

# leisureopportunities

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## Don Valley to get £40m makeover

Don Valley Stadium in Sheffield is to be transformed into a £40m "sports and wellbeing park". The plans, described as the most comprehensive Olympic legacy project outside of the capital, would see the demolition of the existing Don Valley stadium and a complete redevelopment of the site.

At the heart of the planned development is a new stadium – providing a new home for the Sheffield Eagles (Rugby League) and Titans (Rugby Union) teams – as well as new venues for basketball, gymnastics and snooker.

A High Performance Centre, linked with Sheffield Hallam University, would also be created along with a new National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine.

The Woodbourn Road athletics site would also be redeveloped into a 60-80m indoor



The Don Valley site will be developed into a sports and wellbeing park

facility to provide all-weather training facilities. The proposals are backed by partners including both Sheffield universities, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the trust behind the University Technical College (UTC) and Sport England. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=K3C7K>



British Museum – the UK's most visited attraction

## ALVA reveals visitor number report for 2012

Attractions in Liverpool and Scotland have experienced noticeable increases in popularity, according to figures released by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) which detail the most popular UK attractions in 2012.

The annual list is still, however, dominated by London attractions and was topped by the British Museum, which – despite a 4.7 per cent drop in visitor numbers on the previous year – drew 5,575,946 total visits. To see the full ALVA report on visitor figures, see: <http://lei.sr?a=j5Y7j>

## Fraud investigation at Museums of Scotland

Lothian and Borders Police have launched a fraud investigation into National Museums of Scotland after more than £80,000 of the institution's money has gone missing, the organisation has confirmed.

NMS became aware of the fraud in July 2012 and launched an investigation with the help of their internal auditors KPMG.

One staff member has been dismissed and another has resigned as a result of the internal investigation and the matter is now in the hands of police. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=R9u1g>

## £913m cycling boost for London

London Mayor Boris Johnson has outlined a £913m plan to promote cycling in the capital, which will see the establishment of Dutch-style segregated cycle tracks over the next three years. In addition semi-segregated routes will be established as well as "quietways" – continuous, signposted routes through side streets for people who do not enjoy cycling in traffic.

Johnson said the route would run more than 15 miles, from the western suburbs to the heart of London and on to Canary Wharf and Barking. The cycle routes will be parallel to, and named after, Tube lines and bus routes, providing clarity for those using the network. Substantial safety improvements will be made



Funding will improve cyclist safety on London streets

at problem junctions such as Blackfriars, Vauxhall, Tower, Swiss Cottage, and Elephant & Castle, and funding will be made available for eight police officers to investigate cycle accidents involving HGVs.

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## SPORT

# Cambridge £25m water park plans

A 220-acre water sports complex between Milton and Waterbeach in Cambridgeshire is a step closer to becoming a reality after an agreement was completed by the developer, landowners and South Cambridgeshire District Council. Plans to establish the £25m centre were first announced in 2004 and received planning permission in 2007 – subject to the developer agreement.

The agreement, signed last week, requires the area around the lake to be open to the public – including 100 acres of woodland.

Before building works can begin, a raft of conditions relating to drainage, flood risk assessments, impact on the River Cam and land drains – which run adjacent to the planned lake – must also be addressed. When completed, facilities at the complex will include a 3.2km stretch of water, connected to the River



Plans include a 2km-long, international-standard rowing course

Cam and including a 2 km long international competition standard rowing and canoeing course at least 100m wide.

There will also be a triathlon facility; a three-mile long cycle circuit built to international competition standards; a combined competition and training BMX track; a lake stocked with fish for angling and a network of cycle paths connecting to Cambridge and Milton Country Park. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=X2K8N>

## Wales forms advisory group to shape sporting future

Sport Wales has announced the formation of a new Sports Advisory Group (SAG), designed to help shape the future of sport in the country.

The first of its kind, the group of leading figures from business, health, communications, education and leisure will be tasked

with developing new strategic thinking to help broaden sport's appeal amongst the less active. The development represents one of Sport Wales' key corporate objectives: to draw insights and expert thinking from other sectors. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=t5F8E>

## Sports village for the deaf opens in Dublin

A multi-million euro state-of-the-art sports and social complex for Ireland's deaf community has officially opened in Dublin.

Deaf Village Ireland, which is located off Ratoath Road in Cabra, features a sports centre and swimming pool along with administration, social, educational, heritage and religious facilities.

The board of the Catholic Institute for Deaf People (CIDP) set up a new company Sportsco in June 2011 to manage and deliver the project, which will be open to the wider community.

John Sisk & Son, member of the SISK Group was the contractor for the village, which also houses the Life Long Learning Centre for parents and teachers of deaf children that



The village features a number of sports facilities designed for the blind

will have research capabilities. Sign language services will be available via the new centre, educating people on the different types of deafness, the variety of deaf sports including the deaf Olympics, and Irish sign language. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=Y2C4J>



## British success at Laureus awards

Britain has achieved triple success at the Laureus World Sport Awards 2013, held in Rio de Janeiro on 11 March, with Jessica Ennis, Andy Murray and Sebastian Coe taking home top honours.

Broadcast worldwide the majority of the evening's winners came from the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics in London, with British athlete Ennis taking home Sportswoman of the Year for her performance in the heptathlon. Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt took out Sportsman of the Year following his three golds in the 100m, 200m and 4 x 100m relay.

British tennis star Andy Murray won Breakthrough of the Year for his first ever Grand Slam victory, at the US Open, and for his success at the singles and mixed doubles



Olympic champion Jessica Ennis - one of three Brits to be recognised

at last year's Olympics. Rounding off Britain's success at the awards was Lord Sebastian Coe, who received a lifetime achievement award for his role as chair of London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games.

## Beach sport stadium planned for Skegness

England's first national stadium for beach sports will be constructed at Skegness Beach, Lincolnshire, pending planning permission.

The 2,040-seat facility would be home to the National England Beach Soccer Team and also host sports such as beach volleyball, rugby, cricket, handball and Futsal. It will also host events such as fun days for kids, sand sculpture events, movies on the beach, and Red Bull events.

It is expected to attract 400,000 spectators annually and will be self-funded, with the majority of events free to the public. Behind the plans is Gary Shepherd, chief executive of Skegness Beach Stadium Limited, who said: "This is Skegness's chance



The 2,400-capacity venue would be the home to a number of beach sports

to begin capturing major international sporting events, especially during what is typically our slow hotel season as the season will run from April through to late October." Details: <http://lei.sr?a=7M3d3>

## Disability access a priority for organisers of Glasgow 2014

Glasgow has outlined how tourists with disabilities will be accommodated at next year's Commonwealth Games.

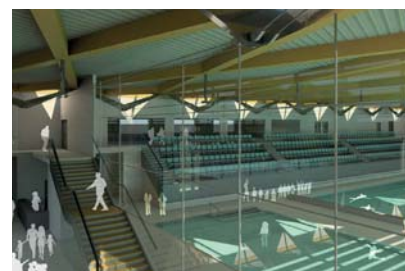
Initiatives would include access statements at Glasgow hotels, giving visitors an accurate picture of accessibility, and training volunteers

in disability equality and awareness. Games minister Shona Robison said VisitScotland had been working with organisations like Capability Scotland and Hearing Dogs for Deaf People to highlight the potential of accessible tourism. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=X6s3L>

## Jersey seeks feedback on its sporting future

Jersey has launched a consultation document calling for those who watch, volunteer or take part in sport to submit their views on the future of sport on the island.

The consultation, which closes 31 May, covers competitive sport, organised and team activities, and activities such as walking and cycling. It seeks feedback on four key questions: whether the state needs to make changes; should it create a new co-ordinating body for sport; is a new model for sports development required; and should the state continue to run facilities or should other options be explored.



An artist's impression of the new leisure centre

## Plans for Grimsby leisure centre unveiled to public

Detailed plans and building designs for Grimsby's new leisure centre, which includes a swimming pool and sports facilities, are set to be unveiled to the public.

North East Lincolnshire Council is embarking on a phased approach to the replacement of the area's ageing facilities.

The development of a new leisure centre, which is to be built on land adjacent to the current Grimsby Leisure Centre and Grimsby Auditorium, is phase 1 of the project. The facility will replace Grimsby Swimming Pool and also the fun pool within Grimsby Leisure Centre.

## Leicester in talks to host elite road cycling event

The mayor of Leicester has revealed the city is in discussions with British Cycling to host an elite annual road race, likely to attract up to 5,000 spectators, as part of a new partnership with the sports body.

The city's Sky Ride - a UK-wide initiative to get more people cycling - will also continue for another three years.

As part of the agreement Leicester City Council will contribute £63,750 over three years, matched by \$135,000 from British Cycling. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=Doh3x>

### Short bouts of exercise linked with self-control

New research published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine reveals short bouts of moderately intense exercise can boost self-control in children, adolescents and young adults.

The research examined 12 studies completed up to April 2012, which detailed the impact of short bouts of physical exercise on self-control in six to 12 year-olds; 13 to 17 year-olds; and 18 to 35 year-olds. The analysis revealed a positive impact in all age groups. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=6a7D6>*



The Gym Group chief executive John Treharne

### The Gym Group among the best companies to work for

Budget gym operator The Gym Group has achieved 15th place in the prestigious The Sunday Times 100 Best Small Companies to Work For list.

Considered the most extensive research into employee engagement, the survey uses a wide range of criteria to measure each of the 896 companies on issues affecting employees in the UK today.

John Treharne, The Gym Group's CEO said: "We work tirelessly to ensure that we are a satisfying and rewarding place to work." *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=N2Y2s>*

### New exercise studio for Downs Leisure Centre

Leisure trust Wave Leisure has unveiled a new £140,000 exercise studio at the Downs Leisure Centre in Seaford, Sussex.

Wave Leisure has invested £90,000 in the new facility, with a further £50,000 being provided by Sport England's Inspired Facilities Fund.

As a result the centre now offers increased space within the existing classes while Wave Leisure has also introduced indoor cycling classes to add to the growing programme of activities. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=H1K2B>*

## UK ranks 'below EU' on health

Premature mortality in the UK is "persistently and significantly" below the mean of other European Union countries, according to analysis of British health data published this month.

The results have been published in medical journal The Lancet and compare the UK with the original 15 members of the European Union, Australia, Canada, Norway and the US.

It found the UK's ranking against other nations for mortality in those aged 20-54 has "worsened substantially" over the past two decades and compared particularly poorly for breast cancer, ischaemic heart disease, respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and tobacco related illness. In response to the article health secretary Jeremy Hunt has vowed to tackle the



Health secretary Hunt said he wants to change the UK's poor ranking

"big five causes of death" – cancer, heart, stroke, respiratory and liver disease. "Despite real progress in cutting deaths we remain a poor relative to our global cousins on many measures of health, something I want to change," he said. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=P2f7Q>*

## First mi-gym.com opens in Chelmsford

A new independently-owned health club based on functional training has opened in Chelmsford city centre.

The aim of the club is to increase group participation and make the exercising experience engaging and fun, drive retention and most of all, achieve results for members.

The 1,400sq ft (130sq m) mi-gym.com is owned by fitness coach and industry veteran Rachel Young and offers members a range of functional training techniques as well as group training and personal training. It also runs CrossFit Chelmsford - a strength and conditioning programme involving varied, functional movements performed at a high intensity.

Young chose functional fitness specialists



The kit includes kettlebells, training discs, sandbags and punch bags

Jordan Fitness as the equipment supplier for the launch. The kit delivered by Jordan includes Olympic training discs, kettlebells, slam balls, sandbags and punch bags. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=P9a9a>*

## 'Strictly' dance stars partner with Everyone Active

Leisure management company Everyone Active is to introduce a new dance fitness routine to its schedules, developed by Strictly Come Dancing stars Natalie Lowe and Ian Waite. Called Fitsteps, the classes have been created in partnership with six-time world

champion swimmer Mark Foster.

The celebrity trio has worked closely with health and fitness professionals to develop a routine that combines Latin and ballroom dances with fitness techniques. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=P7Mon>*



## Gym chains agree to OFT ruling

Three health club operators have agreed to change their contract terms following an investigation by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) which deemed some of the practices used by the gym groups as 'unfair'.

Bannatyne Fitness, David Lloyd Leisure and Fitness First have now agreed to change their contract terms to make them more transparent and give their members better cancellation rights. Among the changes to have been stipulated by the OFT are:

- Extended rights for members to cancel their contracts early should their circumstances change in a way that makes attendance at the gym difficult or unaffordable - for example if they lose their jobs or suffer an injury
- A commitment not to describe membership as being of a fixed duration, if the contract



The OFT recommendations will see the chains change contract policies

automatically continues on a rolling basis after the initial membership period has expired

- Greater transparency about key membership features, including initial membership periods and cancellation rights, and for these to be provided upfront as part of the sales process. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=c4X6X>

## Operators invest in 'obese-friendly' kit

Workplace equipment supplier Slingsby has launched a range of bariatric products in response to rising demand from organisations across all industries – including leisure and sport – to modify their premises in order cope with UK's obesity crisis.

NHS figures reveal more than a quarter of the UK's adult population are clinically obese and research from this year's European Congress on Obesity predicts that nearly half of all British men and more than a third of all women will be obese by 2040. Slingsby, which supplies more than 35,000 workplace products, recognised a gap in the market for businesses, such as hotels and leisure related venues that can accommodate



NHS figures reveal more than a quarter of British adults are obese

larger customers. As a result, the company has launched the new range to cater for this growing demand and plan to continue adding products in the coming months. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=gob9C>

## Think tank recommends rewards for healthy citizens

People who make healthy lifestyle choices should be prioritised for non-emergency hospital appointments as a reward, a report by think tank Demos recommends.

The report, entitled *Control Shift*, said NHS users could prove their responsible lifestyles by

sharing data from their supermarket or gym and this would promote a public service culture of "getting back what you put in". It said the government could top-up benefit recipients' Universal Credit if they attended the gym regularly. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=I6G1w>

## CYBEX showcases excellence in leading sports Universities

The Sport & Fitness Centres at the University of Liverpool and University College Dublin have re-opened following extensive renovations, with both facilities now equipped with over 100 pieces of equipment from CYBEX International.

The 7,000 member gym at the University of Liverpool now boasts a new and bespoke advanced strength training area alongside cardiovascular equipment from CYBEX's 770 series.

On the decision to choose CYBEX, Andy Craig, director of sport at the University of Liverpool, said: "We decided to partner with CYBEX because they were the best overall match against the criteria we set; we wanted good value for money but we also insisted on fitness equipment that was functional, effective and looked great too!"



CYBEX 770 series Arc Trainers at the University of Liverpool

The new 850m<sup>2</sup> gym at University College Dublin is double the size of the existing facility and will be used by students, sports teams and the local community; professional rugby side Leinster will also train at the University.

Commenting on the decision to engage CYBEX to equip the new gym, UCD Sport & Fitness Centre manager Hughie McGearty said: "Not only is CYBEX's equipment of a very high quality, its support, advice and service to customers is excellent; it is because of this combination that we chose CYBEX, who have faultlessly delivered where competing suppliers couldn't."



Strength gym at UCD with customised frames and upholstery

The two gyms are the latest additions to CYBEX's portfolio of education facilities which already include the Universities of Bristol, Birmingham, Nottingham and Limerick, Queen Ethelburga's College and St. Catherine's School.

## ATTRACTIONS & MUSEUMS

### Stroud's Museum in the Park gets £250,000 boost

Stroud's Museum in the Park has received its largest ever donation of £250,000 to build a new pavilion that will house a learning space and restore the garden.

It was awarded by the Gloucestershire Environmental Trust and will fund the Walled Garden Project, which aims to bring back to life 2,000 sq m (21,528sq ft) of derelict land that was formerly the garden belonging to the mansion house, now the Museum in the Park. The grant follows £60,000 put forward by Stroud District Council. *Details:* <http://lei.sr?a=l2l7R>



Will.i.am wants STEM to be more accessible

### Will.i.am launches STEM youth education scheme

A new scheme to engage disadvantaged youth with science and technology has been launched by international pop star will.i.am, in collaboration with The Prince's Trust, at the Science Museum in London.

Funded by a £500,000 donation from the artist, the scheme will deliver workshops aimed to inspire 13-19 year olds in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It will be delivered by Science Museum outreach staff and target young people struggling at school and at risk of exclusion. *Details:* <http://lei.sr?a=O807s>

### Paisley Abbey plans to build £2m visitor centre

Paisley Abbey has submitted plans to Renfrewshire Council for the £2m reconstruction of its fourth cloister, to house a visitor centre, café, gift shop and function space over two-floors.

Architects Simpson & Brown have submitted the plans, received 28 February, and state the extension will complement the existing 12th-century abbey without copying what was there.

It's hoped the expansion will attract more visitors and secure the Abbey's financial future. *Details:* <http://lei.sr?a=s5m6J>

## 'Smiler' to lighten up Alton Towers

Alton Towers Resort has worked with researchers at New Scientist to ensure its new £18m roller coaster *The Smiler* delivers park visitors maximum thrills.

The ride, which will reach speeds of 85km/hr along 1,170m of track, will feature "twisted psychological effects to mess with riders' minds" including blinding lights and optical illusions.

New Scientist research commissioned by Alton Towers revealed the most thrilling rides should consist of five acts: the set-up; the anticipation; the climax; the release; and the period of reflection when the ride has finished.

Ride consultant at Alton Towers John Wardley said: "We know people get a thrill when they ride roller-coasters, but in order to heighten that feeling of excitement we needed



The £18m coaster, with speeds up to 85km/hr, is set to open in May

to design a roller-coaster that also incorporates a variety of mental cues. *The Smiler* will be different from other traditional coasters in that it will combine intense physical effects to put the body through its paces, along with the unique mental elements to mess with the mind." *Details:* <http://lei.sr?a=O900Y>

## Attenborough opens Wakefield museum

A new museum and library has launched at the Merchant Gate development in Wakefield, Yorkshire.

Wakefield One, officially opened by wildlife presenter Sir David Attenborough, is located on the ground floor in the council's new civic building and details the history of the people of Wakefield.

The main displays tell the story of the people who shaped the region's history through themes such as love, war, play and crime.

A display is devoted to eco-warrior Charles Waterton, the 19th century naturalist and explorer born nearby at Walton Hall, and includes the caiman crocodile he famously captured on one of his trips to South America.



Wildlife presenter Sir David Attenborough at the launch of the museum

A temporary exhibition space will showcase displays from the museum's collections, loans from other people and places and will be a space to share the museum's work with local groups. *Details:* <http://lei.sr?a=g6W5t>

## New historical resource centre opens in East Sussex

A major partnership between East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the University of Sussex will see around 350,000 items moved from the Royal Pavilion & Museums to new historical resource centre The Keep, beginning next month.

Based in Falmer the facility will house the area's archives and historical records including: maps and plans; written records; photographs and films; prints and drawings; oral histories; and digital and electronic records. *Details:* <http://lei.sr?a=jsJ8c>



## Arts groups hit by council cuts

Budgets across the UK are delivering harsh cuts to arts groups with Westminster council set to cut funding by 100 per cent, while Newcastle City Council will deliver a 50 per cent cut in funding.

Westminster City Council will reduce its arts budget from £350,000 to £192,00 in 2013-14 and cut it completely by 2014-15 in a bid to set the lowest band D council tax in the country.

Soho Theatre and English National Ballet are among the groups that will lose funding under the plans. Melvyn Caplan, Westminster Council's cabinet member for finance and customer services, said: "We are literally choosing between arts projects and keeping a library open, or retaining gangs workers on our estates, or running our meals on wheels service. There is no easy answer for the savings



Ballet and theatre groups are set to lose funding due to the council cuts

that are required." Newcastle City Council is also overhauling its art funding by stopping its regular arts funding and introducing a new cultural fund worth half the amount.

As part of the council's efforts to save £100m, the £1.2m arts fund will be halved. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=P8Y1u>

## New tax scheme encourages cultural donations

A new scheme that allows people and companies to donate cultural treasures in return for a reduction in their tax liability has come into effect.

The Cultural Gifts Scheme is administrated by the Arts Council on behalf of the secretary

of state for culture, media and sport. It looks to encourage owners of cultural objects or collections to donate them during their lifetime, rather than after their death, and like Acceptance in Lieu must not exceed a £30m annual limit. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=V8Y3l>

## Dylan Thomas Centre lands HLF grant

The Dylan Thomas Centre in Swansea, Wales has secured a development grant to build on its vision to become a world-class centre for learning in the lead up to the 2014 centenary of the poet's birth.

The centre houses the largest collection of Thomas material of its kind, including unique archive material, rare manuscripts, artwork, photographs, books and original sound recordings.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided a £40,000 development grant, which will be used to develop plans and carry out interviews with the few living people who knew Thomas, to ensure these memories are saved for the future. The proposed project would increase access to collections,



The centre houses the largest single collection of Dylan Thomas' material

digitise artefacts and see the appointment of education and outreach officers, to develop events, activities and touring exhibits. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=J7d9C>



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## Tourism shows its Value



**KURT JANSON**  
is policy director of  
Tourism Alliance

**T**he Tourism Alliance is holding its Annual Parliamentary Reception two days before this year's budget on 20 March. While the timing of this is coincidental, there is a significant linkage between the two events. The connection is that while the government continues to search for any possible ways to stimulate growth in the economy, one of the solutions will be on display just down the corridor.

At this year's reception the Tourism Alliance is launching its second annual publication on tourism statistics. This publication draws together tourism related research from the previous year to provide an overview of the industry's value to the UK economy and prospects for the future. This year's publication highlights the fact that 2012 was a very strong year for tourism growth. Overall, spending on tourism in the UK economy rose from £125bn in 2011 to £132bn in 2012. This is not to say that every part of the tourism industry did well – in fact, many tourism businesses struggled significantly during the year.

Yet, for such a large and diverse industry to show overall growth of 5.6 per cent during a period where there is a significant fear that the UK economy will fall back into an unprecedented "triple dip" recession, is quite an achievement. The additional £7bn of tourism expenditure generated last year is enough to create 140,000 new jobs. Compare this to the overall increase in UK employment last year – around 450,000 full-time equivalents – and you can see how tourism has helped drive total UK employment.

That one sector of the economy provides a third of all additional employment within a single year is nothing short of remarkable. And the prospects for the UK tourism industry during 2013 are even better.

The World Economic Forum has just raised the UK's global competitiveness ranking from 7th to 5th, research by VisitBritain in overseas markets shows that the successful hosting of the Olympics has raised the desirability of the UK as a destination, the falling pound makes us a better value and, above all else – the weather surely can't be as bad as last year.

## TOURISM

# 11 vie for City of Culture 2017

Eleven contenders have put their name forward to become the UK's 2017 City of Culture, culture minister Ed Vaizey announced on 6 March.

The bidding cities are Aberdeen, Chester, Dundee, East Kent, Hastings and Bexhill on Sea, Hull, Leicester, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Southampton, Southend on Sea, and Swansea Bay.

The honour is currently held by Derry-Londonderry, which was named the inaugural City of Culture in 2010.

Vaizey said the competition brings together communities and creates economic and social benefits. Liverpool received 9.7m additional visitors and an additional visitor spend of £735m when it was the European City of Culture in 2008, and Derry-Londonderry hopes to create 2800 tourism jobs by 2020



Derry-Londonderry will hold the title of UK City of Culture for 2013

as a legacy from this year's title. Contenders for the 2017 title have until 30 April to submit initial bids, which will be considered by an advisory panel led by Phil Redmond. The panel will decide on a shortlist by June. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=Lov9E>

## Sponsor sought for World Leisure Organisation prize

World Leisure Organisation (WLO) is offering the opportunity to sponsor its prestigious International Innovation Prize (IIP) – also known as "The George".

Named after Dr George Torkildsen – the leisure industry pioneer – the awards are handed

out every two years in a special ceremony at the WLO Congress. The IIP seeks to recognize organizations that have implemented creative solutions for the benefit of communities. For more information on the sponsorship opportunity, see: <http://lei.sr?a=W8f9E>

## Government urged to support tourism

Travel and tourism industry body ABTA has issued a manifesto urging the government to support all three sectors of the industry – domestic, outbound and inbound – in order to maximise its benefit to the UK economy.

Valuing the UK's Tourism Mix, presented to parliament on 27 February, outlines four policy priorities the government should pursue to support the industry: strategic infrastructure support; creating a more competitive product; good regulation for confident customers and businesses; and promoting the industry as a key employer. In the paper's introduction, ABTA chief executive Mark Tanzer said the government's 2011 tourism policy was heavily



ABTA is calling for more support to all forms of tourism in the UK

focussed on the inbound and domestic sectors, but the outbound sector was just as important, and all three sectors were interconnected. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=V6Y1G>



## BISA and SpaBA join forces

Two previously independent UK spa associations – the British International Spa Association (BISA) and the Spa Business Association (SpaBA) – are to join forces as part of plans to form one unified body for the country's spa industry.

The new – as yet unnamed – association has identified three priority areas for development: education; accreditation, benchmarking and the implementing of a code of practice; and market intelligence and providing quality data for the UK spa industry. The launch of the new association – along with the new name and branding – is expected to take place in April.

Charlie Thompson, head of health and beauty for Virgin Active, will become the new chair of the association, while Berni Hawkins,



Alex de Carvalho (left) with Lesley Bacon and Charlie Thompson

the current chair of BISA, will become a deputy chair with a responsibility for education.

She will be joined by two other deputy chairs – Alex de Carvalho (responsible for market intelligence) and Lesley Bacon (responsible for accreditation and code of practice).

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=W3toM>

## Travel agents report growth in spa travel

More than two-thirds of travel agents saw positive growth in hotel, resort and destination spa bookings last year, according to a new SpaFinder Wellness survey.

The survey noted that 68 per cent of agents reported growth in 2012 spa bookings, up from 37 per cent in 2011 and that the average price-per-night-booked is also rising significantly.

Findings are based on a survey that was carried out in Q4 2012 of more than 160 travel agents around the world.

In 2010 only 10 per cent of bookings topped US\$350 (£269, £234)-per-night, but last year that jumped to 29 per cent, with the majority of bookings now falling above US\$300 (£230, £200)-a-night, up significantly from 2009-2011,



Spa and wellness-related travel is increasing its popularity worldwide

when only 25-40 per cent fell in that range.

More than 35 per cent of agents said that the “stay spa” deals were more aggressive in 2012 than in 2011, with 55 per cent reporting they held firm. Only one in ten saw a decline in spa discounting. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=X5D9W>

## UK shoppers heading online for beauty purchases

More than a third (38 per cent) of online shoppers in the UK have bought beauty and personal care products online in the last 12 months, according to research by global strategy consultancy AT Kearney. The study found that online beauty sales grew almost four times

faster than overall retail sales, with the percentage set to increase.

Based on survey responses from 3,942 participants across Europe, the survey found that UK shoppers buy more beauty products online than clothes. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=L1e6O>



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### Passion to succeed



**PETER DUCKER**  
is chief executive  
officer of Institute  
of Hospitality

Last week (11 March) the Institute of Hospitality hosted its third annual Passion 4 Hospitality student debating competition. As eight universities competed, it was a privilege to witness the quick-witted energy, intelligence – and passion – on display.

However, only two teams could go through to the live final and London Metropolitan University and Hotelschool The Hague from the Netherlands went head-to-head in front of the large audience to debate the motion: “In the current economic climate, vocational experience is more relevant than traditional academia for a management career in hospitality.”

It proved to be a heated topic. Arguing for the motion, the London Metropolitan team said that the industry is going back to basics and has a primary focus on food and service. Three years of work experience count for more than three years at university, they argued, because it allows individuals to solve problems while working, use initiative and learn from on-the-job experience. Arguing against the motion, the team from Hotelschool The Hague said that traditional academic training resulted in greater career opportunities and corporate survival. Research from the US showed that the least educated members of the workforce are the most likely to lose their jobs. A hospitality or business management degree is still an absolute requirement to join management training programmes with companies such as Four Seasons and Swissôtel Hotels & Resorts.

So, the impressive marshalling of research and persuasive skills could easily have swayed the audience vote either way. But a key argument that contributed to the Hotelschool The Hague winning the debate was this: the majority of people who start their own hotel or restaurant businesses fail because they have no formal management training. This is not only hugely damaging personally to these would-be entrepreneurs but also to our industry at large. Therefore, the cost of a degree, even if it has escalated to dizzy heights here in the UK, is still considerably less than the cost of bankruptcy.

## Tesco acquires Giraffe restaurants

Retail giant Tesco has acquired family-friendly restaurant group Giraffe in a £48.8m deal, which will see it take over the management of 48 existing sites.

The acquisition forms part of Tesco's strategy to develop its larger, out-of-town “Extra” stores into shopping destinations where customers can meet, eat and drink, as well as do their shopping.

In a statement the company said the first Giraffe restaurant to open next to a Tesco store will be “near London”.

It added that the exact location will be revealed at a later date and that there are plans to roll out Giraffe restaurants in a further nine stores initially.

The first Giraffe opened in Hampstead, North London in 1998 and the group now consists of 48 sites nationwide, including franchised sites at Heathrow and other UK airports as well as one in Dubai.

The original Giraffe founders, husband and wife team Russel and Juliette Joffe, along with Andrew Jacobs, will remain in place with Russel continuing as managing director. 3i and



The deal is part of Tesco's plans to make its stores shopping destinations

Risk Capital Partners have sold their stakes in the business.

Kevin Grace, group commercial director at Tesco said, “We invest in businesses that add value for our customers online or offline; as we’ve done with Harris + Hoole, Euphorium, blinkbox, and now Giraffe.

“We have the opportunity to develop some of the space in our larger stores to create retail destinations that offer customers even more choice. Giraffe is hugely popular with a wide range of ages and particularly families – our customers will love it.”

## People 1st driving bid for skills funding

UK hospitality and travel companies are being urged to support an industry-wide bid for a share of the government's £250m Employer Ownership Fund which aims to improve skills throughout the workforce.

The bid is co-ordinated by People 1st – the sector skills council for hospitality, passenger transport, travel and tourism – and will be submitted on 28 March 2013.

Martin-Christian Kent, product development director at People 1st, believes it is a critical moment in time to improve perceptions of the sector as a career of choice.

He said: “We need to challenge government thinking and current investment in skills in the industry. If we are unsuccessful in establishing an Industrial Partnership, we believe it will be harder for individual employers to access government funding.

“The money is there and we have the expertise and credibility to present a compelling pitch, but we need support from as many employers as possible to unlock this vital funding for skills development.”

The Employer Ownership Fund also provides an opportunity for employers to



Companies would benefit from £250m of skills grants

receive funding directly – particularly for innovative solutions that address specific skills needs, such as delivering apprenticeships across seasonal businesses or bite-sized management and leadership programmes. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=f7G6t>





The zoo will get a new piazza entrance

## Dudley Hill regeneration plans get council approval

Dudley Council has shared its plans for the three attractions at Castle Hill with the public, following its submission of planning permission in January for the major redevelopment.

The £10.1m proposal for the Dudley Zoological Gardens, the Black Country Living Museum and the Dudley Canal Trust include a shared arrival point for visitors, a new entrance for each attraction and 600 new parking spaces and an upgraded car park. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=U8P8i>*

## Green light for golf and spa resort at UNESCO site

Planning permission for a luxury golf and spa resort development for Northern Ireland's Antrim coast has been upheld by the High Court, following a challenge by the National Trust.

Northern Ireland environment minister Alex Attwood has welcomed the decision on the Bushmills Dunes Golf Resort and Spa, which he granted approval for in February 2012. The £100m development will include a 120-room hotel with spa and conference facilities and an 18-hole golf course. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=m7c5I>*

## Scottish abbey plans £2m visitor centre

Paisley Abbey has submitted plans to Refrewhshire Council for the £2m reconstruction of its fourth cloister, to house a visitor centre, café, gift shop and function space.

Architects Simpson & Brown have submitted the plans, received 28 February, and state the extension will complement the existing 12th-century abbey. It is hoped the two-floor expansion will attract more visitors and secure the Abbey's financial future. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=Cow7c>*

## London borough's £1.5m revamp signed off

London mayor Boris Johnson has signed off £1.5bn plans for the regeneration of Elephant & Castle in the city's south-east, providing new leisure and community facilities, thousands of new homes, and shops and offices.

The plans, submitted by Southwark Council's development partner Lend Lease, will see 23 acres of Heygate Estate demolished ahead of the redevelopment, which will create 5,000 construction jobs and a further 1,255 permanent jobs once the transformation is complete.

The mayor has already committed significant funding for transport improvements in the area, including to the northern roundabout, the tube station and to cycling safety



The redevelopment will see the creation of 5,000 construction jobs

in the area. The project is one of a number planned for the borough, with others including 360 London, One The Elephant, and Tribeca Square. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=H1mot>*

## East London to get 'floating village'

London mayor Boris Johnson has unveiled plans to transform 15-acres of docklands in the city's east into the UK's largest "floating village" bringing jobs, commercial space and homes to the capital's waterways.

The announcement coincided with his visit to the world's premiere property conference MIPIM where he will promote the site and others around the capital.

The site at the Royal Victoria Dock, sits directly under the Emirates Air Line, and will include floating homes, hotels, restaurants and bars.

Although it will be the first development of its kind in the UK, it will mirror successful schemes in IJburg near Amsterdam and Hafen City in Hamburg, Germany and many other sites throughout Scandinavia.



The 'floating village' would include restaurants, homes and office space

The village will be linked to central London and Canary Wharf with a new Crossrail station, DLR and the cable car. Newham mayor Sir Robin Wales said: "London is moving eastwards and the Royal Docks offer an investment opportunity in scale unmatched anywhere in Europe." *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=N8z7P>*

## End to legal challenge against Oxford swimming pool

A legal challenge to prevent Oxford City Council closing a public swimming pool so a £9.2m replacement can be built has been dropped, following the High Court's rejection of the claim the community had not been properly consulted.

The new pool will comprise a 25m main pool, teaching pool, moveable floor, toddlers' splash pool and sauna.

A Sport England grant of £75,000 towards the pool is at risk if legal issues are not resolved soon. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=UoB9V>*

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### Management and Operation of Bedford Borough Councils Leisure Facilities

Bedford Borough Council is seeking expressions of interest from suitable Leisure Management Operators to enter into a contract to manage, develop and operate the Councils Leisure Facilities.

The facilities that are to be included are: Robinson Pool, Kempston Pool, Oasis Pool, Bedford International Athletic Stadium, Bunyan Sports Centre, Mowsbury Golf and Squash Centre, Blue Peris Mountain Centre and Kempston Outdoor Centre.

The contract will be for a term of 10 years and will include provision for a potential extension of another 5 years.

The proposed date for the decision to award this contract is September 2013 with the service to commence in January 2014.

In order to be included in the Councils select list to be invited to tender potential bidders must complete a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire and demonstrate a proven track record including delivering innovative partnerships in a variety of areas within a leisure environment.

The procurement will be undertaken using the Council's online e-tendering system and all interested organisations will need to register via the following link: <https://www.delta-esourcing.com/delta/index.html>

Full instructions of how to use the e-tendering system can be found on the relevant website, however in the event of any difficulties please contact the Council by emailing [commercial.hub@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:commercial.hub@bedford.gov.uk) or alternatively by calling 01234 228420 for further assistance. In order to complete the registration process, the Council will need to contact you by phone, email or postal address and it is therefore essential that the contact details inserted on the system are accurate. Once the registration process is complete, you will be provided with an access code and will be able to download the PQQ.

The deadline for the return of the PQQ will be 12 noon on 22nd April 2013.

Ref BBC108

## Entertainment Hub Soft Market Test



North East Lincolnshire Council and its Partners are keen to explore the potential for the development of an innovative and economically viable 'Entertainment Hub' that offers a wide range of cultural and commercial activities for both residents and visitors. The scope of this potential commissioning project includes the commercial management of Grimsby Auditorium and the development of a programme of cultural activity that explores new markets and introduces the local community to new experiences, stretching cultural taste and encouraging diversity.

The Council are looking forward to interested parties submitting an informal market questionnaire to help shape the vision for the 'Entertainment Hub'. As part of this exercise, interested parties will also have the opportunity to take part in a market day on Monday 8th April 2013 that takes the form of individual meetings with organisations; however the council reserves the right to select organisations to participate in this process. This will not guarantee any inclusion in a potential future procurement process.

To receive more information and to request an appointment time, please refer to <https://www.yortender.co.uk> reference number YORE-95QNAL. Please request your place by using the Notification function.

The closing date for expressing an interest in attending the market day is 12.00 pm (noon) Thursday 28th March 2013.

The closing date for submitting the informal market questionnaire is 12.00 pm (noon) Monday 15th April 2013.

## THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

### EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST NORMAN PARK ATHLETICS TRACK MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

The London Borough of Bromley is looking to secure a suitable company to manage Norman Park Athletics Track, Norman Park, Hayes Lane, Bromley, Kent. BR2 9EJ. The 8 lane track with throwing and jumping facilities, graded Class 1 by UK Athletics is one of the busiest tracks in the country used for open meetings and league competitions, primary and secondary schools events, coaching sessions and bookings from a wide variety of organisations including Blackheath and Bromley Harriers AC.

The council invites expressions of interest from companies including non-profit distributing organisations with suitable qualifications or experience that will:

- 1) Manage the facilities under arrangements that are similar to the current operational model whereby a small grant is paid on an annual basis to the track management company, and the Council has responsibility for the repair and replacement of the track, floodlights and pavilion. (The Council is seeking to significantly reduce or remove the current grant paid).
- And/or
- 2) Manage the facilities under a full repair and maintain lease whereby the operator has responsibility for the repair and replacement of the track, floodlights and pavilion and equipment.

Interested parties are required to complete a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire which will be dispatched 2nd April 2013 with a return date of 16th April 2013 to demonstrate suitable company experience to enable the Council to create a short list. Short listed companies will be invited to make a detailed tender submission between 3rd May and 31st May 2013. Tenders will be evaluated in accordance with the project evaluation matrix and best value principles. Contract award will be made in August 2013; the appointed contractor will commence the new contract on 1st April 2014 for a period up to 25 years.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity further, please contact: Martin Hussey, Cultural Business Development Officer, Tel: 0208 313 4351 Email: [martin.hussey@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hussey@bromley.gov.uk)



# TRAINING DAYS

All across the UK graduates are preparing to take the plunge and dive into the world of employment. But how easy will it be to find their first job in this economic climate? We asked some of the industry's leading training professionals for their opinions on the state of the leisure sector and the importance of vocational qualifications

## Debra Stuart

CEO  
Premier Training



### How has the way leisure training is delivered changed in the past 10 years?

The fitness industry started to professionalise through the development of nationally-recognised qualifications in 1988 with the first ever Level 2 fitness qualifications. In the early 1990s, the industry came under scrutiny following a damning *Which?* report, which basically said all fitness instructors were a bunch of cowboys.

At the time, the sector was faced with a call from government to either self-regulate or be regulated. The industry agreed to self-regulate and the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) was set up. REPs has certainly helped set minimum entry standards and helps maintain those standards.

The market for health and fitness professionals is, however, changing dramatically.

Personal training courses are becoming increasingly popular



The nation is becoming older, fatter and sicker. While 12 per cent of the population has a gym membership, 26 per cent of the population is classified as overweight or obese and do little or no exercise at all. Fitness professionals must widen their knowledge and skills to enable them to work with these hard to reach groups.

### What courses are the most popular among young people at the moment?

Premier's Personal Training Diploma is our most popular course, successful completion of this six-week programme guarantees stu-

**"The industry needs to pay better wages to keep people in the sector"**

dents entry onto REPs and interviews with many health club operators in the UK. We've also seen an increase in popularity of the short "bite-sized" CPD courses reflecting innovative ways of training such as 'underground training', battle ropes, kettle bells and a range of others.

### What are the main differences between entering the industry via a vocational qualification and a degree?

The fitness industry is predominantly a vocational industry requiring strong instructional techniques and interpersonal skills. I'd always encourage young people with strong academic ability to continue their formal education as far as economically possible.

Some degree courses,

however, do not provide the necessary vocational skills or qualifications required to work on the gym floor. Apprenticeships are an excellent opportunity for students to "earn while they learn". I'd encourage anyone considering an apprenticeship to carefully select a training provider with a good reputation for quality and one which is recognised by employers.

### Are career prospects different for graduates and those who didn't go to uni?

No – it very much depends on the person. This sector has seen many non-academic individuals reach great heights.

### Do you think we are training up enough qualified people at the moment?

No, the industry is notorious for careers having a very short life span – we need to pay better wages to keep people in the sector. It is also essential that our sector skills council, training providers and awarding organisations engage consistently with employers to create education which is fit for purpose.

### Any changes on the horizon that graduates should know about regarding training?

Yes, adult FE funding will become a loan after August 2013 rather like the HE system.

### If given a free reign, how would you look to improve the way training is delivered?

1. Direct funding to train older professionals to gain specialist qualifications (GP referral etc). It's sometimes inappropriate for 16 to 18 year-olds to work with specialist groups – older individuals often have more empathy and understanding
2. Engage with the active leisure sector and acknowledge us as a trusted delivery partner for prevention and reversal of the obesity epidemic by making our sector a priority funded sector
3. Make PE compulsory on a daily basis in schools. Give children more access to sport and physical activity – the long term benefits are self explanatory.





While the budget gyms have changed the landscape of the fitness sector, customer service is still a key skill to have

## Julian Lebourne

CEO, Icon Training



### How has the landscape of the health and fitness sector changed in recent years?

The economic climate has definitely impacted on the sector and the emergence of low cost and 'no frills' gyms indicate a strong market increase where the opposite may be true of some middle and upper market offers. People are much more cautious to commit to heavy memberships and despite attractive offers will be drawn to lower cost and more flexible payment options.

The budget brands that have been the most successful are the ones that combine friendly service with good quality equipment in attractive, modern surroundings.

Quality is becoming even more important to differentiate the brand and where this has been seen is in customer excellence and ensuring member retention is always at the top of the agenda. The residual and latent members are not out there and no one can afford to lose one customer.

### How has the way leisure training is delivered changed in the past 10 years?

REPs is certainly up there as being an influencing factor and what this has done, almost as a bi-product, is given us quality data on the skills gaps within our sector and there lies the challenge for the future.

There is a desperate need for our sector to take a lead of what good qualifications look like and the current disconnect between agencies has not helped. Employers have taken initiatives to attempt to address this issue with the forming of the Skills Protocol Employer Leadership Group (SPELG) group which is welcome but we must work towards one organisation that acts as the conduit for a Single Qualifications Framework and how this fits with the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

### What courses are the most popular among young people at the moment?

Fitness instructor is still the most popular course of choice although we are getting increased demand for Level 3, 4 and 5 man-

**"Graduates with no work experience will be at a major disadvantage"**

agement and leadership qualifications.

The new EFA Funding Pilot and proposed Traineeships are also great initiatives to fund young people new to our sector who previously may not have had access to quality training and work experience

We do need a structured work experience programme however and these need to have clear outcomes both for qualifications, skills and quality experiences of the

workplace. The sector must get behind this to create succession planning for the future to encourage careers and not just jobs.

### Are career prospects different for graduates and those who didn't go to uni?

A university graduate has academic capabilities while a person with vocational training has often already done the job, learnt the skills, developed the ability to work within a team and has practical competence.

The graduate who has not bothered to work in the sector and who has failed to secure vocationally related qualifications will be at a major disadvantage when compared with a person who is able to demonstrate this, regardless of whatever educational pathway they have travelled.

### If given a free reign, how would you look to improve the way training is delivered?

Employers must take a more active lead in apprenticeships. An extract of the recent Richard Review addresses the heart of the issue: "We must turn the system on its head and set a few clear standards. Preferably one per occupation, describing at a high-level - and being meaningful to employers - what it means to be fully competent in that occupation, while unleashing our educators to reach that goal however they may.

"The standards should form the basis for new, overarching, qualifications. Unlike the standards and qualifications used in apprenticeships today, the new apprenticeship should focus solely on setting out what an apprentice should be able to do and know at the end of their apprenticeship."

## Suzu Gunn

Executive Director

Active IQ



### What courses are the most popular among young people at the moment?

The qualifications that most attract young people to want to enter the industry are:

- Level 2 Fitness Instructor
- Level 3 Personal Trainer
- Level 1 and 2 Coaching Awards

These are the minimum standards in terms of qualifications that are required by employers to enter and work within the industry. Young people are often attracted by the vibrant nature of the sector.

### Are career prospects different for graduates and those who didn't go to uni?

The opportunities in the sector for individuals who have not attended university are vast. The sector itself is hugely vocational and welcomes young people that it can mould into long-term employees within it.

The sector requires individuals to perform on a daily basis and judges their worth on their ability to actually "do the job and do it well", rather than the skills they may have "on paper". At Active IQ, and I think in the sector as a whole, we do not believe that an individual's chances of entering and building a successful career within the industry are compromised by not having a degree.

### Do university graduates entering the leisure industry lack practical skills?

In our experience, in particular when

working with employers to understand their needs, graduates looking to enter the industry (while extremely well educated academically) frequently do not possess the baseline, minimum-standard qualifications to enter and work in the industry in order to access, for example, REPs.

Employers find this challenging as the graduate cannot "hit the ground running" and additional time and money has to be spent by the employer up-skilling them (with, for example, fitness instructor qualifications). As a result, the prospect of employing a graduate becomes less attractive. Equally, via feedback and research, the general opinion of employers is that graduates lack the soft skills to work with the industry's patrons. This sector is extremely customer-facing and soft skills are integral across it. In order to change this we believe that the most sensible way forward would be for universities to "embed" vocational courses into their degree programmes.

**"The medical profession is cautious to engage with the health and fitness profession"**

### What would your advice be to those graduates who are finding it hard to find a job?

Firstly, truly focus on your career pathway and aspirations in the sector and research the minimum requirements – don't go in blind! If your chosen university is not embedding vocational learning, try to achieve base line qualifications in tandem



with the degree – although this could be costly, on top of already large HE loans.

Look for work experience whilst studying and build employer rapport early. Understand that soft skills are an enormous advantage and focus on improving these.

### Are there any major changes on the horizon relating to leisure-related training?

We believe one of the key embryonic changes are the links that are being forged between the medical profession and health and fitness profession.

We find it astounding that a medical student is given little or no training on the positive effects of exercise on health, and how individuals should exercise and partake in physical activity. Little or no training is given on nutrition interventions or interventions for stress, cancer, obesity, low back pain (which costs employers billions per year in sickness), high blood pressure, or heart disease in the context of an individual leading an active, healthy lifestyle.

Understandably, the medical profession is cautious to engage with the health and fitness profession, but one simply cannot ignore the synergies between these two professions and the incredible impact they could have on both the nation and the public purse if indeed they could forge a long lasting relationship of expertise and trust.

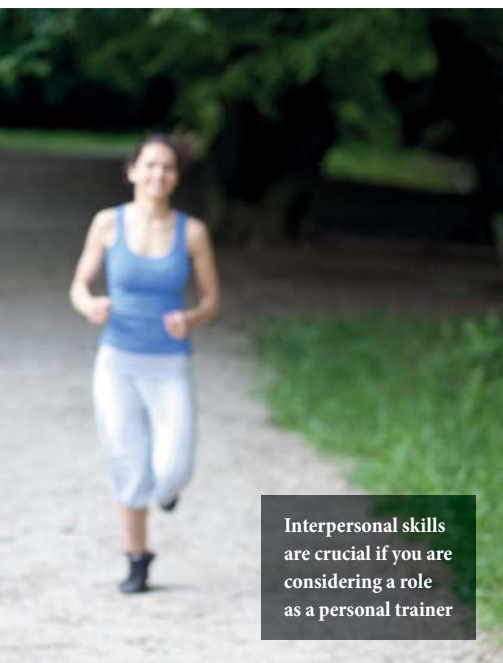
### If given a free reign, how would you look to improve the way training is delivered?

Beg government to increase the wellbeing training to medical students. Legislate to ensure that health and fitness expertise is coupled with medical expertise.



To find a job in a competitive market, graduates will need to have had work experience





Interpersonal skills are crucial if you are considering a role as a personal trainer



Young people with vocational qualifications often find it easier to land that first job

## Jonathan Davies

Founder and CEO of  
The Training Room



### How has the way leisure training is delivered changed in the past 10 years?

The biggest changes have been around the growth and industry buy-in of REPS and the subsequent requirement to obtain a Nationally Recognised QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework) Qualification to enter REPs. This means that all personal trainers entering the industry must have completed a qualification from a recognised awarding organisation ultimately governed by Ofqual.

### What courses are currently the most popular among young people?

The Level 3 Fast Track Diploma still remains by far the most popular qualification and is the quickest route to industry at a reasonable entry level with good earning potential.

### Which would be the best way into leisure – a degree or a vocational qualification

Both have their place but let's be very clear, an academic qualification will not prepare you for the customer and commercial challenges of becoming a successful personal trainer. In my opinion, anyone considering entering the industry should complete a vocational qualification first and then look to further their knowledge through academic study. This has the significant benefits

of allowing people to test their appetite for the industry and also start earning money straight away and also during any further HE/university studies.

Going forward HE/university courses will represent a significant investment in both time and money and hence I would suggest candidates testing their true desire to enter the industry first.

### Are career prospects different for graduates and those who didn't go to uni?

I would say people holding vocational qualifications will now find it easier to enter the industry. Degrees obviously carry a larger weight for direct entry management positions or graduate training schemes but these are few and far between.

**"Get into work and show your employer what you are capable of"**

### What would your advice be to those graduates who are finding it hard to find a job?

I don't think they have much choice in this climate! My advice would be to find a way to make sure they demonstrate to a prospective employer what they can do!

### Are we training up enough qualified exercise professionals at the moment?

The feedback from our corporate partners (operators) is that they need further

improvements in both volume and quality.

The employers will always want more focus on skills such as customer service and business but we are at this stage limited by the QCF requirements.

Going forward there is no reason why, as an industry, we can't argue the need for a shift towards including these skills in greater depth in all qualifications but it won't be an overnight change.

### What role can/should REPs play in this?

I think there is sometimes a huge gulf between QCF Qualifications and REPS approved ones; I would personally like to see more governance around one day workshops, refreshers etc as this is still a grey area within the industry.

### Are there any major changes on the horizon relating to active leisure training?

I think the biggest single change is the move to 100 per cent self-funding (via student loans) of university, HE and college courses.

This will create an open playing field with private operators such as ourselves and my feeling is many more candidates will choose fast track programmes such as ours with definitive career paths over traditional, academic routes with no guarantee of success.

### If given a free reign, how would you look to improve the way training is delivered?

Make membership of REPs compulsory to everyone who wants to work in the fitness industry, introduce more emphasis on customer service and business skills and provide greater regulation around the quality of training provided.

## Leisure industry - ahead of the game in youth employment



**IAN TAYLOR**  
is chief executive  
of SkillsActive

**Y**outh employment is well served in the leisure and wellbeing sector, with approximately 30 per cent of our workforce aged 16 to 24 – against the national average of 13 per cent. As an industry we've a lot to offer young people.

Recently, SkillsActive was heavily involved in National Apprenticeship Week (NAW), which is designed to celebrate apprenticeships and the positive impact they have on individuals, businesses and the economy. We certified 22,040 apprentices last year, making our sector one of the largest deliverers of apprenticeships across the UK. As part of our involvement with NAW we held three webinars with our employer partners which outlined the merits of Apprenticeships.

We also conducted a series of interviews with our advanced apprenticeship in sporting excellence (AASE) athletes. Two of who represented Great Britain in swimming at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. They spoke at length about how AASE had benefitted them and it was heartening to hear about their achievements since graduating.

We also work with higher education institutions, including universities, to endorse their courses. We ensure that they are fit for purpose and offer the best opportunity for learners and graduates to gain meaningful employment in our sector. By endorsing these courses we are able to embed vocational training into the degree. This greatly increases the employability of graduates, making their degree better value for money. Apprentices and graduates with relevant qualifications can then gain entry onto our professional registers. Our registers ensure that their qualifications are industry recognised and that they are respected as fully competent professionals, which in turn enhances the standards of our sector.

All in all, SkillsActive offers a wealth of opportunities through apprenticeships and endorsed University courses for individuals to become involved in the leisure and wellbeing sector.

## TRAINING

### £15m arts employment scheme launched

A new £15m employment programme aims to diversify England's arts and culture workforce by providing 6,500 traineeships, apprenticeships and paid internships for people aged 16 to 24.

Positions will range from technical to administrative roles and will fall within: music, dance, theatre, literature, visual arts, contemporary craft, combined arts, carnival, circus, galleries, museums and libraries.

Parliamentary skills minister Matthew Hancock said the National Lottery-funded scheme would change the recruitment culture in the arts and museums sector.

"The UK's world-beating creative industries should be open to those with the most



The programme will fund new jobs in all areas of the cultural sector

to offer – regardless of background. But for too long, young people without money or connections have struggled to get a foot in the door."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=q6w1K>

### BISL signs memorandum with DWP

Business in Sport and Leisure (BISL), the trade body representing private sector in the UK sports and leisure industry, has signed a memorandum of understanding on jobs with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

The MoU will look to help the government promote schemes such as the Youth Contract wage incentive among leisure employers, while making it easier for employers to find out about the benefits available to them from such schemes.

The signing follows on from a round table meeting between BISL and employment minister Mark Hoban in November 2012.

BISL has also established a Jobs Forum – a working group on employment – which will encourage employers to look at incentives such as National Insurance contribution



The deal looks to assist employers to understand the Youth Contract

exemptions. The Jobs Forum will also develop policy with a group of CEOs alongside HR representatives in BISL's Employment Group.

According to BISL figures, the leisure sector currently provides 2.6 million jobs in the UK, accounting for 9 per cent of all UK employment. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=12W9y>

### Museums Galleries Scotland starts development fund

The Scottish Government will provide £80,000 to establish a Skills Development Fund, which has been developed by Museums Galleries Scotland. Applications of up to £20,000 will be considered for the fund, which opens 1 April and will cover activities such as board

development, mentoring, fact-finding visits, skills sharing and exchanges.

Culture secretary Fiona Hyslop said: "The Scottish Government is committed to supporting training and improving the job prospects of Scots to help build the economy."



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Dianne Eade, Newquay Zoo  
Head of Finance, Human Resources and Administration



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Admin Manager, *DW Sports Fitness, Warrington, UK*  
Gym Manager, *énergie group, North West London, UK*  
Fitness Apprentice, *énergie group, Wilmslow, UK*  
Club Promotional Staff, *énergie group, St Albans, UK*  
General Manager, *DW Sports Fitness, Various locations, UK*  
Multiple Tutor and Tutor Assistant roles, *YMCAfit, Central London, Birmingham, Leicester, Bristol, Brighton and Newcastle, UK*  
Disability Sports Development Officer, *Wandsworth Borough Council, London, UK*  
FOH Manager, *Everyone Active, Watford, UK*  
Personal Trainer, *Énergie Group, Fit4Less Swindon, UK*  
Personal Trainer, *Pure Gym Limited, Various locations, UK*  
Director of Sport and Physical Activity, *University College Cork, Cork, Ireland*  
Leisure Account Manager, *Brenntag UK and Ireland, Covering London / South, UK*  
Fitness Motivator, *Everyone Active, Staines, UK*

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## SOUTH MOLTON SWIMMING POOL

Registered Charity Number 300972

### DUTY OFFICER

#### South Molton Swimming Pool Trust seek to appoint a Duty Officer.

The successful applicant will be expected to form part of the successful team at South Molton Swimming Pool, having current ASA Level 1 (or higher) teaching aquatics and NPLQ lifeguard qualifications along with relevant experience and demonstrating excellent customer service skills. The Duty Officer will be required to undertake all tasks required for the safe and efficient operation of the facility including lifeguarding, teaching, administration, routine cleaning and maintenance. The post is 38 hours per week - weekend and evening duties will form part of rota hours. All posts are subject to an enhanced DBS check.

APPLICATIONS: Application is through application form only. Please contact Miss Clare Farrow, Pool Manager, South Molton Swimming Pool Trust for more details and an application form.

Phone: 01769 572522 E-mail: [manager@southmoltonpool.co.uk](mailto:manager@southmoltonpool.co.uk)  
Closing date for applications Thursday 28 March 2013.

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ENGLANDGOLF

England Golf invite applications for the position of

### Compliance Officer

**SALARY £20,000 - £22,000 per annum + benefits**

The role of the Compliance Officer is to support the Compliance Manager in all aspects of the development, implementation and effective communication of compliance policies, with particular attention to safeguarding policy.

Applicants must have an understanding of the principles of safeguarding and equity, with a clear understanding of confidentiality. You should be calm under pressure and self-motivated with the ability to work as part of a team. It is important to have strong communication and organisational skills and IT literate. Attention to detail and the ability to work to tight deadlines are imperative.

An understanding of the principles of safeguarding in sport is desirable though not essential. A knowledge and understanding of the culture and structure of golf would be advantageous.

The post is full-time (Monday – Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm) and based at the National Golf Centre, Woodhall Spa.

A vetting procedure is required by Disclosure and Barring Service in relation to Countersignatories for this position. An application form and full details can be downloaded from [www.Englandgolf.org/vacancies](http://www.Englandgolf.org/vacancies).

**Closing date for applications: Wednesday 27th March 2013**  
**Interviews week beginning: Monday 8th April 2013**

### Area Manager (South Somerset)

**Goldenstones Leisure Centre, Yeovil (Ref: LEDam001)**

**Salary: £26,276 - £30,851 per annum**

**Plus performance related bonus from 2014**

**Full Time (37 hours), including evenings and weekends**

LED is one of the largest leisure charitable trusts in the South West region, managing eleven centres including entertainment and parks facilities.

We are seeking a highly motivated and commercially focussed individual with a minimum of three years leisure management experience, including financial control. You will have strong leadership skills and motivational qualities, with the drive and energy to ensure effective business development in line with LED's Values.

You will have specific responsibility for the management of Goldenstones Leisure Centre and St Michael's Hall in Yeovil and be expected to drive our business forward in the South Somerset District.

This is an exciting opportunity to join our dynamic organisation at a time of significant change and growth. You must be ambitious, determined, goal-orientated and a team player.

LED actively encourages job applications from all members of the community. We are committed to equal opportunities in employment and service delivery. We are only interested in your ability to do the job.

Please visit our website, [www.ledleisure.co.uk](http://www.ledleisure.co.uk), for full details and to apply on-line, or contact the HR team on 01395 562500 for an application pack.

**Closing date: 29th March 2013**

IPS Registered No. 30029R

[www.ledleisure.co.uk](http://www.ledleisure.co.uk)



## Bond sees Cineworld profits rise

Cinema operator Cineworld has reported pre-tax profits of £38.5m for 2012 – a 15 per cent increase on the £33.4m it made in 2011.

Announcing its full-year results, the group said the latest installment of the James Bond franchise – *Skyfall* – was the “outstanding film of 2012”. During the year, Cineworld acquired fellow operator Picturehouse and opened a seven-screen multiplex in Aldershot – as well as expanded its IMAX offerings to eight cinemas.

Stephen Wiener, CEO of Cineworld, said: “The culmination of the year’s activity was the acquisition of Picturehouse.

“Picturehouse is an exciting, complementary brand which operates in a separate market



Daniel Craig stars in *Skyfall* – the latest installment of the 007 franchise

to Cineworld’s Cinemas and brings further growth opportunities to the Group.”

He said the group’s expansion plans remain on target. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=3M2A1>*

## Leisure companies feature on Sunday Times list

Restaurant operator TGI Fridays has been named as the UK’s third best company to work for by the respected *The Sunday Times* 100 Best Companies List.

TGI Fridays is one of a host of leisure companies to feature on the list, which is

considered the most extensive research into employee engagement in the UK.

The Best Companies survey uses a wide range of criteria to measure a total of 896 companies. *To see the full list of leisure companies featured on the list, see: <http://lei.sr?a=07e6W>*

## Indoor go-kart operator to expand

Indoor go-kart operator TeamSport is to expand rapidly over the next three years after completing a £9m management buyout led by managing director Dom Gaynor.

Gaynor has spent the past few years growing the business alongside TeamSport founder Paul Wrightman, who will now leave the business as part of the buyout deal. Wrightman launched the company 21 years ago with the first site in Guildford, Surrey.

The buyout was part-funded by investor Neil Taylor – co-founder of gaming chain GAME – and private investment firm Connection Capital. Under Gaynor’s leadership, TeamSport plans to nearly double the number of its owned and operated go-karting sites – from nine to 16 by 2016.

Most of its existing circuits are located across the south of England and Wales, but



TeamSport plans to open more circuits in the north

it now plans to start moving north across the UK and strengthen its foothold in London, where it already has two tracks.

TeamSport reported a 40 per cent rise in visitor numbers over the past three years. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=X6y5l>*

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