



New times in education and business

The world of business and education is entering a new phase with the introduction of diplomas for 14-19 year olds which are designed to meet the needs of businesses. These are on a rolling programme of delivery and will begin in Wealden with the Construction diploma in September 2008. Schools are bidding for the next round of diplomas now, to begin in 2009 and the results should be known by January. This will be followed by others in 2010 and 2011 – creating a total of 17.

The diplomas have been created to ensure that young people have the skills they need for the world of work, including literacy, numeracy and employability. Within the diplomas there is a focus on skills and also the relationship between employers and education. Ed Balls, the Secretary of State for Education said "We need the business and academic worlds to continue to back these qualifications and help make them a success. With their support, I believe that Diplomas could emerge as the jewel of our education system".

Diploma lines include:

- Land based and Environmental
- Health and Beauty
- Business Admin and Finance
- Hospitality
- Retail
- Sport and Leisure
- Languages
- Science
- Engineering

Secondary schools, Special schools and Further Education establishments are working together to run these courses and the facility of the Wealden Skills Centre in Uckfield is an extra bonus.

The Education Business Partnership

Wendy Gorham, the new EBP (Education Business Partnership) Coordinator for the Wealden area, employed by Sussex Careers Ltd acts as a broker between businesses and schools in developing a productive relationship. It can be defined as a joint venture in the local community to raise aspirations and achievements of young people and to enable them to become part of a skilled and adaptable workforce.

Your involvement

For the diplomas to be successful for all young people at all levels employer engagement is vital. It begins at primary school but more recently has focused on the 14-19 age group as part of vocational, enterprise and work-related agendas.

As an employer, you could help through a variety of activities including:

- e-mentoring
- Mock interviews
- Contributing to curriculum workshops and conferences
- Hosting teacher placements
- Supporting literacy and numeracy projects
- Supporting enterprise days

The benefits to your business include:

- Raising your profile
- Access to potential trainees
- Staff development
- Contributing to local skill requirements
- Linking to your corporate social responsibility targets

On 12th February 2008 **Uplands Community School** at Wadhurst is hosting a language day where students are shown the importance of language in the world of

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work – they have businesses providing work related scenarios, display stands and speakers. **Beacon Community College**, Crowborough is holding Enterprise days throughout the year. If you would like to be involved in either of these events, please contact the EBP.

Whether you are a small, medium or large business, if you think that you could benefit from working with education please contact Wendy Gorham at Sussex Careers Ltd. To make education real it requires a positive impact from the world of work.

WEALDEN EDUCATION



BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

To find out more, or to arrange a visit from Wendy to talk about EBP and diplomas in a more detailed way, contact her on 01273 223078 or email wendy.gorham@sussexcareers.com

The Essential Guide to Social Media for Tourism

Attract more visitors by understanding the power of social media

Social media is a formidable marketing tool and a great way of connecting with your customers. There are over 100 million MySpace members (nearly half are aged 35 and over) and with over 10 million reviews and 30 million unique visitors a month, TripAdvisor is the largest travel community on the web.

If your customers love you – help them shout about it!

Social media can be personal recommendation on a grand scale. Equally, if customers have a bad experience they are going to share it too. Knowing what people are saying and where people are saying it is a key step in making social media a positive force for your business in the web savvy world of tourism, hospitality and leisure. This isn't the preserve of the under-18s. Everyone's doing it! Your customers are doing it, commenting on and researching your brand online everyday. Social media includes blogs, forums, podcasts, social networks and wikis. What defines them is the ability to share information, to make visible ideas, conversations and recommendations previously only made down the pub. Learn the essentials through relevant case studies and practical information.

Our course includes:

- Introduction to social media
- Social media close up and personal – more in depth look at blogs, forums, podcasts, social networks (Facebook/Linked In)
- Social media in practice – what can you do? What skills do you need?
- How to integrate social media into your marketing strategy
- Social media rules of engagement – avoid classic social media blunders and deal with negative comments about your brand

- How to ensure you don't compromise accessibility and usability
- Searchable social media

Join us and learn how to join in:

North Wealden: Tuesday 11th March 2008

**Ashdown Forest Llama Park, Wych Cross, nr Forest Row
11am-3pm including buffet lunch.**

FREE* to eligible businesses

Award winning internet marketing specialists Academy Internet will be delivering this tailor-made workshop to help you market your business online. (Normal cost of the workshop £395).

To book a place Register online:

www.broadbandeastssussex.co.uk/events

Email: trainingtoolkit@tourismse.com

Or call: 023 8062 5445

*To benefit from a free place we request that you complete a simple form confirming the amount of State Aid if any received by your business. (Please note non-attendees on the day will be charged a £20 cancellation fee).

The Sussex e-Partnership is working in association with Tourism South East and Sussex Tourism Partnership to deliver a series of Workshops and follow up one-to-one advice to help local businesses successfully exploit IT and the internet. To find out more about the Sussex e-Partnership: **www.broadbandeastssussex.co.uk**, email: **jane.atherton@broadbandeastssussex.co.uk** or call **01243 382255**. The Sussex e-Partnership Programme (which includes Broadband East Sussex) is sponsored by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDAL). It is delivered in partnership with East Sussex Economic Partnership (ESEP), West Sussex Economic Partnership (WSEP) and Business Link Sussex.

www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk

The first step for small businesses

wealdenbusinesshelp



One Step Closer!

The Uckfield Farmers' Market has been selected as a finalist in the prestigious Sussex Food & Drinks Award under the category of Best Sussex Farmers Market.

Uckfield Farmers Market, re-introduced to the town in 2001 by the Uckfield Regeneration Partnership (URP) after an absence of over 100 years, has grown from an average of 10 stalls per market to over 40. The stalls offer a large variety of fresh, locally grown produce and other consumables. Meats,



Game, Cheeses, Vegetables, Fruit, are all in abundance, and the selection is impressive. All other products, such as Conserves, Pies, Cakes, etc. are all made locally using local raw materials and each stall is attended by the actual producer. The Uckfield Farmers' Market and the URP work hard to encourage local consumers to lessen their impact on the environment by supporting our local producers - food miles (distance from farm to table) average just seven and a half miles,

excluding the fresh fish products which come from Rye Harbour and the Hastings fishing fleet.

The URP, who promote the market, would like to thank all of the supporters who voted for them. The winner will be announced at a special presentation evening on 24th January 2008.

For more information on Uckfield Farmers' Market contact Barry Knights on 01825 760646 or email barryknights@btopenworld.com

The Gun wins Calor Rural Pub in the Community Award

Local pub The Gun in Chiddingly has been announced the winner of the Calor Rural Pub in the Community award, a scheme which aims to celebrate pubs that have diversified their businesses to offer residents in their local area a wider range of services.

Since taking over The Gun in 2006, landlord and landlady Martial and Natasha Chaussey have transformed the 15th century farmhouse pub into an essential part of the local community.

Calor bulk marketing manager Laura Luty says the pub was chosen as the overall winner as it clearly demonstrated how it has found innovative ways in which to serve the local community whilst making the business a success.

Laura says: "The disappearance of significant facilities and services from UK villages is increasing, yet it is encouraging to see many pubs are taking on the role of the hub of the community by providing more than just a drinking venue". A good example is the local shop at The Gun, which was opened in the old coach house after the local village shop closed, restoring a vital service that many of the villagers rely on. Natasha and Martial have also found a way of giving something back to the local community by incorporating a small surcharge on certain dishes on the menu. Money raised from this scheme goes towards supporting the local primary school's healthy eating education programme, something which benefits the younger residents of the village.

The pub also offers wireless internet connection for customer use and a specially created parking bay for horses, complete with fresh hay bales!

Landlady Natasha Chaussey said: "I was really pleased to find out the pub had been shortlisted as a finalist especially as this is a national competition, but to win it is an absolute honour. The shop has proved very successful and all of the fresh produce we sell is sourced from local suppliers wherever possible. We also use the same approach to the ingredients we use in the pub kitchen".

Expert Advice

The pub will now receive expert advice from leading Michelin-starred pub chef, Tom Kerridge as the prize for winning the award. Tom is owner of the Hand & Flowers in Marlow and has achieved huge success since taking over the pub in March 2005. Accolades include a rating of 6/10 in the Good Food Guide, along with the Guide's title of best newcomer for Buckinghamshire, three AA rosettes, the title of 2006 Craft Guild of Chefs Pub Restaurant Chef of the Year and more recently, the 2007 Best Newcomer Catey Award.

Tom will visit The Gun and work alongside staff to deliver a charity event for the benefit of the local community. He will also host a return visit to the highly successful Hand & Flowers, where he will demonstrate the secret of his own success.



Left to right: Tom Kerridge, proprietor of the Hand & Flowers, the judge and 'prize' for the awards; Natasha Chaussey, owner of The Gun; and Alex Davies, Calor managing director.

Advertise your business free of charge

The Wealden Online Business Directory exists to enable you to market your business free of charge. If you haven't yet registered, log on to www.wealden.gov.uk/business and click on our 'online business directory'.

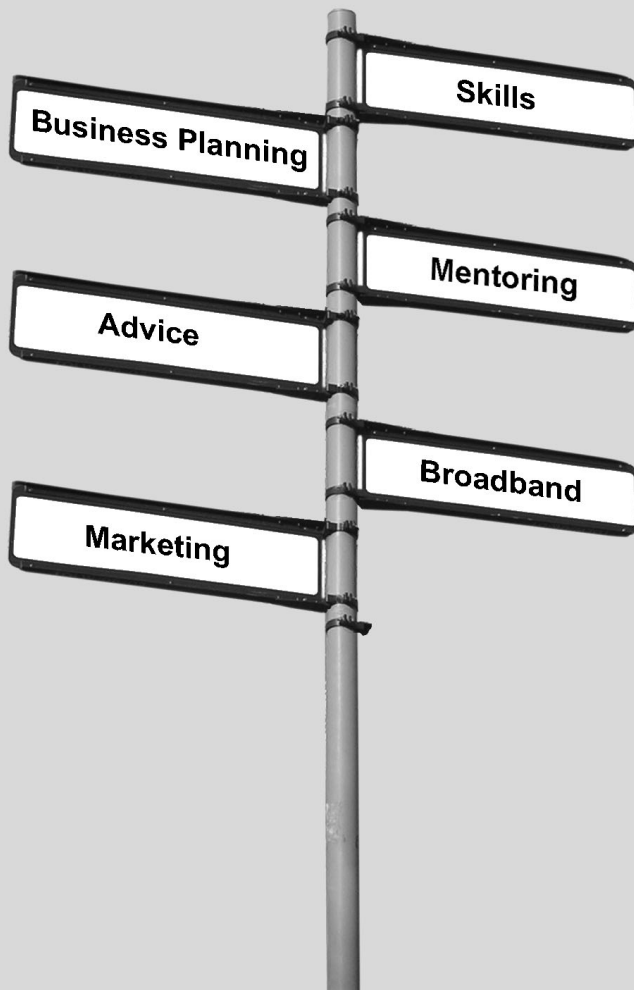
This allows you to add your contact details, a brief description of your business, and even a free link to your website! If you've already added your business, please take a moment to check that your entry is accurate and up-to-date. By submitting a new on-line form we can ensure that your entry is updated with the new information you provide.



For more information please contact the Economic Development & Tourism Team – details on the back page.

Point your business in the right direction with **FREE** business advice

Are you looking for more customers?
Do you want to increase sales and profit?



We provide a FREE business review and access to mentoring services to help you move your business forward.

For more information please visit www.sussex-business-mentoring.co.uk

or call:
EDEAL on 01323 413500

You really do have nothing to lose . . .

Business Essentials Ltd

Big enough to cope . . . Small enough to care

Business Essentials started life as a commercial stationery company over 10 years ago. We are based in Forest Row, East Sussex. We offer free next day delivery in the local area on all orders placed before 4pm daily.

Stationery

We offer competitive prices for desk top stationery, copier/laser paper & computer consumables.

Office furniture

From office design & planning to installation or just a single desk we supply all aspects of office furniture.

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We offer web based stock management systems, controlling customer held stock, with full management reporting capabilities.

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From business cards to full colour brochures we can meet all aspects of your print requirements.

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For further information contact either Paul Chapple direct or speak to any of our customer service team.



Big enough to cope . . . Small enough to care

BUSINESS ESSENTIALS LTD

Units 2 & 3, Forest Row Business Park,

Station Road, Forest Row, East Sussex RH18 5DW

Telephone: 01342 825025 Email: paul@business-essentials.co.uk

A Conference Venue with a difference!

Ashdown Forest Llama Park is much more than just a farm where you can take the children to learn about llamas and alpacas! It is a well established and popular visitor attraction set in the idyllic surroundings of Ashdown Forest with magnificent views over the surrounding countryside. As well as the llamas, alpacas and reindeer there is a large retail shop selling luxury alpaca knitwear, South American crafts and local books and maps. The Coffee Shop is open every day and serves Fairtrade Tea and Coffee, homemade cakes and light lunches.

The purpose-built conference room is in the Park's modern visitor centre and offers excellent facilities for conferences and meetings for up to 60 delegates. It is a peaceful location free from the stress of modern life, but enjoying the facilities and comforts of a modern conference centre, including Wi-Fi broadband connection. It is an excellent venue for training/team building events and you can combine conference sessions with the chilled out experience of a llama walk in the local countryside.

Sustainability and Green issues are high on the agenda at the Park and in 2006 it was joint winner of the Tourism South East Green Tourism Award, and has been awarded a Green Tourism Gold Award.

Ashdown Forest Llama Park, Wych Cross, Forest Row RH18 5JN.

The Park is open to the public every day from 10am to 5pm.

T: 01825 712040 W: www.llamapark.co.uk



The conference room at the Ashdown Forest Llama Park



Taking a llama for a walk

Does your business pride itself on offering great customer service?

Join the East Sussex County Council Trading Standards "Buy With Confidence" Scheme!

East Sussex Trading Standards launched their Buy With Confidence scheme in May 2004. The scheme now has over 260 businesses from across East Sussex which have gained approval from their local Trading Standards.

What are the benefits to business?

Businesses are recommended to members of the public following requests by telephone and email.

The business is promoted on the County Council website www.eastsussex.gov.uk/buywithconfidence and on the regional website for the scheme www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk Once approved, businesses are able to use the scheme's logo on their stationery, advertising and livery. They are also issued with promotional stationery to promote their membership to customers.

Trading Standards promote the scheme locally through their Approved Trader directory. This is distributed to the public through local council buildings and libraries.

How do I join?

Businesses that apply to join Buy With Confidence are vetted to ensure they have no history of causing consumer detriment. Checks include:

- Registry of County Court Judgement check

- Companies House Directors check
- Disqualified Directors check
- Insolvency check
- Check against Trading Standards complaints database

Businesses are then audited to ensure compliance with Trading Standards civil and criminal legislation. For businesses that work in and around people's homes, staff and unsupervised subcontractors must perform a Basic Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure. This process is repeated every two years. An annual membership fee is payable.

Buy with Confidence – Open morning

Trading Standards are inviting businesses that want to find out more about joining the scheme to an open morning which centres around the next Approved Trader Ceremony on 29th February 2008, at the East Sussex Enterprise Gateway, Newhaven.

To find out more about the benefits of becoming a Buy With Confidence member or to register your interest in attending our open morning, please call 01323 418215 or email buywithconfidence@eastsussex.gov.uk or apply online www.eastsussex.gov.uk/buywithconfidence



Inom Management Tip

Do you build trust and rapport?

To get the best out of people, managers need to create trust and rapport with them. One of the foundations of building trust is listening to and understanding people. This does not mean agreeing – which is different, but it does include not immediately judging what they say. A useful focus to aim for when listening, is to get past the words, and focus on how the other person feels (pleased, angry, etc.). The aim is to understand what they want to achieve, rather than judging them on the words they use.

Inom Ltd provide management training. For details contact Mark Greasley at mark.greasley@inom.co.uk or phone 01892 669775.

How to . . . improve your selling using Customer Testimonials

Customer or client testimonials are an excellent way for your potential customers to see the value of your product or service, by hearing the value of doing business with you from other people. Through using testimonials and case studies you can create positive emotions about purchasing. Potential customers can be reassured that they're not going into uncharted waters. Overcoming their fears will take you far in convincing or persuading people, especially if you can use examples of people they know. For more ideas on how to help your business move forward and make more profit see www.businesslinkguides.co.uk and download your free "How to..." guide. Topics covered include:

- Business planning
- Starting your own business
- Understanding finance
- Sustainability
- Marketing
- Innovation
- Your website

Reach 1000 businesses plus more industry professionals for just £100!

Did you know that Wealden Business Focus is sent directly to around 1000 businesses in the Wealden area, as well as Chambers of Commerce, Regeneration Partnerships and other key business groups? The newsletter has a high readership, with professionals taking a real interest in what is published. You could advertise your business in the next edition for a special one-off sponsorship fee of £100 for a full page. Your Sponsorship Feature can include your products or service details, contact details and graphics, in fact anything you want to get your message across. We can even design the page for you. **Just contact the Economic Development & Tourism Team at Wealden District Council on 01892 602887 or email regeneration@wealden.gov.uk to register your interest and reserve your page.**

Sussex Enterprise appoints new Chairman

Malcolm Bradshaw, the CEO of Hailsham based Shep Plastics has been appointed as chairman of the board at Sussex Enterprise. He takes over the position from Sussex businessman Nik Askaroff who stepped down in October 2007.

Sussex Enterprise is the accredited chamber of commerce for the county and currently has over 2,000 member businesses. It represents the views of the local business community to help improve the economic prosperity of Sussex. Member companies also have access to a range of benefits to help them save money and boost their performance.

Malcolm Bradshaw said, "It's a great honour to have been elected chairman of Sussex Enterprise in succession to Nik. My role as I see it is to represent businesses in all of Sussex, large and small, to ensure that the authorities understand the importance of Sussex to the UK economy. My aim is to ensure that the local voice of business gets heard throughout central and local government or within agencies that control the way businesses are run. Sussex Enterprise is a powerful organisation that engages closely with its members helping them network, get the right advice for their business and grow the Sussex economy."

For more information on Sussex Enterprise see www.sussexenterprise.co.uk



Go for Gold!

Members of the business community from across East Sussex met on the 13th November 2007 at the East Sussex National Golf Club, Uckfield to hear how they can make the most of business and training opportunities in the lead up to London 2012 – and to enjoy a full English breakfast!

Expert speakers included Paul Toben, the Business Link Programme Manager for the London 2012 Games and Cat Carkeet, the Sussex Skills Co-ordinator for Tourism South East (TSE).

Paul Toben introduced CompeteFor – a new service to access sub-contracts with 1st tier contractors who have won major contracts for the London 2012 Games. He detailed how business can benefit from being part of CompeteFor and how the registration and bidding processes work.

Cat Carkeet highlighted how TSE are working with local businesses to ensure a world class visitor experience in preparation for London

2012. There was also a chance for businesses to hear about training opportunities with TSE and to share what they wanted to see delivered in the run up to the 2012 Games.

Councillor Sylvia Tidy, Cabinet Member for Community Development at Wealden District Council, said "The Olympic Games may still seem a long way off, but the businesses who plan ahead and get in first will be the ones best placed to reap the eventual benefits".

For more information on Games related contract opportunities see the CompeteFor website at: www.competefor.com

Wealden Business Breakfasts are very popular with local businesses. They provide a great chance for informal networking with other local business people. Go for Gold was organised by Wealden District Council, in partnership with Business Link Sussex.



Left to right: Emma Crosby (Sky News), Mandy Cohen, Catherine Fleetand and Maxine Pancaldi (Cookies Kitchen) and Chris Wormall (Regional Commercial Manager, HSBC).

Cookies Kitchen Ltd., based in Mark Cross, has outperformed hundreds of hopeful new businesses to become a regional winner in the 2007 HSBC Start-Up Stars Awards.

The national contest, now in its seventh year, is designed to seek out the most promising new businesses in the UK and to recognise the entrepreneurial talents behind their creation.

Maxine Pancaldi, who started Cookies Kitchen two years ago, was inspired to start her business by three things: need – something to make her daughter’s 5th birthday party special; an idea – that young children might find it fun to cook with their friends; and a gap in the market – no one else in the area was offering anything similar.

Cookies Kitchen provides an opportunity for children to experience the pleasures of home cooking and teaches them the benefits of eating nutritious, locally grown food. Children can join a monthly club, attend workshops or book parties where they can learn, experiment and create.

Now that cookery is no longer part of the school curriculum, this company fills a gap in children’s education while also supporting local farmers and producers and raising awareness of the importance of using local ingredients where possible.

During their first year, Cookies Kitchen saw steady growth, consolidated when nearly 90% of club members re-booked for the following 12 months. In their second year they expanded into two new areas, Sevenoaks/Tonbridge and Gloucestershire. Since then membership of all three Junior Cookies Clubs has increased more than eight times and figures show there is a very viable future for the business.

This year will see the launch of Kitchen Survivors – a course for students moving away from home for the first time, Creative Cooks – a more advanced class for 11-16 year olds, and Practical Kitchen – for adults looking to improve their skills or pick up fresh ideas.

Looking further ahead, Maxine and her team plan to franchise the business, with a fourth pilot area starting in London to provide working models for future franchisees. There are also plans for more courses and workshops as well as an on-line sales site, to be ready in time for Christmas.

Cookies Kitchen is one of 10 companies to secure a place in the South East regional finals of the 2007 Start-Up Stars Awards.

For more information on Cookies Kitchen see:
www.cookieskitchen.co.uk

For all Economic Development / Business Enquiries contact

Economic Development & Tourism

Tel: 01892 602887
Email: regeneration@wealden.gov.uk

Business Regulation Advisor

Tel: 01323 443276
Email: businesshelp@wealden.gov.uk

Environmental Health

Tel: 01323 443302
Email: env.health@wealden.gov.uk

Business Rates

Tel: 01323 443387
Email: businessrates@wealden.gov.uk

Local Business Support

Business Link
0845 600 9 006

Eastbourne & District Enterprise Agency
01323 413500

Sussex Enterprise
0845 678 8 867

Wealden Business Focus is published four times a year. If you would like to feature an article or raise a particular business issue for discussion, or are interested in sponsoring a page in the next edition, please submit details by **Friday 7th March 2008**. Please email information if possible, otherwise post to The Economic Development & Tourism Section, Wealden District Council, The Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 1DH.

‘Wealden District Council aims to provide accurate, up-to-date information, however, it does not endorse any company featured in this publication’.