project management of various funded strands within PESSYP, staff management, finance and budget control, monitoring and evaluation and the co-ordination of links between the 37 partner schools and colleges. Development and maintenance of links with wider community partners will also be needed to create sustainability, school to community pathways and the wider development of sport within the area.

The applicant will need to demonstrate excellent leadership and project management skills, and have a good understanding of sports development.

To discuss this post informally please contact Kathryn Coulson, Partnership Development Manager, Chiltern School Sport Partnership, All Saints Academy Dunstable, Houghton Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 5AB
Tel: 01582 697633 E-mail: kathryncoulson@allsaintsacademydunstable.org
Please apply via the Recruitment page of the Academy website
www.allsaintsacademydunstable.org
Closing date for applications: 22.3.10

The Academy is committed to the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare and all job offers are subject to enhanced CRB clearance (Police Act 1997).



Income Generation Manager

**Circa £35,000 (subject to experience) plus generous benefits
including final salary pension scheme. Enfield, North London.**

2 year fixed term contract to March 2012

Lee Valley Regional Park is London's biggest open space, a 10,000 acre, 26 mile long mosaic of award-winning parklands and sports venues – including the £16million Lee Valley Athletics Centre, riding stables, an ice rink, golf courses – plus campsites, gardens, nature reserves, heritage sites and riverside walks. We stretch from Hertfordshire through Essex, North and East London and down to the Thames.

We are involved in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and will own, operate and fund three London venues after the Games are over.

We are already running some of the best sports and leisure venues in the country – now we need someone with real dynamism, creativity and entrepreneurial nous to boost their revenues and create even more business opportunities.

You'll be able to demonstrate a track record of innovation, generating income and reducing costs as well as turn your business brain to:

- Finding new ways of delivering top quality experiences to our customers across London, Hertfordshire and Essex.
- Adding to our existing range of services.
- Helping us operate more efficiently.

And, vitally, you'll be able to turn these ideas into reality!

Working closely with Facility Managers and senior staff, you'll be an inspirational colleague buzzing with ideas. Optimistic, realistic and resourceful, you'll crucially have a real 'can do' approach and be excited at the prospect of what our involvement in the 2012 Games could do for us. We will be opening the Olympic White Water Canoe Centre one year before the 2012 Olympic Games – the first brand new Olympic venue to open – and you will be involved in ensuring that maximum profile and revenues are gained from the huge national and international interest in this venue.

We don't mind where you are currently working, but an understanding of the public and leisure sectors are an advantage.

If you feel that you have the right blend of skills for this role, please complete an application form found on our website www.leevalleypark.org.uk and return it to: jobs@leevalleypark.org.uk or The HR Team, Myddelton House, Bulls Cross, Enfield EN2 9HG. Alternatively, if you do not have access to the internet, please call 01992 709839 for an application pack.

Closing Date: 22 March 2010

Interview Date: 6 April 2010

www.leevalleypark.org.uk

We are an equal opportunities employer • No agencies please





Regional Manager - East Region

BADMINTON England has a clear focus on becoming the World Number 1 Badminton nation by 2016 and on Growing the Game in England.

BADMINTON England's regional teams are crucial to the delivery of BADMINTON England's objectives. Each team consists of a Regional Manager and a number of Regional Officers who are focussed on developing badminton in a designated area. The success of the team is based on the competences and motivation of the people involved in them.

BADMINTON England is seeking to recruit a highly motivated person to lead the East Regional Team. This person will:

- Lead the Regional Team to deliver BADMINTON England's strategic aims
- Lead the delivery of Performance Centres and Community Badminton Networks as specified in the regional plan
- Engage with key volunteers and partner organisations at local and regional level
- Undertake a national remit

This will be an exciting and challenging role, requiring the successful candidate to demonstrate:

- Strong leadership skills that will enable the team to deliver excellent results.
- The ability to form partnerships and to influence decision-makers within the badminton environment and the sports development sector.
- The ability to manage a range of tasks and projects concurrently to deliver against organisational objectives.
- An understanding of the needs of sports participants and the people who deliver sport.

Salary is at Grade 5 £30,000 pa plus company car, pension and other benefits. Office location is negotiable.

To apply for this role you should contact enquiries@badmintonengland.co.uk or telephone 01908 268400 for an application pack.

Applications must be received by 23rd March.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON UNION (ULU)



Sports Administrator

£22,000 - £24,000 p/a (depending on experience)
Generous leave, use of fitness centre

ULU is seeking a Sports Administrator to join its Activities Development Team and to be responsible for the smooth running of the ULU Leagues. This is a highly rewarding position in a department that has run student sports leagues since 1910 and provides sporting opportunities to more than 4000 students each week.

The responsibilities of the role include:

- Producing fixture schedules for league programmes.
- Organising intercollegiate cup competitions, including booking venues and match officials.
- Servicing the Inter-Collegiate Sports Committee.
- Liaison with BUCS.
- Using the league website to ensure results are current and accurate.
- Liaison with college sports officers and club captains.
- Receiving and monitoring appeals and disputes from institutions.
- Planning and implementation of ULU's development programme.

The successful candidate will exhibit first rate negotiation skills, determination and an understanding of the needs of student sportswomen and men. Previous experience of running a league competition and using league software is desirable. You must have excellent communication, administration and organisational skills. A flexible approach to working hours is also essential.

For information and to apply please visit www.ulul.co.uk and complete an application pack as instructed. Any queries can be directed to 020 7664 2011.

Closing date for application, Monday 22nd March 2010

Pursuing equal opportunities and excellence in education



Merton
LEISURE CLUB
& AQUADOME

★★★ Lifeguard positions ★★★ (One shift leader, Various lifeguard positions)

Part of Jersey's largest and most popular family hotel, this exciting facility – with its state of the art gym, fantastic leisure and swimming pool, steam and sauna - provides a unique experience for our hotel guests and private members, and with the introduction of the UK's first Flowrider® surf and body boarding machine, we also offer unique career opportunities for the right applicants.

The Shift Leader position requires a competent individual with at least one years experience in a similar role. Both roles require a current NPLQ. A First Aid at Work Certificate and Pool Plant Operators Certificate are both major advantages, especially for the Shift Leader role. The ability to work as a part of a team and as an individual are both essential to the role, as is a good understanding of customer care.

In return we offer an attractive salary, accommodation and all the benefits of working on a delightful holiday island.

Please apply in writing to:
Ed Dubberley, Personnel Administrator
Merton Hotel, Belvedere Hill
St Saviour, Jersey JE4 9PG
Tel 01534 754306 Fax 01534 733121
Email: edubberley@mertonhotel.com

www.seymourhotels.com



Munrow Sports Centre



Job Vacancies

Would you like to work for University of Birmingham Sport?

We offer a comprehensive programme of sporting opportunities for all levels of ability, supported by extensive indoor and outdoor facilities mainly located on our Edgbaston campus.

We have permanent, part-time vacancies for sports centre facilities staff (x 4 up to 24 hrs/wk) and sports centre receptionists (x 2 up to 20 hrs/wk). Will involve early, evening and weekend work.

Are you?

- customer focused
- a good communicator
- proactive
- a team player
- problem solver
- positive

PS

Not qualified, don't worry we will train you - but for sports staff you will be required to do a pool pre-employment assessment.



For an application form, visit www.hr.bham.ac.uk/jobs

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

news & jobs at www.leisureopportunities.co.uk

NI minister's 'visitor inspired' call to tourism sector

Industry leaders urged to consider the needs and demands of tourists in an effort to encourage future growth

By **Pete Hayman**

Northern Ireland tourism leaders has been urged by the country's tourism minister, Arlene Foster, to be more "visitor inspired" in an attempt to help boost the industry.

Speaking at the fifth annual Northern Ireland Tourist Board Visitor Servicing Conference at the La Mon House Hotel in Belfast, Foster highlighted the importance of listening to what visitors want.

More than 130 delegates from Northern Ireland's

tourism sector attended the conference, which also included speeches from Lonely Planet travel editor Tom Hall and Visit Brighton marketing director Adam Bates.

Foster said: "It's an exciting time for tourism here but fulfilling our potential as a leading edge destination is our collective responsibility – everyone has a role to play.

"I urge the industry to focus on further enhancing the visitor experience by listening to the needs of our visitors and becoming visitor inspired."



The Giant's Causeway is one of Northern Ireland's main attractions

London 2012 "to learn" from Vancouver's Games

By **Pete Hayman**

London 2012 organisers have revealed that a team of 50 delegates has spent time at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada, to take advantage of a "final opportunity" to learn from the Games.

Members of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) were tasked with experiencing Games-time



Preparations continue for 2012

operations and how a city functions during the event in order to help ensure that the London Games are a success.

Four key areas in which Vancouver "excelled" were identified by LOCOG; the first being putting sport at the heart of the events. Service; stadia and courses and spectator sites were the three other elements.

LOCOG chair Sebastian Coe said: "The four 'S's we've identified give us real food for thought and an added level of detail to our planning as we become the next taxi off the Olympic Games rank."

Profits up at Goals Soccer

Goals Soccer Centres is poised to take advantage of "opportunities" offered by this year's World Cup after posting a 10 per cent increase in sales in 2009.

Compared with 2008, the operator of five-a-side soccer centres across the UK saw pre-tax profits increase by 7 per cent and revealed it is on target to open seven sites in 2010.

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