

leisure opportunities

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Fitness jobs 'not pushed enough'

Schools are not doing enough to promote careers in the fitness industry to young people, according to research carried out by health and education charity Central YMCA.

In a survey of young people at the World Skills event held in London last month, nearly half said they did not have enough information about working in the sector, while a further one in eight young people had no understanding of what training and qualifications would be needed.

However, nearly two-fifths revealed they were "very" or "quite likely" to consider a career within the health and fitness industry, with nearly a quarter attracted by flexible working hours.

Central YMCA Qualifications business development director Lori Randall said: "It is encouraging that young people are really



Randall: "Schools are not providing much in the way of information"

enthusiastic about working in the health and fitness sector, despite our research suggesting schools are not providing much in the way of information about such career options."



'Educated professionals' topped the list of trends

ACSM predicts 2012 fitness sector trends

Educated and experienced fitness professionals are the top fitness sector trend for 2012, according to American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) research.

Strength training and programmes for older adults were also included as part of the top five trends, along with exercise as part of weight loss schemes and efforts to tackle childhood obesity.

Zumba and dance-based workouts featured in the top 20 trends for the first time (ninth), as did outdoor activities (14th). Pilates, however, dropped off the list.

London to host 2017 IAAF Championships

London has been selected by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) to host the 2017 World Athletics Championships.

The capital, which is currently preparing to host next summer's Olympic and Paralympic Games, was chosen ahead of Doha, Qatar, following a 16-10 vote of the IAAF Council in Monaco on 11 November.

London 2017 president Sebastian Coe said: "It will be such an honour to host our sport's showcase event in the Olympic Stadium and realise a personal and professional dream."

HLF funding for three schemes

The redevelopment of Lews Castle in Stornoway, Scotland, has been named among three heritage schemes to be awarded a share of £9m by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

A £4.6m grant is to go towards the creation of an integrated museum and archive service for the Outer Hebrides, which will be based at the castle alongside a new hotel venture.

The museum will focus on the Isle of Lewis' people and their relationship with the land and sea, while displaying archaeological finds and material from the island's industrial past.

Elsewhere, The Dreamland Trust has secured £3m from the HLF towards plans for a major transformation of Dreamland Margate into



Lews Castle was awarded a £4.6m grant by the HLF

a new theme park comprising historic rides, while the third heritage scheme to receive funding is the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth, which has been awarded £1.4m for the restoration of Storehouse 10.

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SPORT

Willmott Dixon nets Redcar project

Hertfordshire-based Willmott Dixon is set to deliver a major new £33m leisure, business support and community facility in the heart of Redcar.

The group was chosen through the Scape framework on the first of a two-stage contract to build the complex on behalf of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council.

Willmott Dixon will start work in the New Year, working with S&P Architects on the leisure element. Completion is due for autumn 2013 and leisure facilities are to comprise a six-lane, 25m pool, a training pool and a learner pool; a fitness suite; a junior gym; a dance hall and performance space; and a sports hall.

Plus3 Architects have also been involved in the design of the complex, which will also provide business space for small- to medium-sized enterprises, as well as community facilities.



The group will work with S&P Architects to develop the leisure element

Willmott Dixon managing director for north Anthony Dillon said: "This heralds an exciting new future for Redcar and its community, making a genuine lasting difference."

The group has also been appointed to build a new 80ft (24m) vertical pier on Redcar seafront, which will provide a new landmark and tourist attraction for the region.

£1.4m boost for Nantwich Swimming Pool

Cheshire East Council (CEC) has announced plans to invest £1.4m in Nantwich Swimming Pool, following the completion of a full review into the Wall Lane complex.

The local authority agreed to provide funding in order to help "realise the full potential"

of the venue, with improvements to include the creation of a new changing village.

A new entrance, enhanced fitness facilities and upgraded roofing are also planned, as well as the installation of a new boiler, pool filters and an air handling unit.

£20m facility for College Ystrad Mynach

The College Ystrad Mynach has revealed plans for the development of a new £20m leisure and teaching complex, which is to be made available for use by college students and the local community.

Bristol-based architects AWW are behind the design of the new facility, which will replace the South Wales college's S block – currently used by the institution for general education studies.

A full-size sports hall; an eight-lane, 25m swimming pool; a learner pool; and a gym are to be included as part of the complex, along with a beauty spa and a café.

Meanwhile, the upper floors of the new development will house teaching and learning spaces for the college and an aeroplane



AWW will design the college's new dual-use leisure and teaching centre

fuselage will occupy the atrium area for use by air cabin crew students.

Plans are due to be submitted to Caerphilly County Borough Council next month and it is intended that the complex will be completed ahead of the September intake in 2013.

£3m boost for Midlands projects

Culture secretary Jeremy Hunt has announced that £3m is to be invested by Sport England in two new facilities across the West Midlands.

A £1.5m grant has been confirmed for both Worcester Community Sports Arena and Dawley Sports and Learning Community, Telford, through the Iconic Facilities fund.

The University of Worcester is behind the city's new £10m venue, which has been designed by Robert Limbrick Architects and is being delivered by Willmott Dixon.

Worcester Community Sport Arena is due to open in spring 2012 and will include a 12-court sports hall; a centre of excellence for disability sport; and seating for up to 1,850 spectators.

Meanwhile, Birse is due to start construction work on the new Kier Moss-designed Dawley Sports and Learning Community next year. It



Worcester Community Sports Arena is to open its doors in spring 2012

will boast an eight-court sports hall; a fitness suite; and a national-standard BMX track.

Sport England chief executive Jennie Price said: "From sporting beginners to experts, everyone in the Telford and Worcester areas can now look forward to playing sport in world-class facilities."

Spurs set to return to private ownership?

Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (THFC) plans to delist from the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) in a bid to raise funding for its stadium redevelopment plans.

In a statement issued to the London Stock Exchange on 16 November, the club said its listing was "restricting" its ability to raise the necessary backing for its proposals.

A new 56,250-seat stadium designed by KSS Group is at the heart of THFC's plans for the Northumberland Development Project, which will also help regenerate the surrounding area. However, recent reports suggested the club is seeking to increase that capacity to more than 60,000.

THFC chair Daniel Levy said: "Increasing the capacity of the club's stadium is a key factor



The Premier League club is looking to kick-start its development plans

in the continued development and success of the club and will involve the company in considerable additional capital expenditure.

"Given this requirement, we believe that the AIM listing restricts our ability to secure funding for its future development."

Ealing Council backs £1m sports pavilion proposals

Ealing Council has backed plans for a new £1m sports pavilion at Lord Halsbury Memorial playing fields in Northolt, which will replace a former facility destroyed by fire in April.

Facilities will include changing rooms, a community space, a social area and a meeting

room, with the flexible design of the venue to enable it to host a range of different events.

Larkspur Rovers Football Club and Northolt Amateur Boxing Club are the two groups that are expected to be users of the pavilion, with work scheduled to begin on site in May 2012.

ISC recognition for Rugby League Ireland

Rugby League Ireland's (RLI) application to be officially recognised as a national sporting body has been approved by the Irish Sports Council (ISC).

The organisation, which oversees domestic rugby league competitions in Ireland, started the application process in 2009 and received ISC approval on 1 November.

Gordon Matthews, general manager of the RLI, said: "Rugby league has seen a large growth in Ireland over the last couple of years and we are hopeful of that growth continuing in the future."



IMAGE: S. FINN/GETTY IMAGES

The new resource aims to increase participation

New online sports database for Londoners

Get Active London, a new online database of sports clubs, venues and activities spanning the capital, has been developed to increase participation in regular exercise.

The project is led by the five Pro-Active London Partnerships, which are working with 31 boroughs and 46 national governing bodies to offer more than 6,800 opportunities and help address a lack of information seen as a main barrier to physical activity.

Get Active London is free for people to search for activities across the capital, as well as for sports providers to advertise physical activity opportunities.

New sports academy to launch in Walsall

Walsall Adult and Community College (WACC) is to launch a virtual sports academy for 16-to-18-year-olds in partnership with Walsall Football Club.

WACC Sports Academy will commence in January and provide young people with a six-month vocational and practical course in a sports-related environment.

The initiative is aimed at those not in employment, education or training, with qualifications to include a City and Guilds Level 2 Certificate in Sports and a Level 1 Sports Leaders Award, among others.

New gym unveiled at Cardiff leisure centre

Cardiff Council has unveiled a new gym facility at Maindy Centre, which has become the latest city venue to benefit from improvements to its fitness provision.

A £55,000 refurbishment has been carried out at the Maindy Centre, which has included the installation of new equipment from the Life Fitness Integrity range.

Cross trainers, a recumbent bicycle and treadmills are among the new machines installed at Maindy Centre, which follows similar refurbishment schemes at Pentwyn and Llanishen leisure centres.



Olympic hopeful Laura Gallagher at the opening

Fitness suite among new Bridgwater facilities

The dry facilities at Trinity Sports and Leisure Centre in Bridgwater, Somerset have opened to the public.

The opening of the new centre, which is operated by the sports and leisure trust 1610 on behalf of Futures for Somerset, represents the first phase of a major leisure development for the town.

Included as part of the new centre is a sports hall with courts for badminton, football, basketball and volleyball and a 50-station Technogym-equipped fitness suite, in addition to an exercise studio.

Plymouth's £46.5m Life Centre to open in March

Plymouth City Council and Everyone Active have announced that plans are being put in place to open the new £46.5m Life Centre to the public on 23-25 March 2012.

It follows the confirmation from contractor Balfour Beatty that the Archial-designed facility is now due to be officially handed over to Everyone Active on 27 February.

Balfour Beatty told the local authority in early November that a "number of factors" had led to the need to revise the contract completion date, including delays in acquiring materials from Europe.

Teen classes to be 'major trend'

The provision of sports and fitness activities for teenagers will be a "major trend" in 2012, according to health and racquet club operator David Lloyd Leisure (DLL).

Exercise classes for young people aged 11-to-17-years-old, such as zumba and boxercise, will be a "significant area of growth". It is among a number of fitness trends identified for 2012, which also include PT 'express' workouts; padel tennis; and health products.

To capitalise on the expected increase in provision for young people, DLL has now launched Fitness Into Teens (FIT) for its members aged 11-years-old or older. FIT will feature multi-aquatics, to help 11-to-14-year-olds attain swimming qualifications and benefit from other water-based activities, as well as gym group exercise and fast track tennis.



Exercise classes for 11-to-17-year-olds are among DLL's forecast trends

DLL's Sarah Hobbs said: "Research has shown that many children abandon regular exercise and sports activities when they reach their teens. It is important that teenagers are offered programmes teaching them new skills that they find enjoyable and exciting, as well as allowing them to make new friends."

Green light for new King's Cross facility

A new leisure facility is to be built in King's Cross, London, as part of a building housing a number of public services in one location after planning permission was granted.

King's Cross Central Limited Partnership (KCCLP) are behind the plans for the Three Pancras Square development, which were given the green light by Camden Council on 3 November.

The council is working with KCCLP to deliver the LA Architects-designed project, which is to incorporate a two-floor sports centre with a gym equipped with more than 100 stations, a 25m, five-lane swimming pool; a small recreational lagoon-style pool; a poolside spa area with sauna and steamroom; and two exercise studios.



A gym with more than 100 stations is earmarked as part of the scheme

Meanwhile, the proposed development will also house a number of other local authority-run operations, including a library and a customer contact centre, and will help save £77m on maintaining existing sites.

Experts call for mandatory 'physical literacy' tests

Leading sports medicine specialists are calling for the introduction of mandatory "physical literacy" tests in schools to help children with health problems and identify future talent.

Dr Andrew Franklyn-Miller told the BBC that the "physical competence" of young people

has been jeopardised by the failure to give PE the same priority as other school subjects.

Franklyn-Miller said testing helps to identify those children who struggle with maths or English, but not for physical development, cardiovascular fitness or co-ordination.

payasUgym enters Manchester

An online network that allows the public to locate gyms and book sessions on a pay-as-you-go basis without the need for membership fees has expanded to Manchester.

The payasUgym concept was launched in London and the South East by Neil Harmsworth and Jamie Ward earlier this year and is now planning a UK expansion.

A number of clubs across the Manchester area have already signed up to the network, which is designed to allow customers to load credit into a free online account, before buying a voucher that can be used to visit and participate in sessions at participating gyms.

Ward said: "As a flexible gym service provider we know that people want to use payasUgym.com wherever they may be at that particular moment. Launching in Manchester



PayasUgym first launched across London and the South East in January

will help us meet these demands and we now plan to be present in every town and city across the UK over the coming months."

James Worrall from Pure Balance UK at Manchester's Skyline Central added: "People in Manchester will really appreciate the opportunity to use the gym on a more flexible basis."

£18.6m Bilston leisure centre completed

Wolverhampton City Council (WCC) has announced the new £18.6m Bert Williams Leisure Centre in Bilston, West Midlands, will open to the public on 3 December.

York-based Shepherd Construction has now completed work on the 5,600sq m (60,278sq ft) complex, which will replace the existing Bilston Leisure Centre.

Designed by WCC architects, the centre includes a 25m pool; a studio pool; a sauna; and a fitness suite. A sports hall; four squash courts; a Shokk gym for young people aged between 11 and 15; a dance studio; and gym equipment for older people will also be on offer.

WCC cabinet member for leisure and communities Elias Mattu said: "We have worked



A 25m pool and a Shokk gym will be among the centre's new facilities

hard to ensure there will be a wide range of new facilities to suit all ages at the centre. We are also providing more exercise stations than in the current leisure centre as well as a brand new sauna, sports hall and dance studio."

New Bristol facility 'on course' to open in February

Bristol's new multi-million pound Hengrove Park Leisure Centre is on course to open "on time and on budget" on 29 February 2012, according to Bristol City Council.

Kier is the main contractor for the construction and fit-out phases of the project, which has

been funded using £30.56m of private finance initiative credits from the government.

It is the third new pool and leisure centre to open in Bristol in recent years and is to comprise a 10-lane, 50m swimming pool and teaching pool, as well as a 150-station gym.

Annual sales growth for Leisure Connection

Leisure Connection, the operator of more than 70 sports and cultural venues across the UK, has reported an increase in like-for-like sales for the year to September 2011.

Fitness membership revenue and like-for-like personal training sales grew by 1 per cent and 6 per cent respectively, compared with the previous year.

Meanwhile, swimming membership revenue and swimming school revenue also increased in the period, with Leisure Connection's adult swimming programme growing by 200 per cent in 2011.



Figures have come from the Health MOT scheme

Nuffield reveals members' Health MOT data

Data collected from members of Nuffield Health's UK fitness clubs has revealed that seven out of 10 have shown significant increases in their overall health.

The figures come from the operator's Health MOT initiative, launched in 2009, which is offered to every new club member at point of joining. Follow up tests are then conducted to ascertain progress.

Managing director Laura Kerby told *Health Club Management*: "The programmes we have designed for members have helped improve their health scores."

Suffolk leisure revamp nears completion

Anglia Community Leisure (ACL) is to fully open new facilities at a leisure centre in Brandon, Suffolk, on 9 December following a major £500,000 renovation.

Work started on the Forest Heath District Council-funded Brandon Leisure Centre scheme in September, which included a new 50-station gym equipped by Technogym.

A multi-purpose studio will cater for group exercise programmes, while the spinning facility has been converted into a functional training room. A squash court has also been revamped.

Now is the winter of discontent... Or is it?



PHILIPPE ROSSITER
is chief executive of the
Institute of Hospitality

According to a recent survey by the Forum for Private Business, it would appear that more and more business owners are seeking innovative ways in which to combat rising energy costs. Of the businesses surveyed, only 10 per cent indicated that they had taken no action to reduce the cost of utilities, while around 30 per cent had taken steps to reduce their energy consumption. A similar number said they had invested in more energy-efficient equipment.

One of the key findings to emerge, however, was that many smaller companies face a number of challenges in their efforts to become more energy-efficient. A large majority of those responding to the survey felt that current environmental legislation tended to focus on the needs of larger firms. Furthermore, many smaller enterprises said they were unable to adopt more eco-friendly practices until they became profitable.

This was echoed at a recent CBI panel debate by Richard Spencer, head of sustainability at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Commenting that many firms, even large ones, did not have the time or money to take key strategic decisions on energy-efficient investments, he said "at the smaller end it is all about cost. There is a huge concern about energy price, and all SMEs can think about is managing cash from week to week."

This phenomenon has a particular resonance within the hospitality sector, around 80 per cent of which is made up of SMEs and micro-businesses. Of all parts of the industry, it is these businesses that are most challenged by current market conditions, yet, at the same time, possess limited resources to invest in the measures which could reduce their energy costs significantly.

Recognising this, the Institute of Hospitality is pointing its members to no-cost or low-cost solutions through a wide variety of information resources and publications, as well as by working with Make it Cheaper, which has recently become one of its Business Partners. Becoming a member of the Institute could therefore be the best investment you could make this winter!

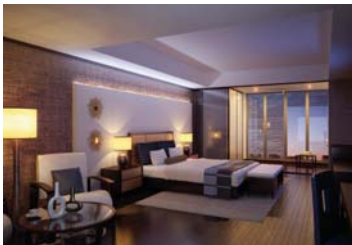
HOTELS

European sector remains 'robust'

New research from professional services firm Deloitte has found that Europe's hospitality sector has remained "robust" throughout 2011, despite ongoing economic uncertainty.

In a survey of senior industry figures, more than half (51 per cent) said current trading was better than expected and a further 17 per cent said that performance was "unchanged". The research was undertaken ahead of the Deloitte Hotel Investment Conference in London and also found that investment in luxury hotel assets is poised to continue. Meanwhile, the UK was found to be the most popular location out of the top five European markets for future hotel developments, with 46 per cent of votes.

Nick van Marken, global head - advisory, travel, hospitality and leisure at Deloitte, said:



The UK is the most popular location to attract investment in hotels

"Despite ongoing economic uncertainty, global hotel transactions in the first half of 2011 were more than double the same period in 2010.

"Funding continues to be a challenge as lenders focus on reducing their balance sheet risk. Cash-rich investors have been the main beneficiaries of this credit squeeze and several all-equity deals have been seen."

Quintain to sell Wembley hotel to Sojourn

Quintain Estates and Development has announced that it has exchanged contracts for the sale of the Plaza Hotel in Wembley, London, to Sojourn Hotels Group for £15m.

The group is behind the mixed-use Wembley City development and had sought to transform

the hotel into residential accommodation as part of plans initially approved in 2004.

However, Quintain said "changing markets" meant that it was now focussing on a "core leisure and entertainment" element of the scheme, including a new Hilton hotel.

MWB Group reports 'challenging' trading

MWB Group, owner of the Malmaison and Hotel du Vin boutique brands, has reported "challenging" conditions for the first four months of the financial year between 1 July and 18 November.

The group said demand for the period had "softened" due to consumer confidence being impacted by UK and Eurozone economic concerns.

However, Malmaison was able to deliver RevPAR in line with figures for 2010 as a result of improvements in room rates, while overall revenues were up 1.5 per cent.

The period also saw the completion of five hotel sales and leasebacks totalling £102.9m, with proceeds used to reduce Malmaison's borrowings by around £100m to £180m.



MWB operates the Malmaison and Hotel du Vin chains of hotels

A MWB spokesperson said: "The completion of the Malmaison transactions, along with the group refinancing that was completed in June, provide a more stable platform."



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KURT JANSON
is policy director of
Tourism Alliance

Backing a Private Member's Bill is usually seen by MPs as something to be undertaken when showing support for an issue but knowing the outcome will almost certainly fail.

Without the support of the government, very few Bills ever receive the votes and the time needed to gain Royal Assent. In the last 10 years, only about five bills per year (around 20 per cent) ever emerge from the Parliamentary process onto the statute books. And even then, Bills that make it are usually ones that no one is interested in opposing – the Ragwort Control Act 2002, for example – or are so obviously needed that no one would consider opposing them – such as the Anti-Slavery Day Act 2009.

Successful Bills also tend not to affect society as a whole, but seek to make small amendments to help a particular small sector of society or rectify a problem that has been found to exist with, or not covered by, existing legislation. This makes the announcement that the government will probably come out in support of Rebecca Harris's Daylight Saving Bill stand out. It is a Bill that could change how everyone undertakes their daily routine receiving the government's backing – something almost without precedent. And not without considerable risk, as there is vocal opposition from some ill-informed groups.

Two things can be drawn from the government's willingness to support the Bill. The first is that it must be convinced of the arguments made by the wide range of groups supporting the Bill, including tourism, leisure and sport groups, road safety campaigners, environmental lobbyists, age welfare support groups and teachers, as to the benefits of having more daylight in the evenings to undertake leisure activities.

The second is that the government will need the support of people in the leisure industry if it is to hold its nerve and continue its support. When the Daylight Saving Bill reaches Committee stage early next year, it will trigger considerable debate in the media. People in the leisure industry must join that debate and win the argument to help ensure the passage of the Bill.

TOURISM

Irish tourism VAT rate to stay

The Irish government has confirmed it will retain the lower 9 per cent VAT rate on tourism products throughout 2012 in a bid to continue supporting the sector's recovery.

Introduced earlier this year as part of the wider Jobs Initiative, the reduced rate is designed to help Irish-owned hospitality and leisure firms whose services and products are "home-grown".

Transport, tourism and sport minister Leo Varadkar has now told the Good Food Ireland conference in Dublin that the government would retain the 9 per cent VAT rate next year.

Varadkar said: "This rate is significant because it principally benefits home-grown employers which are based in Ireland. The vast majority of hotels, restaurants and leisure businesses are Irish-owned and any profits stay in



The lower rate of VAT on tourism products came into force in this year

Ireland. The lower VAT of 9 per cent applies to these domestic businesses whose services and products are home-grown.

"Even where the rate was not passed on [to customers], it still benefited the tourism industry by helping businesses to expand their operations or take on additional staff."

Exmoor nets International Dark Sky Reserve status

The International Dark Sky Association (IDA) has named Exmoor National Park as Europe's first International Dark Sky Reserve.

It is only the world's second such reserve, with Exmoor's bid for the recognition having been developed over the last two years.

UK astronomer and chair of the IDA's IDA Dark Sky Places Development Committee, Steve Owens, said: "The designation will hopefully attract stargazers from around the world, and astrotourism will become another staple attraction to Exmoor."

Airlines call on chancellor to scrap APD

The chief executives of four airlines have urged chancellor George Osborne to scrap Air Passenger Duty (APD), calling it a "tax on tourism and a tax on business".

Carolyn McCall of easyJet; Willie Walsh of International Airlines Group; Virgin Atlantic's Steve Ridgway; and Ryanair's Michael O'Leary have all voiced their opposition to the current levy.

In a letter to Osborne, the four signatories said passenger numbers had fallen at UK airports over the last three years and was having a negative impact on the country's tourism sector. Osborne has also been urged to commission an independent study into the "true economic effects" of APD on the British economy.



The four chief executives said APD has a negative effect on UK tourism

The letter said: "For hard-working families, APD is a tax too far for the privilege of taking a well-earned holiday. It is also a tax on tourism and a tax on business."



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Radisson Edwardian deal for Pinks Boutique

Organic spa brand Pinks Boutique has secured a partnership to supply Radisson Edwardian, one of the largest privately-owned hotel groups in the UK.

The Spa at Radisson Edwardian's newly-launched hotel in Guildford, Surrey, will be among the sites to offer Pinks products and treatments as a result of the agreement.

Lara Lymaney, group spa manager at Radisson Edwardian, said: "The Pinks Boutique range of products and treatment rituals feels like a perfect fit for our spas."

East River Spa at New Providence Wharf in London will offer Pinks manicure and pedicure treatments, as well as using Pinks products for all of its waxing services.

Visitors to The Spa at Guildford will be able to benefit from Pinks' manicures, pedicures, facials and waxing, with both The Spa and East River Spa also retailing the products. Meanwhile, Pegasus Spa (Heathrow) and The May Fair Spa (London) will feature Pinks' Organic Massage Oils in their body treatments following the deal.



Payne led Champneys Health Resorts for 12 years

Ex-Champneys MD appointed by Topaz

Ray Payne, former managing director of Champneys Health Resorts, has been appointed by spa consultancy and management company, Topaz.

Payne, who spent 12 years at the helm of Champneys, has been tasked with leading a new division for the company, Topaz Management Services (TMS). TMS will focus exclusively on the hospitality, spa and wellness sectors to offer a contractual management service along with management and marketing consultancy services.

"I had originally planned to set up on my own as a consultant," said Payne, "but seeing the diverse range of business activities that Topaz is involved with, I decided to approach them with the idea of creating a dedicated arm of the business which would focus on providing management services to the hospitality sector."

Bannatyne opens Fairfield spa

The Bannatyne Group has opened its latest UK spa at the Fairfield health club near Stotfold, Bedfordshire.

Facilities at the £200,000 spa, which is the group's 33rd to open in the UK, include six treatment rooms; a double treatment room; and a relaxation balcony, as well as a spray tan room and a manicure and pedicure area.

Male and female treatments are on offer at the spa and are provided by Elemis, with ID Bare Essentials; Gelish Semi Permanent Nailcare; and Essie

nail care also available. The spa will complement existing relaxation facilities at the club, which include a 14-seat spa pool; a large relaxation area alongside a 16m swimming pool; and a steamroom.

Justin Musgrove, the group's spa director, said: "The new spa in Fairfield is an essential



Justin Musgrove (centre) officially opening the 33rd UK Bannatyne Spa

part of Bannatyne's drive towards creating an enhanced wellbeing concept under one roof.

"In line with all our existing health clubs and spas, the Bannatyne Spa in Fairfield will provide a high quality service and experience for every visitor, offering the latest treatments and using leading luxury product ranges."

December launch for DLL's Farnham club

David Lloyd Leisure's (DLL) new £12m sports, health and fitness club in Farnham, Surrey, is to be opened by Olympic gold medallist Denise Lewis on 6 December.

Facilities at the 6,000sq m (64,583sq ft) club will include the group's largest Amida Spa, spanning more than 1,000sq m (10,764sq ft). It will offer six treatment rooms; four relaxation rooms; a nail studio; a spa plunge pool; a spray tanning salon; and steam experience rooms, while an outdoor area will boast sauna cabins and a hydro spa pool.

A new agreement signed by DLL last month will see Aromatherapy Associates, Rodial and Alpha-H supply products for treatments and therapies at Farnham's Amida Spa.



The new Farnham club will incorporate the group's largest Amida Spa

Elsewhere, a 25m swimming pool and separate children's pool and a 1,337sq m (14,391sq ft) gym will also be available, along with a 470sq m (5,059sq ft) DL Kids area; and an on-site physiotherapy and osteopathy clinic.

St Ives leisure centre to be revamped

One Leisure, the leisure division of Huntingdonshire District Council, has received the go-ahead to redevelop its ageing One Leisure St Ives facility in Cambridgeshire.

The redevelopment will include the opening of a new Pure Health and Wellbeing-branded

spa facility and a new 120-station fitness suite as well as a five-lane bowling alley.

One Leisure spokesperson Gemma Bonnett said: "Family-orientated activities and the extension of the health sector is fundamental to the changing demographic of the area."

Irish arts impact study released

An economic impact report by Arts Council Ireland (ACI) has found that the Irish arts industry contributes €306.8m (£263.7m) in taxes and supports more than 21,000 jobs.

ACI said *Assessment of the Economic Impact of the Arts in Ireland* showed how the industry provided "significant direct and indirect employment" across the country.

Indecon International Economic Consultations was commissioned to compile the new study, which provided an update on a previous economic impact report in 2009 and is "concerned with the impact of the arts" in 2010.

The latest study underlined how "the arts continue to be a major employer and contributor to Irish economic output", while also exploring the impact on the wider creative industries. ACI awarded €60.3m (£51.8m) to



Dublin's Abbey Theatre is among those to receive ACI funding support

arts groups and individuals in 2010, with the recipients generating an estimated turnover of €135m (£116m) in the same year.

Jimmy Deenihan, minister for arts, heritage and the Gaeltacht, said: "By focusing on the arts as an element of social and economic renewal, we are playing to our strengths."

Six philanthropists receive royal accolade

Six individuals have been awarded the Prince of Wales Medal for Arts Philanthropy 2011 in recognition of their support and generosity towards the UK's arts and cultural sector.

Lloyd Dorfman; Jonathan Ruffer; and Lady Hobson were among the recipients to receive

their medal from HRH The Prince of Wales at Clarence House on 17 November.

Mike and Jean Oglesby and Theresa Sackler were also recipients of the accolade, which was created by Arts and Business to recognise those who support the UK arts industry.

BBC and Arts Council England join forces

Arts Council England (ACE) has joined forces with the BBC for an experimental digital arts media service and commissioning initiative called *The Space*, which is to launch next May.

The partnership will see a pop-up service run until the end of October 2012 and challenge artists and cultural groups to collaborate with partners and each other.

ACE will invest £2.5m of strategic digital innovation funds to commission grants for artists and groups to create work that will be shown in *The Space*. The BBC will contribute technology solutions to enable the arts to sit across four key platforms: PC, mobile, tablet and TV. The BBC will also mentor successful bidders.



Alan Davey: Technology is essential to achieving 'great art for everyone'

ACE chief executive Alan Davey said: "Embracing the potential of digital technology is essential to achieving the Arts Council's mission of 'great art for everyone'."

Darlington to get new performance venue?

Darlington Borough Council (DBC) has outlined plans to close an existing arts facility and build a new performance venue as part of its budget proposals for 2012-13.

Residents can now comment on the draft budget, which includes a proposal to close Darlington Arts Centre and use proceeds from the sale towards a new venue.

Meanwhile, DBC has also announced that it has now removed the threat of closure from the town's Civic Theatre after a new management and funding model was drawn up for the venue.



ACE said funding will help attract more visitors

The Public secures ACE strategic funding

Arts Council England (ACE) is to invest £200,000 of strategic funding a year from 2012-2015 to support the visual arts programme at The Public, West Bromwich.

It is anticipated that the three-year award will assist Sandwell Arts Trust (SAT) in planning further ahead and continuing to build on successes in attracting more local and regional visitors to the area.

The Public's 2011-12 visual arts programme has been backed by two £100,000 ACE awards through the agency's Grants for the arts funding programme.

New lease of life for Eastbourne theatre

A trust has been established to take over the running of Eastbourne's Hippodrome Theatre from the local authority in a move to safeguard the future of the venue.

Newly-elected trustees of the Eastbourne Royal Hippodrome Trust will prepare a business plan for the theatre and take control in a staged transfer process.

The trust will be responsible for organising programmes and events for two years with support from Eastbourne Borough Council towards building and utility costs, before taking full control in 2014.



Minerva is aiming to transform the brewery site

Latest Ram Brewery plans to go on show

A second public exhibition has been held to enable developer Minerva to display its latest plans for the redevelopment of the Ram Brewery in Wandsworth, London.

The group's current plans for the former brewery site include 5,334sq m (57,415sq ft) of heritage buildings; 5,367 sq m (57,770sq ft) of shops, cafés, bars and restaurants; and more than 450 residential units.

More than 1,100sq m (11,840sq ft) of leisure facilities, comprising a swimming pool, a gym and spa, are also proposed, along with office space and a showroom.

Carlisle United display stadium study findings

Carlisle United Football Club has displayed the findings of a feasibility study into the potential redevelopment of its Brunton Park stadium or relocation to a new venue.

The Frank Whittle Partnership (FWP) examined the redevelopment of the existing venue over a series of phases, which is estimated to cost more than £18m.

FWP also identified potential sites for a new venue and called for talks to continue with Kingmoor Park, which is seen as the "best opportunity for an 'enabling' development" towards a 12,000-seat stadium.

SCALA accolade for £12m Leeds arts complex

A new £12m home for Northern Ballet and Phoenix Dance Theatre in Leeds, which opened earlier this year, has received its second accolade in the space of a week.

The centre has been named 2011 Civic Building of the Year by the Society of Chief Architects for Local Authorities (SCALA) at a ceremony held on 11 November.

Jacobs Architecture worked alongside Leeds City Council on the design of the new purpose-built building, which was also named Best Arts Project at the National Lottery Awards in early November.

£60m London River Park decision deferred

Plans for the £60m London River Park development, which had been due to open ahead of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee next summer, have been deferred by the City of London Corporation (CLC).

The Gensler-designed project had been due to go before CLC's planning and transportation committee on 15 November but were held back as a result of "serious concerns" raised by the London Port Authority in relation to navigational safety along the planned 1km (0.6-mile) stretch of the River Thames.

CLC planning and transportation committee chair Martin Farr said: "It is unfortunate that the planning and transportation committee is unable to consider this proposal."



The London River Park was due to open ahead of the Diamond Jubilee

"In order to properly exercise its duty as the local planning authority, the City's planning and transportation committee needs to be able to consider all of the material facts."

OPLC unveils Olympic Park visions

Concept designs put forward by ten shortlisted teams for the creation of "two new distinctive areas" in East London have been unveiled by the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC).

Five teams are in the running to design a public space to the south of the Olympic Park, while five more have been selected to draw up plans for a community hub to the north. The visions are now on display at the OPLC's offices until 9 December and at New London Architecture until early January. A winning design for each area will be revealed in December.

It is hoped the South Park space will create an urban landscape similar to the South Bank and will incorporate a visitor centre, water features and play facilities. Meanwhile, the second area to the north of the park will be located in



One of the five shortlisted ideas for the South area of the Olympic Park

the green river valley and comprise a new visitor centre and a multi-purpose indoor space for community use.

OPLC chief executive Andrew Altman said: "The Olympic Park Legacy Company is mobilising plans at pace for the development of the Olympic Park after the 2012 Games."

Mixed-use marina scheme proposed for Fishguard

London-based Conygar Investment Company has partnered with Stena Line Ports to submit plans for a new mixed-use marina development at Fishguard, south west Wales.

A new 450-berth marina with workshops, shops and ancillary facilities; a publicly-

accessible promenade; and more than 250 residential apartments are proposed.

Meanwhile, the regeneration project will also provide a 19-acre (7.7-hectare) platform for a future expansion of the existing Stena Line port in the Goodwick area.

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London Borough of Islington Framework Agreement



ISLINGTON

The **London Borough of Islington** invites expressions of interest from suitably experienced leisure operators for inclusion onto a framework for the management and operation of leisure facilities across the borough. The Council is seeking operators who can ensure that leisure provision uptake reflects its diverse community and in line with its priorities.

It is the Council's intention to award a framework contract for 4 years to 1 or more than 2 bidders. Following this, the Council will undertake a mini competition for Ironmonger Row Baths (due to re-open in the summer of 2012) by inviting those bidders on the framework to submit proposals. It is anticipated that the contract for Ironmonger Row Baths will be for approximately 5 and a half years until 31st March 2018 but with a break clause at 31st March 2014. The exercise of the break clause will be at the Council's sole discretion and will depend upon whether or not the break clause in its existing leisure management contract is invoked.

If this is the case, the Council will undertake a further mini competition(s) for the whole leisure estate (potentially including Ironmonger Row Baths) by inviting those bidders on the framework to submit proposals. At this stage it is anticipated that any such contract would be in the region of 10 – 20 years, however the Council reserves the right to amend this dependent upon the circumstances at the time. The final contract term will be dependent on the outcome of the mini competition and the commercial viability of the bids put forward.

To obtain the Pre Qualification Questionnaire and further details of how to express your interest, the Award Criteria that will be applied for both the Framework and Mini-Competitions within the Framework, and additional information on the process you must do the following:

1. Register your organisation as soon as possible free of charge via this link www.londontenders.org/procontract/supplier.nsf/firm_home?openForm
2. You will then be given your unique username and password. This allows you to register interest in this opportunity that is advertised on the portal.

Potential providers are advised that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2096 will not apply to the Ironmonger Row Baths mini competition but are likely to apply if the Council undertakes a further mini competition(s) for the whole estate (potentially including Ironmonger Row Baths).

The deadline for expressions of interest is:
Thursday 22nd December 2011 at 5pm.

The deadline for submission of completed Pre-qualification Questionnaires by: Friday 23rd December 2011 at 5pm.

All interested parties are made aware that no late applications to express interest or returns of Pre-qualification questionnaires will be accepted.

For an informal discussion about this opportunity, please contact Mark Steward, Managing Director, Max Associates at mark@max-associates.com.

Expressions of Interest

Test Valley Borough Council invites Expressions of Interest from organisations and individuals interested in providing a public catering and bar service at *The Lights Theatre in Andover*, for a period of three years with a possible extension of two years.



The Lights Theatre is a busy venue that offers an extensive programme six days per week, with some occasional operation on Sundays. The venue features a stylish and popular coffee shop, wine bar and outdoor seating area, plus a large catering kitchen.

Please note that Test Valley Borough Council will not be paying the successful bidder for the service; the successful bidder will be required to make payments to Test Valley Borough Council for the benefit of the concession.

Interested parties should forward their expressions of interest in writing to Head of Leisure & Wellbeing, Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover, SP10 3AJ by **23 December 2011**.

For more details: www.testvalley.gov.uk/lightsarenacafebar

For venue details: www.thelights.org.uk

For an informal discussion, contact Heather Whittam, The Lights Venue Director on 01264 368814, or email hwhittam@testvalley.gov.uk



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Expressions of interest for the construction of Stoke Park Skate Park

We are seeking expressions of interest from suitable companies wishing to be considered for inclusion on the tender list for the construction of a new Skate Park in Stoke Park, Guildford.

Construction companies wishing to participate will be required to complete and return a pre-qualification questionnaire by noon on the 16 December 2011, from which a shortlist of tenderers will be selected.

INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD FORWARD THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO:

Dennis Wheeler,
Parks & Countryside Development Manager,
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HLF grant for Stoke factory museum plans

Spode Museum Trust has secured £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which will go towards plans for a new museum at a former Stoke-on-Trent pottery factory.

The two-year scheme will see exhibits from the trust's collection put on show at the former Spode factory, which will explore the 200-year history of the company.

It is expected that the Spode history centre will open to the public in spring 2012, although some work is required to refurbish the building and efforts to raise a further £20,000 have now begun.



Durlston Castle is a gateway to the Jurassic Coast

Durlston Castle reopens after £5.5m revamp

Durlston Castle, which is sited at the heart of Durlston Country Park near Swanage, Dorset, has officially reopened following the completion of a £5.5m revamp.

The public has been able to access the historic building since 18 November after work was completed to redesign the interior of the Grade II-listed castle.

Facilities including a new visitor centre; a shop; interactive displays; a gallery; and a cinema room have been provided as part of the redevelopment project, in addition to the Seventh Wave restaurant.

'Green' Tower Bridge makeover approved

London's Tower Bridge is to benefit from a 'green makeover' ahead of the 2012 Games, after planning permission and listed building consent were approved.

The landmark's 25-year old lights will be replaced with an energy-efficient system, while the project will also allow for the temporary installation of the Olympic rings.

An agreement between the mayor of London; the City of London Corporation; GE; and EDF will see LED lighting installed at the bridge, which will help reduce its energy consumption by 40 per cent.

IWM to build new WWI galleries

New galleries are to be created for Imperial War Museum (IWM) London's First World War collections as part of its plans to mark the centenary of the 1914-18 conflict.

The new spaces are due to open in summer 2014 and will improve access to the attraction's collections, allowing more personal artefacts, films and images to go on display.

Foster + Partners and exhibition designer Casson Mann are working on the scheme, which will see the new First World War galleries offer double the space of the current areas.

The new facilities will be created within the existing footprint of the IWM London building, with the central atrium space to also undergo a transformation as part of the scheme. It will be the first in a number of projects planned for IWM London over the next



The WWI galleries are the first in a series of planned schemes for IWM

decade, which will deliver 20 per cent more gallery space and upgraded visitor facilities.

The First World War galleries project has received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which will enable IWM to progress its plans in order to secure a £4.5m grant. Plans are due to be submitted in next year.

Mather and Co wins York Minster project

Cheshire-based Mather and Co has been chosen to work on a five-year restoration project at York Minster, which is to be carried out in phases.

The group will work with the Dean and Chapter at the Minster, which has secured £10.5m from the Heritage Lottery Fund for its York Minster Revealed scheme.

York Minster Revealed aims to open up the architectural and cultural significance of the Gothic cathedral to a wider audience. The first stage will see Mather and Co work

on the interpretation of the East Front of York Minster, including the Great East Window.

Multi-layered, mixed media presentations will be installed to help depict the stonemason and glazier skills used, as well as guiding guests



The historic cathedral has secured £10.5m of National Lottery funding

around the cathedral and helping to transform the visitor experience of the cathedral.

A second phase will feature work to redisplay the historically-significant crypt; undercroft and treasury areas of York Minster.

Council loan offered for Design Museum relocation

The Design Museum's plans to relocate to the Commonwealth Institute building, London, have been boosted by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC).

A £2.6m loan has been offered by the local authority in order to help the attraction ensure

its ambitions to relocate from its current site at Shad Thames are financially viable.

RBKC said the short-term loan is to help the Design Museum meet a planning obligation requiring 70 per cent of development funding to be in place before work can commence.

New 'recruits' for endorsement service

Central YMCA Qualifications (CYQ) has announced that Aquababies, Ariel Yoga and YMCAfit are among the providers to have signed up to its endorsement service.

Launched this year, the service provides employers with a quality assurance kite-mark for the training provided, even if no qualification is offered.

CYQ director Lori Randall said: "[Endorsement] is of particular benefit where training does not lead to a qualification, or go through the rigmarole of having a qualification attached.

"This independent quality assurance mark also adds value to in-house training and lessens the need for companies to send employees off-site to an external training provider."



Aquababies is among the latest recruits to CYQ's endorsement service

CYQ, which is an awarding body for the health, fitness and wellbeing sector, is operated by Central YMCA and develops qualifications delivered through a range of institutions.

PM reveals £250m skills training pilot

A new £250m pilot to give employers more control over the design and acquisition of training programmes has been announced by Prime Minister David Cameron.

Businesses will have the chance to bid for a share of the funding in early 2012, which will see public support go directly to firms to invest in the training they need.

It is hoped the move will boost growth, with £50m available in 2012-13 and a further £200m in 2013-14 subject to an ongoing evaluation.

Collaborative proposals from businesses of all sizes and sectors will be able to submit bids, which will have to demonstrate how public sector support will bring in private funding. Support for apprenticeships and a commitment to enhancing skills levels across their sector will also be a requirement for applicants.



The new funding will be made available to increase vocational training

Cameron said: "This radical new approach will encourage even more employers to take on apprentices and ensure that the UK workforce has the skills we need to boost growth."

Business secretary Vince Cable added: "We have to fundamentally alter the relationship between employers and the state."

London mayor launches Culture Squad 2012

London mayor Boris Johnson has launched Culture Squad 2012, which will offer five full-time paid apprentices the chance to gain experience of producing a major festival.

The scheme aims to become a flagship for best practice and involves Arts Council England;

The Albany; Barbican; English National Ballet; Watermans and Roundhouse.

Each of the apprentices between the ages of 19- and 24-years old will be based at one of the five arts organisations for 12 months and will work towards a NVQ Level 2 in Live Events.

activepassport is the path to a new career



SUKHI KALIRAI
is interim chief executive officer at SkillsActive

According to an article I read recently, employers can invite individuals to apply for jobs by submitting their LinkedIn profile. In our fast-paced digital age, people expect almost instantaneous responses. Even the most resistant of us can't fail to be impressed by how social media has transformed the way we communicate.

The article also resonated with me because SkillsActive has been involved with the development of a new online skills record called activepassport. It aims to let individuals log all their qualifications, skills and experience; let employers verify their in-house training; and give training providers the chance to give an overview of a client's skills and qualifications.

As expected, this has been a long, technically-challenging process but one we hope will help achieve our goal of ensuring more people in our industry are better qualified and skilled. If we're to help people become more work-ready we have to ensure every skill and opportunity is at their disposal. Part of meeting this challenge is creating a system which allows gaps in training and skills to be recognised by both individuals and employers as well as giving training providers the chance to tailor courses/programmes they offer to meet these gaps.

As the sector skills council for active, leisure and wellbeing, accountability and endorsement are things we take very seriously. Verification is, therefore, at the heart of activepassport. Unlike traditional social media sites, activepassport has a validation and verification process which means users, whether they're individuals, training providers or employers, can feel confident the people they're connecting with have the right skills, training and experience.

We're now about to begin a three-month trial of activepassport with two major fitness employers, before rolling it out the rest of the industry. As with all digital platforms, activepassport will change and adapt according to the needs of its users so it will be interesting to see what this trial shows.



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Recruitment for management roles will involve attendance at an assessment centre. These will be held week commencing 12th December for positions at Dover Castle, Wrest Park, Hadrian's Wall and the Area Manager posts. Assessment centres for other management roles will be from week commencing 9th January.

To discover more and apply, please visit our website at www.english-heritage.org.uk/management-vacancies

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If you are self motivated, have a flexible attitude towards your work and want to become part of the Gulliver's team please in the first instance send your CV with current salary package to:

Ian Gardner (Operations Director)
Gulliver's World, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 9YZ
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SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES MANAGER



Stamford Endowed Schools require an experienced and commercially focused manager to develop the business and educational use of the three schools' sports and leisure facilities including the new 25m indoor swimming pool and gym complex at Stamford School scheduled to open in Spring 2012.

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Previous applicants need not apply.

Further details and an application form may be obtained from Mrs Jacqui Boles at: **Stamford Endowed Schools HR Office, Stamford High School, St Martin's, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 2LL**. Telephone 01780 484273, Fax 01780 484205, e-mail: jboles@ses.lincs.sch.uk Website: ses.lincs.sch.uk

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN FRIDAY 16 DECEMBER 2011

The Stamford Endowed Schools are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

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- Company profiles: including key information, contact details, images of products, a company logo and a picture of a key contact
- Multiple listings of industry suppliers
- Innovation roundup
- Web address book
- Product selector
- Organisation contact book

OPERATOR INFORMATION

- Key industry statistics and research
- 2012-2013 Diary: industry events, shows and networking opportunities
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Business Development Manager, *Anytime fitness, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, UK*
Operations Support Manager, *TED Leisure, Luton, UK*
Health and Fitness Supervisor, *University of Essex, £19,822 - £22,971 pa, UK*
Health and Aerobics Co-ordinator, *University of Essex, Southend, UK*
Part-Time Health and Fitness Advisors, *University of Essex, Southend, UK*
Visitor Experience Manager, *Heartlands, Pool, Cornwall, UK*
Part Time Cafe Assistant, *Jubilee Hall Trust, Covent Garden, UK*
Swim Teacher, *Everyone Active, Fareham, UK*
Membership Advisor, *Everyone Active, Hertford, UK*
Events Officer, *Greenwich Leisure Ltd, Hackney, UK*
Activities and Sports Development Manager, *Daventry Active Ltd, Daventry, UK*
UK Southern Sales Manager, *Barr + Wray, London*
Sales Advisor (Part Time), *Fitness Superstore, London, UK*
Sales Advisor (Full Time), *Fitness Superstore, London, UK*
Membership Consultant, *Everyone Active, Hinckley, UK*
County FA Development Manager, *Cheshire County Football Association, Cheshire, UK*
Operations Manager, *Ambassador Theatre Group, Aylesbury*
Recreation Assistant, *Highgate School, Highgate, North London, UK*
Personal Trainers, *Pure Gym Limited, Various Locations, UK*
Physiotherapy Opportunity, *Bishop Burton College, Bishop Burton, UK*
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General Manager, *Fusion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, UK*
General Manager – Leatherhead Leisure Centre, *Fusion, Mole Valley, Surrey, UK*
General Manager, *Fusion, Charnwood, Loughborough, UK*
Membership sales advisors, *Energie Group, Harrow, London, UK*
Dual Sales and Gym Instructors, *Energie Group, Harrow, London, UK*
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Beauty therapist, *Energie Group, Guildford, Surrey, UK*
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Full- and Part-Time Personal Trainers, *The Hogarth Group, West London, UK*
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Sports Facilities Duty Officer, *Bromsgrove School, Bromsgrove, UK*
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Assistant Leisure Club Manager, *Shire Hotels Ltd, Leeds, UK*
Full and Part Time Therapists, *Wildmoor Spa and Health Club, Stratford upon Avon, UK*
Beauty Therapist, *Center Parcs, Whinifell Forest, Cumbria, UK*
Spa Therapists (Full and Part time), *The Malvern Spa, Worcestershire, UK*
Group Spa Operations Manager, *ESPA International, Farnham*
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Property or Site Managers, *English Heritage, Various, UK*
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Property Manager, *English Heritage, Various, UK*
Commercial Managers, *English Heritage, Various, UK*
Personal Trainer, *The Gym Group, Various locations, UK*
UK Senior Sales Manager, *Wattbike Ltd, Nationwide, UK*
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The successful candidates should also be IT literate as The Hogarth Group operates the FitLinx Interactive Network.

Candidates should send a CV and supporting letter to:

**Terry Rodham, Group Health and Fitness Manager,
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Rank wins European Court case

Rank Group, the bingo hall and casino operator, has won its case at the European Court of Justice (ECJ) over claims that it had overpaid bingo tax by more than £250m.

The ECJ said HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) had breached European Union rules on fiscal neutrality due to different levels of VAT that had been applied to jackpot and similar machines.

Rank's bingo claims totalling £253.4m including interest had already been upheld by the VAT and Duties Tribunal and the High Court.

The company said it would now consider the implications of the ECJ's ruling with regards to a claim for nearly £31m including interest in relation to amusement machines.



Rank's claims had already been upheld by the VAT and Duties Tribunal

Deloitte VAT partner Anbreen Khan, who advised Rank Group, said: "This is a fair decision which corrects the unlawful application of VAT across the industry."

October sales growth for pubs and restaurants

The Coffer Peach Business Tracker, which charts the performance of a number of leading UK pub and restaurant chains, has reported an increase in like-for-like sales for October.

Compared with the same period last year, like-for-like sales were up 0.9 per cent and total

sales, which include new openings, showed an increase of more than 5 per cent.

It comes despite declining consumer confidence and ongoing concerns over the UK economy, with eating and drinking out continuing to outperform the retail sector.

First Leisuredome tenants revealed

A number of leisure operators have been confirmed among the first tenants to sign up to the new £50m Leisuredome development in Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

Local businessmen Mark and Clive Hamilton-Davies are behind the scheme, which received the green light from communities secretary Eric Pickles in September.

Newly-confirmed tenants include Tiny Tearaway, which will provide a simulated ice rink, a laser game, an activity zone and a soft play area, as well as a crèche facility.

Myrace.com has been appointed to manage ski racing; Crystal Blue is to run the surf centre and Terminal Velocity will operate the freeride centre at the Leisuredome development.

Meanwhile, brands such as Subway; SOHO Coffee Co; Tennessee Chicken; and Butcombe have also signed up to the development.



Work is due to start on Leisuredome early next year

Clive Hamilton-Davies said: "It's great to have already secured these companies and we look forward to announcing others in due course. We're talking to a fantastic range of top brands to be a part of this major extreme sports and recreational activity development."

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- Springboard +44 (0)20 7497 8654
www.springboarduk.org.uk
- SkillsActive +44 (0)20 7632 2000
www.skillsactive.com
- Tourism Management Institute +44 (0)1926 641506
www.tmi.org.uk
- Tourism Society +44 (0)20 8661 4636
www.tourismsociety.org
- VisitBritain +44 (0)20 7578 1000
www.visitbritain.com
- World Leisure +1 250 497 6578
www.worldleisure.org