

News in brief

Staccato reports from the cultural typeface

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CCPR no more

The CCPR, the organisation once known as the Central Council for Physical Recreation, is soon to become the organisation once known as the CCPR. At its recent annual general meeting, the CCPR passed a special resolution to change the organisation's name to the Sport and Recreation Alliance. The vote was apparently carried by all but two abstentions and the next step will be to get working on producing a "visual identity" for this new incarnation.

Amaechi centre stage at Manchester clubs event

Manchester City Council's first ever Sports Club Conference at the City of Manchester Stadium attracted 150 coaches, officials and volunteers from a vast array of the city's sports clubs. The event, which is intended to become an annual feature of the Manchester sporting calendar, brought clubs together to learn new skills, receive key information, share best practice and network with clubs from their own and other sports. The event provided training in safeguarding, first aid, equity and disability awareness and updating around funding, valuing your volunteers and engaging Manchester's communities. Executive member for culture and leisure, Mike Amesbury, opened the conference by thanking the delegates for their hours of countless volunteering that enables Mancunians to participate in sport but he was somewhat upstaged by former NBA basketball star John Amaechi, who praised the work of clubs, coaches and volunteers but challenged his audience to make a difference to young people's lives. As one conference delegate put it: "Very impressive, great support to clubs, which is how it should be. Well done, look forward to next year."

More awards for Water Babies

Baby-swimming experts Water Babies have won the best national baby and toddler development activity category in the What's On 4 2010 awards, the third time the company has won this particular prize. Sponsored by Prima Baby and Pregnancy magazine, the awards aim to celebrate and support the best children's activities across the UK as voted for by parents. Water Babies teach more than 20,000 babies every week through an expanding network of franchised businesses in the UK, Ireland and Australia. Jess Thompson, who founded Water Babies with her husband, Paul, in 2002, suggested that the award reflected the company's passion for their work: "I'm delighted that Water Babies has been recognised in this way, especially as we're the only swimming company to have won four national awards in the last three years."

New report reveals swimming pool proximity

According to the recently published State of the UK Swimming Industry report 84.3% of the UK population live within two miles of a public or private swimming pool. The document also reveals that the public have a choice of 4,674 swimming pool facilities across the UK and that 39 new private and public pools opened in the 12 months to end of March 2010. Published by the Leisure Database Company, the report also includes an overview of other facilities available at pools and of refurbishments at UK pools. The report has received the enthusiastic endorsement of numerous luminaries across the world of leisure facility provision, including: David Sparkes, chief executive of the Amateur Swimming Association; Tim Lamb, chief executive of the erstwhile



K&A IN STATUS BID: A six-week public consultation has been launched on proposals to reclassify the 87-mile Kennet and Avon Canal as a national 'cruiseway'. Success would mean that the canal, which runs between Newbury and Bath, would have its maintenance requirements upgraded and move a little further away from the dereliction that threatens it. It would also help mark the route's bicentenary. Efforts to upgrade the 200-year-old waterway from 'remainder' status – one step above 'derelict' – have been put forward by the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust (KACT), British Waterways (BW) and canal supporters. Many of the boat-bound visitors to this year's IWA Festival at Beale Park on the Thames near Goring will have travelled along the K&A and will agree with BW waterway manager Mark Stephens, who said: "We think that the formalisation of this status is beneficial to the canal, helping to secure its long term future by legally stating that the canal should be maintained to a level whereby cruising craft, such as narrowboats, can safely navigate the length of the canal."

CCPR; and even Ian Wakefield, business development manager, of the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (ISRM), soon to be subsumed into the Loughborough-based Chartered Institute of Sport.

Positive development for Midlands consultancy

West Midlands sports management consultancy Sport Structures has celebrated its eighth birthday by taking on two new consultants and promising to respond to the needs of a sector beset by uncertainty and economic constraints. Head man Simon Kirkland was bullish: "We have appointed two experts in the field to support our already extensive consultancy services. Ajay Sharma and Adrian Bradley join us with significant current practice and experience in sport and leisure to further develop our consultancy services. Many of our clients, we feel, will need this expertise to support them through these difficult times."

Leveraged support for local people

Derbyshire villages can look forward to multi-sports clubs for kids, stretching classes for older people and weekend cycling groups with the announcement that social enterprise, the Community Sports Trust, have completed their team of co-ordinators to support villages throughout the county. The Village Games team will offer advice to village groups, sports clubs, and keen individuals who want to get things started in their locality. Hayley Lever, project manager said: "We have just completed the induction of seven superb development workers who will be there to help get new activities going".

National plea for local culture

The National Culture Forum (NCF,) which represents the major professional associations working across culture and leisure, has responded to the secretary of state for culture, media and sport's explanation of this sector's part in the government's "bonfire of the quangos" with a plea to recognise the local importance of cultural services. Chair Richard Hunt argued: "What counts for local communities is what these changes will mean for them in their ability to access the cultural and sporting facilities and programmes which mean so much to the quality of their everyday lives. People participate in these activities because they enjoy them, but they are vital also for everyone's individual and social well-being – their mental and physical health, the cohesion of the communities in which they live and all the other benefits which 'The Big Society' idea aims to achieve." He added: "NCF will welcome talking with ministers about how together we can ensure that at local level services are protected and the best outcomes are realised for people across the UK."

Trough on legs on show

Surrey-based DJ Turfcare are looking forward to IOG Saltex – the major industry exhibition in September – with the launch of their latest product for gardeners with bad backs: the Veg-Table. It seems that "now you can grow your vegetables and plants the easy way at a height to suit you", as the rather chi chi looking trough is actually a "raised garden bed made from treated timber and lined with waterproof material to provide the perfect-height garden on patios, courtyards and other areas where there is no soil". David Jenkins, managing director of DJ Turfcare, says: "The Veg-Table is a true British product, made in Surrey from treated timber that really lasts. We find this to be the ideal solution for giving the disabled and elderly a simple solution to gardening without bending and digging."

Lauren's lorra, lorra volunteering

Merseyside Sport are singing the praises of young volunteer Lauren Lynch from St Helens who has been presented with the coveted Diana Award in recognition of having given 1,500 hours of her time to volunteering at the St Helens Centre for Gymnastics over the last 18 months as part of the Step into Sport scheme. The Diana Award recognises the hard work and dedication of young people who selflessly give their own time to help others and Lauren's well deserved award was presented by rugby league player Kieron Cunningham who, in St Helens, is pretty much royalty.

