

# SPORTS

## MANAGEMENT

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new series

SPORT **CSR**

### David Stalker

ukactive's CEO  
wages war on inactivity

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# SPORT CSR IS GROWING FAST

As sport and exercise become a bigger part of people's lives, there are more opportunities for corporations and businesses to get involved via their corporate social responsibility programmes, to the point where CSR is becoming another sector of the sports industry

**W**ith so much focus on the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Olympic and Paralympic sports, the UK's powerful network of sports governing bodies and voluntary sports clubs, you'd be forgiven for thinking that this represents pretty much the full extent of meaningful sporting activity in the UK.

But largely below the radar, sport is finding its way – via CSR programmes – into other parts of society to the benefit of all.

In this issue we kick off a new occasional series looking at organisations which offer sporting opportunities to the public outside of the conventional channels.

We start with an organisation that has 25,000 members – 3,000 of which are taking part in weekly running clubs all over the country. This organisation has set itself the aim of engaging up to 50,000 people in the next few years – yet it has no allegiance to any sports

governing body and receives no government subsidies. A secret society? A breakaway group of some kind? No – it's a running-focused sport retailer called Sweatshop (page 36).

The company was established by London Marathon-founder Chris Brasher in 1971 and now runs free-of-charge Sweatshop Running Communities across the UK for its customers.

Sweatshop only launched its Running Communities in 2011, but there are already 120 in operation, with significant engagement from members. Sweatshop MD Nick Pearson told *Sports Management*: "The groups are for everyone and whereas at running clubs, members come together to meet the goals of the organisation – winning a race, or doing well in the league, for example – in a Sweatshop Running Community, people come together to pursue their own individual goals."

Runners are under the supervision of running leaders. These are Sweatshop store staff members who take a UK Athletics course which has been specially designed for the company. Members build up their proficiency via a programme designed to help people with no running ability move towards being able to run continuously, at their own pace, for five kilometres.

Sweatshop values fitting – and not just for shoes – so staff are also trained to fit sports bras and attend a course in bra-fitting and breast health at the University of Bedfordshire. In

addition, Sweatshop is working with Portsmouth University on a research project on breast health and how sports bras can stop teenage girls giving up running. Although sports bras may seem a minor matter when compared with the huge challenge and cost of providing facilities and sports infrastructure, their advent has been transformational in getting women and girls into sport, and it's

**Although sports bras may seem a minor matter, their advent has been transformational in getting women and girls into sport**

heartening to see that more mainstream bra manufacturers are now moving into the sports bra market too.

Initiatives like Sweatshop's Running Communities must be embraced and supported, encouraged and studied for best practice. They're not political and they're a good model for creating robust, effective, much needed opportunities for people to take part in sport in the community. We applaud Sweatshop for establishing them as a win:win for both the company and its customers.

This is the most effective type of CSR and as Nick Pearson says, doing anything less "would appear to be corporate BS".

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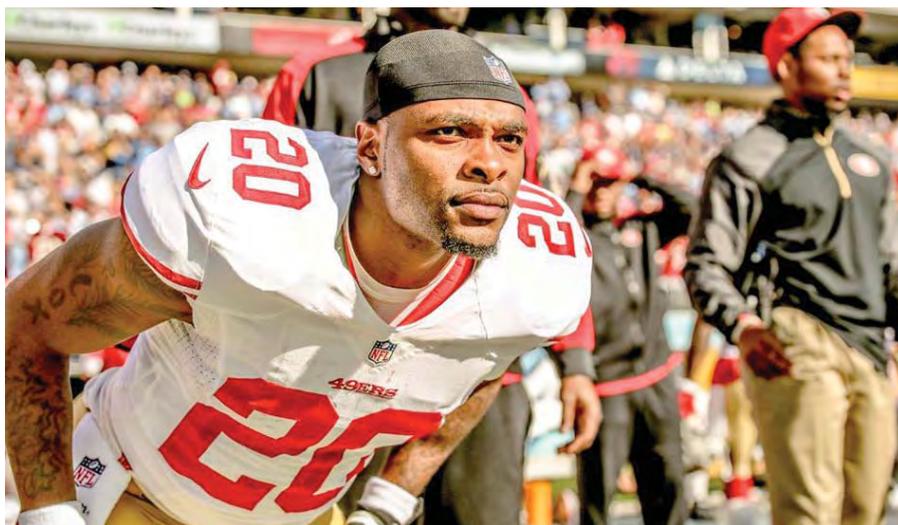
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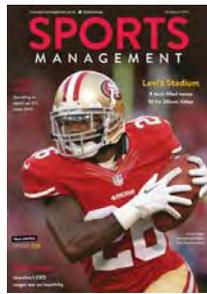
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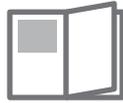
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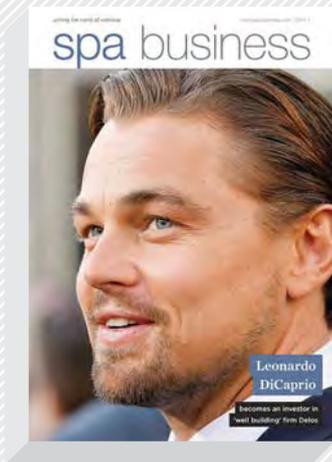


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I realised it wasn't only my medal, it actually belonged to a lot of people

Lizzy Yarnold, Olympic gold medalist

To win an Olympic gold medal is an impressive feat. To do that representing a country with limited facilities even more so.

But for an athlete with limited access to facilities and only five years' worth of experience in the sport to become Olympic champion is something else.

And that's exactly what happened when Lizzy Yarnold raced the skeleton to Olympic gold, following in the footsteps of Amy Williams, who won gold at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.

The UK's only provision for training in the skeleton is a 140m concrete push-start facility at the University of Bath, which enables skeleton athletes to hone their starts without ice.

"I think – as the medals show – that we know we can perform even though we don't have our own track," said Lizzy, speaking to *Sports Management*. "It is a bit of a disadvantage compared with those nations who have a lot of ice on which to test and test their equipment, but what we do is try to focus on those things that we can do well and improve on – whether it's nutrition, physical training or the training track in Bath. I think that's what we'll continue to do to get the best athletes from UK Sport, have the best coaches that we do have and just know what we're good at and just focus on more things."

Yarnold, who initially trained as a heptathlete and was aiming to be picked for the modern pentathlon programme when she attended the Girls4Gold selection day in 2009, has been supported in sport from a young age.



PHOTO: PHIL SEARLE

Lizzy Yarnold became the fourth skeleton medallist in as many Winter Games, dating back to 2002

"It started from when I was about 13 at Tonbridge AC, my local club," she says. "Volunteers and parents would come and coach us and it was from there up until when I was at university – and then through the Girls4Gold scheme – that the lottery funding helped me train full-time."

British Skeleton received a total of £2.1m of National Lottery and Exchequer investment from UK Sport in the four years leading up to the Vancouver

Games and Amy Williams' gold medal saw this rise to £3.4m for Sochi, making skeleton the most funded British winter sport. Gaining consecutive gold medals at Winter Olympics will likely mean a further increase in funding for the Skeleton discipline – something which Lizzy was very aware of.

"Before the Games it was all about getting the medal," she says. "But as soon as I got it I realised it wasn't only my medal, it belonged to a lot of people and the real use and benefit of it is that it will help people so they can follow their dreams get to the Winter Olympics and hopefully bring back some more medals."

Details: [www.britishskeleton.co.uk](http://www.britishskeleton.co.uk)

# I'm pleased to be able to give something back to the community I grew up in

Andy Murray, Wimbledon champion and owner of the Cromlix



**A**ndy Murray's luxury hotel, the Cromlix, is due to open on 1 April 2014. Wimbledon champion Murray bought the hotel in January 2013; it is currently undergoing extensive renovation to re-establish it as a luxury destination. The hotel is situated close to Murray's home town of Dunblane and was the venue for his brother Jamie's wedding in 2010.

It is set in 34 acres of secluded woodlands and will feature 15 rooms, including five suites, and a Chez Rouz restaurant offering fine dining using locally-sourced produce. The estate also has its own private chapel, making the venue ideal for weddings.



Murray bought the £1.8m hotel in January 2013 with the aim of establishing it as a five-star property

"I'm really looking forward to the hotel getting up and running," said Murray. "By re-establishing Cromlix as a leading luxury hotel at the heart of the Dunblane

community we'll be able to attract new visitors to the area, create new jobs and focus on supporting other local businesses. I'm pleased to be able to give something back to the community."

Cromlix is being managed on behalf of Murray by Inverloch Castle Management International (ICMI), which also manages eight other independent properties in Scotland. The hotel is already fully booked for the Ryder Cup in September, which takes place close by at Gleneagles.

The Cromlix estate dates back to the 15th century. The house was rebuilt after a fire in 1880 and was converted from a private residence to a luxury hotel in 1981.

**Details:** [www.cromlix.com](http://www.cromlix.com)

# There's never enough money to satisfy demand

Paul Thorogood, CEO of The Football Foundation



Thorogood joined the foundation in 2006

The Football Foundation recently announced that it has now supported more than £1bn-worth of grassroots sports projects – and the spending is far from over. Grassroots football facilities in England are set to benefit from a further £102m of investment over the next three years.

The foundation's CEO, Paul Thorogood says: "Since the foundation was formed in 2000 we've funded 12,000 grassroots projects worth over £1bn. £490m of that has come directly from our funding partners, the Premier League, The FA and the government (via Sport England), while a further £651m has been secured via partnership funding.

"As well as providing an essential component for developing the game at the grassroots level and increasing participation levels, we are seeking to provide the essential link between the grassroots and the professional game, which has been missing up until now."

The Football Foundation is the UK's largest sports charity; funded by the Premier League, The Football Association and the government, the foundation directs around £30m every year into grassroots



A number of former players act as ambassadors to the foundation – such as England star Alan Shearer

sport. It receives money from the very top of the professional game and also from the DCMS through Sport England. It then uses this money to leverage even more partnership funding to deliver a programme of new and improved community sports facilities in towns and cities.

Thorogood, who was named the foundation's CEO in 2006, led the organisation through the years when public spending was under pressure.

"There is never enough money to satisfy demand, and our greatest strength is our ability to identify where investment will have the greatest impact," he says. "We

squeeze every possible benefit from our investment. We don't just sign a cheque and walk away, just hoping that the investment will deliver. We're helping to stimulate the economy too.

"A report from the Centre for Economics and Business Research analysed 80 of our facility projects. Building these contributed £53m to UK GDP; supported nearly 5,000 jobs, benefitting 1,050 local firms and generating £7.73 for the economy from every pound invested."

The foundation also delivers the Barclays Spaces for Sports community programme, which has developed more than 200 multi-sports facilities, and the mayor of London's Olympic Legacy programme, which has delivered more than 100 sites across the capital to date.

**Details:** [www.footballfoundation.org.uk](http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk)

Foster's vision is to utilise the space above existing urban railways



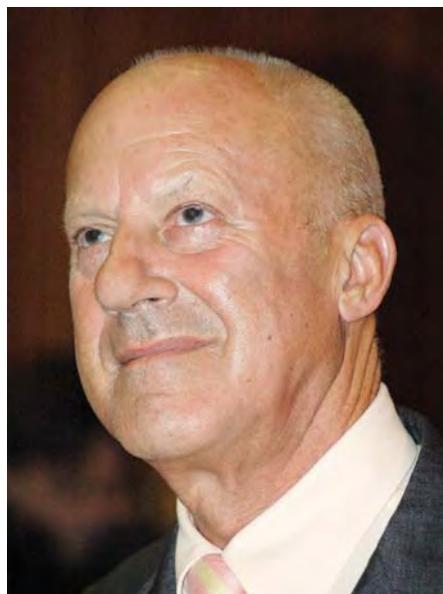
**N**orman Foster + Partners, alongside Exterior Architecture and Space Syntax, have revealed plans for a 135-mile network of cycle routes in London. That amount of cycling lanes itself would be ambitious, but what makes the plan somewhat outrageous is the intention to construct the lanes above existing urban railway lines.

The progressive SkyCycle network would offer cyclists a dedicated commuter route above the trains and the developers believe that the SkyCycle will provide more than 220km of car-free cycle space, which will incorporate over 200 entrance points for cyclists. The first four-mile stretch of the route would potentially run from east London through to Liverpool Street at a cost of £220m, while nine other routes are also proposed along the elevated network. Each route could accommodate 12,000 cyclists each hour, with the network providing easy access to the cycling corridor for 5.8 million people living within the network's vicinity.

"Cycling is one of my great passions – particularly with a group of friends," Foster said. "And I believe that cities where you can walk or cycle, rather than drive, are more congenial places in which to live. To improve the quality of life for all in London and to encourage a new generation of cyclists, we have to make it

## SkyCycle is a lateral approach to finding space in a congested city

**Norman Foster, Foster + Partners**



Cycling is one of Foster's "great passions"

safe. The greatest barrier to segregating cars and cyclists are London's streets, where space is at a premium.

"SkyCycle is a lateral approach to finding space in a congested city. By using the corridors above the suburban railways, we could create a world-class network of safe, car free cycle routes that are ideally located for commuters."

The project's proposers are also seeking to improve journey times and decrease congestion, as London looks to manage population growth of 12 per cent in the next decade. The idea of the network has also spurred creative thinking about the space surrounding the potential route, which could be used in a similar way to other innovative urban spaces – such as New York City's highline project.

**Details:** [www.fosterandpartners.com](http://www.fosterandpartners.com)

# ENGAGING BUILDINGS

In the first of a series, Mike Hall, sports partner at FaulknerBrowns Architects, explores current trends and themes in sports buildings and design. Here, he looks at how sport facilities design should generate better engagement with younger users

**A**s the economy develops, physical activity declines; that is the disturbing headline finding of MOVE IT, a Young Foundation report on sport participation levels among young people. The report cites a number of issues that adversely affect grassroots sport – such as over emphasis on elite sport, the fragmented delivery of amateur sport, misaligned funding streams and gaps in data/accountability. The report also includes a four-part plan outlining how policy-makers can help bring about behavioural change. Among these is a call to make sure sports policy not just provides for young people, but puts them at the centre of the process. The report states: "Sports policy-makers need to better understand the needs, interests and motivations of young people and structure delivery around these." I believe this excellent advice should also be heeded by those of us involved in the design and delivery of sporting facilities.



We should see the report and its findings as a challenge. It rightly identifies that what is needed are facilities that better engage with young people – venues that reflect social trends. These trends include the increasing popularity of more informal sporting activities (climbing, BMX, skateboarding) which require flexible access as well as the option to take part in pay and play activities. There is now a need for facilities that will be able to not only provide a place to meet and take part in sport, but ones which will also become a social hub in an environment where having a digital platform is crucial.

This doesn't mean, however, that we should separate elite and community sporting activities and build separate facilities for each. A good example of this



The National Cycling Centre in Manchester attracts users of all ages

**The Young Foundation report is a timely wake up call. As architects, we need to continue to innovate in the way in which we design and deliver sports and leisure facilities of the future**

is the National Cycling Centre (NCC) in Manchester, where the original velodrome is now nearly 20 years old. Despite its age and prestige, it is common to see elite gold medal winning cyclists on the track with youngsters waiting their turn in the inner D, while other members of the community are participating in court sports in the infield. Next door, in the new indoor BMX facility, young riders prepare to hurl themselves over a series of jumps with cool music playing in the background.

It is precisely these aspects of the NCC – an elite venue that is also a social hub for casual bikers - that should be taken forward to produce the next generation of innovative, inclusive sporting venues.

Some venues have already been designed with these principles in mind. Take the Derby Multi-purpose Arena or the Lee Valley White Water Centre. At Derby, the indoor cycling track has been raised to allow the centre of the area – which usually is inaccessible while cycling takes place - to be in constant use. At Lee Valley, the new home of the highly successful Team GB white water squad, training of elite canoeists will be undertaken alongside young people – many of who come from underprivileged backgrounds and those with accessibility issues.

The Young Report is a timely wake up call to us all. Inactivity carries with it a massive economic burden to the nation. As architects, we need to continue to innovate in the way we design the sports facilities of the future. There are challenging yet exciting times ahead through which we can make a significant contribution. ●

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# Cardiff Blues choose **FieldTurf** synthetic turf for Cardiff Arms Park



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## What they said...



### RICHARD HOLLAND

Cardiff Blues Chief Executive:

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### SAM WARBURTON

Wales captain and Cardiff Blues player:

"The pitch looks immaculate, so I'm really looking forward to playing on it. The conditions we played on in the Dragons match last year were dreadful, so it's nice to know now that you're going to have a good standard of rugby."

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# THOUGHT LEADERS

## No compromise approach does work

John Goodbody, journalist, *Sunday Times*



The basketball Team GB's struggles resulted in funding being suspended

To those who have shall be given. From those who haven't shall be taken away. UK

Sport's recent announcement of its revised £271m funding package for the Rio Olympics and Paralympics has caused delight, satisfaction and also aggrieved fury in almost equal measure. Not for the first time, UK Sport's "no compromise" approach has outraged those sports where financial support has been cut or even stopped.

The clear strategy of UK Sport is to deliver the most number of medals, not only in 2016 but also in 2020. As Liz Nicholl, its chief executive, says: "To continue funding sports which cannot win a medal by 2020 would be a high risk strategy that compromises opportunities elsewhere."

Notable casualties among those sports where funding



Triathlon was among the sports to receive an increase in funding

has now been suspended are basketball, women's water polo and synchronised swimming. In December 2012, basketball was given £7m over four years but since then the British men's and women's teams have failed to reach their targets of a top-six EuroBasket place.

This disappointment did not stop Roger Moreland, British Basketball's performance chair, from saying: "The basketball community at home and abroad will be aghast that this can happen again. What price a legacy from 2012?"

David Sparkes, the CEO of British Swimming, no doubt mindful of the political capital to be made out of the fact that culture secretary Maria Miller is also the minister for women and equality – and that minister for sport is Helen Grant – played a predictable card. He said the decision was "an extremely dark day for women's sport".

Of course funding team sports such as basketball, volleyball, handball or water-polo is extremely expensive because of the numbers involved. Men and women's hockey received £16m from UK Sport although a maximum of two medals can be won at



the Games. Contrast that, for instance, with, say, judo (which has received £7.3m) and where a total of 56 can be garnered. UK Sport officials insist that, despite this imbalance, the organisation will always fund other team sports where it is justified. And I believe them.

Of course, sports which are not currently supported financially by UK Sport, such as basketball and table tennis, still receive backing from Sport England for grassroots activity. Basketball is getting at least £9m between 2013-17 and table tennis about £6m for the same period. As a comparison with two heavily funded sports at the elite level, rowing receives £8.2m from Sport England and sailing £9.3m. However, the argument of officials in those activities, which do

not receive money from UK Sport, is that they need even a moderately successful national team to drive interest among the grassroots and inspire youngsters. There is some validity in this argument. The problem, however, is that if these sports were to be supported, it would drastically reduce the money available for sports where medals seem highly likely to be secured in 2016 and 2020.

My only reservation when it comes to UK Sport's strategy is that sometimes it is influenced in the allocation of money by the structure of an NGB's preparations rather than concentrating exclusively on results. Otherwise, UK Sport has carried out a difficult task with judicious care and its strategy surely remains the right one as we approach Rio.

While the men struggled, the Women's cricket team recorded a famous Ashes victory in Australia



## Women's sport taking big strides - but more needs to be done

Ruth Holdaway, CEO, Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation

It was wonderful that Lizzy Yarnold's first commitment after winning the skeleton gold medal was to use her Olympic success in Sochi to inspire more girls to play sport. But she will face an uphill struggle as the odds are stacked against creating the role models girls need.

We all hoped that the triumphs of Jessica Ennis-Hill, Katherine Grainger, Nicola Adams and other athletes at London 2012 would provide a legacy of female participation – and increased coverage of women's sport. Yet – despite new commercial partnerships in women's cycling, football, netball and rowing – there's a



long way to go. What women's sport needs is prominence.

Shockingly, our report *Women's Sport: Say Yes to Success* shows that since September 2011, women's sport has accounted for a pitiful 0.4 per cent of the total value of reported UK sponsorship deals

in sport. The media do not help. While interest from television companies in covering women's sport is undoubtedly increasing, women's sport makes up only 7 per cent of all sports coverage.

This contributes to a situation which means that sponsorship deals for women tend to be smaller and less common. A cycle of poor financing and poor coverage has been established which will take some breaking.

Here at WSFF we are clear on what needs to be done to break this cycle. That is why we have launched a new campaign, Say Yes to Success aiming to secure increases in both commercial investment for, and

media coverage of, women's sport. For women's sport to make progress, it must secure more media coverage, more commercial investment, and excite and attract the fan base.

To do this it needs to develop its own calendar of major events which spectators, the media, and commercial partners come to expect, anticipate and look forward to.

It isn't that there has been no progress in the thirty years that WSFF has existed: women's sport has come a long way and there is a high degree of political and campaigning spirit behind the drive to make further progress. We are going to keep fighting for it.

## How to care for pitches hit by flooding and weather

Alistair Beggs, head of agronomy and ecology, Sports Turf Research Institute

Over the winter months, much of the UK and Ireland have been subjected to extreme weather. The storms, tidal waves and flooding have meant that few areas have escaped unaffected.

Such extreme weather has a major impact on our landscape and many of our sporting facilities. Sports fields, golf courses and bowling greens situated close to rivers and the seaside have borne the brunt of the storm damage.

As the weather finally starts to quieten down we can now take stock of the damage and set about restoring turf and playing quality in time for the 2014 sports season.



For inland sports facilities, the most likely source of problems will be from flooding and tree damage. This may be in the form of silt accumulation or prolonged soil saturation and water retention, which can lead to thinning turf and eventual grass loss. It is important to remove the silt as quickly as

possible to avoid any potential damage to the turf or the soil which may compromise future drainage performance.

Renovation in the form of aeration, overseeding and top dressing may be required once soil and weather conditions improve or – if the damage is particularly severe – returfing may be required.

Be aware of what operations will achieve, as untimely activities could cause future problems if the soil profile is de-structured or sealed when conditions are still wet.

For coastal facilities, the immediate issue to address is from debris brought onto the course from the sea. Due to the power of the sea, larger

items of debris may have caused direct turf damage and localised repair will be necessary. Accumulations of sand will require removal to avoid smothering damage.

If saltwater ingress has occurred to fine turf areas, it is important to allow rainfall to flush the salt from the soil profile and this will be encouraged via aeration and wetting agent application. Salinity tests of affected areas may be prudent to assess the level of salt in the soil.

If you do have a problem following the storm damage, don't hesitate to contact the institute – we will support you in any restoration work and to improve your facility.

# Chasing that extra second and inspiring a nation. *We'll help you deliver success in sport.*

We share your passion for sport. Drawing on our cutting-edge research and considerable expertise, we can add value to your business – from grass roots participation through to elite level. Tap into our brightest minds and advanced facilities to deliver your whole sport plan.

Our specialist services span athlete and team support, training and development, innovation and research and evaluation.

Together, we can help individuals to succeed and teams to excel. Whether we're working with athletes or coaches to improve

technique or collaborating with sports manufacturers to enhance equipment, our expertise could be the difference between winning and losing.

Widening participation in sport is also firmly on our agenda. We can help you understand which investments will deliver the best returns, determine what actions will bring about changes in behaviour and measure the impact to inform future decisions.

**If you need clear, practical advice, why not set us a challenge?**

[www.shu.ac.uk/sportperformance](http://www.shu.ac.uk/sportperformance)



# Sheffield Hallam identified lessons from Everyday Swim, *which helped the sport stay top of the leader board.*

A team of researchers from Sheffield Hallam University evaluated the Everyday Swim project on behalf of Sport England and the Amateur Swimming Association. Everyday Swim was a pilot scheme designed to increase participation in swimming – and to find out which methods were most effective.

In addition to understanding the impact of the programme, the lessons learned from the project were shared with authorities across the country to help increase participation at national level.

They began by distilling key market intelligence about swimming into easily understood and location-specific reports using Active People Survey data. This enabled local coordinators to get their ideas to market as quickly as possible – and ensured that interventions designed to get more people swimming were based on the best available evidence.

They then worked closely with the project coordinators to evaluate the programme's success. As well as monitoring levels of participation in the

pilot areas, they identified good practice that could be shared with swimming providers across the country on an ongoing basis.

They found that the eight pilot Everyday Swim projects had achieved an increase of more than 10,000 new adult swimmers in the relevant authorities, which was counter to the national trend of static participation in swimming.

By bringing together Active People Survey data with Active Places data, they found strong evidence that the demand for swimming is highly dependent upon supply. This finding encouraged some local coordinators to open up pools on school sites for public use.

Most importantly, their insight brought to light three key themes that formed a blueprint for driving forward the delivery of swimming and increasing participation. These were

- structured sessions, particularly lessons for the 20% of adults who cannot swim
- creative marketing beyond the four walls of swimming pools
- a culture change in all aspects of service delivery

These themes now underpin the Amateur Swimming Association's strategy to maintain swimming as the nation's most popular sport.



## Emergency relief fund to help damaged pitches

Sport England has earmarked £5m for the repairing of hundreds of sport pitches and facilities damaged by the winter flooding and adverse weather conditions. Grants of up to £2,000 for emergency repairs will be made available to sports clubs, local authorities and other community organisations and will cover restorations made to playing pitches, pavilions, changing rooms and floodlights.

Organisations that think they may need help to restore sports facilities are being asked to provide their details about the extent of the damage via the Sport England website ([www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)).

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=Q7W2Q>



The legacy fund will run until 2016

## £1m fund launched to help Scottish community sport

The Scottish government has launched a new fund to help communities operate their sport facilities. The Legacy 2014 Sustainable Sport for Communities Fund will distribute up to £1m during 2014-16 to support the sustainability and capacity of aspiring and existing social enterprises delivering sport and physical activity in communities across Scotland.

The Sustainable Sport for Communities Fund is made up of an investment of £500,000 from the Scottish Government and £500,000 from The Robertson Trust.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=e5r7b>



Prince Harry visiting the Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, US, which were held in May 2013

## Prince sets up Invictus Games for injured soldiers

A new paralympic-style sporting event will see more than 300 wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women compete across a number of sports in London later this year. The first ever UK Invictus Games will take place from 10 to 14 September and will be fashioned after the US-based annual Warrior Games, which first took place in 2013.

The concept of the Warrior Games is being brought to the UK by Prince Harry, who visited the competition last year.

The Prince said: "I've witnessed first-hand how the power of sport can positively impact the lives of wounded,

injured and sick servicemen and women in their journey of recovery.

"The Invictus Games will focus on what they can achieve post injury and celebrate their fighting spirit, through an inclusive sporting competition that recognises the sacrifice they have made. I'm extremely proud that we are bringing an event like this to the UK."

The vision for the Invictus Games is to harness the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and generate a wider understanding and respect of those who serve their country.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=B8z7q>

## Etihad Stadium expansion to make it second largest in EPL



The venue will have a capacity of 62,000

Manchester City Football Club (MCFC) has secured approval for an extension of its Etihad Stadium, which will see capacity at the venue increase from 48,000 to 62,000. The expansion is expected to cost £50m and when complete – in time for the 2015-16 season – will make the Etihad Stadium the second largest in the Premier League, behind rivals Manchester United's Old Trafford (capacity 75,811).

The Etihad Stadium was built in 2002 for the Commonwealth Games.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=t5w3T>

# NEWS UPDATE

## Lee Valley White Water Centre reopens following £6.3m redevelopment

The Lee Valley White Water Centre in east London has opened for the 2014 season following the completion of a £6.3m development and expansion project.

The improvements will have a wide-reaching impact on GB Canoeing's Slalom athletes' team, with the facility becoming a permanent base for athletes and their coaching teams, complete with a gym and physiotherapy suite.

Following on from the Olympics, the capacity of its upstairs café/restaurant area has been increased from 60 to 180 covers, with additions made to cater for events and conferencing.

The Zaha Hadid-designed White Water centre now has a south-facing cafe terrace, with an elevated wooden decking area to provide views over the Olympic



The improvements will see GB Canoeing's slalom team being based at the centre permanently

Standard Competition course and the surrounding River Lee Country Park. The centre has improved parking offerings too, with a new pavilion opening up further opportunities for outdoor meetings.

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, British Canoe Union and Sport England funded the development. The facility hosts the ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup this year.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=G2A5y](http://lei.sr?a=G2A5y)

## €25m to be invested in Irish sport for 2014

The Irish Sports Council has provided an overview of its strategy for 2014 by announcing a €25m (£20.4m) investment programme for the year.

The core activities of 59 Governing Bodies of Sport will receive €10.6m (£8.7m), while €583,000 (£477,000) will be dedicated to Women in Sport activities across the NGBs. The National Network of Local Sports Partnerships will receive €5m (£4m) to support its work in promoting participating in sport.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=f8c2q](http://lei.sr?a=f8c2q)



The strategy aims to improve amateur sport



The scheme will roll out at schools

## Physical literacy programme for Wales

The Welsh government has launched a £1.78m Physical Literacy Programme for Schools (PLPS). The initiative is designed to meet Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson's Schools and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group's recommendation that all young people in Wales should become physically literate.

Targeted at delivering a long term improvement in physical literacy – and an increase in physical activity amongst children in schools in Wales – PLPS aims to help get young people hooked on sport for life and to adopt healthy lifestyles.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=E7s5j](http://lei.sr?a=E7s5j)

## Plans for £36m sports centre in Coventry revealed



The CSLC facility in Coventry was built in 1966

Plans have been tabled to replace the ageing Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre (CSLC) with a new £36m facility. CSLC is “haemorrhaging cash” – costing around £2,000 per day to keep open.

The new 6,500sq m (69,965sq ft) facility is set to include a water park with slides, a health and fitness club, a 25m swimming pool, climbing wall, squash courts and a spa. The new centre is scheduled to open by 2019 and the existing CSLC will remain open until that time.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=t7z3U](http://lei.sr?a=t7z3U)

## EU having a 'positive influence' on UK sport

The European Union (EU) has had a "positive influence" on sport in the UK, according to a report by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).

The EU's impact on UK sport was increased when it was granted a supporting and coordinating role in sports matters by the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. Since then it has influenced a wide range of sports-related policies and recommendations. The report states that part of the positive influence of the EU rulings and recommendations is down to the UK's active involvement in the EU's working groups of sport.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=4S3U7](http://lei.sr?a=4S3U7)



The grants will aid sport activities

## Primary Spaces funding to improve school sport

Sport England has opened its Primary Spaces fund for applications. The funding will look to help more schools create sports spaces and is part of a £18m investment to improve primary school PE and sport activities.

Schools that qualify for grants will receive up to £30,000 to spend on a range of specially created packages which can be tailored to meet their needs. The fund will primarily aim to help provide outdoor multi-sport areas, which can be used both within the curriculum and out of school hours.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=m3J9r](http://lei.sr?a=m3J9r)



Plans for a new 4,000-capacity Crusaders stadium were first tabled back in 2008

## Crusaders FC relaunch plans for new Belfast stadium

Northern Irish football club Crusaders FC has drawn up new proposals for a new 4,000-capacity sports and educational facility, to be shared with Newington Youth FC. The proposed site, close to Crusaders' current home Seaview Stadium, is owned by Belfast City Council, meaning the authority would have to agree to be part of any development.

A number of preliminary discussions about the project are already underway, according to Crusaders, involving the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB), the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the

Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE).

Plans were initially revealed in 2008 to build a shared stadium in the area, although they eventually fell through. But, both Crusaders and Newington hope that building a shared education campus will provide stimulus for a new development.

January saw the Department of Education call on interested parties to submit proposals to move into a shared education campus, with education minister John O'Dowd aiming to create a further 10 similar campuses.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=h9r7k](http://lei.sr?a=h9r7k)

## West Ham signs deal to sell Upton Park in 2016



The Boleyn Ground stadium in East London has been West Ham United's home since 1904

West Ham United Football Club (WHU) has agreed to sell its Upton Park stadium to developer The Galliard Group when the club moves to the Olympic Stadium in 2016.

According to WHU, Galliard won the bidding due to its links to the local community and its commitment to "honour the history of the Hammers" at the Boleyn Ground. Galliard's plans include a mixed-used project with leisure and new homes and there are plans to establish a park named after WHU legend Bobby Moore.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=p7H4x](http://lei.sr?a=p7H4x)

# SPORTS FLOOR UPGRADE

## Eco-Fit Saves 40% in Cost and Down Time!



**B**ournemouth University were overjoyed with the planned refurbishment of their Sports facilities which all parts being rejuvenated but the designs and estimates showed that their tired sports hall was going to have to wait.

The client asked Kier Construction one more time if anything could be done with the question passed on to Gerflor whilst exhibiting at Ecobuild in 2011. Gerflor had decided that the show was going to be the springboard for massive new innovations, one being Taraflex™ Ecofit™. Whilst older sports surfaces had always led to large

refurbishment costs, the new Eco-fit system gave Kier a great message to take back to Bournemouth University.

Both the University and Kier were trusting of the Taraflex™ brand. Used at every Olympic Games since 1976 and with over 60 Million Square metres installed globally, Taraflex™ had both the elite sporting preference looked for by high level University Sport whilst also offering top level protection needed by players.

Rick McEvoy, a senior project manager for Bournemouth University commented “We were suitably impressed when visiting a neighbouring school which had the same solution one year prior. We set the bar high, challenging the sub-contractor to produce an even better finish than our neighbours, on this they delivered. The Sport M Performance looks immaculate and feedback from users of the facility is excellent. The BU Sport department now have excellent facilities including the sports hall which matches other facilities all around our campus.”

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Taraflex Ecofit is ideal for multi-sports areas

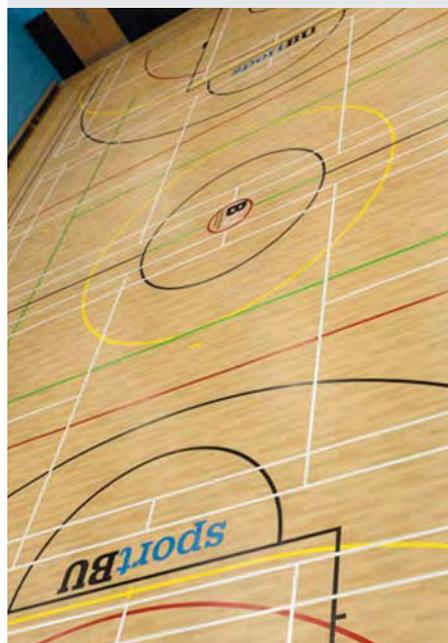
**TARAFLEX™ CASE STUDY :**

**Client Name:**  
Bournemouth University

**Project Details:**  
Sports Hall Floor Over Lay

**Product Specification:**  
Taraflex™ Sport M  
Performance 9mm Eco-fit

**Budget:**  
£30k



“ **The refurbishment of the sports area had to include a new sports hall floor but we questioned if the budget would allow. Anything more than a treating of the old Granwood surface was looking unlikely** ”

*Rick McEvoy (Senior Project Manager, Bournemouth University)*

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**Darren Wood** – Sports Manager on 07836 366579 or [dwood@gerflor.com](mailto:dwood@gerflor.com)

Visit [www.gerflor.co.uk](http://www.gerflor.co.uk) for further information



## Helen Grant: women should be offered the activities they want

Sports minister Helen Grant has called for women to be offered a wider choice of sports in order to increase the number of females playing sport.

In an interview with the *Daily Telegraph*, she expressed her worries that women were being put off by memories of being forced to play football at school.

She added there was a need to “step back and actually ask women what they want and give it to them”.

“There are wonderful sports which you can do and perform to a very high level.” she said. “I think those participating look absolutely radiant and very feminine such as ballet, gymnastics and cheerleading.”

Grant’s comments come after the most recent Active People Survey – published last month – showed that the number of



Grant called for activities such as cheerleading to be offered alongside more traditional sports

women playing sport has declined since the 2012 Olympics.

Tim Woodhouse, head of policy at the Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation, said Grant’s comments regarding school

sport ring true. “Our research show that 51 per cent of girls say that PE and school sport currently puts them off being physically active,” he said.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=E5S2w](http://lei.sr?a=E5S2w)

## FA commits £1.5m to disability football

The Football Association (FA) will invest £1.5m in improving opportunities for disability football in England.

The Disability Football Development Fund – launched this month – will run until 2017 and is part of the FA’s aim to encourage more than 30,000 new disabled players and create 600 new disability football teams. Disability football is the seventh most played team sport overall, with 35 county disability football leagues and 1,500 disability football

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=F4D8w](http://lei.sr?a=F4D8w)



Disability football is increasing its popularity



FA wants to see more artificial pitches

## FA attacks state of local council pitches in England

There should be a strong drive towards installing more artificial football pitches across England, a spokesperson for the FA has said.

Speaking on BBC Radio 5 Live, Peter Akerby, the FA’s senior national game development manager, said many pitches run by local councils were in an “abhorrent” state and that the future of amateur football was under threat unless there is a move from grass to artificial pitches. A grass pitch can sustain around five hours of football each week, while artificial pitches can be used by up to 60 teams for training and matches each week.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=m8B2K](http://lei.sr?a=m8B2K)

## Further £20m earmarked for Inspired Facilities fund



The fund has so far distributed £71m of grants

Sport England has released an additional £20m worth of funding to be distributed through its Inspired Facilities fund.

Aimed at helping grassroots sports clubs and local authorities renovate and modernise their sports facilities, the fund has already distributed £71m to fund 1,300 projects since 2011. To assist applicants, this year Sport England has adjusted the applying procedures and clubs and authorities will now be able to apply for funding all year round.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=k8g5k](http://lei.sr?a=k8g5k)



The new professional register was launched by Olympic gold medal winner Lizzy Yarnold

## SkillsActive launches register for sport professionals

SkillsActive has launched its Register of Personal Development Practitioners in Sport (RPDPS). The register is aimed at professionals who work within professional performance environments, lottery-funded programmes and with athletes and players who are part of the NGB talent pathways.

Launched on 27 February, the RPDPS is set to become a regulatory system aiming to ensure that individuals meet agreed National Occupational Standards

The register will be marketed as exclusive to those who hold "appropriate qualifications and experience" and will run a programme of continuing professional

development. It is owned and operated by SkillsActive, the sector skills council for active leisure, learning and wellbeing.

Steve Mitchell, head of consultancy at SkillsActive, said: "Sport is becoming a lucrative industry, which means it sometimes attracts so-called rogue traders to the sector who offer below-standard advice and services.

"By creating national standards, RPDPS assures national governing bodies that the professionals working with athletes and players are fully qualified and competent in what is a very sensitive job role."

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=6x9y3](http://lei.sr?a=6x9y3)

## 11 Olympic sports see increase in elite funding



Funding for elite taekwondo was increased

High performance sports agency UK Sport has revealed details of its Annual Investment Review, with 11 Olympic sports and seven Paralympic sports seeing an increase in the amount of funding they receive. In total, 19 Olympic and 17 Paralympic sports will receive £350m of funding annually in the run up to Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020. Among the winners are taekwondo, triathlon, hockey, judo and sailing – all of which secured sizeable increases in their elite funding.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=a4b2Z](http://lei.sr?a=a4b2Z)

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## App being developed to increase participation

Canadian software company Geosports is developing an app to help encourage participation in sport. The app allows users to “advertise” the sport they would want to take part in, along with the time and date that they are available. Users can also set up games and create sporting events for others to join. The events and game database is searchable and each time an event is created a notification is then sent out to other app users with same interest near their chosen location.

Sports clubs will also be able to use the app to find new members and cover for injured players.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=p5c2n>



The new Edge machine at Harlequins

## Rugby club benefiting from flexible ultrasound

A rugby club is using a point-of-care ultrasound system from FujiFilm SonoSite in order to diagnose and monitor musculoskeletal injuries. Harlequin FC is using the Edge system to provide valuable information to help foster the rehabilitation of players by aiding treatment methods.

The piece of equipment will allow for the team to conduct assessments more flexibly given the transportability of the system.

The Edge provides real-time imaging to allow experts to accurately make judgments on the impact of injuries, while also relaying the information to players in better detail to help them better understand the impact of their injuries.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=P4X8a>



Biathlon skiers are among the athletes to benefit from using technology in their training

## Technology “increasingly important” in medal success

Scientific and technological developments are becoming an increasingly important contributor to the success of athletes, as recent medal triumphs in the Sochi Winter Olympics have shown.

In terms of training, motion capturing tech is now widely used to help train figure skaters when preparing for jumps. Devices are used to track the shape of the athlete while in the air, as well as measuring all of their angles and points of impact when hitting the ice after a jump. This allows trainers to improve body positioning, while also providing competitors with a pictorial understanding of how their body is working.

Other tools to help preparation include the use of lasers adopted by elite biathlon athletes, who are required to proceed straight from a ski sprint into a rapid drill shooting round.

Given the pace they ski up to the shooting points, the impact of a thumping heartbeat can be detrimental to accuracy – as too can the development of muscle twitches following intense exercise.

Therefore athletes train using lasers in order to learn to get their shots off in a mere seven seconds to prevent these factors impacting on their performance.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=S8S9C>

## Patent suggests Apple looking at sports monitoring device



The app will use earphones to transmit data

A new patent granted to Apple suggests that the technology giant could be looking to create a sports monitoring system that attaches to a pair of earphones or headphones. The patent was awarded to Apple in February, though full details on the product remain scarce.

However, what is known is that the attachment would couple sensors and accelerometers in order to keep track of physical activity, levels of perspiration and the user's heart rate activity.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=b5X6U>

# TECH NEWS

## Face recognition technology becoming the norm at sports grounds

The use of face recognition technology to monitor sports fans at the gates of stadiums continues to grow in prominence, with Australia the next country to be considering its use across its national grounds. The technology can be used to scan and save the images of people entering grounds, with the data being stored on a country-wide database.

The method of security operation has already been adopted in the US, South America and Germany in a bid to eradicate sports-related violence and troublesome fans. The current situation in Australia sees the potential enforcement of five-year exclusions for fans causing trouble, though this relies entirely on security forces spotting the perpetrators with the human



Tech can improve football stadium safety

eye. However, the introduction of the recognition technology could help to prevent hooliganism, vandalism and general unrest at major sporting events.

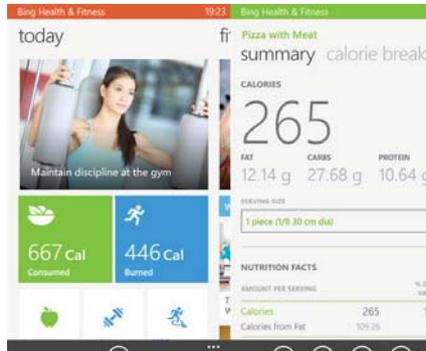
[Read more:](http://lei.sr?a=x8v4b) <http://lei.sr?a=x8v4b>

## Microsoft launches fitness app for Windows Phone

Microsoft has joined the fitness app market and released the Bing Health & Fitness Windows Phone app. Released through the Windows store, the app offers a combination of fitness, health and nutrition-tracking features

There are more than 100,000 foods to track the user's daily calorie routine,, health indicators, a symptom checker, information on human body in a 3D visualisation, an exercise tracker and video workouts and yoga poses.

[Read more:](http://lei.sr?a=s8m9W) <http://lei.sr?a=s8m9W>



The app offers a wealth of features for users

## Loughborough to research nanotechnology



Research will look at nanotechnology in sport

A research team at Loughborough University has gained funding from the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health to investigate the health and safety impact of nanotechnology.

Nanotechnology is been adopted across the sporting industry in recent years – such as carbon nanotubes used to make bicycle frames and tennis rackets lighter and more durable, while golf clubs and hockey sticks are given a more powerful and accurate drive using the particles.

[Read more:](http://lei.sr?a=K9h5Z) <http://lei.sr?a=K9h5Z>

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# Turning the tide of inactivity

Obesity levels are increasing, despite a plethora of healthy living campaigns. Tom Walker asks industry leaders whether a new campaign, exclusively tackling inactivity, will prove more successful



**T**he trade association for the active leisure industry, ukactive, is spearheading a new campaign designed to "turn the tide of inactivity" and prevent 37,000 needless deaths a year. The wording is intentional – rather than concentrating on obesity, the focus is on getting people to get more active.

Launched at the ukactive Summit In November, the initiative has got off to a strong start, with government, business and the NHS backing the scheme. There has even been an acknowledgment from PM David Cameron and in February the government launched its own 'Moving More, Living More' campaign.

If the initiative reaches its target of reducing inactivity by 1 per cent every year for the next five years, it could save thousands of lives and the taxpayer £1.2bn – or £44 per household. To hammer home the point, ukactive published a report (*Turning the Tide of Inactivity*), which showed that local authorities, on average, only spend 2.4 per cent of their health budgets on tackling inactivity.

But how is this programme different from other, similar ones in the past? Has ukactive got the key points – cross-party support and local authority involvement – right to give the initiative the best chance of success?



**Mike Kelly**  
Director of  
the Centre of  
Public Health  
at NICE

**“T**he ukactive report highlights the growing problem of physical inactivity and the fact that resources have not been directed to target this issue in certain parts of the country.

Inactivity has a huge societal cost. The fact that local councils spend just 2.4 per cent of their top-tier public health budgets on programmes aimed to promote physical activity, is disproportionately low compared with other top tier concerns such as substance misuse or smoking.

We must prioritise investment into encouraging more people to get active. ukactive's evidence-based recommendations are designed to help local government do just that, to make the best use of limited funds to improve public health. They're practical, cost-effective measures which will improve the health and wellbeing of their communities and lead to cost savings in the long-term.

We must also ensure that open spaces and built environments are better used to offer effective programmes and interventions to increase the number of people who lead an active lifestyle. The findings from the report will be embedded within the priorities of the medical profession's considerations over the coming years to turn the tide on physical inactivity.”

## Lord Coe Chair of the British Olympic Association

**“S**ince London 2012 we've set out to deliver what no other host nation has done before: a lasting legacy which benefits future generations. Legacy is a long-term programme and we've made an excellent start, including more than £11bn of economic benefits and 1.5 million more people playing sport once a week since we won the bid in 2005.

But one area where there remains work to do is securing the physical activity legacy from the Games. Forty four per cent of adults fail to meet the chief medical officers' guideline of 150 minutes of physical activity per week, and 29 per cent of adults fail to achieve even 30 minutes of activity over seven days.

Turning the tide of inactivity is a hugely important outcome for our legacy story.



I welcome the recent report from ukactive whose analysis and recommendations have helped to establish the scale of the problem and provide an important step towards tackling the issue.

That's also why I recently helped launch the government and mayor of London's Moving More, Living More initiative to reduce inactivity. It brings together government working in a joined up way across departments, the mayor of London's teams, local government, business and the community groups who know how to get people active.

Turning the tide of physical inactivity must be viewed as a national priority and the report makes a persuasive case for action. I'm delighted that ukactive is working with us on the Moving More, Living More campaign.”



“ THERE HAS TO BE A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY TO DRIVE THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AGENDA FORWARD; EVERYBODY CAN PLAY THEIR PART IN IT ”

**Professor Kevin Fenton** National Director of Health and Wellbeing at Public Health England

“Turning the tide of inactivity highlights the complexity and breadth of the physical inactivity challenge and has to be a central platform of public health efforts. It has been followed by a national cross-government commitment through Moving More, Living More to go further and faster on increasing physical activity.

Physical activity is undertaken across communities in a range of ways, from walking and cycling, through fitness, leisure and play to structured amateur and elite sport. We need to embrace and support this diversity through cross-sector collaboration. Public Health England (PHE)



is partnering with national and local organisations to reduce levels of physical inactivity and the associated health, economic and social burden on local communities. Local government can develop and lead the approach across communities to reduce physical inactivity.

Health clubs and leisure centres can be the leaders of the movement to promote active lifestyles and embed activity into daily lives. There has to be a shared responsibility to drive the active agenda forward; I believe everyone can play their part. PHE is leading the development of a National Implementation Framework for Physical Activity in England which is

drawing together evidence and case studies from across the country to help develop a tool that can truly deliver this whole system approach. People and organisations can input to the Framework and we will also be working with ukactive to deliver a series of regional events over May and June to engage with local stakeholders.

I'm passionate about making a difference to people's lives through making the public healthier. Turning the tide of inactivity has revealed the evidence and allowed us to understand the scale of the problem. To move forward, we need to use the case studies within the report – as well as other examples of best practise – to implement practical ways of making a difference.”



# DAVID STALKER

**The UK is in the middle of an obesity epidemic, driven in part by rising levels of inactivity. Jak Phillips speaks to Dave Stalker, CEO of ukactive – formerly the Fitness Industry Association – which aims to turn the tide of inactivity**

**D**espite their similarities, it's fair to say the sport and fitness industries have found fulfilling their collaborative potential fairly hard. The fragmented nature of the sectors – with tangled combinations of private, public and voluntary operations, plus myriads of associations – has meant meaningful co-ordination has often been frustrated.

But as purse-strings continue to tighten and Britain's waistbands expand further, the makings of a sea change are starting to take shape. Riding the crest of this new wave, ukactive (formerly the Fitness Industry Association) is strategically placed to co-ordinate the efforts of the health, sport and fitness industries in tackling the UK's inactivity epidemic. With obesity taking a heavy toll on the NHS, the statistics highlight the need for action.

At present, 37,000 deaths in England could be prevented each year if everyone were sufficiently active, according to Public Health England. The financial cost of inactivity currently stands at £10bn (\$16.7bn, €12.1bn) a year – set to grow to £50bn (\$83.7bn, €60.7bn) by 2050 if unchecked – while a study in the October 2013 edition of the *British Medical Journal* found that exercise was equally or more effective than drugs in treating leading causes of death like heart disease, stroke and diabetes. With so much at stake, there is clearly a golden opportunity for the sport and fitness industries to take the burden



Having joined the UK fitness industry in 1989, Stalker witnessed the sector's meteoric rise and rapid expansion

(and a healthy chunk of funding) from the NHS, by presenting themselves as credible public health delivery partners.

Step forward ukactive CEO David Stalker, whose organisation hopes to tap into the need for a delivery partner for physical activity. A rugby player in his youth, Stalker's imposing frame is offset by a light disposition.

Having started out as a part-time fitness instructor, Stalker has been well-placed to observe the fitness industry's meteoric

rise. The married father-of-two grew up in Kenya, before moving to the UK and taking up his first instructor role at the Royal Berkshire Club in 1989.

He quickly climbed the ladder and held senior roles at Bladerunner, Leisure Connection and First Leisure prior to joining ukactive. Since becoming the not-for-profit body's CEO in April 2011, Stalker has played a key role in widening ukactive's scope for promoting physical activity and oversaw the organisation's name change.

## REBRANDING FITNESS

When the FIA announced its rebranding as ukactive in November 2012, many in the industry saw this as a shrewd move. By shifting its focus from the crowded and overstretched Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), towards the Department of Health (DoH), ukactive was suddenly in the thick of the action.

The body and its 3,500 members – which include public and private facility operators, local authorities, training companies and equipment suppliers – we're now well-placed to engage in debates surrounding physical inactivity, and by extension, the obesity crisis it had sparked. Others also believe that the move meant ukactive and its members were in a better position to attract government/public funding for physical activity schemes promoting healthier lifestyles, although Stalker contends that this wouldn't be a fair assessment of ukactive's motives.



## Background to ukactive

Founded as the Fitness Industry Association in 1991, ukactive is a not-for-profit advocate of physical activity. It comprises of more than 3,500 members, including fitness facility operators, local authority leisure centres, leisure trusts, outdoor fitness providers, trainers, sports providers, education and training providers, lifestyle companies, equipment suppliers and charities. With a motto of 'More people, more active, more often,' the body exists to serve any organisation with a role to play in, or benefit to be gained from getting more people, more active.



ukactive's partners include many sports-related organisations, such as StreetGames

"Funding was irrelevant in the whole thinking," he says. "It was a really bold move by ukactive and we talked to a lot of people asking whether it was right to be moving into the whole physical activity fold.

"But through time, we'd gone from representing the private sector to having members and partners within the public and the third sectors and even big businesses, such as Asda and Coca-Cola. All these people have funds and charities, and they were looking to be involved in physical activity, so we felt our attention should lie with the DoH."

According to Stalker, the DoH recognises the term 'physical activity,' while 'fitness' is a word it tends to shy away from as the focus is simply on getting people more active. "Does it give us the opportunity to bid for more funding?" asks Stalker. "I think it gives us the opportunity to position our members and stakeholders in bids; it gives us reasons to help them be involved in bids, but I don't think it really has opened the door – there isn't exactly a flurry of money coming through."

**One way to become a public health delivery partner is to stop the hyperbole and become evidence-based**

## WORKING TOGETHER

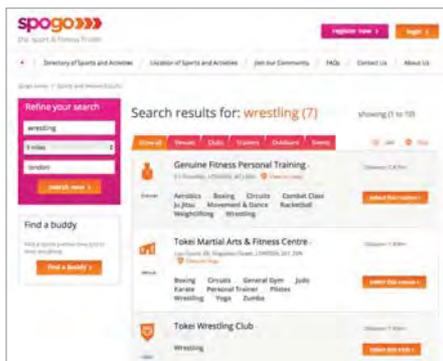
Stalker is also mindful of treading on the toes of bodies already working in the physical activity arena and says ukactive is determined to work with, rather than against them. He says it's important that it "earns the right" to take part in these discussions. "We have to say we've got something to bring to the table, some knowledge about physical activity, and we think we can help. But actually we'd rather be in the background helping them beat

their drum harder and be more successful than be in the foreground on those particular things."

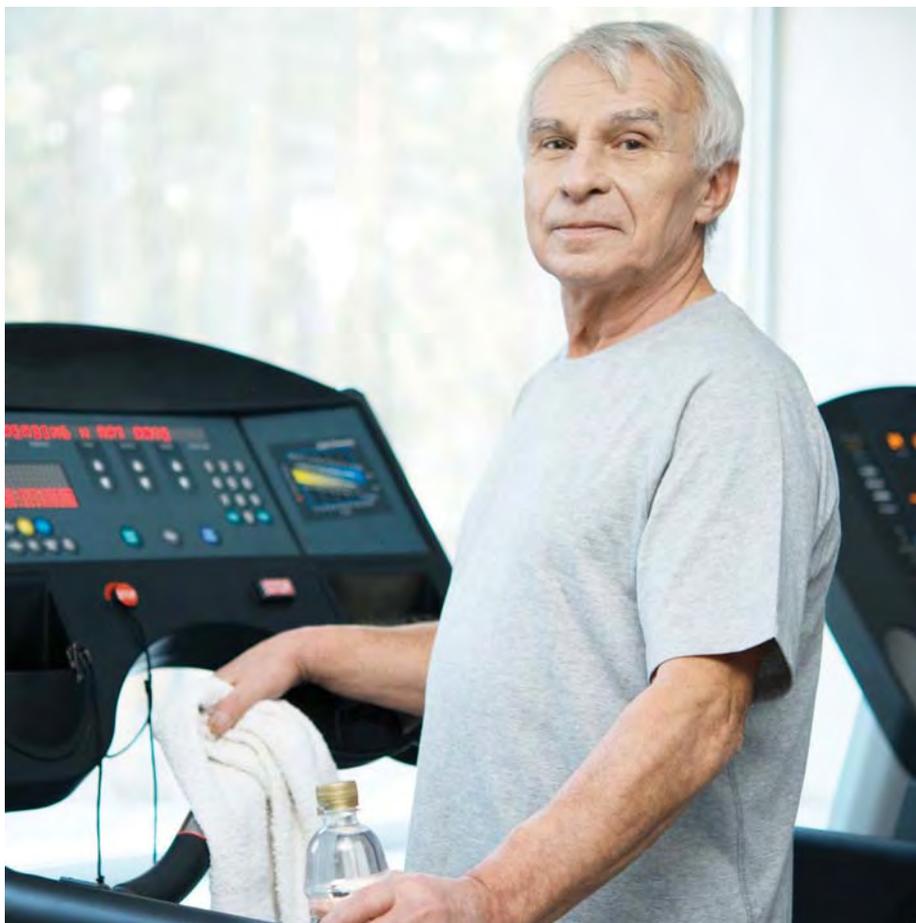
In terms of how the fitness and sport industries actually go about working together, Stalker believes jointly investing in people, through training and developing defined career paths, should be the focus. He says the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA), of which he is a trustee, has a key role to play in this, although admits the institute has had a "stumbling start."

The institute, seen as essential for ensuring industry-wide standards of professionalism, probably wouldn't have received its charter mark if it wasn't for the London Olympics, Stalker admits. It subsequently failed to hit the membership numbers required to be a sustainable entity, prompting a trustee review which sought advice from 300 industry professionals about the best way to proceed.

The industry was unanimous that having a chartered institute was the "right thing to do" according to Stalker, who says that ►



Working together with Sport England, ukactive launched the digital legacy project SPOGO in July 2012



► CIMSPA's transitional management team are in the process of turning things around while the board seeks a new CEO and chair for the institute.

“There is lots of enthusiasm and that’s been reflected in the industry, because membership has now started growing again,” Stalker says. “All the big operators of fitness and leisure and sports facilities have made commitments, not just commitments in ‘yes, Dave, we’ll follow it’, they’ve actually put their hands in their pockets, while Sport England has agreed to help us in driving that forward.”

Another area where sport and health and fitness have combined with mixed results has been SPOGO, which was launched to much fanfare by Sport England and ukactive in July 2012 as the ‘digital legacy’ of the Olympics. The customer-facing online service, estimated to have cost £2m (\$3.3m, €2.4m) in lottery funding, was designed to make searching and finding physical activities simple, with plans for the service to offer digital access and booking processes to every sports club, leisure centre, playing field and community centre.

Heralded as the key to boosting physical activity, particularly among youths, the service has drawn criticism for its lack of visibility and effectiveness.

“It has been as successful as I thought it would be but I would’ve thought by now we would hopefully have decided which way we were going in terms of the consumer and funding,” says Stalker, who describes it as an “outstanding concept”. “My view is that SPOGO can never really



Getting people of all ages more active is a cornerstone of ukactive’s strategy (above). The *Turning the Tide of Inactivity* report was published in January 2013 (left)

fulfil its potential until it is really exposed to the consumer, so we need to do more consumer marketing working with key cities.

I think Sport England agrees with that entirely and the team here have been doing more things like that, but it needs significant funding to do some really big consumer things.”

**THE TURNING TIDE**

One area where ukactive has enjoyed resounding success is with its recent *Turning the Tide of Inactivity* report, which outlined the extent of England’s inactivity pandemic in shocking detail. The hard-hitting report reached an estimated 24 million UK citizens thanks to extensive media coverage, combining existing figures with freedom of information (FOI) requests to illustrate the extent of physical inactivity.

According to Stalker, the report, and particularly the FOI requests, was borne out of the dearth in currently available data. The industry as a whole,

he says, needs to be able to make a case for funding through evidence-based arguments, and show exactly where it can make a difference and by how much.

“I see *Turning the Tide* going on to work with partners like Public Health England, DoH, Sport England and various others, saying how do we get more data to substantiate the situation we’re in and the differences that can be made?”

The report highlights how English local authorities spend, on average, 2,000 per cent more on sexual health than on promoting physical activity. It also claims that increasing physical activity levels by just 1 per cent a year would save the UK economy £1.2bn (\$2bn, €1.5bn) over the next five years.

With an eye on the upcoming 2015 general elections, Stalker adds that the objective was to demonstrate how small percentage changes can lead to substantial figures. This is essential if they are to persuade all political parties of the need to tackle inactivity and ensure it appears on their election manifestos.

“We’re in touch with the political parties on an almost daily basis,” he says. “We have to stop the hyperbole and become evidenced-based – here’s the fact, here’s the difference, here’s the number; this is the difference it’s going to make and here’s the evidence. And then we can be a public health delivery partner.” •



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# MONEY GAMES



A welcomed legacy of the London 2012 Games has been an increase in consumer spending on sport. Themis Kokolakis from Sheffield Hallam University's Sports Industry Research Centre (SIRC) looks at the figures

A very important question in the sport economy is its relationship with economic growth. Throughout the years that we've monitored the sport economy at SIRC (we keep detailed data going back to 1985) invariably sport spending declines in real terms each time we face recession. This is not surprising; sport follows the general leisure spending pattern where people, at times of hardship, firstly sacrifice aspects of their leisure life. For example, an expensive health club membership can be replaced by a much cheaper involvement in a sports club. To establish this fundamental behaviour Table 1

TABLE 1 LONG-TERM PATTERNS IN SPORT SPENDING GROWTH

	Sport spending growth %	Household spending growth %	Recession (GDP)
1990	-0.9%	+0.8%	
1991	-1.5%	-1.6%	x
1995	-0.03%	+1.8%	
2006	-0.5%	+1.8%	
2008	-2.4%	-0.9%	x
2009	-4.1%	-3.6%	x
2010	+2.9%	+1.0%	
2011	+0.6%	-0.5%	
2012	+3.9%	+1.2%	
2013	+2.2%	+1.8%	

includes data of growth (or decline), in real terms, that occurred in the overall household spending and its sporting element, together with observations about recessions in the economy. All these data are methodologically consistent and comparable over time, going back to 1990.

Two clear statements can be established. Firstly, each recession in the past 25 years has been accompanied by a fall in both total household spending (in real terms) and its sporting component. Secondly, in all the pre-2010 data the sport economy did not require a recession to decline. A weak, sub 2 per cent growth in overall household expenditure would bring about a decline in



While overall activity levels in the UK have fallen steadily, spending on sports goods, clothing and equipment has experienced growth



The SIRC figures show that, following London 2012, there has been a 31 per cent increase in spending on participation sport



The total value of the sport market in the UK in 2013 was £25.8bn – representing a growth of 2.2 per cent in real terms. Sport is expected to grow by a further 2 per cent in 2014, reaching £27bn in total value



sport spending. This was clearly the case in 1990, in 1995 and in 2006.

Hence, for more than 25 years (prior to 2010) the general principle was that for the sport market to grow in real terms the overall household expenditure would need to grow by at least 2 per cent year-on-year. Sport spending was relatively down the list of priorities in the household budget. Indirectly it was a question of how much a household valued sport goods and services relative to other goods and services.

This introduces the obvious question of whether the London Olympic Games had an impact on consumers' valuation of sport. Already, through recent

TABLE 2 2010-2013 TRENDS

2010-2013 trends	Real growth
Sport-related consumer spending	7%
Household spending	2.5%
GDP	3%

research, we know that major sport events have a significant impact on the inspiration of the local population. The interpretation of such an 'inspiration' is unclear, yet it is reasonable to assume that both participation and consumer preferences would be affected. In the case of the Olympics the most intensive stage of preparations started in 2010.

This coincided with an acceleration of construction activity and a greater media presence than before. 2010 was also the first year out of the 2008-9 recession. Hence it's very interesting to explore how the sport market behaved: is it the same story as explained earlier, or have the Olympics, already from its preparation stage, changed the conventional character of the market?

Between 2010 and 2013, changes in overall household spending ranged from a decline of -0.5 per cent in 2011, to a growth of 1.8 per cent. Under the pre-2010 paradigm, sport spending should have been in a continuous decline each year

TABLE 1 2013 SPORT-RELATED CONSUMER SPENDING

	Current value £m	Volume growth % 2010-13
Admissions	1,086	23%
Sports goods	1,652	12%
Bicycles	1,026	
Boats	1,546	
Participation Sport	1,991	31%
Health & Fitness	2,589	
Clothing sales	3,633	10%
Footwear sales	1,779	27%
Travel	1,341	
Books and magazines	274	
Newspapers	408	
TV sport	3,222	
Skiing holidays	733	
Football pools	134	
Gambling: off course	2,579	
Gambling on course, online	1,454	10%
Other	380	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25,827</b>	<b>7%</b>

► throughout this period. Yet the opposite occurred. Consumer spending on sport increased, often at double the rates of growth in overall expenditure.

In 2011, a year before the Games, while total household spending declined by -0.5 per cent, the sport economy moved in the opposite direction – increasing in size. The experience of 2010-13 suggests a new sporting landscape where consumers’ preferences have shifted in favour of sporting goods and services. As Table 2 illustrates, during 2010-13 the sport economy grew by 7 per cent in real terms, compared to a 3 per cent growth in GDP and 2.5 per cent in household spending.

This suggests the possibility of expanding business potential and at the same time increasing sports participation. The new profile of the sport economy, growing substantially during economic slowdown, creates new economic opportunities for the sector in terms of commercial funding (likely to be undervalued as now sport represents a lesser risk), and much greater returns to the central government in the form of taxes.

A more detailed look of 2013 sport-related spending estimates reveals further dynamics. The total value of the sport market in the UK in 2013 was £25.8bn representing a growth of 2.2 per cent in real terms. This is contrasted to a smaller change in overall household spending (1.8 per cent) and an even weaker growth of



The London 2012 Olympic Games have resulted in a boost in bicycle sales for all ages

### The increase in admissions was mostly realised within a single year and is mostly related to the Olympics

GDP at 1.5 per cent, validating the post-2010 shift in the market. Sport is expected to grow further by 2 per cent in 2014 reaching £27bn in value.

Table 3 illustrates the detailed distribution of the UK sport market in 2013 (estimates). This is combined with the most dynamic growth rates for the period 2010-13 in real terms. Clearly the most important markets are participation-related. Participation sport itself excluding health and fitness leads the way in terms of

growth (31 per cent) followed by footwear (27 per cent), admissions (23 per cent) and sport goods (12 per cent). The increase in admissions was mostly realised within a single year (2011) and is mostly related to the Olympics. The most dynamic category of participation sport is to a great extent related to the UK’s 151,000 sport clubs.

The latter increased their participating adult membership by 21 per cent during the period 2011-13, a trend consistent with our estimates of participation-related spending (based on Family Spending statistics). Despite the disproportionate ‘weight’ of the Games, admission spending, in growth terms, fell below two important participation-related categories, bringing justifiable expectations for sports participation growth in the future. ●

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# SWEATING THE ASSETS

**W**e've all seen them, running, usually by the side of a busy road, even in the pouring rain. Usually they're head down, struggling against the wind. Or else, upright like a clockwork soldier. Face a contorted mask, apparently feeling every drop of rain, gust of wind and jarring contact with the pavement. Or, a mask of concentration, seemingly oblivious to anything other than the next step.

We give them names: joggers, masochists, nutters. But apart from the occasional jogging club outing; when we see these people, they're usually on their own. Unless, that is, you live in Nottingham, Cambridge, Hyde or Castleford, where every week passers-by will see a procession of bright yellow jerseys bobbing up and down by the roadside. Some pushing ever onwards at a lively pace, others huffing and puffing

**Sports retailers are investing time and effort in providing community-based activities in order to strengthen brand loyalty and awareness. One of these is Sweatshop, a specialist provider of running shoes and clothing**

like asthmatics down a coal mine. Some walking, others talking. Some even allow themselves the occasional smile.

## ALL TOGETHER NOW

This sea of yellow-clad joggers can mean only one thing – a Sweatshop running community. There are 120 of these groups around the country, with around 25,000 members, 3,000 of whom run every week.

Sweatshop is the chain of sports footwear and clothing shops founded by Roger Bannister's running buddy, Chris

Brasher way back in 1971. Sweatshop's managing director, Nick Pearson, a former Great Britain junior middle distance runner, explains that the company wanted to give local people of all ages and abilities the opportunity to run for free, and at their own pace. The first running community was set up in 2011 in Teddington.

"We want people to run as part of their everyday lifestyle not to see running as a fitness fad or something only the super fit can do," he says, and adds that the running communities meet at



There are now 120 Sweatshop running clubs around the UK



their local Sweatshop store or a nearby clubhouse, every week. Members run a pre-determined route around their town or city, before arriving back at base for a stretch, a chat and maybe some refreshments. The groups run under the guidance of running leaders. That's one of the store's staff members who has taken a UK Athletics course, especially designed for the company.

**MAKING FRIENDS**

Pearson explains that many people find starting with a running group intimidating.

This, he says, is what the running communities were set up to overcome. "Maybe someone doesn't know where to look to find a group in the first place, or believes that the physical challenge will be beyond them," he says. "They might feel too self-conscious to run around the streets in Lycra or think that everyone at a gym or a club will be fitter and healthier than they are."

During their first few Sweatshop sessions, beginners learn how to run and gradually build up their proficiency. It's a

six to eight week programme, designed to help people with no running ability move towards being able to run continuously – at their own pace – for five kilometres.

Beginners start off running for a while, then walking for a while, then running again, walking and so on. Each week, they run a bit more and walk a bit less. A back marker moves very slowly along the course to make sure no one gets left behind. "The idea is that beginners improve a little bit each time," Nick Pearson says. "The groups are for everyone," Pearson says. "You can join in whether you're training for a marathon or have a problem running to catch the bus."

More experienced runners race their friends, try to beat their personal bests or practice for big races. From fitness freaks to fun runners; everyone runs how far and how fast they want.

Members get their yellow Sweatshop jersey after they've completed five runs. After twenty five, they get a free



Sweatshop's MD, Nick Pearson

nutrition pack. After thirty, it's a sweatshop foam roller and after fifty a free pair of running shoes up to the value of £100. "Whereas at clubs, members come together to meet the goals of the organisation – winning a race, doing well in the league," Nick Pearson says, "in a Sweatshop running community people come together to pursue individual goals."

**FIRST STEPS**

The very first Sweatshop store opened in Teddington as Chris Brasher's Sporting Emporium. Back then, in 1971, running was still a niche sport and the 1956 Olympic 3,000m steeplechase gold medallist was annoyed that he and his friends couldn't easily find the right kit.

At first, Brasher, who also set the pace for the first half of Roger Bannister's 1954 four minute mile, sold kit out of the back of his car. Then he imported the stuff and finally, opened the shop. ▶

### The runner's view

#### Katrina Hallett, Plymouth SRC

I joined to get fit enough to run a half marathon. I hadn't run before, but now I go along as much as possible.

It has been great for my fitness, as not so long ago, I took a health and safety medical at work and was close to being declared medically unfit (now I can complete the whole fitness test).

I've made some brilliant friends at the running community and have great fun running, something I didn't think was possible. I look forward to the Monday and Thursday evening sessions.



The 120 Sweatshop clubs have a total of 25,000 members – of which 3,000 run every week

- It was twenty years before Sweatshop opened shops two and three. By then, Brasher had conceived of, and co-organised, the first London Marathon. Two years after he competed in the 1979 New York marathon alongside fun runners, for the first time. When Nick Pearson joined the company in 1994, Sweatshop had just opened its fifth store, all of them in south-east London. By 2000, Sweatshop had fourteen stores around the UK.

Then came the running boom, in the early 2000s, and with increasing demand for running, among all ages, including teenagers, Sweatshop spread out, and now has 120 stores.

Running has become one of Britain's most popular physical activities, and the running communities helped Sweatshop build brand loyalty with a rapidly increasing group of people. But like Chris Brasher, who died in 2003, Nick Pearson wanted the company to do something tangible for running and runners. Sweatshop started supporting Parkrun, back in 2004,

when no more than twenty or so people would show up. Now, 500,000 take part annually. Sweatshop also provides free kit for thirty six elite junior athletes every year, and has Olympic Gold medallist, Christine Ohuruogu mentoring them. With Portsmouth University, the company is involved in a research project on breast health and how sports bras can help stop teenage girls from giving up on running.

"We knew we actually had to do something, or all the talk of helping runners would just come across as corporate BS,"

Nick Pearson says and adds that Sweatshop staff do a bespoke course in biomechanics at the University of Roehampton. "It's important that our staff know how people's bodies move while we're running. That way they can give customers informed advice." Staff also attend a course in bra-fitting and breast health at the University of Bedford.

Pearson hopes that as existing running communities grow and with more shops opening, membership will rise to more than 50,000 in the next few years. The company is currently creating a digital platform to keep running community members informed about upcoming events and their individual progress.

Last year, six hundred runners, all kitted out in Sweatshop yellow jersey's turned out for the annual Westminster mile. Individual stores as far away as Manchester and Yorkshire put on buses to get their community members to the event. Pearson hopes to take 1,000 runners to this year's event. "We want those people who come along to our running communities to feel part of something bigger," he says. "Something that has both a local and a national identity." ●

### The runner's view

#### Graham Clark, Edinburgh SRC

I felt very proud the day I got my Sweatshop club running shirt and the tangible sense of achievement from having my card stamped each week was a real encouragement. I went to

SRC religiously and had worked out when I was off duty, booked baby-sitters and begged lifts so that I wouldn't miss a week. Add to this the fact that my general level of fitness was rising rapidly and I was losing weight constantly meant that I was becoming fitter than I had ever been in my adult life.



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# FIELD OF JEANS

The opening of the Levi's Stadium this August is being heralded as the dawn of a new era for stadium design. The venue, the new home of the famed San Francisco 49ers, has been described as the most technologically advanced building in sports

**W**hen the San Francisco 49ers move to their new stadium later this year, it will mark the end of a long journey.

The franchise, one of the most successful in the history of the National Football League (NFL), first tabled plans to build a new stadium back in 1996. Despite the city of San Francisco supporting the plans and offering a US\$100m grant to help build the new venue in 1997, the project, however, ran into trouble due to changes in the team's ownership and differences of view over the way the project should be handled.

The plans then spent a decade in a state of flux, until San Francisco major Gavin Newsom launched a bid, in early 2006, to bring the 2016 Olympic Games to the city – rekindling the plans for a new flagship stadium. The new proposals, announced in late 2006, were based on the construction of a new stadium at the site of the 49ers' current home, the 69,700-capacity Candlestick Park. Another disagreement – this time over



## Stadium stats

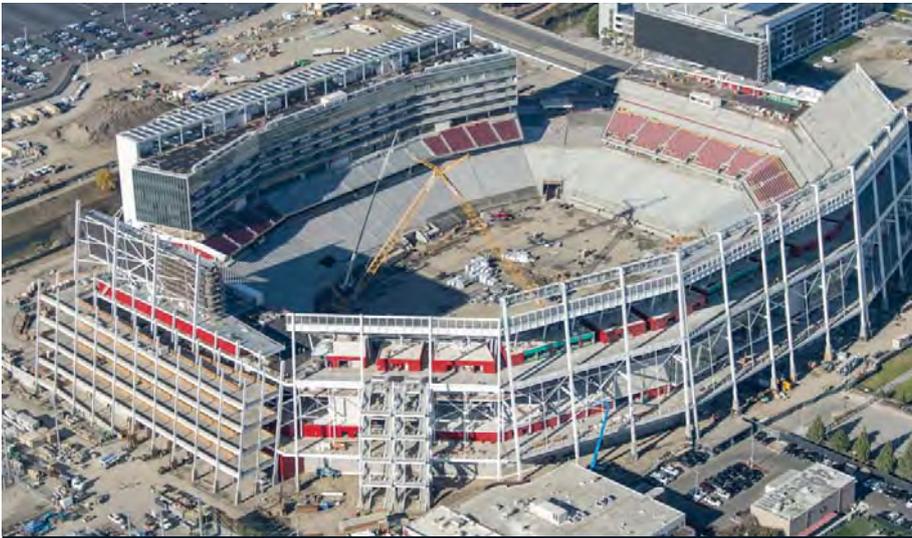
- Designer/architect:** HNTB
- Project manager:** Hathaway Consulting
- Structural engineer:** Magnusson Klemencic Associates
- Opening date:** August 2014
- Cost to build:** US\$1.2bn
- Total footprint:** 176,515sq m (1.9 million sq ft)
- Capacity:** 68,500 (standard, can be expanded to 75,000)
- Total sq ft of scoreboards:** 13,600
- Retail points of sale:** 370
- Restroom fixtures:** 1,135

the use of space (the 49ers weren't happy with a planned housing estate as part of the deal) – saw the plans stall again.

To avoid another long delay and to ensure the team would finally be able to move out of its ageing Candlestick Park, the 49ers' owners – the York family, led by CEO Jed York – made a radical decision; to tear up all existing plans and explore relocation to Santa Clara, a city 40 miles away from San Francisco – removing the need for a large-scale stadium – ended the city's Olympic ambitions and angered state officials, the city council in Santa Clara pounced on the opportunity to bring a big-name sports franchise into town. Negotiations over potential locations began in 2008 and a final approval was given in June 2010. Construction work began later that year – 13 years after the first plans for a new stadium were tabled.

## KEEPING IT GREEN

Designed by architects HNTB, the 68,500-capacity Santa Clara stadium will



Construction work will be completed in July and the stadium will officially open in August

### Five fascinating facts...

- 1 The stadium's lower bowl will have 35 rows of seats; the first row will only be about 10 feet away from the playing surface
- 2 The stadium's natural grass has been growing for more than a year at West Coast Turf in Livingston, California
- 3 The 20,000sq ft 49ers Museum will be sponsored by Sony and will host sports education programmes for youths
- 4 American footballers are big men - the 49ers locker room will feature 10ft-tall walnut-wood lockers.
- 5 At 48ft tall and 200ft wide, the stadium's two video scoreboards are the largest of their kind in outdoor arenas.

be an open stadium with a natural grass field. It will feature landscaped pedestrian plazas, commercial community space, a 49ers superstore and a Hall of Fame and museum dedicated to the history of the team. The 49ers have secured a 20-year, US\$220m stadium naming deal with clothing giant Levi Strauss & Co, which will see the venue called "Levi's Stadium".

The stadium's design allows it to cater for wide range of events – from football and motocross to concerts and civic events. To add to its versatility, capacity will be expendable to 75,000 for major events that require a smaller playing field. The stadium is also designed to meet the FIFA requirements for international-level association football, which will allow the stadium to host international friendly matches and major tournaments.

What makes the Levi's stadium special, however, is the level of environmental sustainability and technology built into it. The venue is currently one of the largest buildings registered with the US Green Building Council and the first stadium that will have both a green roof and solar panels. It has already been widely touted as the greenest stadium in the US.

In total the stadium will boast 20,000sq ft of solar photovoltaic panels, supplied by local company SunPower. The panels will

be used to generate power all year round, offsetting the electricity that is used during the 49ers home games. For the power it needs to buy in from electricity suppliers, the 49ers have signed an agreement with energy giant NRG Energy to ensure sustainable power is being used. Through the unique partnership, NRG will help the new facility become the first professional football stadium to open with LEED certification, the recognized standard for measuring building sustainability.

Further green initiatives and solutions include a high-efficiency geothermal water system and a unique "green roof", which will include a waterproof membrane covered with plants. The roof will absorb rainwater, provide eco-friendly insulation and help lower urban air temperatures and mitigate the heat island effect. The greywater within the stadium will be recycled and reused throughout venue. There will also be public transit access and convenient bicycle parking to cut down the use of cars.

San Francisco 49ers project executive Jack Hill says sustainability is at the centre of the design. "We've incorporated a lot of energy saving measures within the stadium itself and we're incorporated green thinking into everything we do – such as recycling most of the construction debris."





The 49ers' chief of technology Kunal Malik – one of Silicon Valley's leading tech experts

THE VISION FOR LEVI'S STADIUM HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO CREATE THE ULTIMATE FAN EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE USE OF INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

► TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

Not only will Levi's Stadium be one of the most eco-friendly in the world, but it will also be one of the most technologically advanced. According to CEO Jed York, the aim is to have a ticketless, cashless building by enabling visitors to present their passes, order food and purchase goods by using nothing but their mobile devices. Fans' tablets and smart phones will also act as personal entertainment centres, information points and scoreboards thanks to the 49ers mobile app.

The app, custom designed to be used in the stadium, will feature a "real-time dashboard" for game-day fan tech features and a data analytics suite for use by the team's executives. The idea is to allow fans to step away from their seats – to visit bathrooms or to make purchase at retail and F&B points – without missing any action. The app will feature a live feed of the game, replays, stats and even a function displaying queuing times at the stadium's various points of sale.

For the app to work, though, fans must have reliable access to the internet – and a lot of bandwidth. This in mind, the stadium is set to have the best publicly accessible Wi-Fi network of a sports facility anywhere in the US. What makes it so special is that it should allow all 68,500 fans to have

access to high-speed internet simultaneously. Until now, the limits of large-scale bandwidth have meant that stadium operators have found it impossible to build a network that would let every single fan connect at once. To solve the issue, The 49ers utilised the stadium's closeness to Silicon Valley and recruited two top class IT professionals.

The club's chief technology officer is Kunal Malik, regarded as one of Silicon Valley's leading tech experts and the man who led the creation of the IT department at Facebook. He is partnered by senior IT director, Dan Williams, who spent four years at Facebook. The pair have announced plans to have a terabit of capacity within the stadium. That means that even if every single fan would bring an internet device to use at the game, each smart phone and tablet would still have around 15mb to use.

Speaking at the SVForum sports technology conference in Palo Alto in December 2013, Malik said: "Working on the Levi's Stadium is like taking a blank piece of paper and redefining the fan



The app has a range of in-game features

experience. We wanted to make sure fans would be able to move around the stadium without missing any of the play – but couldn't find anyone who was doing it in real-time so we had to design and produce it ourselves"

Those who prefer a traditional scoreboard won't be disappointed either. Daktronics have supplied two gigantic, 48ft tall HD-quality screens which will be placed at either end of the stadium. There is also a 3.6ft-tall "ribbon" border display that will wrap around the length of the 1,650ft inner bowl.

Club president Gideon Yu said: "The vision for Levi's Stadium is to create the ultimate fan experience through the use of innovative technology. The partnership between Sony and Daktronics will outfit the stadium with ground-breaking visual elements, setting its in-stadium experience apart from all other outdoor sports venues and rivaling the home viewing option."

The stadium hosts its first event on 2 August when the San Jose Earthquakes and Seattle Sounders take on each other at a one-off Major League Soccer game. ●

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# STADIUM TOUR

Tom Anstey takes a look at the stadium projects currently underway in the UK and Ireland – from a Gaelic Athletic Association stadium in Belfast to a £100m non-league venue



## ■ Making the case for GAA

Ireland's sports minister Carál Ní Chuilín has reached an agreement with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) on a funding agreement of more than £62m for the £76m redevelopment of Casement Park in West Belfast.

Work on the 38,000 all-seater stadium is due to start in early 2014 with a view to hosting GAA Games in 2016.

Heron Buckingham's JV – a consortium led by County Derry-based developer's Heron Bros and supported by stadium development specialist the Buckingham Group – has been appointed as contractor

for the development which will comprise replace the existing Casement stadium.

Additional facilities will include a new playing surface to established GAA standards, creation of conference/ corporate and community facilities, player facilities, press centre and upgrading of the stadium lighting.

The project was green-lighted by environment minister Mark H Durkan in December 2013 and is part of the government's policy to upgrade the three major sports grounds in Belfast – association football's Windsor Park (see p. 46) and Ulster's rugby ground at Ravenhill.

Sports minister Ní Chuilín described the

The new Casement Park stadium in Belfast will be home to Antrim GAA – the only Ulster county to appear in an All-Ireland hurling final

planning approval as a key milestone for the city of Belfast.

"Stadium and major venue development is not just about sport and the benefits associated with sport," she said. "It is also about maximising social opportunities around major capital investments.

"This is a hugely important development for the people of West Belfast."



The design of the stadium will feature flowing lines of external cladding and an undulating roof

## ■ Tottenham plans 20-acre stadium project

Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur has received planning permission for a 56,250 capacity, all-seater stadium in north London. Designed by the KSS Group, the venue will form part of the larger Northumberland Development Project – comprising 275 homes, a primary school, a university technical college specialising in sports, a supermarket and a public square for community events.

The entire project will cover 20 acres (80,000sq m) and the design will feature

Tottenham chair Daniel Levy sees the new stadium as a crucial factor in its plans to become a regular Champions League team

flowing lines of external cladding, an undulating roof and the club colours to create a visually striking building.

Spurs has not announced the projected cost of the stadium, although it is estimated at around £400m.

Haringey Council has granted planning permission for the project and also pledged to invest £9m towards improvements of the area, while London mayor Boris Johnson has also pledged £18m of public money towards the scheme.

## ■ Talks for Aberdeen's Loirston stadium back on

Scottish Premier League side Aberdeen FC has re-entered talks to build a new £50m stadium to replace its Pittodrie stadium.

The new venue is to be located near the city's Cover Bay and Loirston Loch. Plans originally put forward by the club to build a 21,000-seat stadium at Loirston were put on hold in August 2012 when Aberdeen City Council rejected the plans.

However, Aberdeen FC's chair Stewart Milne has said



Aberdeen FC remains confident of securing the Loirston site

that talks are now back on and advancing well.

"We still see Loirston as the best location for the stadium

and in recent months have reopened discussions with the Council," he said. "We've invested a lot of money into

the Loirston site and believe it is the best option."

The club intends to fund the venture partly by selling its current Pittodrie Stadium for a housing development. The housing project received outline planning approval from the council in April 2011.

Barr Construction has been named the preferred contractor for the proposed stadium. It is expected that training facilities for the club will be in place before the stadium relocation.



## ■ Brentford looks to break into the big time

League One football club Brentford has moved forward plans to build a new 20,000-seat stadium in west London.

The club has named Willmott Dixon as its preferred development partner for the project, which also includes 910 new homes. The plans will see Brentford move from Griffin Park stadium, its home since 1904 – and move to the new location on Lionel Road South.

The new homes will be built adjacent to the new stadium – on the site of

The stadium will provide the club with a sustainable future as well as create new homes by regenerating a brownfield site

the club's Griffin stadium following its demolition. The surrounding area will also be regenerated with improvements to the environment and infrastructure.

The stadium is expected to be completed in time for the 2016-17 football season, while the homes will be built over a six-year period.

The project was master planned by FaulknerBrowns architects, while AFLS+P designed the stadium. Planning consent was given in December 2013.

## ■ Wait is over for Belfast's Windsor Park

The Northern Ireland Executive has allocated £28m towards the redevelopment of Windsor Park stadium in Belfast. The works will see Windsor Park become an 18,000 all-seater stadium with a series of phased works.

Plans include the demolition of both the Railway and South Stand structures to be replaced by new stands that will partially enclose the stadium, the complete renovation of the existing North and West Stands, and

construction of both new conferencing facilities and a new headquarters facility for the Irish FA. Field dimensions will remain at 110 x 75 yards and the stadium will be used as the home for Northern Ireland's national team and the home ground of Linfield FC. Planning permission for the redevelopment has already been granted, with the estimated cost of the project around £29.2m.

The redevelopment was finally given the green light



The stadium is scheduled to open in 2016

In December 2013, three months after the work was originally scheduled to begin. Ireland's sports minister Carál Ní Chuilín has signed off on £31m of funding to complete the project. Work is scheduled

to begin during 2014 and be completed in 2016.

The revamp will be part of the executive's £138m programme of stadium redevelopment throughout the region (see page 44).

The plans were unveiled by QPR in December 2013



## ■ Rangers looking to write new chapter at Old Oak

Queens Park Rangers Football Club is planning a new 40,000-seat stadium as part of a major regeneration project of the Old Oak area in west London.

Provisionally called New Queens Park, the scheme will see the stadium built alongside a new residential area with 24,000 homes and commercial space to include a 350-bedroom luxury hotel, studios, offices, cinemas and restaurants.

London mayor Boris Johnson recently announced that turning Old Oak into a new world-class city quarter is to be one of his main regeneration priorities for the city and that a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) – only the second after the Olympic Park development – is to be set up to promote it.

“Not only will this give us a top quality stadium to cater for QPR’s needs as the

club progresses and grows over the years ahead, but we’re very excited about being the driving force behind creating one of the best new urban places in the world,” said QPR chair Tony Fernandes. “It will create a vibrant new destination, boosting local businesses, attracting visitors and creating a thriving community.”

The club is working with Stadium Capital Developments on the project.

## ■ Iron Arena for Scunthorpe

Scunthorpe United Football Club (SUFC) has revealed ambitious plans for a new 12,000-capacity stadium.

SUFC chair, millionaire businessman Peter Swann, has been keen to provide the club with a new home and move from the 9,000-capacity Glanford Park to increase the club’s commercial opportunities. To be located close to the club’s current Glanford Park ground, the ‘Iron

Arena’ is set to be developed as part of a mixed-use project including a 120-bedroom hotel, a multi-use indoor arena, community sports pitches and a new transport hub.

The initial designs and master plan have been created by the Frank Whittle Partnership and include a sweeping curve on the main stand and a striking truss which pays homage to Scunthorpe’s steelwork history.



The masterplan was created by the Frank Whittle Partnership

## ■ Grimsby Town FC

Officials from Grimsby Town Football Club are currently conducting a search for a location to house a new 14,000-capacity stadium and retail facility for the non-league side.

North East Lincolnshire Council approved a 12-month period of exclusivity in November 2013 which the club will look at how land between Peaks Parkway and Weelsby Avenue could be redeveloped.

The club has sought a new stadium site for some time and, after losing a bid to use land in Great Coates, is focusing on the Peaks Parkway site, currently home to allotments and a former council depot.

## ■ Don Valley, Sheffield

Don Valley Stadium in Sheffield has been demolished to make way for a new £40m sports and wellbeing park – described as the most comprehensive Olympic legacy project outside London.

The plans include a complete redevelopment of the site with a new stadium at the heart of the development – providing a new home for the Sheffield Eagles (Rugby League) and Titans (Rugby Union) teams – as well as new venues for basketball, gymnastics and snooker. A high performance centre linked to Sheffield Hallam University and a National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine will also be created.

## ■ Basingstoke Town FC

Basingstoke Town FC has set its sights on a 5,000-seat football ground which would meet League One standards.

The scheme would be funded by replacing the existing Camrose stadium with a 90,000 sq ft (27,432 sq m) retail development. The £10m stadium development has received the backing of Basingstoke and Deane Council (BDC) and is to be located west of the Hilton Basingstoke hotel.

BTFC hope to begin the 2014-15 season in the new development.

Alongside the stadium, the club is also planning to establish a £500,000 all-weather training pitch.



Rovers' new 21,000-capacity home will meet all FIFA and IRU standards

## ■ Bristol Rovers to move north of the city

Bristol Rovers FC's plans for a new stadium have been given the green light after a legal challenge against the club and supermarket chain Sainsbury's was thrown out by the High Court.

The club needs funding from selling its existing ground to Sainsbury's to help pay for the new £40m stadium on the northern edge of the city. Rovers have already been given planning permission by South Gloucestershire Council to proceed with its new stadium development on

land next to the University of the West of England's Frenchay campus. The Arturus Architects-designed project will centre on the 21,700-seat stadium to provide a new home for the club. Gleeds, Pegasus Planning Consultants and TPA have also been involved with the plans.

The new venue will feature a bowl design and will meet all FIFA and International Rugby Union standards. Facilities will include a 1,280sq m gym, a 784sq m premium bar and conferencing space.

## ■ Concrete plans tabled for Cornwall's rugby stadium

Development company Inox has tabled proposals for the long awaited Stadium of Cornwall to be built at Threemilestone near Truro. Inox, which has already gained outline planning permission to build the stadium, has now secured an option on an additional 35 acres of land adjoining Langarth Farm.

The additional space would be used for a commercial development which, in turn, would fund the £15m, 10,000-seat stadium project.

Included within its structure, full training facilities for able-bodied and disabled athletes, and both professional and amateur athletes will be

included. It will also include physiotherapy suites.

Though no team has as yet been confirmed to be moving into the stadium, a trio of clubs – Cornish Pirates rugby team, Truro City Football Club and Truro Fencing Club – have all expressed their interest in relocating to the planned stadium.



The stadium would be the first-ever professional-standard sports venue to be built in Cornwall

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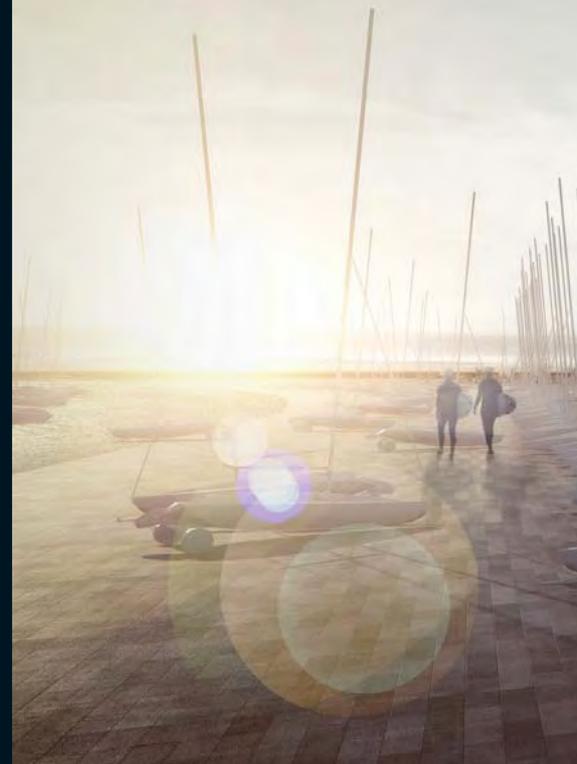
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FaulknerBrowns are involved in the Swansea Tidal Lagoon project and have designed the water sports centre and oyster hatchery



## ARCHITECT FOCUS

# FaulknerBrowns

Newcastle-based architects FaulknerBrowns have made their name as specialists in providing complex sports venues. We talk to senior partner Mike Hall about the practice, his career and the Aberdeen Aquatics Centre, which opens at Aberdeen Sports Village later this year

### MIKE HALL ON THE ABERDEEN AQUATICS CENTRE



#### How did you get involved with the Aberdeen Aquatics Centre project?

We won the Aberdeen project back in 2010 following an international competition under OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) regulations. The project was to provide much needed modern swimming and diving facilities in the north-east of Scotland.

#### What does the project consist of?

A 10-lane Olympic standard, 50m pool with seating for 500 spectators and a diving complex comprising of a full complement of boards and platforms up to 10m. Both tanks contain moveable floors providing flexibility to meet the requirements of all ages and abilities. The associated support accommodation includes steam and sauna suites, offices and multifunctional spaces.

#### Why did you separate the 50m pool from the 25m pool with diving facilities?

We looked very carefully at the functional and operational issues behind this decision. The typical configuration is to align these in a single pool hall such as the configuration at the London Aquatics Centre.

As Aberdeen will not be used as a major diving competition venue, we felt the advantages of separate halls for diving and swimming outweighed them being combined. It allows for a completely separate warm up/warm down pool for swimming competitions and flexibility of programming generally when there are different activities taking place. This decision, made on operational grounds, allowed us to express the two separate forms architecturally: one a simple elegant black box for swimming and the other, a taller sculptural curving form for diving.

#### What is your favourite part of the project?

I think the simple understated box for swimming with careful consideration of natural light has worked particularly well.

If I was a diver, however, I couldn't wait to be poised on the 10m platform so close to the spectators in such a dramatic intimate environment.

#### How was sustainability taken into account?

There were a couple of key opportunities that we have taken full advantage of. Firstly, we worked with a local combined



heat and power company to provide what is effectively considered off-site renewables. In addition to carbon reduction, this also allowed us to make some savings on plant space. The secondary opportunity was afforded by natural light in both pool halls. We undertook a number of studies to get the best balance between top lit roof lights and window wall lights whilst managing to keep pool water glare within acceptable limits. The quality of natural light in the space feels absolutely superb.

**What were the biggest challenges of the project?**

There were a number of design challenges. The site for the aquatics centre is quite tight but also sits near the University, adjacent to a recently completed major dry sport facility which forms part of the wider Aberdeen Sports Village. This has its own separate entrance at the other end of the site and we were required to link the two buildings in order to reduce some of the staffing costs. This was further complicated by a significant change of levels and a culvert running between the two buildings. Rather than



The facility will provide training facilities for the Commonwealth Games this summer

simply providing a link between the two, we wanted to celebrate the connection and have made it a central feature of the design with an expressed bridge morphing into a dynamic central top lit circulation route between the two pool halls

**Was there anything you would have liked to have done that you couldn't?**

We did a lot of work with a Dutch company to provide the latest technology for underwater video playback for coaching purposes. This uses software from the

bottling industry which stitches together imagery from a series of underwater cameras. We have the containment in place and, hopefully, fundraising will cover the costs of the cameras and software

**What reactions have you had to the designs so far?**

The design has created a huge amount of interest. The facility will provide some of the support and training facilities for the forthcoming Commonwealth Games to be held in Glasgow. The GB diving coaches are ▶



I still get a great buzz from seeing those initial scribbles turned into buildings – and being able to improve peoples' opportunities to take part in sport

► **What drew you to a career in architecture**

I always liked making things as a child and I enjoyed the usual construction toys like Lego, even contemplating engineering as a career and, hence, the decision to go to Bath University in the days of the great late Sir Ted Happold. Bath's architectural course had a common first year with the engineers all learning together in one environment. I thought I could switch at the end of the first year if need be, but realised my calling was as an architect .

**How did you start your career?**

My first proper job was at Aldington Craig and Collinge, working initially in their newly established Bath office where my main project was one of the Hampshire schools. Peter Aldington and my mentor, Donald Wilson, had both been tutors at Bath University and we shared an office with Mark Whitby's fledgling engineering practice. The recession of the early 90s was, however, a great opportunity to travel. I cycled around the world, ending up in Hong Kong where I worked on the new airport with Sir Norman Foster & Partners

**THROUGH THE TRACING PAPER**

**Mike Hall, sports partner at FaulknerBrowns**

**How would you describe your philosophy when it comes to architecture?**

As architects we have a unique responsibility to influence and shape our built environment. Our training empowers us to think laterally when solving problems.

This begins with understanding clients' needs and those of society in general. In the sports sector, we need a detailed appreciation of functional sporting user and operational requirements. Only then can we contemplate sporting innovation and fine architecture resulting from this. The musician must first practice his scales before composing new pieces.

**Where do you get your inspiration from?**

I have a diverse range of Interests outside architecture which I find helpful in creating the right mind set for solving problems and the creation of new ideas.

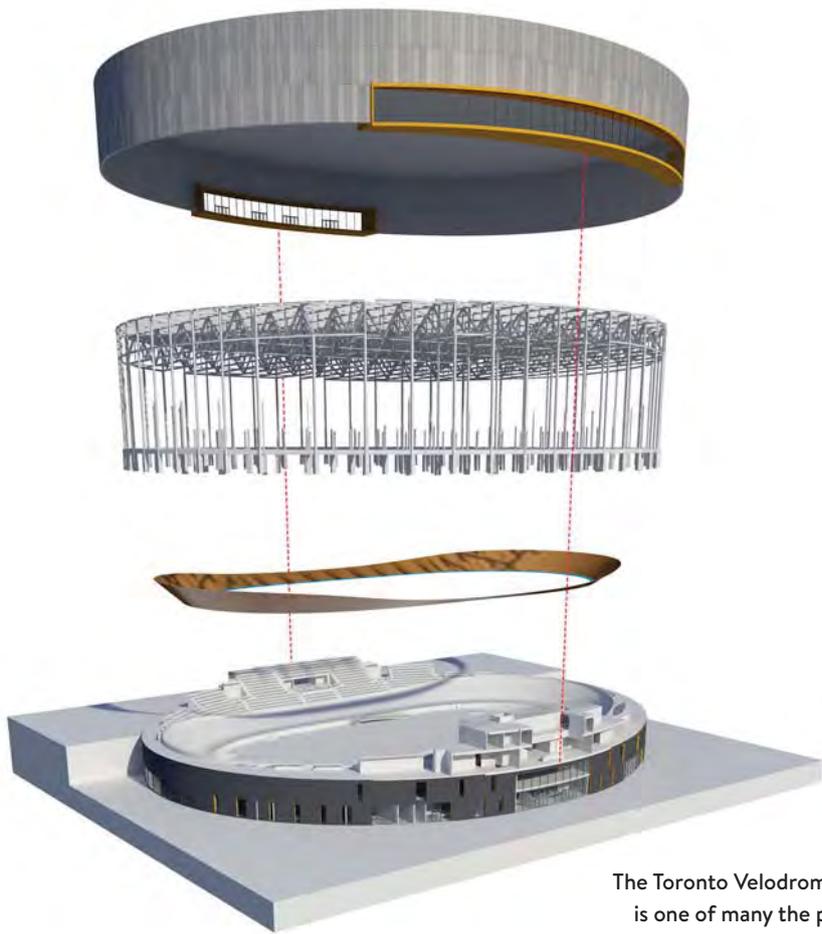
These include cycling, kayaking and Nordic skiing as well as bee-keeping and Cuban Salsa. I find they all have a contemplative dimension even if finding a ready place for the Moleskine notebook is a little challenging!

**Which architects do you admire?**

I was brought up on a diet of Le Corbusier, Louis Khan and Alvar Aalto. I travelled widely on the trail of Corb buildings in Europe and India. My most memorable architectural experience last year was a visit to Peter Zumthor's Kolumba Museum in Cologne, a truly masterful combination of light and detailing.

**What do you love about your job?**

I have a great job and wouldn't swap it. I work with some excellent people here in our Newcastle based office and lead the designs for some great sports projects



The Toronto Velodrome project is one of many the practice is working on overseas

The £65m dry sport facility in Den Haag will include a 3,000-seat elite arena and a sports academy

both nationally and internationally. I relish the range of challenges, whether it's working on a new standard for a swimming pool design or an innovative way in which building types can create stronger opportunities for participation and engaging with communities.

These buildings might have a three to five year start to completion, but it is truly inspirational seeing them take shape and then being well used. Even just having turned 50, I still get a great buzz seeing those initial scribbles turned into buildings and positively changing peoples' opportunities to take part in sport.

#### And what do you enjoy the least?

There isn't much I don't like really, although we all have the odd bad day at the office. Architecture is a broad church but, as a Partner, we have to manage design, finance and people.

Even though we have completed many sports buildings and have an excellent team, each building is still a prototype and invariably something goes wrong, to a greater or lesser extent, at some point. ●

## Background to FaulknerBrowns

FaulknerBrowns specialises in creating a wide range of sporting facilities and infrastructure for training, competition and community use. It has designed major, high performance centres in Sheffield, Gateshead, Manchester and Loughborough in the UK and at Apeldoorn and Den Haag in The Netherlands. During the run up to London 2012, more than ten of the overseas teams held their training camps at FaulknerBrowns-designed venues. Two of the London Olympic venues (White Water Centre at Lee Valley and the sailing complex at Weymouth) were designed by the firm – as were four of the venues for Manchester's 2002 Commonwealth Games.

In 2010, the firm was invited by ARUP to audit a master plan for an Olympic sporting complex in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan comprising a stadium, two arenas, velodrome and aquatics centre.

As well as the Olympic pool in Aberdeen, the company is currently involved in the Derby Sports Park project and the massive Tidal Lagoon project at Swansea Bay. The Tidal Lagoon will capture



Lee Valley White Water Centre in London

a body of water that can harness tidal currents to provide renewable energy for 120,000 homes. The body of water will be protected by the lagoon walls and provides a safe location for water sports including sailing and kite surfing.

Outside the UK, FaulknerBrowns is working on two velodromes in Canada, one for next year's Pan Am Games in the town of Milton, Toronto, and a community velodrome in Edmonton. It is also working on a £65m dry sport facility in Den Haag, Holland, which includes a 3,000 seat arena that integrates elite sport with academic training and learning. The project is a partnership between two schools and the local authority.

# Inspiring nations

The charity International Inspiration (IN) uses the power of sport to positively impact upon the lives of children and marginalised groups around the world. London 2012 Gold Medallist and IN trustee, Katherine Grainger, and IN's Robert Morini, discuss the past, present and future of IN

TOM WALKER, SPORTS MANAGEMENT





IN has reached more than 15 million children globally

**We're involved in a charity that's able to go out there and create opportunities. The programme really does make a difference to people's lives and I don't think we should ever stop trying to make that difference.**



Katherine Grainger

International Inspiration's foundations are firmly planted in a promise, one made by Lord Coe to the world in Singapore in 2005 as part of the UK's bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The promise was 'to reach young people all around the world and connect them to the inspirational power of the Games so they are inspired to choose sport'. This led to the International Inspiration Programme, IN's flagship international sport legacy initiative, the largest ever associated with an Olympic Games. At the heart of the International Inspiration Programme lay an ambitious aim, that of 'enriching the lives of 12 million children in 20 countries through the power of high quality and inclusive sport, physical education and play'.

barriers – be it social, economic or physical. With the programme coming to an end in 2014, and having far surpassed its original ambition, IN enters the second phase of its work on the crest of another promise: to capture the inspirational power of the Games in London by "keeping its flame alight and carrying the torch even further", engaging and empowering more generations through quality sport and physical activity.

IN aims to be inclusive, involving and is designed to inspire young people and those most excluded from basic rights and opportunities around the world.

**Why, and how, did you decide to get involved with IN?**

KG: "I was always aware of IN's projects so, when I was asked to be a part of it and come on board, I was massively flattered. It's an incredible charity and to be able to be on the board, to help influence, guide, support and advise, is a privilege. Knowing that you could help change the life of one person out there is an honour. I have to say that as a sports person who loves sports, it's wonderful to see the impact that sport has made globally. It's not projects that are trying to find the next superstar; it's not about inspiring the next Olympic or Paralympic champion – although that could be a by-product – it's about people learning about themselves and enhancing their lives through sport. As an athlete, as much as we all chase medals, titles and success, what we love about sport is the reach



Robert Morini

The end result has been something extraordinary – more than 15 million children and young people have been reached globally; 230,000 teachers, coaches and young leaders have been trained in quality, inclusive sport; and more than 40 national policies have been adopted, changed or implemented to promote better, safer physical education and activity in schools and communities around the world.

London 2012 was therefore more than just medals. Through the International Inspiration Programme, it inspired entire generations, individuals and communities around the world through sport. It demonstrated like no other Games that sport has the unique power to overcome

## MAJOR EVENT LEGACY

- ▶ it has and the difference and impact it makes in people's lives."

### Can you tell us about IN's history and its heritage?

RM: "The charity was borne out of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, particularly from the Singapore Promise made by Seb Coe in 2005 that led to the development of the International Inspiration Programme.

The programme had reached more than 12 million children in 20 countries around the world by the time of London 2012. Following the games, there was a recognition of the incredible work that had been achieved and a promise to continue this work was made.

This is where the charity was formed. It brings together an expert board of trustees that come from the world of sport and international development, as well as a team of professionals with more than a decade of knowledge, practice, and expertise of working with sport on an international scale."

### IN has reached more than 15 million people now – what is the next target?

KG: "It has actually reached more than 15 million people now. I think that the key thing is, as much as we should celebrate it, that's not the end point, it's the beginning. IN is making things better for young people around the world – that's how and why it was set up. There are always people to



The legacy of London 2012 will live on far outside the borders of the UK

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**There are always people to reach out to, and unless we feel that every single young person around the world is in a great place we can't rest**

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reach out to, and unless we feel that every single young person around the world is in a great place we can't rest. Every successful project is a springboard to the next project. It's like elite sport - you're constantly looking for improvements, how to do it better and that's exactly what IN should be doing."

### What is it about sport that's so engaging and inspirational?

KG: "The simple thing with sport is that anyone can take part, anyone can try it, it doesn't matter what your background is, what age you are, it doesn't matter what culture, religion or race. There are no barriers in sport. Most people start because it's fun, it's playing, ultimately sport is playing and then it is whatever you want it to be beyond that.

People can genuinely try to be the best that they can be, that's quite an amazing thing to do. If you just want to do it to be a part of something special, to have friendships, to learn about yourself and other people, then that's open to everyone as well. Nelson Mandela said it too, as a politician, that sport has the power to change the world. It's just universal in its simplicity and it's for everyone."

### IN is still in its adolescence, how can it ensure it continues to inspire people?

KG: "As with any new project it'll have a natural enthusiasm behind it, it's the excitement of starting something new and something fresh. A successful organisation needs to keep that energy and positivity, it needs to know where it's going, what it's about, why it exists, those really sort of simple – but fundamental – things that are the lifeblood. Everyone should be able



The scheme targets young people in developing nations



The IN programme works on three levels; with policymakers, practitioners and young people

to see what we're doing, say why they're a part of it and why it's special."

### Can you describe the moment when you first saw a programme on the ground?

RM: "My first experience of seeing a programme on the ground was in Bangladesh. The biggest cause of death for children up to the age of five in Bangladesh isn't malaria or malnutrition but drowning, due to the high and differing levels of water in flooding seasons.

The programme aimed at reducing drowning by teaching children how to swim in their local ponds, using very basic equipment but learning a skill which was truly lifesaving. Around the swimming activity, you've also got crèches being built to keep those same children safe when the parents are busy with house duties or working in the field. Watching the community leaders and parents joining in and seeing those activities often being led by young women, just summed up what you can do through sport.

A few months later there was a national competition bringing together all the kids, for the first time ever, in a swimming pool. Watching the reaction on the faces of these children, their parents and the local elders was mesmerizing. You also had girls and kids with disabilities taking part, in a supposedly traditional and conservative

culture – but the level of engagement, energy and enthusiasm we got from everybody was simply extraordinary."

### How does IN – through its partnerships – deliver on its ambitions?

RM: "The answer is in the question, it's through its partnerships. Everything is done through local partners because we utilise local knowledge and we find solutions from within our local partners.

What we add is our knowledge and experience in designing and delivering a programme that is centred around sport but that can achieve so much more. We help to understand the bigger picture, to evaluate it and make sure we are reaching the right people. Fundamentally, the key to success is that partnership working, making sure we find the right people to implement that shared objective."

### What would you say IN stands for?

KG: "I think International Inspiration is fundamentally about making a difference to people's lives and providing opportunities where there weren't any before. It's also about engagement, working with and for people here in the UK and globally to link up, establish and keep those partnerships.

What it stands for, on the moral side, is really about making a positive difference.

"I look back at my life and I'm incredibly lucky. I see great support, great family, great friends, live in a great city with all these incredible opportunities given to me. I've worked hard for all the success I've achieved but I've also taken any opportunity coming my way and it's about seizing it when it comes. The difference is that most people in most countries don't have those opportunities. It's not that they don't take them, it's that they don't even get them. We're involved in a charity that's able to go out there and give opportunities, and then you really do make a difference to people's lives and I don't think we should ever stop trying to make that difference."

### How can people and organisations get involved?

KG: "The easiest thing to do is to check out the [internationalinspiration.org](http://internationalinspiration.org) website, which they're probably already doing if they're listening, reading or watching things like this. Come and find out more information from us.

Knowledge is power, so get in touch via email, social media, the telephone, letters, whatever suits you! There's always something to be done within every charity. If you feel that's important then it's an easy charity to get involved with and play a part in to make a difference to people's lives all around the world." ●

# CHARTING THE LEGACY

**This year marks the 21st year of the Youth Charter - a charity set up in 1993 to tackle educational non-attainment, health inequality, anti-social behaviour and the negative effects of crime. Headed by a former karate world champion, it uses sport as a vehicle to obtain its goals.**



## THE YOUTH CHARTER: Local dreams to Global reality...

In 1993, Benji Stanley, a 14 year-old schoolboy, was gunned down on the streets of Moss Side in Manchester. That same year, five-time world karate champion Geoff Thompson moved to stop the senseless violence.

Drawing on his upbringing in London's East End, and having been part of Manchester's bid team to host the 2000 Olympic Games, he created the Youth Charter, with a "mission to provide young people with opportunities in life through sport and cultural activity.

Thompson lived near Moss Side, long an area of deprivation, where the social and cultural hopes of young people were low. Despite millions being spent on regeneration initiatives after the riots of the 1980s, youth employment prospects were low, the future looked bleak.

He describes the founding of the Youth Charter as a struggle for truth. "It was – and is – the greatest fight of my life, and a vocation that I could not turn away from, or ignore", he says.

It's a fight that has gone rather

Geoff Thompson, founder of Youth Charter, is a five-time world karate champion

well. The Youth Charter marked its 21st birthday on 23 March 2014, by publishing its full legacy report. Among the key recommendations for future programmes, the agency proposes the development of ten Social Centres of Excellence.

"The idea is to train ten thousand social coaches in the UK," says Geoff.

Through cultural activities, the Youth Charter will also deliver an international girls' empowerment programme in collaboration with the Muhammad Ali Center for Peace. With the Youth Charter's "coming of age", Thompson hopes that the 200 page report will offer today's youngsters, as well as future generations, tangible and achievable goals.

## IN THE BEGINNING

The charter's launch in 1993 saw Britain's most successful martial arts competitor swap the dojo for a desk and a PC. "We've had huge help from volunteers and support from businesses," Thompson says. "One of them, Muse Developments, has provided our office in Manchester for the past 16 years."

Although Manchester missed out on the Olympic Games, the city hosted the 2002 Commonwealth Games. Thompson was determined that British youngsters joined in by launching Connecting Communities. Obtaining 1,000 tickets, his organization distributed 100 to young people in ten communities. Other steps include the Charter's 12-year legacy initiative Citizenship in Action, which links 10 communities in the UK with 10 in the Commonwealth with a series of projects to help disaffected youth.

## THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET

When London was awarded the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games back in 2005, the Youth Charter threw down



PIC: WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ DIEGO CERVO

Founded in 1993, the Youth Charter aims to provide young people with opportunities in life through sport

the gauntlet with a call to action at Manchester’s Bridgewater Hall. “We insisted that the Games should also inspire kids living on the streets of Britain, as well as TV viewers,” Thompson says. Totally apolitical, Thompson says he has enjoyed being a thorn in the side of all political parties, reminding them that the often-mentioned Olympic legacy is still a major priority: “We have to fulfill the Games pledge of delivering a legacy of ‘inspiring a generation,’” he says. “By working with young people and communities, we can realize this legacy, by using a properly

coordinated and collaborative approach.”

The Youth Charter may have been born on a Manchester street, but its aims apply equally to youth around the world. In 2007, Namibia hosted the Southern Africa Social Coach Leadership programme, with surrounding countries participating in a unique workshop to establish coaches, who could develop the social, cultural and human potential of young people and communities. No wonder the Youth Charter is now recognised as a United Nations Non-Governmental Organisation!

### HOME AND AWAY

Back home, the Youth Charter youth culture programme was integrated into Liverpool’s reign as European Capital of Culture in 2008. Two years later, the Muhammad Ali Scholars Tour of the UK brought together British Council scholars from the USA, who toured Britain comparing and contrasting the shared issues that affect their everyday lives. At the Roehampton Legacy Summit, the scholars were joined by 200 delegates who debated the Olympic legacy, then presented their thoughts to Lord Sebastian Coe’s bid team.

That summit kicked off a five-year consultation at all levels of British society, including an e-petition in 2011 on the Access for All campaign. This asked the House of Commons to vote in favour of all young people up to the age of 18 having free access to all community sports and leisure facilities. Another milestone was the Youth Charter’s Legacy Debate at Salford’s Media City in 2012. Chaired by John Bercow, the speaker of the House of Commons, the forum followed up on the 2010 legacy summit, with delegates from schools and colleges highlighting the Olympic Games legacy.

### WALKING THE WALK

The Youth Charter has a track record of achieving success. Take Adesuwa McCalla. ▶

#### Youth Charter ambassador Dame Sarah Storey

“I first became involved with Youth Charter as a teenager because I felt passionately that everyone should have a chance in sport like I had, regardless of their background. Seeing Geoff’s passion for nurturing youngsters through sport, the arts and other structured activity was very inspiring. Since I first became involved, the charity has gone global, using sport as a bridge to bringing even the most socially-challenged youngsters back onto a positive path.

When an Olympic and Paralympic Games comes to an end and you hear the



Sarah Storey

words “I call upon the youth of the world to pledge to gather again in four years-time...” I always think of YC because the young people the charity reaches out to are always far more talented than their communities have often admitted to.”



Thompson describes the Youth Charter and its work as the "greatest fight of his life"

Developed over the past 10 years, the legacy bond has been designed to attract public, private, donor, institution and individual contributions

► Back in 1994, she was on the Youth Charter's exchange from Moss Side to Los Angeles, exploring the legacy of the LA Olympics. Fired with enthusiasm, she studied at university in the US, went in the film business in Hollywood and is now a highly-rated literary agent. How did she get funding? "We got money by running a car park for away fans visiting Man United," says Geoff.

Then, there are the Southwark Tigers. The Youth Charter worked to get Rugby Union into inner cities. "That's all about social inclusion," Geoff points out. "In south-east London, Southwark is the first inner city rugby club, run by volunteers and the local community. Now an increasing number of kids want to play rugby as they see it as a genuine alternative to football."

**BOUND TO A LEGACY**

In a busy 20th year, the Charter's remarkable journey saw the launch of its 2012 Games Legacy Report at the Palace of Westminster. After five years of nationwide consultation – which involved all levels of British society and was supported by the public, private and third sector – the report calls for a truly integrated legacy opportunity for all.

The report also provides the delivery of the current government's big society and localism agendas. More importantly, it gives the locally developed multi-stakeholder networks real and sustainable potential with the local authority commissioning to communities through youth and sport facilities.

The short, mid and long-term viability of legacy access for all will be the "legacy bond". Developed over the past ten years, the bond has been designed to attract public, private, donor, institution and individual contributions to provide a central fund that ensures that money is used, flexibly yet efficiently. It will form the next episode in the charter's story. ●

**Youth Charter Ambassadors**

Britain's sporting community has provided significant moral support for the Youth Charter. Over the past 20 years, 263 sporting ambassadors have signed Youth Charter Scrolls, the symbols of opportunity for young people and communities throughout the world. These include the late Nelson Mandela, David Beckham, Sir Bobby Charlton, Sir Alex Ferguson, Sir Stephen Redgrave, Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson, Dame Kelly Holmes, Dame Mary Peters and Dame Sarah Storey.



Nelson Mandela with Youth Charter Scroll



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# BUILDING UP A SPORT

A look at the flexible sports structure projects which are designed to help venues and clubs maximise the space available to them



The new Spartak stadium in Moscow, Russia

## Spartak goes for Stechert

Due to open in July 2014, the new Otkrytie Arena will be the new home of Spartak Moscow as well as one of the stadiums hosting games at the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Funded by Spartak owner, billionaire Leonid Fedun, the venue is being developed by AECOM at a cost of 14bn RUB (US\$402, €294m, £244m).

German seat manufacturer Stechert secured the contract to supply the seating for the 45,000-capacity stadium.

Installation of the seats began in January 2014 and will be completed the following May. To maximise flexibility and utilise the space, all of the seats will be fixed on crossbars, allowing the space between the seats to be extended or reduced as needed. A total of 4,000 of the seats will be Stechert's premium Copacabana seats, which will be installed across the VIP and business areas.

## Spatial secures Brighton contract

Spatial Structures has been awarded the contract to build a covered training pitch for Championship football team Brighton and Hove Albion.

The new pitch is part of a £20m development led by Buckingham Group Contracting which will include 13 outdoor pitches at New Monks Farm, Lancing, West Sussex. The steel framed membrane facility will cover an area 78 x 60sq m and will provide a half-sized pitch enabling training to carry on whatever the weather.

Terry Young, managing director of Spatial Structures, commented on the project: "Given the unpredictable and

constantly changing nature of the British weather we are seeing a growing demand in sports clubs wanting to cover existing facilities. Covering pitches means that bad weather no longer needs to stop play or training. The new building will give the club a fantastic all year round, all weather training facility."

Mike Jeffreys of Buckingham Group said: "We have found Spatial Structures to be co-operative and positive in the way in which they have sought to integrate the design and delivery of the covered pitch facility within the overall training ground development."



A steel framed membrane covers the structure



The new facility will ensure training can take place in any weather



The project cost £16m to complete

## Rubb comes up with the goods at Ipswich Academy sports hall

Rubb Buildings joined forces with construction giant Balfour Beatty to deliver a custom-made sports structure containing a mix of spaces as well as a main sports hall as part of a new £16m academy in Ipswich.

The new campus is made up of two buildings, a main block which houses

spaces for teaching and a sports block, which will be a custom-made part fabric structure and a main sports hall. Alongside the sports building is a new all-weather sports pitch built to FIFA competition standards.

The split level 20m span x 70m long sports complex boasts a 7m high x 33m

long multi-sports playing area, based on a four-court badminton hall.

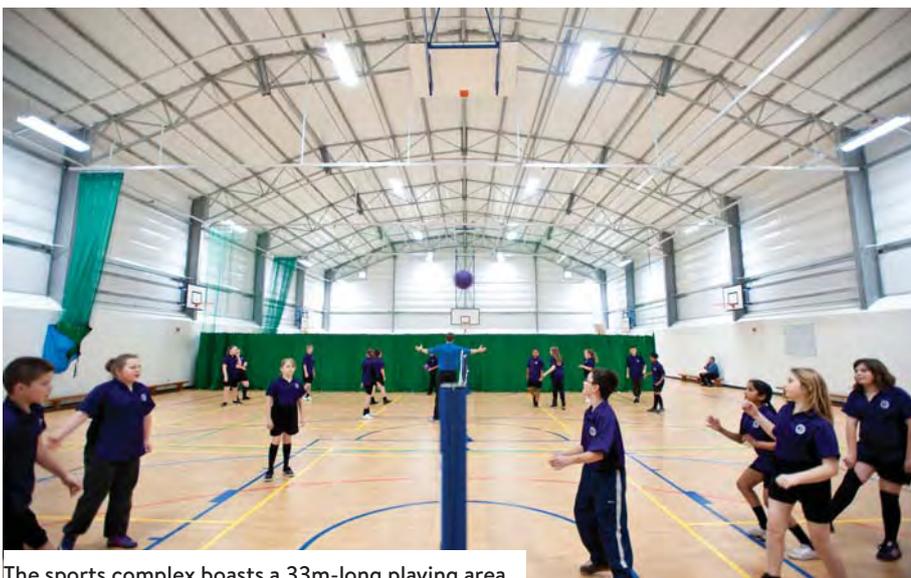
This area, situated at the rear of the building, can also be converted to one basketball court, one netball court, one tennis court or one 5-a-side football pitch. A 4m high x 37 long amenities block completes the front of the facility and includes an entrance lobby, a dance studio, executive studio, changing facilities, four store rooms and a seminar and educational room.

Visitors to the building enter via the main aluminium, glass-panelled entrance which is operated electrically.

Steve Hawley, estates and facilities manager for the Learning Schools Trust – which operates the academy – said: “Rubb provided an ingenious solution and was able to offer a design for a sports hall that met our requirements and those of the planning authorities.

“The sports hall offers light, airy spaces that inspire great physical activities and learning about health, sports and PE.

The facility is widely used by the community and is creating a real impact.”



The sports complex boasts a 33m-long playing area

## Viable Alternative To Seat Replacement

Faded seats are a problem for stadium owners and clubs – especially if installing a new system would mean changing existing set ups and losing space. Unfortunately, faded old seats leave a lasting impression on fans which adversely affects their impression of the facility and by default, its sponsors.

Until now the remedy for weathered seats has been to replace them with new ones. This comes at enormous

cost to the facility and the environment - so what about repairing them?

One of the systems offering refurbished seats is New Zealand-based Seat Renew’s Fade Management Plan. Work is carried out on site without removing the seats from the grandstand – a typical 40,000 seat stadium can be totally restored in about two weeks.

Work can be carried out after hours to avoid

cancellations. The Seat Renew System works by deep cleaning the seats to remove the chalky layer and return seats to the original colour.

A thin coating is then laminated to the surface to act as a barrier from the weather – similar to how sun block works on skin.

A maintenance programme is then tailored to keep seats in the restored condition. The life expectancy of renewed seats is between 10-15 years.



An example of how the Seat Renew system can breath new life to even the most faded seats

## Triple decker for ATP tournament

Arena Group introduced its new triple decker hospitality structure as part of the Sponsor Hospitality Village at the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals in November. In total, the company provided 9,000sq ft of temporary overlay at the tournament, which was held at The O2 in London.

It is the fifth year that Arena has been involved with the ATP World Tour Finals as part of its long-term relationship with organisers ATP & AEG. In line with the organiser's ambitions to create a warmer practice environment for players – and a more exclusive viewing environment for sponsors – Arena worked closely with the ATP's production and sponsor hospitality teams to design and install a bespoke 15m x 35m triple deck hospitality structure overlooking the players' practice court.

The structure was carefully engineered to fit seamlessly against a 40m x 20m Tensioned Fabric Structure (TFS) housing the court, therefore giving guests of the event's portfolio of sponsors exclusive views of the action.

The TFS featured a new white lining to create a brighter environment for the players while maintaining the heat,



To maximise the space available at the O2, Arena combined the training and corporate areas

and the open front enabled fans to view the ATP's top players practising at the venue. Elsewhere in The O2, Arena Group supplied extensive temporary event overlay including structures for the Racquet Club Hospitality Lounge, Media Centre, Tennis Family and Player Restaurants, Offices and VIP accreditation.

An additional 40m x 50m TFS located within the event's Fan Zone incorporated two further practice courts, open to the

public, with 500 tiered seats supplied by Arena Seating. Within The O2's main arena, custom broadcast studios and camera platforms were installed, to be used by international broadcasters, across The O2's permanent tiered seating.

Daniel Bluff, project manager, Arena Group, explained: "This year's new practice court and hospitality structure showed what can be achieved with our extensive stock inventory and skilled design teams."



Audience Systems' stands at the venue

## Flexible seating for Barnsley Metrodome

Audience Systems has installed new retractable seating structures at Barnsley Metrodome as part of venue operator Barnsley Premier Leisure's (BPL) strategy to cater for a wide variety of events. The Metrodome plays host to the Weber Cup for ten pin bowling, world championship pool, and a range of other sports including taekwondo, table

tennis and boxing. It also hosts exhibitions and music events. The flexibility of the seating has a large part to play in allowing the venue to attract such a diverse range of events. The newly installed retractable platforms seat 500 people in five banks.

Each retractable unit is mobile – once closed, the units can be hydraulically jacked onto trolleys and manoeuvred to create different seating layouts, including the atre style and catwalk.

When not in use, the closed seating units are tucked beneath a balcony. BPL chose to fit the new retractable platforms with individual upholstered seats, replacing the previous benches which had been in service for 24 years – and were also installed by Audience Systems.

Metrodome's 500-seat installation took eight days to complete on site. The installation proved straightforward, with the units aligning well with the

rear access steps used in some of the configurations.

Richard Bailey, events and catering manager at The Metrodome said: "The newly installed telescopic seating system looks great. The advice throughout the sales process coupled with the expertise of the project management and installation team has given us a fantastic addition to our facility, taking the Metrodome into the premier league of UK sporting venues."

## Old Trafford Ashes benefits from Olympic fencing

Old Trafford venue managers turned to technology developed for the London 2012 Olympic Games when they were looking to increase capacity for the 2013 Ashes series in England.

Lancashire County Cricket Club (LCCC), whose home is at Emirates Old Trafford, approached event overlay and perimeter fencing specialist Zaun to provide a high security temporary perimeter protection system at the ground.

Specifiers and safety officials wanted to create an extra three metres of space around the ground's perimeter to remove 'pinch points' and enable better spectator flow within the venue, without affecting pedestrian and traffic flow around the stadium, so needed fencing with a small footprint. LCCC used Zaun's MultiFence temporary fencing solution to expand the perimeter and increase capacity for the third Investec 2013 Ashes Test while ensuring the aesthetic appeal of the ground was not altered, as the MultiFence system was branded with event and advertising messages.

Zaun has been granted a patent for its MultiFence security fence assembly that it created especially for the London 2012 Olympic Games. The mounting of the fencing on concrete blocks means that a considerable amount of space is saved.

In recent years, Old Trafford has undergone a £40m redevelopment designed to attract more international cricket and major music and entertainment events.



The Heineken House structure at the Sochi 2014 village took a week to build

## Neptunus provides Sochi 2014 with Heineken House

Having provided a number of facilities at the London 2012 Olympics, temporary structures specialist Neptunus worked in partnership with Heineken and the Dutch Olympic Committee (DOC) to supply additional structures for the Holland Heineken House at Sochi 2014. As an official supplier to the DOC and a partner to Heineken, Neptunus was selected to build Holland Heineken House in the grounds of the AZIMUT Hotel Sochi just 500m from the Olympic Park.

The installation of a double deck temporary structure took Neptunus technicians a week to build. Inside there was a large entrance lobby and a radio studio on the top floor for a Dutch station to broadcast sports programmes live from the Games.

A covered walkway connects the main structure to the Olympic Club where athletes, sponsors and VIPs can gather for the duration of the Games. Neptunus also built a Heineken ice bar on the rooftop.

On the same site Neptunus erected several temporary storage facilities as well as a TV studio, which was similar to the one it built at London 2012. Temperatures at Sochi, however, meant that the studio had to be completely closed with walls and windows.

April Trasler, Neptunus' managing director, said: "We partnered with Heineken on the project on the back of London 2012. We also have experience of working in Russia, which meant that we were able to deliver a high quality venue suitable for world-class athletes."



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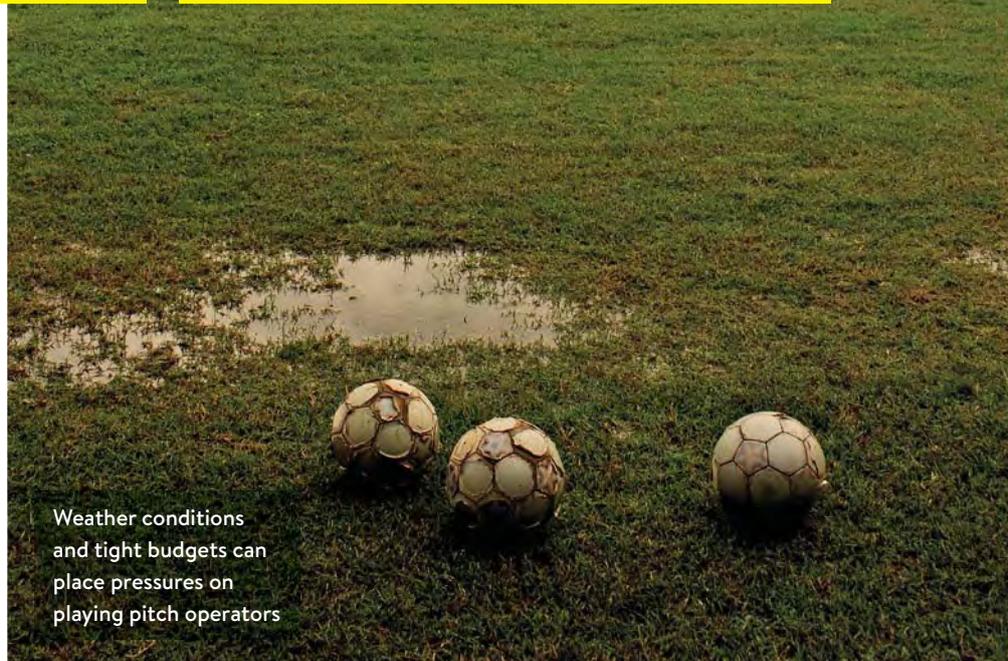
**A new Grounds and Natural Turf Improvement Programme has been launched as part of a strategy to improve standards in the natural turf sector. We speak to Jason Booth, who's leading the scheme, about the challenges faced by the industry.**



# GROUND CONTROL

**T**he new Grounds and Natural Turf Improvement Programme (GNTIP) is a joint initiative between the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG), the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB), The Football Association (FA), The Football Foundation and Sport England. It has been designed to raise the standards of sports surfaces by providing grassroots and volunteer groundsmen with guidance and advice to increase the understanding of sports turf management practices for football, cricket and rugby.

The programme, which co-ordinates industry, funding providers and NGBs, aims to provide a strong infrastructure of support to the public and voluntary sectors during a time of financial austerity, while



Weather conditions and tight budgets can place pressures on playing pitch operators



Jason Booth

also providing links to Sport England's Protecting Playing Fields award recipients – via the provision of post-contract support, advice and guidance.

The programme is headed up by Jason Booth, who will have a team of eight regional pitch advisors covering the English regions. They will liaise with the national governing bodies and will report directly to Booth and to the IOG's regional advisory panel.

The programme builds on the work of the IOG's network of regional advisors established five years ago with a grant from the ECB, whose number – with the additional funding now available – will be expanded to eight full-time regional

pitch advisors across England. Booth's role will be to lead and manage the advisors, and he will be a key conduit between the sports bodies and the IOG, leading the programme's strategy and its local delivery.

### MUCH NEEDED HELP

Booth is the head groundsman at Leeds Rugby and has also undertaken consultancy work for the likes of RFL, the FA and the IOG. "I love a challenge and GNTIP certainly offers that in terms of upgrading grassroots pitches throughout the country and up-skilling the people responsible for their care and maintenance," Booth said. "The sector is simply lacking suitable and ▶



Booth joined IOG after a long career as head groundsman at Headingley Carnegie

### The aims of the Grounds and Natural Turf Improvement Programme

- Enable players to access the best possible facilities in their local community
- Reduce the likelihood of cancelled matches and training, thus helping economic viability
- Maximise potential opportunities for growth locally
- Build sustainable relationships at a local, regional and national level across sport.

► sufficient groundscare knowledge and understanding, and by aiming to boost the level of much-needed awareness the new programme will, in turn, allow me and the regional pitch advisors to demonstrate not only the practical benefits – in terms of improved playability – of high-class yet cost-effective sports turf management but also our passion for the groundscare industry and the desire to up-skill the people within it.”

“The framework for the programme’s success has already been laid down – the blueprint was devised and has been successfully applied in recent years by the IOG/ECB regional advisor network and, more recently, also by the RFL Pitch Improvement Programme.

Booth adds that the first task he faces is to broadcast the message and the resultant benefits to a wide audience in order to reach sports grounds, club and volunteers who persevere with limited and outdated equipment.

“Another major target area are local authority sites that have been negotiated locally with local community groups and clubs as asset transfers,” Booth continues. “Following the transfers any problem of maintenance is left in the

hands of volunteers - and this is an area where the art of groundscare has often been ‘lost in translation.’”

Booth is convinced that one strategic aspect of the programme will depend on backing for the project from high-profile groundstaff together with the elite sports clubs and stadia. “Their support will be crucial,” he argues. “With the support of famous venues and their recognised head groundsmen, the programme’s concept will be easier to ‘sell’ into the grassroots sector. I will be using my full network of friends and contacts to encourage full involvement in this respect.”

### WORKING THE NETWORK

Another major aspect of Booth’s role will be to communicate the programme’s benefits ‘downwards’ via meetings with the

respective sports county networks within each region, engaging clubs and leagues across each sport.

“The message will cascade down into grassroots clubs far quicker if we meet these groups,” says Booth, “than it would if we’d try sending a regional pitch advisor to visit every sports pitch in the country. That said, the regional pitch advisors will be available to make site visits and draw up recommendations for improvements to playing

surface(s) as well as suggesting appropriate education/training routes to the many club volunteers and those involved in groundsmanship locally.”

Booth is convinced that the project will be successful, mainly due to it being run by a team of passionate groundscare experts. The team will be able to offer independent advice that many grassroots clubs are simply unaware of – advice which could drastically improve the playing performance of natural turf surfaces.

“It’s a process that the whole turf care industry should champion, Booth says. “This includes suppliers and manufacturers. Never before have we as an industry had such an opportunity to make significant improvements throughout sports and right down to grassroots level.” ●

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# PITCHING UP

A look at sports surfacing projects - from training pitches to specialist surfaces for the disabled

## Powerleague expands sports offering

Five-a-side football Lucozade Powerleague is looking to expand its reach in Manchester by offering sports other than football. The company has replaced two indoor 3G football pitches at its Trafford Manchester site with a Taraflex Sport M synthetic sports floor – supplied by Gerflor – in a bid to get more members of the local community playing a wider range of sports. The venue will be known as Powerleague Multisport Arena @ Trafford.

James Price, director of marketing at Powerleague, said: “Lucozade Powerleague has tremendous community reach. We have thousands of teams playing within our facilities every week. We saw

an opportunity to engage with other user profiles within our communities and engage them in a positive way by offering a wider range of sports such as badminton, netball and basketball. We’ve worked in partnership with Badminton England to ensure that the facility is suitable as a badminton performance centre and took specification and fit out advice from Gerflor.

“The refurbishment programme was completed on time and on budget largely down to the preparation and planning of the parties involved in the early stages.”

Darren Wood, Taraflex Sport manager said there were three key specification



The operator is looking to attract a wider range of users at the centre

requirements. “Firstly, we had to provide a sports surface that would satisfy national or international sport federation requirements for badminton, netball, basketball, volleyball and encompass a full size futsal court,” he said. “Secondly, programme time and budget had to be hit. Down time costs money and we worked

with the client on cost plans to reduce expenditure. Finally, the look had to be bespoke to Powerleague. Over a dozen CAD plans were provided together with samples to get the look and feel just right.”

Lucozade Powerleague currently operates 46 football centres and attracts 1.2m visits per year in the UK.



Work in progress at Chelsea's Cobham training centre

## Chelsea invests in Cobham training site

White Horse Contractors' association with Barclays Premier League side Chelsea FC has seen renovation works undertaken at the club's Cobham training ground.

Building on the relationship that the company has enjoyed with the club for more than 15 years, White Horse Contractors were chosen as the contractor of choice for the initial construction of the first team pitches in 2003.

“White Horse built phase one and two and then continued to build the whole training facility,” explained Jason Griffin, Head Groundsman at Chelsea FC. “Each phase gets upgraded every year, and currently, White Horse is in the process of renovating the ‘phase five’ pitches. This involves ten full-size pitches being re-graded, levelled and re-seeded.



The new facility at the Damilola centre

## Damilola Taylor Leisure Centre treated to Tigerturf

A Peckham leisure centre has been equipped with a new sports zone as part of efforts to encourage more local adults and children to participate in outdoor activities.

With the previous surface at the Damilola Taylor Centre having reached the end of its natural life, the London Borough of Southwark, which oversees the day-to-day management of the leisure centre, decided to invest in a new system to rejuvenate its sports offering in the local community.

Following a tender issued by Bailey Garner Architects, TigerTurf UK was selected to produce a replacement surface, primarily for football use. The result was the installation of a TigerTurf Soccer Real 60XQ 3G surface, completed by sports surface contractors, Agripower. Boasting FIFA 1 and 2 star accreditation; TigerTurf's Soccer Real 60XQ is a premier football product which meets the needs of professionals and the community alike.

The third generation synthetic turf system has a 60mm pile height and comprises two unique profiled fibres; part-filled with rubber and sand which enhance the overall playing characteristics. Thanks to the blend of two profiled fibres, the system is durable while maintaining the look of a healthy playing surface throughout its entire lifespan. The refurbishment contract also included the installation of replacement fencing and pavements, to ensure the centre can handle a greater number of local residents of the facilities.



Polytan|STI installed a circular track at Dalian

## Chinese Games contested on Polytan surface

The Chinese province of Liaoning held the 12th National Games of the People's Republic of China from 31 August to 12 September. The largest national sporting event in China saw athletes compete in a total of 350 events across 31 disciplines.

Polytan|STI and its longstanding partner company, C. Melchers & Co, had already begun work back in May on two sports facilities in the port city of Dalian that were used for the National Games. At the Liaoning Maritime Sports School the Polytan|STI team installed two MegaTurf Cool Plus hockey pitches, one of which is certified to FIH Global standards – a first for Polytan|STI in China.

The facility was extended by two Poligras hockey pitches by STI. The FIH Global-certified pitch was used for a variety of events, while the other fields were

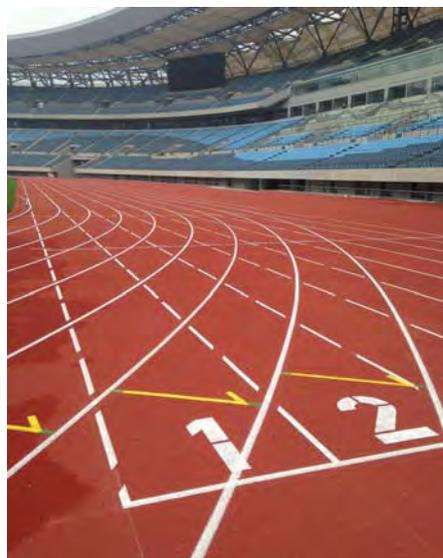


One of the new hockey pitches at Liaoning

employed for training. The running tracks were also supplied by Polytan|STI. At the Dalian Sports Center a circular track, a warm-up track and two indoor areas were installed – resulting in nearly 30,000sq m of the Polytan M system being used. The circular track in the main stadium is IAAF Class I-certified.

Following the Games, the new installations have continued to be in regular use: while the hockey pitches are being used by national and international hockey teams for training purposes, the Dalian Sports Center has had a busy schedule of sports events of a wide range.

The installation of both projects had to be completed in just 40 days – a real challenge, given that the Polytan team was faced with adverse weather conditions. Heavy rainfalls and cool temperatures at the start and severe heat waves towards the end of the project meant that the individual steps had to be coordinated as much as possible with the weather forecasts. Another challenge faced by the project management team was the logistics: the two projects were installed simultaneously, but were 50 km apart.



The project was completed in just 40 days

## Tennis courts receive new lease of life

The tennis courts at Old Albanian Tennis Club in St Albans in Hertfordshire have received a new lease of life following a Replay Rejuvenation and will now be fit for play for a number of years.

The courts at OA Tennis Club had not been maintained properly since they were laid and were in a state of disrepair.

Following a full site survey, Replay Maintenance was confident that by implementing the correct maintenance programme, even the most heavily affected areas of moss and algae on the surface could be restored to an 'as new' condition. At 10 years' old, the tennis courts were suffering the consequences of age, with contaminated material affecting both the aesthetics and the playing properties.



The surfaces were restored to an 'as new' level

Dark patches were evident right across the courts, highlighting the contamination that was present within the surface infill, while areas of standing water were commonplace after heavy spells of rain, demonstrating the inability to adequately

drain. The surface had also become slippery under foot.

The club expected that resurfacing would be the only solution, and were relieved to discover this wasn't the case after contacting Replay.



## School athletics

British Olympic Heptathlete Denise Lewis has officially opened the new athletics facilities at St Mary's School, Ascot, Berkshire.

Smith Construction was awarded the £1.4m contract to provide the school with a six-lane, 400m athletics track, complete with associated athletics facilities; an eight-lane 100m sprint straight; pole vault; hammer and discus facility; water jump; shot put and long jump. A full sized hockey pitch to comply with FIH specifications was built within the track, complete with fencing.



Denise Lewis at the track's launch event



The academy has invested £25m in upgrading its sports facilities

## Multisports for an academy

Fulwood Academy in Preston, Lancashire, recently invested £25m in new sports facilities. As part of that, the academy appointed Thornton Sports to provide a full-size artificial football/hockey pitch and a MUGA on site.

Thornton supplied the football pitch with its SoccerTurf 40M product – a 3rd generation surface that complies with IATS (FIFA I\*) and International Hockey Federation (FIH) performance criteria. The surface was chosen due to its adaptability, which allows a range of sports to be played

on the pitch. For the MUGA, Thornton chose a porous Polyflex 950/4 polymeric surface – ideal to use for schools and amateur clubs due to its softer surface which helps prevent and reduce injuries.

A SudsPorts conduit system was also installed within the sub-base layer of the MUGA to provide a sustainable, cost-effective combined sports surface and drainage solution. Painted line markings provide opportunities for tennis, netball and basketball while fencing was installed around the perimeter.

## Gloucestershire FA invests in artificial turf at Oakland Park

The recent £650,000 upgrade of Gloucestershire FA's Oakland Park Stadium is already making a difference by allowing tournaments and games to go ahead despite the recent extremely wet weather.

A new synthetic pitch (Soccer Pro 60), manufactured and installed by SIS Pitches, has replaced the previous natural pitch, ensuring the surface can be used throughout the year, whatever the weather. The Soccer Pro 60 surface is made from a Polyethylene monofilament and the surface is tested to 50,000 Lisport cycles and to FIFA star Quality Concept Performance.

The project took SIS 14 weeks to complete and was undertaken with a number of partners, including Pitchbase, Murfitts, Garside Sands, Stauf, J Halliday and Citadel Security.

David Neale, CEO of Gloucestershire FA, said: "The new surface has enabled coaching sessions and matches to be played out in all winds and weathers without the traditional mud-bath effects. During January 2014, when nearly all grass pitches were unfit, the football centre hosted up to 10 football matches each weekend, including multiple adult 11v11 league games."



The pitch will allow club to cater for children with impaired vision

## Frimley CC aims to become centre for visually impaired cricket

One of Surrey's oldest cricket clubs has invested in a new practice facility that will mark a key step toward it becoming Surrey's centre for Visually Impaired (VI) cricket. Established in 1820, Frimley CC is based on a public recreation ground in West Surrey, close to the Berkshire and Hampshire borders.

Supplied by total-play, the two-lane, 33m fully-enclosed facility is based on a ECB-approved tp365 system. A 2.4m high security fence and pedestrian access gate completes the basic specification, with bespoke elements including a brightly coloured two-tone carpet, the use of white

guide lines on the surface and white batting curtains to help players pick out the ball. Having already won backing from the Surrey Cricket Board, funding for the project was secured from a range of sources including Surrey Heath Borough Council, Surrey County Council Councillors, The ECB, Lords Taverners, Surrey Cricket Board and Frimley Fuel Allotments Charity; alongside a variety of fundraising efforts within the club.

Frimley CC has been awarded ECB Focus Club status and was named the new home of Surrey's VI squad, having worked with the Surrey Cricket Board to instigate VI cricket in the county.

Club chair, Gary Dunford, said the club wanted to establish itself as a centre for disability cricket. "It was absolutely vital that we created a safe, secure and flat net facility at Frimley if we were going to develop VI Cricket at the site," he said.



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The physical demands of a racing driver requires specialist training programmes

# SPORTING STRENGTH

Lauren Applegarth looks at how fixed resistance equipment still plays a key role in assisting athletes achieve success

The latest fitness trends suggest that functional training areas and rigs are increasingly being added to accompany traditional resistance equipment on the gym floor.

Fixed strength equipment, however, still plays a key role in many facilities – and it’s powering some of the world’s top professional sports people to success, from tennis stars to Premier League football teams.

Incorporating fixed strength equipment into sport-specific training programmes isn’t exclusive to professional athletes either; it’s accessible to players of all ages and abilities. Rob Thurston, commercial director at fitness equipment manufacturer Cybex, says: “Fixed strength equipment is still central to many sports gym floor layouts.

“There are many examples of sports people at all levels using strength equipment in their training programmes – it’s all about using the right kit to develop the attributes applicable to your sport.”

We look at ways in which resistance kit is being used by elite athletes, and how amateur sports enthusiasts can benefit from similar techniques.

## RESISTING THE FORCE

Being a racing driver is extremely challenging both physically and mentally; you need to be in the best condition possible to cope with the demands,” explains Marlon Stöckinger, Lotus F1 Junior Team driver.

Consequently, physical fitness is one of the eight key areas of development identified by the Lotus F1 Junior Team, which has been established by Gravity Sports Management and the Lotus F1 team to uncover motor sport’s stars of the future.

Aside from a resilient cardiovascular system required to maintain an average heart rate of 140–160bpm, strength training is essential to combat the physical demands of the sport.

Drivers must focus on building neck strength to withstand cornering at speed and high G-forces; core strength to manage tight movements at extremely high speeds; strong and reactive glutes and legs to apply correct pressure and

**Sport:** Formula 1  
**Client:** Lotus Formula 1 Junior Team, UK  
**Supplier:** Matrix

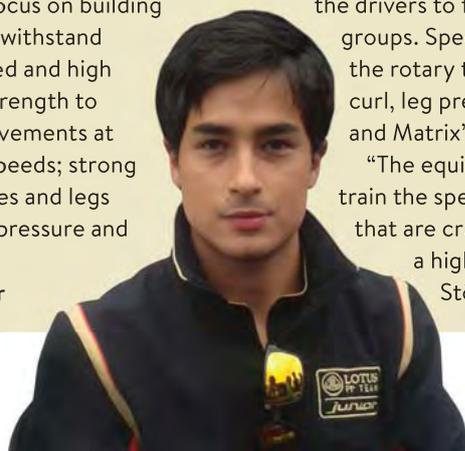
speed to the brake; and accelerator and grip strength to maintain maximum control of the car at all times.

Based at the Lotus F1 Team factory in Enstone, Oxfordshire, the team’s Human Performance Centre is equipped by Matrix Fitness. Products from its commercial strength series, Ultra and Aura, are incorporated into the bespoke training programmes of

the drivers to focus on key muscle groups. Specifically, drivers use the rotary torso, seated leg curl, leg press, leg extension and Matrix’s functional trainer.

“The equipment helps me train the specific muscle groups that are crucial for racing at a high level,” concludes Stöckinger.

Marlon Stöckinger





Tottenham Hotspur's new training centre in Enfield opened in 2012

## FUNCTIONAL POWER

The physical wellbeing of professional footballers can be the difference between a trophy-winning season or one to forget; with 38 Premier League fixtures, FA Cup and League Cup competitions and spells in the UEFA Champions League and Europa League for the last four seasons, fitness levels of the players at Tottenham Hotspur FC are crucial to the club's success.

In September 2012, the Premier League side opened its new training centre in Bulls Cross, Enfield. A 77-acre facility, the training centre comprises 15 grass pitches, a covered artificial pitch, pool and hydrotherapy complex, altitude room, sports rehabilitation suites and a large-scale gym equipped by Keiser.

**Sport:** Football

**Client:** Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, UK

**Supplier:** Keiser

"We used Keiser equipment at our old training centre and our players were extremely satisfied with it," says Wayne Diesel, head of medical services at Tottenham. "As part of our commitment to research into football-specific training, we needed equipment that would allow functional power

**Wayne Diesel, head of medical services at Tottenham Hotspur**



development, creating a greater spectrum to progress exercises."

Strength equipment from Keiser's Air range is incorporated into the football-specific strength and conditioning programmes used by the players. Unlike most fixed resistance equipment with weight stacks, Keiser's range uses air pressure to provide resistance.

The range targets upper body, lower body and core strength, as well as offering a detailed information display. "Keiser's Air resistance equipment delivers ease of regulation of power output as a percentage of the player's maximum; the ability to spot asymmetries between opposite limbs," explains Diesel.

**Sport:** Cricket

**Client:** Warwickshire County Cricket Club, UK

**Supplier:** Technogym

## REHAB & PERFORMANCE

The physical demands of cricketers are unique to each player's specialism: from tall, strong and powerful fast bowlers to shorter wicket keepers who place a large amount of pressure on their hamstrings during long days in the field. Building and maintaining peak physical fitness enables batsmen to score more runs, bowlers to maintain their desired pace and accuracy for longer, and fielders to sustain high levels of concentration and faster reaction speeds.

While teams train year-round, the intended outcome of their strength and conditioning programmes will also change depending on where they are in a season,



**Strength and conditioning coach Chris Armstrong on the kit**

explains Armstrong: "Resistance training takes priority pre-season, throughout November and December, as the players focus on building up their baseline strength; in January the programme switches to developing power and speed; and then, when the season starts in April, strength training is again incorporated to maintain high performance levels."

In 2013, Technogym installed resistance equipment in the on-site

gym at Edgbaston Stadium, home to Warwickshire County Cricket Club.

"The equipment we chose allows for a wide variety of exercises, uses and loads, and its flexibility meets the needs of the players' unique specialisms," adds Armstrong. The gym incorporates Technogym's Multipower, a lifting rack that allows for assisted lower and upper limb exercises. This was used as part of a comprehensive rehabilitation programme for three of the club's bowlers who suffered back stress fractures last year.

Products from Technogym's Selection MED line were also installed, including the leg extension and leg press, which are designed specifically to support rehabilitation and users with various physical conditions during exercise.

The equipment also allows the team to quickly bring new players up to the required strength and fitness levels. "The adjustable head rest and handles of the leg press ensure players are seated in a safe and uncompromised position, allowing them to put significant loads on their legs without compromising their back," explains Armstrong.



Novak Djokovic successfully defended his ATP World Tour Finals title at London's O2

## ACEING IT

**P**ower, strength, agility, endurance, flexibility and speed are all vital abilities for tennis players at any level of the sport and, while time spent on-court is essential, time spent in the gym is



Clay Sniteman

often where a competitive edge is gained.

In November 2013, as the climax to the men's professional tennis season, the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals returned to London's O2 arena. Continuing a partnership that dates back to 2009, Cybex International UK was chosen to equip the tournament's on-site gym. "Having a gym within the venue opens up a lot of opportunities," says ATP World Tour medical director Clay Sniteman.

"Players can run their own functional warm-up sessions, cool down after matches or even rehabilitate injuries they pick up during the tournament."

**Sport:** Tennis

**Client:** ATP World Tour Finals, UK

**Supplier:** Cybex International UK

Alongside CV equipment, the gym housed the Bravo Pull and Bravo Press, two pieces from Cybex's cable-based Bravo Functional Training system. "Cable-based training is perfect for tennis players, as it allows for the multi-directional movement required for the sport," explains Sniteman. "By using the Cybex Bravo, players benefit hugely from the range of motion, angles and stability work, being able to isolate parts of the body during their workouts and target the weaker areas from abdominals to core, back to shoulders and even lower body."

The Bravo functional training system is one of Cybex's key strength pieces and is used at a number of elite training centres.

"The Bravo system combines the features of selectorised and cable-based strength training equipment to deliver endless possibilities," says Thurston.

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## Sports Facility Show dates announced for 2014

The next SAPCA show on sports facility funding, design, development and management is to be held at Warwickshire County Cricket Club on May 20th 2014.

The Sports Facility Show is a one-day event aimed at anyone involved in the development of sports facilities – from sports clubs and schools to leisure operators and local authorities. Its aim is to broaden the experience and skill base of UK sports providers in an effort to refine construction standards and facilitate exceptional sports and play.

The event will be delivered in close co-operation with the Birmingham Sport & Physical Activity Partnership, whose role is to get more people, more active, more often.

A new feature for all three events will be a dedicated “Advice Centre”, manned throughout the day, which will provide support and information to delegates on different aspects of sports facility development.

The event will give those attending the latest insights into a range of topics. These include funding sources for sports facilities, how to make a funding application, designing multi-use games areas and how to cost-effectively renovate existing sports facilities. There will also be sessions on design, lighting, sports surface maintenance and procurement.

“We put on these invaluable shows to enrich the industry and ensure that UK facility owners, developers and managers are armed with the latest knowledge, skills and technology of the sports and play construction industry,” says SAPCA CEO Chris Trickey. “Why? To ensure that sports and play facilities are built to the highest standards and to promote a culture of ongoing interest in improving the industry.”

The first of three Sports Facility Shows in 2014 takes place on May 20th at Edgbaston cricket ground. Two more events will follow later this year – 17 June (Elland Road, Leeds) and 28 October (Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility, Motherwell).

Those interested are advised to book early by calling the dedicated booking line 024 7776 7226 or visiting [www.sapca.org.uk](http://www.sapca.org.uk).



Members of the Wheelchair Racing Academy at the SAPCA AGM in January

## Wheelchair Racing Academy appointed as SAPCA sponsored charity

The University of Warwick Wheelchair Racing Academy has become The Sports and Play Construction Association’s (SAPCA) sponsored charity for 2014. Following the sporting success of London 2012 and The 2012 Paralympic Games, the charity has seen an unprecedented demand from differently able athletes who want to take part in wheelchair racing.

Since being established in 2011, it has offered training, coaching, support and real sporting opportunities for athletes of any ability or impairment, with 59 disabled athletes training with the academy since its launch and going on

to represent local athletics club Coventry Godiva Harriers both in the UK and on the global stage.

SAPCA hopes to use its unique position within the sports and play construction industry to generate further support for this deserving charity and raise much needed funds to purchase new equipment and help in the cultivating of future paralympians.

The academy is recognised by British Athletics as one of four national hubs for wheelchair racing and is a member of Sported, a charity transforming the lives of disadvantaged young people through sport.

## Technical Committee to raise standards

SAPCA has launched a new specialist committee responsible for developing and overseeing the delivery of a technical programme.

Composed of experts from a variety of fields and a range of disciplines, the SAPCA Technical Committee will also be responsible for agreeing the association’s policies on technical issues pivotal to the industry, such as the construction standards embodied in SAPCA’s various codes of practice and coordinating the industry’s input into the development of relevant British and European standards.

The role of the Technical Committee will include the on-going development of SAPCA’s technical guidance, which provides valuable advice



Committee chair Bill Pomfret

and information for those who are involved in the development of sports and play facilities projects across the marketplace.

The committee will also address important technical issues that are often central to the association’s relationships with sports governing bodies and will oversee the delivery of the regular technical meetings.

The first meeting of the committee was held on 25 November 2013 under the chairmanship of Bill Pomfret, managing director of Thornton Sports’ synthetic grass manufacturing division, Nordon.

Pomfret said: “SAPCA’s technical programme plays a vital role in the association’s work to raise standards of sports and play facilities.”



The London 2012 Olympic Games were successful in visibly supporting sport in the UK

## Beyond the legacy of London 2012:

Why participation is up, people are more engaged and sporting standards are higher

At SAPCA's recent Annual Conference a host of industry experts gave their views on the lasting legacy of The 2012 Games.

### Decades ahead

Emma Boggis, head of the Cabinet Office's Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Unit, offered a number of encouraging statistics to SAPCA members.

"The Games succeeded in creating an ongoing legacy in four key areas," she explained. "They visibly supported sport and healthy living, boosted economic growth in the UK, added an emphasis on the importance of community engagement and aided in the regeneration of East London."

"In the *Inspired by 2012* report July 2013 Jacques Rogge said: 'The London 2012 Games have definitively served as a catalyst for development and improvements, both tangible and intangible, which would otherwise have taken decades to achieve. There is no doubt that the

citizens of London and Great Britain will benefit from the Games for a long time to come.'

"The Games have sparked countless initiatives, such as Get Set, aimed at encouraging sports participation in schools. There are monetary benefits too. The GREAT Campaign aims to secure £11bn of economic benefit from trade and investment by 2016 and a further £2bn from increased tourism by 2015."

### World-class athletes and expertise

Andrew Bacchus, head of Global Sports Projects for UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) built on Emma's insights with a special presentation on The Export Legacy for Global Sports Projects.

"London 2012 showed that Britain not only has world-class athletes but also the world-class expertise, knowledge and innovation to deliver the most high profile event in the world on time and on budget," he enthused.



Emma Boggis at the conference

"The UK economy has already seen a £11.06bn trade and investment boost from the London Olympic and Paralympic Games, one year into a four-year programme of activity and events."

### Maintaining momentum

While the UK is so far reaping the benefits of The Games insofar as an increase in sports participation, funding, investment and community interest, Chris Trickey, CEO of SAPCA, stresses that the race is far from over.

"We've taken huge strides towards achieving sporting greatness through the 2012 Games, but we need to think of this triumph in terms of running a marathon, not a sprint. While the Games undoubtedly caused a huge surge in interest in sports, it's up to key decision makers in the industry to ensure that momentum is maintained. We need to be doing all we can to increase participation, maximize funding and reinvigorate interest. For the legacy of the 2012 Games to be ongoing, so must our efforts."

### Forthcoming Presentations

The following presentations can be found on the SAPCA website: [www.sapca.org.uk](http://www.sapca.org.uk):

- **The Legacy of London 2012.** Speaker: Emma Boggis, Cabinet Office
- **Commonwealth Games Legacy.** Speaker: Graham Finnie, sportscotland
- **The Export Legacy for Global Sports Projects.** Speaker: Andrew Bacchus, UKTI
- **Funding for Sports Facilities in the**

- **Education Sector.** Speaker: Karen Woland, wctd limited
- **How to Accelerate The Growth of Your Business.** Speakers: Nigel Knapp, Francis Christie Ltd
- **Developing Standards for the Performance of Shockpads.** Speaker: Martin Laidler, Trocellen GmbH
- **Football Facility Strategy and Funding.** Speaker: Mark Pover, The FA

# The crucial choice: which contractor do you choose?

## How SAPCA membership ensures “absolute quality”

**S**APCA membership is a safeguard for facility owners against poor construction standards and inferior installations. “Investing in a new sporting facility or refurbishment is exactly that: an investment, so some element of risk is unavoidable,” explains SAPCA CEO Chris Trickey. “Whether it’s a football pitch, a MUGA or an athletics track, as the key decision maker for your facility, it is up to you to ensure that the build is right for you and fit for purpose. Very early on in the planning stages of your project you’ll face one crucial choice: which contractor, supplier or consultant do you choose?”

“To minimise the substantial investment risk to facility owners, SAPCA has a system in place to ensure contractors meet the highest standards. We would urge anybody commissioning a sports or play facility to only use a SAPCA member.

“All our members are carefully vetted to ensure they are financially stable,” he adds. “They undergo rigorous and random inspections to monitor quality and, to maintain membership, they must meet a set of strict quality guidelines.”

SAPCA vets members by measuring them against three key criteria. To gain membership, each prospective associate must have practical

Building or adding to a sports or play facility can be a daunting prospect, especially with tales of contractors finishing installations to sub-par standards and going over deadlines and budgets. But how do you ensure quality?

experience in their trade; the financial stability to support contracts; and a commitment to deliver outstanding quality of workmanship.

“SAPCA membership is a seal of approval,” explains Tony Hession, SAPCA project manager. “It signifies that a contractor is committed to meeting the very highest standards and furthering the provision of sport and play through excellence, so we take it very seriously.

“To make sure each member is commendable, we undertake random site inspections to ensure that projects are being constructed to the standards required by the association’s codes of practice. We also take post-project feedback from each installation to establish satisfaction levels with contractors’ performance.

“The last thing facility owners want is a costly installation that is unfit for play or needs further work,” he emphasises. “By selecting your

contractor from SAPCA’s extensive list of over 200 members across a variety of disciplines, you are making a commitment to your facility, and we in turn are making a commitment to you by enforcing strict quality guidelines to ensure the build is fit for purpose.”

### Strict quality guidelines

How does SAPCA ensure excellence? To maintain high standards and ensure its stringent membership criteria is being met by every individual member, SAPCA has an annual Technical Audit Programme through which it monitors the standards of members’ workmanship and their continued compliance with the relevant membership criteria.

Each year a number of member companies are selected for the audit, with inspections of completed projects being undertaken by an independent assessor. Feedback on the companies’ performance is also sought from a wide range of people, including clients, sports governing bodies and the wider industry.

As a whole, the feedback process is designed to be constructive - providing valuable, informed feedback and encouraging companies to consider possible improvements, however there are potentially serious consequences should a company be seen to have performed below the expected standards. The benefit for clients is the reassurance that SAPCA members undergo quality assurance testing and, if an issue does arise, that SAPCA can undertake a mediation role in any dispute and guide negotiations to achieve a mutually favorable outcome.

### Financial stability

SAPCA has always included financial strength as an important membership criterion, but The Association has now introduced a new system to



Each year, SAPCA carries out a number of inspections on completed projects



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BUILDING BETTER SPORTS AND PLAY



SAPCA now has more than 200 members across a number of sectors

## “SAPCA now Monitors the financial stability of its members on an annual basis”

► strengthen its requirements. In order to ensure that the assessment of a company’s financial stability is impartial, SAPCA works closely with the credit reference specialist Experian, and bases its membership requirements on the Commercial Delphi Scoring System used within the Experian Risk Reports.

SAPCA demands that all contractor and supplier applicants must have a minimum Commercial Delphi score of 40 out of 100, which effectively means that, as a starting point, applicants must be in the top 70% of UK businesses for financial stability. But as well as applying this requirement as a prerequisite for admission, SAPCA now also monitors the financial stability of its members on an annual basis and requires that contractors and suppliers comply with requirements for financial stability in order to renew their SAPCA membership at the start of each new membership year in January.

### “The benefits are simple”

Mark Oakley of SAPCA approved contractors Hunter Construction, explains that SAPCA membership is there specifically to safeguard facility owners. He outlines some of the key benefits to the end user:

“There are issues with irresponsible working methods going on in the industry, as there are in any vocation. Whether it’s through designs that aren’t fit for purpose being accepted or simply because the contractor has said a proposal

would work when it was perhaps promised on an unrealistic time frame, we do see it.

“Obviously, not all contractors who lack SAPCA membership will be guilty of this,” he adds. “But as SAPCA membership is effectively a seal of approval from the recognised trade association for the sports and play construction industry, it clarifies to the customer that their work is of the highest quality and supports them in their bid to foster excellence and improve standards across the board.”

Like many contractors with the benefit SAPCA membership, Mark is adamant that it brings clear advantages: “We have found that membership brings added value to purchasers as an assurance that the contract will be carried out to the required standard.”

### Raising industry standards

SAPCA’s core remit is to foster excellence, professionalism and continuous improvement throughout the industry, in order to provide the high quality facilities needed at all levels of sport, physical activity, recreation and play. A core constituent of this is delivered through carefully selecting only the best UK contractors, suppliers and consultants and ensuring they stick to definitive construction frameworks to improve industry standards on a national scale and supplement the provision of sport by actively ensuring all installations are fit for purpose and worth the risk of investment.

### Core benefits for customers

- SAPCA membership signifies professional competence and performance, which directly benefits customers that choose member companies for their projects.
- Strict admission criteria. Ensures that all SAPCA members have the necessary experience and quality of workmanship.
- Through the code of conduct, members are committed to high standards of customer service and business practice.
- Clearly defined standards of construction. Compliance with minimum construction specifications and quality of work.
- Impartial assistance in the resolution of complaints and disputes between members and their customers is available through the technical mediation service..
- Publications and newsletters provide valuable information and guidance.
- Exhibitions and seminars. Regional events featuring the leading constructors of sports facilities and suppliers of related products, together with a programme of short papers on key aspects of sports facility design and construction.

### What are the different types of SAPCA members?

SAPCA’s membership structure, comprises six distinct groups of members.

#### Group 1: Principal contractors

Specialist contractors that design and construct sports and play facilities, including tennis courts, pitches, athletics tracks, cricket wickets, bowling greens and multi-use games areas, acting as the main contractors for projects.

#### Group 2: Surfacing contractors

Installers of sports surfaces that have in-house expertise in surfacing disciplines.

#### Group 3: Ancillary contractors

Contractors engaged in related trades within the industry, such as floodlighting, fencing, line-marking and maintenance

#### Group 4: Manufacturers & suppliers

Manufacturers and suppliers of products used in the industry.

#### Group 5: Professional services

Providers of professional services, including consultants and laboratories.

#### Group 6: Affiliate members

Organisations that have a direct interest in the development of sports facilities in the UK, and a close working relationship with SAPCA, such as national governing bodies.

# SAPCA DIRECTORY



The Sports and Play Construction Association, SAPCA, is the recognised trade organisation for the sports and play facility construction industry in the UK. SAPCA fosters excellence, professionalism and continuous improvement throughout the industry,

in order to provide the high quality facilities necessary for the success of British sport. SAPCA represents a wide range of specialist constructors of natural and synthetic sports surfaces, including both outdoor and indoor facilities,

from tennis courts and sports pitches to playgrounds and sports halls. SAPCA also represents manufacturers and suppliers of related products, and independent consultants that offer professional advice on the development of projects.

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### Forthcoming shows:

- **Tuesday 20 May:** Edgbaston Cricket Ground, Birmingham
- **Tuesday 17 June:** Elland Road, Leeds FC, Yorkshire
- **Tuesday 28 October:** Ravenscraig Sports Facility, Nr Motherwell, Scotland

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## Product round-up



### UK Premier League club trials Q App food orders

Through the Q App mobile ordering platform, West Bromwich Albion FC fans can use their mobile phones to place food and drink orders at the club's Hawthorns stadium. As well as removing the need to carry cash, Q App is designed to let supporters avoid queuing to place their orders, while also enabling staff to process more orders and promote special offers. Fans can order food from their mobile phone before and during the game.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**qapp**



### Brighton and Hove FC books Spatial Structures

Manufacturer and builder of steel framed membrane-covered buildings Spatial Structures will build a covered training pitch for UK championship football team Brighton and Hove Albion. The contract is part of a £20m development that will include 13 outdoor pitches at the club's new training site New Monks Farm, Lancing, West Sussex. The Spatial Structures facility will cover 78 by 60sq m, providing a half-sized pitch for indoor training during bad weather.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**spatial structures**

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### Polytan surfaces for ISTAF Berlin

Polytan installed its modern Polytan M athletics surface at the O2 World at Ostbahnhof, Berlin, for the first indoor Internationale Stadionfest Berlin (ISTAF). Top international athletes, including discus Olympic and world champion Robert Harting, pole-vaulters Björn Otto and Raphael Holzdeppe as well as shot-put world champion David Storl, competed at the indoor venue on 1 March. As a partner of the ISTAF Indoor event, Polytan is also installing a mobile Hertha Blue 85-metre sprint track.



sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**polytan**



sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**dlf**

### DLF lays down new seed mixture for Brazil

Seed from DLF's Johnsons Sports Seeds range has been chosen for all World Cup stadiums and training pitches for Brazil 2014. DLF's new 4turf cultivar in the mixture chosen has been trialled in the UK at the STRI and the final seed mixture has been tested in Brazil by both international advisors and local sports grass specialists. Football pitches in Brazil are generally Bermuda-grass based, so the pitches need to be reinforced with temperate sports turfgrass to provide the perfect playing surface. To meet this requirement, the pitches have been overseeded with DLF's perennial ryegrasses including 4turf.

log on to [www.sport-kit.net](http://www.sport-kit.net) and type the company name under 'keyword search'



## Gunnell becomes CNP brand ambassador

First Milk has revealed that Sally Gunnell OBE will be its brand ambassador to showcase, develop and promote its new products for both of its key brands, sport nutrition experts CNP, and dairy brand, Lake District Dairy Co. First Milk says the two-year agreement with the British sporting hero, who holds World Record and Olympic Gold winning experience, will help it secure its reputation with its range of dairy foods.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD** **cnp**



## Versapulley reaches European premier ship clubs

European football clubs have been getting to grips with the Versaclimber's Versapulley strength and conditioning machine. Real Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Real Betis and Athletic de Bilbao have been using the machine as part of their fitness regimes. Juventus and Monaco have also been using the Versapulley, which has user-controlled resistance to work muscle groups. The kit is available through European distributors Iberian Sportech and Spanish fitness specialist VF Sport.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**  
**versaclimber**



## Jupiter Play buys Park

Edinburgh-based Jupiter Play and Leisure has acquired outdoor play equipment manufacturer Park Leisure Ltd. With 30 years of experience in the play industry, Kent-based Park Leisure's steel play and sports equipment will add to the natural timber product that Jupiter Play and Leisure currently supply, expanding its equipment offering.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**jupiter play**



## One World Futbol Project goes worldwide

The US-based One World Futbol Project has agreed a European distribution deal with German company Rhiem group, making its "indestructible" Futbol available for European clubs. The Futbol is designed to endure punctures and rough surfaces. For every purchase, another Futbol ball is donated to organisations working with youth in refugee camps, disaster areas, conflict zones and harsh environments.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**

**futbol**

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6-11 APR 2014

**SportAccord****Belek/Antalya, Turkey**

The SportAccord Convention is a six-day annual gathering of more than 2,500 leading representatives from the international sport sector. It encompasses the congress and general assemblies of three associations whose members consist of 109 international sports federations and associate members. The convention provides the global sports community with an opportunity to gather in an exclusive networking environment, to build relationships, expand horizons and broaden sport's collective endeavours.

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[www.sportaccordconvention.com](http://www.sportaccordconvention.com)

20 MAY 2014

**The Sports Facility Show****Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham, UK**

A one-day event that comprises a series of informative and educational seminars together with an exhibition featuring specialists in the design, construction and maintenance of sports facilities.

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[www.sapca.org.uk/events-exhibitions](http://www.sapca.org.uk/events-exhibitions)

28 MAY – 1 JUN 2014

**CIFTIS-Sports****China National Convention Center, Beijing, China**

CIFTIS-Sports focuses on creating opportunities for the sports service industry by building a communication network platform for government departments in charge of sports and leisure facilities. It is hosted by China's Ministry of Commerce.

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**IFSEC International****ExCeL, London, UK**

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17 JUN 2014

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26 JUN 2014

**Sports and Leisure Facilities Forum****Royal Berkshire Conference Centre, Madejski Stadium, Reading, Berkshire, UK**

The Sports and Leisure Facilities Forum is specifically designed for development and procurement managers from stadia, leisure facilities, arenas and local authorities all over the UK. At the event they will find inspirational ideas and gain up to date knowledge from leading solution and service providers. The event will combine an ideas forum and an exhibition and is designed to deliver content that is informative and opportunity-driven.

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**19th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science****Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

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28 OCT 2014

**Sports Facility Show****Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility, Motherwell, United Kingdom**

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