

## FIA reveals first MoreActive4Life campaign results

By **Pete Hayman**

New statistics from the Fitness Industry Association (FIA) have revealed that more than 200,000 people across the UK participated in the inaugural MoreActive4Life campaign during the summer.

The three-month initiative, which was launched by the FIA as part of the government's Change4Life programme in June 2009, saw more than 1,200 health clubs and leisure centres participate in a bid to increase levels of physical activity throughout Britain.

FIA chief operating officer Dave Stalker unveiled results from the first year of the



**Participating fitness facilities reported an average of 200 referrals**

three-year campaign at Leisure Industry Week (LIW) on 22 September, which revealed that participating facilities reported an average of 200 referrals through MoreActive4Life.

According to the results, the most popular element of the consumer offer was a six-week gym programme, attracting 80 per cent of participants and contributed to an average 44.7

per cent of people converting to full memberships as a result of the campaign.

Stalker said the level of statistics reported back will demonstrate to the Department of Health (DH) that it can be a key delivery partner in addressing the nation's health.

Stalker said: "This is the biggest opportunity for our industry to be recognised for what it is – one of the key delivery partners in changing the health of the nation."

Plans for the 2010 and 2011 MoreActive4Life include increasing the number of clubs taking part and creating links with Business4Life to increase the levels of funding available.

## NHM's new £78m Darwin Centre opens in London

The eight-storey high cocoon centrepiece is home to 17 million insect specimens

By **Helen Patenall**

The £78m Darwin Centre at the Natural History Museum (NHM) in London, has opened to the public.

At the centre of the new 16,700sq m (180,000sq ft) wing sits a 65m-long, eight-storey high cocoon accommodating 17 million insect and three million plant specimens in 3km (1.9 miles) of cabinets open to display to museum visitors. Some of the windows also feature a microphone to allow visitors to question



**Denmark's CF Møller Architects designed the new £78m wing**

museum scientists while they carry out live research.

The museum has teamed up with the BBC to showcase

natural history film footage at the Attenborough Studio, while a 30sq m (323sq ft) Climate Change Wall provides information on global warming.

NHM director Michael Dixon said: "There will be nowhere else in the world where the public can engage with the science of nature on this scale."

"We hope the Darwin Centre will change perceptions of what museums of natural history can be. It is an awe-inspiring new building, inviting everyone to explore the natural world in an exciting and innovative way."

### Top clubs resist the recession

New research has revealed that leading European football clubs are weathering the recession well, reporting an increase in average attendances at the start of the 2009-10 season.

According to Deloitte's Sports Business Group, the average number of people attending the first two rounds of UEFA Champions League fixtures has shown a 5 per cent increase on the same period last year.

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## Green light for £400m Reading plans

Station Hill development to include a new arts complex and a tenpin bowling alley

By Pete Hayman

Plans for a £400m mixed-use development scheme, which has been designed to transform the centre of Reading, has been given outline planning consent by the local authority.

Reading Borough Council (RBC) has backed Sackville Developments' proposals for Station Hill, which aims to regenerate a 5-acre (2-hectare) area situated adjacent to the town's railway station.

Designed by architects Scott Brownrigg and Chapman Taylor, the plans include a new arts complex, a 5,400sq ft (500sq m) health and fitness centre and a tenpin bowling alley.

A central public piazza, new public spaces, restaurants, cafés and bars form part of the proposed scheme, which also



The proposals will transform an area adjacent to Reading Station

features retail, residential and office units and will complement RBC and Network Rail's plans for an £825m redevelopment of Reading station.

It is hoped that construction work can get underway in 2011, subject to the completion of legal agreements and Reserved Matters applications. The first

phase of work is scheduled for completion in 2014.

Sackville Developments, a subsidiary of the Sir John Madejski-owned property company Sackville Properties, expects to provide funding for the four-phase regeneration project, which could take up to eight years to complete.

## British hotel operators set for critical period

By Pete Hayman

UK hoteliers are set to enter a critical period this autumn as the industry faces a drop off in summer leisure spend that has helped businesses to offset a fall in corporate bookings.

Richard Hathway, head of tourism at KPMG, said the professional services firm is expecting to see an increase in insolvencies as operators struggle with falling room rates and a reduction in conference and meeting bookings.

Hathway said: "Many will find that their traditionally strong autumn and Christmas revenues from business travel, conferences and events will not materialise this year, and as a result, businesses will remain under severe pressure for the foreseeable future."



KPMG expects insolvencies to increase as problems continue

However, Deloitte's Hotel Market Outlook has revealed that prospects for 2010 are more positive for the sector, with regional hotels across the UK set to show signs of RevPAR growth of more than 5 per cent by the end of next year.

London hotels could continue to report decreases in RevPAR

until the fourth quarter of 2010, although Marvin Rust, hospitality managing partner at Deloitte, believes the industry is now over the worst.

Rust said: "The revised forecasts show that for hotels in London and across the UK, the worst falls in RevPAR are probably behind us now. However, both sectors still face further falls in revenue before recovery takes place."

Predictions for the short-term future of the sector come as new research from PKF Hotel Consultancy Services reported further decreases in occupancy and RevPAR during August 2009, compared with last year.

According to PKF, room yield in London saw a 9.2 per cent decline, while regional hotels reported a 11 per cent drop in room yield; both to £44.10.



## Facebook joins bid to boost participation

Sport England turns to social networking website to get more people playing sport

By **Pete Hayman**

Sport England has secured a long-term partnership with the social networking website, Facebook, in a bid to increase sports participation leading up to the London 2012 Olympics.

It is hoped the £20m venture will provide national governing bodies for sport (NGBs) with a new method of reaching out to people before the 2012 Games, with more than 20 million people currently using Facebook in the UK.

A new 'Sport Hub' will be established on the website as part of the partnership, which will feature a number of applications – sponsors; fans; groups; events calendar; photos; videos and competitions – to allow NGBs to market and organise sporting events.



**Table Tennis is one sport to benefit from the Facebook initiative**

The competition element will provide Facebook users with the opportunity to challenge other people in their local area to a match or race and then to share the results with their friends and networks.

The scheme is being piloted through British Universities and

Colleges Sport and six sports during this year's freshers week, aiming to reach 12,000 students within four months.

Sport England chair Richard Lewis said: "This partnership with Facebook will fundamentally change the way sports engage with participants."

## WTS launches new £1.5m woodland campaign

By **Pete Hayman**

Woodland Trust Scotland (WTS) has launched a major £1.5m fundraising campaign to help the organisation acquire 240 hectares (593.1 acres) of land near Dumbarton.

The trust aims to create a new native woodland, but revealed that it only has a limited amount of time to reach a deal and help contribute towards its ambitions to create a woodland legacy for Scotland.

Located to the north of Dumbarton, WTS' plans for the creation of a native woodland



**WTS is aiming to create a new woodland north of Dumbarton**

on the site would provide accessible green space for residents of the town, as well as for the wider area of Glasgow and western Scotland.

Schools and local communities will be given the chance to take part in planting activities as part of the forest scheme, which is expected to take 12-15 years to be transformed and will provide a long-term use as an outdoor education facility.

WTS' Andrew Fairbairn said: "This is an ambitious project for the trust. Not only do we want to create new native woodland, we also want to create an area that will become a thriving home for wildlife and where we can give children the opportunity to be involved and learn about the wonders of nature."

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## IN BRIEF

### Mayor outlines child obesity measures

► Boris Johnson has called on each of the 32 London Boroughs to adopt a city-wide approach to tackling childhood obesity ahead of the 2012 Olympics. Speaking at the launch of his health consultation – The London Health Inequalities Strategy – the London mayor outlined plans for a joint bid to increase fitness levels and to enable challenges against fast food firms and advertisers who target youngsters with unhealthy food. Among the recommendations is the use of sports to help young people build self-confidence and a campaign to promote parks and green spaces to Londoners.

### New leisure facility for Huyton

► Knowsley Council is building a new sports and leisure facility on the site of the former St Thomas Beckett School in Huyton, as part of its wider £25m leisure strategy. The centre will offer a swimming pool, a health and fitness suite, spa facilities and a multi-purpose sports court, as well as adult day care services. A new youth centre called OurPlace will provide sports and arts facilities, including a dance studio, a BMX/skate park, a multi-use games area and a catering training area, for young people aged 13 to 19 years old.

### Work underway on Harold Hill revamp

► Work is underway on a £250,000 refurbishment of Central Park Leisure Centre in Harold Hill, East London. The centre, operated by SLM on behalf of Havering Council, will have its fitness suite extended and a new dance studio installed. A spokesperson for SLM told *Leisure Opportunities* that the new 74-station fitness suite will be equipped by Precor.

## First mbodies centre opens in Witney

One of the largest purpose-built pilates facility in the UK unveiled in Oxfordshire

By **Tom Walker**

Fitness entrepreneur Chris Onslow has opened his first health and fitness facility in Witney, Oxfordshire.

The 558sq m (6,000sq ft) mbodies centre is one of the largest purpose-built pilates centres in the UK. The club has been divided into three exercise studios and two treatment rooms.

The pilates equipment has been supplied by Stott Pilates, with the remainder of the therapy equipment and functional fitness accessories supplied by ProActive Health, PowerBlock and GoFit.

Onslow, who also owns and operates distribution companies ProActive Health and Pilates Solutions, has invested around £200,000 in the design and build of the facility.

Onslow says: "A key to the success of mbodies is going to



The new venue will offer a range of pilates in five separate rooms

be our effectiveness in getting interested prospects to understand that the pilates we teach is miles apart from most people's perception of pilates – a sedentary group of ladies lying on mats in a room performing yoga-style exercises.

"The mbodies brand is new and develops the Active Pilates studio concept of pilates-only

exercise studios located in Oxford, Central London and Southampton."

There are no memberships at mbodies, with customers attending each session on a pay as you go basis.

Onslow has set a target of attracting 250 regular class-based customers during the first year of operation. Details: [www.mbodies.co.uk](http://www.mbodies.co.uk)

### Heworth work "on schedule"

Work has got underway on the construction of the new Heworth Leisure Centre in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear.

When complete, the complex will be home to the North East England's first indoor boarding facility, as well as a 25m swimming pool, a learner pool and toddlers pool.

A fitness gym, a multi-purpose room and changing facilities for outdoor sports are also planned for Heworth Leisure Centre, which is due to open in summer 2010 to replace the outdated Felling Pool.

## Nottingham complex topped out

By **Pete Hayman**

A new £6.44m leisure complex currently under construction in Hyson Green, Nottingham, has reached the topping out stage.

A 50-station fitness suite equipped by Technogym and a multi-activity studio are among the facilities at the centre, which is being built on the Djanogly City Academy Nottingham site to replace the city's Noel Street Leisure Centre.

The scheme, part of Nottingham City Council's (NCC) £32m Leisure Centre Transformation Programme to improve the city's sports provision, will also include a 25m swimming pool, a sauna and steamroom and changing facilities.



A 50-station fitness suite will be among the centre's facilities

Funding for the new centre, which has been designed by Archial Architects and is being built by ISG Regions, has been provided by NCC along with a £2.2m contribution from the Neighbourhood Development Company and a £1m grant from Sport England's Swim Modernisation Programme.



## Refurbished facility reopens in Syston

A fitness suite and a dance studio have been created as part of a £3.1m scheme

By **Pete Hayman**

South Charnwood Swimming Pool in Syston, Leicestershire, has reopened following the completion of a £3.1m refurbishment of the facility.

A new 45-station, 150sq m (1,615sq ft) health and fitness studio equipped by Life Fitness, as well as two Octane Fitness stepping machines, has been created as part of the scheme.

Work has also included a new dance studio, dry side changing rooms and the refurbishment of the reception area. The complex's swimming pool has also received a new roof.

All of the leisure centre's heating, electrical and filtration plants have been replaced as part of the nine-month scheme,



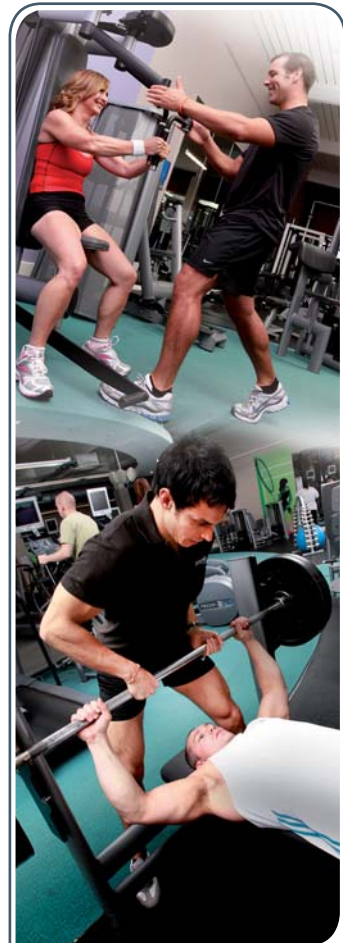
**Life Fitness has equipped the site's new 45-station fitness studio**

funded by Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) and carried out by contractor GF Tomlinson

CBC leader Mike Preston said: "The new facilities at South Charnwood Leisure Centre are the culmination of many months of hard work and

dedication from council officers and the building contractor.

"The new facility has to be seen to be believed and will provide vital opportunities for residents in the south of the borough to improve their health and wellbeing."



## Council funding boost for Carn Brea refurbishment

By **Pete Hayman**

New eco-friendly technology is to be installed as part of a revamp at Carn Brea Leisure Centre in Redruth after the local authority agreed to invest £480,000 in the scheme.

Cornwall Council's decision means a three-phase refurbishment can now get underway at the charity-run facility, which will include a new canopy over the entrance and improvements to the changing facilities.



**Carn Brea first opened in 1973**

New boilers, air handling units, electrical systems and a high-efficiency water system

will be installed as part of the first phase of work to reduce the centre's day-to-day costs.

Visual improvements, such as the new canopy and improved signage, will form the second stage, while the third includes an overhaul of the swimming pool's changing village.

Carn Brea Leisure Centre is run by an independent charitable trust and governed by a board of trustees. The refurbishment is expected to be completed by March 2010.

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## BMF launches new membership initiative for teenagers

British Military Fitness (BMF) has unveiled new membership rates for people under the age of 21 to tackle inactivity among teenagers.

The fitness provider has reported a 75 per cent increase in the number of people joining its under 21 scheme, which offers a monthly fee of £25 in London and £20 elsewhere.

BMF marketing manager Barney Larkin said: "We decided to introduce a membership rate for under 21s allowing more youngsters to take part in our classes.

"With the growing issue of obesity, it is essential that we encourage everyone to adopt a healthier lifestyle."

## IN BRIEF

### M&B issues warning over VAT increase

► Pub operator Mitchells and Butlers (M&B) has warned that the planned VAT increase in January could have an impact on growth in 2010 as consumer spending is cut back. The company has said that it expects full-year earnings to surpass industry estimates for the year ending 26 September 2009, after reporting a 2.6 per cent increase in like-for-like sales in the 10 weeks to 19 September 2009.

### New research into Scottish alcohol plans

► A new report, commissioned by the Scottish Government, has revealed that plans to introduce minimum pricing for alcohol could reduce consumption by 5.4 per cent. Research published by the University of Sheffield has concluded that using an example minimum price of 40p per unit of alcohol, together with a ban on off-sales promotions, could also save the NHS a total of £21m each year. A team led by Dr Petra Meier conducted the research, which examined more than 20 policy scenarios based on the proposed measures the Scottish Government is looking to implement to tackle alcohol-related illnesses and crime

### Property sales boost Arsenal results

► Arsenal Holdings has revealed the sale of private apartments as part of the Highbury Square project helped the company report record profits for the year ending 31 May 2009. The company, which owns Arsenal Football Club (AFC), posted profits after tax of £35.2m, compared with £25.7m for the previous year. Property sales totalled £88m, boosting the club's annual revenue. AFC's matchday revenue increased by to £100.1m during the period.

## Racing worth "billions" to UK economy

Research shows UK horse racing generated at least £325m in tax during 2008

By **Pete Hayman**

New research by Deloitte's Sports Business Group has revealed that horse racing is currently the second largest sport in Britain behind football, worth £3.7bn to the economy.

According to the professional services firm's latest Economic Impact Study, UK horse racing generated expenditure of £3.4bn during 2008, when compared with £2.8bn in 2005, while the sector contributed at least £325m in tax revenue.

The study is the second of its kind to be produced for the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) by Deloitte, which revealed that the UK's total betting amount on horse racing is the second highest in the world, behind Japan.

Alan Switzer, director at Deloitte's Sports Business Group, said: "Like all sports, racing faces a significant challenge as



**British gamblers are the second highest spenders in world racing**

a result of the downturn. While sport is certainly not immune from its effects we have seen an encouraging resilience across many sports.

"Many of the metrics in this report are likely to experience declines in 2009, but we are confident the sport has the ability to bounce back once economic conditions improve."

Nic Coward, BHA chief executive, added: "Deloitte's

study reiterates that British Horseracing, as the second biggest sporting activity in Britain, is a significant contributor to the leisure, agricultural and rural economies in Britain."

"Our sport is of enormous value to Britain, and while we face challenges, there are opportunities racing must take which can ensure our standing and importance within Britain can be maintained."

### DCMS unveils licensing plans

Pubs, clubs and voluntary organisations that want to sell alcohol, stage live music or arts events may soon be able to apply for licences online.

Measures put forward by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport include a simplified online application process, which could save the industry around £1.5m.

Temporary Events Notice applications will be made available online as part of the plans, which will be subject to a six-week consultation on the system due to come into force in January 2010.

## Powerleague acquired for £42m

By **Luke Tuchscherer**

Powerleague, the UK's largest operator of five-a-side football facilities, has agreed to a £42m takeover offer.

The company, which currently owns 43 centres across Britain, is set to be acquired by Patron Sports Leisure, a division of private equity group Patron Capital – which already holds a 29 per cent stake and is Powerleague's biggest shareholder.

Executive chair, Claude Littner, known for his appearances on BBC Television's *The Apprentice* alongside former Amstrad colleague Alan Sugar, will receive £2.6m for his 6.1 per cent stake.



**Powerleague owns 43 five-a-side football centres in the UK**

Powerleague was formed in 1999 after merger of Powerplay Soccer Centres and Anchor International, both investee companies of the 3i Group.

Littner led a management buyout of 3i in 2003, while Powerleague gained an Alternative Investment Market (AIM) listing in 2005.



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## IN BRIEF

### US tycoon increases Arsenal FC stake

► Stan Kroenke, the billionaire businessman behind the group which owns a number of US sports teams, has increased his stake in Arsenal Football Club to 28.7 per cent. Earlier this year, Kroenke strengthened his position on the board of directors with a 20.5 per cent stake in the London-based Premier League club after acquiring 5,000 shares from Danny Fiszman in a deal worth £42.5m. However, the tycoon has increased his stake by a further 8.2 per cent after purchasing 80 ordinary shares for £680,000.

### Hyde United handed High Court reprieve

► Hyde United Football Club has been successful in its appeal against the High Court's decision to wind the club up over unpaid tax debts on 24 September. Despite producing evidence that it could pay £122,000 in petition debt owed to HM Revenue and Customs, the High Court refused to grant the club a final adjournment for more time to meet the total owed. However, the Blue Square North team has announced that it is back in business after successfully appealing against the decision.

### Cambridge swimming pool revamp underway

► Construction work has started on a £310,000 refurbishment scheme at Abbey Swimming Pool in Cambridge in order to modernise the centre's facilities. The five-week project will include separate male and female showering facilities and larger lockers, while the centre's existing all-weather pitch will be relaid by Tiger Turf. New portable weighted goals and team shelters will also be provided as part of work to upgrade the all-weather pitch.

## New scheme to target deprived areas

Sport England announces two-year funding plans to increase sports participation

By **Pete Hayman**

Sport England plans to invest £680,000 in StreetGames over the next two years to make sport more accessible to young people from disadvantaged communities across the country.

A new strategic partnership aims to help the charity to build on the work it has carried out in areas of social deprivation since its launch in 2007, providing coaches, community sports leaders and volunteers to increase opportunities.

Sport England's support will enable StreetGames to form ties with 10 county sports partnerships over the next 12 months, and a further 20 in the second year, to get a million more people playing sport and



The scheme will target people from disadvantaged backgrounds

establish a lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympics.

Links between existing StreetGames projects and mainstream club participation will be strengthened using Sport England funding, with the charity committed to

working with at least six national governing bodies in the first year of the partnership and 14 by the end of year two.

StreetGames will also help to connect 'doorstep sport' with mainstream sports clubs and talent development schemes.

## Construction work starts on Bridgwater complex

By **Pete Hayman**

Work has got underway on a new £4.3m youth facility in Bridgwater, Somerset, which is being funded through the government's myplace initiative and will provide a new home for Bridgwater YMCA.

Construction firm Pollards has been appointed to deliver the youth centre, which has been designed by architects Smith Gamblin and is expected to take 62 weeks to complete.



Plans include a new sports hall

A public consultation helped to determine the facilities to be offered by the centre, which

will include a café, a multi-use sports hall with skate ramps and an IFI-accredited fitness suite equipped by Technogym.

A sprung-floor dance studio, an under-16s football pitch, a floodlit multi-use games area and conference, meeting and office space are also included.

The centre will offer activities to provide young people with a "place to go" in Bridgwater, while offering advice and support for those who are seeking other local activities.

## Bradshaw: Conservatives would "decimate" sport

Culture secretary Ben Bradshaw has claimed that sport and culture would be "decimated" if the Conservative Party is victorious at the next general election.

Speaking at the Labour party conference in Brighton, Bradshaw stated that a Conservative administration would turn sport and culture into luxuries that would no longer be available to all.

Addressing delegates at the conference, Bradshaw said: "Remember what the Tories did to Britain's sports, culture and the arts? They considered them luxuries to be paid for by those who can afford them. For us, they are a common good for all."



# £1bn Trump golf resort plans unveiled

Designs for the US tycoon's new Aberdeenshire development have been revealed

By **Helen Patenall**

Gareth Hoskins Architects have unveiled the designs for Donald Trump's £1bn golf resort in Aberdeenshire.

The Trump International Golf Links Scotland complex on the Menie Estate near Balmedie is set to include two 18-hole golf courses designed by golf architect Martin Hawtree, which will be separated by a clubhouse open to guests and visitors, a caddyshack and a short-game practice area, as well as a driving range.

Additional recreational activities at the resort will include an equestrian centre, an archery range and a tennis facility. The accommodation offering will comprise a 450-bedroom hotel with a



**The resort will boast two 18-hole golf courses and a driving range**

conference centre and a spa overlooking the sea, adjacent to 950 new holiday apartments and golf villas.

A residential village, based around a central square with shops, cafes, pubs and playgrounds, will also be open to residents and visitors alike.

In December, the proposals were granted outline planning approval by the Scottish Government following a public inquiry into the proposals, which were initially refused by Aberdeenshire Council in 2007 as a result of strong opposition from local residents.

## IN BRIEF

### Football scheme to tackle 'male cancers'

▶ A new pilot scheme targeted at football supporters has been launched by the Department of Health to raise awareness of symptoms relating to 'male' cancers. Health secretary Andy Burnham unveiled the one-year 'Ahead of the Game – Organise Your Defence' initiative at Portsmouth Football Club, which will be co-ordinated by the Football Foundation to help tackle cases of lung, bowel and prostate cancer in men.

### Notts County reveals new investors

▶ Two members of the trust which acquired Notts County Football Club (NCFC) during the summer have been revealed by the club after media speculation into their identities. The Shafi and Hyat families have been named as major shareholders in the Qadbak company, which boasts an investment portfolio across the natural resource, heavy industry and logistics sectors. A spokesperson for NCFC said: "Until now we have tried to respect the wish for privacy of our investors. But the confusion and misplaced allegations of the last few days have forced us to ask them to reveal themselves."

### First clubs receive Cash4Clubs grants

▶ Cash4Clubs, a scheme that gives money to grassroots sport, has named the 15 clubs that will receive grants in the first round of funding since it was launched nationally. Funded by online betting company Betfair and SportsAid, awards of up to £1,000 are handed out on a quarterly basis, with bids judged by an independent committee. The panel received more than 2,000 applications in the first round, of which 15 clubs were given awards totalling £10,000.

## Council gives SAFC more time

Stirling Council has announced that Stirling Albion Football Club (SAFC) has been handed more time to pay more than a year's worth of unpaid rent on the Forthbank Stadium.

The council revealed that it has given until the end of November to make "satisfactory progress" in paying £67,000 owed by the club, after reaffirming its commitment to pursue the rent arrears.

Although negotiations are continuing with the current owner of SAFC, Stirling Council is also seeking to terminate the existing lease on the stadium, which has been in place since 1993 but currently restricts the way the venue is run.

## BOA secures major sponsorship



**GB Olympians and Paralympians will be sponsored by Visa in 2012**

By **Pete Hayman**

The British Olympic Association (BOA) has secured a major multi-million pound deal with credit card company Visa to sponsor the British Olympic and Paralympic teams in 2012.

Team 2012, which comprises around 1,200 elite performers across 47 sports and disciplines, is the result of a partnership between the BOA, the British Paralympic Association, the

London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games and UK Sport.

It is hoped that the sponsorship of Team 2012, one of the largest national teams to secure such a deal, will also secure support for eight sports that had funding cut by UK Sport as a result of a £50m black hole.

Visa will also support UK Sport's World Class Performance Programme to prepare athletes ahead of London 2012.

## IN BRIEF

### Britannia Hospitality acquires Stafford Hotel

► Daniel Thwaites, the Lancashire-based pub and hotel operator, has completed the sale of the Stafford Hotel in St James' Place, London, to privately-held family group, Britannia Hospitality. Britannia Hospitality, which is currently owned by the Egypt-based El Sharkawy family, has acquired the hotel through Stafford Hotel Limited (SHL) in a £77.5m deal, including repayment of debts owed by SHL to Thwaites. Thwaites, which operated the Stafford Hotel under the Shire Hotels brand since 1995, announced in June that it was prepared to consider offloading the London property after it received offers from a number of prospective buyers.

### AA Hospitality Award winners unveiled

► The winners of the AA Hospitality Awards 2009-2010 have been announced at a ceremony at the London Hilton on Park Lane. The awards are designed to recognise the services provided by the best AA-inspected and rated hotels, restaurants and pubs throughout the UK. The AA Lifetime Achievement Award went to Raymond Blanc OBE, chef-patron of Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons in Oxfordshire, while the AA Chefs' Chef of the Year was revealed to be Marcus Wareing. After nine years as chef-patron of Pétrus, since September 2008 he has run the restaurant as Marcus Wareing at The Berkeley and achieved five AA Rosettes. The AA Hotel Group of the Year award went to von Essen hotels, which owns properties across the UK and France, while the AA Small Hotel Group of the Year was Exclusive Hotels, a family owned hotel group comprising mansions, manor houses, country homes, a spa and two golf courses.

## Hotel chain and pub group join forces

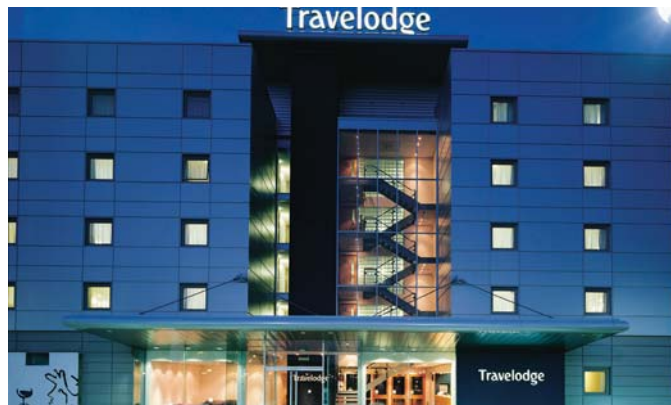
Travelodge and Marston's unveil joint venture to pursue development opportunities

By **Pete Hayman**

Budget hotel chain Travelodge and pub group Marston's have launched a new joint venture in a bid to meet the development needs of both companies.

The pair have completed the exchange on a joint development at Wincanton, Somerset, which will see the construction of a 57-bed Travelodge hotel next to a 6,500sq ft (603.9sq m) Marston's pub restaurant.

The joint venture will enable the companies to pursue more schemes in high-profile A-road locations in suburban and out-of-town areas, with a further two sites around 1 acre (0.4 hectares) in size set to be secured by the end of 2009. It is hoped 10 more sites will be secured in 2010.



The partnership will look to develop sites in suburban locations

Paul Harvey, managing director for development at Travelodge, said: "By co-locating with Marston's, we will be able to develop sites which would not have been viable for ourselves alone.

"With an ever-increasing number of business customers

staying with us, to compliment our city centre growth we are also looking for opportunities near to out-of-town areas.

"Given that these also tend to be near new residential developments there is perfect synergy between our requirements and those of Marston's."

### von Essen nets Forbury Hotel

The Forbury Hotel in Reading, which went into administration earlier this year, has been acquired by von Essen Hotels.

The five-star hotel, which was built in 1911 and has 23 rooms and suites over four floors, will become the first property to launch under the new Metropolitan brand.

The Forbury Hotel also features a 30-seat private cinema, a restaurant and a brasserie and bar.

Andrew Davis, von Essen chair, said: "A key objective for the collection is to acquire properties in the UK's principal cities and The Forbury is a fitting first hotel in this set and a valuable addition to our portfolio."

## Radisson Blu opens Bristol hotel



Rezidor's new Bristol property boasts 176 bedrooms and a library

By **Tom Walker**

The Rezidor Hotel Group has launched its 15th Radisson Blu hotel in the UK – the new-build Radisson Blu Hotel, Bristol.

Located on Broad Quay in the centre of the city, the 176-room hotel's facilities include a library and a lobby bar on the ground floor.

A Filini-branded restaurant will be available to guests on the first floor of the hotel, while

a dedicated meeting and events area on the second floor will be capable of seating 100 delegates theatre-style or 70 delegates for a dinner dance.

"This new Bristol property is a great addition to our Radisson Blu portfolio in the UK and a significant opening in the South West, complementing the new Radisson Blu in Cardiff which opened in the summer," said Mark Willis, regional director of Radisson Blu UK.





Legislation will now mean that staff have to be paid wages in full

## New tipping rules implemented

BHA believes measures cost cost firms up to £130m

By **Martin Nash**

New rules which make it illegal for the operators of bars, restaurants and hotels to make up staff wages using service charges, or money received as tips, have come into force.

Previously it was legal to calculate tips as part of the National Minimum Wage (NMW), but the new legislation means that staff now have to be paid their wages in full, attracting National Insurance liability on the whole amount.

Business secretary Lord Mandelson, said: "When I leave

a tip I don't expect it to be used to make up the minimum wage. I want it to go to the person who has served me."

However, the British Hospitality Association (BHA) believes that the changes will involve an additional £130m in National Insurance costs.

BHA's Bob Cotton, responding to government claims that in real terms the legislation could also mean one person per restaurant losing their job, said: "One person's job may not sound a lot. But potentially that's quite a lot of jobs in these difficult circumstances."

## Globe reports £200m loss in Q1

The Globe Pub Company, the tenanted pub operator owned by Robert Tchenguiz, has reported a first quarter loss of £200m.

The group blamed the loss on a £199.1m impairment charge for the 12 months to 21 May 2008. An impairment charge reflects the difference between the value of an asset in the accounts and its actual worth, and a review of the company's estate valued it at

£160m. However, Tchenguiz acquired 364 pubs from Spirit in 2004 for £345m.

In the three months to 31 August 2009, Globe reported a £800,000 decrease in rental income to £2.8m.

A spokesperson for Globe said: "This is reflective of current market conditions and a clear indication of the increased level of support we are offering to our lessees during this time."

## Cutting room rates could secure survival

The likely demise of corporate travel means we have to look at ways to ensure revenue

In the last 12 months, hoteliers have had to cope with a recession that has reduced corporate spend rather more than leisure spend.

In fact, spend on trips by UK businesses has been falling steadily for the last four years – from £5.2bn in 2005 to £4.5bn in 2008. Early results for 2009 show a further decline – in the first four months, the number of business trips dropped by 13 per cent compared to the first four months of 2008. This has been partly offset by the rising corporate spend of overseas visitors – up from £4bn in 2005 to £4.6bn in 2008 – but, again, the figures for 2009 are looking gloomy. They have dropped in the first quarter by 26 per cent in terms of number and 15 per cent in spend.

The value of the conference meetings market has also dropped – by 11 per cent in 2008 with little evidence to show that there has been an upturn in 2009.

Hoteliers have to face up to this challenge. Already, the bottom has dropped out of the corporate market for many hotels. At a time of rising unemployment, with businesses cutting costs, corporate spend is especially vulnerable and not even the budget sector has been immune.

And here's a thought: as the political parties manoeuvre before the general election, the cutbacks in public spending have hardly yet begun.

How much the government and other public agencies spend on hotel accommodation, meetings and conferences is not precisely known but a conservative guess would probably pitch it at over £1bn. A significant proportion of that is certain to disappear as the next government tackles the huge public sector finance overspend it faces.

The answer is for these hotels to attack the leisure market. But the leisure market although – at £11bn – it is twice as big at the business market, is also under pressure. However, holidays are part of modern lifestyle and short holidays are on the rise and now worth almost £6bn a year – more than long holidays. It is this sector that is undoubtedly the most attractive for hotels today.

Therefore, prices may have to be cut in order to generate revenue, even if this is at the expense of margin. Such price cutting will affect profitability but, more importantly, it may well ensure survival.



**BOB COTTON** is chief executive of the BHA. *Leisure Opportunities* is a member benefit of the BHA

**IN BRIEF**

**Surf museum receives charity boost**

► Plans for the creation of the Museum of British Surfing in Braunton, North Devon have received a boost after the Charity Commission approved the attraction's application to become a registered charity. A purpose-built facility, which will be home to one of Europe's first permanent surfing museums, is poised to open next summer after the proposals received planning permission from North Devon District Council.

**Horseracing museum granted funding**

► A £10.3m attraction called The Home of Horseracing is to be built in Newmarket, thanks to a final cash injection of £1m being allocated to the project by Suffolk County Council. Between 2011 and 2015, the Forest Heath District Council-owned Palace House and Stables situated in the centre of Newmarket will be refurbished to accommodate a museum, an art gallery and a study centre presenting the history of the thoroughbred horse and sport in Great Britain.

**Final stage of Tudor House revamp starts**

► Work has got underway on the last stage of a multi-million pound scheme to restore and preserve Southampton's Tudor House attraction. Birmingham-based Linford Construction has been appointed to carry out the work on the second phase of the project, which is scheduled to take 18 months to complete and includes new visitor facilities, displays and exhibitions. A new lift will be installed to make the first floor accessible to disabled visitors. The scheme is being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which contributed £3.5m, and a £1.8m investment by Southampton City Council.

# **Farnham Castle nets HLF funding**

Ancient monument to be redeveloped to accommodate more visitors

By **Pete Hayman**

The final phase of a restoration scheme at Farnham Castle in Surrey has been handed more than £700,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Built in 1138 by a grandson of William the Conqueror, Farnham Castle has been designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and will now undergo work to open up its history to a wider audience.

Funding will be used to complete the much-needed restoration of the main Bishop's Palace, including the castle walls, the Grade II-listed stable block, the gatehouse block and the south range.

The castle's Keep will also be upgraded with the installation of new interpretation boards and improved safety railings, while it will also be united with the Bishop's Palace under



**The castle is a designated monument and dates back 1138**

single management for the first time in its 900-year history.

A programme of activities is also set to be implemented, including a Heritage in Action room to explore the castle's history and a scheme to recognise the site's role during the Second World War.

The scheme is scheduled for completion in spring 2010, with Farnham Castle, which

manages the Bishop's Palace, set to take over the running of the Keep from English Heritage in a bid to create a unified vision for visitor development.

Jeremy Hunt, Conservative member of parliament for South West Surrey, said: "A newly refurbished castle will attract more people to the town and other traders can look forward to benefiting."

## **Blackstone acquires Busch parks**

By **Luke Tuchscherer**

Private equity giant Blackstone has reached an agreement with Anheuser-Busch InBev to acquire 10 major US attractions - including the SeaWorld and Busch Gardens chains - for US\$2.7bn (£1.69bn).

The deal includes the SeaWorld parks in Orlando, San Antonio and San Diego, two Busch Gardens parks in Tampa and Williamsburg and other family attractions across the US.

The parks fall under Anheuser-Busch's wholly-owned subsidiary, Busch Entertainment Corporation.

The deal is comprised of a cash payment of US\$2.3bn and a right to participate in Blackstone's return on its initial



**The deal includes the Sea World portfolio of parks**

investment, capped at US\$400m (£250m).

Blackstone already owns Merlin Entertainments, the second largest visitor attraction operator in the world. According to Blackstone, the Busch portfolio will be operated separately to Merlin and there are currently no plans to merge the operations of the two.

## **POW attraction put up for sale**

Owners of a former prisoner of war (POW) camp attraction in County Durham, have put it up for sale on internet auction site eBay after running out of funds to pay for the site's restoration.

Harperley POW Camp was initially established in 1943 to house Italian prisoners of war, although Italian prisoners were dispersed to make way for German prisoners deemed to be of low security risk in 1944.

The 10-acre (4-hectare) site comprises 49 huts, including a theatre with a stage and auditorium, and a canteen featuring painted wall panels showing typical German scenes.

English Heritage awarded the former camp Ancient Monument status in 2002.



## Work starts on new RWCMD complex

New £22.5m training and performance facility planned for Cardiff arts institution

By **Pete Hayman**

Work has started on the construction of a new £22.5m arts training and performance complex for the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD) in Cardiff.

Willmott Dixon has been appointed to lead the development of the facility, which has been designed by Hamiltons architects and is set to feature a 450-seat concert hall and a 160-seat courtyard theatre.

An exhibition gallery and drama rehearsal studios will also form part of the new centre, which will see the drama wing and concert hall, together with the existing Bute Theatre linked by a public space under a unifying roof.



The centre will boast a 450-seat concert hall and rehearsal space

RWCMD has received £10m Welsh Assembly Government funding towards the scheme, which was approved by Cardiff Council in September 2008.

College principal Hilary Boulding said: "This development will allow the college to

greatly expand on its range of performances and activities, as well as our interaction with creative industries."

The college will remain open throughout the duration of the construction process, which is due to be completed in 2011.

### IN BRIEF

#### Arts scheme to close to new applicants

► Arts Council England (ACE) has announced that its Sustain initiative, set up to help arts organisations during the recession, will close to new applicants on 9 October. The news comes as a further 16 funding applications have been approved by ACE as part of the programme, which will see an extra £40m invested in the arts over the next two years.

#### Work starts on new Bodleian facility

► A groundbreaking ceremony has marked the start of construction work on a new book storage facility for the Bodleian Library on the outskirts of Swindon, Wiltshire. Oxford University has acquired a 15-acre (6.1-hectare) site at South Marston for the building, which will house eight million volumes of the library's low-demand items. The work forms part of a wider scheme at the New Bodleian Library in Oxford, which will be refurbished when the new facility is complete to provide a special collections library and exhibition galleries.

#### Government launches first year of music

► Schools secretary Ed Balls has launched the inaugural National Year of Music to encourage more schools and local authorities to get more children involved with music by 2011. The Department for Children, Schools and Families is aiming to give more than two million primary school pupils the opportunity to learn a musical instrument within the next two years. Events will take place over the coming year to promote the initiative, which is being backed by investment worth £330m in music both inside and outside the classroom to reach more young people.

## Minister officially unveils revamped Derry venue

By **Pete Hayman**

Northern Ireland arts minister Nelson McCausland has reopened the Waterside Theatre in Derry, following the completion of a £1.2m revamp.

Work included a major extension to the theatre, which now includes a new pavilion; a rehearsal room; a new foyer and a new entrance and box office and exhibition space.

Built in a converted factory, the theatre boasts a 372-seat



The refurbishment cost £1.2m

auditorium and a full-screen cinema, hosting a range of arts, drama and live music events.

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure contributed £800,000 towards the scheme, while the Arts Council for Northern Ireland, Ilex through the NW Cultural Challenge Fund and the Local Strategy Partnership also helped to fund the refurbishment.

McCausland said: "Londonderry needs a facility like the Waterside Theatre which I am sure will have a positive impact on the lives of both local people and visitors alike."

## Mayor refutes Labour museum admission charge claim

London mayor Boris Johnson has rejected claims made by culture secretary Ben Bradshaw that he advocates the return of admission charges for the city's museums and galleries.

Speaking at the Labour party conference, Bradshaw suggested that Johnson "let the cat out the bag when he advocated charging for

museums" in a speech regarding the future of arts and culture in the capital.

However, Johnson said the culture secretary was "deliberately misrepresenting" the views he expressed when addressing delegates from the arts, business and public sectors at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London last month.

## IN BRIEF

### NI Forestry Bill puts focus on recreation

► The Northern Ireland Assembly have approved the second stage of a new Forestry Bill, which has been drawn up with an emphasis on the recreational potential of the country's forests. Introduced by agriculture minister Michelle Gildernew in June, the main principles of the proposed legislation have been approved by members after general debate and a vote on the proposals.

### Consultation into Nottingham park plans

► Nottingham City Council has launched a public consultation over plans to turn the Victoria Embankment into a riverside park as part of a wider scheme to improve flood defences. Initial designs for the park incorporate four zones – play; community and sport; heritage and performance, which are set to include a playground, a sports pavilion, upgraded pitches, a café and a performance area. A community garden could also be created as part of the proposals, which will complement an Environment Agency-led scheme to construct new flood defences along the Victoria Embankment.

### Work starts on Norwich gardens renovation

► Work has started on a £2.6m revamp of the Memorial Gardens in Norwich, which closed in 2004 after faults were found with the site's supporting structure. Funding has been provided as part of a collaboration between Norwich City Council and the Homes and Communities Agency, the government's regeneration agency. The building on which the Memorial Gardens is situated will benefit from much-needed repair work and the structure's roof will be replaced as part of the project, while stone finishes and gardens will be upgraded.

## WTS opposes £1.3bn resort scheme

Plans for Loch Rannoch site include two golf courses and a 105-room hotel

By **Pete Hayman**

Part of an ancient Caledonian forest in Perthshire, Scotland, could be destroyed if plans for a £1.3bn resort development are given the green light, according to the Woodland Trust Scotland (WTS).

The BBC reported that Dall Estate and M James Developments have submitted plans to Perth and Kinross Council to build a private members club next to Loch Rannoch, including a 104-suite hotel, two golf courses and a health spa.

However, WTS said that the plans – if approved – could lead to the loss of 160 hectares (395.4 acres) of historic forest, while a further 240 hectares (593.1 acres) of associated woodland would also be at risk from the development.



The trust is concerned about the potential loss of an ancient forest

The South Rannoch woodland was formed at the end of the last Ice Age and is thought to be one of the last remaining wildernesses across the British Isles, boasting rare eco-systems and wildlife habitats.

According to WTS, the loss of woodland could cover an area the size of London's Regent's

Park and will threaten wildlife species such as the capercaillie.

Andrew Fairbairn, WTS policy and communications manager, said: "The proposals will effectively pour concrete over this habitat, destroying the valuable wildlife within and isolating the Black Wood of Rannoch even further."

## Preparatory work starts on new Bradford City Park

By **Pete Hayman**

Preparatory work has started ahead of the development of a new £24.4m city park designed to transform the centre of Bradford, West Yorkshire.

The 6-acre (2.4-hectare) park is set to be centred around a 4,200sq m (45,200sq ft) mirror pool, boasting causeways and a series of fountains reaching 30m (98.4ft) in height.

Minor highway and public transport alterations have been made by Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC) to allow construction work to start, while the footbridge over Hall Ings will also be demolished.

Plans for Bradford City Park also include green spaces, public art, relaxation and play areas, while the park can be drained in order to provide



The £24.4m park can be drained in order to stage public events

space for public events with a capacity of 10,000 people.

Adrian Naylor, executive member for regeneration and economy for BMDC, said: "The City Park is a key pedestrian route through the city and accessible meeting place for everyone. It's important we create a traffic-free space and improve links across the city."

The scheme is being funded by BMDC, Yorkshire Forward, the Homes and Communities Agency and the Regional Transport Board.

The park is expected to attract 2.2 million visits each year, bringing an extra £80m annually to the local economy, according to an independent report by Locum Consulting.



# leisure property news

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## £40m MK casino project approved

X Leisure's plans for mixed-use scheme include regional casino and large hotel

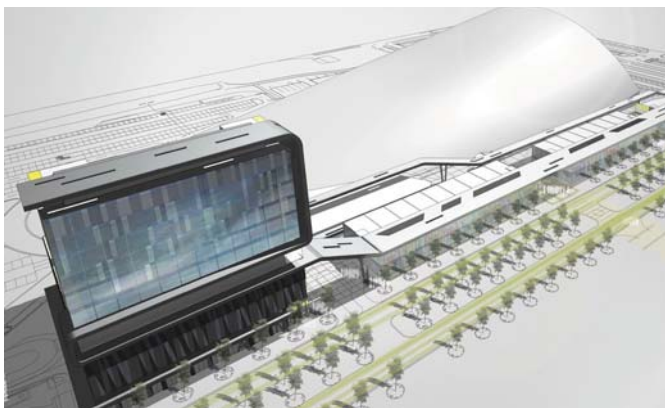
By Tom Walker

Leisure group X Leisure's plans for a £40m retail and leisure scheme in Milton Keynes has been awarded outline planning consent by the local authority.

Milton Keynes Council has approved revised plans for the scheme, which will be located adjacent to its existing Xscape venue and is set to include a 64,153sq ft (5,960sq m) casino, a hotel, bars and restaurants.

A public realm and 50,000sq ft (4,645sq m) of niche retail units have also been included as part of the plans, which were altered due to concerns over the retail impact and proposed height of the building.

Revisions to the plans have included reducing the maximum height of the proposed hotel to 40.3m (132.2ft), and X



The scheme will be located adjacent to the existing Xscape facility

Leisure chief executive PY Gerbeau told *Leisure Opportunities* that the company aims to ensure the project has a positive impact on the town.

Gerbeau said: "The next stage of the project is working with the local authorities, getting the PR right and getting everyone involved.

"We do not want a wart on the landscape. We do not want something that doesn't look good or will not trade well, compared with Xscape."

However, Gerbeau said that plans for the hotel element are dependent on securing the large casino licence awarded to the town by the government.

### IN BRIEF

#### Tredegar House set for Ryder Cup upgrade

► Plans to upgrade car parking facilities at Tredegar House, which will be used as a park and ride location during the 2010 Ryder Cup, have been given the green light by Newport City Council. The attraction's car park will be extended and resurfaced as part of the Welsh Assembly Government-funded scheme, while a new coach area will also be created to ensure the house benefits from improvements being made in the city ahead of next year's golf tournament.

#### Trust to lead Peter Pan restoration scheme

► The proposed redevelopment of the Moat Brae property in Dumfries, which provided author JM Barrie with the inspiration for Peter Pan, has taken a step forward. Loreburn Housing Association has announced that it has reached a deal with the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust, which will see the trust take forward the refurbishment of the site. Plans for Moat Brae include a visitor centre and the restoration of gardens as part of efforts to mark the birthplace of Peter Pan.

#### Rethink for Carlyon Bay leisure resort?

► Developers behind a multi-million pound beach resort at Carlyon Bay in Cornwall are reported to be looking at ways to get the project moving again. Planning permission for the complex was granted in 1991 and sea defences were built to protect the scheme, which was halted in 2007 when a request by developers Ampersand to upgrade the defences was turned down by Cornwall Council.

## Swansea set for £38m overhaul

By Pete Hayman

City centre and waterfront areas in Swansea are set to undergo a major £38m transformation after a £28m funding package for the scheme was approved by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The package includes £20m from the European Regional Development Fund and will go towards Swansea Council's Waterfront City initiative.

Plans include a landmark European-style boulevard along the Oystermouth Road, Victoria Road and Quay Parade corridor to improve links between the city centre and the waterfront.



Plans include a new boulevard

Public realm enhancements, including footpaths, cycleways, street furniture and street art also form part of the proposed boulevard, which will eventually extend from the Tawe Road bridge to the east of the city to the Civic Centre in the west.

### FA counts cost of Wembley

Wembley Stadium's first full year of operation cost the Football Association (FA) £86.6m, according to *The Guardian* newspaper.

The FA's financial report to 31 December 2008 showed that stadium and event management cost £83.8m. The total was hampered by £39m in interest payments on the debt taken on to build the stadium. When added to capital repayments of £11.8m, the total costs incurred totalled £134.6m, leading to a net cost to the FA of £86.6m.

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## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

**FOR THE DESIGN OF A FULL SIZE 3RD GENERATION ARTIFICIAL TURF PITCH, INCLUDING THE DESIGN OF AN ACCESS SCHEME**

**Closing Date: 17:00 on Friday 27th November 2009**

Cannock Chase District Council invites expressions of interest from suitably experienced and qualified organisations who wish to be considered for the above project.

It should be noted that this is a "design and project management commission" only, and includes both the design of the Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP), with appropriate lighting and fencing, and also the design of a DDA compliant Access Scheme, e.g. access road, access path, and car parking facility. The successful organisation is additionally required to provide a full project management service for the entire project, i.e. for the design phase of the project and also for the construction phase of the project.

A separate contract will be procured at a later date for construction works.

Organisations wishing to express an interest must do so by completing a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire. PQQs will be available with effect from **Thursday 22 October 2009** and must be returned as a hard copy to arrive no later than **17:00 on Friday 27th November 2009**.

PQQs can be obtained either by sending an e-mail to [strategicprojects@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:strategicprojects@cannockchasedc.gov.uk) or by writing to the following address:

**Cannock Chase District Council, Civic Centre, PO Box 28, Beecroft Road, Cannock, Staffordshire, WS11 1BG**

Contact Officer: **Mike Edmonds**, by E-mail only, via the e-mail address given above.

tel 01543 462621

[www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk](http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk)

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

### REMODELED BOWLS PAVILION AT PADDINGTON RECREATION GROUND

Westminster City Council is seeking Expressions of Interests (EOI's) from suitably experienced and qualified companies who wish to be considered for selection to tender for the following project.

**Summary of Works:** Applications are invited from suitably experienced and qualified companies who wish to be considered for selection to tender for the remodelling and extensive refurbishment of a single-storey Bowls Pavilion building to create a flexible space for meetings, training courses and activities.

**Contractor Requirements:** The contractor will need to have experience in similar projects and wide ranging operative skill base to achieve the various elements of the contract e.g. demolition, M & E plant and equipment, internal fit out.

**Interested parties are asked to submit EOI's to include their:**

- Company name, address, contact name and registration number
- Company bankers name and account number
- 3 years Audited Accounts including profit and loss
- Company full Health & Safety Policy
- Details of two recent (within last 12 months) and similar projects undertaken by the company
- 2 company references

**Expression of Interest proposals should be sent no later than 12 noon on Friday 30th October 2009 to: Sean Stewart, Leisure Contracts Manager, Parks, Sport & Leisure Department, Westminster City Council**  
Applications should be sent via e-mail to [ssstewart@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:ssstewart@westminster.gov.uk)

#### SELECTION PROCESS:

**Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:**

- Experience of similar projects
- Demonstration of a successful performance record
- Health & Safety Policy
- Financial Assessment
- References

Upon receipt the City Council will shortlist bidders and issue to the shortlist an Invitation to Tender.

**For further information regarding this project, please contact Sean Stewart on 020 7641 1846**



City of Westminster

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## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

### Management of Conference, Exhibition, Cultural and Leisure Facilities

Bournemouth Borough Council ("the Council") is considering the option to set up a Not for Profit Distributing Organisation (NPDO) for managing, operating and developing its conference, exhibition, cultural and leisure facilities. This will include the Bournemouth International Centre (BIC), Pavilion Theatre, and Littledown, Pelhams Park, Stokewood, and Sir David English Leisure Centres. **Information about all the facilities and the Council can be found at <http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk>.**

The Council invites expressions of interest from any organisations generally with suitable qualifications or experience to manage this diversified portfolio and who are able to provide high quality and added value services. **Pre-qualification questionnaires and further information will be provided to those contacting Ian Kendall at [ian.kendall@bournemouth.gov.uk](mailto:ian.kendall@bournemouth.gov.uk)**

The Council's existing conference, exhibition, cultural and leisure teams will be expressing an interest through the creation of a locally based charitable trust.

**Expression of interest deadline is 28 October 2009.**





# Jumping into leisure

With the number of unemployed graduates rising, the choices you make as a final-year undergraduate are more important than ever. We help you with those choices by looking at the basics of finding that first job in the leisure industry

Undergraduates heading into the final year of university life face a multitude of options as they take their first steps toward securing a successful career in the growing – and increasingly dynamic – leisure industry. Those who have a clear idea what they want to do upon graduation are the lucky ones. Due to the tough economic climate, and an age in which having a university degree no longer guarantees a job, more graduates than before will experience difficulties in finding that first job.

So while this moment in time – the first few weeks into your last year at university – might feel premature to be thinking about where you want to be in a year's time, it is far from the case. The earlier you know what

you want to do, the more time you give yourself to achieve your goal.

Despite the somewhat sombre economic outlook, there are a number of things graduates can do to help themselves to find that first job in leisure. According to Nigel Wallace, director of training at training provider Lifetime, graduates wishing to carve a prosperous path need to realise that their education has only just begun.

"My advice for graduates would be for them to see their university education as a solid platform upon which to build their practical skills," says Wallace. "A university education is great but it is no way to the end of their learning, it's just the start. Graduates who accept that will be successful. Those who come into the industry thinking they

know it all, will not. Go in with your eyes open, not shut."

Christine North, director of training for Northern Fitness and Education, another training provider, agrees that the need for vocational qualification in the health and fitness sector cannot be overstressed. "Sports science degrees are very theoretical and yes, they might do fitness testing, but it's not as hands-on as the NVQ 2 is, so they'll come to us to get that," she says.

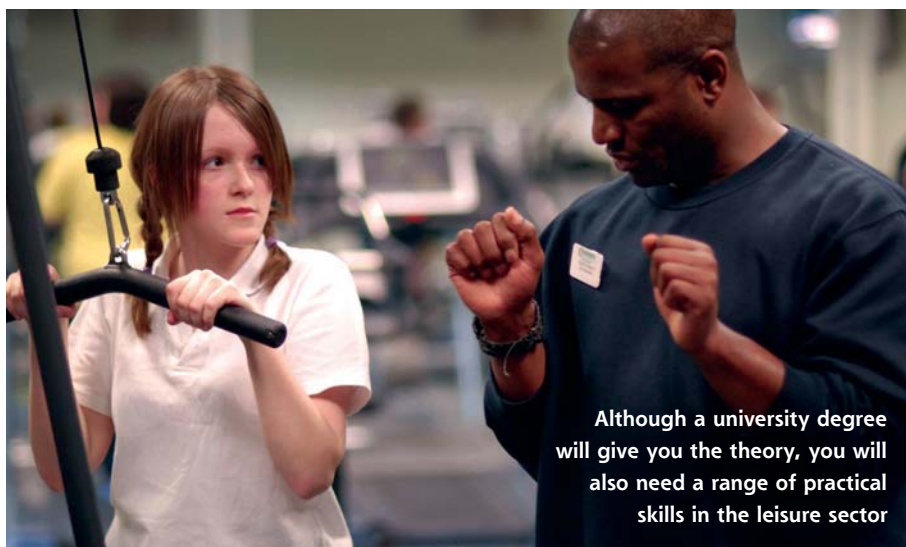
"Sometimes when people come out of university, their degree doesn't qualify them to be a personal trainer. Many realise that everything they've learned in their degree is theoretical and they don't actually have the hands-on skills to work in a gym."

## THE VALUE OF A DEGREE

Depending on which sector you are looking to enter, the reputation and coverage of a university degree course can sometimes

***The value of a relevant, standalone degree can vary across different leisure sectors***





**Although a university degree will give you the theory, you will also need a range of practical skills in the leisure sector**

speak volumes to an employer in itself. The vast majority of higher education institutions across Britain have expertise in at least one subject area, and it is a factor that often matters to prospective students when choosing a university.

According to Steve Gelder, course leader for sports management at the University of Wolverhampton, universities are increasingly looking for ways to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills that employers are likely to ask for. Work placements incorporated into the programme of study are valuable in providing vital on-the-job experience that would otherwise be unavailable.

"We try and develop our industries through a number of routes," said Gelder. "We do a lot of consultancy work with our local sports employers and leisure employers, and we involve them at every stage possible because we feel we need to know

what our employers want from our graduates, so that forms a lot of our curriculum. We ask them what skills do you want from our graduates and we try to incorporate that into our programmes."

The value of a relevant standalone degree can vary across different leisure sectors - like any profession, particular jobs come with particular demands. But as Gelder explains, in certain industries such as hospitality, a degree can be a valuable qualification in pushing you up the corporate ladder before you've even started as graduate training schemes create a path through to middle-management.

"We do understand that some people can achieve those skills you need in the industry by starting at base level and working their way up," he says. "But just by taking three years and getting your professional qualification, you can get into the industry at middle-management level with the

## CASE STUDY: Abbie Keeper



**What university course did you take?**

The BSc Archaeology course at University College London.

**Where do you currently work? What is your position?**

I work at Exmoor National Park Authority as a public rights of way and access officer

**What does your day-to-day role include?**

Our aim is to help the public to enjoy and understand the national park and the majority of visitors to Exmoor will explore the national park using the network of paths and areas of open access land. One of my main roles is to improve the quality of the paths and access in the park. My work is very varied and can include surveying paths, negotiating improvements with landowners and processing legal changes to the path network.

**What attracted you to leisure?**

I always wanted to work outdoors as much as possible and this area of work combines this with other interesting elements.

**Did you enter employment directly from university?**

During my final year of university, I volunteered as a ranger in urban green-spaces and on completing my degree was employed in this role.

**How easy was it to find a job?**

There are often temporary and seasonal jobs in this field but permanent posts are much harder to find. Competition for all of these jobs is fierce and experience is usually required, so most people will undertake voluntary work before gaining paid employment.

**What are the best aspects of working in at a national park authority?**

With ancient woodland, open moors and high sea cliffs, the national park is an amazing setting in which to work.

**And the worst?**

The pay is generally low in this field of work, but the places in which you can work are hard to beat.

**What advice would you have for graduates looking for their first job?**

It is worth gaining as much experience as possible through voluntary work to support your qualifications. This is also a good means of determining whether this is the right area of work for you.

**CASE STUDY: Adina Savut*****What university course did you take?***

I took an MA in Tourism Management at the University of Brighton.

I also have a BSc in

Tourism Management from the Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest, Romania.

***Where do you currently work? What is your position?***

I am 'elevator' trainee manager at the London Hilton on Park Lane.

***What does your day-to-day role include?***

I work in both the finance and operation divisions of the hotel. In finance, I reconcile the daily figures, the daily revenue, analyse profit and loss statements (P&Ls) and measure performance against plans. In operations, I combine hands-on operational activities with back office activities such as payroll forecast, rotas, productivity measures and guest satisfaction scores.

***What attracted you to the hospitality industry?***

The variety of activities that take place within a hotel and the professionals working in the industry.

***How well did your course prepare you for your current job?***

My tourism management studies helped me understand the tourism industry; however, the course did not provide me with the technical skills required for the day-to-day workings of the hotel. I was given excellent training by Hilton in the many different job roles that I undertake on a daily basis.

***What are the best aspects of working in at a Hilton hotel?***

The great opportunities to learn on-the-job skills and apply them in everyday scenarios. Hilton has provided me with the ability to see 'the big picture' of hospitality and the opportunity to play an important role in delivering it.

***What advice would you have for graduates looking for a job in hospitality?***

Really consider the learning and development resources of a prospective employer – and be prepared for some hard, yet rewarding work.

***What is the best bit of career advice you have ever received?***

To stay focused on your long term career goals while continuing to work hard.



## Some universities already train their sports science graduates for exercise referral

► academic knowledge. But also through having had enough experience over the three years through work placements, you will be able to hit the ground running."

One example of how a degree can work for you straight after graduating is provided by the budget hotel chain, Travelodge. Like many companies in the hospitality sector, Travelodge has a graduate recruitment scheme. Nick Dines, head of corporate communications at Travelodge, says the scheme prepares graduates for a long career in hospitality.

"Travelodge's graduate recruitment scheme is aimed at those who want to be future leaders in the hotel industry," explains Dines. "Within five years, we fully expect graduates to be district managers, responsible for numerous hotels in their area."

"We are opening 40 hotels a year. To go with that pipeline of properties, it is crucial that we have a pipeline of managers. If someone shows they have the determination to rise to the top, then the only limit to their progression is themselves."

**WHICH SECTOR?**

A key issue that students completing leisure-related courses need to decide is which sector they will want to find a job in. The boundaries between the different sectors are becoming increasingly blurred – national parks now have restaurants and accommodation, while many large health clubs have begun offering spa treatments

and out-of-centre sporting activities, such as running clubs. Finding a job in each sector could vary significantly.

In 2007, the Museums Association published a report – called *The Tomorrow People: Entry to the Museum Workforce* – investigating all 13 universities offering Association-recognised postgraduate courses on museum studies.

The research revealed that the majority of the student intake at these universities had already completed a humanities degree in history, archaeology, art history and classics, whereas a smaller number had taken a first degree in teaching, business/management studies, tourism, hotel management and health. Between 70 and 80 per cent of those graduating with a postgraduate qualification at one of the establishments secured employment in a museum, gallery, historic environment and archive sub-sectors between one and four years of graduating, although half of these were not in 'reasonable' jobs.

Within the hospitality sector, the picture is very different. A graduate who is prepared to enter at a lower rung of the ladder can confidently expect to find a job at a pub, a hotel or a restaurant. However, this is far from ideal for a graduate who has spent three years on a fulltime course.

A much better option would be to secure a placement on one of the sector's numerous industrial placement programmes or management fast track





A career in leisure is one that guarantees you a lifetime of learning



schemes. These usually provide hands-on business experience complemented by formal study at the company's training house. Those aspiring to a career in the hospitality or tourism sector, but yet undecided on a specific position or preferred company, could be more suited to enrolling on a postgraduate diploma, such as an MA or PhD in hospitality management or tourism management.

"Postgraduate education gives you the opportunity to explore the subject in greater depth, allowing you to develop a variety of intellectual and business skills to enable you to work at the senior levels in industry - thereby enhancing your career opportunities and earning potential," says Professor David Foskett MBE from Thames Valley University.

Meanwhile, in the active leisure sector, sports trust Greenwich Leisure (GLL) runs a two-year graduate trainee management scheme for graduates aiming to join the senior management team of sports and fitness organisations.

The programme includes a structured course of statutory, management and modular training covering front of house, health and fitness, operations, development and marketing, with the benefit of industry-recognised qualifications.

An important aspect to consider when entering the active leisure and fitness sector is the increasing emphasis placed on using exercise as a means of preventative medical care. The government has, over the past two

years, significantly increased its efforts to combat obesity and has acknowledged that the fitness sector has an important role to play in the battle. As a result, fitness professionals will, in future, need to be able to implement exercise regimes for people who have been referred to a leisure or fitness centre by a GP.

John Searle, the chief medical officer of the Fitness Industry Association (FIA), says dealing with GP referrals is a skilled job that needs additional training. "Coming out of university with a sports science degree is not a passport into the fitness industry because you have no idea how to do exercise programmes," he says.

Searle adds that wheels are in motion to correct this but that it will take time to universities and colleges to 'catch up'. "We're already in conversation with a number of sport scientists over GP referrals (and the skills needed to deal with them). There are already some universities which in their sports and health science degrees are training people for exercise referral."

Elsewhere in the leisure industry, opportunities within the parks and countryside sector are becoming increasingly popular with graduates seeking positions as forest officers, wildlife rangers, community rangers and education officers.

Those desiring a career within this sector could join the Forestry Commission's three-year Graduate Development Programme, which aims to "train our leaders ➔

## CASE STUDY: Verena Trend



### What university course did you take?

BSc (Hons) Sports Science at Brunel University, London

### Did you enter the leisure industry directly from university?

When I started my degree in 2000 I moved to Holmes Place in South Wimbledon where I worked as a gym instructor for four years.

During university I worked as a camp counsellor for BUNAC in the USA for a summer. After graduating I wanted to work for a local authority and gained employment working for Croydon Council as an exercise referral assistant.

### Where do you currently work?

In January 2009 Fusion was looking for a sport and community development manager in Croydon, I applied and was hired.

### Does your employer offer on the job training - and what kind?

Since joining Fusion Lifestyle, I have gained qualifications and training in recruitment, finance, the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Managing Safely course, safeguarding children, manual handling, first aid, risk assessment and environmental training.

### What does your day-to-day role include?

My key role is to co-ordinate activities and initiatives within the five leisure centres across Croydon. I work with local partners such as local sports clubs and the Primary Care Trust to name but a few examples. I have a particular remit to increase opportunities for under-represented groups such as young people and those with disabilities to exercise and utilise the leisure centres.

### How easy was it to find a job?

When I graduated it wasn't easy to find a job. There were lots of applicants applying for a small number of positions - I found that it was the experience I had gained in addition to my degree that separated me from other applicants.

### What would you do differently?

I would have obtained more coaching qualifications and experience while at university and done more work experience.

### Any advice for last-year students looking to get into the industry?

Fill your CV with as much experience as possible, and don't be afraid to consider work experience with local councils.

## Which Career?

Be it tourism or hospitality, Springboard will be there to help you with your career

**KERRY MABBLEY** is  
customer relationship  
manager for the  
Springboard charity



**H**ospitality, leisure travel and tourism. Four of my favourite words. Why? Because they provide great places to work! I know this from personal experience, having worked in these industries for over 10 years, mainly in hospitality. They offer vibrant, diverse and global opportunities for the right people – and even during these tough times there are great opportunities to be found. So, if you're considering a new career move into one of these sectors, how do you choose?

The characters of these industries do differ – but at heart they share a common aim. The Oxford English Dictionary definitions offer some insight; hospitality is defined as the friendly and generous treatment of guests or strangers; leisure is defined as time spent in or free for relaxation or enjoyment; travel can be described as making a journey/travelling from one place to another; and finally tourism is defined as 'the commercial organization and operation of holidays and visits to places of interest'.

So, hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism are all about offering a service and a product. To work in any part of the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industry you must have a passion for working with people and great communication skills – but as each sector offers different opportunities how do you then work out which is the sector for you. Simple – do your research!

There are lots of organisations and publications that can inform you of the different careers that are out there within the four sectors. Publications such as *Leisure Opportunities* can offer an insight. It also runs a website which gives an idea of the different careers available, as well as the opportunity to be provided with e-updates for the latest industry news, including career opportunities.

Work experience is another fantastic way to get a real taste of a sector and help you make a decision as to which career path to choose. Remember to look out for the INSPIRE kitemark – carried by employers who work with Springboard's INSPIRE pack to offer quality work experience that is worth doing.

There is a world of opportunity out there and The Springboard Charity can help you find the right path for you. Springboard can facilitate work experience through different programmes such as Summer School.

Our Careerscope service has a dedicated careers team with a wide range of industry experience. It will always be on hand to offer free advice to anyone with an interest in careers in hospitality leisure travel and tourism.

So whichever sector you choose, we here at Springboard will be there to help you at every stage of your career progression. See you in the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industry!



**Working in health and fitness is becoming increasingly popular among sports science graduates**

that the nature of the health and fitness sector is not one that is based on the concepts taught at university. Instead, becoming a personal trainer is something that requires a different approach.

"Our belief is that within the industry, passion drives it," he says. "Based on knowledge, we wouldn't do very well because we're not a very knowledgeable industry compared with other professions. But we are enthusiastic, passionate and the aim is to change the health of the nation. That's the energy that's needed."

"I think that it is quite normal in any profession to have basic training that differs from what is required. In health and fitness, there's no training degree course and therefore people go for courses such as sports science."

"Sports science is an academic and research based degree, and there is a void. Not that anybody is at fault here, it's two different parts coming together and it doesn't quite match."

At the end of the day, however, it is down to what you want to do, and what is right to you. By preparing yourself now for what you want to do after you say goodbye to university, you'll ensure that you're in the best position to succeed in whatever you believe is the one which is right for you. And you can be sure that whatever you decide, there will be the right people to help and to advise you as you start out on the next chapter of your life. ●

► of the future". The initiative is open to graduates of any subject.

### A PASSION FOR A VOCATION

However, for some sectors it is vital to remember that a degree is not the key that unlocks each and every door. While certain university courses will provide a comprehensive theoretical background and will attempt to address practical issues, the truth is that a degree is still an academic qualification. It asserts your ability to grasp key concepts and that's not in question. But what it doesn't provide is the industry-standard

experience and accreditation that is essential to you if you're looking to take up a job as a fitness instructor or as a personal trainer.

Don't let that make you think you've wasted the best part of three or four years on something that is redundant - that isn't the case. Your degree is still a useful qualification that will take you on in your development. If you are looking to work within the fitness industry, there are a number of training organisations able to provide the essential vocational qualifications.

Darren Tebbenham, director of the European Institute of Fitness (EIF), explains



## RFU energy initiative to benefit clubs

Supporters switching energy suppliers with uSwitch.com will help to raise funds

By **Pete Hayman**

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) and energy comparison website uSwitch.com have launched a new scheme aimed at raising funds for community clubs across England.

Rugby supporters using the dedicated Conversion Zone website to switch their energy provider using uSwitch.com will be able to raise an average of £12.89 for their chosen club.

According to the RFU, if 100 club members switch energy provider using the service and each encourage two more people to do the same while nominating the same club, it could generate around £3,800.

Funds raised through the partnership, which will not impose a limit on the amount



The new energy scheme will raise funding grassroots rugby clubs

that can be raised, will be collected and distributed by the RFU, allowing clubs to choose what to spend the money on.

RFU national clubs development manager, Andy Lees, said: "The more they encourage their members and friends and family to use the Conver-

sion Zone the more they will gain. This can only help to ensure that clubs remain sustainable and growing during these difficult financial times."

Steve Weller, marketing director at uSwitch.com, added: "This is a win-win for consumers and grassroots rugby."

### IN BRIEF

#### NT launches new Monopoly game

► A number of iconic National Trust (NT) properties have been included as part of new version of the Monopoly board game. Instead of purchasing houses and hotels, players will have the opportunity to build visitor centres and holiday cottages on properties they acquire, while the grouping of locations – countryside, beaches, mansions, gardens and industrial works – aim to reflect the range of sites under NT ownership.

#### RFU launches new Core Values campaign

► A new nationwide campaign has been launched by the Rugby Football Union in a bid to promote and preserve the sport's core values in the wake of the recent 'Bloodgate' scandal. The launch of the 'This is Rugby' strategy follows a two-year consultation with players, coaches and supporters, who identified teamwork; respect; discipline; enjoyment and sportsmanship as rugby union's key values. Supported by the International Rugby Board, the campaign will include Premier Rugby Limited and the Professional Rugby Players Association to promote core values from the grassroots game through to elite performers.

#### Rugby month nets Scotland £36m boost

► Event Scotland has announced that three major rugby events staged at the Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh, during May contributed £36m to the Scottish economy. Murrayfield Stadium – the home of Scottish rugby – generated a total of £129.9m for the national economy during the 2008-09 season, which has benefited hoteliers, restaurants and other tourism businesses.

### Dragons back charity appeal

Newport Gwent Dragons rugby union team has joined forces with local charity, the Sparkle Appeal, to help raise £1.5m for a new purpose-built centre for disabled children.

The campaign, launched by the South Gwent Children's Foundation in 2003, aims to raise £6m for the new facility at High Cross to cater for more than 1,200 children with complex disabilities.

The Dragons will wear a specially commissioned shirt against the Scarlets on 31 December, which will be donated to the Sparkle Appeal in a bid to raise funds, while the Rodney Parade stadium will be used to host special fundraising events for the appeal.

## Sector to help elite competitors



Olympian Zac Purchase and Paralympian Ian Rose with the books

By **Pete Hayman**

More than 2,000 leisure operators have teamed up with the British Athletes Commission (BAC) as part of a scheme to help boost elite sport.

The new scheme aims to offset the impact of the recession on the industry by offering businesses a new marketing platform through the BAC and Invitation Media.

Invitation Books – money-saving guides for use in 15 cities and nine regions – will provide firms with the chance to reach customers through online and mobile platforms.

Sales of the Invitation Books will also support the future success of elite athletes through the British Athletes Affinity Club, which will be run by the BAC and will raise more than £500,000 for good causes.

## PEOPLE NEWS

- Margaret Hodge has returned to her former ministerial position at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), following a period of compassionate leave. Hodge will resume ministerial responsibility for architecture, culture, heritage and tourism after replacing Barbara Follett, the new parliamentary under secretary of state at the Department for Communities and Local Government.
- Sir Steve Redgrave, the five-time Olympic rowing gold medallist, has been appointed to help promote sports participation as part of legacy plans for the 2012 London Games. Redgrave has been named by the government as its 2012 Sports Champion, which will see the former Olympian supported advise ministers and national governing bodies for sport to boost participation across all age groups.
- Mike Balfour, founder of Fitness First, one of the largest gym chains in the world, has resigned from the company's board. Balfour launched the company with business partner Christopher Pearce in 1992. Since then, Fitness First has grown from a single site in Bournemouth, to a global chain operating more than 560 sites. Balfour has remained at the company through two takeovers, the last one in September 2005 when venture capitalist group BC Partners dished out a total of £830m for the company.
- Glamorgan County Cricket Club has announced that Alan Hamer has been appointed as the club's new chief executive more than a year after Mike Fatkin's departure. Currently the club's finance and commercial director, Hamer will take over executive responsibilities from chair Paul Russell after a handover period.

## LEISURE LADDER

### Sports Leaders UK

Formerly named the British Sports Trust, Sports Leaders UK is a charity providing leadership training sport. It trains more than 2,500 sports tutors each year.

#### LINDA PLOWRIGHT chief executive

##### How did you get to this point in your career?

I've had a varied career! I trained up as a PE teacher but decided to opt for a career in sports management. My first seven years were spent in sports centres in the public sector, before stints at recruitment, contract management and running my own consultancy business. A chance meeting with Margaret Talbot, then CEO for British Sport Trust alerted me to the CEO's role with Sports Leaders.

##### What is your day to day role?

To lead the maintenance of a strong vision and mission for Sports Leaders UK and a

corporate governance structure and staff management team that is fit for purpose to deliver that vision and mission.

##### What has been the high point of your career so far?

My appointment as CEO of Sports Leaders UK

##### How would you describe yourself?

Single-minded. Frustratingly logical and dogmatic in approach. Committed to improving people's lives – especially those who have had least life chances.

##### How would your critics describe you?

Dogmatic, inflexible and an idealist with a bad memory!



##### What keeps you motivated?

A belief that sport and physical activity enriches people's lives

##### Any advice would for up-and-coming management?

Manage with humility and without ego. Identify your organisation's unique strength, strengthen it further by working in joint ventures. Keep the end beneficiary in the centre of all that you do.

#### REBECCA SIMPSON project officer

##### What attracted you to the leisure industry?

I'm passionate about community dance, physical activity and community development. In the leisure industry I am able to combine all of my interests and develop them in a way that'll benefit others.

##### How did you get to this point in your career?

I worked in dance development for Dundee City Council prior to joining Sports Leaders.

##### What are the advantages of working in the leisure sector?

The array of opportunities available and the scope for development. Leisure has a positive impact on people's lives.

##### And the disadvantages?

There's not enough joined up thinking amongst the key organisations, which can result in work being segmented.

##### What are your ambitions?

To continue developing in my career, learning and improving at every stage.

##### What will your next move be?

The next move will be to ensure that the Sports Leaders UK's foundation work is embedded in Scotland and to make sure that we are seen and act as key players in both the leisure and third sector.

##### What do you do in your leisure time?

I love to try out different dance



styles and also enjoy going to classes at the gym.

##### Any advice for people wanting to work in leisure?

I'd encourage people to take every opportunity that is available in terms of training. This to gain as varied an experience as possible in order to establish what area they are interested and passionate about and would like to work in.





The funding will be used to develop traditional skills in heritage

## HLF boost for skills training

Grant to provide more than 220 training places

By **Pete Hayman**

Seven projects delivering traditional skills training - including stone masonry, blacksmithing and thatching - are set to receive an additional £2.85m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The extra funding will enable the schemes, which currently operate under the HLF's existing £7m Training Bursary Programme, to immediately create more than 220 further training places for people looking for a career in heritage. Among the projects to benefit is

the Institute of Archaeologists (£355,000) to create 20 new archaeology placements across the UK and the Traditional Building Skills for England and Wales scheme (£500,000) run by the National Trust and English Heritage, which will provide 56 placements.

The funding, which will provide range of placements to offer accredited work-based training with skilled professionals and environmental specialists, will be followed by a new £5m HLF initiative - Skills for the Future - due to launch in December 2009.

## RFL to launch wheelchair course

The Rugby Football League (RFL) has announced plans to launch a UK Coaching Certificate (UKCC) Level 1 course for wheelchair rugby league in November.

Disabled and non-disabled candidates will be able to participate on the two-and-a-half-day course, which aims to increase the number of coaches and is being partly funded through Sport England's Whole Sport Plan.

Vinny Webb, the RFL's head of coach development, said: "Since England's success in winning the Wheelchair Rugby League World Cup last year in Australia the number of people playing the sport has increased dramatically.

"Under our community strategy we are looking for a 50 per cent increase in the number of coaches by 2012 at all levels, including Wheelchair Rugby League."

## Utilise the recession, attract the right people

The tough climate offers opportunities to employ highly qualified graduates

There's no denying that we're going through a very difficult period. As the recession continues, the job market continues to look bleak across the whole of industry. Over the past few months the media has focused on graduates who have left university and are simply boosting the unemployment figures, instead of starting their career.

Despite this reality, our industry has remained somewhat buoyant, the growth has slowed down, yet we continue to see a rise in opportunities. To this end, there has never been a better time to attract people to start a career within health and fitness.

Our Sector Skills Agreement research has shown that there is a lack of people with higher level skills in management and leadership attracted to the industry. And yet, according to national statistics, there are a number of unemployed graduates; so I have to ask the question, are we doing enough to attract the right people?

Employers repeatedly tell me that expectation is often a barrier to attracting graduates into the industry. They have the skills required and yet don't expect to learn the business by working on the front desk or cleaning the bathrooms.

This may have been the case five years ago; however the rise in vocationally-based qualifications, placement work experience, and part-time jobs have given graduates a realistic picture of the industry, so expectation can no longer be a significant barrier.

According to the FIA *State of Industry Report*, in 2009 the industry's total revenue was up to almost £4bn - an all time high. This places a greater emphasis on the workforce, and ensuring that we have the right people with the right skills to support this growth. Positively, our recently launched 2009 *Working in Fitness Survey* results show that health and fitness continues to be a popular industry to work in - once you're working in it - and respondents were keen to progress their career within the industry.

This is great news for an industry with historically reported retention challenges. So what can we do to tackle the recruitment challenges?

My advice, let's utilise the current climate and find a way to attract more people who are highly qualified, with the skills we need for the continual development and success of the industry. It's well publicised that graduates are out there looking to start their careers - let's help them.



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- Physiology and pathology of respiratory disease
- Management of chronic respiratory disease
- Responses to exercise and exercise prescription
- Managing breathlessness
- Referral pathways

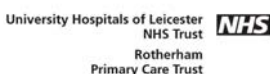
The BLF bursary, funded by Air Products, is available to exercise professionals who meet the following entry requirements:

- Level 3 equivalent qualification as recognised by REP's
- A current valid first aid certificate
- Endorsement from a local pulmonary rehabilitation team
- 100 hours practical exercise instruction over the past year, with some experience of working with clients with COPD/respiratory disease
- Current CRB disclosure form

Instructors taking up a bursary will be expected to work with local Breathe Easy support groups to set up exercise classes within the community.

**For more details or an application pack please log on to**  
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**Danielle Smreczak using the details below**

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Sports coaches are required to work in a number of schools across south of Waltham Forest in a part time capacity, providing instruction to young people in breakfast, lunch time and after school activities. Coaches are required for the following activities:

- Athletics
- Multi skills
- Tag Rugby
- Cycling
- Short Tennis
- Handball
- Table Tennis

Candidates should possess a minimum level 1 national governing body accredited award. They should be a good motivator and a strong communicator, with good leadership qualities. Previous experience of working with young people and an up to date first aid certificate would be an advantage.

An hourly rate of pay will be agreed dependent on qualifications and experience. Successful candidates must be flexible and prepared to travel across the south of Waltham Forest.

**Closing date: Friday 30th October 2009**

**Short listing: Friday 5th November 2009**

**Interviews: To be advised**

**Application forms and details are available on request from Tracey Palmer (Personnel Officer) on 020 8988 7431 or e-mail tracey.palmer@sch.walthamforest.gov.uk.**

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**Ref: KAL 09/057**

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This challenging role will allow you to focus on sales and retention strategies and develop these to ensure targets are achieved.

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**1 year fixed term post**

**Ref: KAL 09/058**

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You will hold an NVQ level 3 fitness related qualification or equivalent and have proven experience of planning and delivering physical activity programs to a variety of groups.

A key initial project will revolve around the launch of an exercise recommendation scheme for Kirklees Active Leisure, which is currently in its planning stage, but scope remains for the successful candidate to make a significant impact on the direction of the project.

The post is initially a 12 month contract to be reviewed subject to funding.

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**Informal enquiries are welcomed by Barry Turnbull, Business Development Manager on (01484) 234143.**

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**Closing date: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Interviews will take place on 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009.**

**An enhanced Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure will be required for these posts. A conviction will not necessarily exclude candidates from appointment but will be considered as part of the recruitment process.**

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## £13m HLF funding boost for UK heritage schemes

National Maritime Museum among four venues to receive Lottery grants towards a wide range of projects

By **Pete Hayman**

Plans for the refurbishment of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, London, is among four schemes to receive a share of £13m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The Greenwich museum has received £5m to help fund the revamp project, which is set to include a new entrance, a new library, archive facilities and a special exhibitions gallery.

All Souls Church in Bolton, Lancashire, will be transformed into a education, training and

youth facility with the help of a £3.3m grant, which will see pews removed and replaced with a community centre.

Stowe Landscape Gardens in Buckinghamshire has received £1.5m to fund the reinstatement of the original entrance and the refurbishment of New Inn, which was built in 1717.

A £4m grant has been awarded to the Vindolanda Trust in Northumberland to help the organisation link its two museums at the remains of Roman forts at the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.



The National Maritime Museum is set to undergo a major revamp

## Deloitte issues new warning over discount trend

By **Tom Walker**

Restaurateurs that rely on discount vouchers to bump up revenue might be cannibalising profits and creating problems for the future, as the economic climate begins to improve.

According to advisory firm Deloitte, consumers have become much more aware of, and responsive to, promotional initiatives – such as discounting and two-for-one type deals.



Discounting could affect profits

Glyn Bunting, partner of Deloitte's hospitality team, has warned that this might become a problem in the mid-to-long-

term, as customers will expect the discounts and the operators brand might suffer as a result.

Bunting said: "Operators need to use such promotions wisely, to ensure that their initiatives genuinely increase sale, rather than cannibalising profit margins."

"As the economy begins to emerge from the recession, a key challenge for operators will be to wean consumers off these discount deals."

## £2.9m upgrade for Kent centre

Maidstone Borough Council has appointed a contractor for the £2.9m upgrade of Maidstone Leisure Centre in Kent.

ISG will carry out the work, which is to be completed by spring 2010 and includes the construction of a new mezzanine floor to house a 500sq m (5,382sq ft) fitness suite with changing facilities.

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[www.people1st.co.uk](http://www.people1st.co.uk)

**REPs** +44 (0)20 8686 6464  
[www.exerciseregister.org](http://www.exerciseregister.org)

**SAPCA** +44 (0)24 7641 6316  
[www.sapca.org.uk](http://www.sapca.org.uk)

**Sports Aid** +44 (0)20 7273 1975  
[www.sportsaid.org.uk](http://www.sportsaid.org.uk)

**Sport England** +44 (0)8458 508 508  
[www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

**Springboard** +44 (0)20 7497 8654  
[www.springboarduk.org.uk](http://www.springboarduk.org.uk)

**SkillsActive** +44 (0)20 7632 2000  
[www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)

**Tourism Management Institute**  
+44 (0)1926 641506  
[www.tmi.org.uk](http://www.tmi.org.uk)

**Tourism Society** +44 (0)20 8661 4636  
[www.tourismsociety.org](http://www.tourismsociety.org)

**VisitBritain** +44 (0)20 8563 3000  
[www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com)

**World Leisure** +1 250 497 6578  
[www.worldleisure.org](http://www.worldleisure.org)