

GBG plan to educate licensing officers during ICE 2024 at its new expanded High Street Hub

EVENTS

The **Gambling Business Group** will bring local authority licensing officers together with land-based gambling experts at ICE 2024, as part of an expanded programme of events and engagements at the group's High Street Hub at the ExCeL in London next month.

The Gambling Business Group will build on the "really positive" feedback from last year's High Street Hub at ICE by expanding the programme of events on offer in 2024, incorporating a practical drive to increase shared knowledge in the licensing sector.

As well as a "fluid and intimate" schedule of presentations for operators and business owners, the GBG is also working with the Institute of Licensing to ensure representatives of local authorities are kept up to date with the industry's progress.

"I think having a focus for the street sector underlined the totality of the ICE experience and provided another important reason to attend the show," said GM Charlotte Meller. "As with everything there's always room for improvement and we conducted a debrief with our members to identify what went well, where we could have done better and what we could add to the Hub."

That process of evaluation has delivered the programme of gaming expert insights that GBG Hub visitors will experience at ICE 2024, with Meller stating "our aim is to make the pro-



gramme of presentations more fluid and intimate by having a number of experts on hand for visitors to speak to on a 1-2-1 basis over the first two days."

"Our partners at the Institute of Licensing were particularly keen to get Local Authority officers to ICE and we are delighted to have a joint bespoke morning on the Thursday for licensing officers."

"Education and improving awareness levels are key and I am looking forward to being able to explain to licensing officers what the industry is all about and the technologies that are being deployed particularly in relation to age verification and customer interaction."

Licence to learn

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GBG'S HIGH STREET HUB AT ICE 2024 : ASK THE EXPERTS STAND S10 -130

On Tuesday 6 - February Wednesday 7 February GBG will be hosting Advisory Sessions at ICE with a number of experts on hand to talk to about stakeholder issues:

Age Verification Compliance
Data Protection Licensing
Responsible Gambling AML/CFT Security
Technical Standards Safety, responsibility and partnership working

Tony Allen, Age Check Certification Scheme
Howard Gant, Boomerang Digital's Smart Hub
Richard Dutton Elias Partnership
David Lucas, Institute of Licensing (IOL)
Kirsty Caldwell and colleagues, Betsmart Consulting
Jim Leitch, Link Integrated
Rob Wheeler, Chair of GBG's Technical Group
Sylvia Oates Six till Six

On Thursday 8 February a number of local licensing officers have already confirmed to attend the joint GBG/IOL session with more spaces available.

BNAE opens third London store

RETAIL

Bandai Namco Amusement Europe has followed the success of recent retail openings in Camden and Victoria with a new physical shop in Ealing Broadway.

The latest addition to the company's store estate will also sell Japanese collectables and games, and comes as part of a UK roll-out for the branded shopping concept.

"It's brilliant that Bandai Namco has chosen to open one of their first stores in the UK at the centre," said Ealing Broadway shopping centre director Andrew Rollings.

"We know just how much of a following their characters have and I'm sure the store's unique experience will prove popular with our shoppers."

Bandai Namco Cross Store opened in Camden in August, with Victoria following November, as MD John McKenzie hailed the growing popularity of Japanese culture in the country.

"We continue to embrace this, listen to our fans and deliver rich products as we expand into further parts of the UK."



Hollywood Bowl takes first step in Teesside expansion

PLANNING

Hollywood Bowl has applied to update the signage on the front of its Teesside Leisure Park premises as work begins on converting an adjacent restaurant unit into a new 12-hole golf course.

The operator lodged plans with Middlesbrough Council before Christmas to erect illuminated and non-illuminated signs featuring the slogan "bowl, putt, dine, drink, play" ahead of converting the former Imperial City restaurant.

"Hollywood Bowl confirmed earlier this



year that it would be taking over the eatery, which closed in 2019, as it introduces a new 12-hole golf course at its new 'amalgamated

leisure unit,'" reported Teesside Live.

"This move will see the Imperial City site, front of Hollywood Bowl, and the bar sign,

which is located to the right of the entrance doors, all have the same branding."

"The new signage above the main doors will not only feature a string of words but several white stars, which will illuminate alongside the text. This branding will similarly be wrapped around the former Imperial City restaurant with black block-out vinyl."

On confirming the expansion, a spokesperson for Hollywood Bowl said: "We are due to transform the site in Teesside to include a brand new 12-hole mini golf, and five additional bowling lanes, offering even more affordable family entertainment to guests in 2024."