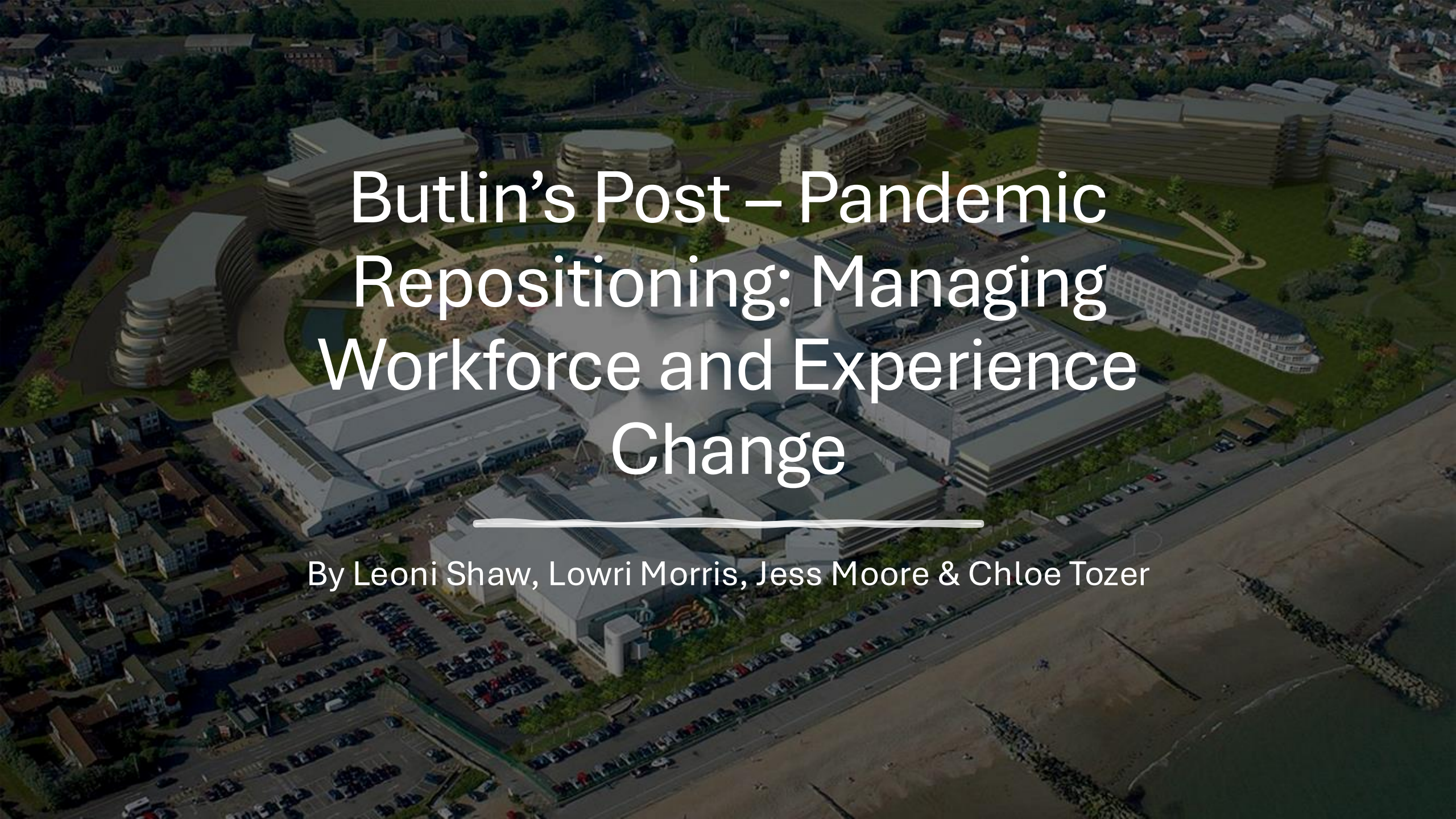


An aerial photograph of a large university campus. The campus features several large, modern buildings with curved, tiered roofs. There are green spaces, trees, and a beach area in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the image.

Butlin's Post – Pandemic Repositioning: Managing Workforce and Experience Change

By Leoni Shaw, Lowri Morris, Jess Moore & Chloe Tozer

Introduction - Lowri

This presentation illustrates Butlin's post – pandemic repositioning, focusing on how it has adapted its workforce and customer experience.

-The Covid – 19 pandemic severely disrupted the tourism and leisure industry, requiring organisations to rethink their strategies.

-Butlins has faced issues such as staff shortages and changing -customer expectations which led to a shift in organisational culture and operations.

This presentation will cover organisational culture, change management and response, the wider industry impact, and recommendations for future improvement.

Introduction

Post Pandemic Reposition at Butlins



WELCOME B
— KEEPING YOU SAFE AT B

- “Butlins is a well-known holiday resort operator in the UK, offering family-friendly entertainment and accommodation options” (Studysmarter, no date)
- The pandemic changed the impact of the tourism and leisure industry
- Faced heavy shortages and change to the customers expectations at the resort
- Had to change to adapt to the operations and employee management

PLEASE WEAR A FACE COVERING

SANITISE HANDS

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING

TEMPERATURE CHECK

STAY SAFE & HAVE FUN

Organisational Culture Change

Work and Cultural Changes

Changes that happened:

- Focus change on employee health and well-being
- More flexible working patterns
- Excessive training for post pandemic safety precautions
- Increased safety measures around the resort
- Heightened pressure to the working staff

Theory- organisational culture Schein

- “Schein’s management theory explains that organisational culture operates beneath the surface, shaping how a company functions, makes decisions and responds to challenges” (freedman, 2026)
- Culture shapes many values, behaviours and employee experiences in a workforce

Application to Butlins

- Introduced workplace changes, (shift patters, hygiene practices, safe driven workplace)
- Encouraged employees of safety, reassurance and adaptability
- Highlights artefacts, values and assumptions enabling Butlins embed a safer workplace culture

Leadership During Change

Leadership Response and Adaption

Leadership Styles at Butlins

- Customer focused (creating a good guest experience)
- High energy staff focusing on guest satisfaction/ quick problem solving
- Operational leadership in hospitality
- Situational leadership during Covid

Theory Application

- **Transactional leadership**- “Transactional leadership is a management style that focuses on structure, rewards and risks. Leaders using this approach set clear goals and expectations for their team.” (Thompson, 2025)
- **Situational leadership**- “Situational leadership means adapting your leadership style to each unique situation or task to meet the needs of the team or team members” (Wolf, 2022)

Application to Butlins

- Leaders adapt to the new lifestyle that's been changed
- Guest satisfaction connected with problem-solving
- Staff responsibilities while maintaining a standard of working



The impact and Evaluation of Butlins

Did the change become effective in the end?

Positive aspects gained after pandemic

- Gained a rising demand in domestic tourists arriving
- Positive change in customer expectations of the place
- More realisable and flexible working pattern shifts

Challenges they still facing

- On-going training of new skills which could come into affect at any point
- Consistent motivation to keep staff active during shifts
- Suffering from rising cost and proposed tourist tax

Key suggestion

- “A strong leader in the travel industry possesses a clear vision of the company’s goals and objectives.” (Tulsyan, 2024)

Final thoughts

- Strong leadership and communication is a must
- Effective change management goes down to how trustworthy the managers can be
- Butlins goes to show they they can keep a long term business a success during challenges and shutdowns

Change Management and Response – Lowri

- **How Butlins managed change following the Covid – 19 pandemic.**
I will be focusing on the change management and how HR, marketing and operations contributed.
Why was change needed?
- The Covid – 19 pandemic impacted the leisure sector and Uk holiday severely. There was revenue loss, workforce disruption and temporary closures.
- A shift in consumer expectations, for example....
 - Demand for flexible bookings, high hygiene standards and interest in domestic holidays increased.Change was not optional, it was critical for survival and competitiveness for the Butlins resort.

Butlin's Change Strategy - Lowri

- **The Butlin's resort is owned by Bourne Leisure. Bourne Leisure introduced a repositioning strategy which focused on, investment, digital transformation, and workforce changes.**
- Investment – The investment was upgrading accommodations and facilities.
- Digital Transformation – The digital transformation was online booking and contactless services.
- Workforce changes – Retraining and restructuring.
The overall aim was to shift from its traditional image as a budget holiday provider and instead position itself as a high quality and modern family resort.

HR Role and Maslow Hierarchy of Needs - Lowri

- “HR played a key role through restructuring, recruitment, and retraining staff” – Maslow, A.H. (1943) ‘A Theory of Human Motivation’.
- During Covid – 19, employees were focused on safety needs, such as job security and safe working conditions.
- Post – Pandemic, Butlin’s supported higher – level needs through offering training and development, helping employees achieve esteem.
- Ongoing issues – job insecurity and staff shortages suggest that not all basic needs have been fully addressed.

Marketing and Operations Roles - Lowri

- Marketing played an important role in the change process as it helped repositioned the brand.
- Campaigns focused on family experiences and improved domestic demand and facilities.
This aligns with changing consumer needs, especially the desire of safety, again reflecting on Maslow's Theory of Needs.
- Operations were in charge for delivering these changes in practice.
This includes...
 - Cleaning procedures,
 - Digital check – in systems,
 - Upgraded facilities.**This enhanced the customer experience but also increased operational costs, creating a challenge for long - term sustainability.**

Are these Strategies Working? - Lowri

- The benefits for employees...
Improved training and development opportunities. -
- The benefits for customers...
Better facilities, -
Enhanced safety conditions. -
- Butlins has strengthened its position in the UK staycation market and recovered from the demand during the Covid – 19 pandemic.
- Butlins has portrayed effective change management through efforts across HR, marketing and operations.
- The repositioning has been successful, ongoing issues such as staff shortage and increased prices suggests that managing change is an ongoing process.

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Leisure and Events Transformation at Butlins.

- After the COVID-19 pandemic, Butlin's repositioned its leisure and events , responding to changing customer expectations. (*Butlin's, 2024*)
- The organisation shifted from traditional entertainment to more experience led and immersive activities.
- Events and entertainment now play a massive role in attracting visitors and shaping the overall guest experience.
- This reflects the wider growth of the UK vacation market and demand for high quality domestic tourism experiences. (*VisitBritain, 2023*)

Changes in Leisure and Events.

- Before COVID-19 Butlins focused on traditional family entertainment, including standard shows and repeated activities.
- After the pandemic, the organisation introduced more diverse and engaging event formats to enhance customer experience.
- This includes live music performances, large scale productions and themed adult only weekends, such as Big Weekenders. (*Butlin's, 2024*).
- These changes show a clear shift towards creating memorable and unique experiences instead of basic entertainment.

Culture, Leadership and Change Management.

- The transformation of leisure and events reflects a shift in organisational culture towards a stronger focus on customer experience. (*CIPD, 2023*).
- Staff are now expected to deliver more engaging and high energy entertainment, increasing performance expectations. (*Depierraz*)
- Butlins has supported this change through staff training, investment in entertainment, and developing new event formats.
- The organisation has also used customer feedback to adapt its offerings, showing a flexible approach to change management.

Impact and recommendations.

- These changes have increased competition within the UK tourism and events industry by raising customer expectations. (*World*)
- The focus on high quality events has improved guest satisfaction but also increased operational costs and staff pressure.
- Butlins should introduce more interactive and immersive events to further enhance the guest experience.
- The organisation should also expand niche themed weekends and invest in digital technology and staff development. (*Depierraz*)

What Went Wrong?

- Failure to adapt to the changing holiday trends. Cheaper flights made overseas holidays more attractive and British holidays declined in popularity
- They have an outdated image through things like basic accommodation and being old fashioned
- The service quality can dip at peak times due to lack of training as they have inconsistent staff
- They are in competition with air bnbs
- Covid 19 a statement from reddit says "they run promotions for £100 for 5 nights in the sun newspaper. Due to covid, they stopped those and jacked the prices way up as they know we won't be able to go on holidays abroad" this supports how they have failed to adapt since covid and they should change their prices to coincide with competition within the industry.
- Holiday taxes £2 per night "families could pay an extra £32 on a four-night break for four people and £100 extra on a two-week holiday break" this means they could lose visitors as some people cannot afford this on top of what they have already paid for the holiday

Recommendations for Leonis' Slides

Focusing on Leonis' slide (slide 4)

- Continue to prioritise employee wellbeing by offering mental health support, wellbeing programmes and regular staff feedback sessions to improve work culture
- Improve communication between leaders and employees to create a more supportive workplace
- Butlins could introduce reward and recognition schemes to motivate staff and encourage positive behaviour
- Flexible working arrangements and fair shift patterns should stay in place where possible for a good work-life balance and employee satisfaction. Employee reviews from indeed highlight concerns about "long hours, inconsistent staffing and limited work-life balance" which is why organisational culture improvements are necessary. In 2020 a resort safety officer stated "I was there just under 5 years. Prepare to not see your family. No work-life balance"
- Team-building activities would improve relationship with staff and create a more collaborative work environment
- Leadership should reinforce a culture of adaptability and resilience so employees are better prepared for future challenges and changes in the leisure industry

Recommendations for Lowri's Slides

To support Lowri's slide(slide 7) " Demand for flexible bookings, high hygiene standards and interest in domestic holidays increased."

- Some investment could be put into digital transformation to upgrade online booking systems, mobile apps and contactless check-ins, this will meet new customer expectations
- More flexible booking policies could be put in place as well as cancellation policies allowing guests to have more confidence when booking after the uncertainty cause by covid-19 Butlins website states "there is a £20 admin fee for any changes" this fee could be dropped or even put in place for cancellations only and not for changes.
- Following the pandemic, Butlin's could maintain high hygiene and safety standards so that guest feel more confident and also to protect the company's reputation
- Butlin's could provide staff with support or their wellbeing alongside additional training in order to help employees adapt to the new ways of working following covid-19 and to improve customer service

More recommendations to support Lowri's slide (slide 10) "Cleaning procedures, digital check – in systems, upgraded facilities."

- Cashless payments, online entertainment booking and mobile apps could be put into place to improve efficiency for customers
- The marketing team could use the feedback from social media to understand how the customer preferences are changing and personalise the experience to them
- Sustainability operations could be improved by reducing energy use and waste, this could also help with long-term operational costs and also improve the brand image
- Loyalty schemes and repeat-customer discounts could help maintain customers and increase future bookings

Recommendations for Jess' Slides

To expand on Jess' slide(slide 16) "Butlins should introduce more interactive and immersive events to further enhance the guest experience."

- Themed entertainment weekends
- Live interactive shows
- Virtual reality attractions
- Escape rooms
- Family competitions which encourage guest participation

These additional experiences could help make the holiday more memorable and personal whilst also attracting a wider range of customers as well as encouraging repeat visits. Interactive events could also strengthen Butlins' competitive advantage within the industry by offering experiences which differ from other UK holiday resorts. Additionally immersive events would increase customer engagement on social media which will provide free promotion through online reviews, photos and shared experiences.

To expand more on Jess' slide(slide 16) "the organisation should also expand niche themed weekends and invest in digital technology and staff development" "

- Niche themed weekends would attract a wider audience as well as increase bookings during the quieter periods this could be done through specialised events based on; music genres, fitness, gaming, nostalgia or cultural themes which would allow there to be something for all ages and interests. This would create unique experiences for customers, encourage repeat visits and help Butlins stand out from competitors.
- Butlins should continue to invest in digital technology to improve convenience for the customers and make things more efficient. This could include faster online booking systems, improving the app, contactless services and personalised recommendations to suit the customers. This would improve the experience to customers by making the holiday easier to plan.
- Investing in staff development would also be an important step to ensure that employees can effectively deliver these changes. Regular training in customer service, digital systems and health and safety procedures would benefit staff by allowing them to adapt to new technologies as well and maintain high service standards. Maslow says "people need to feel valued to perform well" so motivated and skilled employees would be more likely to improve customer satisfaction.

Risks for Recommendations

- Financial
- Implementation- relating to Herseys theory on situational leadership and how leaders should adapt based on staff ability and situation. Butlins may not have the staff to be able to apply this change due to them being seasonal. If managers fail to adapt it leads to poor training and inconsistent service.
- Resistance to change- relating to Lewins theory
- Impact on staff morale- focusing on Maslows theory about people feeling valued. staff may not feel valued at Butlins due to lack of training and communication between leaders and employees. Seasonal staff may only meet basic needs and may lead to low motivation and inconsistent guest experience
- Brand risk
- Operational disruption
- External risks
- Seasonal staff "parks often struggle to recruit enough staff for peak season, especially in rural areas" says Caravan Industry and Park Operator

Conclusion

These risks show that although Butlins' recommendations could improve customer experience and organisational performance, challenges linked to staffing, finance, leadership and employee morale may affect success of implementing change.

Conclusion.

- Butlins has successfully adapted its business model in response to the COVID-19 pandemics impact.
- The organisation has shifted towards a stronger focus on customer experience, innovation and flexibility.
- Changes across areas like leisure and events, leadership, and operations show a clear response to evolving customer expectations.
- This has strengthened Butlins position within the UK staycation market.
- However, these changes also bring challenges, such as higher costs and increased customer expectations.
- Overall, continued adaptation and investment will be essential for maintaining competitiveness in the future.



~Jessica Moore

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