

Casino gambles on grand opening

Final preparations were being carried out last night for the opening party of a grand GBP 13m casino.

Businessman Damian Aspinall is hosting a lavish, themed event tonight at the new venue in Swansea's city centre Salubrious Place.

Costing GBP 75,000, it will feature soccer and rugby players, showbiz celebrities plus "movers and shakers" from business and politics in Wales.

A 30-strong production team worked through last night to transform Wind Street, laying down a 10m red carpet lined with four 7ft gas flames that will greet guests, and installing high-powered spotlights on Wind Street rooftops.

X Factor star Ray Quinn, famed for his trademark quiff, stylish suits and his love of 1950s and '60s swing music, will be headlining the show, treating guests to a set of "Rat Pack" classics such as My Way and That's Life.

Also performing tonight is Jennie Sawdon, a jazz singer who has performed with the cast of hit West End show The Rat Pack and at the famous Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in London.

The new entertainment complex has capacity for 1,600 people and boasts a 120-seater restaurant, three bars, an iPod lounge, a beauty parlour, 28 multimedia screens, a stage for live music and entertainment, plus state-of-the-art gaming facilities.