

leisureopportunities

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Is Fitness First shaping up for a sale?

Speculation is mounting that Fitness First could be up for sale, with owner Oaktree Capital Management said to be lining up a potential suitor for the gym chain.

One well-placed insider told *Leisure Opportunities* that private equity firm Oaktree would “sell Fitness First today if it could,” going on to note that private equity investment is “ultimately, all about returns.”

Meanwhile, several recent business decisions have suggested that Oaktree may be planning an exit strategy. Chief among these was the decision in June to replace CEO Andrew Cosslett with Oren Peleg, one of Oaktree's senior managers who has a strong pedigree in finance. Peleg's appointment sparked suggestions that he will move to cut costs and boost earnings ahead of a potential sale of Fitness First



Fitness First's Bishopgate site is one of the jewels in the gym chain's crown

by Oaktree, which bought the company in 2012. Since then, Fitness First has indicated that it is open to selling at least some of its UK locations. Sports Direct Fitness has refused to comment on rumours that it has been weighing up a bid for the wider Fitness First

portfolio, having recently lost out to Pure Gym in the race to acquire similar-style gym chain LA fitness.

Despite this, Sports Direct Fitness has indicated that it is eager to use its £250m ‘war chest’ to gain a stronger foothold in the south east of England – where Fitness First has more than 50 sites

Fitness First has recently outsourced its public relations to Tulchan Communications – a firm which “specialises in advising companies on their Capital Market Communications” as well as the “preparation and

articulation of a compelling investment case, wrapped in a strong corporate narrative.”

A Tulchan spokesperson was unable to confirm or deny whether Fitness First is up for sale, stating simply: “No comment.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=y9G8s_O

Study shines light on millennial fitness trends

Despite having greater access to exercise and wellness tools than ever before, barely half of millennials rate their overall level of wellness as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’, says new research.

Findings from *The Wellness Deficit – Millennials & Health in America* – a study of 5,000 US young people aged 14 to 34 – looked at changing wellness habits, with a particular focus on exercise. The study, commissioned by Technogym, offers business insight into how millennials' habits can impact the health and fitness industry.

Continued on back cover

Bond is back to fire tourism push

To coincide with the release of the new James Bond blockbuster *Spectre*, VisitBritain has turned to the world's most famous spy to fire the starter pistol on its new tourism campaign.

Spectre, the 24th James Bond adventure, launched in cinemas worldwide on 26 October and VisitBritain is once again utilising 007's iconic international profile to showcase the best of Britain.

To leverage the global fascination with Bond and the international exposure the film affords to potential visitors to Britain, VisitBritain has launched a global Bond is GREAT Britain film tourism campaign in partnership with Sony Pictures Entertainment and



VisitBritain has partnered with the Bond franchise

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios. The campaign has kicked off across more than 60 countries to encourage 007 fans to choose Britain – the home of Bond – for their next holiday.

Continued on page 14

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Campbell to speak at SRA event

Author and former Labour party aide Alastair Campbell will be a keynote speaker at this year's Leadership Convention on sport organised by the Sports and Recreation Alliance (SRA).

Taking place in Nottingham next month, the event's core theme will be "Building for the Future" and will feature speakers from a wide range of industries outside of sport.

As well as Campbell – whose book *Winners and How They Succeed* was published earlier this year – those sharing their views over the two days (3-4 November) include West End director Chris Key, Dame Helen Ghosh from the National Trust and polar explorer Craig Mathieson. The keynotes will be supported by a number of workshops, exploring topics from talent identification to mental health.

There will also be a programme of short, sharp and informative "TEDtalk-style" presentations, aimed at introducing the front line of innovative thought leadership and inspiring delegates to explore the issues further.



Alastair Campbell, Labour's former director of communications

SRA chief executive Emma Boggis said: "We hope we have pulled together a programme that will inspire and motivate the senior leadership of our members - but I also hope I will come away learning new things and perhaps with a new perspective.

"With speakers covering everything from the musical theatre to the Arctic, with a bit of heritage, media and criminal justice thrown in, there should be plenty of food for thought."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=x5w4b_O

Premier League still priciest in EU to watch

The cost of watching football has remained the same at most clubs across the UK's 13 professional leagues – but fans of top flight teams still pay more than any other European fans for match day experiences.

According to the BBC's annual *The Price of Football* study, 70 per cent of British clubs introduced a price freeze or reduction in ticket prices for the 2015-16 season.

Despite a small overall fall, however, the average cost for the cheapest match-day tickets in the English Premier League (EPL) surged above £30 for the first time – a result of 11 EPL clubs hiking up the price for their cheapest tickets.

There are also stark differences between the top four English divisions (EPL, The Championship and Leagues One and Two) and other professional leagues around the British Isles.

The cheapest ticket to watch Scotland's top tier, the Scottish Premiership, now costs £20.17 on average – less than those for England's third tier, League One. In the Welsh Premier



Arsenal fans support Europe's most expensive club to watch play

League and Irish Premiership, fans pay less than £10 per match, while tickets in the Women's Super League in England cost less than £5.

The cheapest season ticket in the EPL can be found at Stoke City (£294), while the most expensive is offered by Arsenal (£2,013).

Arsenal – which only recently broke an eight-year trophyless spell – is the most expensive club to watch in Europe, as even the cheapest season ticket costs £1,014. The study showed watching football on the continent is considerably cheaper.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=h3y7C_O

FA refinances Wembley Stadium

The Football Association (FA) has secured a refinancing deal for Wembley Stadium, which could result in the national governing body saving more than £10m a year in interest payments.

A new £300m loan facility – provided by Barclays, HSBC and Santander – will provide “increased flexibility” for the FA, as well as result in significant annual interest savings. The loan will replace a previous deal, put in place to fund the £800m construction costs of Wembley.

FA chief executive Martin Glenn said the savings will be directed into grassroots football, in line with its new objectives to increase the number of artificial football pitches in England.

“This is an important step in our move towards a more focussed, sustainable FA that maximises its investments into football, especially at the lower levels of the game where our support is critical,” Glenn said.



Wembley opened in 2007 at a cost of £780m and is owned by the FA

“Support from our lenders will allow us to free up more vital and significant funds at a time where we are able to capitalise on the lower interest rates.”

The deal is part of a reorganisation and cost-cutting exercise launched by Glenn earlier this year, which has so far included the axing of 100 office-based and administrative jobs. Details: http://lei.sr?a=v6B7c_O

Southend United reveals stadium plans

League One team Southend United Football Club (SUFC) has revealed detailed plans for a new £80m stadium and retail complex which the club says will play a “huge role” in regenerating the seaside town.

The team plans to build a 21,000-seat stadium incorporating a 131-bedroom hotel and a retail park with an 11-12 screen cinema, 10 restaurant unites and 35 retail spaces. There will also be a residential element to the development.

Located at the town’s Fossetts Farm, the planned development will also include two all-weather soccer domes – one for use by the community and one for SUFC for training purposes and to aid the club’s academy aspirations in developing young talent for the future.

The project is headed by developer Martin Dawn, a company owned by SUFC chair Ron Martin. Martin Dawn is in advanced discussions with British Land to forward fund the retail development which will facilitate the first phase of the stadium. SUFC currently plays its home games at



The plans include a 21,000-capacity stadium and a retail aspect

the ageing Roots Hall stadium, which was built in 1952 and has a capacity of 12,000.

The football club was promoted to League One in 2015 and has aspirations to establish itself as a Championship club – the second tier of English football. Details: http://lei.sr?a=w3w5B_O

Leicester Tigers’ West Stand to open in November

The new 3,100-capacity West Stand at Leicester Tigers’ Welford Road stadium is nearing completion, with the standard seating and concourse being prepared for the start of the rugby season and the rest of the stand due to complete in January 2016.

Construction work on the £8m stand, undertaken by contractors Buckingham, began in May this year and when complete will increase capacity at the venue to 26,000. The West Stand will replace the old Clubhouse building, which only had a capacity of 992 fans and dated back to 1909.

It will house club offices, the main ticket office, plus a Tigers retail shop. Details: http://lei.sr?a=h4j4J_O



The stadium is part of a £135m mixed-use project

Castleford Tigers’ £135m stadium gets green light

Castleford Tigers Rugby Football Club’s plans to build a new stadium in Glasshoughton, West Yorkshire, have been given final approval by Wakefield Council.

The Council had already approved the planning application for the £135m Five Towns Park development, but the sheer size of the project meant any final approval was subject to review by central government. With the expiry of the judicial review period having loomed last month (28 September), the plans have now cleared their final hurdle.

Developed by Lateral Property Group, the plans for the Five Towns Park project include a new 10,000-capacity community stadium for the Tigers, along with a 50-acre country park and a 53,000sq m retail and entertainment complex – creating around 2,000 new jobs in the area.

Lateral is working with Leeds-based construction company GMI on the project and other partners in the development include architects DLA Design, HOW Planning and landscape architects Tyler Grange. Details: http://lei.sr?a=4w7H8_O

MATRIX

EDUCATION THE MATRIX WAY

Matrix Fitness has partnered with Lifetime Training and InstructAbility to create an education programme to help you and your team to deliver the best and broadest range of services to your customers.

The value of knowledge and education within the leisure market is often underestimated, but it's integral to the long-term success of individual facilities and the wider community. While customers may be enticed by factors such as cost or convenience initially, the key to retaining them is well-educated trainers, who are fully versed in the delivery and execution of all major programmes, and able to provide the best possible service to your audience.

As part of the Matrix Education Programme, Lifetime Training offer a suite of REPs accredited courses that will provide Matrix customers with quality training and education, so that their fitness teams can provide excellent member-focused service, and help to improve retention.

COMMENTING ON THE PARTNERSHIP, GEMMA BONNETT, HEAD OF MARKETING AT MATRIX FITNESS, SAID:

"As a company that works tirelessly to deliver industry-leading fitness equipment and related services, we're delighted to be able to add further value for our customers through our Education Programme. Our partnership with Lifetime, as experts in their field, will enable us to ensure our customers not only have access to cutting edge products, but are also able to create inclusive, educated workforces that optimise member experiences on every occasion."



Renowned for their industry excellence and quality of teaching, Lifetime is one of the UK's top education providers, offering traineeships, apprenticeship programmes, and self-funded training courses across the fitness and active leisure sector.



InstructAbility – co-created by Aspire, the spinal injury charity – is a targeted project designed to engage more disabled people in the fitness industry, and increase the number of disabled people becoming fitness instructors.

www.matrixfitness.co.uk

SMART, POWERFUL, LOYAL

Following the Matrix SMART, POWERFUL, and LOYAL framework, our programme of courses is designed to upskill staff, keep them motivated, and provide a workforce dedicated to your customers' experience.



SMART

A set of REPs accredited courses to help teams focus on the basics.

POWERFUL

A set of REPs accredited courses to ensure your team of trainers is fully educated in all major training programmes and delivery.

LOYAL

A set of REPs accredited courses to enable teams to maintain and deliver the best possible service to members, focused on retention and excellence.

Matrix is also able to offer BESPOKE programmes in conjunction with Lifetime Training. Tailoring training courses is something that delivers incredible value and gets right to the heart of helping your team to be the best it can be. We can work with you to tailor your training programme to suit your needs.

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This training programme will equip health and fitness professionals with the skills to engage less active people in person-centred, motivating, and supportive conversations about becoming and staying more active.

It is underpinned by robust theory (including self-determination theory, self-efficacy theory and self-control theory) and informed by the latest research findings from behaviour change and proven physical activity interventions.

After participating in this course, candidates will be able to:

- / Talk with people in ways which help them feel listened to, heard, and understood
- / Discover and strengthen the other person's motivation for becoming more active
- / Build the other person's confidence about becoming and staying more active
- / Help people develop their own personalised plan for becoming and staying more active
- / Understand and be able to apply the four processes of motivational interviewing based on health coaching
- / Use a range of proven behaviour change techniques
- / Tailor behaviour change tools and strategies

Contact your Matrix Area Sales Manager to book this course, or for more information about the full range of courses on offer.

Could exercise in a bottle become a reality?

Scientists in Australia have hailed a 'major breakthrough' which could lead to drug treatments which are able to mirror the health benefits of exercise.

New research has identified molecular reactions to exercise in the body, providing what is described as the world's first comprehensive exercise blueprint. The research exposed a thousand molecular changes that occur in our muscles when we exercise. Although the scientists admit nothing can replace exercise in terms of its health benefits, the breakthrough could help bring these benefits to people whose condition prevents participation in physical activity. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=S7R5k_O*



The TV chef is backing a 10p sugar levy

Jamie Oliver backs Brighton plans for new 'sugar tax'

Celebrity chef and food campaigner Jamie Oliver has thrown his support behind a new wellbeing initiative that will see a voluntary tax placed on sugar.

Brighton is pushing forward with plans to tackle obesity by bringing in the Sugar Smart City campaign to cut consumption.

Health services in the region currently spend £80m per year treating diet-related diseases, while one in three UK 11-year-olds is currently overweight or obese, with sugar shown to be a major contributory factor.

Oliver, who has long campaigned for healthier eating habits, is supporting calls from Brighton's director of public health for residents, schools and food outlets in the city to reassess their sugar consumption levels. The TV chef is inviting food outlets in the city, from restaurants to takeaways, to adopt a voluntary 10p sugar levy on soft drinks with added sugar. His own eatery in Brighton – Jamie's Italian on Black Lion Lane – has already imposed its own levy, with the money raised going to Sustain, a charity working in health and food education.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=q7W3W_O

ukactive fights Coca Cola claims

ukactive chair Tanni Grey-Thompson has issued a strong rebuttal to a *Times* article which appeared to suggest that Coca Cola's membership of the physical activity trade body had influenced its position on obesity.

The article, which follows the recent controversy regarding Coca Cola's sponsorship of scientific research, said the drinks giant has "poured millions of pounds into British scientific research and healthy-eating initiatives to counter claims that its drinks help to cause obesity."

The piece went on to highlight links between ukactive and Coca Cola, selecting choice quotes from former ukactive chair Fred Turok – specifically the oft-repeated notion that "You can be fat and fit" – to seemingly imply that focus was placed on physical inactivity over obesity to the benefit of Coca Cola.

In a letter to *The Times*, Grey-Thompson said Turok's quote was a "statement of fact," noting that ukactive has consistently championed healthy eating and regular exercise



Grey-Thompson has responded with a letter to *The Times*

as part of a healthy lifestyle. But, she added, it has also distinguished between inactivity and obesity – issues which are often conflated by policymakers and the media.

"Our position on public health issues has been consistent and unaffected by any outside influence," wrote Grey-Thompson. "We've never disputed the importance of obesity. But we've also been unwavering in pointing out that obesity and physical inactivity are separate public health issues that need to be tackled as dual priorities of equal significance."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n6e8x_O

Peter Roberts: Cut gym VAT to aid NHS

Pure Gym founder Peter Roberts has called on the government to abolish VAT on gym memberships to encourage more people to get active and lighten the load on the NHS.

Currently, the direct and indirect costs of inactivity in the UK are estimated to total £20bn a year and with the NHS needing to make extra savings of £8.2bn a year by 2020, Roberts believes more accessible gym memberships could help shift the emphasis onto prevention rather than cure. With VAT currently at 20 per cent, the move could cut membership prices by a fifth.

"There's a tradition of everything being solved by pills, when a lot could be solved by exercise," Roberts was quoted by *The Telegraph*.

With only 13 per cent of UK adults currently members of a health club, Roberts said the move could help increase this figure to around 20 per cent. European countries such as Norway offer a VAT exemption on gym memberships and it has a penetration rate



Roberts says cheaper gyms will help lighten the load on the NHS

of 19.6 per cent, according to the *European Health & Fitness Market Report 2015*.

Critics point to the £10m profits posted by Pure Gym last year and say gyms don't need further tax breaks, but with many operators struggling in an increasingly competitive market and cost remaining the biggest barrier to physical activity for consumers, the move could have nationwide implications for making exercise more accessible. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=J5D5A_O*

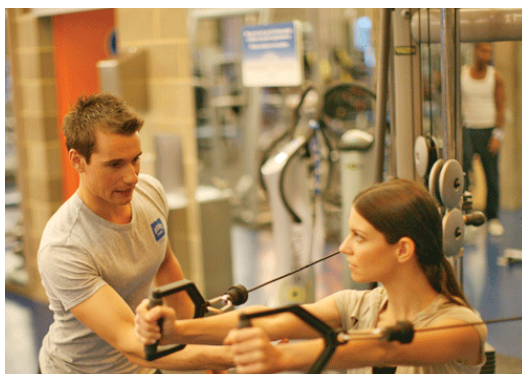
Soho shrugs off takeover talks

London-based fitness chain Soho Gyms has moved to draw a line under speculation of a potential takeover by outlining plans to develop its existing portfolio, as well as its fledgling budget offering.

The eight-strong chain of London gyms, which was founded in 1994 by current chair Jeremy Norman, had been linked to several investors, with reports suggesting Sports Direct Fitness may have been lining up a bid as it seeks a stronger foothold in the southeast.

However, no such deal was reached and Soho Gyms has now moved to reiterate its commitment to focusing on operations. The chain's newest gym, Farringdon, will shortly undergo a refurbishment and expansion, while sister brand Budget Gym is currently scaling up its low cost offering in Lewisham.

"We have an exciting plan for further investment in the group for the future, both within and outside of our existing portfolio," said managing director and shareholder Michael Crockett. "Whilst our shareholders were happy to listen to interested parties in order to accelerate our growth, the business, like our



Soho Gyms has eight sites in London, as well as a budget gym

members, is in great shape, is financially strong and continues to grow. We remain committed to providing our growing membership with excellent facilities and customer service."

With its extensive property footprint in prominent London locations, it's easy to see why operators and investors would be interested in the business. According to filings at Companies House, Soho Gyms' holding company Ovalhouse made a pre-tax profit of £611,000 last year, on sales of £8.02m. Meanwhile, speculation continues that a deal could still happen if an attractive bid is forthcoming. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=f2n4s_O*

Snap to launch flagship site amid rollout

Snap Fitness aims to more than double its UK footprint by the end of this year, with the franchise hoping its meticulously honed property acquisition strategy will begin to pay dividends.

Matt Quinn, owner of TwentyTwoYards, set up a master development agreement with Snap Fitness to bring the franchise to the UK last year, with initial plans to open 200 sites over the next four years. As has been the case with many gym businesses, the team found sourcing suitable properties tougher than anticipated, but believe they have now hit upon a formula that will allow them to hasten expansion.

"The hard part has been finding sites and there's been a lot of homework involved in identifying areas that are underserved by the existing market," said sales manager Isaac Buchanan, who together with new CEO Todd Howard - the largest private owner of Snap franchises in the world - has taken the lead on developing the strategy which sees potential sites sourced predominantly in-house.

"We're at that stage now where things are starting to move and we've got great partners coming in who are hungry to drive the business forward. We've developed a good structure for



Snap Fitness is getting ready for a rollout

site acquisition, so there are properties in place ready for franchisees to take them on."

With five Snap Fitness clubs currently in operation, the team hope to open a further five to ten sites by Christmas, including a new flagship club in St Neots that will be operated in-house as opposed to being launched with a franchisee. The new sites will be approximately 5,000sq ft (464.5sq m) and feature a selection of gym equipment from Matrix Fitness, Cybex, Technogym, Octane, with MyZone also on offer. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=E7B8k_O*



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LEARN ABOUT A BETTER WAY TO WORK

Sitting all day is bad for our health and the health of business. Recently announced as part of Brunswick Corporation's fitness and active lifestyle division, InMovement will introduce the Activated Workplace - a next generation workplace vision that combats the sedentary nature of the modern office by integrating movement into a wide range of daily work activities.



"Over time, the sedentary way we work can do serious harm to the body," says Gary Hirschel, Vice President of InMovement, "Activity throughout the day is the key to a healthier work style, and changes don't have to be drastic to bring big health returns. Simply adding little movements and routine standing breaks into your day is linked to improvements in energy, sleep quality, a reduction in aches and pains and even weight loss."

"Prolonged sitting has been connected to a range of health problems, from heart disease and diabetes to physical pain and even depression. The compounding effects of working in a sedentary environment

cannot be undone through short bursts of daily exercise, and ultimately end up costing our businesses in healthcare expenses and through loss of productivity."

InMovement has created its portfolio of workplace furnishings to unite healthy behaviour with productivity. The company's unique design perspective redefines corporate wellness to support what it calls Productive Well-being™, transforming how we approach wellness at work today.

THE INMOVEMENT CONCEPT

Born out of the Life Fitness heritage in biomechanics and the study of how movement affects the human body, InMovement brings new proprietary research to workplace planning and employee behaviour. At the heart of the InMovement solution are worktools designed to incorporate subtle movement into an employee's work habits, like the InMovement™

TreadMill Desk and Elevate DeskTop™ Series of sit-to-stand desks. By blending healthy behavior with daily job function, InMovement removes barriers to workday movement to create a happier, healthier and more productive business.

"The workplace has forced desk-workers to operate in unhealthy conditions that immobilise us," said Hirschel. "You shouldn't have to choose between earning a

living and living healthy—you can do both. We've created products and services that re-engineer the workplace to support light movement throughout the day, which combats the harm of all-day sitting."

"We're going beyond traditional exercise and migrating some of the benefits of the company gym into the workplace, where we can help companies and their employees work in a way that supports their well-being," explains Brunswick Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Dusty McCoy. "While an estimated 15 percent of the population exercises regularly, through InMovement we can serve a broader audience to support those who want to live a healthy lifestyle. The reality is that short bursts of exercise, even an hour a day, cannot combat the detrimental effects of all-day sitting."



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NHM undergoes major renovation

London's Natural History Museum (NHM) is to receive a multi-million pound transformation of its grounds as part of an overall redevelopment of the popular tourist attraction.

Niall McLaughlin Architects, in collaboration with Kim Wilkie, won a competition to redesign the grounds of the London attraction in April 2014.

As part of a larger strategy, NHM is adopting "three great narratives", which will guide visitors around the museum based on the origins and evolution of life, the diversity of life on Earth today, and the long-term sustainability of humans' custodianship of the planet. The areas of the grounds will also follow these themes.

Set against the backdrop of Sir Alfred Waterhouse's 1880 Grade I listed building, the redevelopment and landscaping – which is set to take place between 2017 and 2020 – will feature a café and exhibition space below ground, on top of which will sit a new green square at street level.



The redevelopment is designed to improve flow around the NHM

The museum's famous Diplodocus – "Dippy", which will be ousted from the institution's main hall in favour of a blue whale skeleton, finds a new home in the gardens, with the popular plaster-cast skeleton being recast in bronze so as to survive the elements.

In the east, where the bronze Diplodocus will be located, a geological walkway will feature plants with a long history such as ferns and cycads, and in the west, a more modern environment will use plants and foliage.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n9N7c_O

UK has hidden heritage potential

A study looking at the heritage and cultural value of the UK's towns and cities has said that Dudley, Bury and Newport are among those with the greatest potential economic benefit to their heritage assets.

Bringing together 100 different indicators, including number of listed buildings, land designated for wildlife protection, parks, national parks, local produce, heritage open days and young people active in heritage, the Heritage

Index was designed to stimulate debate about what is valued from the past and how that influences the identity of current residents.

Compiled by the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) in collaboration with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the study suggests that many of the UK's heritage assets remain untapped by local authorities, with said assets potentially able to play a much larger role in helping an area thrive.



Dudley was highlighted for its historical industrial assets

Dudley was highlighted for its historical industrial assets such as canals, railways and the Black Country Living Museum, which despite the potential, is not capitalised on as the area sits in the bottom half of local authorities compared with the rest of the UK for heritage.

Bury was noted to be an "opportune area", citing its historical inner-city districts, while Newport, plus Cardiff and Flintshire, have the largest gap when comparing heritage activity to assets. Details: http://lei.sr?a=k4K2C_O

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School of Complementary Health opens new branch

The London School of Complementary Health has opened a new facility in Grantham, which is designed to help massage specialists broaden their skill set, increase the services they can offer and continue their professional development.

The LSCH specialises in warm bamboo, hot stone and Bellabaci cupping massage.

Each of the courses takes one day to complete, each providing 10 CPD points and a qualification accredited by the Federation of Holistic Therapists (FHT).

Further complementary courses are available in Indian head massage, Thai foot massage, plus baby & pregnancy treatments. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=P5D5w_O*



Beata Alexandrowicz is one of the speakers

New speakers announced for Spa Life UK event

Three new speakers have been announced for Spa Life UK, set to take place on 10-11 November in Stratford-Upon-Avon.

Beata Alexandrowicz will share her secrets of "How to prevent therapist burn-out"; John Hardwick will speak on how "Employee engagement creates delighted customers"; and Chris Lane will address the issue of "How does your management style influence your customers?"

The three new speakers join a host of others, including keynote Jo Fairley, co-founder of Green & Black's organic chocolate and author of the Green Beauty Bible, who will kick off the conference with her talk on "Sweet dreams: building an ethical global business"; and keynote Andrew McMillan, who spent 28 years with John Lewis Department Stores and will close the conference as he speaks on "Improving service while cutting costs."

The Spa Life Conference is a full day programme of continuing professional development with four separate tracks running simultaneously. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=v8s4M_O*

Greenwich history inspires spa

The InterContinental London - The O2 has partnered with ESPA for its new spa, which is operated by The Arora Group and set to open in Q4 2015.

The Spa at InterContinental London - The O2 will be located on the ground floor of the 18-storey hotel, and it is expected to include eight treatment rooms.

Spanning 1,000sq m (10,764sq ft), the spa will feature a relaxation room, sauna and steam room, along with a 17m (56ft) indoor swimming pool with whirlpool, cannon neck massage jets and poolside loungers.

The spa's aesthetic draws on the hotel's location within historic Royal Greenwich and local influences of the East India Trading Company, with bespoke printed mosaic tiles, rugs and delicate die-cut pendant lighting inspired by the area's trading of porcelain and silks as far back as the 18th century. The spa also includes exotic textures and materials, such as gold gilt and blue pearl granite, as well as heavy



Printed mosaic tiles, rugs and delicate die-cut pendant lighting feature

timbers inspired by Greenwich's historic naval ships and merchant dock yards.

"We've taken great care with the design of the spa in order to create a real oasis of calm that invites guests and members to sink into the depths of the space, like an underwater cavern," said Hasham Soliman, general manager of the hotel. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=4g3K5_O*

Gut bacteria 'may impact weight and fat'

For better cardiovascular health, check your gut. Bacteria living in there may impact on your weight, fat and good cholesterol levels, according to new research published in *Circulation Research*, an American Heart Association journal.

"Our study provides new evidence that microbes in the gut are strongly linked to the blood level of HDL (good cholesterol) and triglycerides and may be added as a new risk factor for abnormal blood lipids, in addition to age, gender, BMI and genetics," said Jingyuan Fu, Ph.D., study lead author and associate professor of genetics at University Medical Center Groningen in the Netherlands.

The researchers identified 34 types of bacteria that contributed to differences in body fat and blood lipids, such as triglycerides and the good cholesterol known as HDL.

The bacterial community in the human gut has been referred to as an extra organ because of its important role in an individual's health, researchers said.



In the future, new therapies could help alter gut bacteria types

The scientists believe their findings may someday open the door to new therapies to alter the gut bacteria types that contribute to body weight, fat and cholesterol levels, to help aid the prevention of heart disease.

Spa Business identified faecal transplant – taking faecal matter rich in gut bacteria from a healthy person and, through an approved medical process, inserting it into the gut of the patient as one of its Spa Foresight trends for 2015. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=m3S3F_O*



Organisers have worked hard to ensure that this year's show offers the perfect balance between spa suppliers and pool specialists to suit all attendees' needs

UK Pool & Spa Expo 2015



22nd - 24th November 2015
Pavilion Hall NEC Birmingham

The Pool & Spa Expo is back, and while some annual events seem to come around quicker and quicker each year, this one actually has. In a few short weeks, the UK Pool & Spa Expo will be back at the NEC from 22-24 November, a good four months ahead of the previous dateline.

So why the change of date?

Claire Saunders, event director explains: "With change comes progress. In order to move forward, stay abreast of what is best for the industry and break new ground, we must adapt. The new dates come into line with global events. It allows us to stand apart from any other show in the UK and is therefore perfectly placed for companies to showcase their newest products.

Staying at The NEC was an obvious choice, with the rail, road and air transport links arriving right on site, it makes the ideal location for both domestic and international exhibitors and visitors. And with the new Resorts World, the social scene opens up a whole new networking arena (plus a luxurious choice of hotels, bars and restaurants).

What else is staying the same?

Pool & Spa Scene remain the official media partner for the show. "The support we receive for the show from Christina and the girls at Pool & Spa Scene is fantastic," says Lauren King, sales & marketing manager for team UKPS. "Christina knows the industry inside out and her panel forum last year was an unmitigated success with visitors spilling out into the aisles to hear what the experts



The show's panel forum is an annual highlight

had to say. We're really looking forward to seeing who is on the panel this year."

The Pool & Spa Awards run by the magazine have also moved to be timed with the expo and will run on the second night of the event. Alongside the panel forum, there will also be seminars on safety and energy efficiency, as well as the opportunity to gain your Certified Pool Operators certificate at the on-site two day course.

So what's new?

Aside from the date change, the event team have been working hard and getting the right balance of exhibitors into this year's show. With rumblings about the event having become a 'spa show,' they have certainly

captured that side of the market, so this time around special attention has been paid to the pool companies and how to make sure there is a good balance of each.

Doughboy, Desjoyaux and Sundance will be leading this particular parade with a number of ancillary companies giving the support that will attract not only pool seekers, but also owners and upgraders. Jo Downs Glassware, Pool-dek by Stage Systems and The Brio Group are all newbies this year, but many old favourites also return.

With free parking, free wifi and most importantly free tickets to the show, it is clear that UK Pool & Spa Expo are doing everything to bring value to both visitors and exhibitors of the wet leisure industry. We are excited about this latest strategy, which will help them to become the right choice for pool & spa professionals in the UK and around the world.

MORE INFORMATION

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Email info@neweventsLtd.com
www.ukpoolspace-expo.co.uk

Are low-cost long-term visas a game-changer?



KURT JANSON

is policy director of the Tourism Alliance

The recent State visit of Chinese Premier Xi Jinping saw the Prime Minister announce that two year multiple entry visas for Chinese residents would be reduced from £342 to £85 to develop increased trade and tourism from China.

The impact that this will have on Chinese visitor numbers to the UK is uncertain. If you look at this reduction in cost in purely logical terms it's hard to say that there will be much impact. There are three main groups – leisure visitors, business visitors and students. As China is a developing market where the new middle class outbound visitors are wanting to see as much of the world as possible, it is unlikely that a large proportion of these people will be planning to return to the UK within two years. This means that we shouldn't expect to see a huge uptake of the two year visa by leisure visitors.

Similarly, if you are a business visitor from China, paying £342 every two years is hardly going to put you off travelling to the UK and although there will probably be a large uptake on the two year visa so that they can reduce costs, this won't impact upon the overall number of business visitors from China. With the students, they are coming to the UK on a student visa which isn't included in this arrangement and therefore will be unaffected.

So, what is the point of introducing a low-cost two year visa to the UK?

Well, there are three major benefits. The first, it goes a long way to counteracting the perception in the Chinese market that the UK is unwelcoming for Chinese visitors and that is something that has been holding back the UK's development of this market for some years. Second, if the trial is deemed a success the government will introduce a 10 year multiple entry visa for £85 and this will boost tourism significantly as you would expect leisure visitors to return within this time. Finally, if there are no problems experienced in China, then there is a good chance that low-cost visas introduced for other countries such as India, where visitors have very high return rate. That's why this move is a game-changer.

TOURISM

Rates reshuffle risky for tourism

Chancellor George Osborne's plans to give local councils new powers over business rates could leave tourism hotspots in rural areas and seaside destinations with even bigger investment problems than they currently face.

That is the warning from Tourism Alliance director Kurt Janson, who says the devolution of responsibility to local authorities for setting business rates and spending their proceeds will lead to an "even more fragmented and patchy tourism landscape."

Speaking at the recent Conservative Party conference, Osborne announced that he will allow councils to lower rates to attract new business and to decide how to spend the revenue generated from business rates (which amounts to £26bn nationwide).

Labour has said a move away from the current pooled national system for business rates – where the proceeds from richer local authorities help subsidise poorer areas – 'will lead to greater inequality'.

Janson says the poorer local authorities are typically tourism heartlands like seaside destinations and rural areas. Because these areas have fewer businesses than major cities, he warns they are likely to receive diminished returns under the new system.



George Osborne plans to devolve business rates

"The problem is rural areas and seaside destinations are the places that most need the money for regeneration and economic growth and their funds will decrease because the government will be withdrawing its core funding," he told *Leisure Opportunities*.

"And regardless of the value of tourism to the local economy, there is no guarantee that local authorities will reinvest any of the tax in tourism. So we will continue down the path of a more fragmented and patchy tourism landscape, which isn't helpful for national tourism growth." Details: http://lei.sr?a=B4F9R_O

VisitBritain campaign turns to Bond

Continued from front cover

This is the third time that VisitBritain has partnered with the Bond franchise to inspire more international visitors to come to Britain.

The last Bond film *Skyfall* was credited with helping to significantly boost visitor numbers to one of Scotland's mountain landscapes. Glencoe saw more than a 40 per cent increase in visitor numbers last year, thanks in part to Daniel Craig's depiction of Bond in the 2012 blockbuster, in which the final scenes take place in the region.

VisitBritain's global campaign is using a mix of outdoor billboards, print, digital and social media. This includes exclusive 'behind the scenes' footage from *Spectre* through its dedicated campaign page VisitBritain.com/spectre.

Other highlights include the release of four new 360-degree images of key filming locations in *Spectre* including Blenheim Palace, Camden, Westminster Bridge and City Hall to be promoted internationally through



It is the third time VisitBritain has partnered with the Bond franchise

VisitBritain's social media channels.

"We know the link between tourism and film is potent," said VisitBritain CEO Sally Balcombe. "Recent films have demonstrated they deliver a real increase in visitor numbers with just under half of our potential visitors wanting to visit places they have seen featured in films or TV." Details: http://lei.sr?a=R8W9a_O

Health Club Management Retention Hub

We've pulled together the latest retention series written for Health Club Management by leading industry experts Dr Melvyn Hillsdon, Dr Paul Bedford and Guy Griffiths. This one-stop online shop gives you quick access to the latest thinking, stats, trends and reports in this vital field.

The screenshot shows the 'Health Club Management Retention Hub' website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like HOME, JOBS, NEWS, FEATURES, BLOG, PRODUCTS, and a search bar. Below this, there are three featured articles:

- The TRP 10,000 series** by Dr Melvyn Hillsdon. It includes an 'ABOUT THE AUTHOR' section for Dr Melvyn Hillsdon and a 'HCM April 2014' overview of attention retention.
- The Black & White series** by Dr Paul Bedford. It includes an 'ABOUT THE AUTHOR' section for Dr Paul Bedford and a 'HCM September 2013' overview of attention retention.
- The Stick Around series** by Guy Griffiths. It includes an 'ABOUT THE AUTHOR' section for Guy Griffiths and a 'HCM May 2013' overview of attention retention.

At the bottom, there's a section for 'Part 1: GX vs gym'.

This collage features several articles and charts from the Health Club Management Retention Hub:

- ABSENTEE & EX-MEMBER JOURNEY**: An article discussing the journey of absent and ex-members, including a flowchart of the process.
- NEW YEAR, NEW STRATEGY**: An article by Dr Melvyn Hillsdon offering top five new year's resolutions for clubs looking to improve member retention levels.
- The PERSONAL touch**: An article discussing the importance of personal training and personal touch in member retention.
- Retention Series**: A series of articles and charts, including a bar chart showing 'Number of PT sessions purchased by gender, age group and length of membership' and a line graph showing 'Retention rates by gender, age group and length of membership'.

Let the experts keep you up to speed on the latest retention trends
healthclubmanagement.co.uk/retention



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HOTELS

UK hotels 'best in Europe' for service

UK hotels offer the best customer service in Europe, according to new research examining which aspects of a hotel are most likely to influence a guest's impressions.

The findings from the Independent Hotel Show, in partnership with Travelzoo, are the result of a survey of more than 1,000 adults. UK hotels were rated number one for service, with hotels in Spain and Italy ranked second and third. Hotels in France fared worst, and were the lowest rated for customer service.

Nine out of ten respondents said that good service could rectify their impression of a "bad hotel" and is the top reason why two-thirds of customers would rebook. Good hotel service also has huge positive word-of-mouth potential, with 40 per cent of respondents saying it would make them recommend a hotel to friends and family, second only to the cleanliness of a hotel.



British service was described as 'formal and polite' by respondents

Despite coming out on top, UK hospitality was shown to induce wildly different perceptions among consumers. British service is viewed as "formal and polite" by 35 per cent of respondents, while 18 per cent described the hospitality as "warm and generous".

Respondents' biggest bugbears regarding hotel service were flagged as "condescending staff" (38%), "not following up on requests" (21%) and "struggling to get staff's attention" (15%). *Details: http://lei.sr?a=x6p2s_O*

Trump kickstarts major hotel work

US tycoon Donald Trump is aiming to step up the £200m refurbishment of the Turnberry golf resort in South Ayrshire, Scotland, bringing in a team of constructors and designers to realise his vision for the hotel element.

Trump bought the resort for a reported £36m in April 2014 and has pledged the Turnberry will be 'a canvas like no other' when redevelopment work is complete.

To that end, he has hired construction firm ISG to carry out a comprehensive refurbishment of all 103 bedrooms and public spaces within the hotel building, and construct a new 500-person capacity grand ballroom at the world-renowned golfing and leisure venue. Architects 3DReid are responsible for the hotel works and Covell Matthews Architects are the designers for the ballroom.

Working to a brief to create the most luxurious hotel anywhere in the UK, the team will add touches such as large marble bathrooms to every bedroom. The new 6,000sq ft (557sq m) grand ballroom is envisioned as



Trump has pledged the Turnberry will be 'a canvas like no other'

being a focal point of the rejuvenated facility and has been sympathetically designed to blend seamlessly with the original architecture of the hotel building.

Investors have been rediscovering the appeal of European golf resorts, with in excess of £301m worth of major single asset transactions in golf occurring last year, according to a recent report from global hotel consultancy HVS London. Trump has been a serial investor in the market and is also the owner of the Menie Estate in nearby Aberdeenshire. *Details: http://lei.sr?a=c7S6T_O*

Meals on wheels cuts offer food for thought on our future



PETER DUCKER
is chief executive
of the Institute
of Hospitality

None of us is getting any younger. Put simply, we are all heading for old age if we are lucky, or perhaps not so lucky, depending on where we live. We'd all like to think there are essential services available to us when we are elderly and in need. So it's worrying to learn that one third of large councils no longer provide a meals on wheels service and half expect to see further reductions in the year ahead. This false economy is putting greater strain on the NHS.

Meals on wheels helps prevent more serious and costly health issues. Keeping the elderly nourished reduces malnutrition-related admissions to hospital, which cost far more than the service itself. Malnutrition costs the UK £13bn a year (more than obesity), £7.3bn of which is on the elderly.

The meals on wheels service empowers older people to live independently in their own homes for longer. As well as a nutritious daily meal, it provides a much-needed social lifeline. Namely, regular human contact that eases the devastating isolation and loneliness the elderly often endure, and crucial wellbeing and safety checks.

To raise awareness of Meals on Wheels Week this November (9-13) the National Association of Care Catering (NACC) recently invited industry leaders to go out on the road in various parts of the country. I joined the meals on wheels service in St Albans. There were 21 deliveries on our round, including three with an additional evening snack, gluten-free and vegetarian options. Most were elderly, but two were younger with other challenges in life.

I think it is impossible to experience this without feeling humbled by how easy your own life is by comparison. Everyone lived alone, and it was quite apparent that in many cases this would be the only outside contact that day. In addition to delivering meals, we helped one blind lady by moving a training flex out of her way, and another by taking a birthday card to be posted. It's a real lifeline.

As part of the awareness week, NACC is calling on the government to make meals on wheels a statutory responsibility. Their campaign deserves our full support.



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PROPERTY

Caruso St John toast triple launch

Three high-profile projects designed by London-based architecture studio Caruso St John have been opened in the space of just two weeks.

Two private art galleries designed by the firm have opened their doors in London; Damien Hirst's £25m Newport Street Gallery, plus Larry Gagosian's third and largest gallery in the capital. Work has also been completed on a large-scale refurbishment of the 1939 Grade II-listed Liverpool Philharmonic Hall.

The Newport Street Gallery is set out over two levels and comprises three listed theatre production warehouses and two new buildings, which stretch the entire length of a street in Vauxhall. The new additions by Caruso St John use similar materials to the existing buildings, which were originally built in 1913.

Free for the public to visit, the 3,437sq m gallery houses the personal collection of Damien Hirst, comprising 3,000 pieces including works by Francis Bacon, Jeff Koons and Banksy.

Larry Gagosian's new gallery is his 15th location. The Gagosian Grosvenor Hill in



The refurbishment of the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall cost £14.5m

Mayfair is Caruso St John's seventh collaboration with Gagosian, having also designed the US art dealer's galleries in Hong Kong, Paris and Rome, as well as a smaller Mayfair location close to the new addition.

Meanwhile, the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall launched its new 250-capacity Music Room on 10 October, signalling the completion of its £14.5m refurbishment. The Caruso St John-designed renovations were carried out in two phases, enhancing the drama of the building's original art deco detailing and design. Details: http://lei.sr?a=Z4v3C_O

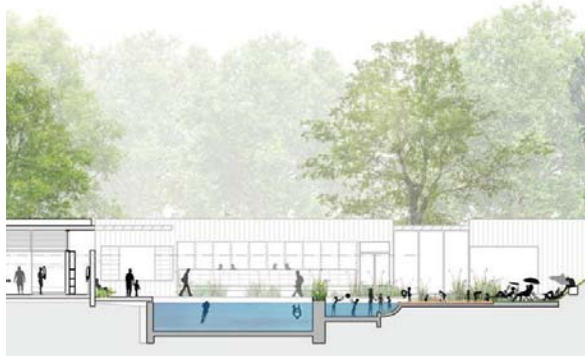
Campaign to protect UK's historic pools

A new association has been launched with a mission to unify campaigners working to protect and restore Britain's heritage swimming baths and lidos.

Historic Pools of Britain will aim to provide a shared voice for the hundreds of indoor and outdoor pools in the UK, most of which pre-date 1939. It will serve to celebrate the social and architectural contributions of these sites and underline the role they have to play today in helping communities stay active, particularly as the number of British pools continues to decrease.

Many of the Britain's heritage baths are currently in a fragile state. For example, there are 116 listed baths buildings, of which only 52 are operational or in the process of being refurbished.

There has, however, been somewhat of a renaissance for baths of late. Architecture practice Studio Octopi are currently working to resurrect Peckham Rye Lido – and



Studio Octopi are currently planning to resurrect Peckham Rye Lido

are also hoping to create floating baths on the Thames – while developer and operator Thames Lido is aiming to replicate its Bristol Lido success on a new project in Reading.

Historic Pools of Britain hopes to provide a platform to help bring more historic baths back into being. It is being steered by Gill Wright, who for 20 years has led the campaign for the country's finest Edwardian pool, Victoria Baths in Manchester. She is inspired by community run pools and their local impact. Details: http://lei.sr?a=A2u3f_O

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A LIFE IN LEISURE

Parental pressure, high tuition fees and uncertainty about the future can make choosing your career a thankless task. Luckily, the leisure industry provides a multitude of options that everyone can pursue.

As the UK continues to emerge from the shadow of recession and build up impressive growth momentum, now is certainly a good time to be considering pursuing a career in the leisure industry. More people are members of gyms and health clubs than ever before, while the wider society trend towards wellness means a raft of opportunities are opening up in the spa and hospitality industries.

Whereas many industries require years of training and expensive qualifications before you ever even glimpse a paycheck, leisure is unique in the sense that anyone with the right commitment and mindset can make a start. Indeed, many of today's industry leaders began as fitness instructors and lifeguards, climbing the career ladder to eventually end up in the boardroom.

You can't beat experience

A commitment to offering great customer service and a willingness to work hard are often the main attributes that an employer will look for in a candidate. The latest *Fitness Industry Confidence Survey* showed work experience was the most important attribute a school leaver could have when applying for a job in leisure. Around 47 per cent of senior leisure centre managers expressed a preference for new-starters to have work

experience, compared to just 15 per cent saying academic qualifications.

"Relevant experience has always been an important component within service based industries, but the margin in this finding is still surprising," said Nigel Wallace, client services director for Lifetime Training.

"Employers will also be looking for practical examples of interest in the industry"

"It really suggests skill and knowledge-based training integrated within the work setting is perhaps the most effective means to build talent within an organisation."

While the opportunities are undoubtedly out there for young people eager to make fast progress in the leisure industry, it's important to carefully consider which area you'd be best suited to. The leisure sector offers various options to both school leavers and graduates to gain a foothold on the career ladder and each comes with its own

set of challenges and demands. Most jobs will feature some form of in-role vocational training, enabling you to grow within the role and gradually assume responsibility.

"For young people taking their first steps in their careers, the leisure industry has a great deal to offer, especially those who want to follow a career path supported by vocational training programmes," said Jenny Patrickson, commercial director of awarding organisation Active IQ.

"Over the last 18 months, vocational qualifications have been the focus of significant change and it is important that students have qualifications that are of a high standard, truly valued by employers and which provide a clear line of sight to work."

Vocational programmes are available from a variety of providers, offering specific entrance points to young people. Each of the programmes aims to enhance both students' professional experience and allow them to gain certified accreditation in a specific field.

Providers include the likes of The Training Room, which can provide training and qualifications, while companies like Lifetime Training are able to set students up with apprenticeships, giving them the chance to earn as they learn in leisure capacities. Often these apprenticeships will result in students gaining new and highly-valuable certified qualifications.

The extra mile

But as with most industries, qualifications can only get prospective employees so far and the same goes for leisure. Those looking for a job in the field will also need to be able to demonstrate other qualities, as well as a genuine interest in the area of work that they're applying to do.

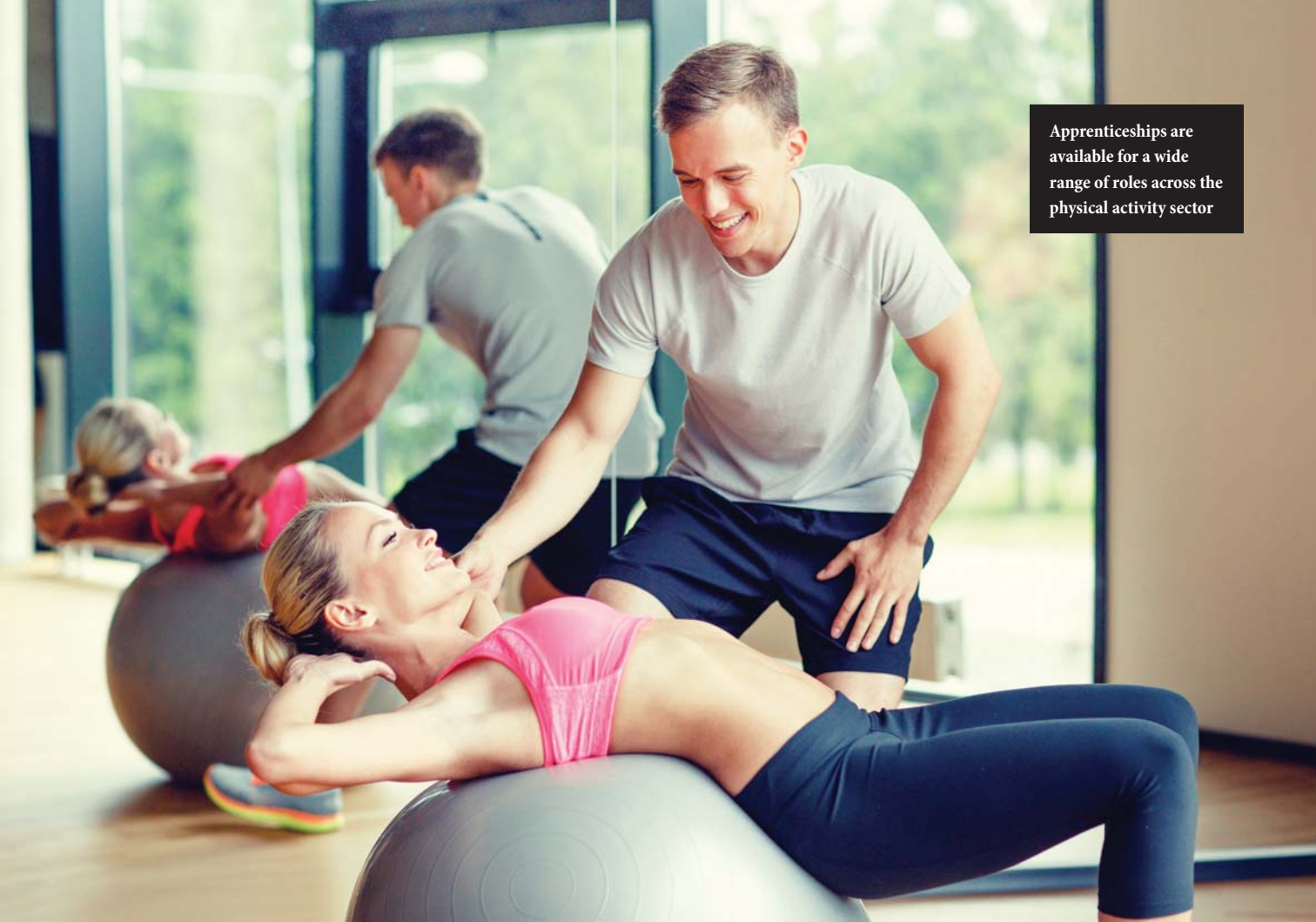
Employers will also be looking for practical examples of interest in the industry and many young people choose to undergo work experience or volunteering to prove they're keen on building a life in leisure.

With that in mind, we take a look at three young people working in the leisure industry to find out how they got to where they are and the recommendations that they would make to people planning their future.



Customer service and an ability to engage with people are key traits for leisure industry workers

Apprenticeships are available for a wide range of roles across the physical activity sector



■ **HENRY BERRY**
18, personal trainer

Where are you working and what is your position?

For the last year I've been working at The Crown Leisure Club in Wetheral, Carlisle Cumbria. My position at the health club has primarily been working as a fitness instructor.

What does your day-to-day role include?

Opening/closing the club, planning/teaching the fitness classes, membership sales, cleaning and maintenance of the poolside, plant room training and making sure that I have a good laugh with the members.

What attracted you to this particular sector?

Personal training allows me to put the knowledge gained from my diploma into perfect practice. I teach my clients everything from how to exercise properly, to what the best products are to help them eat healthier and lose weight.

How easy was it to find a job?

I was very lucky as the position was being advertised while I was in my last few weeks



of qualifying. I contacted them and was immediately offered an interview which led to me starting work there just a week after completing my Level 2&3. Quite ideal!

How did you enter the industry? What training course did you do before your first job at The Crown Leisure Club?

I qualified as a trainer through Premier Training International – a 'Diploma in Fitness Instructing and Personal Training' course.

How well do you think your training prepared you for your career?

The Premier course tutors have incredible in-depth knowledge and I found them very engaging which made the learning more interesting. I have found that the course prepared me well and gave me the knowledge and confidence to go straight into teaching classes and giving personal training.

Have you attended any training arranged by your current employer?

The Crown put me through my 'Indoor Spinning' qualification, which has been helpful. In addition, I have also put myself through a diploma in GP exercise referral and another course in advanced nutrition, both of these qualifications were also done with Premier Training.

What advice would you have for school leavers looking to get into the industry?

I would say the fitness industry is becoming more and more competitive so always strive to offer something unique to your clients and try to build up a reputation. It may take time at first, but once people enjoy your classes and you build rapport, the clients (and the money) will come, so don't rush.

Is there anything you would do differently if given the chance?

In all honesty, I think things have gone pretty much to plan so far, so there isn't much I would change to my first year in the industry. I recently left The Crown to pursue a job as a personal trainer on a cruise ship. It has always been a big ambition for me to travel the world, so to be able to do that with a job that I'm passionate about is very much a perfect combination for me.

What are the best aspects of the leisure industry in your opinion?

The environment within the club and the types of members there – a lot of great characters. I think it differs to the other more commercial gyms around the area in the sense that you can really develop a friendship with people, as well as working them hard in the classes.

Pressing the reset button to become global leaders in the management of sport and physical activity



JULIAN LEYBOURNE
is CEO of Icon
Training, a Grade 1
Ofsted inspected
training provider

Our sector is currently going through considerable change against a backdrop of austerity, funding cuts and fragmentation with a common disconnect to single core principles of our existence.

Employers often complain that some degree-qualified graduates do not hold basic entry-level qualifications or do not have practical experience. Work-based training providers have the advantage here, as they can work in partnership with employers at the coal face to negate this. However, there needs to be a single focus to underpin what our sector is truly about in order to build a simple, uncomplicated competency framework that applies across all sub-sectors.

I believe that our strategy for success has to revolve around creating core competencies regardless of job classification but with additional technical modules for staff suited to the functional needs of the job role. For example, the generic skills for most frontline staff functions involve customer service, equality and diversity, safety, teamwork, safeguarding, skills in English and Maths, as well as an understanding of basic physical literacy.

On top of this we need additional technical and functional skills, but we should try to keep this structure simple so that new entrants and managers can understand career pathways and what people must do to progress to higher levels.

Training must be fuelled by adding value to people, customers and value to business performance and profitability. Training should also be delivered in context to the core principles of our sector, which is active leisure and increased participation of physical activity.

I hope that now we can be the exciting generation that grasps the vision of a transparent, innovative, inclusive, honest and dynamic sector, that embraces change and drives standards upwards through thought-leadership with integrity and passion. This will put us in the position to truly be able to change lives.

STUDENT SPECIAL



Vocational programmes are available from many providers, offering specific entry points for young people

ALISTAIR MCQUEEN 22, duty manager



Where are you working and what is your position?

I currently work as a duty manager for a small dual-use leisure centre in Guildford called Broadwater and Fullbrook Dual-use Centre.

What does your day-to-day role include?

My duties include leading a small team of staff and ensuring that we have a balanced programme of events and activities for all of our customers.

What attracted you to the leisure industry?

I was always interested in sport. When my local school posted an opportunity to join a unique programme called Young Apprenticeships, with training provider Icon Training, based at the Guildford Spectrum Leisure Complex, I jumped at the chance.

How did you enter the industry? What training course did you do before you got the Broadwater job?

Over a two-year programme, Icon took me through a wide range of sport and exercise-related qualifications. I then subsequently graduated from University of Exeter with a 2:1 BA Honours Degree in Sport Exercise and Science in 2014.

How well do you think your training prepared you for your career?

The Young Apprenticeship programme was a great opportunity for me and the Icon instructors were really supportive. I did some coaching at Keogh Army Barracks and did football coaching for a season as well.

What advice would you have for school leavers looking to get into the industry?

Try to get as many industry qualifications as you can, such as first aid, lifesaving and coaching, even if this means paying for them yourself. Another way is to volunteer, where quite often free training can be provided.

Is there anything you would do differently if given the chance?

I think I would not have gone to college, which didn't quite work out for me. It does suit some people, but I think I should have gone through on a higher apprenticeship.

Is working in the leisure industry what you expected it to be like?

It has been a brilliant experience and exceeded my expectations. Following my Young Apprentice success I became a Young Ambassador for the 2012 Olympic Games and became 2008 South East of England LSC Apprentice of the Year.

What are the best aspects of the leisure industry in your opinion?

I've been lucky to become involved in mentoring and teaching as part of the Cohort 4 Young Apprenticeship programme and I was also employed full-time to teach on various school-based vocational learning programmes. These roles made me feel I was making a positive contribution and giving something back, which means a lot to me.

And the worst?

The pay is not great, but the freedom and job satisfaction makes up for this. I am confident I can improve my pay level as I work hard to climb the career ladder and learn new skills and continue to gain more qualifications in teaching and development.



A genuine passion for your area of work can be key for standing out from the crowd

■ DANIEL HEARN 20, fitness instructor



Where are you working and what is your position?
I work for Jubilee Hall Trust as a fitness instructor.

What does your day-to-day role include?
Engaging with customers and supporting them or correcting technique, conducting fitness instructor training, one-to-one sessions with customers, cleaning the club, maintenance of the gym equipment.

What attracted you to the leisure industry?
From a young age I liked sports such as boxing and swimming. I started using the gym and saw benefits on my fitness levels and to my body. Other people would ask me for tips and sharing my workouts made me want to learn more and do this as a career.

What was it that attracted you to this particular sector?
I struggled at school and the only thing that really enthused me was fitness training. It's great to be working for a charitable trust and knowing that we can help the people within the health club and our community to lead healthier and more active lives.

How easy was it to find a job?

Not easy at all! I must have applied for over 100 jobs over a period of 2 years, out of those 100 applications only got invited to 5 interviews. Then, 2 years down the line after a work trial, I managed to secure an apprenticeship with Jubilee Hall.

How did you enter the industry? What training course did you do before you got the job with Jubilee Hall?

First, I gained a Sport and Active Leisure Level 1 qualification in college, and then a funded Level 2 fitness qualification with Lifetime Training. I gained a Level 2 in Employability skills and a Level 3 in Exploring employability skills. I also volunteered and gained some work experience at Lime House Youth Centre, as well as doing work at my local boxing club.

How well do you think your training prepared you for your career?

I feel it gave me the knowledge, but like anything; until you are in position where you can apply it, that knowledge on its own doesn't really mean a lot.

Have you attended any training arranged by your current employer?

I completed my Level 3 apprenticeship with them and I have also done sales training,

customer service training, upholstery training, first aid training, plus member retention/interaction training.

What advice would you have for school leavers looking to get into the industry?

Never give up if it is what you are passionate about. Always ask for feedback following a rejection, otherwise you will never know what you may be doing wrong. Ask for a work trial to demonstrate how committed you are to getting the job.

Is there anything you would do differently if given the chance?

Not really, I feel that I wouldn't be the person or in the position I am today if I hadn't taken every step I took in order to get here.

Is working in the leisure industry what you expected it to be like?

Yes, it is everything I thought it would be and more. The acceptance and the support I have had has been unbelievable and each day is a new challenge, I don't think I will ever get bored in this industry.

What are the best aspects of the leisure industry in your opinion?

Being able to make a difference to someone's wellbeing and the constant learning curve with new trends being introduced all the time.



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TRAINING

Work experience trumps qualifications

Work experience is more important than academic qualifications, according to operators taking part in the latest Fitness Industry Confidence Survey.

The findings follow a growing sentiment in the health and fitness industry that many qualifications do not provide candidates who are fit-for-purpose, with a lack of 'soft skills' of particular concern.

The latest research, carried out by insight specialist Leisure-net Solutions in collaboration with Leisure Industry Week (LIW) and Lifetime Training, showed work experience was the most important attribute a school leaver could have when applying for a job. Around 47 per cent of respondents expressed a preference for new-starters to have work experience, compared to just 15 per cent saying academic qualifications.

"Relevant experience has always been an important component within service based industries, but the margin in this finding is still surprising," said Nigel Wallace, client services director for Lifetime Training.



47 per cent of employers prefer candidates to have work experience

"It really suggests that skill and knowledge-based training integrated within the work setting is perhaps the most effective means to build talent within an organisation."

The survey, which questioned 143 senior managers from private and public sector operators, showed sections of the fitness industry are behind the government's commitment to deliver three million apprenticeships during this term of parliament. Around 27 per cent of operators are already committed to recruiting apprentices and 45 per cent are considering it.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Y9K3u_O

New guidelines on baby swimming

National guidelines to ensure baby and toddler safety during swimming lessons were launched this month (13 October) at a parliamentary reception in Westminster.

According to the ASA (Amateur Swimming Association), almost half a million babies and toddlers will take part in swimming lessons this year, continuing the growth trend seen in recent years.

The nationwide rise in baby and toddler swimming lessons has also seen a corresponding fall in the number of deaths by drowning in children aged 0-4 years, with a drop of 25 per cent since 2010, according to WAID (Water Accident and Incident Database).

The new Baby and Toddler Swimming Teaching Safety Guidelines have been developed to build on these improvements and help keep children safe in swimming pools. Supported by the ASA, baby and toddler swim school Water Babies, and baby swimming product manufacturer Splash About International, the new guidelines aim to set the standard for British baby swimming lessons (up to age four). As well as providing safety advice for swimming



The new safety guidelines offer aquatic best practice

lessons, the new guidelines give recommendations on using leak-proof neoprene swim nappy covers over a disposable or reusable swim nappy for under 4-year-olds, and other pool environment factors such as temperature. There are also best-practice guidelines for those who offer underwater baby photography services, to help safeguard young children and their parents following a dramatic growth in popularity in recent years.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Z9f7x_O



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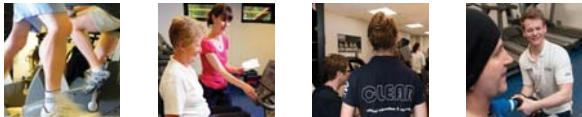
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An inspirational leader, you will have operational management responsibility for all our leisure and recreation facilities (indoor and outdoor) along with all aspects of the Sport & Physical Activity Development service. In addition, you will provide strategic input to the work of the **Active Aberdeen Partnership** and maintain high level relationships with all key agencies on a local and national scale.

Applicants should have a natural flair for strategic leadership, be highly motivated and possess a strong level of commercial acumen. You will be capable of managing partnerships and people effectively, possess excellent communication skills and will be ready to meet challenges head on.

Salary c£60,000 + Benefits

For further information, including a full job description, information on Sport Aberdeen's future plans and details on how to apply, please visit the dedicated web page of our recruitment advisors, The Urquhart Partnership Ltd, at www.upwebsite.com/sportaberdeen

E-mail queries can be sent to Alan Clark,
Senior Consultant, The Urquhart
Partnership Ltd at ac@upwebsite.com

Closing date: **27th November 2015**





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St Mary's School Sports Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and members. Due to the nature of the work involved the successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced Clearance via the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Further details and an application form are available on request from the Sports Centre office on 01249 857335 or via e-mail to: jpilumb@stmaryscalne.org.

Closing Date: Monday 9th November 2015

General Manager

Location: Birmingham
Salary: up to £26,000



The Castle Pool Community Partnership is seeking to recruit an exceptional General Manager to develop the recently acquired Community Asset Transfer of the Castle Vale Community Leisure Centre. The role of a GM requires an extraordinary manager with proven entrepreneurial flair and commercial ability, as well as the skill, energy and determination to drive and grow the business. We're looking for managers who enjoy having the freedom to take charge of all aspects of an operation. Instead of having a huge central operation, we prefer to empower our manager to manage the business.

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Company: Legacy Leisure
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Membership Consultant

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Sutton, UK

Fitness Operations Manager

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: Essex, England

Membership Consultant

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Watford, UK

Swimming Services Engineer

Company: Ipswich Borough Council
Location: Ipswich, UK

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Company: Hazel Grove High School
Location: Stockport, UK

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Location: Coventry, UK

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General Manager

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
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Company: Valley Leisure Ltd
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Academy of Sport Duty Officer

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Company: Everyone Active
Location: Southam Leisure Centre, UK

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Company: Valley Leisure Ltd
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Membership Consultant

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Southam Leisure Centre, UK

Community Assistant

Company: Oxford City Council
Location: Oxford, UK

Swim Manager

Company: Everyone Active
Location: St Albans, UK

Club Sales Manager

Company: énergie group
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Health & Wellbeing Manager

Company: YMCA East Surrey
Location: Redhill, Surrey, UK

Duty Officer x 2

Company: Oxford City Council
Location: Oxford, UK

Partnership Manager

Company: Belfast City Council
Location: Belfast, UK

Assistant Manager

Company: University of Huddersfield
Location: Huddersfield, UK

Regional Sales Manager

Company: Core Health & Fitness
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Community Officer (Events)

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Lifeguard

Company: GLL
Location: Various locations, UK

Duty Manager

Company: Legacy Leisure
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Lifeguard

Company: Swimming Tales
Location: Rayleigh, Essex, UK

Senior Recreation Assistant

Company: GLL
Location: Bath, Somerset, UK

Fitness Motivator

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Wembley, London, UK

Duty Manager (Senior)

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Bexleyheath, UK

Catering Assistant

Company: GLL
Location: Thame, Oxfordshire, UK

Team Leader / Duty Manager

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Stratford-Upon-Avon, UK

Apprentice

Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Exeter, UK

Recreation Assistant

Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Exeter, UK

Catering Assistant

Company: GLL
Location: Cambridge, UK

Membership Sales Advisor

Company: énergie group
Location: North Finchley, UK

Group Exercise Instructor

Company: GLL
Location: West Oxfordshire, UK

Swimming Teacher

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Wembley, UK

Membership Sales Adviser

Company: énergie group
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Centre Manager

Company: BikePark Wales
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Food & Beverage Assistants

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General Manager

Company: Simply Gym
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Duty Managers

Company: Simply Gym
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Company: GLL
Location: Bath, Somerset, UK

Group Exercise Instructor

Company: GLL
Location: West Oxfordshire, UK

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Company: Everyone Active
Location: Basildon, UK

Casual Cycle Staff

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Farnham, UK

Head of Corporate Sales

Company: Pure Gym Limited
Location: Field based, UK

Duty Manager

Company: Love Withington Baths
Location: Withington, Manchester, UK

Maintenance Technician

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Bexleyheath, UK

Fitness Instructor

Company: énergie group
Location: Newport Pagnell, UK

Catering Assistant

Company: Everyone Active
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Company: Everyone Active
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Personal Training Tutors

Company: The Training Room
Location: Various, UK

Assistant General Manager

Company: The Gym Group
Location: Ashford, Kent, UK

Sports Development Officer

Company: Wandsworth BC
Location: London, UK

Get Active Local Project Lead

Company: Wandsworth BC
Location: London, UK

Duty Supervisors x 2

Company: Carmarthenshire CC
Location: Carmarthenshire, Wales, UK

Care Planner - Healthy Hearts

Company: Thrive Tribe Ltd
Location: Hammersmith and Fulham, UK

Finance Manager

Company: Inverclyde Leisure
Location: Greenock, Inverclyde, UK

Partnership Officer

Company: Thrive Tribe Ltd
Location: Hammersmith and Fulham, UK

Recreation Assistants

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Ilfracombe, UK

Operations Manager

Company: Highgate School
Location: Highgate, North London, UK

Sales and Marketing Manager

Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Kidlington, UK

Personal Trainer

Company: Pure Gym Limited
Location: Various locations, UK

Cafe Assistant

Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Banbury, UK

Sales Manager (Home Worker)

Company: Aqualine Wellness
Location: Home Worker, UK

Fitness Motivator

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Stowmarket, UK

Fitness Instructor

Company: énergie group
Location: Southwark, London SE1, UK

Tutors / Assessors

Company: Diverse Trainers.
Location: Nationwide, UK

Fitness Operations Manager

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

Fitness Instructor

Company: énergie group
Location: Cricklewood, UK

NCTA Deputy Director

Company: Nat Coastal Tourism Academy
Location: Bournemouth, UK

Recreational Assistants

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Various locations, UK

Recreation Assistants

Company: Legacy Leisure
Location: Windsor, UK

Trainee Lifeguard

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Stratford - Upon - Avon, UK

Play Leader/Party Host X2

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Bexleyheath, UK

Personal Trainer

Company: Matt Roberts
Location: Mayfair, UK

Duty Manager

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Bexleyheath, UK

Fitness Leader

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Bexleyheath, UK

General Manager

Company: The Gym Group
Location: Dagenham, UK

Café Duty Manager

Company: Rush Leisure
Location: Bromsgrove, UK

Leisure Duty Manager

Company: Sir Herbert Leon Academy
Location: Milton Keynes, UK

Facility Officer

Company: St Mary's Calne
Location: Calne, Wiltshire, UK

Fitness Operations Manager

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: Middlesex, England

Les Mills Group Exercise

Company: Rush Leisure
Location: Bromsgrove, UK

Fitness and Leisure Assistant

Company: Rush Leisure
Location: Bromsgrove, UK

Leisure Duty Officer

Company: Rush Leisure
Location: Bromsgrove, UK

Senior Recreation Assistant

Company: GLL
Location: Buckinghamshire, UK

Director of Sport

Company: Hertfordshire Sports Village
Location: Hatfield, UK

Assistant Manager

Company: The Original Bowling Co
Location: Stockton, UK

Fitness Supervisor

Company: Lincs Inspire
Location: Cleethorpes, UK

Fitness Apprenticeships

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Watford Central, UK

Sales Advisor / Club Promoter

Company: énergie group
Location: Various locations, UK

Fitness Operations Manager

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: Bedfordshire, England

Sales Manager

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

General Manager

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: Oxfordshire, England

General Manager Pools

Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

Membership Sales Advisor

Company: énergie group
Location: London, UK

General Manager

Company: Castle Pool Community
Location: Birmingham, UK

Customer Success Consultant

Company: Clubwise Software Ltd
Location: Buckinghamshire, UK

Membership Sales Consultant

Company: énergie group
Location: Fit4less Stevenage, UK

Personal Trainer

Company: énergie group
Location: Various locations, UK

Membership Advisor

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Rushcliffe Leisure Centre, UK

Recreation Assistant X2

Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Bexleyheath, UK

Regional Sales Manager

Company: Sports Art Fitness
Location: North, UK

Impact Sales Consultant

Company: Alliance Leisure
Location: Nationwide, UK

Facilities Assistant

Company: GLL
Location: Oxfordshire, UK

Fitness Apprentice

Company: énergie group
Location: Fit4Less Cheadle Hulme, UK

Swimming Teachers

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Horfield, UK

Sports Assistants

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Bristol, UK

Training Academy Sales Advisor

Company: Xercise 4 Less
Location: Leeds, UK

Assistant Manager

Company: Goals Soccer Centres
Location: Beckenham

Gym Manager

Company: énergie group
Location: Portsmouth, UK

Sales Manager

Company: énergie group
Location: Portsmouth, UK

Party Leaders

Company: Everyone Active
Location: North Wembley, UK

Catering Assistant

Company: Everyone Active
Location: North Wembley, UK

Duty Manager

Company: YMCA Maidstone
Location: Maidstone, UK

Health Club Manager

Company: Hoar Cross Hall Hotel
Location: Burton upon Trent, UK

Swimming Teachers

Company: Everyone Active
Location: Harrow Middlesex, UK

Personal Trainer

Company: Xercise4Less
Location: Nationwide, UK

General Manager

Company: Xercise4Less
Location: Various locations, UK

Impact Sales Consultant

Company: Xercise4Less
Location: North West & Scotland, UK

General Managers

Company: The Gym Group
Location: Various locations, UK

Membership Consultant

Company: Xercise4Less
Location: Southend - on - sea

Sales and Marketing Manager

Company: Xercise4Less
Location: Rochford, Shrewsbury, Liverpool Speke, UK

Swimming Teacher

Company: Becky Adlington's Swim Stars
Location: Nationwide, UK

Beauty Therapist

Company: Center Parcs Ltd
Location: Brandon, Suffolk, UK

Spa Therapists

Company: Everyone Active
Location: St Albans, UK

Senior Spa Therapist

Company: Tresco Island
Location: Isles of Scilly, UK

UK Sales Representative

Company: Blinc Inc
Location: UK

Spa Therapist

Company: Four Seasons Hotel Hampshire
Location: Hampshire, UK

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Liverpool skatepark glows in the dark

The UK's first glow-in-the-dark skateboard park has opened in Liverpool ahead of the city's 2016 biennial arts festival.

The permanent sculpture, which is named *Evertro*, opened to the public on 6 October. It has been designed by South Korean artist Koo Jeong A, in association with developer *Wheelscape Skateparks*. The central bowl of the facility is coated in a phosphorescent paint, so when evening falls, the park glows a luminous green.



The skatepark was commissioned as part of the Liverpool Biennial

Evertro is located in a new public space within *Everton Park*, branded the *Action Sports HUB*. It was commissioned by the city's mayor, Joe Anderson, and is the flagship development in a wider scheme to open five similar sports parks across the city.

It will be managed by *Friends of Everton Park*, the *Land Trust* and *Liverpool Vision*.

Jeong A worked on the design with young *Liverpudlians* and the city's skating community. As a result, *Evertro* combines popular skatepark features with new sculptural elements, creating a unique space for experimentation.

Jeong A said: "Working in the community of *Everton* has been a fascinating process. What appealed to me about this is that community members of different ages have come together to help create this project."

Evertro is part of the ongoing regeneration of *Everton Park* and *North Liverpool*, with the city council reportedly seeking to emulate *Barcelona's Parc Guell*. The park, which is located at *Liverpool's* highest point, is a draw for tourists because of its panoramic views over the *River Mersey*.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=B8C4r_O

Millennials' fitness habits revealed

Continued from front cover

The research into millennials' fitness habits identified a number of business opportunities.

It found an increased eagerness to maintain physical health among millennials, with tracking technology and group exercise classes shown to be particularly popular among this demographic. More than 70 per cent of millennials value the benefits of being able to track their exercise progress wherever and whenever, with the use of mobile app technology set to increase from 56 per cent to 74 per cent by 2016.

The rise to prominence of boutique gyms offering high-quality exercise classes has been closely linked to the preferences of millennials, and the research supports this, with 70 per cent of respondents saying that group exercise provides greater motivation.

The research concludes that millennials represent the future of wellness, and that



Millennials represent the future of wellness

their choices will ultimately determine how wellness evolves over the next 10 to 20 years.

Also key, the report highlights, will be the ability of fitness providers to adjust to fast-changing market conditions and the death of traditional demographics.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=R2K3s_O

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