

BUSINESS

with James Cowling
Contact James on 0117 934 3258
or email him at j.cowling@bepp.co.uk



IN BRIEF



Appointment: Neil Hanna

Firm tries out ex-rugby pro

Bristol-based, luxury serviced accommodation provider, acityabode, has appointed ex-professional rugby player, Neil Hanna, as group marketing manager.

Neil, 28, who played professional rugby for Ulster RFC and Rotherham Titans until injury led to early retirement this year, will oversee the acityabode group's marketing and brand initiatives as it expands across UK and Europe.

A business graduate from Ulster University, Neil has experience of working for US-based business, Unifi Inc, as marketing executive in its international marketing department.

Neil later joined Imaging Business Systems, Belfast, in a marketing capacity.

He said: "I am delighted to be part of such a young, dynamic and driven team. With expansion plans in place,

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New home: MD Colin Blumenthal

City offers the Complete package

AN IT support and services company has announced the opening of its new regional office in Bristol.

Complete IT has opened in Broad Quay House, close to the Arnolfini.

Colin Blumenthal, managing director said: "By using Complete IT, a customer passes on all the day-to-day running and potential worry of the IT

function to a long-established and expert IT partner — typically benefiting from cuts in its IT expenditure while at the same time achieving greater IT efficiency and business results.

"Bristol was a logical choice for a new office as it has a highly skilled and committed workforce, a large number of high-quality, IT enabled businesses

that are looking for true business advantage from effective use of IT spend, and is an expanding, vibrant city."

Complete IT is an IT support and services company based near Marlborough, with offices in Bristol, Swindon, Oxford, Peterborough, Nottingham and London.

Serviced apartment demand for past six months on rise

BOOKINGS at Bristol serviced apartment firm Saco have risen by 55 per cent in six months.

The number of bookings grew from 5,564 in the period between May and October 2008 to 8,621 in the same period of this year, with Birmingham being the most popular location.

Jo Redman, sales and marketing director for Saco, said: "Since last year we have noticed an increased awareness of serviced apartments as an alternative accommodation choice to hotels, especially from the leisure market.

"As demand has increased we have developed our services to deal with it. We have taken on two more apartment buildings in Manchester and London and expanded the on site teams, which has in turn increased the number of staff working on business development and reservations.

"As well as physically increasing our presence we have expanded our online services. Our new website, which launched in December, is constantly being improved to simplify the booking process

and create more opportunities to book online making Saco more accessible to every customer."

Saco's customer satisfaction survey for the same six-month period supports the company's recent success.

It said 96.9 per cent of guests said they would stay in a Saco apartment again and 95 per cent rated services across the board as excellent or good, from overall impressions of the apartments to the efficiency, knowledge and helpfulness of staff.

The growing popularity of serviced apartments was reflected in a report published in September by the Association of Serviced Apartment Providers (ASAP), which has identified a 60 per cent increase in the number of serviced apartments provided by their members in all major UK cities.

Serviced apartments provide guests with more space, privacy and flexibility than a hotel room and the ability to avoid the additional costs of hotel extras and expensive food bills with the option to cater for themselves in their own "home from



Pictured: Lesley Freed, founder and CEO of The Serviced Apartment Company

home". Saco, founded by Lesley Freed, owns and operates serviced apartments in 13 cities across the UK and 12,000 apartments in over 100 destinations across 35 countries.

Local Prices			FTSE 100			Major Movers			£Abroad	
Share	Price	Var	Share	Price	Var	Share Name	Price	Var	Country	Value
Airsprung	26		Jelf Gp	55	+1/2	British Airways	198 1/4	+12 1/2	Australia	1.719
Albe & Bond	241		KCOM	40 1/4	-1 1/4	Royal Bank of Scot	37	+1 1/4	Bangladesh	107.630
Alexandra	17		Litho Supl	5		Burberry Gp	58 1/2	+14 1/2	Canada	1.682
Autologic	27		Mears Gp	274	-2 1/4	Standard Chartered	1607	+39	Czech Republic	26.450
Avon Rubber	82 1/2		MITIE Gp	232	+1 1/4	Home Retail Gp	309 1/4	+7 1/2	Denmark	7.909
BAE Systems	317 1/4	..xd	Oak Holdings	10		Invensys	296 1/4	+6 1/4	Egypt	8.046
Bris & West P	77 1/4	..xd	Renishaw	560	+11 1/2	Schroders	1126	+25	Euro	1.066
Cadbury	758	-4	Ricardo Int	237 1/2	..xd	Intertek Gp	1279	+28	Hong Kong	12.220
CEPS	23 1/2		Rok	48	+3 1/4	Lloyds Banking	84 1/4	+1 1/4	India	68.570
Connaught	394 1/2	-2 1/2	Rolls-Royce Gp	467 1/2	..xd	Segro	345 1/4	+7 1/4	Israel	5.643
Dairy Crest	399 1/4	-5 1/4	Rotork	1201	+35	Sagro	526 1/2	+2 1/2	Japan	143.070
Dod Media	8		RTC Group	13 1/2		Severn Trent	945 1/2	-13 1/2	New Zealand	2.132
Euro Home Retail	21		SciSys	46 1/2	..xd	Shire	1095	+21	Norway	8.991
FirstGroup	392 1/2	+2 1/4	Scotty Gp	41	+1 1/2	Smith & Neph	536	-4	Pakistan	130.560
Future	20	+1 1/4	Swallowfield	110 1/2	+4	Smiths Gp	930 1/2	+4	Saudi Arabia	5.822
Helphire	58 1/2	-1 1/2	Weir Gp	713 1/2	..xd	Standard Chartered	1607	+39	Singapore	2.159
Hydro Intl	90					Standard Life	213	-1 1/2	South Africa	11.730
Imperial Tob	1823	+9				Tesco	418	-4	Sweden	11.090
						Thomas Cook	209 1/4	+1 1/4	Switzerland	1.609
						TUI Travel	241 1/4	+1 1/4	Thailand	48.210
						Tullow Oil	1236	+3	Turkey	2.327
						Unilever	1795	+1	US	1.586
						United Utilities	443 1/2	+4		
						Vodanta Resources	2263	+21		
						Vodafone Gp	135 1/4	-1 1/4		
						Whitbread	1233	-1		
						Wolseley	1257	-12		
						WPP	568	+6 1/2		
						Xstrata	962 1/2	+8		