

November 2026: FEA Business Briefing

Join us for an exciting edition of the FEA's Business Briefing, specially designed for our community of members and CFSP-accredited individuals!

The FEA Business Briefing provides a market snapshot of the latest sector news.

Hotels	Page 1
Restaurants	Page 2
Pubs & Clubs	Page 4
Contract Catering	Page 4
Leisure & Tourism	Page 5

Hotels

Dakota secures planning for new hotel in Edinburgh
Dakota has secured planning permission to build a new hotel in Edinburgh. The boutique hospitality company has been given official planning to transform the site of a former office block into a new 143-bedroom hotel, which would mark the eighth in the Dakota portfolio.

The new seven-storey building is situated close to Edinburgh Castle on Dundas Street and will be developed on the site of the former office block, which previously housed Centrum House.
Boutique Hotelier, 4.10.26

Ardencote Manor to relaunch in 2027 after £25m investment
Ardencote Manor in Warwickshire will relaunch in early 2027 following a £25m transformation under its new ownership. As part of the investment plans, an expansive indoor and outdoor spa will open, repositioning the property as a countryside wellness destination.

The new-look Ardencote Manor, set in 83 acres, will comprise 68 bedrooms, three restaurants, three bars, 34 treatment rooms and the luxury spa. *Boutique Hotelier, 8.10.26*

Manchester hotel undergoing multimillion-pound makeover with all staff retained
International brand, B&B Hotels, is investing in a multimillion-pound refurbishment of its Manchester Sportcity hotel, which has now closed until early 2027, with all jobs retained.

The investment covers a complete refurbishment of every bedroom and all public areas including new beds, new furniture and a reimagined ground floor to help guests work, meet, recharge and feel at home while on the move.
The ground floor will become a place to collaborate and gather and will include a new restaurant serving light bites and pizzas throughout the day and evening.
The Business Desk, 14.10.26

Derwentwater Hotel wins approval for expansion
Derwentwater Hotel in the Lake District has secured planning permission for an extension that will significantly add to its offering. The hotel will now develop a new restaurant, ballroom and eight bedrooms as part of the project that has now been approved by the Lake District National Park Authority.

The proposal will see the hotel's existing conservatory replaced with a larger extension, expanded reception, kitchen and new café. The plan for the development was submitted by owner Alfa Hotels Ltd.
Boutique Hotelier, 19.10.26

Former Wakefield Westgate Station Site to Become New 110-Bedroom Hotel
A major hotel development is planned for the former Wakefield Westgate railway station site, with proposals for a new 110-bedroom property aimed at supporting both business and leisure travel to the West Yorkshire city.

The project, led by Ion Property Developments Limited, is expected to begin construction in 2027, transforming the long-vacant site into a significant new hospitality offering. Completion is currently targeted for winter 2028, although an operator for the hotel has yet to be announced.
Travelling for Business, 19.10.26

Construction milestone reached at cliff top eco hotel
The first British hotel to be built to meet the Passivhaus sustainability standard, has topped out. Independent hotel, pub and restaurant, Cliffemount in North Yorkshire, now has a roof. A previous hotel on the site was demolished to make way for the new multi-million pound, 19,321 sq ft building.

Development of the 20-bed coastal hotel is being project managed by Silverstone Building Consultancy. The property is being built by Stainforth Construction. Located on a clifftop at Runswick Bay, near Whitby, the building will require a much lower amount of energy to heat and maintain temperature, than a standard construction. The grand opening of Cliffemount is scheduled for autumn 2027.
The Business Desk, 21.10.26

Plans lodged to convert former Dunnes store in Glasgow into new hotel
A new hotel could be developed in the space of a former department store in Glasgow after plans were lodged to transform a building in the city centre. The former Dunnes Store would be converted into a new 132-bedroom hotel with a restaurant, bar and rooftop terrace if plans submitted by architects HAUS are given the green light.

The landmark site on Sauchiehall Street, which was originally constructed in 1929, was formerly a C&A and then later occupied by Dunnes Stores before the department chain moved out in 2017. The building has been empty ever since. It was sold to a private investor in 2025.
Boutique Hotelier, 26.10.26

Village Hotel Club to open Sheffield site in 2027
Village Hotel Club has announced plans to open its first site in Sheffield, tasking over the former DoubleTree by Hilton Sheffield Park. The hotel will be opened in phases from January 2027, with the health and wellness club launched before rooms in February and spa and swimming facilities in the spring.
The Caterer, 28.10.26

Restaurants

Shake Shack's Paddington Arrival: Changing the Commuter Snack Game
Shake Shack is heading to Paddington Station this winter, adding a new London location aimed at commuters, travellers and local customers. Located at Paddington Station's main entrance, this will be Shake Shack's 22nd UK location.
Gorilla Dash, 1.10.26

Historic Stanley Dock pumphouse to become new Liverpool pizzeria
A Grade II-listed pumphouse is being transformed into a new 120-seat pizzeria. The restaurant, 1848 Stanley Dock, is set to open later this year as part of a £1.5 million redevelopment at Stanley Dock in Liverpool.

The pumphouse, built in 1855, housed the hydraulic pumping systems that powered the dock gates, capstans, cargo cranes and tobacco presses across both the North and South Warehouses for decades.
Wirral Globe, 5.9.26

New The Beefy Boys restaurant set to open in Cambridge
A burger chain crowned the UK's best are set to open a new restaurant in Cambridgeshire. The Beefy Boys plan to open their eighth restaurant on Bene't Street, Cambridge, in the former BrewDog premises. The bar was among 38 BrewDog sites announced for closure in March 2026 after the brewery was acquired by US firm Tilray Brands.
Ely Standard, 10.10.26

Dumpling Xi plans to open ten UK sites over the next three years
One of the world's biggest dumpling restaurant brands, Dumpling Xi, which is set to make its UK debut in Central London, plans to open ten sites here over the next three years.

Dumpling Xi, which was founded in Hegang in the north east of China in 2002, has more than 900 locations worldwide across 40 cities in China and is growing internationally, entering the United States, South Korea and Spain in the last two years. The brand is being brought to and rolled out in the UK by hospitality entrepreneurs Aaron Li and Xuerui Lyu, who have signed a new 15-year lease for the 2,500 square-foot debut site – the former Theatre Café Diner site at 154 Shaftesbury Avenue.
Propel, 14.10.26



Celebrated chef set to open new restaurant in the centre of Bath
The celebrated chef Margot Henderson OBE is set to open a new restaurant in the centre of Bath. In partnership with investor, artist and gallery owner Max Wigram, the plan is to refurbish 3-7 Shires Yard to create a "world-class dining experience" which will contribute to the regeneration of the Milsom Quarter.

The new restaurant would have approximately 143 covers across the ground floor, private dining room and courtyard terrace and would trade from midday to 11.30pm, seven days a week.
Daily Echo, 15.10.26

Chick-fil-A gets go-ahead for second UK drive-thru
US brand Chick-fil-A, which made its return to England last year with an opening in Leeds, has been given the go-ahead for its second UK drive-thru. Chick-fil-A is set to open its first drive-thru here "in the coming weeks" in Hamilton, Scotland, and was "already building on this momentum with a strong pipeline".

The brand had also put forward plans to convert the former Pizza Hut unit at Cortonwood Retail Park in South Yorkshire for a second drive-thru site, and the proposal has now been approved by Rotherham Council. Chick-fil-A – which operates five UK sites – is also set to convert the Footasylum site in Nottingham's Clumber Street.
Propel,16.10.26

Noodle & Beer to open in Covent Garden
Chinese restaurant Noodle & Beer is set to open on Covent Garden's Catherine Street.
Restaurant 19.10.26

Fast food and fast charging planned for derelict site opposite Coventry Building Society Arena
Plans for an electric vehicle charging hub, two drive-thrus and a retail unit opposite Coventry Building Society Arena have been validated by the council and published for public view. Birmingham-based developer Redleaf wants to redevelop the former Rowley's Green Working Men's Club site, which was demolished in September after standing empty for years.

The scheme centres on a charging hub with 12 ultra-rapid bays, with terms agreed with Osprey Charging, which operates more than 400 locations nationally. It also includes a retail unit and two drive-thrus for restaurant and coffee uses, with Redleaf in advanced talks with national and international brands.
The Business Desk, 19.10.26

Famous burger chain to open its first site in Wales
Award-winning burger brand, The Beefy Boys are opening their first Welsh restaurant in 2027. The new Cardiff restaurant, due to launch next March, is expected to create more than 70 jobs in the city centre.

The independent burger brand started out as four childhood friends cooking burgers in their back gardens in Herefordshire and became a nationally recognised restaurant group, winning titles such as best burger and best burger chef at the 2023 National Burger Awards. Their first-ever Welsh restaurant will be found at 12 Wharton Street, Cardiff.
Cardiff Daily, 21.10.26

Raising Cane's UK: When Is It Coming to the UK and Where Will It Open?
Raising Cane's is officially coming to the UK, with its first British restaurant scheduled to open in Piccadilly Circus, London, in early 2027. The American chicken chain has confirmed that its UK flagship will occupy 21–22 Coventry Street, between Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square.

More restaurants are expected to follow around The Strand, Oxford Circus and Paddington, while Raising Cane's has also said it plans drive-thru locations across Greater London. Current recruitment activity points to an even broader pipeline, with restaurant-management vacancies connected to addresses on Coventry Street, the Strand, Tottenham Court Road and Eden Street in Kingston upon Thames.
Top Business Blog, 21.10.26

Popeyes secures Peterborough site
Popeyes UK, the TDR Capital-backed business, is to open a site in Peterborough. The company has secured a site at the Queensgate shopping centre. Popeyes will open in a 2,000 square-foot external unit in Long Causeway.
Propel, 22.10.26

Alux Hospitality to open British brasserie Beatrix on Chelsea's King's Road
Alux Hospitality, the group behind Mexican restaurant Ixchel, will open Beatrix, an all-day British brasserie on Chelsea's King's Road, in early 2027.
Restaurant, 23.10.26

Pablo's to make London debut at Bloodsports bar
North East-based breakfast and brunch concept Pablo's is to make its London debut in January 2027 after signing a franchise agreement with Bloodsports founder, Scott Collins. Pablo's was founded in 2020 and currently operates six sites in Tyne and Wear, as well as Edinburgh, serving up breakfast bao buns and hash browns.

It will launch in London for the first time within Bloodsports bar in London's Covent Garden, which was opened by the Meatliquor founder back in early 2025. Pablo's is looking to expand further across the UK through franchise consultancy Presman & Colard. The brand is targeting at least five new openings by mid-2027 with prospective franchisees.
The Caterer, 23.10.26

Luxury hotel brand is new operator of former WestBeach restaurant site
A luxury hotel brand has been named as the new operator of a vacant Bournemouth seafront restaurant, the Echo can exclusively reveal. The Nici will take over the 25-year lease for the former WestBeach restaurant, located just west of Bournemouth Pier, and reopen it as Nici B.

A spokesperson for The Nici Group said: "We can confirm that the former Westbeach restaurant will reopen in the spring, as 'Nici B'."
Yahoo News!, 23.10.26

Charity secures £29,000 heritage grant to restore former Somerset café site
Shepton Mallet charity Interim Spaces has secured a grant of up to £29,250 to develop restoration plans for a former town centre café. The Project Development Grant from the Architectural Heritage Fund will support work on 19 Town Street, which previously housed Madhatters café.

The charity acquired the building in June 2026 and has begun stripping out and securing the property.
The Business Desk, 26.10.26

Pubs & Clubs

The Coaching Inn Group ploughs £10m into property expansion and upgrades
The Coaching Inn Group has announced plans to invest between £8-10m of capital expenditure into its estate, with funds split between enhancing its existing properties and securing new sites.

A significant chunk of this cash injection will be earmarked for property upgrades across the group's existing estate starting in 2027. Renovations are planned at the Royal Oak in Welshpool and two of the nine properties which were transferred from RedCat Hospitality in February, as well as adding 15 new bedrooms to the group's Feathers outpost in Ledbury. *The Caterer, 26.10.26*

Rooftop bar plans formally submitted for Nottingham's Market Square House
Plans to transform Nottingham's Market Square House with a rooftop bar, restaurant and terraces have now been formally submitted. The proposals for the prominent building at 1-7 St James's Street, overlooking Old Market Square, have been lodged with Nottingham City Council following the emergence of plans for the scheme earlier this year.

The application sets out detailed proposals to turn the currently inaccessible third-floor roof into a new food and drink destination, alongside changes aimed at bringing vacant and underused parts of Market Square House back into use.
The Business Desk, 28.10.26

Shepherd Neame to build new £15m brewery
Shepherd Neame is to invest £15m over three years in a modern, smaller brewery in its town centre site in Faversham.

The pub operator and brewer detailed the project will "create a highly efficient and cost-effective facility, with a plant that will enable us to drive quality standards, improve the sustainability of our operations and provide us with the flexibility to continue to innovate and develop our portfolio in a rapidly evolving beer market".
The Caterer, 29.10.26

Contract Catering

ESS mobilises soft FM services at the UK Hydrographic Office
ESS, specialist provider of foodservice and FM to military establishments across the UK, has mobilised the Soft FM contract for the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), a world-leading centre for hydrography, delivering data and expertise to support safe, secure and thriving oceans.

ESS is delivering a range of services from catering and retail to cleaning, waste management, mail services and general labouring, including moving light equipment, preparation for site visits and minor redecoration works to the site in Taunton, Somerset.
Compass, 1.10.26

Hospital awards catering procurement contract to Avendra International
James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has awarded Avendra International a catering procurement contract to support purchasing across key food, beverage and non-food categories, including wholesale, dairy, fresh produce, butchery, sandwiches and non-food supplies.

Based in Gorleston, the Trust provides care to around 250,000 people across Great Yarmouth and Waveney and is one of the largest employers in the local area. The new contract, valued at approximately £1 million per annum, covers an initial three-year term with the option to extend for two further one-year periods.
Public Sector Catering, 5.10.26

Elior UK wins Whittington Hospital contract
Elior UK has secured a multi-year partnership with Whittington Health NHS Trust to deliver catering and retail services at Whittington Hospital in North London. The caterer will manage the hospital's food court.

The partnership includes a new line-up of outlets within Whittington Court – the N19 staff restaurant, Wild Green Deli, Cahoots Coffee, a separate coffee pod serving Costa coffee and a retail shop. Elior has also introduced smart vending machines throughout the hospital and supported a refurbishment of its main courtyard.
Contract Catering, 12.10.26

Company of Cooks appointed food, drink and events partner at London's Apothecaries' Hall
Company of Cooks has been announced as the new food, drink and events partner for Apothecaries' Hall, the oldest surviving Livery Hall in the City of London and home to the Society of Apothecaries.

The three-year deal will see the Company of Cooks team provide food, drink and events within four spaces, including the Great Hall which can cater up to 250 guests and 150 for dinner, and the outdoor Courtyard which can accommodate 250 guests or 40 for dinner.
The Caterer, 12.10.26

Lodestone House secures new 10-year deal with Eastbourne College
Lodestone House, formerly known as Chartwells Independent, has secured a new 10-year partnership with Eastbourne College Incorporated building on a long-standing relationship rooted in innovation and a shared commitment to exceptional pupil experience.

Under the new partnership, Lodestone House will continue to cater for pupils across the college, prep school and nursery. Lodestone House will continue to roll out its 'SMART' concept, which structures the food offer into five choices.
Public Sector Catering, 20.10.26

Houston & Hawkes wins catering contract with VodafoneThree
Independent and B Corp-certified contract caterer Houston & Hawkes has been appointed as the catering partner for telecommunications giant VodafoneThree. Houston & Hawkes will provide a range of catering services, including staff dining, hospitality, events, and cafés, across VodafoneThree's sites in London, Newbury and Stoke, serving approximately 7,000 customers daily.

The contract follows Houston & Hawkes' four-year tenure as caterer to Three UK and was won through competitive tender after the merger of Vodafone UK and Three UK in June 2025.
Public Sector Catering, 21.10.26

ESS wins South Wales Police catering contract
ESS Government has gone live with a three-year contract for catering and hospitality services at South Wales Police's headquarters in Bridgend. The contract, which went live at the start of October, will see the defence, government and offshore services arm of Compass Group provide access to nutritious food for officers and staff.

As part of the agreement, ESS has also committed to working with Welsh suppliers including Ferrari's Coffee, Wickedly Welsh Chocolate and wholesaler Castell Howell. ESS will also invest in the on-site catering facilities to enhance the dining experience for South Wales Police teams.
The Caterer, 28.10.26



Leisure & Tourism

Millions of pounds worth of funding support proposed for retail and leisure scheme
Plans to transform Scarborough's former Brunswick Centre into a leisure, retail and hospitality destination could benefit from millions of pounds in funding to help to kickstart the scheme.
The proposed redevelopment would create a new town centre attraction featuring a six-screen multiplex cinema and family-focused leisure facilities alongside food and drink outlets and new retail units. The aim is to bring a key town centre site back into use and create a year-round destination for residents and visitors.
The Business Desk, 21.10.26

Brewery plots major expansion with food hall and events venue
Independent Grimsby brewery Docks Beers has lodged plans for a major expansion featuring a food hall, events venue and offices. The company has applied to North East Lincolnshire Council to convert a former car sales and repair facility at the junction of King Edward Street and Fotherby Street.

The building sits next to Docks Beers' existing home, The Church, which the brewer has occupied since 2018.
The plans would see the northern section of the property converted into a food hall housing independent operators in repurposed shipping containers.
The Business Desk, 20.10.26

For more information on FEA visit www.fea.org.uk