

E-Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2009

Do you need advice or support but don't know who to turn to?

www.solihull.gov.uk/weatherthestorm

Weather the Storm represents a range of partners, all here to help point individuals, families and businesses in Solihull in the right direction during these difficult times. If you, or someone you know are affected by this, please **call 0121 704 6000**.

The web pages include advice on individual business support, sources of finance, relocating or downsizing property and recruitment and redundancy issues. For **business issues**, please call the Team on **0121 704 6151**.



Solihull Businesses On Their Marks for 2012

Solihull businesses were recently invited to the London 2012 Olympic Park for an event hosted by the Olympic Delivery Authority, giving them an insight into the estimated 75,000 tender opportunities available, throughout the supply chain.

John Cave, Business Development Manager for EH Smith, said: 'The visit to the ODA and Olympic Park was very useful to get an understanding of the procurement process and the opportunities available to local companies. The facilitated introductions to some of the top tier contractors have also started our dialogue running with those businesses on a positive note.'

The visit was co-ordinated by West Midlands Business Task Force for the Olympic Games, involving Advantage West Midlands, the West Midlands Business Council and Solihull Council, alongside other partners.

For more information on how businesses can get involved, please call the Council on 0121 704 6151, or register on the national tender portal for London 2012 business opportunities - www.competefor.com.

The Place for Business Success Continues....

Russian energy giant Gazprom, is hoping to establish even more powerful connections after opening a new arm of their UK retail operation at Blythe Valley Park.

Gazprom Marketing and Trading Limited has been trading successfully in the UK for 10 years and the new branch at Blythe Valley Park will focus on serving the power needs of business customers.

James Constant, Head of Power for Gazprom Marketing and Trading Retail UK, said: "We are driven through good customer service and we hope to build on our reputation as one of the country's fastest growing energy suppliers in the business market following our move to Blythe Valley Park. It is a fabulous place, in a fantastic location with good accessibility and the people here are a different class. There are really strong companies already located and we are delighted to join them here in Solihull."





Vector - a worldwide producer of electronic systems for the automotive industry has opened a new UK headquarters at Blythe Valley Park.

The German firm produces software tools and components for electronic systems used inside vehicles. It has bases in Europe, America and Asia, and employs 900 people worldwide.

Uwe Gerlinger, managing director of Vector GB, said: "We have dealt with clients in the UK for quite a while and a year ago we started to think about opening a subsidiary. We analysed the country for the best location for transport and where would be logical because of our client base. We soon realised that this area was ideal, and that Blythe Valley Park was our best option.

Local Glass Glazing Company a Clear Success

North Solihull resident Ian Hiley had often thought about becoming self-employed, so when he was made redundant in October 2008, he seized the opportunity to make his idea a reality. Ian set up Glass & Glazing Services Limited in November 2008 and has never looked back. "There are a lot of cheap double glazing companies but Glass & Glazing Services Limited specialises in commercial fit outs such as schools, hotels and care homes where safety is a real priority" said Ian.



Ian was able to access free business advice through the Council's Enterprise for Success scheme as well as help with looking for new premises as the business has grown. Ian said "The support I had through Enterprise for Success was really helpful in getting my business off the ground - and I'm meeting with the Council again this week to see how they can help my business to grow."



Ian's Enterprise for Success advisor Marcus Cole of Tribal said "Ian has great customer service skills, loads of experience and some really good ideas about how to diversify his business. They have the basis of a really good, profitable business"

For further information on the Solihull's "Enterprise for Success" scheme please call 0121 704 6363 or email enterprise@solihull.gov.uk or visit www.solihull.gov.uk/enterprise or for information about Glass & Glazing Services Limited, please see www.glassglaze.co.uk or call 0845 618 7748.

Focus On...Tourism

Last month, stakeholders came together for the first Solihull Tourism Forum meeting, co-ordinated by Solihull Council.

Interested parties from Solihull Town Centre and surrounding areas discussed the priorities for the sector and identify the key 'selling points' of the Borough for both business and leisure tourists. The Forum also included presentations around local transport improvements and the free support available from the Council around skills and recruitment for the sector.

Andrew Cole, General Manager at the Ramada Solihull and Chair of the Forum, commented: 'The aim of the Forum is to get all stakeholders together and identify how Solihull can become more effective in promoting its tourist attractions to visitors – including that those that come through the NEC and Airport, but also those who come to enjoy the heritage and rural aspects of the Borough.



We aim to look at how we can maximise promotional tourism opportunities and how partners can work together to cross sell different aspects of the Borough – from shopping and dining to using the local leisure facilities and visiting places of interest.'

Councillor Courts, Cabinet Member for Community and Economic Regeneration, said: 'We are keen to raise the profile of all that Solihull can offer to visitors and encourage interested local businesses to get involved, so that we are prepared for events such as the London 2012 Olympics, as well as the business visitor that wants to extend their stay.'

For more information on the Tourism Forum, or to get involved, please call the Council on 0121 704 6151 or email business@solihull.gov.uk.



Case Study: Environmental Management Key to Success at Land Rover

As part of the Solihull CSR Programme Footprint, Jaguar Land Rover recently offered local businesses a guided tour on their approach to environmental management, tackling cost saving, legal compliance and changing customer demands.

Developing and implementing a system wasn't confined to the strategic boardroom and all employees were involved to learn how they could help implement the new systems and the benefits it would bring.

To monitor environmental performance a specific scorecard was developed, measuring waste, water and energy consumption as well as carbon dioxide emissions. The scorecard is filtered down to the production line where operatives are pro-actively encouraged to monitor targets and report problems, enabling them to feel involved as well as developing new "lean" techniques.

They communicate standards through user friendly 'lesson sheets', advising workers on topics such as hazardous waste, power down processes and waste segregation. The implementation programme is also supported by centres of excellence that enable knowledge sharing across plants.

Other techniques include colour coded scheme waste bins to help employees identify the right disposal point and 'spill kits' along the production line. Workshops were also run to help employee's release the benefits of environmental management at home and environmental champions are used as role models to sell change. Regular audits are carried out with some front line workers trained and involved in the audit process.

Results include a sustained reduction in water use, waste generation, energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, allowing the business to invest into new resources.

For more information on the Footprint programme or the Land Rover Case Study, please call 0121 704 6894 or see www.solihull.gov.uk/csr.



Top Award for Local Business

One of our local businesses, Waterside Aesthetics have been officially recognised as the top medical aesthetics clinic in the UK & Ireland, following their recent success at the Aesthetic Medicine Awards.

The clinic located within Dickens Heath Village Centre, has been awarded the highly prestigious 'Clinic of the Year' Award 2009, by a panel of judges including independent industry experts and clinic managers.

Helen Hannigan, owner of Waterside Aesthetics commented: "We are absolutely delighted to win this award - particularly as the competition in this category was particularly strong and we have been established for less than three years."

Events & Forums

Local Business Forums

Cranmore – Autumn 2009 – Waste/Recycling, IT Connectivity, Business Park Signage

Bickenhill & Elmdon – Autumn 2009 – Airport and NEC Integrated Transport Access Major Scheme and Birmingham International Airport Update

Dickens Heath – Summer 2009

North Solihull Business Forum – 29/7/09 – Time TBC

Tourism Forum – June 2009 – Developing and Positioning Solihull's Tourism Offer



To book, or for more information, please call **0121 704 6151** or email business@solihull.gov.uk.



Business Link

26/5/09 – 9.30am to 12.00pm - Employing People - Hogarths Hotel, Dorridge

2/6/09 – 9.30am to 12.00pm – Managing Money and Making a Profit – The Windmill Village Hotel, Allesley, Coventry

9/6/09 – 9.30am to 12.00pm – Maximising Efficiency and Profitability Through People – The Windmill Village Hotel, Allesley, Coventry

16/6/09 – 9.30am to 12.00pm – Trading Online – The Windmill Village Hotel, Allesley, Coventry

23/6/09 – Selling Skills to Grow Your Business – The Windmill Village Hotel, Allesley, Coventry

To book, or for more information, please call **0845 609 9890** or email events@businesslinkwm.co.uk.

Solihull Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Solihull Chamber of Commerce

3/6/09 - 12.00pm to 2.30pm - Whistle Stop Networking - Premier Inn, National Exhibition Centre

5/6/09 - 12.00pm to 2.30pm - New Members Lunch - Hampton Manor

25/6/09 - 12.00pm to 9.00pm - Golf Day - Marriott Forest of Arden, Meriden

3/7/09 - 12.00pm to 2.30pm - Leading Ladies Lunch - Hogarths, Four Ashes Road, Dorridge

14/7/09 - 7.00am to 9.00am - Early Bird Breakfast - Shirley Golf Club, Stratford Road, Shirley

To book or for more information, please call **0121 781 7384** or email solevents@solihull-chamber.com.

Aston Business School

21/5/09 – 12.45pm to 2.00pm – Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Business Growth – Aston Business School, Birmingham

16/7/09 – 12.45pm to 2.00pm – Enabling Staff in Response to Challenging Times – Aston Science Park, Birmingham

29/7/09 – 8.00am to 10.45am - Money Matters! Seminar for Success – Aston Science Park, Birmingham

28/10/09 - 8.00am to 10.45am – Marketing Miracles Seminar for Success – Aston Science Park, Birmingham

To book, or for more information, please call **0121 250 3505** or email events@astonsciencepark.co.uk.

For the latest business support advice and information, please contact the Team:

Call - **0121 704 6151**

Email – business@solihull.gov.uk

Web – www.solihull.gov.uk/businessadvice/creditcrunch.htm