ANNUAL REVIEW
2017/18
The National Ice Centre and Motorpoint Arena Nottingham aims to create incredible experiences and memories for every visitor. The skating coaches thrive on nurturing talent, Arena staff are dedicated to ensuring customers leave each show with wonderful and lifelong memories, and Ice Locker, National Merchandise and National Catering employees pride themselves on delivering expert advice and great customer service.
CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am once again delighted to have the privilege of introducing the Annual Review of the National Ice Centre and Motorpoint Arena Nottingham.

The achievements of our Company in 2017/18 are detailed in the following pages and are a source of great pride to the Board of Directors and our shareholder and key stakeholder, Nottingham City Council.

It is to our board members that I turn to first in expressing my sincere gratitude for their hard work, diligence and enthusiasm in helping to guide the Company forwards in its continuous growth. Our board members give their time and expertise without remuneration and without this support, the Company would not be in the position of having improved and consolidated its financial position over the past few years.

Support from Nottingham City Council is also crucial. This comes both in the form of political support and practical working relationships. The City Council’s original decision to invest in our superb facility generates a wider economic dividend to the City of Nottingham of £36m per annum, according to a report commissioned this year, whilst also adding hugely to the City’s rich cultural offering.

I would also like to pay tribute to our wonderful team of staff across the many departments of the business and even across the UK, in our various National Merchandise teams. They never cease to delight me with their positive attitude in customer service, their creativity and sheer hard work. This was never more ably demonstrated following the horrific events in Manchester on 22 May 2017 when the Arena world was shocked to the core. Staff remained stoic, extra security measures were put in place, and staff provided reassurance to customers, who were effusive in praising the response of the police and our staff, particularly those of our crowd management partner, Controlled Solutions Group (CSG). Our staff perform to high standards but, in adversity, they surpassed themselves and I gratefully acknowledge that here.

2017/18 threw many other challenges at us but many of these were wonderfully positive in that they were capital investment opportunities, carried out alongside our day to day business. These investments in catering, merchandising and in the building infrastructure leave us in a stronger starting position for what promises to be another exciting and busy year in 2018/19.

I look forward in anticipation to reporting on it this time next year.

R Michiel Stevenson OBE DL Hon LLD Hon MA
Freeman of the City of Nottingham
CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S STATEMENT

Welcome to our Annual Review of 2017/18, which was a very successful year for the business.

The Motorpoint Arena had one of its busiest ever years with a glittering array of talent performing, ranging from musical legends such as Queen, Iron Maiden and Phil Collins to the latest superstars like Ed Sheeran and Bruno Mars. Comedy performances were numerous, with stars including Peter Kay (Dance for Life), Micky Flanagan and John Bishop making multiple appearances. Audiences also turned out in record numbers to see shows as diverse as Strictly Come Dancing Live and PDC Premier League Darts while the Nottingham Panthers Ice Hockey team broke new ground for British clubs with great success in the Champions Hockey League.

On the ice sports side, the National Ice Centre once again proudly despatched athletes to a Winter Olympic Games, with seven skaters representing GB in Short Track Speed Skating and Ice Dance having trained in our venue. Our continued development of hockey players, synchronized skaters, figure skaters and ice dancers led to many successes and we re-focussed our efforts in ensuring that these pathways were full of new, emerging talent from customers of public skating and learn to skate experiences.

Our commercial activities saw huge growth thanks to bringing catering in-house (including a major project to redevelop concourse bars and catering); the ongoing development of National Merchandise into new venues and festivals, including the iconic SSE Arena Wembley; and record levels of hospitality sales.

Aside from all this activity, the day to day running of a venue of such size and complexity is a huge undertaking in itself - unprecedented security activities have been introduced with minimum disruption to customers, whilst our environmental credentials have improved even further.

There are too many highlights to mention here but amongst the famous names, the high numbers and the eye-catching projects lies a team of staff that, on a daily basis, achieve incredibly high levels of performance and service through dedication, hard work and a passion for the venue. Our customers and this report is a testament to their performance as a team.

Martin Ingham
Chief Executive
National Ice Centre & Motorpoint Arena Nottingham
PUBLIC SKATING

Following a substantial market research and public skating rebrand project led by the Marketing Team (see Marketing section), and ice skating in the spotlight on national TV via the Winter Olympics and ITV’s Dancing on Ice, interest and public skating attendance increased in 2017/18.

- Over **109,000** people skated at the National Ice Centre (NIC).
- Due to the programming of additional sessions including a family foam party, the Easter half term holiday remained one of the busiest periods of the year with over **7,000** visits, up by **24%** on the previous year.
- The May half term holiday attracted over **2,700** skaters, an increase of **15%** on the previous year.
- Over **8,400** people skated with us during the summer holidays, with an average session attendance of **93** people over **90** sessions. A £10 skate for families offer ran for the duration of the summer period.
- Christmas skating was up **15%** on last year with a total **10,950** people enjoying a festive skate.
- February half term saw a **48%** increase on the previous year with **9,574** skaters.
- **179** birthday parties were hosted.

- Our customer experience was improved. The ice equipment hire process was simplified and moved to skate hire, Rink Assistants were retrained as Customer Experience Coordinators to provide a bigger customer services focus, and from December 2017 ice skating essentials were made available for purchase at skate hire resulting in the following sales:

![Image of ice skating equipment]

**3,403** pieces of on ice equipment
SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

Research shows that people feel more inspired to get active after watching sport on TV. The high profile of winter Sports via the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, Dancing on Ice and Ice Stars, along with a new marketing strategy for ice skating, enthused people to try ice skating and contributed to an increase in skating lessons.

Skating lessons

- Over 30,000 people participated in a National Ice Skating Association (NISA) accredited Skate UK course, up 4% on last year.
- 23% of bookings were beginners.

Toddlers

- 224 toddlers aged 2 to 4 years learnt to skate at the venue through Tots skating courses.
- A Tots Learn to Skate with Parent course was introduced in January 2018.

Ice hockey

- Following the introduction of the Skate Hockey programme, participation has increased by 44% compared to the previous year with the Learn to Play Ice Hockey programme.
- Over 4,000 aspiring ice hockey players booked onto Skate Hockey and Play Hockey courses.

Speed skating

- 720 people participated in NISA’s Learn to Speed Skate programme.
- Following the Winter Olympics, 123 customers took advantage of a free Speed Skating Taster session.
ICE SPORTS

The award-winning TV documentary series Ice Stars, filmed at the NIC, followed Nottingham based skaters representing the disciplines of figure skating, ice hockey, short track speed skating and synchronized skating. The third series aired on CBBC for a final year in Autumn 2017.

Short Track Speed Skating

Ahead of the Winter Olympic Games, Dame Katherine Grainger visited GB Short Track Speed Skating in Nottingham on her first official visit as UK Sport Chair. Dame Katherine, alongside English Institute of Sport (EIS) National Director Nigel Walker, met with athletes, coaches and support staff targeting medal success in South Korea.

2018 Winter Olympic Games

The nation had big hopes for triple World Champion Elise Christie to medal in multiple distances at the Winter Olympics. After setting an Olympic record in the first heat of the 500m race, disaster struck after Elise crashed out in the final lap and finished 4th place in the 500m final.

Whilst it’s been another heart-breaking Olympics for Britain’s Elise Christie, she is considered a true inspiration, and has won over a new generation of fans.

Top results:
- Elise Christie 4th in the 500m final
- Charlotte Gilmartin 14th in 1,500m
- Farrell Treacy 14th in 1,000m in his first Olympic Games
- Josh Cheetham 23rd in 1,000m in his first Olympic Games
- Kat Thomson 24th in 500m in her first Olympic Games
- Nottingham’s Nick Buckland and Penny Coomes finished 11th in the Ice Dance competition.
ICE SPORTS

Nottinghamshire Ice Racing Club (NIRC)

- 51 new skaters (24 girls and 27 boys) attended club sessions to try the sport.
- 51 skaters registered with the NIRC including 35 racing members.
- 71 top three results at domestic competitions, four international medals and 13 British Championship medals.
- Three British records were smashed by Freddie Polak in Oberstdorf in August 2017. Freddie is the holder of the Pee Wee category in the 222m, 333m and 500m distances.

Ice Hockey

- 21 teams trained and competed out of the NIC.
- Over 500 players aged 5-50 years registered with the EIHA to compete during the season.
- The Nottingham Ice Hockey Club (NIHC) programme was delivered by 40 EIHA registered volunteer coaches.
- 15 NIHC players selected to represent England and nine selected to represent Great Britain.
- The Nottingham Universities Mavericks Ice Hockey Club had a membership of over 100 with 51 new members recruited for the season.
- Varsity Ice Hockey sold out and the Battle of Nottingham Universities match attracted over 1,200 spectators.
- Hosted a British Universities Ice Hockey Association (BUIHA) Women’s tournament and an international winter camp

Figure Skating

- One skater was selected for the GB Performance Team and three skaters finished the 2017/18 season in the top three of the NISA National Rankings:
  - Elena Komova ranked 1st Basic Novice A Ladies
  - Joshua Brown ranked 2nd Junior Men
  - Ryan Lu ranked 3rd Basic Novice B Men
- NIC Academy members achieved 84 top three results in 11 domestic competitions with 21 gold, 34 silver & 29 bronze medals.
- 13 podium finishes were gained from two international competitions with three gold, six silver & four bronze medals.
- 22 skaters represented Nottingham at the British Championships securing three medals - one gold, one silver & one bronze.
- NIC Academy members completed over 140 NISA Competitive Test sessions, achieving a 97% pass rate.

The Nottingham Synchronized Skating Academy (NSSA)

- Competed with six teams and a membership of over 90 skaters ranging from 6 to 19 years.
- NSSA dominated the British Synchronized Skating Championships with all six teams winning gold.
- Junior Team represented GB at the Junior World Championships achieving 13th place.
- The NSSA achieved the prestigious Clubmark - an accreditation scheme licensed by Sport England. Clubmark shows that a club is sustainable, well run and provides the right environment for its members.
- The NIC hosted the British Synchronized Skating Championships for the fourth consecutive year attracting over 2,600 spectators and 54 teams. A superb team of 50+ volunteers helped deliver the Championships to a high standard resulting in a repeat booking for 2019.
SHOWS, EVENTS AND TICKET SALES

117 events took place in 2017/18

40 CONCERTS AND SHOWS

19 COMEDY

44 PANTHERS ICE HOCKEY MATCHES

14 SPORTING EVENTS

OUR FANS

416,036 people came through our doors to enjoy a concert or show

219,007 ice hockey enthusiasts cheered on the Nottingham Panthers

20,682 people enjoyed hospitality in one of our suites, bars and restaurants

SOLD OUT status maintained for our executive suites three years running

56% female
44% male

TOP FIVE SHOWS

BRUNO MARS
ED SHEERAN
THE KILLERS
LIAM GALLAGHER
STEREOPHONICS

Artists who graced the Motorpoint Arena Nottingham stage for the first time in 2017/18!

The XX
Brian Cox
John Legend
Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds
Impractical Jokers

J Cole
Phil Collins
Royal Blood
Liam Gallagher
Chris Rock

43.5

MEDIAN

CUSTOMER AGE

98% of customers would return

3% live in Sheffield

51% live in Nottingham

2.7% live in Lincoln

14% live in Derby

10% live in Leicester

3.5% live in Peterborough
SALES & HOSPITALITY

The Sales & Hospitality Team once again delivered record hospitality sales in 2017/18 with both annual and single event hospitality enjoying their most profitable ever years.

- 25% increase in single event hospitality profit year on year
- Maintained ‘SOLD OUT’ status of our executive suites for a third year in a row
- 2% increase in annual hospitality profit from previous record year
- Record number of customers in the Executive Suites for Ed Sheeran, 1,000 people over two nights!

The recent decline in advertising sales continued but there was a positive uplift towards the end of the year as we experienced strong renewal rates and agreed a new partnership with Pukka Ltd.

Room hire rental from the Bolero and Platinum Suites remained consistent with 2016/17. However, the team was successful in securing eight new large Arena events for 2018/19 from six promoters with whom we haven’t previously worked; this will be an area of focus for 2018/19 to try and bring in new and alternative events to the Arena.

2017/18 was a strong year for group booking sales:

- 9,074 for Arena shows and events
- 5,279 for ice skating
- 1,655 for Nottingham Panthers
- A new record was also achieved with 1,275 group tickets sold for Andre Rieu!
OPERATIONS

Following the tragic attack at Manchester Arena in May 2017, the Operations Team introduced extra security measures, updated Counter Terrorism procedures, and carried out staff training in a short space of time. Searches outside the venue were introduced and bag size restrictions were put into place. The team worked closely with the police on other measures to keep the public safe and reassured, and a large-scale evacuation was carried out during an event to test procedures.

The team also managed and successfully completed several large projects including:

- Project managed bringing the catering function in-house.
- Refurbishment and redesign of 10 catering outlets on the concourse to create feature bars providing specific catering and drinks offers.
- The installation of new merchandise kiosks with improved viewing and customer interaction.
- Managing the installation of a world class Olympic hybrid safety barrier system for the GB Speed team in the lead up to the Winter Olympics.
- Redesign and installation of a new VIP Bar on level 4 to improve the hospitality catering service.
- Refurbishment of the skate hire area to enhance the customer experience and drive commercial opportunity.
- In conjunction with the Nottingham City Council, led a project to bring in a new Motorpoint Arena Car Park based by BioCity.
- Ran several training sessions for employees covering emergency procedures, licencing and food safety.

IT SERVICES

In 2017/18 the core infrastructure was continually improved to ensure services remained fast and reliable. The primary firewall was upgraded with a bigger, more secure solution. This has strengthened our network and is another step towards gaining Cyber Essentials accreditation.

Other achievements include:

- Replacing the digital signage platform with a more reliable and robust system.
- Managing and supporting merchandise websites for several UK festivals.
- Technical developments to the catering order system improved waiter/waitress service in the hospitality areas, and the addition of mobile chip & pin devices for each wireless ordering tablet improved the speed of service.
- Audio-visual setups were updated to improve internal and external meetings and conferences. The new audio-visual configuration includes the latest connection technologies, a more simplified operation for users, and better quality audio and video output with high definition TVs, projectors, amplifiers and speakers.
MARKETING

In 2017/18 the Marketing Team invested significant time in understanding and identifying ways to address the decline in public skating.

To understand the barriers to ice skating, 400 face to face interviews were conducted and the findings were used to create a new NIC public skating strategy to boost skating numbers by making ice skating more attractive and accessible to the public. Some of the developments included:

- Rebranded the NIC to widen its appeal and better reflect ice skating as a fun activity for all the family.
- Built and launched a new NIC website.
- Launched a new Tots Zone at all weekend sessions to increase opportunities for families to come ice skating.
- Introduced a new junior ticket and free entry for under 5s.
- Introduced a Warm Up Zone to improve the experience for first time skaters.
- Created a new birthday party package.

The move to inhouse catering and the investment in developing the concourse catering units created a lot of additional work for the team. New brands were created, and adverts and menus were designed for the digital screens.

The team designed and launched new Arena gift cards which are proving popular with Panthers fans and comedy lovers and they also supported the launch of the new Motorpoint Arena Car Park via communications and promotion.
MOTORPOINT ARENA NOTTINGHAM WEBSITE

The focus on digital marketing continued with new activities implemented to drive ticket sales and revenue across the business.

On average 115,000 users visit our website monthly. This can reach 250,000 during event season.

159,883 tickets sold via our website.

Our mobile visits increased to 60% thanks to our fully responsive website.

Our email database reached 190,000.

Our ecommerce conversion was 3.75% - higher than the average ecommerce site (2.3%).

MOTORPOINT ARENA NOTTINGHAM SOCIAL MEDIA

Trained Box Office Supervisors now manage social media customer enquiries and feedback to improve response times and overall customer service.

The Motorpoint Arena Nottingham has almost 200,000 social media followers.

76,196 FOLLOWERS
An average of three million individuals see something related to the Arena in their newsfeeds monthly.

108,111 FOLLOWERS
We’re the third most followed Arena outside of London.

10,048 FOLLOWERS
Surpassed 10,000 followers giving us access to the ‘swipe up’ option.

1.325 FOLLOWERS
...on our business page.

CELEBRITY FANS

We had retweets from several artists and acts on Twitter, reaching millions of online fans.

RICKY GERVAIS
13.3 MILLION

OLLY MURS
7.34 MILLION

THE VAMPS
4.31 MILLION

BRIAN COX
2.91 MILLION

5 AFTER MIDNIGHT
615 THOUSAND
On average **24,700** users visit our website monthly.

Our email database reached **4,700**

Our ecommerce conversion was **2.6%** - higher than the average ecommerce site (2.3%).

**NATIONAL ICE CENTRE SOCIAL MEDIA**

The National Ice Centre has over **25,000 social media followers!**

- **Facebook**: 15,983 followers
- **Twitter**: 7,496 followers
- **Instagram**: 2,042 followers
CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Greener Arena

In December 2017, the Motorpoint Arena Nottingham became the first indoor entertainment and sports venue in the UK to introduce eco-friendly cups in a bid to reduce plastic and lower its carbon footprint. 160,000 recyclable cups have been reused since they were introduced.

A dedicated environmental group continue to look for new ways to reduce energy usage and keep staff motivated to think green. Killawatt, a long-term employee awareness campaign assisted in an electricity consumption reduction of 3% across the building.

Other environmental successes and initiatives implemented in 2017/18 include:

• **Lowest ever** annual consumption of electricity.
• **One million kilowatts** of electricity generated from our solar panels.
• **39%** of all waste was recycled on site.
• The building has almost **100% LED lights** following a light replacement project.
• Addition of a **secure bicycle park**.
• Many departments converted their documentation to **paperless**.
• Ran recycling and energy awareness events to engage staff and customers.
• The majority of cutlery in all catering outlets is **biodegradable**.
• **Elimination of plastic straws and plastic lids** for Coke cups.
• **Solar powered** National Merchandise trailers and introduction of **tote bags**.
CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Security
As highlighted in the Operations section, a significant amount of time and effort went into keeping the public safe in the venue following the tragic attack at Manchester Arena.

The safety and security of all visitors to the venue is of the utmost importance and, alongside crowd management partner Controlled Solutions Group (CSG), employees ensured the extra security measures were brought in, trained out, and kept in place.

Gender pay gap
The Nottingham Ice Centre Ltd is committed to treating its workforce in a fair and equal way, regardless of gender. Compared to the gender pay gap national average of 18.4% (as measured by the Office for National Statistics), we are pleased to report a gender pay gap well below the national average at 4.3%, favourable to male employees. This gap is largely attributable to our demographics as 60% of management and supervisory roles are held by male staff, although our senior management team is comprised of 50% male and 50% female.

Communities
The NIC has worked in partnership with Nottingham City Council, resident clubs, Blue Bell Hill Trust, Nottingham Panthers and local and national sports organisations to deliver several innovative programmes for the benefit of the community.

These sports development programmes have inspired people to be active and enjoy activities with friends. These programmes have been instrumental in providing various ice sports disciplines with new talent.

• Our Sports Development Officer engaged with schools to get children active and learn new skills. 3,400 pupils ranging from age 4-12 attended the six-week School Skating programme, an increase of almost 30% on last year.
• 147 pupils were awarded a six-week scholarship on the Skate UK Learn to Skate programme to assist in their development.
• The Urban Hockey programme was delivered to 1,495 pupils during their PE and after school sessions.

Partnerships
Our partnership work aims to improve health & wellbeing.

• In partnership with Blue Bell Hill Trust and the Nottingham Panthers, we delivered three Panther Activity days engaging almost 100 pupils.
• Experian’s Values, Money and Me educational programme was delivered by the Blue Bell Hill Trust to over 150 families in the St Ann’s area of Nottingham and the wider community. The aim of the programme was to develop mental, physical and moral capabilities through practical training or leisure time.
• Skate with the Panthers sessions attracted almost 1,000 pupils from 26 schools. The Panthers donated 2,000 tickets to inspire children to start skating through watching elite ice hockey.

Royal Foundation Coach Core Apprenticeship Scheme
The NIC employed two apprentices from the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry’s Royal Foundation Coach Core Apprenticeship Scheme. Both apprentices completed Level 2 in Activity Leadership, and one apprentice gained the EHA Level 1 Coaching qualification.
HUMAN RESOURCES

The 2017/18 HR stats have significantly increased in many areas of this report due to bringing the catering function inhouse.

EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHICS
Our headcount increased from 439 to 1,057, an increase of 141% compared to last year.

GENDER
The company gender split is currently 41% male to 59% female. The gender ratio across our management and supervisory roles is 60% male and 40% female.

GENDER PAY COMPARISON
The average hourly pay for female employees is £8.13 compared to £8.50 for male employees. This represents a 4.3% gender pay gap favourable to male employees.

AGE
Our employees range from aged 17 - 76. 85.7% of our workforce is under the age of 30 and our median age is 25.

LENGTH OF SERVICE
Our average service length is 2.2 years. 10.74% of our employees have been employed for 5 years or more. 3.4% of our workforce have been employed for 10 years or more.

FLEXIBLE WORKING
87.1% of our workforce are employed on a zero-hour basis, 8.1% on a full-time basis and 4.7% on a part-time basis.

DIVERSITY
Approximately 18% of employees have an ethnic origin other than White British and 1% of employees consider themselves to have a disability.

RECRUITMENT
The HR Team processed 9,244 applications for vacancies.

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER
Employee turnover decreased from 46% to 24%.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to the board who are as follows

Directors:
- Mich Stevenson OBE DL Chairman
- Councillor Malcolm Wood Vice Chairman
- Councillor Brian Grocock
- Councillor Anne Peach
- Councillor Sarah Piper
- Dr Tina Byrom
- Mel Egginton
- Peter Ellis
- Jo Bradley

Members:
- Hugh White
- Glen O’Connell
- Ceri Walters
- James Buller

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