

Wealden Business Breakfast

Managing and Leading your business during uncertain times

Venue: Barnsgate Manor Vineyard, nr Crowborough

Date: Tuesday 23rd February 2010

Time: 7.30am-10.30am

Cost: £5.00 per head (including breakfast)



The two topics covered at Business Breakfast include 'Managing your Business through Uncertain Times' and a presentation by the Valuation Office on Business Rates.

The first topic, Managing your Business during Uncertain Times, will consider how our natural communication preferences influence our perception of what makes Strong Leadership, how to best Manage Uncertainty and Setting Realistic Goals.

By the end of the session you will understand how

communication can go so wrong on each level, while giving you practical tips for making communication so much easier. There will then be a short talk by Andrew Scott from the Valuation Office speaking about:

- What business rates are
- How they are calculated
- Who is responsible for the various aspects of the Rating process
- Action ratepayers can take to ensure they are paying the right amount

You can choose from either a full English or a healthier, Continental style breakfast, made from local produce (where possible).

If you would like to attend please contact the Economic Development & Tourism Team on 01892 602886/7 or email regeneration@wealden.gov.uk

LEADER funding in Wealden and Rural Rother (WARR)

The EU, national and regional governments think that rural areas need help to become or remain economically, environmentally and socially healthy and sustainable. Due to this £2.4 million of Leader funding has been made available to spend in the WARR area over the next 5 years from 2009-2013.

Small businesses based in Hailsham, Heathfield and all the rural parishes of Wealden, can apply for up to



£50,000 of grant funding to start or expand their businesses. Those eligible include farmers and growers, small businesses and tourism enterprises.

Hook and Son milk processing are the latest successful applicants for funding within this scheme.

This organic farming business in Hailsham has received a grant of £20,280 to expand their successful milk round and to develop the capacity to make butter and cream.

The grant part funded the following:

- Purchase of a semi-automatic bottling plant, plus bottle washer
- Purchase of software programme to assist

management of milk round and customer billing.

- Purchase cream separating and pot filling equipment
- Purchase butter making equipment
- Purchase cold refrigeration store

Milk used to be bottled by hand in the kitchen, with bottles washed in a domestic dishwasher, however, an expanding customer base and potential new markets meant these facilities were no longer adequate.

Due to existing borrowings, the business was unable to fund the cost of purchasing a bottling plant and therefore hired the equipment. This has proved extremely efficient, but the business was struggling to afford the monthly hire cost and was unable to afford to buy the plant without grant assistance.

Without the project, they would not be able to generate sufficient income to pay their new mortgage monthly commitment, and would have been forced to sell the farm.

If you would like more information about this project in particular or LEADER funding in general, please get in touch with Kathy Fordham, Rural Development Programme Project Officer
Email: kathy.fordham@wealden.gov.uk
Tel: 07985 871792



Waves of Recession



Looking back on 2008/2009 we can see what global economists have termed the "Waves of Recession" roll over the Wealden economy. Following the 2008 trigger event of a

collapsing property bubble – Wave 1 was witnessed in the immediate withdrawal of overdrafts resulting in the sudden closure of several debt laden local businesses.

Wave 2 in 2009 has seen the annual rate of lending to business fall at an ever increasing rate, month after month – and as we head into 2010 – Wave 3 is in the form of Public Sector spending cuts combined with the aftershock effects from Waves 1 and 2 closely followed by Wave 4 – where we all look to tighten up on commercial and personal indebtedness – causing a substantial lowering of commercial investment and increased focus on personal saving.

In the past year EDEAL has seen the waves take effect from the sudden closure of substantial local businesses to rising order pipelines for those who main markets are exports (the falling Pound v. Euro making our goods very attractive). We

have also seen the mainstay of the Wealden economy – the Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) – remain relatively stable with new entrants appearing all the time.

Typically the owners and employees of SME's, especially those less than 5 years old are exhibiting a drive and ambition to succeed that will see the majority leave the recession stronger and more resilient than ever. So what are they doing?

They are viewing the recession as a challenge, diversifying to meet new market needs, updating their IT systems to increase market reach and operational efficiency, creating new ethical values for their services by joining service assurance schemes such as the highly successful 'Buy With Confidence', seeking SFEDI (Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative) accredited expert advice to develop key aspects of their business, providing an exceptional customer experience upon every contact and managing their finances professionally. In essence remaining dynamic, open to change and receptive to new ideas.

EDEAL is working in partnership with Wealden District Council to support and develop local businesses of any size from Sole Trader to Corporate, so please call us on 01323 489800 or email info@edeal.org



INOM MANAGEMENT TIP

Are you leading your team?

Whether they like it or not managers are the leaders of a team and it is crucial they give their team leadership. They need to set the vision, set the objectives and set the standards expected.

Staff can quickly become disillusioned if they lose personal direction, do not clearly understand what the team is trying to achieve or do not buy in to the vision.

To communicate the vision Managers need to:

- Clearly explain the difference between where you are now and where you want to be;
- Identify what is in it for the staff and sell the benefits;
- Involve your team in how they can achieve the vision;

And most importantly make it clear what you expect individuals to do differently to achieve the vision.

If you ask your staff what the vision was for the team – what would they say? Would they all say the same thing?

If you have any managers or supervisors who would benefit from training in staff management take a look at the Inom website www.inom.co.uk or contact Mark Greasley at Inom Limited.

Email: mark.greasley@inom.co.uk or

Tel: 01892 669775.

New Financial Intermediary Service – Changes in banking conditions

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills tasked Business Link to set up the new 'Financial Intermediary Service' as the result of feedback from business membership organisations.

The Business Link core service has helped many companies to plan and adapt to changing banking conditions. Business Link encourages all trading businesses to have a comprehensive health check which includes a financial review carried out by an experienced, accredited Business Link Adviser.

This new service is being run as part of the existing Business Link operation. There are three functions of the service:

- Identify and monitor those businesses which are suffering from disruptive changes in their banking terms and conditions.
- Help from Business Link Advisers with a financial background for those businesses affected.
- Intensive support and mediation between a business and its bank where such intervention is likely to achieve a positive and workable outcome for both parties.

Any business which has been negatively affected by changing banking conditions should call Business Link on 0845 600 9006.



FREE local business advice



BETRE was set up as a partnership in 2001, it includes all the Local Authorities in East Sussex, the Environment Agency and Business Link.

Betre provides

FREE practical and independent advice to East Sussex small and medium sized businesses on how to cut utility costs, environmental impact and how they can work towards a low carbon economy. Over the last 6 years BETRE has helped over 900 local businesses. Bottom line savings on waste, energy and water costs have totalled over £1.3m.

FREE services for businesses include:

- **GREEN ACTION GRANTS** – Up to £500 towards the cost of implementing actions to reduce waste, energy or water.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS** – A review of your energy, water and waste bills, carrying out a short site survey and providing you with a detailed report on savings opportunities and legislation.
- **TRAINING** – Topics ranging from practical energy and water efficiency, waste minimisation, climate change adaptation, environmental management systems and environmental legislation.

Forthcoming events with BETRE during 2010-11:

Simple Utilities Management Seminar (SUMS)

Two linked half-day workshops, helping businesses to effectively manage utility costs, saving on energy water and waste. SUMS Workshops will run from 09.00-13.30 during 2010-11 as follows:

March 2010 – Hastings **April 2010** – Brighton
May 2010 – Battle **October 2010** – Bexhill
November 2010 – Lewes

Topics covered include:

- Spotting improvement areas using data from your bills
- Tips for saving on waste, water and energy bills
- Learn to self audit your business and engage your staff

Climate Change and Carbon Management – 1 day event. Help your organisation to prepare and adapt for climate change, calculate your carbon footprint, learn about carbon offsetting and find out about renewable energy technology on 19th May 2010, Eastbourne.

For further information on any of Betre's services contact either:

Tel: 01273 336777

Email: betre@eastsussex.gov.uk

www.betre.org.uk



Walk Wealden: The 2012 Active Challenge

Wealden District Council is currently working on an exciting new project and we would like to invite your company to get involved.

'Walk Wealden: The 2012 Active Challenge' aims to promote the local area and get more people active through walking, leading up to the 2012 Olympics.

At the heart of the project will be a high profile, district-wide programme of short community walking events. We are inviting every town/parish area to host a healthy walk event between 2010 and 2012.

This project aims to use the Olympics to inspire and challenge residents to be more active and to bring communities together.

The events will be aimed particularly at those who are not currently very active, so the health walks will be short and accessible.

To help facilitate this project, Wealden District Council is looking for local businesses to provide sponsorship which will enable us to develop a broad marketing campaign across the district.

Your organisation will receive district wide coverage, with your name/logo on 42 banners, 500 posters, press releases, radio advertisements, web pages and t-shirts.

This is not only a great marketing opportunity for your organisation, but also a chance to support your local community and enhance your company image.

If you would like further information on how you can get involved in this project please contact Diana Carlick, Cultural Services Officer at Wealden District Council on 01892 602879

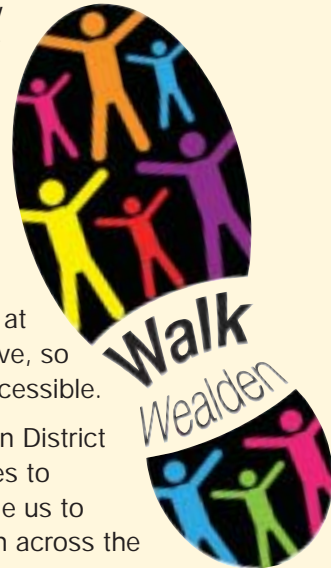
Email: diana.carlick@wealden.gov.uk

New member joins the Team

The Economic Development and Tourism Team welcomes Sam Reid. Having recently graduated in Business Administration from the University of Portsmouth, Sam will be joining the Team as our Economic Development & Tourism Assistant taking on a number of duties. Sam will work daily with local businesses offering them support and assistance. Sam will be responsible for supporting the delivery of the Council's economic development, tourism development and market towns regeneration work programme.



Tel: 01892 602886. Email: sam.reid@wealden.gov.uk





Gail Fenn is Wealden's Regulation Adviser. Gail works closely with the Economic Development and Tourism Team to support businesses starting up and operating within the Wealden area and also to promote the business support work within the Council.

Gail also produces Wealden's Food and Safety Bulletin which is sent out 3 times a year covering topics on food safety, health and safety and other regulatory changes and good business practice. This is sent to all food businesses and many other Wealden businesses.

What attracted you to the job?

Having trained as an Environmental Health Officer straight from school I suppose it was the varied work from controlling infectious diseases to ensuring workplaces are safe and healthy, that attracted me to the job.

I had no idea just how interesting, challenging and rewarding it would become. As we all know regulations are constantly changing, often becoming more complex, whether we like it or not!

My current role as Regulation Adviser has meant I can focus my many years of experience on helping people starting up and running businesses, to deal with the many strands of red tape they can get tangled in. Also the need to keep businesses updated on changes to

regulations, gives me the opportunity to use training sessions, newsletters and the internet in addition to face to face contact.

What's the most interesting aspect of your role?

Meeting people and getting caught up with their enthusiasm for bringing their business ideas to life. Plus being able to connect them with other business support available.

It's also quite rewarding when people realise that I am there to help, not to restrict what they want to do. Plus a lot of my work is with food businesses so you can imagine there is a lot of interest there!

What's the most bizarre experience you've had at work?

Over the years, exhumations and welfare burials jump straight to mind and being in charge of meat inspection in a slaughterhouse certainly tested my strength of character. Fortunately these were many moons ago for me although not so for my colleagues.

More recently, I suppose being locked in and out of a medium-secure psychiatric unit, in order to discuss the building of an outside smoking shelter, felt pretty bizarre.

If you feel there may be other ways that we can help, then please telephone Gail on 01323 443276 or email: gail.fenn@wealden.gov.uk or visit: www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk

For all Economic Development / Business Enquiries contact

Business Rates

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

Business Regulation Adviser

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

Economic Development & Tourism

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

Environmental Health

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

Procurement

Tel: 01323 443350
Email: procurement@wealden.gov.uk

LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT:

Business Link Sussex
0845 036 0 144

EDEAL
01323 489800

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, please submit details by **Friday 19th March 2010**. Please email information if possible to: regeneration@wealden.gov.uk, 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.

"You get a great deal with Wealden"

www.wealdenbusinesshelp.org.uk

www.wealden.gov.uk

www.enjoysussex.info

Portfolio Holder for Community
Cllr Ron Cussons



Please recycle after use

This newsletter is available in large print on request