



Issue 3

Winter 2008

Helping business in St Edmundsbury

St Edmundsbury Borough Council wants to help local business during this current difficult time and is committed to re-investing an extra £1.5million in the local economy over the next two years. Most of the money comes from the Government's Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (LABGI) which rewards local authorities in accordance with the economic growth of their area. Projects include a £100,000 bursary and training fund to unlock further funding for new business growth and inward investment and £70,000 for training initiatives to address difficulties faced by business to be delivered by Mid Anglian Enterprise Agency (Menta). There is also £60,000 for the promotion of Bury St Edmunds, £61,000 for a new business competition to fund substantial discounts for successful entrants on new units in the Incubation Centre at Suffolk Business Park, £445,000 to re-vitalise the Hollands Road business units in Haverhill and £25,000 for a shopfront grant scheme in Queen Street, Haverhill.

For help and advice on dealing with the credit crunch, see ☎ <http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/sebc/live/CreditCrunch.cfm>

See inside for:

- Rural issues and businesses
- Small business rate relief
- Business events



A national first for West Suffolk College



West Suffolk College is the first training provider in the country to achieve the Training Quality Standard (TQS) for excellence in seven areas of provision. In October, the College was named Outstanding Training Provider of the Year by the Construction Skills Forum for the second year running. The award recognises the College's proactive approach to the needs of learners, with a mixture of well-established and innovative methods in work based delivery. Working with employers is a key priority for the College. A recent investigation into the socio-economic impact of the College shows that it brought a benefit of £193.2m to the region through stimulating economic growth, increasing earnings for learners and savings for the public.



This year's graduation ceremony for University Campus Suffolk Bury St Edmunds, located at the site of West Suffolk College, marked a significant transition for university course provision in Bury St Edmunds. Over the past 15 years the College has been at the forefront in encouraging mature students back to study and more recently University Campus Suffolk Bury St Edmunds has been working with local employers to develop new employment-related foundation degrees.

Contact: ☎ 01284 716333; 🌐 www.westsuffolk.ac.uk

Suffolk Rural Economy Scheme

The Suffolk rural economy scheme awards small one-off revenue and capital grants to shops and post offices in rural areas, which can demonstrate sustainable economic community benefits. Shops with a turnover of £7,500 per week or less can apply for grants to improve premises or to expand their business.

The scheme is also looking for ten communities who have a new project to create a sustainable community business or service. Grants are around £9,000 per project, to include project management support to work up a feasibility study and conduct community consultations. Applications must be from a rural community or parish council, not an individual business. If you are aware of any project or community in St Edmundsbury which could benefit from this funding and could spend the money by March 2009, please let us know.

Contact: ☎ Kirsty Pitwood on 01284 757109
✉ rural@stedsbcc.gov.uk
<http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/sebc/live/suffolkres.cfm>

Rural business event

Improving profits from rural business

Monday 2 February 2009

10am to 1pm (registration from 9:40am)
Kedington Community Centre

Organised by Business Link and St Edmundsbury Borough Council

Do you have a rural business? Would you like to improve your profits? If so, please book a place at this free event! It is your chance to hear what the experts have to say about topics including finance, environmental issues and marketing and how using these more effectively can result in greater profits.

To book: Call Business Link Events Booking Team on 0845 601 1000 or book online at www.bookevents.org



A focus on...

Rede Hall Farm Park

Rede Hall Farm Park is a working farm lying in 72 acres of farmland on which great Suffolk Punch horses graze peacefully. It is a quiet and secluded spot, even though it is only 6 miles from Bury St Edmunds on the road to Haverhill. The farm is owned by Chris and Nigel Oakley and they first opened the farm park to promote the Suffolk Punch horse. The park was for many years a popular local visitor attraction, but it closed in 2000 because of foot and mouth restrictions. Chris and Nigel considered selling up, but instead they converted some traditional flint and red-brick farm buildings into holiday cottages, helped by EEDA and Defra funding. The cottages, called 'Jenny Wren' and 'Nuthatch', are very attractive and have earned four star ratings. Other farm buildings are leased to organisations such as the Millennium Farm Trust and a drilling company. Chris and Nigel are still very involved with the Suffolk Punch horses. They breed, train and break them in and they train people to handle them. They also take them to events such as the Nowton Park Country Fair, and they are still used commercially, for example to deliver beer to pubs in Bury St Edmunds and to work in sensitive sites where vehicles can't be used. It is a tremendous success story of how a couple have managed to keep a traditional farm going and promote a rare farm breed by seizing new opportunities.

Contact: Chris & Nigel Oakley, Rede Hall Farm Park, Rede, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk
☎ 01284 850695; ✉ chris@redehallfarmpark.co.uk



Women in Rural Enterprise



Are you....Rural? Ambitious? Ethical? Professional? Focused? Then WiRE is for you! WiRE started in 1996 and membership is just £40. WiRE gives its members:

- supportive local WiRE Network groups for rural businesswomen
- quarterly issues of WiRED magazine
- free listing in our online directory - the rural marketplace
- e-newsletters sharing news, information, events, offers and advice
- fantastic deals on professional services
- inspirational advice from our library of business articles
- a lively online forum where you can meet other businesswomen
- national PR opportunities
- annual WiRE conference
- being part of the national campaign to raise the profile of rural women's enterprise

The West Suffolk Network Group is held monthly from 7.30pm until 9pm on the last Tuesday of each month at Ravenwood Hall Hotel, Rougham, Bury St Edmunds. **Contact:** ☎ Alex Parr on 01842 890264

✉ alexparr@lineone.net; www.wireuk.org

A focus on...

Fornham Stores

We have all heard a great deal recently about the impact of post office closures on rural communities. Fornham Stores, on the Street, Fornham All Saints, used to be a post office that sold a few groceries. Earlier this year, it was announced that it would be closing as part of the national post office closures programme. Local people and the local M.P. mounted a campaign to keep it open, arguing that it was a vital lifeline for people living in the Fornhams and the surrounding villages, but it closed in August 2008. The shop is run by Lisa Whitehouse and her family, who also run Court News in Horringer Court, and they decided to try and re-open it as a general shop, although they were very worried that it would not be viable. After some refurbishment work to make the most of the internal space, the store re-opened in September, selling anything they thought would be useful to people living nearby. This includes fruit, vegetables, cards, newspapers, magazines, delicatessen products, home-made cakes, eggs, stationery, seeds, medicine, cigarettes, flowers, stamps, bird seed, pet food, toys, puzzles, greetings cards, wrapping paper and alcohol – an astonishingly wide range for a very small shop. They are very responsive to their customers: if anybody asks them to stock something, they do their best to get it. As a result, the shop is doing much better than Lisa expected and is attracting both passing trade and repeat business from satisfied customers. Local people, especially pensioners and young families, are delighted to have a shop close by and have become very loyal. There is a bus stop outside and also parking space, including a space for disabled customers. The shop is open 7 days a week, Monday to Friday 8am-1.30pm, Saturday 8am-midday and Sundays 8am –10am. Fornham Stores shows that there can be life after a post office closes.



Contact: Lisa Whitehouse, Fornham Stores, The Street, Fornham All Saints, Bury St Edmunds

☎ 01284 727788

✉ courtnewsandpo@yahoo.co.uk



Are you eligible for small business rate relief?

Small business rate relief may be available for small businesses that operate from one property in St Edmundsbury. Your business may qualify if you meet certain criteria such as the property having a rateable value of less than £15,000.

If you are experiencing cash flow problems, please let us know. St Edmundsbury Borough Council collects the rates for the government. We do not have the authority to remove the business rate charge but we do not want your business to cease trading and we will help if we can.

Contact: ☎ 01284 757275 or 01284 757295; ✉ revenues@stedsbc.gov.uk

Business Ratepayers Consultation Meeting

St Edmundsbury businesses are invited to the council's annual Business Ratepayers Consultation Meeting which will be held on Wednesday 7 January 2009 at 6pm in the Athenaeum, Bury St Edmunds. There will be speakers from EEDA, Business Link and West Suffolk College on 'Gearing Up for the Downturn' - the help available for businesses. There will also be a presentation and discussion on non-domestic rates, the broader context of the council's budget for 2009/10 and the opportunity to ask questions.

Places are limited so please let us know if you are coming. **Contact:** ☎ 01284 757683
✉ economic.development@stedsbc.gov.uk

It's Your Opportunity!

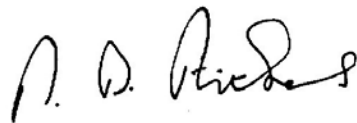
... to access more sales openings in the public sector by coming along to St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District Councils' procurement event. Meet both councils' economic development and procurement teams as well as the 48th Contracting Squadron from RAF Lakenheath and the Suffolk Project Manager for the London 2012 Olympic Games. Anglia Revenues Partnership, Business Link, Choose Suffolk and many others will be on hand.

**Palace House, Newmarket.
Tuesday 10 February 2009
10am-4pm**

Contact: ✉ www.stedsmundsbury.gov.uk/business or www.forest-heath.gov.uk/business;
☎ Emma Cooney, FHDC Economic Development Officer, 01638 719471

Talk to us

This is the third issue of St Edmundsbury Borough Council's newsletters for and about business. If you would like to receive future issues, or you would like to suggest items for them, please contact us at the address below.



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St Edmundsbury Borough Council



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