



## GBG's High Street Hub to return in 2025 at ARE Expo

HIGH STREET

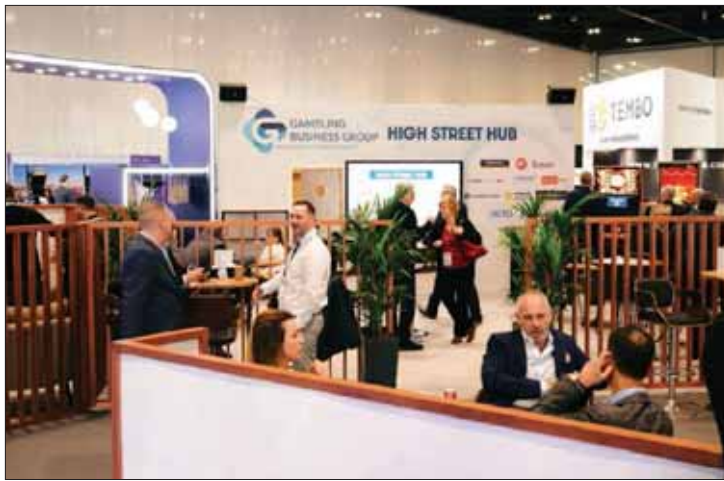
The **High Street Hub** will return in 2025 at the ARE Expo in Manchester, with the Gambling Business Group once again hosting a series of workshops, networking opportunities and licensing seminars aimed at promoting the UK land-based sector.

The Gambling Business Group has confirmed that its High Street Hub will return in 2025 despite the relocation of ICE, with the networking and workshop platform becoming a central feature of the Amusement and Retail Entertainment Expo.

ARE takes place on 29 and 30 April next year at The Cotton Sheds, Victoria Warehouse, in Manchester, and will allow the GBG to continue promoting the UK's land-based gambling industry.

"Whilst ICE is moving to Barcelona, the High Street Hub is staying closer to the land-based sector that the GBG supports," said GBG GM Charlotte Meller. "The Expo is being organised by Swan Events and it's the first industry focused event for high street businesses to be staged in the North West for many years. There's been a very positive reaction to both the event and its location and the publicity for the expo will start to ratchet up from January."

"We will be organising a number of workshops over the two exhibition days, to be held in dedicated workshop space alongside the High



Street Hub stand."

And she called once again on members who were interested in running or being involved in a workshop to promote their products or services to join the event. "There was a very positive response to the Hub's advisory sessions with a number of members offering specialist advice and guidance to other members on issues relating to licensing, compliance, age verification etc."

The GBG will again look to work with the Institute of Licensing at ARE, with a focus for licensing authorities on the second day. The collaboration proved a significant success at ICE earlier this year when circa 20 council representatives attended the GBG initiative.

"This was really successful at the London show and we hope that councils in the Northern regions will also engage positively."

Meller added: "We are

pleased to see that a number of GBG Members have already signed up to exhibit and would encourage others to consider doing so. This is a new show in the north of England and is therefore likely to attract many operators and businesses that won't normally travel to London."

To deliver High Street Hub Seminars:  
charlotte.gamblingbusiness-group.co.uk

### Helping the high streets

Charlotte Meller said...

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## Cygnets Bury opens new arcade-driven social hub

COMMUNITY

A mental health facility for young people in Bury has looked to amusement machines to create a "homely" space for local kids to socialise in.

Cygnets Bury Forestwood on Bolton Road is now one of 20 Cygnets Health Care facilities to have established a new social hub venue, as the independent health provider looks to roll the scheme out across the length and breadth of its locations nationwide.

Cygnets says it aims for the spaces to be of a non-clinical nature where young people, many of whom suffer from autism and other developmental conditions, can relax and have fun outside of specific treatment sessions.

The space at the Bury location, nicknamed "Tree-tops" by staff, was developed in direct collaboration with young patients: a wish-list of things the space might include was compiled and resulted in the acquisition of a huge TV, a PS5, bean bags, and a couple of classic video arcade titles: Pac Man and Fast and Furious.

"The management team at Forestwood are really proud of the co-production project undertaken by young people within the service to enhance the patient experience," remarked hospital manager Cheryl Wood. "The launch of this social hub will support and enhance staff and patient engagement within the service."



## Gravity UK launches its first standalone arcade at Bluewater

FEC

Gravity UK has officially launched its first standalone arcade at the Bluewater shopping centre in Kent, with the cutting-edge 7,000 sq ft venue opening its doors on 12 December.

Gravity Arcade is the latest in the company's bid to serve the full sweep of the entertainment spectrum, and offers more than 50 games and activities "for all ages to enjoy."

"We're incredibly excited to launch this new concept at Bluewater,"



said co-founder and chief growth officer Michael Harrison. "Our Gravity Active (trampoline park) and Gravity Rocks (Climbing Walls) in the mall already see fantastic footfall and our FunBox arcades in Gravity MAX sites have consistently performed well."

"Introducing this standalone product offering made perfect sense when a suitable unit became available. We are also delighted to continue our long-term partnership with Landsec, a landlord at several of our locations. Blue-

water is the perfect home for this thrilling new experience."

The arcade has been designed in collaboration with partner brand FunBox, and features titles such as Apex Rebels, Hungry Hippo, Capto Crane, High Five Crane, Jurassic Park, and House of the Dead Scarlet Dawn, as well as air hockey and basketball.

"At Gravity Arcade, there's no need to pre-book or check in. Simply head to the self-service kiosk, grab your Player Card, and dive right in."