

## **NCL joins forces with GLL**

### **NCL joins forces with GLL to strengthen Social Enterprise in leisure centres in the North**

North Country Leisure (NCL) has agreed to become a wholly-owned subsidiary of GLL, the UK's largest and most successful leisure charitable social enterprise. NCL will continue to directly operate its 12 leisure and sporting facilities across Cumbria and Newcastle City.

Formed in the 1990's, GLL and NCL have strong reputations in developing and delivering high quality leisure activities. GLL currently operates over 150 leisure centres across the UK, providing affordable access to top class sporting facilities including the London Aquatics Centre, on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. As a 'non-profit' that reinvests any financial surplus back into the service, GLL is set help NCL improve its already strong services to existing customers and stakeholders across Northern England. Growth opportunities exist in the region with a number of leisure contracts being tendered. GLL also has expertise and experience in managing wider cultural services such as libraries, children's centres and sports development, providing councils a joined-up service solution at a time of financial pressure.

NCL, itself a leisure management charity, has developed from its base in Hexham, operating leisure facilities and successful apprenticeship programmes on behalf of local councils including Copeland Borough Council, Eden District Council and South Lakeland District Council in Cumbria; and Eldon Leisure, Gosforth Pool and Outer West Pool in the city of Newcastle.

It is anticipated that NCL will become part of the GLL group from 1st April 2015 and the NCL local Board structure, which connects the local service with its communities, would remain in place working closely with the GLL Board.

Mark Sesnan, Managing Director, GLL, said, "We are very pleased that North Country Leisure (NCL) has joined the GLL family, where we both share the same core values, to increase physical activity, reduce health inequalities and improve social inclusion.

"This is a great opportunity for NCL, with its regional networks, locally skilled staff and operational strength, to team up with the UK's largest and most successful leisure charitable social enterprise, further strengthening and developing its services, retaining local jobs for local people – all whilst benefitting from the knowledge, experience and economies of scale of GLL."

Chris Roberts (Chair of North Country Leisure), said, "We are delighted that NCL will be joining GLL as a partner, during a period where there are a number of significant opportunities to develop and improve the service. The decision by the NCL board to become part of GLL will preserve and enhance the strengths on which NCL has built its reputation, and gain advantages for both clients, customers and staff within a larger GLL group structure".

Copeland Borough Council Portfolio Holder for Community Regeneration, Councillor Hugh Branney said: "This is great news for residents in Copeland. The partnership between our leisure provider, North Country Leisure (NCL) and one of the country's leading charitable social enterprises in this area, means more opportunities to offer people more ways to get and keep healthy.

"As a council, we have had a contract with NCL to provide our leisure facilities since 2006, and we have seen the successful growth in the Be Active Plus scheme and other health initiatives, improving access to facilities to help people achieve a healthy lifestyle.

"The partnership means local people will continue to manage local leisure services, a way of working which has already been proved successful in Copeland. The recent extension to the pool and fitness centre in Whitehaven is one example. In the first two months of opening more than 250 additional people have joined.

“This local focus on delivering what the local community needs now has the additional benefits of a bigger partner which, we believe will bring more benefits for Copeland in the months and years to come.”

For more information visit [www.gll.org](http://www.gll.org) [1].

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### **Notes to the editor**

#### About GLL

Established in 1993, GLL is the largest UK-based charitable social enterprise delivering leisure, health and community services. We operate over 150 public sport and leisure centres and 26 libraries (including three prison libraries) in partnership with over 30 local councils, public agencies and sporting organisations. Our leisure facilities enjoy more than 39 million visitors a year with over 450,000 members.

Alongside our core leisure and library divisions, we also operate children centres and in sport and legacy development, health intervention and education sectors - as well as offering the GLL Sports Foundation, one of the largest independent support programmes for talented young athletes in the UK.

#### About NCL

1. North Country Leisure is a charitable company limited by guarantee which launched in November 1998. Operating across the north of England, our main business is running public leisure centres and sports development services, encouraging healthy, physical activity. We also run leisure training and apprenticeship programmes.

2. The overall mission is “Excellent Sports & Leisure for All”

3. A non-charitable company, North Country Leisure (Trading) Limited carries out the trading activities associated with the charity, principally the provision of catering services. Profits are transferred to the charity through gift aid.

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The logo for North Country Leisure (NCL) features the letters 'NCL' in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, the words 'northcountryleisure' are written in a smaller, lowercase, bold, sans-serif font.

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**Links**

[1] <http://www.gll.org>

[2] <mailto:donna.mitchell@gll.org>