

City's new Casino set for September Opening Date

Aspers Casino in Swansea will open its doors to the public for the first time on September 6. Boss Damian Aspinall was in Swansea yesterday to announce the official opening of the Salubrious Place gambling emporium.

With GBP 7 million fit-out costs, the casino represents a huge investment in the city and Mr Aspinall is confident it will pay off.

Aspers is one of the biggest casino groups in the UK, and Mr Aspinall says it is leading the way in making casinos respectable.

He said: „What we are trying to do is get away from the traditional idea of a casino. They have always been down back streets, or in units above shops. They have not been somewhere where you would go for a fun night out.

„What we are doing is making it part of the mainstream activities.“

Swansea's new casino will include restaurants and bars, which Mr Aspinall says will appeal to people who do not want to gamble.

The company has been established in Newcastle since 2005 and is breaking records as the city's most popular venue.

„Aspers is the biggest leisure destination in Newcastle,“ said Mr Aspinall. „We have been open there for 18 months and we are getting 10,000 visitors per week.

„Swansea will be bigger and better. We have learned from Newcastle. I'd give that eight out of 10, Swansea will be 9.5 out of 10.“

The figures from Newcastle also suggest Aspers has got the right mix to have wider appeal. Half of the members in Newcastle do not gamble, and 38 per cent are women.

„The bars are a major meeting place in the city. It has become a natural thing for people to consider on a night out. People talk about going to Aspers in the same way they talk about going bowling or going to the cinema.

„We are the only casino company moving this way. I think we have set a benchmark for how casinos should be, and in five years time we will see a lot more casinos like Aspers on high streets. You walk in and there's a wow-factor.“

Mr Aspinall is confident his new casino will be a boost for Swansea.

He said: „It's a world-class facility. We could put it in New York or Sydney and it would not be out of place. It will attract people from Cardiff and I do not think there is anything in Swansea at the moment that you can say that about.“