

Issue two 2009

# Connect

[www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/lbp](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/lbp)

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**Basingstoke  
& Business**

Local Business Partnership FREEPHONE HELPLINE 0800 136670

# Changes to Connect

**You may have noticed this issue of connect is somewhat different to previous copies. There are two reasons why we have made these changes:**

- The design has been altered to incorporate the new 'Basingstoke &' borough branding launched by Destination Basingstoke to gain a brand for the area. Any business can use the branding, so if you're interested log onto [www.destinationbasingstoke.co.uk](http://www.destinationbasingstoke.co.uk) or call Felicity Edwards, Managing Director of Destination Basingstoke on 01256 461167.
- After a review of the council's print and graphics services, and the addition of new automated mailing equipment, we have been able to bring the production and distribution of Connect in-house. This change has not only saved in officer time but financially too. These savings have allowed the council to provide a wider range of activities to support the borough's business community.

**Let us know what you think! Do you like the new look Connect? Do you think the articles are useful? What else would you like us to cover in future issues?**

This magazine is for you, so let us know your thoughts to make it even better.

Contact Andrew Dowling, Business Support Officer on **01256 845359** or email **[andrew.dowling@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.dowling@basingstoke.gov.uk)**.

# Local Business Partnership

The Local Business Partnership aims to help businesses and regulators within the Basingstoke and Deane area work closer together.

It is hoped that this will make it easier for businesses to comply with regulation by ensuring they are given clear and useful information and advice through quarterly meetings, email updates and this newsletter.

## Why is there a need for a Local Business Partnership?

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Fire and Rescue and the Police are all committed to helping businesses, rather than catching them out. The Local Business Partnership is about creating a new relationship between businesses and the regulators. We will work with you to provide practical help, advice and information on legislation relevant to your company.

## Aims of the partnership

- Encourage better two-way communication between local businesses and regulators.
- Help to improve mutual understanding of needs.
- Make it easier for businesses to comply with regulations, by helping them understand their responsibilities under the legislation.
- Develop clear standards of service that businesses can expect from the regulators.
- Provide a mechanism to receive early notification of forthcoming new legislation, and therefore, enable an assessment of the likely impact on your business.
- Ensure fair competition for all local businesses, whatever the size of the company.

For further information, or to join the Local Business Partnership, please contact Andrew Dowling, Business Support Officer on **01256 845359** or email [andrew.dowling@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.dowling@basingstoke.gov.uk).



# Sustainable Business Network goes local

**Free help and support for North Hampshire businesses is becoming even more local and relevant this week.**

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sustainable Business Partnership is entering an exciting phase with the appointment of Vicki Westall, the new networks officer, who will run a brand new local network, specifically for North Hampshire businesses.

This new post represents a major step forward for the partnership and means that it will be able to take forward a range of programmes and activities aimed at encouraging and supporting local sustainable business practices across Basingstoke, Hart and Rushmoor.

The new network, which is hosted and supported by Hampshire County Council, has been set up to ensure that all local businesses, specifically small to medium enterprises, have access to all the local support and guidance they need to improve their triple bottom line.

Manager of the Sustainable Business Partnership Stephen Duncan said: “Our partnership has a very simple goal – to motivate and support all businesses within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to adopt sustainable business practices.

“The new local network is an excellent way of ensuring that the information we are giving to businesses in North Hampshire is useful and relevant to local issues. We aim to do this by working closely with support organisations, and engaging directly with businesses in order to bring them together. Through sharing good practice and information, and having the opportunity to learn more about sustainability issues, businesses will be able to appreciate the very strong business case which underpins the approach and identify measures which they could put in place to help improve their bottom line.

The North Hampshire Sustainable Business Network, which is being partly funded by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council’s Eco-Advantage project, acts as a platform for businesses to discuss and learn about sustainability issues and money saving opportunities through a series of free meetings at across the North Hampshire area.

Businesses which already have well established sustainability programmes will be able to share their experiences with others, as well as stay on top of the latest legislation through presentations from experts in the field.



**“With  
sustainability  
increasingly  
on the agenda,  
now really is an  
excellent time  
to get involved.”**

To find out how to join the North Hampshire Sustainable Business Network, and for free advice and guidance, visit the website at [www.the-sbp.co.uk](http://www.the-sbp.co.uk).



**eco / advantage**

# Non domestic rates

Every business in the UK has to pay rates to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to operate in the borough. The council is aware that during the economic downturn, some businesses are struggling. But help is at hand with the government's deferral scheme.

All businesses in the borough should now have received information on the deferral scheme, which has been introduced as a way to lighten the load of non domestic rates for 2009/2010.

Businesses wishing to apply for the deferral or have any queries should contact the council's non domestic rates team on **01256 358555** or email [localtax@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:localtax@basingstoke.gov.uk).

## Small Business Rates Relief

If your non domestic property has a rateable value of less than £15,000, you may be entitled to Small Business Rate Relief. Further information can be found at [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/businessrates](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/businessrates) or by calling **01256 358555**.

## Arrears

If your account has any arrears outstanding for current or previous years you will be contacted about this shortly. It is imperative that you contact a member of the non domestic rates team to discuss and agree a mutually acceptable payment arrangement to settle these debts. Failure to do so will result in further recovery action being taken, which will incur additional costs.

## Revaluation

The Valuation Office Agency is responsible for assessing rateable values and every five years they conduct a revaluation. The next revaluation will take place from 1 April 2010. Information has been sent to newly set up accounts and further information can be found at [www.voa.gov.uk/2010](http://www.voa.gov.uk/2010) or by calling **01256 358555** and requesting a copy of the leaflet.





# Helping Hampshire 'Buy With Confidence'

Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards Service has reported a sharp increase in consumer complaints. But help is at hand with the new and improved 'Buy with confidence' directory.

Trading Standards officers in Hampshire are now dealing with almost 600 complaints a month, which represents a 100% rise on pre-recession figures. A change in the law to further protect consumer rights and customers becoming more willing to take issue with faults during the recession, are the main reasons for the rise.

A large number of these complaints are against companies offering home improvement products and services, offering anything from general repair work to household equipment. It is estimated that across the UK, rogue traders stole £170m from unsuspecting homeowners and they give whole industries a bad reputation with consumers. For Hampshire residents however, help to ensure that they are protected is available and businesses can promote their credentials thanks to the 'Buy with confidence' scheme.

And now the new 'Buy with confidence' directory is available to the public FREE of charge. The latest edition contains

information on over 500 Hampshire organisations from more than 100 different trades and is being distributed across the county.

Copies of the directory are available from libraries and information centres across Hampshire and by calling **08454 04 05 06**. Alternatively, details of 'Buy with confidence' members can be found at **www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk**.

Businesses who are interested in joining the scheme can get more information at the website or by calling the 'Buy with confidence' team on **01962 833620**.



## Employment law changes since 1 October 2009

The new national minimum wage rates came into force from 1 October 2009. Under the new rates, tips and service charges are now prohibited from being counted towards the national minimum wage.

The new rates of pay are:

- Main (adult) rate for workers aged 22 and over - **£5.80** per hour.
- Development rate for workers aged 18 to 21(inclusive) - **£4.83** per hour .
- Special rate for 16 and 17 year olds (above compulsory school leaving age) - **£3.57** per hour.

These rates apply to pay reference periods beginning on or after the date they came into law.

For further information go to [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)



## Easy links to all new legislation

It's now even easier for you to keep track of environmental legislation affecting your business with NetRegs' new quick reference lists of regulations, that have come into force in the past 12 months. To keep up-to-date, visit <http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/default.aspx>

## SEEDA - supporting business

SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) is responsible for managing two national business grant schemes, which aim to increase the economic activity within the South East.

For more information on the Grant for Business Investment and Grant for Research and Development, and other support for businesses, please visit

[www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)

## Compensation rise

The statutory limit on a week's pay, used to calculate redundancy pay and the basic award for unfair dismissal, has risen from **£350** to **£380**. No further increase is planned until February 2011. The maximum statutory redundancy pay is **£11,400**.



## Retirement age

The government has brought forward, by a year, its review of the default retirement age of 65. The default retirement age is likely to be raised, or even abolished, some time during 2011.



## Agency workers directive

The Department of Business Innovation and Skills launched (on date and month) the second consultation on the implementation of the Agency Workers Directive, and has published the summary of responses to the first consultation. Both documents can be found at <http://www.berr.gov.uk/consultations/page53060.html>. This legislation will change the face of temporary work, so please ensure you have your say!

## Real help for businesses

Business Link can provide you and your business with practical help with getting into shape for the year ahead.

There is a range of free support to find finance, raise productivity, or save money by reducing waste and saving energy. Whether you need to increase cash flow, keep your staff on, improve their skills and flexibility, or simply reduce costs, you can get real help to keep your business fighting fit.

For more information, please visit [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

## Managing the impact of swine flu in the workplace

ACAS has published guidance on how to deal with issues arising from swine flu or other pandemic flu in the workplace. Visit [www.acas.org.uk/swineflu](http://www.acas.org.uk/swineflu) to access this guidance online.



# Implementation of EU Agency Workers Directive to be delayed

The EU Agency Workers Directive, that would see temporary workers gain access to the same pay and holiday conditions as permanent staff after 12 weeks' work, will now not come into force in the UK until October 2011.

Although the delay means there is now more time to ensure that the directive is workable in the UK, the government appears to have formed views on some of the more difficult issues.

Implementation will apply to people finding temporary work through a 'temporary work agency', which will be based on the existing concept of an 'employment business' but will exclude workers that are genuinely one of the following:

- self employed
- those working through their own limited liability company
- those employed on 'managed service contracts'.

Umbrella company workers will be included in the Regulations' protection.

The 12 week qualifying period, will be 12 calendar weeks, regardless of working pattern (for example part-time as opposed to full-time). A new qualifying period will begin only if a new assignment with the same employer is substantively different, with a minimum six week break between assignments in the same job before the 12 week clock should start again.

For further information, visit <http://www.berr.gov.uk/>.



# Sustainable Business Awards Go Live

Does your business go the extra mile when it comes to environmental, social and economic performance? Have you been able to turn your waste into profit, to build a team which has taken your company to new heights, or to make a real difference in your local community? If your answer is yes, why not apply to the 2009/10 Sustainable Business Awards?

The prestigious awards are open to any business from any sector. A number of categories ensure that everyone has the chance to shout about their achievements, these include:

- Micro
- Small
- Medium and Large Business
- Environmental Innovation and Technology
- Leadership
- Sustainable Built Environment

Last year's overall winner, Kinglsey Brown of Total Coverage based in Southampton said: "Since winning the award we

haven't looked back. The whole team was delighted that we were rewarded for the things we do which are so important to a business. It's given us a really powerful message now to take back to our customers, and we proudly promote ourselves as winners of the award at every opportunity."

Successful applicants will be those who are able to demonstrate how sustainability has been built into the heart of the business' operation. This means more than being a good 'green' business. Judges will be looking for evidence of how this good practice,

coupled with action on economic and social impacts, has led to real business gain through competitive advantage, reduced costs, strong teams and more satisfied customers.



Application forms can be downloaded from [www.the-sbp.co.uk](http://www.the-sbp.co.uk) along with case studies and guidance notes. The winner will be announced at a gala ceremony and dinner in May 2010.

## Useful Contacts

### Local Business Partnership

Andrew Dowling 01256 845359  
LBP Freephone 0800 136670

### Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

#### Business Relationships and Enterprise

Jamie Freeth 01256 845498

Andrew Dowling 01256 845359

#### Planning (Development Control and Advice)

Giorgio Framalico 01256 845440

#### Building Control

David Sadler 01256 845565

#### Environmental Health

Tom Payne 01256 845545

#### Business Rates

Lesley Relf 01256 845543

#### Community Safety Co-ordinator

PC Paul Green 01256 845316

### Hampshire County Council

#### Trading Standards

Jon Whale 01962 846232

#### Economic Development

John Rees Evans 01962 846628

### Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

Simon Purnell 01256 818881

### Basingstoke Police

Inspector John Halfacre 01256 406466

### Business Support Agencies

#### North Hampshire Chamber of Commerce

John Harrocks 01256 352275

#### Business Link Wessex 08457 354555

#### Federation of Small Business

Regional Office 01425 280080

#### Health and Safety Executive

Workplace Contact Officer 01256 404000

#### ACAS

Mervyn Poore Senior Adviser 01252 360707

Ruth Lambe Senior Adviser 01425 627991

#### Manufacturing Advisory Service – South East

Roger Dyer 0845 6092121

#### Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sustainable Business Partnership

Stephen Duncan 01962 845243

#### Enterprise First

John Mitchell 01252 319272

#### Business Community

LBP Chair Charles Brooks, Pennington's 01256 407100

LBP V.Chair James Clay, London Clancy 01256 462222

## Further Information

Please fill in the form below, deleting as appropriate, and return using the freepost address below and return to:

Andrew Dowling Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, FREEPOST BZ97/2, BASINGSTOKE. RG21 4GA

Do you think that receiving regular issues of Connect provides you with useful information for your business?

Yes  No

Would you like to know more about your Local Business Partnership?

Yes  No

Business Partnership meetings?

Yes  No

Do you have suggestions for future topics for Connect and/or agenda items for the Local Business Partnership meetings?

Any further comments

  

Name:

Company:

Address:

Postcode:

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