



The chief executive officer: Richard Catt

# Look out for all those Olympic opportunities

LAST year was pleasantly punctuated for me by the Olympics. TV viewing in the Catt household is dominated by sporting events. The Six Nations Rugby is always a favourite, the world cup (football and rugby), Wimbledon, then the Tour de France all get attention.

It's not that either Michelle or I have participated in any of these sports to a high level, it's simply that we have become interested in these sports and enjoy watching them at a high level. Rugby is Michelle's passion, having watched her dad play at decent club level as a child; she then stood on the terraces with him as a season ticket holder at Leicester Tigers as a teenager.

However, the Olympics are most special and 2008 was a bumper year for medals. The swimming kicked things off, but the cycling really captured our imaginations. And when a world cup round visited the Manchester Velodrome in November we went along. Again, I only have an erratic and amateur interest as a fair weather cyclist, but seeing cycling at that level was brilliant.

The 2008 GB Olympians have been honoured in a number of ways, notably a knighthood for Chris Hoy, whilst still actively competing. Frustratingly, we now have to wait until 2012 for the next Olympics; I am counting down and hope to get an opportunity to attend an event.

Of course, business opportunities for suppliers of goods or services should not be ignored. Although flooring will be the one of the last things installed, tenders are already being offered. Details on the Competefor website: [www.competefor.com/london2012business](http://www.competefor.com/london2012business)

Registration keeps you updated and although feedback has been varied, this is the main route to 2012 Olympic projects.

On another subject, I recently attended a National Specialists Contractors Council (NSCC) meeting to brief us on their new headline project, pre qualification. NSCC has teamed up with the builders profile to tackle problems caused by the multitude of paper pre-qualification questionnaires.

You can try the services free and, as a CFA member, get a discount for unlimited use. I

strongly recommend considering the service as the time saving could be enormous and genuinely add to profit. For further information: [www.nsc.org.uk](http://www.nsc.org.uk)

[www.buildersprofile.co.uk](http://www.buildersprofile.co.uk)  
Another NSCC initiative we fully support is the accident return. Our collective membership of NSCC depends on improving your response to the accident survey, which is a very simple online form. If you haven't already received details, they will be with you shortly; I urge you to support it even if it is only to file a nil response.

And finally, don't forget that the CFA dinner dance on Saturday June 20 at Bristol Marriot Hotel. Entertainment this year is from the James Taylor Disco Road Show. He has played for a variety of corporate events, plus the National TV Awards, GMTV Style Awards and the 10th anniversary party of the musical, Chicago..

Places are limited, so if you haven't already reserved your place, don't delay. Call the CFA office (0115 941 1126). Hotel rooms can also be booked through the CFA.



CFA president: John Alcock

## Why you should train in a recession

WHAT history tells us about recessions is that no matter how bad they get, eventually we will come out of them. The question is just how many of us will be ready for the recovery?

Let me talk about training – a lot of you will roll your eyes when I say the word training; you might even dismiss it as an unnecessary chore when clearly everyone is worried about the future. But actually now is the time you should be looking at it.

Even if you've been unfortunate to have been laid off, training is extremely valuable and without wanting to be trivial – a good way to up-skill, fill your down time and put you in the best position for employment in the future.

And if you're an employer and considering laying off people, why not instead think about sending

some on courses like those run by FITA? The payback is good sound investment that can only add value to your business and ultimately help you to maximise your future bottom line.

Yes, I know there are costs, but there are grants and other pots of funding available that you can tap into, either an individual or as an employer.

Training has moved on too; there are many bespoke courses available. Most training organisations – and FITA certainly does – tailor training to suit particular requirements and around the needs of individuals. They are happy to design a bespoke course to address a specific need; for example, where you are weak or where your employees could benefit from up-skilling. So go and talk to them.

FITA has good trainers too and courses are modern and engaging as well as allowing that all important hands-on experience demanded by a professional skill such as flooring.

I'm not suggesting that a training course will turn around a business, but it is a tool to put on the table along with all other options to consolidate your work.

Training really isn't and should never be considered a chore as there is very little doubt that it benefits everyone, including employers. It also raises that equally important general level of skill and professionalism that always benefits the industry.

Go-on; go learn something today and you may be best ready to lay that smoothing compound over those inevitable green shoots of recovery.

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