

Chamber Chatter

The Voice of local business in Taunton Deane

January 2009

TAUNTON
CHAMBER
of
COMMERCE

New Year "Credit Crunch" Financial Healthcheck

Monday 19th January 2009 at Exchange House, The Crescent, Taunton from 12.00pm to 3.00pm — Refreshments available

The news is full of doom and gloom about prospects for the economy, employment and the future.

In association with some of its Members and key Partners, the Taunton Chamber of commerce is delighted to be hosting this event which aims to provide you with hints and practical advice on how you can deflect the impact the economic downturn may have on your business.

The event is completely free of charge and:-

Representatives from the following organisations will be available on the day to give advice:-

- Milsted Langdon, Chartered Accountants
- Somerset College
- Debt Solutions Southwest Ltd
- Business Link
- Foot Anstey Solicitors
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Invest Southwest
- Lloyds Bank

Presentations will cover the following topics:-

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------|
| • "Weathering the financial storm" | – Milsted Langdon | 12.15 |
| • "Consumer Credit: Pitfalls and Opportunities" | – Debt Solutions SW Ltd | 12.35 |
| • "How we can help you" | – Business Link | 12.55 |
| • "Crunch Solutions" | – Foot Anstey Solicitors | 1.15 |
| • "Saving Money with Sound Financial Planning" | – Invest SW | 1.35 |
| • Get Talking - Get Advice | – Taunton CAB | 1.55 |
| • "Introducing Local Support" | – Lloyds Bank | 2.15 |

So, why not pop in for a chat with one of the advisors, in a nice friendly, atmosphere over a cup of tea or coffee or come along to one or all of the presentations to see what steps you can take to deflect the impact of the economic downturn.

For further information or to book a place at one of the presentations, please telephone Jane on 01823 353353 or e-mail office@taunton-chamber.co.uk

New Hotdesk service targets business start ups and self employed

A Taunton business centre is launching a special hotdesking service, which is ideal for redundant workers who are starting up on their own. The service from Exchange House is aimed specially at sole traders and the self-employed. Thanks to the latest IT and phone systems, business owners can run a 'virtual office' – from anywhere. Some even live abroad while handling UK work.

Exchange House is a business centre in the heart of Taunton – with a difference. It offers superb facilities, such as cutting edge IT hardware and communication systems; modern, comfortable offices in a classic-style building; meeting rooms of all sizes; a club style coffee lounge; kitchen facilities and more, without charging exorbitant add-on fees.

Exchange House's Hotdesk system means that the business owner can start work immediately. Peter Allinson explains, "The idea behind this was to offer the entrepreneur complete flexibility. The phone system enables them to sit down at the hotdesk space with their laptop and send or receive emails, enabling them to get to work immediately. Basically, it is like taking their office from one place and moving it temporarily into Taunton. It is incredibly flexible and gives them total freedom to keep the business moving."

He continues, "With the internet phone system that we use, it means that clients simply type in a code into any IP phone in the business centre and the phone is personalised to their own settings - even the telephone number becomes their own. Their number can be a local number or a number from anywhere in the country. If the business owner is out and about any number of options are available ranging from call attendant through to mobile twinning where the call is automatically transferred to their mobile, so clients only have one number to remember."

For more information, contact Peter Allinson at Exchange House, Taunton, Tel: 01823 273100 or by email at info@exchange-house.com



EXCHANGE
HOUSE

Diary Dates — Forthcoming Events

Chamber of Commerce

Thursday 29th January
Joint Business to Business Dinner with
Somerset Chamber of Commerce at The
Holiday Inn
Booking form attached

Wednesday 25th February
Networking Lunch to include
Presentation/Training from RNID —
"Deaf People Contacting Businesses"
Details to follow in February Business
News

Wednesday 25th March
Business Visit, including breakfast, to
McDonald's Restaurant, Taunton at
7.30am—Cost £10.50
Details to follow

Other

Tuesday 10th February 2009
8.30am to 1.15pm
"Business and Education: Walking a Two
Way Street"
A Conference for Employers in Somerset
at Dillington House, Ilminster
For further information contact:-
Helen Roper at Somerset EBP on 01278
726879 or visit their website
www.epb-somerset.org.uk

NEW YEAR -

NEW LOOK -

NEW WEBSITE -

A little overdue but well worth the wait, the Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that work is currently underway on the re-design of a new look website, which include some new "Member only" features.

So, watch this space for further details about the new look Chamber of Commerce website.

BURSARY AWARDS AND SPONSORSHIP

The Chamber of Commerce is delighted to continue with its support of Bursary Awards and prize sponsorships in association with local secondary schools and Somerset College. Chamber President, Mr Chris Mitchell recently had the pleasure of attending the Bishop Fox Annual Presentation Evening where he was delighted to present the Taunton Chamber's Bursary Award for Business Studies to Jackie Alexander .

Photograph shows (from L to R) Paul Scutt, Headteacher, Chris Mitchell, President — Taunton Chamber of Commerce, Jackie Alexander and fellow students.



Chris, together with Executive Committee Member, Dr Liz Payne-Ahmadi, have also recently attended Somerset College Division of Technology Student Award Ceremony, where, once again, the Chamber was delighted to have been able to sponsor one of the prizes awarded to the students by Mr Jeremy Browne, MP.

Rok in Somerset – an update

This has been a difficult period for the UK economy as a whole and our industry in particular. In the light of current market conditions we have taken some tough decisions over recent weeks and made significant organisational changes which we believe will benefit our customers, employees and shareholders. These changes concentrate our activities on the fields in which we perform best and on markets we consider most sustainable. Indeed, we believe they will accelerate our progress towards becoming The Nation's Local Builder as we become more responsive to the needs of local people while drawing on the advantages of being a large organisation with its economies of scale and buying power.

We are reshaping the business to supply more general building and maintenance services and to do less of the traditional contracting for which we were perhaps best known in the South West. Our teams are focused on repairs, maintenance and smaller building projects rather than larger high value major contracts although we still do a certain amount of this work and new build affordable housing from selected offices such as Exeter. Another sector in which we are among the market leaders is insurance repairs and we have just opened a national claims centre which we expect to handle 70,000 claims a year.

As part of our new structure, we have merged the management of our offices in Taunton and Yeovil to create one Somerset Management team which will deliver services from bases in both towns using our local delivery teams. We operate from the Abbey Business Centre, Preston Rd in Yeovil and Blackbrook Business Park in Taunton.



Among our current customers are South Somerset District Council, Quedam Shopping Centre, Diocese of Bath & Wells, Pattern Forme, Knightstone Housing and Taunton Deane.

For further information please contact any of our management team, Steve Bradley, Mike Pinney, Nigel Morris or Sarah Buckley on 01823 446020/01935 424444.

TAUNTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE welcomes

New Members:-

TaxAssist Accountants,
Wellington Road, Taunton

Jeremy Gainsford Associates
Ltd,
Chartered Building
Surveyors, Taunton



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Tel: 08000 978897
Email: info@mbetaunton.co.uk
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For Membership, General Information and Events: call: **01823 353353**
For Business News or Promotion & Event Hosting: Email: office@taunton-chamber.co.uk
For Web Information or Amendments: Email: webmaster@taunton-chamber.co.uk

First Floor, 12F Fore Street, The Old Market Centre, Taunton TA1 3TP

Data Protection

The Chamber has your details held in a database that has been compiled from volunteered information.

If you no longer wish to receive E-communications from the Chamber please email Jane Burden. We will continue to hold your remaining details unless you specifically indicate otherwise in writing.

If you would like a colleague to receive these e-mails direct, please let us have their details and we will add them to our database.