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MATT SPENCE

On teaming up with
the Rockefeller family

DANIEL GAUTHIER

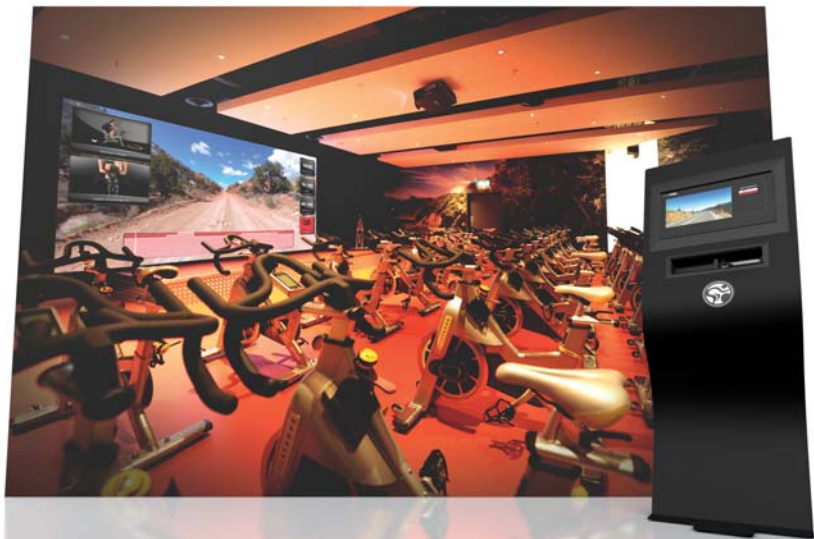
The co-founder of Cirque du Soleil on how his
latest project is redefining the ski experience

Mark Sesnan

GLL's plans for the London Aquatics
Centre and Multi-Use Arena

**THE WORLD'S
MOST INSPIRING
PLAYGROUNDS**

**How Kensington
and Chelsea is
putting culture
at the heart of all
development**



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PARALYMPIC TRIUMPH

I've never been prouder to be British than when watching the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

Coming off the back of such a successful Olympics, the Paralympics has had a leg up that has propelled it from sideline to centre stage in truly spectacular style.

And it could only really have happened in Britain – the birthplace of the Paralympic movement and a nation

where both disability sport and the needs of people with disabilities have had systematic, sustained and robust support for decades.

It's been stunning for many reasons – first and foremost in the fundamental way it's changed so many people's view of disability from being something that raises uncomfortable feelings, to a point where they can look past the disability to the person and celebrate their achievements as fellow human beings. The world will never be the same again.

The fact Britain did so well in the Paralympics is due in part to longstanding policies which enable people with disabilities to go about their lives and get involved in sport facing less obstacles than those living in many other nations.

These include anti-discrimination laws and rights of access which are delivered both at national and local government level via a whole raft of statutory services to ensure infrastructure is accessible and the playing field is as level as it can be.

But most importantly, sports governing bodies have committed to developing not only access for people with disabilities, but also adapted versions of sports such as sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball so people with disabilities can choose a sport which accommodates their physical strengths and



The final, sweetest part of all is the way the Paralympic Games has encouraged more ordinary people to take up exercise than the 'dull Olympics' – as it's affectionately known by Paralympic commentators

attributes and is enjoyable and challenging.

And it isn't all new news – many of the athletes who've become household names in 2012 have been competing and winning medals on the world stage for decades. It's taken high profile TV coverage and London's sell-out crowds to bring them to everyone's attention.

Channel 4 has also done an amazing job of branding the Paralympics with its 'Superheroes' adverts for Paralympics GB – the first time the creative might of the UK's world class advertising industry has been thrown behind disability to raise profiles and change perceptions.

We laughed, cried and screamed our way through the Paralympics as competitors pulled out phenomenal performances of sheer athletic brilliance and now we have a new set of household names to inspire a generation of disabled and able bodied athletes.

And the final, sweetest part of all is the way the Paralympics has encouraged more ordinary people to take up exercise than even the 'dull Olympics' (as it's affectionately known by Paralympic commentators), on the grounds that 'if they can do it, then so can I'.

Liz Terry, Editor Twitter @elizterry

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Buyers' guide:

For suppliers of products and services in the leisure markets, turn to p104

Four Seasons signs deal to operate Serengeti lodge

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts is to take over the operation of Bilila Lodge in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park after signing an agreement with the property's owner. The deal will come into effect during the third quarter, with the property to be renamed Four Seasons Safari Lodge Serengeti. James Kosticky has been named as general manager of the lodge.

Facilities at the lodge include a 4,000sq ft (372sq m) spa with six standalone treatment rooms. All of the treatment rooms contain a full shower/steam shower, while one offers dual soaking tubs.



IMAGE: ROBIN ARNOLD/TT NEWS

Latin America and US markets remain strong

HRG: Latin America leads hotel rates growth

The latest data on hotel rates has revealed a fragmented global picture, with Latin America and the US showing signs of recovery, while the Eurozone is still struggling.

According to the latest bi-annual hotel survey from Hogg Robinson Group, the strongest growth in hotel rates during the first half of 2012 took place in Latin America. Mexico City reported the highest increase in room rates at 30 per cent, as growth in demand, coupled with a lack of new openings, drove an aggressive increase in rates.

Across the wider Latin American region, the Brazilian cities of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo reported increases of 15 per cent and 23 per cent respectively.

Key destinations in the US – including New York and San Francisco – all saw average hotel room rates rise in the first half of 2012 as business activity increased in line with economic performance.

The financial crisis affected average room rates across the Eurozone, leading to rate decreases in key European cities – notably in Barcelona, Spain, where rates fell by 22 per cent. Madrid and Dublin also reported 2 and 6 per cent rate decreases respectively.

Elsewhere in the world, hotel rates in India were driven down by the country's economic slowdown and by a lack of capital for new investments.

IMG signs deal for Marvel park

Ilyas and Mustafa Galadari (IMG) Group has signed a new licence deal with Marvel Entertainment to develop a branded attraction in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Marvel Adventure will be an indoor family entertainment centre and is due to open in late 2013 as part of a new 1.2 million sq ft (111,484sq m) themed destination in the City of Arabia development.

Work has now started on constructing the 350,000sq ft (32,516sq m) Marvel Adventure complex, which is set to include retail and dining facilities.

A number of interactive experiences based on Marvel characters also form part of the plans for the new attraction, in addition to expansive common areas and facilities.

Marvel Entertainment International president Simon Phillips said: "We are thrilled to be



Work has started on the Marvel-branded family entertainment facility

working with the IMG Group to bring some of Marvel's most popular characters to Dubai.

"Whether it's having fun at one of the entertainment experiences, hanging out with friends and enjoying a meal or collecting the latest Marvel gadgets and action figures, there is truly something for everyone at Marvel Adventure." Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d9xoT>

11 new spas planned for Resense during 2013

Management company Resense Spa is set to open 11 new spas during 2013 as part of a larger expansion strategy. Three of the new spas will be operated as full-service Resense Spas while the other eight will be managed under the Kempinski, The Spa brand.

The Resense Spas – described as the ultimate European luxury spa experience – have been uniquely tailored for each location. The first Resense Spas will be situated in Accra, Ghana (at the Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City); Cairo, Egypt (as part of Kempinski Hotel Royal Maxim); and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (at the Kempinski Hotel Riyadh).

The Kempinski hotels that will host the new Kempinski, The Spas are in Austria, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Namibia and Oman, while three more will open in China. Kempinski, The Spa is described



Resense Spas plans to have 80 spas operating by the end of 2015

as a luxurious, seasonal concept and the preferred suppliers are Element Herbology, Daniele de Winter and Thémae – although brands will be chosen according to spa location and target market and have been adapted for Kempinski. The product house for Resense will be announced shortly.

A joint venture between Kempinski and consultancy Raison d'Etre, Resense currently has 40 spas under contract. Details: www.resensespas.com

Sydney Aquarium to relaunch as Sea Life attraction

Sydney Aquarium is to relaunch as a Sea Life-branded attraction in September following a six-month overhaul – its first major redevelopment since opening in 1988.

Merlin Entertainments has invested AU\$10m (US\$5.5m, €8.6m, €6.7m) as part of its efforts

to bring the Darling Harbour-based aquarium under the Sea Life banner. The transformation of the attraction has included the creation of 14 newly-themed zones, such as the Shark Walk; a Tropical Bay of Rays habitat; an interactive Touch Pool; and a Shipwreck area.

Work starts on Warsaw project

A groundbreaking event has taken place in order to mark the start of construction work at Adventure World Warsaw – a new theme park at Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Poland.

The development of the 240-hectare (593-acre) attraction is intended to provide Poland with a comparable experience to other European theme parks, such as Europa-Park in Rust, Germany.

Companies involved with the development include JoraVision, Vekoma Rides Manufacturing and AGS Architects – all based in The Netherlands, as well as Poland-based RCK and Intech.

German water ride manufacturer Hafema and consulting firm Tebodin will also work on the construction of the €400m (US\$490m, £312m) Adventure World Warsaw, which is due for completion in 2014 and is being funded by



Adventure World Warsaw aims to become one of Europe's leading parks

a consortium of private and institutional investors registered in Luxembourg – Las Palm.

Adventure World Warsaw executive managing director Steven Shaiken said: "The scale of Adventure World Warsaw is without precedent in Eastern Europe."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=S3N5N>

Japan's first Evian-branded spa for Tokyo

Japan's first Evian-branded spa has been unveiled at Palace Hotel Tokyo – part of a US\$1.2bn (€980m, £770m) mixed-use development in the heart of the city.

Located on the fifth floor of the hotel, the 1,200sq m (12,197sq ft) spa is inspired by the Alpine journey taken by the France-based company's natural mineral water.

Facilities include five treatment rooms and a spa suite – named after Alpine peaks, as well as heated baths, two saunas and a cold plunge pool. Men's and women's relaxation lounges also form part of the Evian spa, which boasts views overlooking Tokyo's Imperial Palace Gardens and Mount Fuji.

The treatment menu – like the spa's design – has taken inspiration from the purifying journey of Evian's natural mineral water and



Facilities at the new 1,200sq m Evian spa include five treatment rooms

uses products from French spa skincare companies Omnisens and Anne Semonin. MEC Design International Corporation led the design of the Evian Spa.

Consultant Patrick Saussay, previously general manager of Swiss spa and skincare firm After the Rain, has been appointed to develop the Evian spa concept for future projects. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=A8X7K>

Oetker secures exclusive partnership with Guerlain

The Oetker Collection has entered into an exclusive partnership with Guerlain for the future joint development of branded spas, which will form part of new "masterpiece" hotels. The first property expected to benefit from the new agreement will be Palais

Namaskar in Marrakech, Morocco, which opened its doors earlier this year.

Facilities include the 650sq m (6,997sq ft) Le Spa Namaskar, which includes four individual treatment cabins with outdoor terraces and two double cabins with private hammams.

Fitness First acquires four clubs in Dubai from Hayya

Fitness First Middle East has taken over a chain of community health clubs formerly operated under the Hayya brand in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The deal will see four full-service clubs incorporated in the Fitness First estate, with each rebranded as Fitness First sites. However, all four will maintain their unique family focus.

The clubs – Fitness First Al Manzil, Fitness First Lakes, Fitness First Meadows and Fitness First Town centre – will all be grouped under the Fitness First Community clubs umbrella.



Spanish clubs could suffer membership losses

VAT on Spanish health clubs increases to 21 per cent

VAT paid by health club operators across Spain is to increase from the current rate of 8 per cent to 21 per cent later this year. There is concern among stakeholders in the Spanish fitness industry that the VAT rate rise will hit the already under-pressure membership numbers at health clubs.

When neighbouring Portugal increased its VAT rate on health clubs in 2011 – from 5 per cent to 23 per cent – the Portuguese trade association for fitness (Associação de Ginásios y Academias de Portugal, AGAP) said it had directly resulted in more than 100,000 cancelled memberships.

New look Flanders Fields Museum reopens in Ypres

In Flanders Field Museum, the heritage attraction examining the events of World War One (WWI), has reopened its doors in Ypres, Belgium, following an extensive renovation and expansion project.

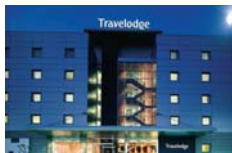
The 5,000sq m (53,819sq ft) museum is housed in the town's iconic Cloth Hall and its redesign has been led by Brussels-based design practice *noAarchitecten*.

A new WWI research centre has been created at the In Flanders Fields Museum, which itself has increased in size by 50 per cent following the expansion.

Furniture giant IKEA to launch budget hotel chain

The parent company of furniture giant IKEA has announced plans to launch a 'budget design' hotel chain for the European market. Inter IKEA, which owns the intellectual property rights to IKEA, is considering more than 100 locations and it is understood that negotiations are at an advanced stage for sites in Germany, the UK, the Netherlands and Poland.

The hotels will likely be operated by an established hotel management firm outside the IKEA group of companies, with the properties being owned by Inter IKEA.



One of Travelodge's UK budget hotels

Travelodge safeguards future with restructuring

UK budget hotel group Travelodge has moved to secure its long-term future after agreeing a financial restructuring, while also initiating a Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA).

The chain worked with investors GoldenTree Asset Management, Avenue Capital Group and Goldman Sachs to implement the restructuring, which will see £75m injected into the group.

Travelodge's portfolio will receive a £55m investment to refurbish 175 hotels starting early next year, while its debt will be reduced from £635m to £329m.

Scottish cities among top European hotel locations

A new report from sector analyst STR Global has included three Scottish cities - Inverness, Edinburgh and Stirling - among the top five European locations for hotel occupancy. The three cities came second, third and fifth respectively, while other Scottish locations such as Dundee (seventh), Glasgow (11th), Aberdeen (12th) and St Andrews (17th) also featured.

In addition to its ranking on STR's occupancy list, St Andrews also came second highest in terms of revenue per available room - behind Paris and above London.

2012 Games 'will benefit' sector

The UK sector "will eventually enjoy" benefits from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games despite a slow July, according to PKF Hotel Consultancy Services.

In its latest preliminary figures, London saw room rates increase 17.3 per cent for the month. However, occupancy fell 14.9 per cent and rooms yield was down 0.2 per cent.

Meanwhile, a 4 per cent growth in regional hotels' room rate was more than offset by a 5.7 per cent decline in occupancy, which led to a 1.9 per cent drop in rooms yield.

PKF Hotel Consultancy Services partner Robert Barnard said the results for July remained impressive, despite "not much evidence of an Olympic-inspired uplift".

"We have seen the country's reputation boosted by what have been widely recognised



London hoteliers saw room rates grow 17.3 per cent, but occupancy fell

as amongst the best Olympics in recent history," said Barnard.

"I'm confident that the hotel sector will eventually enjoy the benefits of the Games - although probably not until after the last athletes have boarded their planes home."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=w2m3x>

BDL secures £6.5m to build and run Shetland hotel

BDL Management has secured a £6.5m funding package from the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) towards the development and operation of a new hotel in the Shetland Islands.

RBS' Corporate and Institutional Banking arm has provided the funding, with the new

hotel to be located in Brae. BDL's management contract will last 10 years.

It is expected the 100-bedroom property will primarily accommodate workers on a new gas project - ensuring high occupancy rates.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=o601K>

Starwood brand publishes mobile research

Four Points by Sheraton, the hospitality brand owned by Starwood Hotels and Resorts, has published new research examining the mobile device habits of business travellers.

StudyLogic surveyed 6,000 guests - 1,000 from Brazil, China, Germany, India, the US and the UK - on behalf of the operator, with the study conducted during March.

Most guests (55 per cent) took three/four mobile devices on trips, with Brazilians most likely to take five or more and a third of Germans travelling with two or less.

Smartphones were found to be the main device taken on business trips (74 per cent), followed by tablets (65 per cent); music players (43 per cent); and laptops (32 per cent).



Laptops were taken by 32 per cent of travellers, according to the report

Reasons for using mobile devices include to check email (90 per cent) and internet browsing or social networking (75 per cent).

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=k6XzD>



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Public consultation for £150m Ebbw Vale track

A consultation period has begun on plans to build a £150m race track at Ebbw Vale.

The Circuit of Wales has been billed as a world-class complex and will be centred around a performance circuit designed to host global events such as MotoGP and World Superbikes. The company behind the proposals, Heads of the Valleys Development Company, is headed by former banker Michael Carrick and also sees former Labour leader Lord Kinnock chairing its advisory board.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=v6f2I>



Michel Ternier speaking at the business summit

Olympics deliver UK leisure business boost

The government has vowed to capitalise on the impact of London's Olympic Games on the UK economy after businesses secured deals worth up to £14bn in recent weeks.

During the Games, leading government figures such as chancellor George Osborne were among 35 ministers to meet with around 3,000 business leaders and global representatives. Brazilian vice president Michel Ternier and UK deputy prime minister Nick Clegg hosted the Brazil Business Summit on 11 August to forge partnerships between the two nations.

Intertain launches new Maluko brand

The operator of the Walkabout chain of bars, Intertain, has launched a new late-night concept called Maluko.

The first new Maluko site opened in Leeds in early August following a £500,000 refurbishment and redesign of a formerly Risa-branded property in the city centre.

The launch of the Tiki-style Maluko bar concept is part of Intertain's larger redevelopment programme, which has seen Walkabout bars in Watford, Henley, Liverpool and Temple all receive significant renovations.

Approval for Silverstone scheme

A Museum of Motor Sport and three hotels are among the new additions planned for Silverstone after an extensive redevelopment of the Northamptonshire motor racing circuit was approved.

South Northamptonshire Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council have given the go ahead to the scheme, which aims to secure the venue's future as an international motorsport facility.

Silverstone Holdings – the commercial arm of the British Racing Drivers' Club (BRDC) – is behind the plans, which will help establish the circuit as a leading leisure, business and entertainment facility.

A kart track, an outdoor stage and a business park also form part of the project, along with an education campus and other ancillary



Silverstone Holdings is behind the ambitious plans for the race track

developments. It follows the completion of a new pit and paddock complex last year.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=k6E3Q>

ISG nets £61m deal for sixth Center parcs

Construction firm ISG has secured a £61m deal to build the accommodation element of a new Center Parcs holiday village in Bedfordshire.

Center Parcs Woburn Forest will be the operator's fifth UK village and the project will see ISG deliver 625 lodges across the 365-acre (148-hectare) site, which is due to open in spring 2014.

Commencing in November, the 59-week fast-track construction scheme will lead to the creation of Woodland, Executive and Exclusive lodges configured around woodland clusters.

When completed, the £250m village will also include a 75-bedroom hotel, an Aqua Sana spa and two main centres housing indoor sports facilities, a swimming pool and restaurants.



Work to start the accommodation element will commence in November

Private equity giant Blackstone, Center Parcs' owner, will invest £100m into the venture while four UK banks – RBS, Barclays, HSBC and Lloyds Banking Group – have committed to a loan of approximately £150m. Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=Q7e0K>

Camelot defeated in Health Lottery legal challenge

National Lottery operator Camelot has been defeated in its legal action against the Gambling Commission, which approved The Health Lottery's license to operate in the UK.

According to Camelot, a loophole in the Gambling Act 2005 has allowed The Health

Lottery to "position itself as a direct rival to the National Lottery" and has labelled the High Court decision as "legally flawed".

The National Lottery operator has now confirmed its intention to appeal the ruling.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=t6P2n>

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Nicola Spiers-Keleher,
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YMCA refurbishes two Y+ Fitness gyms in London

YMCA London South West's Y+ Fitness gyms – Surbiton and Hawker Centre, Kingston – are being transformed as part of refurbishments at both locations.

The 285sq m (3,068sq ft) facility at YMCA Surbiton has already been unveiled following its facelift, with 32 stations of Precor cv equipment installed.

Meanwhile, the revamp of the 225sq m (2,422sq ft) facility at YMCA Hawker Centre is part of a wider development and will feature a new studio when complete.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=27M9b>



Britons' healthy life expectancy is on the increase

ONS: UK residents living longer, healthier lives

People in the UK are living longer, healthier lives than ever before according to an Office for National Statistics (ONS) report.

The healthy life expectancy increased by more than two years between 2005 and 2010, with more than 75 per cent of a lifetime spent in good health from birth.

The figures do, however, differ regionally. While the proportion of life spent in very good or good general health is increasing in England and Wales it is, on the whole, falling in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=P6i3E>

DC Leisure secures Horsham contract renewal

DC Leisure has secured a renewal of its management deal to operate three facilities on behalf of Horsham District Council.

The deal – which followed a bidding process involving five organisations – will see DC Leisure continue to manage The Pavilions in the Park, Steyning Leisure Centre and Billingshurst Leisure Centre for a 10-year period from 1 December.

The new contract includes a detailed performance monitoring system to ensure that important participation.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=LoK5F>

DLL to launch PT studio concept

David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) has announced the launch of a high street-based personal training concept, which will be trialled in three locations from the end of September.

The first DL Studio site will open on Upper Richmond Road in Putney, London, while a second location is expected to follow in Winchester – subject to planning consent.

A third site is being planned in the centre of London and DLL is looking to roll-out the format on a wider scale. The first three DL Studios represent a £500,000 investment.

It is anticipated the new concept will provide one-to-one personal training sessions, exercise classes and group training run by DLL-qualified instructors.

DLL chief executive Scott Lloyd said: "The creation of our new studio training concept



The first DL Studio is due to open in Putney by the end of September

provides a complementary alternative to the traditional gym and brings an exciting new offer to the high street.

"We are excited by the potential for this concept, which fills a gap in the market."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=I9l8e>

FIA CEO calls for legacy 'unity'

Fitness Industry Association (FIA) CEO David Stalker has called on all political parties and stakeholders across the leisure sector to join forces to ensure a lasting legacy from the 2012 London Olympics.

In a passionate blog post, Stalker heralded the Olympics as a "magical event" and added that to squander the chance of benefiting from the mood created by the Games would be "criminally negligent".

Stalker said: "Creating a lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games is too important for knee-jerk decisions and party political positioning. Even before the Games, we learnt that Tony Blair was to return as a policy advisor to Labour on legacy. Yesterday we had the announcement that Seb Coe would take up the same role for



Stalker said the Games' legacy is "too important" for party politicking

the government. My hope is that they pick up the phone to each other and tackle this challenge hand in hand."

He also offered seven key recommendations for legacy plans, which include ensuring that the thousands of volunteers who helped make the Games aren't "lost" as a resource.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d8D3w>

£6m Godalming centre opens its doors

Waverley Borough Council has opened the new £6m Godalming Leisure Centre, which took just over a year to complete.

ISG delivered the Pozzoni-designed facility, which is operated by DC Leisure and houses a 60-station gym – 40 stations of which are

Precor cardio equipment. The rest of the first-floor fitness suite contains around 20 stations of resistance equipment from Technogym, with users able to tailor sessions to tone, build up muscle and improve general fitness.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=g1o8N>

Derby arena development moves forward

Multi-million pound plans to build a new velodrome and sports centre near Derby's Pride Park Stadium have been given the green light by the Environmental Agency.

In a statement, the organisation said it was satisfied with the plans to build the centre on a former landfill site. The approval clears the final hurdle for the £28m facility, which will include a 250m cycling track.

A 1.5km (0.9-mile) outdoor closed cycle trail, a sports infield accommodating 12 badminton courts and hospitality facilities will also form part of the new centre.

Members of Derby City Council's (DCC) cabinet previously approved the appointment of Bowmer and Kirkland as the preferred contractor for the scheme, with Morgan Sindall named as reserve contractor.



FaulknerBrowns Architects are behind the design of Derby's new arena

The Derbyshire-based firm held off competition from four rival bidders for the contract, which included BAM, Galliford Try and Interserve. Designed by FaulknerBrowns Architects, the 14,500sq m (156,077sq ft) multi-sport arena received planning permission earlier this year. The new arena is due for completion in early 2014. It also forms part of the city's wider Leisure Strategy.

Funding for Swansea watersports centre

Swansea's new 360 Beach and Watersports centre has been awarded £25,000 by Sport Wales to acquire equipment for its beachfront hub. Due for completion in September, the new Mumbles Road facility will focus on three main beach sports and three main watersports – football, rugby, volleyball, kayaking, powerkiting and stand-up paddle boarding.

Among kit to be acquired are 10 sit-on-top kayaks; seven stand-up paddle boards; footballs and volleyballs; and floodlighting.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=C4a6g>



S&P Architects designed the £20m development

EFDS unveils new participation campaign

A new campaign to promote participation at all levels – Pass The Baton – was unveiled by the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) at the end of August ahead of the Paralympic Games in London.

The organisation said it hoped the increased interest in the Paralympic Games would establish an inclusive legacy for disabled people.

Nine London Underground and three Newcastle Metro stations host the poster element of the campaign in order to emphasise the availability of sport for all. Meanwhile, participants register online for information on sport and exercise programmes.

EFDS chief executive Barry Horne said: "We know the London 2012 Paralympic Games is



The campaign promotes sport as accessible to all

a fantastic opportunity to motivate more disabled people in sport.

"Let's get together and make more sporting opportunities inclusive."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=2U1B4>

Rotherham United's £20m New York Stadium opens

Rotherham United Football Club (RUF) has returned to its home town after a four year absence, with the new £20m New York Stadium opening its doors.

Although the 12,000-seat venue was not at full capacity for its first match – a friendly against Barnsley on 21 July – the club confirmed it will be fully complete in time for the start of the 2012-13 season.

S&P Architects designed the stadium, which was built by Gleds along with GMI Construction. 3E Consulting Engineers have also worked on the scheme.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=om6yo>



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National Football Museum reaches visitor landmark

Manchester's National Football Museum (NFM) has attracted 100,000 visitors in its first six weeks since opening on 6 July.

As a result, it is likely to surpass its target of reaching 350,000 visitors in its first year. Entrance to the museum is free but exhibits include exclusive paid-for interactives.

NFM director Kevin Moore said: "It's happened far quicker than even we had anticipated and validates all the reasons we gave for moving the National Football Museum to Manchester in the first place."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=y6q1t>



The Dreamland park site is currently derelict

Green light for council's Dreamland CPO plans

Communities secretary Eric Pickles has approved Thanet District Council's (TDC) plans to serve a compulsory purchase order for Margate's Dreamland site.

The council is looking to secure the land to move forward with the development of the world's first heritage amusement park of historic rides and attractions.

TDC will now work to assume control of the land before access can be granted – a move that will open up funding worth more than £10m to deliver the scheme.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=aoW3b>

Mace sponsors 'Phantom Railings' at British Museum

Mace is sponsoring the British Museum's 'Phantom Railings' project – a public art intervention which is designed to focus on London's wartime memories.

The multi-disciplinary firm is currently involved with the development of the museum's World Conservation and Exhibition Centre, which will open in 2014.

'Phantom Railings' is an interactive sound sculpture using the movement of pedestrians to "evoke the ghost of a lost iron fence" removed during the 1940s.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=L1c5n>

UK arrival for Rovio's Angry Birds

The first Angry Birds Activity Park in the UK has been officially launched at Sundown Adventureland in Nottinghamshire – a theme park designed for children under the age of 10.

The new visitor experience sees the digital world of Angry Birds combined with the physical world at Sundown Adventureland and will feature activities for children.

Designed and manufactured by Kettering-based Lappset, the Angry Birds Activity Parks encourage people to surrender their video game controllers in favour of outdoor play. The activity areas are based on the popular mobile game Angry Birds, produced by Finnish company Rovio.

Lappset UK managing director Chris Jones said: "As a company, we are very keen to encourage people of all ages to get outside



Adventureland manager Paul Tomlinson (left) with Chris Jones of Lappset

and get active and this seems like a perfect way to continue our mission.

"Lovers of the digital game will hopefully want to try our parks which combine fun and exercise – both of which are extremely important for social and cognitive development."

To read about the world's first Angry Bird theme park attraction visit: <http://lei.sr?a=s3u2S>

'World-class' future for Nottingham Castle

Nottingham residents are being given the opportunity to comment on "exciting proposals" for the transformation of the city's castle into a "world-class tourist destination".

The Castle Working Group – a business-led partnership – has launched a consultation into the plans, nearly 370 years to the day after Charles I raised the Royal Standard at Nottingham Castle.

Initial ideas outlined by the group include placing Robin Hood at the heart of the experience and making more of the cave network located under the building.

An exploration of Nottingham's national role in social protest and rebellion and the creation of a new visitor centre at the entrance to the castle are also among the proposals.



The Nottingham Castle scheme is lead by The Castle Working Group

The Grade I-listed Nottingham Castle currently attracts nearly 270,000 visitors a year, while also hosting a range of events such as the Robin Hood Pageant and Outdoor Theatre. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=048sk>

£5.5m funding for Northern Ireland police museum

The RUC George Cross Foundation has been handed £5.5m from the Treasury towards a new museum at the Police Service of Northern Ireland's headquarters in Knock, Belfast.

Located close to the Police Memorial Garden, the new attraction will examine the

history of policing across the island of Ireland and will replace the existing Police Museum.

The museum will cover policing developments from the foundation of uniformed policing in 1814 through to the present day. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=23X4Y>

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Islington leisure centre reopens in legacy mode

Sobell Leisure Centre in north London has reopened after serving as a practice venue for volleyball athletes for the 2012 Games.

Team GB and 11 other national teams used the sports hall during the Olympics, which has been given a £250,000 revamp.

Lasting improvements for sports hall users include a new sprung wooden floor, and international-standard lighting.

The sports hall has now been returned to Islington Council and partner Aquaterra Leisure and is once again fully open.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=W1N3d>



BMX is now a rapidly growing sport in the UK

BMX star partners with council to build new track

North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) has unveiled a BMX track at Sheffield Park in Scunthorpe, as part of a partnership with international BMX rider Mark Harrison.

The council provided equipment, materials and land as part of the project, while Harrison – who comes from Scunthorpe – designed and built the new track.

NLC cabinet member for customer services Carl Sherwood said: "BMX riding is a rapidly growing sport and there is a shortage of quality BMX tracks."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=15275>

C-SALT trust to manage Wokingham facilities

Wokingham Borough Council-owned leisure facilities are now operated by a new trust linked to Leisure Connection.

C-SALT – launched in July – will manage Loddon Valley, Carnival Pool and St Crispins, with each of the venues retaining the Harpers brand and current facilities.

The charitable trust will reinvest any of the profits generated into improving facilities, while also being able to benefit from VAT exemption, business rate relief and other funding opportunities.

London 2012 to improve appeal

New research by VisitBritain suggests London 2012 will improve the UK's appeal, after 80 per cent of tourists last year felt at least "very welcome" during their stay.

The tourism agency sponsored a question as part of the Civil Aviation Authority's poll of nearly 9,000 departing tourists, undertaken over the last three years.

In that time, VisitBritain reported a "steady improvement" in how welcome the visitors felt and in how likely those people were to recommend the UK as a destination.

English-speaking markets such as the US, Canada and Australia were among those feeling most welcome, with 40 per cent of Americans saying they felt "extremely welcome".

Attractions (22 per cent) and restaurants (21 per cent) are most likely to be the first point



The UK is expected to attract more inbound visits from abroad in 2013

described as most welcoming, with pubs and bars coming in at 13 per cent.

VisitBritain director of strategy and communications Patricia Yates said: "Enhancing the world's perceptions of a British welcome will help us attract more visitors."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=14p3g>

ACE announces £1.2m of touring funding

Arts Council England (ACE) has awarded more than £1.2m of grants to 11 organisations in the third round of its Strategic touring programme.

The initiative aims to increase arts access across the country, particularly in areas where engagement levels are currently low and where there is a reliance on touring.

ACE is currently halfway through the inaugural year of the Strategic touring fund, which has seen more than £5.7m distributed to arts organisations out of the total £15m allocated for the year.

Among the successful applicants in the third round is a nationwide tour of artistic work by dead and disabled artists led by DaDa, as well as a workshop fronted by Home Live Art.



ACE is currently halfway through the inaugural year of the touring fund

An ACE spokesperson said: "It aims to facilitate stronger relationships between arts organisations and local promoters, who are on the 'supply' and 'demand' side of touring."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=13v3B>

VisitScotland launches campaign for 'late bookers'

VisitScotland is looking to capitalise on a "last minute surge" in potential domestic visitors this autumn after announcing details of a £3m seasonal marketing push.

According to the national tourism agency, there is evidence to suggest that UK residents

had delayed their holidays as a result of London 2012 and poor weather.

VisitScotland said that research undertaken by Travelsupermarket had shown 3 million Brits could now be looking to holiday later than usual after delaying plans.

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Hilton's 'football hotel' to feature luxury spa

A spa is among facilities at Hilton Worldwide's first UK dual-branded property – the Hilton and Hampton by Hilton at St. George's Park.

Located at the Football Association's (FA) new National Football Centre in Burton upon Trent, the Health Club and Spa at St George's Park will offer fitness and spa facilities as well as an indoor pool and relaxation area. The Spa includes four treatment rooms offering treatments by Comfort Zone, exclusively designed for the St George's Park property.

Accommodation is offered in the 142-bed-room upscale Hilton Hotels and Resorts hotel, and the budget 86-bedroom Hampton by Hilton for the 'value-wise' guest.



The spa will house treatment rooms and a pool

Plans submitted for Cornish holiday park

Espalier Developments has submitted a planning application for the construction of a spa at its planned £50m Millendreath holiday village in Looe, Cornwall, UK.

The developer has already revealed proposals for 150 luxury holiday homes on the site and has now made public its intention to establish a luxury spa as part of the resort. BFLS designed the building which will house the spa, which will include treatment rooms; a health and fitness club; and an indoor swimming pool.

Following consultation with residents and the Cornwall Council, Espalier has specified design adjustments to reduce the impact of the original concept, presented to residents and the public earlier in the year. The project team includes Arup, the engineers which developed London's Olympic velodrome and LDA, the landscape architects who master-planned the Olympic Park.

Rick Gibbs, director of The Millendreath Project, said: "The new building will offer facilities typical of high quality leisure spas with a focus on health and wellbeing."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=08y4E>

Kohler unveils new spa services

A new range of therapeutic and innovative services has been unveiled by Kohler Waters Spa at three sites – Kohler and Burr Ridge in the US and St Andrews, UK.

Hydrotherapy services, advanced massage technology and experiences tailored for men and teens are among the new introductions, with all three now offering the group's Hamman Ritual.

The Kohler Waters Spa flagship location at Kohler's American Club Resort now offers 12 new services, including five for those aged between 12- and 15-years-old.

Kohler also offers the WaveMotion Body treatment and is now one of just four spas in the US to have installed the technology, which provides 3D movement allowing guests to experience a feeling of weightlessness.



The experiences tailored for teenage guests are among the new services

A spokesperson said: "WaveMotion affords the technician the opportunity to provide enhanced stretches and movements personalized to each individual."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=e1jsh>

Spa planned for Great Yarmouth facility

Great Yarmouth's Marina Centre is in line for a redevelopment which is set to include the introduction of a spa.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) is in discussions to find funding for a £3m regeneration of the iconic sea-front centre, which houses a 25m swimming pool, a health and fitness club, indoor bowls green and sports courts.

The council is eager to improve services at the venue – operated by the Great Yarmouth Sport and Leisure Trust for the last six years.

The launch of a spa and wet areas – such as saunas, steamrooms and relaxation spaces – is among the proposals being considered in a business plan drawn up by GYBC, which is understood to be using the recent



Plans for the Marina Centre include a day spa with treatment rooms

redevelopment of the Waterlane centre in nearby Lowestoft as a template for its plans.

The Waterlane centre opened earlier this year and now includes a thermal spa, body treatment rooms and a 100-station gym.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=u4N1X>

Chamneys announces expansion of medical services

Chamneys, the UK destination spa group, has expanded the medical services on offer at its flagship site in Tring, Hertfordshire.

The WellWoman and Wellman screening programmes provide a full MOT, which includes blood tests and heart and lung function tests.

Meanwhile, the Tring Medical Centre now offers injury and pain management, weight management and detox services. There's also a Health Heart Programme offering one-off heart checks, rehabilitation and prevention schemes.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=u4N1X>

Extra space approved for LDN pod hotel

Plans for a Japanese-style pod hotel and rooftop bar at London's historic Trocadero complex have been given the green light by Westminster City Council (WCC).

Criterion Capital is the developer behind the project, which will see the hotel accommodation being offered across 583 bedrooms measuring between 9sq m and 17sq m (97sq ft and 183 sq ft).

Plans to create a 495-bedroom hotel at The Trocadero were originally granted planning permission in 2010.

Current proposals for the LDN hotel have added 88 rooms and the rooftop bar within a space previously occupied by Funland, an amusement arcade acquired in 2005 that was phased out and closed in 2011.



London's historic Trocadero will house the new 583-bedroom pod hotel

WCC's Heather Acton said: "This scheme will help to breathe new life into one of London's most famous buildings." *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=i7X3T>*

KSL acquires landmark Belfry resort

US firm KSL Capital Partners acquired the Belfry Hotel and Golf Resort – located amid 550 acres (223 hectares) of Warwickshire countryside.

A subsidiary of the De Vere Group has been chosen to run the resort, with the group having owned the Belfry prior to its sale to an affiliate of The Quinn Group in 2005.

It is the world's only four-time host of the Ryder Cup golf tournament and features a 324-bedroom property housing seven dining outlets, a 25,000sq ft (2,323sq m) fitness centre and simply THE spa.

The Belfry's spa – inspired by Eastern promise and ultimate tranquility – currently includes 10 treatment rooms; a bespoke pregnancy room; and a double treatment room.

Elsewhere, the spa includes a manicure and pedicure room and post-treatment areas.



The Warwickshire property is the only four-time host of the Ryder Cup

ESPA, Clarins, Solutions, Jessica, Fake Bake and Bare Escentuals products are used.

KSL is now proposing to undertake a full revamp of the hotel – including all public areas, bedrooms, dining outlets and meeting spaces to enhance visitor experience.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=09ToG>

£9m leisure development for Glasgow Fort complex

Work started in August on the construction of a £9m leisure development at the Glasgow Fort Shopping Park on the eastern outskirts of Glasgow in Scotland.

The scheme will deliver a 45,000sq ft (4,181sq m) extension housing a Vue-branded cinema

and five restaurants. Millar Construction UK has been appointed lead contractor.

Glasgow Fort Shopping Park manager Phil Goodman said: "We can look forward to a major extension to the park's offering."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=k4Ezh>

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Design news

From the Louvre's Islamic Art Galleries to a Peruvian spa, we check out what's hot

Project Hotel Alfonso XIII

Design The Gallery

Location Seville, Spain

Seville's Hotel Alfonso XIII relaunched

Seville's iconic Hotel Alfonso XIII – which originally opened in 1929 – has reopened following a \$25m restoration and reinvention by The Gallery, part of HBA's London team.

The hotel features 151 guestrooms, which have been designed in Moorish, Andalucian and Castilian styles to reflect Seville's main design influences.

It has two restaurants, a pool café and an American Bar. As part of the renovation, the existing fitness centre was expanded and a yoga garden and sauna added.



The Hotel Alfonso XIII is owned by Starwood



The existing glasshouses will be refurbished

Project Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Design TBA

Location Edinburgh, UK

Royal Botanic Garden masterplan

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh has announced details of its planned £40m masterplan development project. The announcement follows the release of a £1.5m fund from the Scottish government for the project, part of a £26m funding package aimed at creating a greener Scotland.

The masterplan includes the creation of the Scottish School of Botany & Horticulture, the refurbishment of the historic glasshouses and creation of new state-of-the-art glasshouses and improved visitor facilities.



The products used within the spa use native plant extracts

Project Hypnôze spa

Design Michael Simonato

Location Cuzco, Peru

Andean spa opens in Cuzco

A new Andean spa has opened at Orient Express Hotels' new Palacio Nazarenas hotel in Cuzco, Peru.

The Hypnôze spa has a patio overlooking an outdoor pool; five treatment rooms, including a couple's suite with a private pool; a relaxation lounge; and a specialist practitioner's room. The spa was created by Michael Simonato, who chose to highlight the historical significance of the building by creating glass floors in two of the treatment rooms. These expose an original Inca wall and stream beneath the floor.



The galleries are covered by a gold iridescent steel roof

Project	Louvre Islamic Art Galleries
Design	Mario Bellini/Rudy Ricciotti
Location	Paris, France

Louvre to launch new Islamic Art Galleries

More than 2,500 objects from the Louvre's collection of Islamic art will go on show across nearly 3,000sq m (32,292sq ft) of new gallery space at the Paris attraction on 22 September.

The opening of the new Islamic Art Galleries – designed by architects Mario Bellini and Rudy Ricciotti – is the first major addition to the Louvre since I M Pei's glass pyramid in 1989.

Located across two levels within a contemporary glass pavilion, the galleries open up the courtyard of the Cour Visconti for the first time.

The objects on show come from works within the Louvre's collection, as well as the 3,400 items on permanent loan from the Musée des Arts.



The rooms feature four poster beds and plasma screen tvs

Project	No 11 Cadogan Gardens
Design	Paul Davis
Location	London, UK

Boutique hotel opens in Chelsea

Previously a private members' club, No 11 Cadogan Gardens in London's Chelsea has reopened as a hotel following an extensive programme of refurbishment.

The boutique hotel features 54 guest rooms and four suites, a film noir-inspired bar and a British restaurant. The design was by Paul Davis, and aims to blend the original Victorian features with modern facilities. Quirky features include a Mirror Room with mirrors covering the roof and walls and flat screen tvs concealed in antique picture frames.



The design was influenced by the local Shangaan culture

Project	Ngala Tented Camp
Design	Nicola Merlo
Location	Kruger National Park, South Africa

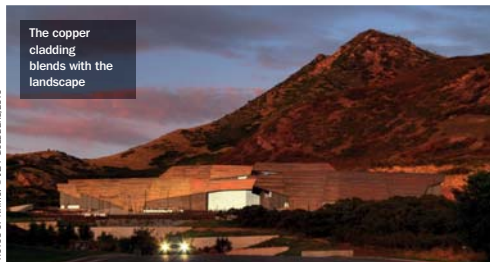
Ngala Tented Camp unveils new look

The &Beyond Ngala Tented Camp has re-opened in the Kruger National Park in South Africa after a major refurbishment.

The camp's six luxury safari tents feature outdoor showers, deep baths and private wooden decks overlooking the seasonal Timbavati riverbed.

The camp's interior designer, Nicola Merlo, used warm, earthy tones and organic materials to reflect the local landscape and culture. Each tent sits on a raised platform, and has been designed to minimise environmental impact.

PHOTOS OF NHMU: © JEFF GOLDBERG/GETTY



The copper cladding blends with the landscape

PHOTO: © BEN BAKER



TODD SCHLIEMANN

When designing a new home for the Natural History Museum of Utah, Ennead partner Todd Schliemann decided to let the landscape take centre stage. He tells Magali Robathan how he approached the project

How did you begin your career?

My father was an architect, so as a child I sat at his drafting table and used his equipment. I grew up in the 1960s, when architecture wasn't just about designing buildings; it was a way of life. Architecture was a complete experience – it was about furniture and plates, how you served your food and lived your life. It had a powerful influence on me.

It was also a time before computers; there were no video games, so in my spare time I made things.

I studied architecture at Cornell University. After graduating, I taught architecture briefly and then came to New York in 1979. I've been here ever since. When I started working at the Polshek Partnership, there were only seven people working for the firm. Now it has a new name, I am one of the founding partners, and there are 170 people working for the firm. [It became Ennead Architects in 2010].

What is your approach to architecture?

My philosophy is that buildings must serve people. Architecture is the mother of the arts. Its power is both intellectual and emotional. Not only must it incorporate sound construc-

tion and beautiful aesthetics, but it also has to touch people and make their lives better. There are many different ways to do this, because each project is different. The influences that you bring to bear on the buildings are all varied, but in the end architecture is a cultural statement. It has to be responsive to people.

How did you get involved with the Natural History Museum of Utah?

I had designed the Rose Center for Earth and Space at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, so when the directors of the Natural History Museum of Utah started thinking about creating a new building, they sent us an invitation to interview. I went through several interviews, and they selected us.

What were the aims of the new building?

The Natural History Museum of Utah was previously housed on the University of Utah's campus in an old library building, which was not at all suitable. The stacks that had contained books were storage for the Museum's collections, it wasn't air-conditioned, and there wasn't enough space to exhibit or tell stories or



■ A vast atrium called the Canyon acts as a central public space and displays some of the Museum's collection

teach. So first and foremost, they wanted the right facility to house their collection, which is substantial. Then they wanted the new museum to tell the story of the region and its people.

What was your brief?

I had complete freedom. Early on in the project, the museum's director, Sarah George, borrowed two jeeps from the



THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF UTAH

The Natural History Museum of Utah's new \$102m home opened in Salt Lake City in November 2011. The Museum, which was established in 1963, is associated with the University of Utah, and was previously housed in the university's campus building.

The Museum is an active research institution, with a collection of more than 1.2 million specimens and objects. It features more than 41,300

sq ft of gallery and education space, with the collections housed in new exhibitions designed by Ralph Appelbaum Associates. Nine dedicated, thematic exhibition galleries explore the Sky, Native Voices, Life, Land, First Peoples, Lake (Great Salt Lake), Past Worlds, Our Backyard and Utah's Futures.

Designed by Todd Schliemann of Ennead Architects, the new building was inspired by the region's natural

landscape of rock, soil, minerals and vegetation. By incorporating the use of recycled materials, local resources, photovoltaic energy, radiant cooling and the implementation of an extensive storm water catchment and management system, the Natural History Museum of Utah is seeking LEED Gold certification, which would make it one of only 18 buildings in Salt Lake City with that distinction.



■ Todd Schliemann's other projects include The Standard hotel New York (both pictures, above)

Governor of Utah's office and we travelled around the state for a week. We explored the natural landscape, talked to many people and got a feel for Utah's character – so that we could make the building represent that.

After this trip, it became clear that Utah is all about the land and how people have engaged it for thousands of years – people have been trying to deal with what is a very harsh landscape for a long time. The building had to be responsive to that; it had to feel like it belonged to the land, but it also had to serve the people and tell the story of Utah's natural history in a way that people could understand whether they were six or 60 years old, if they were a native American or an immigrant.

Can you describe the building?

It sits on the edge of culture and the edge of nature. It's in the foothills of the Wasatch Mountain Range, and is also on the edge of Salt Lake City.

Our goal was to create a building that would blend with nature and appear to be like a rock outcropping. We used board-formed concrete at the

base of the building, which is striated to appear as if it is a land form, one that has built up over time. We covered the exterior with copper which was donated by Kennecott Utah/Rio Tinto, whose mines are across the valley. On the roof we have planted areas, as if silt has fallen on the rock and plants have grown there. We think it blends quite nicely with the landscape.

Inside the building we created the Canyon, which is a 60-ft-high public space where people can gather and which can be used for events. It has an almost church-like scale to it and is very inspiring because of its height.

The Canyon sets the stage for the visitor experience. When you get people into a museum like this you want to make sure you've got them ready to learn. The emotionally-charged experience of getting into a space like the Canyon makes it more than just an intellectual exercise. It touches you as a human being first and then gets your mind working.

Then, of course, there are the galleries. Their sequence builds a narrative that encompasses many ideas from

the region and explains them in a way that people can understand. On the opposite side of the building is the working part of the museum, the empirical part – the research and conservation laboratories, collection storage and administration.

The approach to the Museum is very important to the experience of the building. You get out of your car, enter the building, ascend from a compressed entry lobby to the voluminous, light-filled Canyon and then traverse, through a series of switchbacks, to the top floor. The switchbacks, which ascend 90 feet, allow you to climb and not feel it's an exhausting experience.

Then of course you've also got the views from the roof and the Canyon looking out across all of the Salt Lake Valley to the lake, with the mountains in the background.

What is your favourite part of the museum?

The Canyon is the most interesting space to me. It really is a spectacular volume of space. As you go through the museum you are always using the Canyon as a kind of way-finding reference. You know where you are because you can always see back into it.

How important was it for the museum to be sustainable?

Everything we do is sustainable, whether the client asks us or not. In this case it was very important to them, but also if the building is going to be part of the land, it had better be responsive to the land in the long term.

TODD SCHLIEMANN

Todd Schliemann is a founding partner and design principal in Ennead Architects. He studied architecture at Cornell University in 1979 and Urban Design at the Architectural Association in London.

Schliemann's recent projects include the Rose Center for Earth

and Space at the American Museum of Natural History in New York; Yerba Buena Gardens Center for the Arts Theater, San Francisco; The Standard, New York; The Natural History Museum of Utah; and Queens Borough Public Library, Flushing Regional Branch, New York.



The design of The Standard has won awards including a National Design Award from the Society of American Registered Architects

PHOTO: © NIKOLAS KOENIG

The building has a solar array on the roof behind the planting. We have underground water retention tanks for controlling erosion on the site. The building is built into the side of the hill – half of it is buried – which creates a flywheel effect, which keeps the building cool in the summer and warm in the winter. There are all kinds of high-performance mechanical systems that are running at peak efficiency.

We don't have many windows in the museum because natural light can damage the items on display, so we've been able to create a very tight exterior envelope. This means there's not a lot of air passage between inside and out, which allows the building to use less energy. With a nice tight wall the mechanical equipment doesn't have to work so hard to control the variations in temperature and humidity.

We're working at getting an LEED Gold certificate for the museum. We should find out within the next few

months whether we've got it (you have to wait until the building has been operational for a year, so you can prove it does what you said it would do).

What reactions have you had to the museum's design?

It seems to be doing what we wanted. People get inspired when they see it.

Who do you admire in architecture?

Mostly dead architects, I'm afraid! Eero Saarinen, who was a Finnish/American architect in the 1950s and 1960s, is a strong influence. He did some rather amazing buildings, none of which looked the same. He was extraordinarily talented – his architecture is very thoughtful and beautiful

Where do you get your inspiration?

It comes from whatever context I'm working in. The context in the case of the Natural History Museum of Utah was complex, and was about the land

and the people. If I'm working in New York, it's about the city and how people engage it. The inspiration always comes from people and the context.

Where is your favourite place?

I love the sea. I have always sailed and it's a fabulous thing. The ground is always moving and you can go anywhere you want in the world – it's a highway to everywhere. There's something upside down about it; everything takes place underneath the surface.

What do you love about your job?

I love to make things. You can think up an idea, and then make it. That's very rewarding. Sometimes it doesn't work out the way you want, and sometimes it does, but it's a joy to try.

And what do you enjoy the least?

Probably clients who don't want to understand the bigger ideas. Small thinkers. I suffer fools badly. ●



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DAN SNOW

Encouraging museum and heritage operators to embrace new media and attract the next generation of visitors is vital, argues the British historian and tv presenter. Kathleen Whyman finds out why

Why are heritage attractions so important to the British?

This country takes its past very seriously. Two thirds of visitor attractions in Britain are heritage-based and more people go to heritage properties than football matches every weekend.

This is partly because of our extraordinarily rich, well-documented and well-protected industry – we have the buildings, the artwork, the documents and the museums. We have wisely preserved much of our past, which not all countries have done.

How can we get the younger generation interested?

We have to work out how they communicate and get information, and we have to use different tools, such as

Facebook pages and games.

There are some good examples out there – the Museum of Modern Art in America has millions of likes on Facebook and there's a multiplayer online game dedicated to armoured warfare in the mid-20th century, which a relevant museum could link in with.

You are addressing these issues in a keynote speech at the Visitor Attractions Conference in October. How did you get involved with the VAC?

The Visitor Attractions Conference (VAC) is the biggest conference of its kind in the UK and hugely well known. I met Ken Robinson, the chair of the Tourism Alliance, through my work with the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu House, Hampshire and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

I recently released an app about World War II and am currently helping museums with their new media strategies, so Ken Robinson thought it would be good if I came along to the VAC.



Snow at ancient heritage site Stonehenge

What will be in your keynote speech?

I'll give a sense of what I've learned from making television programmes. Historical documentaries, museums and visitor attractions all have the same agenda. We're all trying to appeal to a very wide audience, who can have a limited attention span if they're out with their families. Writing a script is similar to writing interpretation – you have to get the key facts across without wasting vocabulary. We have to pitch our message just right and grab their attention.

I'll also talk about the work I'm doing in new media with museums, such as a project with the Battle of Hastings site. Visitors can now download films about the battle that I made for my tv shows.

What work are you doing for Kids in Museums?

Kids in Museums is a forum for young people to express how they aren't always made to feel very welcome

ABOUT TIMELINE WW2



The Timeline WW2 app is a definitive history of the Second World War. Using an interactive timeline, it brings to life the cataclysmic events of 70 years ago for a 21st century audience.

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The National Motor Museum, Beaulieu House, UK

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is among the heritage attractions Snow is working with



"HOW ARE OPERATORS GOING TO WORK WITH THE ASIAN MARKETPLACE IN THE NEXT 30 YEARS? WE NEED TO MAKE SURE WE'RE READY FOR THE RUSH WHEN IT COMES"

in museums. I'm a trustee and have chaired a few meetings and brought people together to discuss how to make museums more accessible for kids.

Sometimes we introduce children to curating teams to talk about what they find difficult in museums. That's a very valuable thing. I have a baby daughter and am looking forward to taking her to museums. Hopefully they'll all be child-friendly by the time we get there.

What can heritage operators do better?

They don't do much badly. There's still a tendency to create a 'don't touch, don't shout' atmosphere, which can be difficult for young people and kids. I like taking my nephews to places and they want to run around and make noise – that's easier on a battlefield than it is in an art gallery.

One thing operators do need to improve is their new media strategies, such as building up their Facebook and Twitter profiles. People aren't doing that nearly as much as they should be.

What sparked your interest in apps?

Tablet computers are the future. People love them and apps are very easy to use on tablets. It's an exciting way of delivering information directly to an audience. With an app, I'm talking

directly to the person who bought it. It's just between me and them; it's almost a personal relationship.

Also, apps are flexible. Once a book has been written, there's nothing you can do about the inevitable errors. With an app, you can just amend, adapt and update as new information becomes available.

What feedback have you had about your app?

The timelineww2.com app has been widely reviewed and has an average rating on iTunes of five stars.

We've sold many thousands and hope that schools start to adopt them. We have plans to release a few more apps in the autumn. I'll be revealing more at VAC.

How can heritage-based attractions use new media?

Too many heritage attractions simply put information about the ticket price and opening hours on their website. That's just turgid. You need to create an unusual, funky vibe. If you operate a castle, put incredible facts about your past up each day to keep people interested. Tell them about the ghosts and other horrible history-type facts. Be brazen about things that will bring people to the attraction and the website. Use clues, quizzes, and treasure



Portsmouth UK's Historic Dockyard's Action Stations Helicopter experience

hunts to keep them logging on. Create a buzz – very few operators do that.

The Imperial War Museum is doing really well now. People submit photos online of their ancestors who fought in the wars and they're being made into an online exhibition. Many visitor attractions could do this.

Once you've done something, plug it aggressively so people know about it.

What do you want to learn at VAC?

I'm interested to find out how operators are going to work with the Asian marketplace in the next 30 years. What plans are there to make our sites accessible to the potentially vast audiences who want to come and see European castles, Tudor stately homes and the Crown Jewels?

We need to make sure we're ready for the rush when it comes. ●

ABOUT VAC

The Annual National Conference of Visitor Attractions takes place on 11 October 2012 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, UK. To book, go to www.vac2012.co.uk

MATT SPENCE

From the family farm to a partnership with the Rockefeller family, luxury self-catering holiday company Natural Retreats has come a long way. CEO Matt Spence tells Magali Robathan what's next

As Matt Spence talks about last year's deal with the Rockefeller family, which catapulted the luxury self-catering company Natural Retreats into the big league, he sounds as though he still can't quite believe it.

"Mark Rockefeller [son of former US vice president Nelson Rockefeller] was looking for someone to operate his Idaho resort," says Spence. "He could have picked any high profile American hotel chain, but he backed us. I think he realised we were unpolished – we're farmers, at the end of the day – but he liked us and he liked what we were trying to do. By May last year we were operating this beautiful boutique lodge he'd built on the banks of the Snake River in Idaho. I had to pinch myself."

Matt Spence is the founder and CEO of Natural Retreats, which offers luxury self-catering holidays in national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty. It currently owns or operates four sites in Ireland, six in Britain, two in the US and one in Lanzarote.

The chatty Yorkshireman is passionate about getting people – particularly families – out into the wilderness.

"The great outdoors is the best gym and spa you could ever wish for. It really does get people connected, and recharges their batteries," he says. "We're trying to get people out into these fantastic areas. We want to create childhood memories and family holidays that really leave a mark."

"We have 15 national parks in the UK, and they are our most visited loca-

tions, but no brands have targeted them. Hotel brands tend to stick to formulae – highways, cities or big resorts. No-one has picked the top 20 locations in the UK and said if we had a place in every one of these amazing locations then we'd have a great travel brand."

Not until now, at least. Spence and his team want to try to get a minimum of 15 Natural Retreats sites in the UK, 50 in the US and 10 in Ireland.

"Europe will be next," he says.

HOW IT BEGAN

Spence didn't start with a grand plan. Natural Retreats was born back in 2006, when the Spence family decided to get out of farming. "My mother was in her 70s, and had been a sheep farmer for a number of years. It's a

Natural Retreats' founder and CEO Matt Spence has a passion for the outdoors



Natural Retreats' site in Playa Blanca, Lanzarote opened in 2011



tough existence, and she basically couldn't handle the early starts and lambing late at night," he says. "We'd also been losing money for about 20 years. It was time to call it quits. My family called a meeting and said we need to find another way of earning a living, because this isn't working."

Spence's love of the outdoors was born when he was a child, after his family went to the Yellowstone National Park and Yosemite National Park in the US three years in a row. "The national parks really left a big impression on me," he says. "I lost my father when I was young in tragic circumstances, so I remember those holidays as the time when we were a whole family, and were at our happiest."

Spence returned to the Yellowstone National Park on his honeymoon. While he had an amazing time, he found the standard of accommodation to be disappointing. This gave him the idea of putting high quality accommodation into national parks, and when his family were looking for alternative ways of making money, he suggested building luxury self catering properties on the family farm, which is in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

At the time, Spence was working as regional manager for the marketing team at Coca Cola. He quit his job and then undertook the difficult task of getting planning permission for the



All of the Playa Blanca villas feature a terrace and a private pool

"WE HAVE 15 NATIONAL PARKS IN THE UK, AND THEY ARE OUR MOST VISITED LOCATIONS, BUT NO HOTEL BRANDS HAVE EVER TARGETED THEM"

nine cottages he wanted to build. "I was very naïve," he says. "I'd never applied for planning permission before – I didn't even own a house. Our farm is on a Greenfield site in an area of outstanding natural beauty, and is just a mile and half from the town of Richmond. People were very, very nervous about our plans."

After two years, Spence finally got planning permission and, together with his two brothers, built the first nine cottages. The site opened in 2006,

with a further nine cottages opening on the site the following year.

"The cottages were a huge success and we had big occupancies from day one," he says. "A few private investors put money into the business, which enabled us to buy three spectacular sites in 2008/2009 – one in the Lake District, one in the North Yorkshire Moors National Park and an old gold mine in Snowdonia."

At that point, the world's economies went into freefall and Spence had to



The original Yorkshire Dales residences feature sustainable timber, biomass heating and solar glazing

change tack slightly. "The idea had always been to roll Natural Retreats out to every national park in the UK, but then in 2008 and 2009 the world got into such a bad state that it was pointless talking to anybody about development funding," he says.

"I looked at the hotel model of just operating facilities – Hilton, for example, doesn't own any of its hotels. I saw that Natural Retreats was becoming a great little brand and that banks and developers were stuck with assets that were in real trouble, and a lot of people had bought second homes that they couldn't sell. I decided to go out and speak to people who had cottages and say that we would operate them as Natural Retreats sites."

Today, Natural Retreats owns 75 per cent of its properties, and operates 25 per cent. "We have no strategy to be an owner or operator. We're just playing what's in front of us," says Spence.

Over the next couple of years, Natural Retreats picked up several sites in the UK and Ireland, found a new investor, and set up its asset ownership vehicle Natural Assets. "We have a number of opportunities where we're coming in as an operator and we realise that the site is in trouble financially. We will now look at helping both on the equity and the operating side," says Spence.

So what does the company look for in terms of opportunities? "It's got to be a site of outstanding natural beauty and the land has to have potential for putting new cottages onto it," says Spence. "We will also look at resorts that aren't working and need rethinking. Two of our sites in Ireland – Castle Marder and Parknasilla – are €100m hotel resorts. There were 42 cottages on one and 56 on the other that were



The properties look out onto the Yorkshire Dales National Park (above)

practically empty. We came in, in conjunction with the banks and owners, and took those assets off them and transformed them. When we acquired it, Castlemartyr had €50,000 a year coming in from the cottages; it now makes more than €1m a year."

LOOKING STATESIDE

By 2010, Spence decided the time was right to tackle the US.

"I was determined we would open up in the US, because that's where the idea came from originally," he says. "I thought all along that Natural Retreats was as well suited, if not better suited, to the US than the UK."

Spence went over to the States on several visits, meeting up with people he'd been advised might be able to help him. One of these was Charles Adams, principal of developer Celebrations Associates (responsible for the town of Celebration in Florida) who later called him and told him to come and meet some-

one who was looking for an operator for his site. Much to Spence's amazement, that someone turned out to be Mark Rockefeller. "I was invited to meet Mark in January 2011 in the John D Rockefeller boardroom in the Rockefeller Centre," he says. "It was eye-wateringly terrifying – it was just me and him, and I presented to him for seven hours. By the end, I was shattered, and he was probably nearly asleep, but he decided to back us. It was a huge leap of faith on his part."

South Fork Lodge has 22 guest suites and is situated on the South Fork of the Snake River in Idaho, famed for its fishing. The lodge offers a range of guided activities including fly fishing, kayaking, wildlife-spotting, skiing and heli-skiing.

"I'm so proud that we are a British company and we went into America and got one of the best assets in the Mid West, if not the whole US, from one of the most incredible men I've ever met," says Spence.



The cabins at South Fork Lodge in Idaho, US are situated on the river



Mark Rockefeller

**"A BIG PART OF THE ROCKEFELLERS
PHILANTHROPY WAS ABOUT GETTING
PEOPLE INTO THE GREAT OUTDOORS"**

The Rockefellers have a strong link with the great outdoors. John D Rockefeller Jr donated millions of dollars to the expansion and creation of America's national parks, while his son Laurence was a conservationist who helped launch the National Park Foundation. Laurence Rockefeller also created Rock Retreats, a holiday company which created 'environmentally-focused' luxury hotel resorts in spectacular natural surroundings.

"A big part of the Rockefeller's philanthropic work was about getting people into the great outdoors," says Spence. "John D Rockefeller Senior and Junior and Laurence Rockefeller believed that national parks were about getting back to reality, and that

if people took a break in these places it would re-energise them."

Natural Retreats opened a second site in the US in Virginia Hot Springs, and Spence says there will be another four or five sites opening in the States over the next 12 months.

"Some of these are associated with the Rockefellers and some are not, but I believe that we got all of them because of Mark Rockefeller agreeing to take us on," says Spence. "That's probably the best due diligence anyone could ever do on us."

JOHN O'GROATS

The latest big project for Natural Retreats is the redevelopment of the John O'Groats House Hotel in

IN HIS OWN WORDS - MATT SPENCE

What's your favourite book and film?

My favourite book is either *White Fang* or *Call of the Wild* by Jack London. My favourite film is *The Great Escape*.



What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

It's a phrase that I was once told: The brave may not live forever, but the cautious never live at all.

What's been your lowest point since starting up Natural Retreats?

I guess the most difficult moment was when I was trying to get planning permission for the first site. I was two years into planning and I heard that the council was going to turn me down. I'd completely run out of money – all my savings, credit cards, everything – and I knew that my family had given me the land. How could I go back to them and say we'd lost everything? Luckily we didn't.

What inspires you?

The great outdoors. I'm happiest up a mountain, or hiking with my kids and a rucksack. Unfortunately I can't make a living doing that, so Natural Retreats allows me to stay close to my real passion, and make a living to provide for my family.

What challenges you?

I have two kids – they are five and two and a half. They challenge me every day. It's hard work, but it's amazing.

What's been your highest point?

My best day at work has got to be the day we signed the Mark Rockefeller deal. I don't think we could ever get higher than that – one of the world's greatest families backing us. That was my proudest day.

We staked our reputation on that deal; we'd never run anything like that before. It was so out of our league in location, in scale. It was a \$3m turnover business with 40 employees. We got the deal from guts and passion and really putting ourselves on the line.



The Hollies, in Co Kerry, Ireland features a restored 19th century manor house

Scotland. The hotel launched in 1875, and its famous guests included Emmeline Pankhurst. However, the hotel had fallen into a state of disrepair and was a dilapidated eyesore by the time Natural Retreats took it on.

"I fell in love with the area as soon as I saw it," says Spence. "It's one of the only wildernesses left in the UK, and I just thought, we have to do something here. I knew it was a big job, but I knew we could do it."

As part of a £6m regeneration of the area, Natural Retreats is redeveloping the hotel into 19 self-catering apartments – which will be called The Inn – and has built 23 standalone new holiday cottages. "It's not apartments in the way that people are used to – there's a library, a big roaring fireplace, places to read your paper, says Spence. "It's not boutique – it's for families and we want people to go out into the wild and get soaking wet – but the quality of the accommodation is really high."

Several of the cottages have already opened, with the rest opening in stages, and the hotel will launch next year. "We're aiming for this to be one of the top 10 mentioned places to stay in the UK," says Spence.

Natural Retreats has also opened The Storehouse, an on-site co-opera-

"MOST BIG HOTEL RESORTS DETRACT FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. ALL OF THE RESTAURANTS AND COFFEE SHOPS STRUGGLE BECAUSE PEOPLE STAY ON THE RESORT"

tive shop selling produce from local businesses. "We invited the whole of Cathness county to come to a Meet the Buyer day at the John O'Groats House Hotel and said, 'if you make anything, bring it along. If it's any good, we'll stock it on our shelves'. It was hugely successful," says Spence.

The opening of the hotel and cottages is part of a wider plan to rejuvenate John O'Groats as an attractive tourist destination. Natural Retreats is working with partners including the Highlands and Islands Enterprise, The Highland Council and Heritage GB on the plans, which include the development of the public areas and the Last House Museum and shop, and the expansion and upgrade of the Journey's End Café, as well as the creation of a new visitor centre.

SUSTAINABILITY

Spence has strong feelings about sustainability, and the responsibility of tourism operators to the communities in which they operate.

All of the Natural Retreats properties are built on sustainable principles – using locally-sourced materials, and with minimum impact on their surroundings. Other sustainable features include sedum roofs, passive solar-glazing, biomass heating and recycled insulation.

The company is a member of the Green Tourism Business Scheme, which covers a range of areas including energy and water efficiency, waste management and biodiversity.

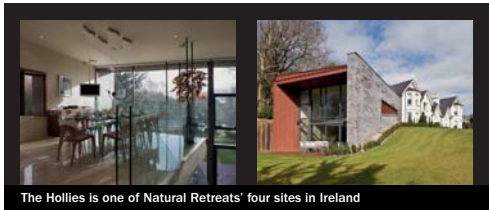
Spence hasn't included restaurants or spas in any of his sites, because he believes that guests should spend their money in locally-run establishments.

"Most big hotel resorts detract from the local community. All of the little restaurants and coffee shops struggle to survive because everyone stays on the resort and that's not very sustainable," he says.

"When I was trying to get planning permission for the first site in Richmond, I argued that the area needed five star accommodation because it would bring people with money in. Then I thought, if I put a spa and a restaurant in, guests might come with money, but they won't spend a penny of it outside of the resort."

At the end of the day, says Spence, it all comes back to making sure everyone associated with Natural Retreats is happy, whether it's the people staying in the cottages, or the people who live in the communities nearby.

"All we want is for families to have a good time, and as long as we can achieve that, I'm happy." ●



The Hollies is one of Natural Retreats' four sites in Ireland



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CREATIVE SPIRIT



As the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea sets out its Cultural Placemaking proposals, Councillor Nicholas Paget-Brown explains how they aim to revive the creative spirit of the area

In May, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in London launched Cultural Placemaking proposals, which set out to put culture and the creative industries at the heart of all new developments in the borough.

Kensington was once a thriving mecca for artists and designers – with Vivienne Westwood, Mary Quant, Monsoon-founder Peter Simon, Wayne Hemingway, Thomas Heatherwick and Stella McCartney all launching their careers in the area. It's also home to the V&A, The Science Museum, the Natural History Museum and the Saatchi Gallery, and hosts festivals including the Notting Hill Carnival, Chelsea Flower Show and the Nour Festival, which explores Middle Eastern and North African culture.

The local authority wants to build on the creative history of Kensington and Chelsea and make it the first in the UK to integrate arts and culture into its economic development through planning. The plans also hope to address the problem of high rents

driving out young artists, creative businesses and entrepreneurs.

The Cultural Placemaking initiative has been developed in partnership with consultancies Futurecity and BOP Consulting. The aim, according to the mission statement, is to "Place the borough at the forefront of contemporary creativity, enabling residents to access internationally excellent culture and using culture to attract inward investment".

The local authority is now asking for feedback on the proposals, which will help to shape future council policy.

Here Nicholas Paget-Brown, deputy leader of the council and cabinet member for transportation, environment and leisure, answers some questions about what the initiative hopes to achieve.

How and when was the idea for the Cultural Placemaking initiative born?

It all started in about 2009 when the council produced its Arts and Culture Policy. Although we've had arts in the borough in the form of Opera Holland



Notting Hill Carnival is Europe's biggest carnival, attracting around a million people to the borough

PHOTO: © BIKWORLDTRAVEL/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Park and Leighton House Museum, we hadn't had a cohesive, coherent strategy to represent the whole of the council's artistic ambitions.

Once upon a time the borough was the home of creative arts. There were lots of painters down on the Chelsea embankment, lots of fashion icons started their businesses on Portobello Road and the King's Road in the 1950s and 1960s, including Vivienne Westwood and Mary Quant. In those days Chelsea was a creative place, but over the last few decades, land prices have made it difficult for young artists to get established in the borough and we needed to start thinking about that. It was time to start addressing all the council's policies to ensure that the borough could provide fertile ground for creative people again.

In May we launched the Cultural Placemaking initiative, which is all about how we can encourage people who've got a development project in mind in the borough to take into account our creative and artistic ambitions for the borough.



What are the aims of the Cultural Placemaking proposals?

The more interesting and dynamic a neighbourhood appears, the more people seem to enjoy and value it. That must have a knock on benefit to the businesses that occupy it.

We are saying that we would like developers to incorporate some kind of provision for creative space into their ideas, thinking and initial plans. It might be design and fashion, it might be sculpture or arts or photography. We think there are always opportunities in developments to include those sorts of things, and we think that they really help to define a neighbourhood.

We believe that adopting a cultural placemaking approach to planning and development across the entire borough has the potential to create places to benefit present and future residents and businesses, stimulate home-grown cultural talent and make the Royal Borough the choice for international creative companies seeking to locate in London.

WHAT IS CULTURAL PLACEMAKING?

Cultural placemaking is about ingraining culture, community and creativity in a development right from the start of the process. At its heart is the involvement of local people and an exploration of local heritage to create an authentic, multilayered, vibrant place, where people want to live, work and visit. A place that sits comfortably in its locality as well as significantly contributing to the wider neighbourhood's life and activity.

To achieve this outcome there is a requirement for developers, local people and local authorities to think as creatively as possible about their new place, and to agree mutually shared visions for the future; and for developers to form partnerships with local and international cultural and creative industries, planning in the provision of high quality cultural amenities and how these amenities might grow and expand over time. Source: www.rbkc.gov.uk

What happens next?

The Cultural Placemaking agenda has been published on the council's website (www.rbkc.gov.uk), and we have asked people for their thoughts and ideas. We will be analysing and taking on board the feedback we get from that and talking to colleagues on the planning department to ensure that that goes ahead.

How much of an issue are expensive rents in the borough?

There's a view that over the second half of the 20th century, there's been a haemorrhaging of creative and artistic activity in Kensington and Chelsea, largely as a result of very high rental values. We need to think of imaginative and creative ways of trying to address that, and I hope that the Cultural

Portobello Road offers creative entrepreneurs a chance to display their wares

PHOTO: © OLIVIA WOODHOUSE/RBC



Placemaking strategy is a start.

The council has launched a studio bursary programme in partnership with the Chelsea Arts Club Trust, whereby we offer free studios to emerging artists. The successful artists get a three-year bursary comprising the use of one of the borough's artist's studios, an annual bursary fee and

help towards the costs of materials. It gives artists coming out of art school the opportunity not to have to worry about rent and location and other expenses; they can just come to the borough and get established. We've got two or three of those bursaries running at the moment and they have been a great success.

In the Arts and Culture Strategy there are all sorts of initiatives where we try to link arts and culture to employment opportunities and training, and to finding ways that young people can get engaged in positive activities. There are all sorts of ways we think that arts and culture can play a positive role in social policy, in regeneration, in planning and obviously in terms of our own arts and culture aspirations as set out in the strategy.

If you go back to the 1950s and 1960s, the Kings Road and Portobello Road were where art and design and business all came together. Creative entrepreneurs could show their wares.

We are currently running an initiative to give young entrepreneurs a free stall in Portobello Road for six months to test the market and see what feedback they get. The Royal Borough's Market Enterprise Launch Pad also gives the winners £1,000 in start up funds, a support package from the Prince's Trust and free business insurance.

Are you trying to recreate the creativity of the 1950s and 1960s?

No, this needs to be of its time. The enthusiasms and priorities of today are different. It's not about trying

The cultural placemaking initiative calls on developers to:

- Embed culture and the creative industries into their thinking right from the very start of the development process.
- Be even more imaginative and bold in their thinking and proposals, in particular masterplanning design, the animation of new places and creative and commercial ideas for the public realm.
- Explore and anchor the heritage and contemporary cultural context of their sites.
- Work with the Creative District Profiler to identify the potential of a proposed site to become a creative district.
- Brand and animate their developments, through interventions, temporary creative spaces and long-term cultural provision, partnerships and programming.
- Be active in forming creative partnerships with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's communities, local and international cultural providers and the creative industries to influence development.
- Form long-term partnerships with cultural providers in order to influence the style and content of cultural amenities, not merely their existence.



PHOTO: © OLIVIA WOODHOUSE/BRBC



Clockwise from left: Artist Edgar Mueller created a 3D painting for the InTRANSIT Festival; The recently remodelled Exhibition Road; the Victoria & Albert Museum; more culture at the InTRANSIT Festival



PHOTO: © BRBC CULTURE SERVICE



PHOTO: © JAN KRANENBOM/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

We don't want to find that Kensington and Chelsea has become a place where only the very wealthy can live and work

to recreate something which has gone, but about trying to develop a creative atmosphere and a sense that if you are an artistic person and want an opportunity to try and set up in business, Kensington and Chelsea should be a place you can do so.

Can you give some examples of cultural projects taking place in Kensington and Chelsea?

The council runs its own arts festivals. We have the InTRANSIT Festival of Arts [which took place in July] which aims to provide young creative people with all sorts of ways of thinking and fresh ideas about traditional art forms. We also have the Nour festival (1 October – 1 November), which showcases contemporary culture from North Africa and the Middle East. The council has grown Nour to become an internationally respected festival and this year, for the first time, it has moved beyond its home at Leighton

House Museum to include other institutions such as the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Science Museum, the Ismaili Centre and the Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre.

Exhibition Road has recently been remodelled to become one of the UK's most accessible cultural spaces and was home to The Roadshow Festival during the London 2012 Olympics. The festival celebrated the relationship between the arts and the sciences and between the different institutions on Exhibition Road – the Royal Geographic Society, Natural History Museum, Imperial College and the Victoria & Albert Museum. All these organisations have a creative dimension that we want to celebrate.

What are your favourite things about Kensington and Chelsea?

I've lived here for 25 years. I love the energy in Kensington and Chelsea and I love the fact that we

are home to so many world-class museums, galleries and institutions that have inspired people over generations. What appeared to be waning rather than waxing, was the current opportunity for new creative people to get a foothold in our borough rather than feeling they needed to move elsewhere.

What do you see as the biggest challenges of this initiative?

It comes back to the economic background against which everyone is operating. It's about whether people are currently choosing to go into artistic and design type activities as much as they were a few years ago, and whether the level of development over the next few years will be as great as it has been over the last 20 years.

What we don't want to do is find that Kensington and Chelsea has become a place where only the very wealthy can live and work. There should be this thread running through development and through the thinking of the council and its partners about how this borough can remain an interesting, lively part of London, not just somewhere with very expensive land prices. ●

MARK SESNAN



The London 2012 Aquatics Centre and Multi-Use Arena saw history being made during the Olympics and Paralympics. GLL's managing director talks to Ian Freeman about the challenges of operating the venues in legacy mode

Mark Sesnan, the charismatic managing director of GLL, has come a long way since I first interviewed him in 2005 for *Leisure Management's* sister publication, *Sports Management*. GLL (formerly Greenwich Leisure) has grown into the UK's leading operator of local authority leisure facilities, with a turnover of £111m and management of more than 100 facilities.

A lot has been happening at GLL's late-Georgian, Grade II-listed headquarters in London's Woolwich Arsenal. As well as growing the number of leisure centres the team manages in London – the company's traditional heartland – a carefully-judged growth plan has taken them as far north as York and into the Chilterns and Surrey.

Add to this expansion into library and play-centre management and wholly-owned businesses such as budget gyms, the creation of local operating partnerships and winning the contract to run two London 2012 venues post-Olympics, and you can see why it may have been a considerable challenge for Sesnan to maintain his deceptively laid-back persona.

"As a charitable social enterprise, we're showing that it isn't all about profit – we're on a mission," Sesnan says. "Currently, about a third of UK leisure centres are still run by the public sector, even in places like Liverpool, Newcastle and Leeds." When I ask why, he pauses. "I could be provocative and say it's about self-interest or trade-union influence, but I'm much more generous than that – I think it's just local choice," he says.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

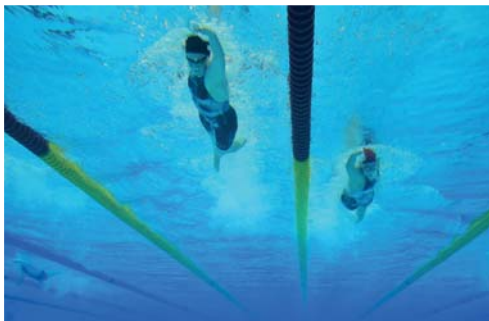
The way forward for GLL's core leisure centre business includes forming operating partnerships with smaller local leisure trusts, such as Freedom Leisure in southern England and the Hereford-based Halo Leisure Trust.

Sesnan says: "Local authorities outside London were asking us to bid to operate their centres. We said that if we could find a way of doing it and help other trusts to get business it'd make sense. We work with the trusts to win the business, but they deliver the services and staff the centres themselves, which provides a local feel. We give councils security that they wouldn't get from a smaller organisation and we can influence what goes on in the centres.

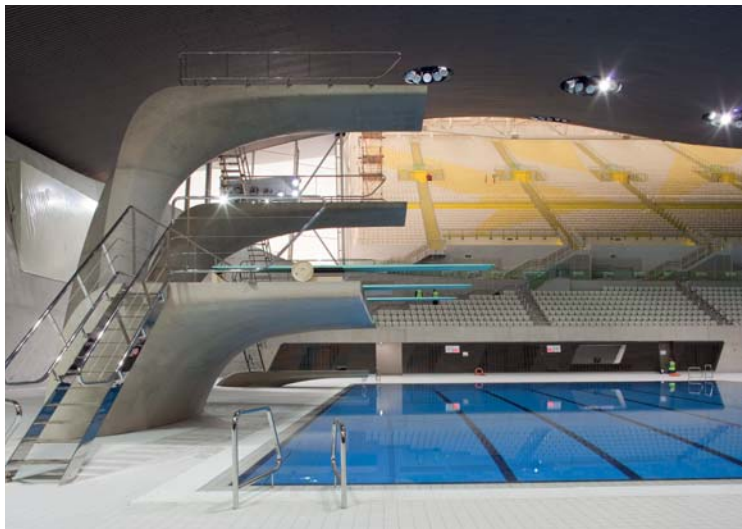
"We're open to discussion with anyone once contracts go to market," he continues. "Because of our reputation, we can get on shortlists, which smaller trusts often can't. We do the bid work for them, which we charge for, but the bigger game – and my vision – is to have an affinity community of customers, a block that has some muscle with sponsors and suppliers. But that's some years away yet."

With expansion usually comes the thirst to branch out, and Sesnan has his heart set firmly on organic growth. "We need to diversify so we're not reliant on any one particular income source", he says. He has a desire to own, as well as operate, leisure facilities with budget gyms top of the list – their first, at Bexleyheath, Kent, is, says Sesnan, "flying".

"Our plan is to extend the wholly-owned estate and, as a charitable



The London 2012 Aquatics Centre will open to the public in 2014



The 2012 Aquatics Centre will cater for community and competitive events

operator rather than a commercial one, we would be looking to see where there are socio-demographic reasons for putting in a gym," he says. "We can do rich and poor areas so there's a much wider matrix of sites that we'd consider. We want our gyms to be accessible and have the right look and feel for all sections of the community, including children." GLL gyms will be 800 – 1,200sq m, with online sign-up only, self-admission and what Sesnan calls "lightly staffed".

WINNING OLYMPIC GOLD

With legacy at the core of the Olympic mission, Sesnan is justly proud to have won the bid, which he spent most of 2011 spearheading, to operate two Olympic Park venues – the Aquatics Centre and the Multi-Use Arena (better known as the Copper Box). "We bid for both", he says, "as we believe you need one to subsidise the other."

After the Paralympic Games, when the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) got the keys to the park, builders began to transform

the venues. If it all goes to Sesnan's plans, the arena will open on 27th July 2013 – a year to the day after the Olympics opening ceremony. The Aquatics centre, where seating will be reduced from 17,500 to 2,500, is scheduled to open at Easter in 2014.

Sesnan is naturally enthusiastic about winning Olympic gold. The Aquatics Centre boasts not one, but two, 50m pools – the one that saw the likes of Michael Phelps make Olympic history and the hidden practice pool. Both, along with the 25m diving pool, were designed with moveable floors to enable the depth to be reconfigured at the touch of a button.

"The legacy brief for the Aquatics Centre was to provide community use and cater for schools, clubs and people with kids at the weekends, as well as to be a tourist attraction and a site for international sporting events," says Sesnan. "This way, we can make

"To have these venues is coming of age for us and changes us from local to national. It ups the ante and increases the challenge"

the dive pool 2ft deep and use it for swimming lessons and have an international event going on in the main pools. We'll be working with British Swimming and the synchro-swimming, diving and water-polo bodies."

The Multi-Use Arena is the size of three sports halls and will be home to the British Basketball League's London Lions. "It can be used to host rock concerts, community sport and corporate events," Sesnan explains. "The bleachers are electric-powered and can be moved back and forth to adjust spectator capacity."

"Originally we were looking to partner with AEG [US-based owner of the O2 Arena] for this venue," he says. "But they got involved in the stadium bidding and things got confused. We want to work closely with AEG because a 7,000-seat rock venue seems to fit their family. And it's newer, shinier and easier to get to than Wembley Arena."



The GLL Sport Foundation provides funding for London athletes

As operator of the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, Sesnan is interested in the outcome of the Olympic stadium wrangle. "We have a 20,000-seat athletics stadium at Crystal Palace, which we believe is serviceable. But if you have one in east London, you don't need both.

"GLL's strategy for the Olympic venues is based on what you lose in one venue, you make in the other," he explains. "The pool has a mass of water which needs heating and treating and lifeguards. To keep swimming accessible, you have to keep the prices down – the real cost of swimming is between £7 and £9 per session, which people won't pay here.

"To have these venues is the coming of age for us," he says, "and changes us from local to national. It ups the ante and increases the challenge. We'd have loved the Velodrome, so

"My challenge to our marketing people was that we run 110 centres and no one's heard of us, but they know of David Lloyd"

eventually maybe we can talk to Lea Valley about that. We'd like to work with Rio 2016, too," he adds. "We met with the Brazilians during the Games when they were stabled up the road at Crystal Palace. No one's yet got legacy rights, so if we deliver it would be interesting to get involved."

As to the Games themselves, Sesnan says: "I don't think we could have wished for better. It exposed people to a wide range of sports, not just the usual suspects. To see women's boxing, for example, was fantastic. The organisers, the construction people, the athletes – everyone did us proud."

He also hails the focus on sport inspired by the Games. "Because we are in so many London boroughs

we've noticed things getting done that wouldn't have normally. In Greenwich, for instance, there are two completely new school sports centres, much bigger than any school would previously have had. There will now be seven 50m pools in London, up from only two 10 years ago. Applications for everything for the under-14s is up, especially gymnastics. And you only have to go out on the street to see how many more cyclists and runners there are now – that's good for us. We call it 'the Jess effect'."

BRANCHING OUT

GLL is branching out into other areas of service provision, most notably library management. It currently operates all Greenwich libraries, including those at Belmarsh prison, hospitals and a mobile facility. When I suggest this to be a significant diversion, Sesnan disagrees. "Libraries are a part of the cultural block within local authorities," he says. "We're open to talk to any council where we already have an interest about integrating their other cultural operations. You'd want your library to be open seven days a week, to be accessible, to have a crèche, a café, a car park and to be friendly and bright – which is the same specification as for a leisure centre.

"Apart from a few shining examples, libraries tend not to be like that," he continues. "They're suffering from cut-backs and the people who run them aren't building managers. We need between two and five library contracts

A selection of GLL's core legacy commitments for 2012-2016

- To support 52 community sports events across GLL's 27 partner regions per annum
- To increase the number of young athletes supported by the GLL Sport Foundation by 5 per cent per annum
- To offer the GLL 'Kids For A Quid' initiative to promote young people's participation in swimming
- To hold the GLL Senior Games each year as a dedicated sports and activity tournament for over 55 year-olds
- To provide a GP referral/health programme in all GLL partner regions
- To deliver professional quali-

fication skills training to 2,000 students per annum through our vocational training college

- To have support agreements in place to promote and sponsor key disability sports clubs
- To invest an average of £4m per annum into GLL managed services to improve service and standards
- To reduce gas and electricity consumption for each venue annually to reduce our carbon footprint by an annual average of 2 per cent
- To trial and review two alternative forms of energy generation

BETTER

the feel good place



PHOTO: WWW.GETTYIMAGES.COM



in London to get the savings in the back office in book purchasing and so on. About 80 per cent of book purchasing can be centralised, which is in the local authorities' interest."

Sesnan views early-age customers as so vital – both to his business and in the war on child obesity – that children over 11 can use GLL centres' adult facilities from 3.30pm until 6pm for free. "Getting kids to enjoy activity will deal with obesity – they'll do it because they want to, not because they've been told to," he says, though he admits that "no one has yet got their head around pricing for kids."

By virtue of operating more swimming pools in the UK than anyone else, Sesnan finds that getting the balance between safety and fun is difficult. "Kids want to enjoy swimming, but the insurers and health and safety people tell us not to let them run, shout or dive," he says. "But if they're not having fun, they'll go back to playing computer games."

A CHANGE OF IMAGE

GLL has recently undergone a major reimagining. The public face of the busi-

GLL has won the bid to operate the Multi Use Arena, or Copper Box

ness now operates under the Better brand. "Our advertising and publicity material had become a big logo-fest," says Sesnan. "There was a need for something distinct and recognisable – we wanted to brighten it up. My challenge to our marketing people was that we run 110 centres and yet no one has heard of us, but they know of David Lloyd. Better is different, striking and positive. We want it to be recognisable."

With rebranding costing tens of thousands per venue, Sesnan has invested in changing the interiors of just two as a try-out – Hackney's Clissold Centre and the Waterfront in Woolwich (which, coincidentally, he used to manage). The process will be gradual says Sesnan – "we've got 10,000 staff polo shirts, for example. We won't be throwing those out overnight!"

Anxious to ensure, at a time when transparency and compliance has never been more important, that GLL is doing all it can to meet expecta-

tions, Sesnan has brought in some autonomous assistance. "Salaries, for example, are overseen by an independent sub-committee of non-executive directors", he says. "Our compliance level is much higher as we seek to converge with traditional charities."

Of the issues facing GLL going forward, Sesnan immediately refers to the management of expansion while retaining GLL's core values. "The challenge all the way through for us," he says, "has been to remind people all the way up and down the chain that we have values they have to live up to. There's a mass of people out there, particularly in the health and safety field, who are empowered to batter businesses and make our job as difficult as possible, so the true challenge is about our people's skill-sets. We have run graduate trainee schemes for 15 years, without which we would never have been able to expand."

"As for the industry, we still have much to do, such as sorting out the qualifications structure. We're only now on the cusp of change. I'm one of the people working on that – and I've got the bruises to prove it!" ●

Building Imaginations

A new book – *Learn for Life, New Architecture for New Learning* – explores learning spaces that are pushing the boundaries of architecture. We take a look at some of the truly inspiring playgrounds featured



▲ Tree Camp provides shelter in the form of six cocoons



▲ The cocoons are connected by hanging bridges

BASE CAMP

LOCATION:

Strand, Norway

ARCHITECTS:

Helen & Hard

Base Camp introduces 12- to 15-year-old children to outdoor and camping activities through a dynamic architectural intervention. Comprised of interactive, nomadic structures, this project encourages children to play, learn and explore. Tree Camp consists of six cocoons hung around living trees, providing shelter for camping children. Four cocoons are connected by a hanging bridge, which leads into a larger pod where children can meet and prepare food. In Mountain Wall, children sleep inside a steel structure attached to a steep rock, while Water Camp houses children in hammocks on a covered quay.

PHOTOS: BASE CAMP BY HELEN & HARD FROM LEARN FOR LIFE ©GESTALTEN 2012





▲ Tree Camp (all pictures, this page)
Water Camp and Mountain Wall make up Base Camp

IMAGINATION PLAYGROUND

LOCATION:

New York, USA

ARCHITECT:

Rockwell Group

The result of seven years of research, development, focus groups and testing, Imagination Playground stands as a breakthrough play-space concept that encourages child-directed, unstructured free play. With a focus on small, individual parts, this project offers a changing array of elements that allow children to constantly reconfigure their environment and design their own course of play. This unique playground provides a flexible environment for many types of imaginative activities through the incorporation of multilevel spaces with large sand and water features and a variety of toys and tools.



▲ Elements include cascading water channels, masts and pulleys

PHOTO: IMAGINATION PLAYGROUND BY ROCKWELL GROUP FROM LEARN FOR LIFE ©GESTALTEN 2012

PHOTO: THE SPERM WHALE AT THE NORTH SEA OCEANARIUM BY MONSTRUM FROM LEARN FOR LIFE ©GESTALTEN 2012



▲ Children can climb inside and look out of the whale's eyes

THE SPERM WHALE AT THE NORTH SEA OCEANARIUM

LOCATION:

Hirtshals, Denmark

ARCHITECT:

Monstrum

The first stage of a larger North Sea Oceanarium playground, this sperm whale serves as the central point for the project. The whale, which can be traversed both inside and out, offers decorative drawings of its internal organs from within and glimpses of its white ribs along the side. Fitted with ladders, stairs, and other climbing areas, the whale can also be entered through the mouth across the teeth. Small holes run along the side of the whale doubling as both peepholes and climbing grips.



▲ The playground is based on a story in which Rasmus Klump and his friends sail their ship onto an island

RASMUS KLUMP LAND

LOCATION:

Copenhagen, Denmark

ARCHITECT:

Monstrum

Located in the heart of Copenhagen in Tivoli, this play space takes its formal approach from the adventure stories of a Danish comic strip. The playground incorporates numerous water elements, maritime themes, and a large whale, around which many challenges and activities await. From rock hopping to rope climbing, the playground offers excitement for toddlers through to adolescents.



▲ The park also features a submarine, a raft and a lighthouse

PHOTOS: RASMUS KLUMP LAND BY MONSTRUM FROM LEARN FOR LIFECOSTALLEN 2012

ONION PINCH

LOCATION:

Lisbon, Portugal

ARCHITECTS:

Caterina Tiazzoldi,
Nuova Ordentra &
Benamor Duarte
Architecture



▲ Different types and thicknesses of cork were used

Appearing first in a Lisbon subway station and then moving across greater Europe, this organically shaped cork installation serves as a unique public playground for all ages. The flexibility of the cork results in a series of 15 tactile and dynamic pinched spaces that inspire user interaction and fluctuate between shelter, hammock and open space. Internal paths between the onion profiles add additional pathways for children to run, walk, climb, lay and rock on.

PHOTO: ONION PINCH BY CATERINA TIAZZOLDI, NUOVA ORDENTRA, AND BENAMOR DUARTE. ARCHITECTURE FROM LEARN FOR LIFE © GESTALTEN 2012

Designed for and hand knitted by artist Toshiko Horiuchi Macadam, the project confounds distinctions between indoor and outdoor space. Suspended within a loosely stacked wooden structure, the main net attracts children while their parents occupy the wooden perimeter



PHOTO: WOODS OF NET BY TEZUKA ARCHITECTS, TAKAHARA & YUI TEZUKA. © GESTALTEN 2012

WOODS OF NET

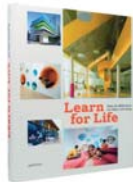
LOCATION:

Ninotaira, Japan

ARCHITECTS:

Tezuka Architects
Takaharu & Yui Tezuka

This colourful, permanent pavilion serves as a tactile and whimsical children's play space. Designed for and hand knitted by artist Toshiko Horiuchi Macadam, the project confounds distinctions between indoor and outdoor space. Suspended within a loosely stacked wooden structure, the main net space attracts children while their parents occupy the more understated wooden perimeter.



Learn for Life: New Architecture for New Learning is a diverse collection of inspiring architecture and interiors showing new interpretations of schools, nurseries, universities, libraries and playgrounds. The book is available to buy from all good bookshops. www.gestalten.com



▲ Geopark has become a social meeting point, used by children, adolescents and adults

GEOPARK

LOCATION:

Stavanger, Norway

ARCHITECTS:

Helen & Hard

Situated in the heart of Norway's oil industry, Geopark combines the expertise and material resources of the offshore rigs with sustainable urban development. The park provides a playful urban space on the waterfront, utilising a vacant forecourt adjacent to the Oil Museum. This multipurpose geo-landscape accommodates biking, skating, climbing, exhibitions, concerts, sports and relaxation. Constructed out of recycled elements from petroleum installations, abandoned oil platforms, off-shore bases, and scrap heaps, Geopark transforms the formerly abandoned site into a bustling social meeting point. ●



▲ The park has been made from recycled materials



A RAY OF SUNSHINE

The latest generation of solar power can use the sun's energy to generate power even on a cloudy day. It's great news for the leisure industry, explains the Energy Desk's Laura-Clare Davies

As the hottest topic in renewable energy solutions to emerge in the past 12 months, interest in the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is on the rise and so it should be. As explained in the last issue of *Leisure Management*, RHI is a financial incentive scheme that guarantees cashback payments for 20 years on the installation of renewable heat technologies. The scheme is designed to ensure that your benefits are two-fold; firstly you save money by producing your own energy, reducing your need for gas or oil; secondly, you get paid a fixed rate for the heat you generate.

So the big question now is what pieces of kit are out there that tick all the boxes for the RHI? The trick is in realising that different equipment will vary in terms of its compatibility with different sites, depending on where the majority of a building's energy use sits. For example, leisure buildings rely a lot on air conditioning and water heating systems. Thankfully most technologies in the RHI scheme are used for heating and cooling, so from the outset, the leisure industry has a competitive advantage.

EVOLUTIONS IN RENEWABLE HEAT TECHNOLOGY

The renewable energy technology market is constantly evolving.

Solar panels or photovoltaics (PV), for example, have long been an established means of generating renewable energy via the sun's direct heat source, and they have been adopted by domestic and commercial users up and down the country for the past decade. However, although these traditional solar power systems have proved viable in terms of producing electricity, they do rely on sunlight, which is something of an elusive commodity in some places.

This leads us on to thermodynamic solar panels (TSPs), the next generation in solar power.

Thermodynamic solar panels work in exactly the same way as conventional solar panels, insofar as they utilise the sun's power and convert it to thermal energy to heat water, but with one very big difference. The sun doesn't need to be out for the panels to operate. Sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? Trust us, it's not. The key word here is 'dynamic'. The panels are activated by the surrounding ambient temperature, whether the sun is out or not.

So rather than restricting energy production to hours of the day with direct sunlight, TSPs generate heat from the atmosphere during the day and continue through the night, heating water to 55 degrees celsius. Generating energy 24 hours a day, 365 days a year is pretty impressive and these thermodynamic systems operate down to a minimum ambient temperature of -15 degrees celsius, which is of particular benefit if you're plagued by disappointing summers. What's more, unlike conventional solar panels, TSPs don't necessarily need to be placed on your roof. These systems can be installed anywhere on a building, meaning they can work with the overall aesthetics of a building.

MAKING THERMODYNAMIC SOLAR POWER WORK

Thermodynamic solar power is very new to many markets and its innovative capabilities and overall efficiency will make this technology a big seller in the renewable heat sector. Installing this system will not only reduce your requirement for traditional water heating systems, it will also achieve guaranteed savings of a minimum of 30 per cent. For a leisure centre with



Thermodynamic Solar Power

ASK TED, THE ENERGY DESK'S SPECIALIST HELP DESK, ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

Can photovoltaics and thermodynamic systems be installed in tandem?

The short answer to this is yes. If you have a high electricity use, you can install photovoltaics (PV) to produce electricity from the sun. Alongside these you can install a thermodynamic

system, which will heat your water 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year at temperatures above -14 degrees celsius. So a combination of the two can result in savings on both electricity and gas or oil.

If I install a thermodynamic system, will I still need my old boiler?

As thermodynamic systems are designed to work around the clock, you will no longer need to utilise a traditional boiler powered by gas or oil to heat your water. However, your boiler will remain to provide heating. You could then go one step further and install a biomass boiler to heat your space, making your traditional boiler obsolete. There are a lot of renewable heat technologies out there and a combination of different systems can work well.

If thermodynamic panels don't need to be put on my roof, where can I put them?

Although the panels don't need to go on the roof, they can. The beauty of the system is that the panels can be installed on the roof, on the side of a

building or on the ground outside, but they work at their best on the south elevation. This means that they can be hidden away and you don't need planning permission to install them.

Do the panels need maintenance?

The systems are very robust and self-cleaning which is of particular advantage considering that they are outside. The systems come with a 20-year guarantee and maintenance is almost nonexistent.

How long does it take to install a thermodynamic system?

This very much depends on the size of the system. For domestic installations, it can take one day. For larger systems for commercial use, installation can take anything from two days up to seven days, but your water heating will not be disrupted during installation and the switch over to your new system is very simple.



heated pools and continually flowing showers, the savings will be huge.

And if that wasn't enough, the technology qualifies for the Renewable Heat Incentive, which is undoubtedly its biggest advantage. If you choose to be among commercial energy users to pioneer this technology, applying to RHI should most definitely be a priority. Through the RHI, you will get paid

a fixed amount on the heat energy you generate, and if you consider yourself a green champion, you can also sit back and relax at the thought of the significant carbon emissions you have saved in adopting this system.

Of course, with all new technologies, there will be early adopters keen to reap the benefits, but the leisure industry stands to be at the top of the

league table when it comes to making a huge saving through this technology. So what are you waiting for? ●

If you have any questions about thermodynamics, the RHI or any other energy management related matter, contact The Energy Desk on +44 (0)800 3777 889 info@theenergydesk.co.uk www.theenergydesk.co.uk

AIMING HIGH

Having shaken up the leisure industry once, co-founder of Cirque du Soleil Daniel Gauthier is set to do so again. Le Massif de Charlevoix incorporates a ski area, a unique touring train experience and high quality accommodation. Professor Terry Stevens finds out more



Every now and then along comes a game changer in the tourism industry – an initiative that reshapes the way we think and injects a new dynamic that influences product development or investment for a decade or more.

Game changing projects generally have their genesis in a fusion of creative ideas facilitated by individuals with a willingness to experiment and a desire to be different.

In 1984 Le Cirque du Soleil was one of those brave, important, game changers. Le Cirque was founded in the small community of Baie-Saint-Paul, 80km east of Quebec City on the St Lawrence River, by a group of avant-garde, self-confessed dreamers.

Today, Cirque owns 20 different shows performed in 270 cities on

every continent in the world, generating revenues exceeding US\$810m PA, and employing more than 4,000 people.

Individuals who strive to make a difference and thrive on innovation tend not to be content with making one seismic shift; they are impatient to achieve more. Such is the case with the co-founder of Le Cirque and its president for 11 years, Daniel Gauthier, OC.

Gauthier, the self-proclaimed “too young to quit ski bum now leading a new business concept”, has reawakened the leisure industry as the visionary behind Le Massif de Charlevoix. For the execution of this vision, Daniel Gauthier has returned to his spiritual home and the mountain overlooking Baie-Saint-Paul where the Le Cirque story began. “It’s a place which for too long has been Canada’s

hidden secret,” says Gauthier.

This is another transformational Gauthier concept that will elevate market expectations. It will cause a shift in the way tourism projects are developed and it will certainly challenge the traditional definition of ‘integrated destination development’.

Le Massif de Charlevoix is a destination that, according to Gauthier, “will offer a panoply of experiences that will unfold over three environments in the Charlevoix: the Mountain, La Ferme and Le Train Touristique.”

Gauthier, holder of Officer of the Order of Canada (one of the highest honours in the country), presides over his hand-picked team with individual pedigrees as impressive as his own. This is a collective of exceptionally experienced property, financial and



PHOTO: LE MASSIF DE CHARLEVOIX



PHOTO: LE MASSIF DE CHARLEVOIX

■ The touring train travels along 140 km of stunning riverside scenery between Québec City and La Malbaie



■ The mountain overlooks the St Lawrence River and provides skiing for a range of ages and abilities

PHOTO: BENJAMIN GAGNON

"THE MOUNTAIN IS THE KEYSTONE OF THIS PROJECT. IT IS A PLACE WHERE ARTISTS AND ARTISANS HAVE GATHERED FOR 150 YEARS"



PHOTO: LE MASSIF DE CHARLEVILLE / A. BLANCHETTE

■ It has 53 ski areas, a snowpark and a 7.5km-long roddelling trail

specialist operational talent (see box out p55) that have taken Gauthier's vision and delivered a remarkable new approach to the delivery of a 21st century touristic experience.

THE CONCEPT

Le Massif embodies the principles of sustainable development. Rooted in its community – indeed fuelled by and co-created with, the local community and regional tourism industry – this project was "borne of a desire to share with a curious, inquisitive and adventurous clientele, who are sensitive to the importance of the wellbeing of the planet, an authentic project defined as being a place for pleasure, learning and discovery," says Gauthier.

There is no doubt about the quality of the 'terroir', or place. This destination has a clear physicality; it is the meeting place of cultures and artists, it has a special micro-climate and a good range of locally-produced products. It is also close to the major centres of population in eastern Canada and accessible to the US and international markets.

"It's a great place to be creative, to make money, to grow the local economy, to help internationalise Quebec and to be different," says Gauthier.

In 2000, the local community set about developing a destination concept establishing a not-for-profit organisation to take it forward. The lack of a strong vision, the need for

public subsidy and the shortage of investment brought the realisation that an investor was needed. In stepped Gauthier, who initially became the sole investor, leasing the land on a 99 year agreement with the local municipalities and a new partnership emerged. He is now chairman of the board of directors

Gauthier explains that this is an inclusive concept; one that's relevant across generations, for guests with different backgrounds and from different communities. He focuses on the realisation of original, genuine and human-scale experiences, constantly offering new encounters based on the stimulation of all the senses. It is pure theatre with the guests being active participants in creating their own experience.

periences using the environment and the facilities as their stage.

Such visionary projects don't come cheap. This project represents an overall investment of over \$300m. It will directly support 600 jobs and help sustain a further 1,200 jobs in the region.

THE VISION

Gauthier's vision is based on fusion... creating a place where people can explore their environment using all their senses, where there will be freedom of movement, discovery of local food and craft in a creative, innovative setting. Le Massif will be an ecological showcase where the spirit of the place, its cultures and its produce are given centre stage.

This is a destination encompassing art, the outdoors, heritage, local gastronomy, architecture, design, wellness and of course people.

THE MOUNTAIN

The Mountain is the keystone of the project. A vast skiable terrain of over 400 acres rising 770m from the shores of the St Lawrence river, this is part of a UNESCO-designated biosphere and a meeting point of cultures – a place where artists and artisans have gathered and been inspired by each other for 150 years.

This is the highest vertical point east of the Canadian Rockies. It has

THE VALUES

THE LE MASSIF DEVELOPMENT IS FOUNDED ON FOUR CORE VALUES:

■ RESPECT:

for mankind and nature

■ ENJOYMENT:

of the senses through communion with nature

■ CHALLENGE:

the search for balance by exploring your own personal physical, spiritual and perceptual boundaries

■ EXCHANGE:

an awareness of the importance of sharing ideas and the process of giving and taking

Underscoring these values are a clear set of well-established development principles:

- A vision for sustainable development
- Concern and partnership approach for tourism development across the region
- Diversity of form, design and types of experiences, including the accommodation
- Contemporary design with echoes of heritage and culture
- Robust gastronomy based upon the local terroir
- Multiple destinations within a single destination
- Creating conviviality through social meeting places
- Different forms of transport to and within the destination
- Creating quality local jobs

53 ski trails, calibre and beginners' areas as well as a snowpark and a 7.5km long rolodring trail.

The Mountain is now a year-round, four seasons destination for skiing, walking and mountain biking, as well as a creative landscape whose use and development – be it for whale watching on the river or the development of lodges and trails on the mountain – all adhere to strict sustainable principles agreed with the community, who remain the landowners for the majority of the area.

THE TRAIN

Connectivity and accessibility from Quebec City and the core markets of Montreal and the USA is essential. Securing the ownership of the 140km stretch of the railway line linking Quebec city with La Malbaie (including 85km of unrivalled riverside scenery) was identified as being a critical success factor for the project.

The train route has its origins in 1889 when the Quebec Railway Company established what was known



■ Guests on the train enjoy a three course lunch and four course dinner, focusing on local produce



■ La Ferme encompasses a hotel (above) and runs regular events including a market selling local produce (top right)

as 'The Good Saint Anne Line' as it primarily served the needs of the annual pilgrimage to the Church of St Anne. At its peak, serving the pilgrimage and the growing winter sports markets, the line carried 2.5 million passengers,

however, the advent of the car and changing consumer behaviour saw the demise and eventual closure of the passenger service in 1996.

It was the genius of Gauthier to realise that this train could be more than simply a 'people-mover'. In 2009 he purchased the railway line from the Quebec Railway Group and invested \$20m in the creation of a new concept – 'rail cruise' – using modern and innovative rolling stock as the setting for a total on-board experience.

This experience combines a social atmosphere; a showcase of Charlevoix gastronomy with exclusively-designed menus offering distinctive culinary experiences; and personalised GPS-activated multimedia shows delivered to guests' seats, giving them exposure to the region's heritage and landscape.

In this way, Gauthier has ensured that every journey is unique. "The passing landscape paints a canvas for a rail cruise of beauty, creativity and conviviality," he says.

The Train is, therefore, part of the overall visitor experience. It's more than a scene setter or taster for the main act. It's clearly designed to help the guest transition from the mundane

to the exceptional. It is an unambiguous statement of what Gauthier's Le Massif is all about.

Operated by Train Touristique de Charlevoix Inc, the train comprises two locomotives with two caterpillar power cars that also double up as baggage cars. There are eight Pullman carriages that have been refurbished with designs by Morelli Designers and renovation by the Centre de Realisations d'Outils Innovateurs.

The Train of Le Massif has a total capacity of 492 passengers and operates year round with 254 departures planned for 2012-2013.

THE HOTEL LA FERME

Hotel La Ferme is the hub of the project, encompassing a public square, a multi-use centre for meeting and cultural programmes, restaurants, a spa, the railway station and, of course, the 145 bedroom hotel. This architect-designed complex consists of five pavilions that resembles an old farm complex. It is stylish, eco-friendly and will provide guests with the core services, facilities and amenities.

If the Mountain is the soul of the project then La Ferme is the heart. ●

THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

DANIEL GAUTHIER, Chairman of the Board and Chair of the Executive and Strategic Development Committee

CLAUDE CHOQUETTE, President and General Manager who is also President of HDG Inc (Daniel Gauthier's holding company)

MARC-VINCENT BOBEE, Vice-President Operations, Planning and Integration

BERNARD SANSOUR, Vice-President Finance and Information Technology

NANCY BELLEY, General Manager, Train Touristique de Charlevoix

RICHARD GERMAIN, General Manager, Hotel La Ferme

PEARL OF THE ADRIATIC

What is now Croatia has gone from Europe's top holiday destination to a war zone, and is now emerging as a new market. IO Adria was one of the first leisure operators to put up its flag. Kath Hudson reports



“Croatia is one of the last remaining unspoilt canvases in Europe,” says Julian Houchin, commercial director of UK company iO Adria, “and we aim to be the country’s leading provider of leisure and hospitality, competing with the top tourist destinations in Europe.”

With a stunning coastline, where the mountains drop into the sea and with more than 100 islands to explore, Yugoslavia – which Croatia was once part of – was Europe’s number one

tourist destination in the 1980s. Then the Balkans war started in 1991 and the tourism industry disappeared. Now, Croatia is coming back stronger than ever and iO Adria is blazing a trail. “In the 80s, Yugoslavia was high volume, low spend, but now tourism is moving towards the luxury end of the market,” explains Houchin. “Croatia is now a playground for the rich and famous.” Annual tourist numbers are estimated at around 2 million.

PIPELINE OF SITES

iO Adria (formerly Jupiter Adria) spotted Croatia’s potential over seven years ago, and set up the business under the auspices of Jupiter Fund Management in 2005. Having looked at everything for sale in the country, it acquired Dubrovnik Sun Gardens – just 20 minutes outside the historic city – and has seven other sites to develop. Three are in Istria and will be designed as small boutique golf estates. Three boutique marina resorts in northern



Dalmatia will cash in on the trend for sailing in Croatia. Finally, an island resort is planned for Sipan in the Elafiti Islands, near Dubrovnik Sun Gardens.

The economic climate has stalled the development of the other sites, but has allowed time to fine tune the concepts and get the flagship, five-star integrated resort, Dubrovnik Sun Gardens, running smoothly. "Our research has shown families are a strong market and people want multi-generational get togethers," says

Houchin. This has driven the focus on families at the resort, with the option of self catering accommodation, as well as a hotel. There's a children's only pool, a nursery, kids' club, juniors' club and sports and activities to keep teens occupied.

The 207 apartments range in size from 44sq m to 111sq m. An important aspect of the business model is the phased, freehold sale of these as holiday homes, which will pay for the development. Prices

start at €170,000, for a one-bed ground floor apartment with a garden view, rising to €608,000 for a three-bed apartment with a sea view. Under Croatian law, they have to be let out when not in use and iO Adria manages the lettings on behalf of the owners for 50 per cent of the rental income. Annual ownership fees are €110 per sq m. Houchin says rental returns are up to 4 per cent, after fees, and that last year one of the owners covered their annual fees after just six weeks



RESORT FACILITIES

- 13 restaurants, with an emphasis on local ingredients, including olive oil, truffles and the excellent wine and cheese
- Sports centre with a five-a-side football pitch, tennis courts, a volleyball court, squash courts, a Technogym gym and an exercise studio
- Self-contained conference rooms and facilities
- Spa with 12 treatment rooms, a gym, a heat experience area with salt sauna, sauna, steamroom and hammam, supplied by Klafs. A plunge pool and a freshwater swimming pool
- 3 outdoor pools: one adults only, one for families
- A man-made beach, as the coastline doesn't allow for natural beaches

of rental during the peak season.

When full, the resort holds 1,200 guests, but even then it's designed to feel spacious, as the infrastructure is in place to cater for 1,900 guests. This is the size it will be when a second, 120-bed, five-star hotel and a further 200 residences are completed.

Development right next to the sea is restricted in Croatia, so Dubrovnik Sun Garden's coastal location is a major asset. Although the Radisson Hotel is a more recent addition, the apartments have a history. In the 1980s, rich communists holidayed there and during the war they were occupied by the Yugoslav army, which did the site clearance when it left.

FULL OCCUPANCY

iO Adria acquired the resort in 2009 and by the end of 2010, when targets weren't being met, the contracts with Radisson were re-negotiated and Houchin and his team were parachuted in. "I rolled up my sleeves, and came in

as sales and marketing director and we put £1.75m on the rooms revenue in 12 months, achieving a 24 per cent uplift, and up to 46 per cent growth in rooms revenue in the last 18 months," says Houchin. "Turnarounds is what I do."

In high season, two-bed apartments are fetching a price tag of up to €660 a night and a whopping €1,000 for the three-bed apartments. "The booking system runs to the same model as the budget airlines, where as availability lessens, the prices rise," explains Houchin. "From 1 June, until mid-September, the resort runs at pretty much full capacity and the average stay in the summer is 7.2 nights, which is the highest in Dubrovnik. We also have many long stays of upwards of three to four weeks, many of whom are repeat customers having visited us now for the last three years."

Currently, the season is eight months, but iO Adria is pushing hard to bring visitors all year round, with the MICE market being the main



iO has created its own Croatian-themed spa concept (far left and below left); bedrooms at the Radisson (above left); one of three pools (above); its position on the coast is a major asset (below)



I ROLLED UP MY SLEEVES, AND CAME IN AS SALES AND MARKETING DIRECTOR AND WE PUT €1.75M ON THE ROOMS REVENUE IN 12 MONTHS

target for off season. Visitors come from 145 countries, with 18 per cent of them being British and the rest fairly evenly split across the rest of the world. "We are focused on generating business during the low and shoulder season," says Houchin, "and as a result the first three months of this year saw room revenues increase by 77 per cent." According to figures from the Dubrovnik Tourist Board, of the 3,500-plus five sleeper nights booked in Dubrovnik from January to March, Dubrovnik Sun Gardens captured 75 per cent of this growth.

CROATIAN SPA BRAND

Another important ingredient is the resort's spa: there are plans to make this a destination spa, which will further boost the off-peak

business. Radisson's original spa partner was Anne Semonin, but this arrangement ended at the same time as Houchin and the iO Adria team took over the operation of the resort and they took the decision to launch their own brand.

"The spa operators we spoke to projected profits by year 10, but we want profit in three," says Houchin. Working with UK-based spa consultant, Anna Doyle, iO Adria created the first Croatian spa concept and skincare brand, Occo. Each of the iO Adria's sites will feature an Occo spa, but all will have a distinctive character. Central to this is the product range: every spa has its own products based on the local foliage, for example a coastal feel for Sipan, and Istrian vineyards for the site in Mirnavina.

Spa manager, Adriana Barfala, has put together an interesting treatment menu, with gold therapy and shell massage new additions for this year. These treatments join the seasoned favourites of holistic massage, signature facials, bathing and couples' rituals, as well as the usual fare of manicures and pedicures. "My aim is to keep developing programmes which will bring people here just for the spa," says Barfala, "as well as appealing to customers from the local market outside peak season."

For Houchin, after repositioning the resort to compete with other leading five-star integrated resorts across Europe, he is focused on selling the resort's residences, before moving on to work on developing the other sites. ●

It's natural to want to improve your business, but beware of change for change's sake, warns Grahame Senior

How to do the Right Thing

Concentrate on solutions

I have been working in the marketing business for some 40-odd years and in the hotel business for at least 20 years, but I still keep forgetting my own rules. And every time, I do so at my peril!

The trouble with running a business – any business – is that no matter how well it's going, we always keep trying to do better... and sometimes that runs the risk of doing worse.

Forty five years ago when I was in my first advertising agency job, I can well remember a meeting with our top client's managing director (GlaxoSmithKline in those days), in which he insisted he was tired of the current campaign, was sure the customers were equally fed up with it and wanted to see something new by the end of the week. As a lowly copywriter, I could only watch in wonder as my extremely smooth managing director pointed out gently and respectfully that, as the campaign hadn't even launched on television yet, the chances were

that the customers were not yet suffering from slogan fatigue.

It was a valuable illustration of how easy it is for anybody running a business to get tired or bored with the current offering and restlessly try to do something better. It's a dangerous temptation.

It may satisfy our restless search for perfection but it does risk at best confusing our clients and at worst losing them altogether.

Understand your market

Whatever kind of hospitality business you are running, you're not doing it to satisfy yourself, you're doing it to satisfy your guests. Whatever it is about your current offering, if you are more than half full, you must be doing something right, so changing it on a whim can be a very foolish way to go.



Mind you, it's easy to avoid making the mistake – all you have to do is ask your best customers what they want and what they think. Firstly, it will stop you making a fool of yourself and secondly it will help you make improvements that actually work, rather than just

tinkering for the sake of it.

Despite all my years of experience, I very nearly fell into this old trap myself when planning this coming year's promotional mailing. During the winter season 2011/12, we ran a series of 'foodie feasts' which were designed to bring in individuals who would enjoy a kind of 'dining club' atmosphere and the opportunity to meet with like-minded individuals in congenial surroundings and enjoy different takes on different cuisines. They have gone reasonably well – in fact some of them



Howard's House Hotel – it's not just the scenery that keeps guests coming

SOME KEY POINTERS ON GETTING IT RIGHT

1. Don't change things for change's sake – do it for a good reason.
2. Always talk it over with the team.
3. Ask your best customers what they want from you – and also what they don't want.
4. Don't suddenly be different. People come to you with expectations and if you cease to fulfil them, then they cease to come.
5. Do what it says on the can – deliver what they expect.
6. Make change slowly.
7. Keep on improving what you do with little enhancements rather than wholesale change.

A LOCAL HERO

I may not have mentioned this before but we're lucky enough to have on our team at Howard's House as our number two chef to Nick Wentworth a guy called Paul Firmin. Paul was the original chef-founder of Howard's House back in the 1990s and he and I became firm friends before he sold it in 2002. He came back to us after a few years away and he did so because he doesn't like anything as much as he likes cooking. He's a great guy to have around and he and I decided recently to visit a local hostelry that is famous for its fish.

The Red Lion at East Chisenbury is run by Guy Manning and it's hell to find. Way over on the wrong side of the A303, up a very narrow country lane, the only entry into the village from the south was blocked off and so we had to make a huge detour to get there. When we arrived, we wondered if it was going to be worth it, as the decor was gastro pub shabby and the menus 'nothing special'.

That all changed when we ordered. The young girl behind the bar knew every detail of the wines that we wanted and spoke of them knowledgeably, and the young man taking the orders described every aspect of the dishes with confidence and clarity.



Guy Manning and the team at The Red Lion

We perked up. We got even perkier when things started arriving on the plates. The breads were brilliant but the simple fish was completely superb. You wouldn't think goujons of plaice could have much of a wow factor but they did, and the cod with squid was a perfectly judged celebration from someone with the knowledge and determination to plan right, buy right and cook right. Well done Guy. I'm sending our whole kitchen and front-of-house team along to check it out on the next possible occasion.

were a sell out – but I noticed that with one or two exceptions we didn't get a lot of the same people coming back. Perhaps more significantly, we didn't get our most faithful regular customers taking up the offers in droves.

When it came to planning the current winter campaign, we had some bright ideas for some exciting evenings but, before completing the mailing, I took a bit of my own advice and sent a questionnaire to my top 50 customers. The answers I got back were intriguing and can be best summed up by the remarks of one valued client who has been coming to us for over 20 years and even has most of his private parties at home catered for by our team. He said: "Don't stop doing what you do so well just to do something different".

When analysing the majority of responses, it was clear that most of our regular guests come to us for their own reasons and find we suit them – again – for their own reasons. What they don't particularly want is to be part of someone else's party – they'd rather make their own.

Having had the initial feedback, we had some direct conversations with a number of our guests. We found that what they actually want is the opportunity to come to interesting events from time to time but the regular and unchanging opportunity to come and feel at home within their familiar com-

"Listening to your customers can be a humbling but heartening experience"

fort zone whenever it suits them.

What has been a great success has been our 'house party style' antiques weekend and we are running that again this year. Although it's not until December it's already a sell out.

Don't suddenly be different

The lesson, I think, is to listen to the customers and give them the opportunity to join in or not with your new ideas without assuming that because they like you for one thing they'll like you for everything. They simply won't.

Listening to your customers can be a humbling but heartening experience. What we have found out over the past few weeks is that the things we often take granted about ourselves (always time to talk, always some passion in the kitchen, always a relaxed atmosphere without stress or competitiveness) are what make us attractive. It's not the smartness of the environment (there are smarter places) and it's not the innovative brilliance of the food (there are edgier kitchens). It's

not even the 'jaw-droppingly beautiful' (I quote *Salisbury Life*) environment we are lucky enough to inhabit. It's a combination of everything that makes us individual and welcoming.

Listen to your customers... and your staff

The upshot of this is that we've simplified our promotional programme for the coming winter and focused on putting in some relaxed opportunities for people to try new things but without forcing them into a mould of our own making.

We had a 'team day' last week for all the team and shared this information. What was very interesting was their reaction. "I could have told you that," said one of our newer and very popular members of the front-of-house team. "So could I," said Martin, our excellent number three chef who, at 26, is wise beyond his years.

You see, they are often closer to the customers because they talk to them every day. So from now on, all new ideas will be tested out first with the staff and then gently simmered in front of the key guests before we even think of promoting them.

It may sound a bit cowardly but discretion is ever the better part of valour and being a bit cautious is an awful lot better than losing your best customers. They are hard won and are worth fighting hard for. ●



DOUG WERNER

When Doug Werner's nine-year-old daughter failed a fitness exam at school, he put together a daily programme to help her get fit. The results were amazing, and the pair decided to write a book to share their success. Tom Walker finds out more.

What is your career background?

I started working as a part-time trainer in one of the first Nautilus gyms in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1977. Since then my roles have included sales director for Life Fitness, vice president of commercial sales for Nautilus, country club manager for Club Corporation of America in Dallas, Texas, and director of business development for Star Trac UK.

I am currently a vice president for Healthtrax Fitness and Wellness – a hospital-based health club company with operations in eight US states.

When did you come up with the idea of writing a book about children's fitness?

The idea came nearly four years after the true story of my daughter Abbie's journey to get fit. Abbie was so excited about her own success story that she became sincerely determined to help other children get fit.

Why did Abbie need to get fit?

Unlike her younger brother, who plays numerous sports and is in perpetual motion, Abbie has always been very quiet, sedentary and had no interest in sports or games. Although never obese or even unhealthy, Abbie has always been a big girl. We mistakenly came to accept this disinterest as part of her personality. The thought of her being unfit never occurred to us as she was always happy and had no body image or health issues.

Our wake-up call came when she was nine years old and failed her basic fitness examination at school. The most disturbing result was her time in the mile run – over 12 min-

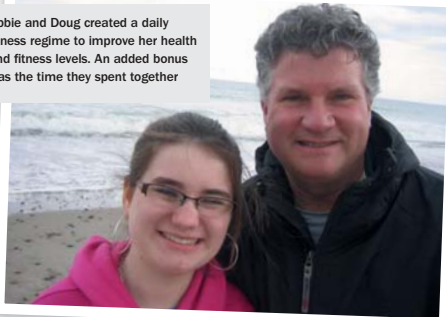
utes on a more than reasonable goal of 11 minutes. The exam also indicated a lack of upper body strength.

What did you do to address this?

Abbie and I set out on a quest to improve her fitness levels, with a 60-minute fitness walk at the core of our daily programme. We usually go to bed an hour earlier and get up an hour earlier...sometimes as early as 5am. That might sound extreme, but we actually look forward to these early morning walks together.

How did your programme benefit Abbie?

Abbie not only got fit, but also developed a genuine interest in fitness. Now, aged 13, she has become a very fit girl with a great attitude towards wellness. She wears a pedometer every day and rarely fails to achieve at least 10,000 steps per day, as recommended by most experts.



utes on a more than reasonable goal of 11 minutes. The exam also indicated a lack of upper body strength.

She's also taken a strong interest in nutrition, having read several books on the topic and she now uses an app on her iPhone to log her daily food consumption and calorie intake.

With increased energy levels came improved focus. She's now an honour roll student and just completed her seventh grade year with eight As and four Bs...something we couldn't have imagined four years ago.

What do you hope to achieve with the book?

We hope that *Abbie Gets Fit* will help educate parents on not only the need to get involved in their child's fitness, but to appreciate the tremendous benefits of physical fitness. We also hope that the fitness industry will use this story as validation of the benefits of low intensity exercise for specialised markets and as an inspiration to contribute more towards those markets. ● Details: www.abbiegetsfit.com

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18 – 20 SEPTEMBER 2012

LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK 2012



Leisure Industry Week (LIW) returns to Birmingham NEC this month with more than 300 exhibitors for what promises to be another inspirational show

LIW is the only UK trade show to cover the entire out of home leisure industry with an exciting range of sectors incorporating Play & Attractions, Health & Fitness, Sport, Pool & Spa, Eat & Drink and Leisure Facilities. These sectors combine to offer leisure professionals, from health club operators and public sector managers to attractions buyers and catering specialists, inspirational and innovative business solutions.

Venue: NEC, Birmingham

Dates: 18-20 September 2012

Opening Times:

Tues 18 Sept, 10am - 5pm

Weds 19 Sept, 10am - 5pm

Thurs 20 Sept, 10am - 4pm

Registration: Pre-register for the show for free at www.liw.co.uk

Keep up to date at: Twitter @L_I_W,

LinkedIn 'Leisure Industry Week' group and

Facebook 'Leisure Industry Week' page

With both local and national budget cuts still affecting leisure services, it is essential that operators really consider how best to spend their money in order to ensure maximum efficiency throughout the procurement process. LIW provides the perfect opportunity to do just that; with specialists in their fields around the exhibition floor, visi-

tors will be able to gather all of the information they require in a face-to-face setting. They will also have the chance to research and try out the newest and upcoming innovations.

Back by popular demand, LIW 2012 will once again deliver more than 150 hours of varied seminar sessions in the Education Village, sponsored by Matrix, which will be positioned on the show floor. Visitors seeking CPD accreditation or inspiration, or just wanting to keep up-to-date with industry trends, will have hours of free education at their fingertips, from practical advice and expert-led sessions to case studies. This year's highlights include the Fitness Industry Association (FIA) Keynote, Olympian speaker sessions and the CPD-accredited REPs National Convention.

SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

POOL & SPA



The pool and spa area provides the perfect opportunity to network with industry colleagues, keep up to date

with industry trends and source the latest products, technologies and services to hit the market.

Exhibitors will be on hand to discuss the business potential of incorporating children's classes into an existing programme with various companies on hand to outline how their products could open up this valuable market opportunity, from swimwear and play equipment to specialised classes.

The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and the Swimming Teachers Association (STA) will be on hand at

their stands to discuss the challenges facing the industry at the moment and will also be contributing to the free education programme.

Safety is never far from a pool and spa professional's mind and so, for the first time, LIW welcomes the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), who will be hosting a walk-in Safety Advice Clinic where visitors can seek advice from the experts.

Allison Spears, HM Inspector of Health and Safety at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), will present a seminar alongside RoSPA's David Walker, titled *Health and Safety in Swimming Pools*. The session will run on Wednesday 19 September and will focus on the *Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools* guidance, exploring why the guidance is being updated and what it plans to achieve.

The Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group (PWTAG) will present an outline of its new code of practice while describing its implementation. This presentation will include contributions from Dr Gordon Nichols of the Health Protection Agency; Janice Calvert, Chair of PWTAG; and Ralf Riley, former chief executive of the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management. These sessions are free and will be seated on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Pool and Spa section welcomes numerous new exhibitors this year including Aquavate, Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance and Splashabout, alongside returning names including RLSS UK, JC Leisure Solutions and Certikin. These exhibitors will give visitors a multitude of options from secondary spend products to cleaning, heating and safety solutions.



LIW is set to welcome more than 9,000 leisure industry professionals

PLAY & ATTRACTIONS



Play and Attractions at LIW provides a dedicated forum for the family entertainment and visitor attractions sector to explore indoor and outdoor play equipment, test new products and keep up with the latest developments.

Supported by the Play Providers Association (PPA), this section of the show will inspire and educate. The PPA will be running its conference on Tuesday 18th and Wednesday 19th September with top-rated speakers from the attractions sector poised to share their ideas, leadership advice and motivation. The ASPIRE awards are being held at the newly re-opened Drayton Manor Hotel.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) will also host an

advice clinic for play and attractions professionals. Specialists will be on hand to offer advice and information to visitors on a range of safety issues.

RoSPA will also feature in the free Education Village. During the session they will present case studies focusing on issues including children's play, swimming and water safety, risk management for international locations and events, and safety promotion for risk seekers. Another area of focus will be the importance of promoting positive risk choices through changing attitudes, perceptions and education.

Interactive family attractions specialist Innovative Leisure will once again be a key exhibitor at this year's LIW. The Innovative Leisure display will be the central feature of the Play and Attractions section of the show.

Among the products being shown by the Leicester-based company will be a fully operational SkyTrail high ropes

course, in addition to a climbing wall and a mobile zip line.

In the Outdoor Play Area, Innovative Leisure will showcase its products alongside Waterwalkers' inflatable games and outdoor gym equipment, Extreme Adventure's high ropes course, Play Bus Company's buses, Autoculture Distributions' go karts and theming from Snow Business.



Innovative Leisure and Extreme Adventures will exhibit ropes courses



The Health & Fitness section of the show will see a new focus on group fitness



HEALTH & FITNESS

HEALTH & FITNESS

Once again, LIW welcomes all of the leading fitness companies to the show. Technogym, Life Fitness, Matrix,

Precor, Power Plate, Escape Fitness, Pulse and a whole host of others will bring their newest equipment for visitors to try out for themselves. There will also be a new focus on group fitness with the Les Mills Exercise Arena and the Bokwa Arena.

Les Mills UK is set to launch GRIT SERIES, its latest High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) programme. GRIT SERIES provides the perfect platform for operators to maximize revenue around the demand for small group and team training, while helping to attract and retain younger members.

Keith Burnet, CEO of Les Mills UK, says: "Les Mills GRIT SERIES is the ultimate opportunity to increase retention and membership. It's the most innovative fitness trend right now and we've designed our offering so clubs can provide members a premium, PT-style workout without the expensive price tag, or offer it to members free of charge as a value add.

Bokwa will demonstrate the new fitness craze where participants 'Sweat the Alphabet and Dance the Digits,' drawing letters and numbers with their feet while doing an intense cardio rou-

tine. Whether you're seven or 77, you can follow the Bokwa moves. The team will be on hand within the Bokwa Arena and also on the live stage, LIW Live, on each day of the show.

LIW has also commissioned Leisure-net Solutions, leading customer insight and business intelligence provider, to produce a market intelligence report into the rapidly expanding and increasingly popular outdoor fitness sector.

The report will be outlined as part of the Education Village programme sponsored by Matrix and will be made available for download to LIW visitors. With research questions targeted at both consumer and trade representatives, the report will analyse the size, growth and potential of the market as well as providing insight into the motivations of outdoor fitness participants.

Three key industry players will also be represented with in-depth case studies into the business practices

and successes of some of the leaders in the outdoor fitness field.

The Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) will be running its National Convention over all three days of the LIW show. This year's convention is full of vital updates and bite-sized CPD accredited training to keep you on top of industry trends. There will be one point awarded per session attended.

Programme highlights include inspirational keynote sessions from weight loss guru Pete Cohen who will be presenting 'Obesity – an untapped fitness market', Tim Fearon from The Extraordinary Coaching Company presenting 'Welcome to the age of different' and Bob Laventure of Later Life Training presenting 'Can you really teach an old dog new tricks?'

In addition to these keynotes, REPs is set to present a dynamic selection of 40 interactive workshops. These include the following topics: 'Carbs for exercise? Think again!', 'Maximise building a small business into a brand', 'Working with specialist medical conditions', 'Food addiction – it's not all in the mind!', 'The dos, don'ts and whys of postnatal exercise' and 'Training the active independent older adult'.

Visitors can book a place on these sessions at www.liw.co.uk. Tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis with an exclusive discount available to REPs members.

"LIW has commissioned Leisure-net Solutions to produce a market intelligence report into the increasingly popular outdoor fitness sector"

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LIW LIVE LAUNCHED

LIW Live launches this year as a platform for exhibitors to display the best live action from their company on a live stage in the middle of the show floor.

Some of the UK's leading Olympic faces will be joining exhibitors on their stands and will also make an appearance on the brand new live stage, taking part in question and answer sessions. Already lined up for this programme are 2012 bronze medalist Greg Searle and badminton ace Gail Emms, both attending with Precor, and the three time world champion and 2012 bronze medalist Beth Tweddle MBE, founder of exhibiting company Total Gymnastics, which will be showcasing its new programme, Gym Stars.

Also taking part will be the cast of *The Apprentice* 2012, with contestants Stephen Brady and Adam Corbally exhibiting with their new company mysuccescoach.com. *The Biggest Loser* winner Kevin McLernon will also be accompanying Concept2 to the show with plans to outline ways in which fitness providers can attract completely disengaged participants to their facilities. *Britain's Got Talent* finalist Zoe Cooper is also set to appear with the Swimming Teacher's Association discussing her Aquabatique experience, why synchronised swimming is one of



Bronze medalist Greg Searle will be appearing on the LIW Live stage

the hardest sports in the world and the importance of increasing participation in swimming and aquatic activities.

Swimwear brand Zoggs will be hosting a fashion show showcasing its newest ranges. With new group fitness trends emerging all the time, visitors will have the chance to see sample-size demonstrations of the next big things to hit the market. These include Powerhoop sessions, in which visi-

tors will be able to join in – with the most enthusiastic Powerhooper winning their own hoop. Bokwa, Funky Moves, Revolve Fitness, Elite Sports Performance and Unikurve will also be performing dynamic demonstrations.

The LIW Live programme will run throughout the three days of the show with a full outline of demonstrations, interviews and showcases on the LIW website and in the LIW showguide.

VISITING THE SHOW

LEISURE FACILITIES

LEISURE FACILITIES

The leisure facilities section of LIW caters for visitors from the entire spectrum of the leisure industry. In one day at LIW

you will be able to ensure that your company or site has the latest and most technologically sound facilities it needs to run efficiently, cost-effectively and, most importantly, safely.

Exhibitors within this part of the show will include specialists in signage, energy efficiency, membership management and retention, information technology, heating, cooling, flooring, water treatment, lockers, payments, software, uniforms, ticketing and refurbishments.

SPORT

SPORT

With the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games just behind us, it seems that the whole world is talking about legacy.

The responsibility is partly on the leisure industry to keep people motivated, engaged, active and healthy.

Visitors will have the opportunity to talk to the exhibitors across the show floor about what they are doing to promote Olympic legacy and will find that this topic is high on the agendas of the majority of the professionals.

Also, keep an eye out for the Olympian Q&A sessions on the LIW Live stage as well as seminars within the education theatres.

EAT & DRINK

Eat & Drink

One of the reasons visitors give for attending LIW is to investigate potential new options for increasing secondary spend at their premises or site. This is where the eat and drink section of the show really comes into its own.

Visitors will have the chance to feast their senses on the latest food innovations, watch tasty demos, sample a wide range of treats and meet the suppliers that could shake up their menus.

This element of the show features companies with a range of products including vending machines, soft drinks, healthy snacks, ice cream, pizza and energy drinks. ●



"Contact Manager will give us more time to sell more memberships and is already becoming an invaluable addition to the team!"

CONTACT MANAGER

joins the One Leisure sales team

Huntingdonshire District Council is the first to launch Gladstone Health and Leisure's Contact Manager sales management software. One Leisure, which manages five leisure sites in Huntingdon, Ramsey, Sawtry, St. Ives and St. Neots, piloted the new system over a three-month period, assisting Gladstone in ironing out any glitches before its official launch this month.

After working on the initial stages of Contact Manager I am excited to start using the software. The way it will assist the sales team in terms of cutting time and, more importantly, eliminating the need to duplicate work appear invaluable.

Adding all contact information directly into Contact Manager at the prospect stage means all details are at hand. The existing member check ensures that

previous information is included in the customer journey. Historically I've had to input into our Plus2 membership system and then detail all member journeys on a separate spreadsheet, constantly moving between the two, updating and double checking changes made to a prospect's or member's profile.

If I wanted to catch up with any non-joiners I would have to find them via the spreadsheet and then cross reference with Plus2, the same as I would to check if any prospects had joined during my absence. It's the way that Contact Manager integrates with Plus2 that makes tracking simple.

Contact Manager alerts the sales staff to new tasks that require attention along the sales process and I can easily see the sales team's daily logs, such as outgoing calls, and can instantly check on their contact and prospect progress, along with any outstanding issues such as follow up contact with new members. Basically the system acts as their diary, but using

the Plus2 database so that it tracks the customer journey along its way.

Outreaching is also easy. With a template, emails and text messages can be sent to multiple recipients at the touch of a button. And I can run all the reports I need from one place, in real time too.

The greatest thing that Contact Manager will do for us is save time. Our system before was very laborious and so it's a delight to open a programme and see how simple it is to use. Contact Manager will give us more time to sell more memberships and is already becoming an invaluable addition to the team!

Nadine Thomson, Member Care Leader at One Leisure

To find out more about Contact Manager or to see the video case study, call +44 (0)1491 201010 or visit www.gladstonemrm.com



"The greatest thing that Contact Manager will do for us is save time"



EXHIBITOR NEWS

THE LATEST NEWS FROM SOME EXHIBITORS AT LIW 2012



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Ashbourne launch their Membership Validation Till System at LIW. This makes it easy for clubs to increase secondary spend. By linking members' payment status to a touch-screen till system, clubs can allow members to make purchases for classes, drinks, supplements, in fact anything, without the need for cash. All purchases are able to be added to a member's monthly membership direct debit. A complete package of software, touch-screen, secure till and receipt printer is available as a great deal to Ashbourne clients. See a demo on our stand, H396.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES



Club members can make purchases without needing cash using Ashbourne's touch screen system

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SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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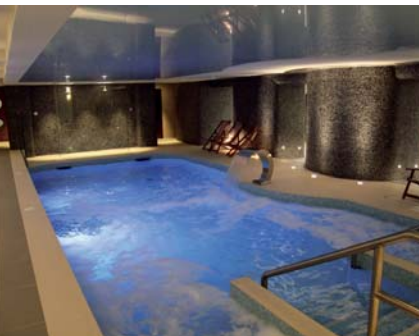
SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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When it comes to the supply of Wellness equipment, nobody does it better than Certikin as the luxurious Headland Hotel in Newquay will testify. Apex Pool Engineers recently carried out a refurbishment of the existing pool and added an impressive Wellness suite - including the sought-after Tranquillity range from Certikin. A Cornish salt steam room, aromatherapy showers, large tiled overflow spa bath and a stunning sauna were all installed to great acclaim.

SECTION: POOL & SPA



Certikin refurbished the Headland Hotel pool



Codelocks installed KitLock into Champneys

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Champneys install KitLock Visit us on stand F100 and find out why Champneys Health Spa has removed all the key-operated locks from their changing room lockers and replaced them with KitLock digital cabinet locks instead. KitLock uses a four-digit code rather than a key to operate and secure lockers. Champneys guests simply enter a code, "lock and go", free to enjoy the facilities without having to carry a key around with them. "The KitLock solution is more professional and, from a guest perspective, the lockers are now far more secure as keys are not left lying around in robe pockets," said Alex De Carvalho, Managing Director at Champneys. In 'locker-mode' function, KitLock operates with a single-use code setting facility. The guest enters a four-digit code, that will lock and open the locker only once, then be erased. The locker then remains open until another guest.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

CONCEPT 2

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Concept2's LIW stand will showcase the innovative functional zone that can be created by combining Concept2 Indoor Rovers with SkiErgs and Wattbikes. These high-accuracy products have been adopted by the CrossFit community, confirming their suitability for functional training. On 18th September, Kevin McLernon, winner of ITV's Biggest Loser, will be appearing on the Concept2 stand and the LIW Live Stage, describing how instrumental to his amazing weight loss the Concept2 Indoor was.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Cybex goes from strength to strength

As one of the industry's leading providers of premium exercise equipment, 2012 has already been a busy year for Cybex. The company has seen the opening of its new UK showcase site and Games-time Training Venue SportHouse in March; new additions to the UK team in sales and training departments as

well as the promotion of Rob Thurston from UK sales manager to commercial director. Not forgetting many new sites and extending partnerships with existing clients, plus the launch of award-winning product ranges, Cybex UK looks set to build on the success of 2011 with a fantastic 2012.

Global success supported by UK

In an announcement made in February to the US financial markets, Cybex reported a series of strong financial results for 2011, which saw net sales across the global group increase by 14% to \$140.1m.

On explaining what the results mean to the UK market, Rob Thurston, commercial director said, "It's important that our customers can see the positive financial results and overall financial position of the business, both in the UK and as a global group. The successes of the last 12 months have been replicated in the UK and we have maintained this success throughout 2012.

"This means we are again confident of strong year on year growth and as the company continues to invest further resources in bringing new and exciting products to the market, our customers can be sure that our product ranges will remain at the forefront of the health and fitness industry."

Extending partnerships with new & existing clients

March 2012 saw the official launch of SportHouse, a leading fitness training facility and Cybex's brand new UK showcase site, located in Barking.

Whilst it is the sports hall and not the gym that was awarded the status of Games-time Training Venue, it is the gym that will play a central part in retaining the sporting legacy, as SportHouse aims to target both elite performing teams

and talented young athletes, alongside the local community.

With over 1000m² of training space and over 250 pieces of Cybex cardiovascular and strength equipment, SportHouse houses one of the country's most comprehensive sports conditioning gyms. Described by Sir Steve Redgrave CBE as "world class," SportHouse has received significant press attention since its official opening, which was attended by some of the industry's leading figures.

"The gym at SportHouse has been designed to cater for a diverse range of users," commented Mark Harrop, director of sport and leisure industry consultancy HBA.

"Cybex's focus on engineering equipment that is biomechanically correct factored greatly in our decision and with its comprehensive range of IFI accredited equipment, we felt that Cybex provided the best solution for the site." The facilities at SportHouse can be viewed at www.sporthouse.co.uk.

The past 12 months has also seen Cybex extend its longstanding relationship with Nuffield Health, the UK's leading provider of employee wellbeing services and market leader in the design, build and management of on-site company health and fitness facilities.

As one of Cybex's key clients, Nuffield Health has partnered with Cybex on the provision of a range of corporate training facilities to include Deutsche Bank, Waitrose HQ and since January 2012, Network Rail HQ, Invesco Perpetual, Lloyds Banking Group and The Club at Baltimore, London's largest residential gym facility.

"Nuffield Health is the largest provider of employee wellbeing services in the UK so it is only fitting that we have partnered with Cybex on a number of high-profile projects. This partnership with Cybex enables us to deliver first-class fitness and wellbeing facilities, with excellent levels of service, professionalism and expertise," confirmed Daniel Law, operations director for Nuffield Health.

"The equipment Cybex provides is of such a high quality that we continue to receive very positive feedback from our corporate clients."

An IFI first for Cybex

As one of a select number of suppliers to offer IFI accredited equipment, Cybex's Total Access range is certified to IFI standard level 2.

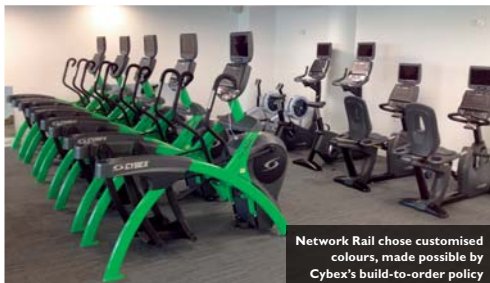
"By incorporating the unique design requirements directly into our product



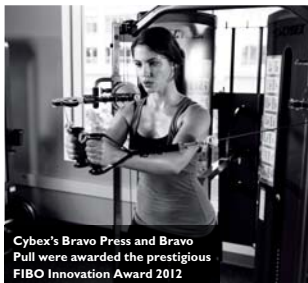
The Cybex E3 View is one of the industry's most advanced entertainment consoles



SportHouse is home to over 250 pieces of Cybex equipment, including the Big Iron lifting platform



Network Rail chose customised colours, made possible by Cybex's build-to-order policy



Cybex's Bravo Press and Bravo Pull were awarded the prestigious FIBO Innovation Award 2012

research and development, we've been able to produce a range of both cardio and strength equipment that is accessible to the physically impaired, but which doesn't exclude other exercisers," confirms Richard Purves, Cybex senior regional manager.

Energise, a local authority-owned training facility and existing Cybex client based in York, was the first centre in the UK to be awarded the Inclusive Fitness Mark. This September will see the opening of its newly-extended training facility, taking its number of Cybex equipment to almost 90 pieces.

"The positive feedback we've had from our members has supported our decision to re-engage with Cybex and our new suite of premium equipment will further ensure that we can deliver to our members' requirements," confirmed Paul Bickle, leisure centre manager.

Delivering the latest in technology and design

Launching at this year's Leisure Industry Week, the Cybex 770 cardio series is the company's most advanced range of premium commercial cardio equipment. Incorporating a treadmill, upright and

recumbent bikes as well as Cybex's ground-breaking lower and total body Arc Trainers, the 770 series guarantees maximum durability, stability and greater comfort, whilst also offering more entertainment options than any other product range in the company's history.

Cybex will also be launching its 625 cardio series at LIW 2012, offering customers an alternative product range for commercial use.

Both the new 625 and 770 series are compatible with another of Cybex's latest innovations and one of the industry's most advanced entertainment consoles, the Cybex E3 View:

"Recognising that everyone approaches exercise differently, we have developed the E3 view to give users three distinct viewing modes that deliver the precise content they want," confirmed Rob Thurston.

This year's LIW will also feature Cybex's revolutionary Bravo functional training system. Comprising of the Bravo functional trainer and Bravo Lift, Press and Pull systems, the four machines have been incorporated into a brand new Bravo Boot Camp training programme; Cybex's Bravo Workout

Guide, a free App that is available for download via the Cybex website and iTunes, can also be used in conjunction with the equipment.

Utilising Progressive Stabilisation, Cybex's Bravo Press and Bravo Pull are the first multi-function cable training stations to offer the stability and strength potential found in single-function, fixed-path equipment along with the expanded movement variety typical with multi-function cable training systems; in recognition of this, the series was awarded the prestigious FIBO Innovation Award 2012 for its patented Progressive Stabilisation system in April.

Exciting times ahead

"We've experienced a fantastic year so far, with many new projects already secured over the coming months," confirmed Rob Thurston.

"As a brand, we are internationally-renowned for our premium quality, highly durable equipment and as we continue to invest in new technology, research and design, Cybex will continue to cement its position as one of the industry's leading equipment manufacturers." ●

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Cybox is a leading manufacturer of premium exercise equipment, designed to improve physical well being, function and performance. Launching at this year's Leisure Industry Week, the Cybox 770 series is the company's most advanced range of premium commercial cardiovascular equipment. Incorporating a treadmill, upright and recumbent bikes as well as Cybox's ground-breaking lower and total body Arc Trainers, the 770 series guarantees maximum durability, stability and greater comfort, whilst also offering more entertainment options than any other product range in the company's history. Cybox will also be launching its 625 cardiovascular series at LIW, offering customers an alternative product range for commercial use. Both the new 625 and 770 series are compatible with another of Cybox's latest innovations and one of the industry's most advanced entertainment consoles, the Cybox E3 View. Offering users three distinct viewing modes, the E3 View high definition embedded monitor is also fully compatible with iPhone and iPod connections. LIW will also feature Cybox's revolutionary Bravo functional training system; in recognition of its unique Progressive Stabilisation system, the series was awarded the prestigious FIBO Innovation Award 2012 in April.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



Cybox will reveal its 770 CV series



Dalesauna leads innovation in sauna and steam relaxation

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It is without doubt true that everything does go in cycles, and indeed the Local Authority and Trust sector have certainly come back strong in the past couple of years, despite the much mooted government spending cuts. It seems that some of the more entrepreneurial authorities have seen the future, which is not all about pure fitness but the more all encompassing "wellness" and the latest new builds and refurbishments have certainly taken this into consideration. The Lagoon, Paisley, Westminster Lodge St, Albans and Ramsgate Leisure Centre are just three facilities that have committed hundreds of thousands (millions in some cases), to offering better facilities for the community, and with wellbeing and mental health, high on the agenda, this seems to be the start of an ongoing trend, as the benefits of relaxation now counts as highly as pure fitness.

SECTION: POOL & SPA

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Eurosite's on-site solutions are now available in the UK



equipment required is financed, installed, owned and operated by EuroSite Power rather than the client - who simply pays for the energy they use at a cheaper rate than without the equipment in place. For more information, visit stand P236.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

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STAND P221



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The FIA is the trade body for the UK health and fitness sector, representing over 3,000 outdoor and indoor organisations from the public, private and third sectors. As a facilitator, the FIA work across the following areas;

- talking to government to ensure sure physical activity, health and wellbeing is high on the agenda
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- developing new initiatives to improve the quality of provision offered by the sector
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- delivering www.spogo.co.uk a customer-facing digital service to make searching and finding physical activities as simple as other consumer-friendly online services. The fact is together we can achieve more; join the FIA today visit us at LIVW stand H465.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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www.gantner.com

GANTNER Electronic is the leading European manufacturer of SMART Card system solutions. All GANTNER products are specially designed for the requirements of the global leisure industry. The offered system solutions include access control, automated check-in, electronic wardrobe locking systems, and cashless payment applications. GANTNER has proven to be amongst the most reliable on the market. High quality, great design, flexibility and short payback times are GANTNER's strengths. GANTNER hardware and 3rd party club management software create a fully integrated system solution which is extremely convenient and secure. Boost your profits and streamline your organisation with SMART Card Technology.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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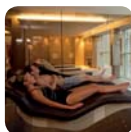
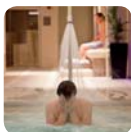
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SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Hippo equipment promotes play

SECTION: PLAY & ATTRACTIONS

Learn2 Swim

achieves Mission Impossible



Fusion launched Gladstone's Learn2 Swim course management module as an early adopter in January this year, installing it at Hillingdon Sport and Leisure Complex. The Learn2 Swim trial marked the start of a new three-year contract between Gladstone and Fusion Lifestyle, which will take the partnership to more than 10 years.

The Learn2 Swim software, which has been endorsed by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA), is designed to simplify the complicated and time-consuming swim school administration process, allowing operators to register pupils on courses, manage accreditation at the poolside and ease the movement of pupils between levels. It can also provide tailored reports on joiners, leavers, pupils changing classes and class occupancy.

Mike Carruthers, head of ICT at Fusion Lifestyle, says: "The trial of Learn2 Swim was led by a couple of enthusiastic members of the swim team and so far we've had very positive responses.

"The main benefits are: continuous assessment, which I believe will help us keep children swimming for longer, as they can automatically enrol onto the next level; time saving on administration, meaning our instructors can spend less time recording attendance and attainment and more time improving lesson delivery and interacting with their classes; and information for the parents at no extra cost."

In line with many operators, Fusion's previous approach to enrolment was term-based and, with tens of thousands of children on the swim school programme, there would be a rush every 10 weeks, with parents looking to re-enrol within a relatively short booking window, creating

Registered charity Fusion Lifestyle manages 36 pools across its estate of 52 public leisure facilities. The administration of its thousands of swimming classes each week may sound like mission impossible, especially when you consider that equates to well over a million swimming lessons every year, but according to Fusion's head of ICT, Gladstone Health and Leisure's new Learn2 Swim software will soon make light of those figures.

lengthy queues at reception and pressure for parents. "Learn2 Swim's 50-week rolling programme will improve this significantly," continues Carruthers. "Re-enrolment is driven by when the child is ready to move up a class, not by pre-dated terms."

Teachers use a portable, waterproof, touch-screen device to take registers, store notes and assess pupils at the poolside. Carruthers says the staff truly see the advantages: "The device increases their time poolside and reduces the time spent on admin in the back office. It offers reliable, up-to-date information so they can easily track the progress of individual pupils and their classes as a whole, respond quickly to any parent queries, monitor attendance levels and see any medical issues at a glance."

The intelligent software promotes movement between courses by flagging up children who are ready to progress and, if necessary, can put them onto a waiting list in line with the parent preferences, for days and lesson times, which can be saved on the system.

Carruthers adds: "Learn2 Swim has the added benefit of data sharing and enables automated customer contact, emailing or texting customers when a pupil is

approved to move up a class or needs to pay for lessons, driving our engagement and retention potential."

The web-based system also carries a 'home portal', allowing parents to access and review the progress of their child at their leisure, as well as re-enrolling their child online when an email trigger alerts that they are ready to move up a level.

"The new software has been a real success. Obviously as a completely new product it's had its challenges and issues, but the response from the team at Gladstone was very positive. Learn2 Swim will now take our swimming lesson programme to the next level," concludes Carruthers.

Learn2 Swim will be introduced to a further 10-15 of Fusion Lifestyle's pools in time for the autumn term in September, and will be rolled out to the remaining sites in the new year.

To find out more about
Learn2 Swim, call +44
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Innovative Leisure will once again be present at LIW in 2012 and this years' show is set to be the biggest yet for the leading supplier of high energy, adventure play attractions. A first for LIW, our Mobile Zip Line, recipient of a 'Best new product' award at IAAPA 2011 makes an appearance, and visitors to our stand will be able to try the latest in thrilling mobile attractions for themselves. For the second year running, you will be able to test yourself on one of our Sky Trail High Ropes Courses with this years course set to be even bigger. Our usual climbing attractions will also be on show as will our Water Wars range outdoors. Our full team will be on hand to talk to you about any of our products. You can find Innovative Leisure on stand A40 on the show floor and outside on stand AS10.

SECTION: PLAY & ATTRACTIONS

JORDAN FITNESS

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www.jordanfitness.co.uk

For 25 years, Jordan Fitness have been at the forefront of design, manufacture and supply of quality commercial grade, functional fitness equipment, in the UK and internationally. Jordan Fitness also provides training through their comprehensive REP's accredited training programme. As part of their Results Based Training (RBT) programme, Jordan Fitness also offers a full facility design and planning service. Their in-house creative design team can provide 3D visuals in conjunction with advice from the experienced sales team. From inception to finance, installation and then on-going staff training, Jordan Fitness is able to offer a package that is unrivalled within the industry. Jordan Fitness will be showcasing and demonstrating several new functional fitness products at Leisure Industry Week (LIW) 2012 on Stand H650. For more information about Jordan Fitness, visit their website at www.jordanfitness.co.uk, call +44 (0)1945 880257, or email sales@jordanfitness.co.uk

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION:
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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION:
HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES



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HEALTH &
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SECTION: PLAY & ATTRACTIONS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Over 900 leisure centres with more than 500 swimming pools in Europe: an impressive portfolio. Pellikaan specialises in designing and constructing sports facilities and commercial buildings including schools, offices and hotels. The company has the experience and expertise to design, coordinate, and complete every aspect of construction projects. Pellikaan can be involved from the very first design stage, or work with the client's architect to fine tune the drawings and carry out the construction works. The vast know-how and experience have led to all UK projects being handed over on time and on budget. Visit Pellikaan on stand F180.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES



Pellikaan designs and constructs sports and commercial sites ▶

POMMEL TORSO

THE POMMEL TORSO IS A REVOLUTIONARY EXERCISE TOOL DESIGNED TO OFFER THE USER A MULTITUDE OF BENEFITS.

The machine uses a circular movement to engage all of the core muscles, strengthening this area, as well as elevating heart rate to provide cardiovascular benefits.

The Pommel Torso was developed by back surgeon Dr. Yasser Nadim after watching athletes competing on the pommel horse at the Olympic Games. He observed how the rotational movement worked the muscles of the torso like no other and set about designing a machine that would allow users to engage their core in the same way, without having to master the pommel horse. Dr. Nadim



Pommel Torso works the torso muscles more effectively than conventional ab exercises

was driven by his passion to see people exercising safely and correctly, having treated many patients who had hurt their back through exercise, often due to bad technique or poor core strength.

The Pommel Torso is unique; no other machine targets all the muscles of the core and lower back. The machine is designed to be more effective than standard abdominal exercises, providing a more beneficial and well-rounded workout. While standard exercises predominantly target the rectus abdominis muscles, Pommel Torso targets all of the muscles of the core, lower and upper back in a functional manner.

Research undertaken at the University of Central Lancashire showed that the Pommel Torso resulted in greater overall abdominal and back muscle activity than standard core exercises. As a result, the Pommel Torso allows users to get a more effective core workout in a shorter space of time. Using the Pommel Torso also elevates heart rate, therefore providing additional cardio benefits. The



The Pommel Torso would slot neatly into any gym set-up

research showed that using the machine for an average of 15 minutes, three times a week for six weeks resulted in a significant reduction in body fat.

Recently, the Pommel Torso has been trialled by The Chelsea Club, an Elite London health club, located within the Stamford Bridge Stadium complex. The machine has received rave reviews from members who report a lower rate of perceived level of exertion, despite still getting a great core workout.

Darren Garrett, the club's fitness manager, said: *'This could make a real impact when it hits the market. It gives members an effective way to condition their core safe in the knowledge that they are performing the exercise correctly and not putting their back at risk. Installation is so easy it could slot neatly into nearly any gym set up.'*

For more information about Pommel Torso see www.pommeltorso.co.uk or call 0203 582 3822

PHYSICAL COMPANY

Tel: +44 (0)1494 769 222

www.physicalcompany.co.uk

Physical Company launch their EX:CEL training platform at this year's LIW. The platform bridges the gap between fitness equipment and exercise programming by way of an interactive online training zone. It's been designed by industry experts to take the stress out of keeping trainers up to date with the latest REPS accredited group exercise trends. Equipment featured during the first phase will be BOSU, Human Trainer, freeFORM and Kettlebells.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



Physical Company launches its EX:CEL training platform online training zone



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Calling all independent operators...

The Fitness Industry Independent Operators Unite forum will be returning to Leisure Industry Week (LIW) 2012 bringing you expert advice and new ideas to make your club or gym stand out from the competition.

This year's programme will be delivered by fellow independent operators who will share their experiences, mistakes, lessons and ideas with you.

Boost your knowledge with this fantastic FREE programme:

Day 1 - Wednesday 19 September 2012

14:00-14:40

Practical ideas that work for the UK Independent Operator

Sometimes you can go to a restaurant and order what you want, or pick and choose from a whole smorgus board of ideas. This session is based on the latter, with a panel of Independent Operators with years of experience of mistakes, successes, lessons and ideas that are easy to implement for any club owner in the UK. Clubs will take away quick-win ideas that they will produce quick-win results!

Panel of Independent Operators

15:00-15:40

Making money for your club from the 'other stuff' (not actual memberships)

In today's market of diminishing returns due to increased competition and physical activity alternatives, clubs have to maximise the revenue that they generate from non-membership money. This session is a panel of expert club owners who have been able to offer innovative secondary spend ideas that not only generate more money but also provide a better service to their existing membership base.

Panel of Independent Operators

16:00-16:40

Easy ways to use the internet to make more money for your independent club

Whether it's Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Foursquare or many other social media avenues, there is no doubt that the internet is here to stay. Due to the internet, a small Independent Operator can 'compete' with the big boys without leaving their reception. This session is a panel of club owners who have successfully achieved just that... and most importantly, you don't have to follow their twitter account to learn those secrets. Simply turn up with an open mind!

Panel of Independent Operators

Day 2 - Thursday 20 September 2012

10:30-11:30

The great debate... Strengths/Weakness/Opportunities/Threats of being an Independent Operator in today's climate

The UK is undergoing a paradigm shift on how health clubs must adapt to survive in today's evolving market. This session will be an open forum 'discussion' about the pros and cons of being an Independent Operator in today's market with insights into the future of the industry and what opportunities are out there. This is a not-to-be-missed 'recovery' session after the previous night's festivities!

Panel of Independent Operators

Plus, celebrate your hard work at the IOU Industry party*

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*The IOU Industry party is FREE for all IOU and FIA members with a discounted price for non IOU member Independent Operators. Request your free ticket or book a ticket at www.liw.co.uk/iouforum

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Poolpod is a new product set to provide a lasting legacy of the London 2012 Olympic Games. The award winning design provides access to the pool for less mobile people and promotes new rehabilitation and aqua-therapy techniques. Legacy begins now with swimmers in East London, followed by pilot installations across the UK by the Amateur Swimming Association. Visit our stand to find out more and follow on its journey to a pool near you.

SECTION: POOL & SPA

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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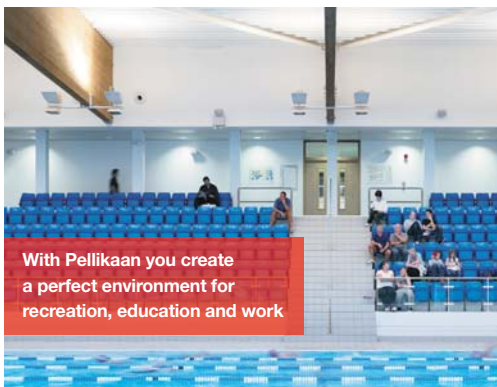
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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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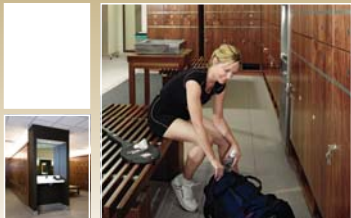
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