

Issue two 2009

Connect

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 borough-wide brand for the area. Any business can use the branding, so if you're interested log onto www.destinationbasingstoke.gov.uk or call Felicity Edwards, Managing Director of Destination Basingstoke on 01256 461167.
- After a review of the councils 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**.

Government contract opportunities for local companies



Small firms from across the South East are being urged to sign up to the government's Supply2.gov.uk website and take advantage of the thousands of public sector contracts available.

Nationally, more than 123,000 companies have already signed up to the website, which provides an up-to-the-minute database of government contracts for small businesses wishing to supply to the public sector.

To date, around 110,000 opportunities have been advertised through the **Supply2.gov.uk** portal – 11% of which were specific to the South East – with an average of over 3,000 new opportunities posted every month.



Suppliers who have signed up to the site receive advice on how best to access government contracts and a free daily email alert notifying them of new opportunities relevant to their business.

A key feature of the service, the 'daily email alert' profile, allows suppliers to match their contract search results exactly with their business requirements.

For further information please visit www.supply2.gov.uk

Apprenticeships, a qualification for our times

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Apprenticeships are now available for everyone, both young people and adults. This means companies, as well as recruiting young people for initial training, may re-skill existing employees for a wider range of work or for promotion to a more senior position.

Most employers use apprenticeships to recruit young people from the age of 16 in technician or craft positions. Finding the right apprentice is now much easier because employers can advertise vacancies online using the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service at www.apprenticeships.org.uk





Advantages of recruiting apprentices

- Attractive to new and existing employees as they confer status and the prospect of future career.
- Enable recruitment of young people if there is a long term offer of qualifications and career progression beyond the immediate job.
- Available to everybody, young people and adults in employment. Only people with a pre-existing degree level qualification, or those who have started a degree programme don't qualify.
- A huge range of frameworks incorporating practical and theoretical knowledge with Key Skills and other training.
- Government funded, most providers do not charge fees.
- Flexible in delivery: from two year 'traditional' models to workshop based formats achieving completion in five months (Level 2).
- Flexible in design: the apprenticeship can be built around a company's requirements with apprentices moving to different work environments to gain an employee who is knowledgeable and experienced in many areas.
- Offer progression to degree level study with appropriate additional preparation.

For further information about apprenticeships log onto:
www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

Alternatively contact Basingstoke College of Technology (BCOT) on 01256 306336 or email monica.lubbock-smith@bcot.ac.uk. The college manages a large apprenticeship programme and is able to provide companies with all the information they need. BCOT also offers employers an apprenticeship recruitment service using its own resources and those of Connexions and the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service.

A Question of Business

On Thursday 29 January, Destination Basingstoke, in Partnership with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council held an event for businesses in and around the borough aimed at finding out what businesses felt about the area.

Over 110 people attended the event and key discussions took place on Basing View, transport and congestion, education and skills, procurement, promoting Basingstoke, the economic downturn and manufacturing.

Businesses were invited to put questions to a panel in advance and further questions were then taken from the floor in a debate on the night.

The panel was made up of the Leader of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

- **CLlr Andrew Finney**, the Chair of the Local Strategic Partnership
- Stephen Sheedy, the Chair of Destination Basingstoke
- **Mike Loftus**, the Deputy County Chairman of the Federation of Small Business
- **Tim Colman**, and Managing Director of Tenon (Basingstoke) and Destination Basingstoke board member
- **Kevin Lee. Mark Jones**, Editor of the Basingstoke Gazette chaired and challenged the panel to ensure responses were received to key issues.

Basing View was identified as the key issue for the borough to resolve in terms of economic development, which the council is already looking at and early plans should be available in the second half of the year.

Feedback from the event was good with 79% of attendees saying the event met their expectations and 93 % wanted a similar event in the future.

Keep an eye out for more business events to come this year by logging onto the council's website at

www.basingstoke.gov.uk/business or contact Andy Dowling, Business Support Officer at

andrew.dowling@basingstoke.gov.uk or call **01256 845359**.



Businesses were asked to rate Basingstoke as a location to 'do' business, and 86% of those who attended said the area was either good or excellent.

Local Business Partnership

The Local Business Partnership is a framework to enable businesses and regulators within the Basingstoke and Deane area to work closer together.

The aim is to make it easier for the business community to comply with regulations, by ensuring they are given clear information and good user-friendly advice through quarterly meetings, email updates and the Connect Newsletter.

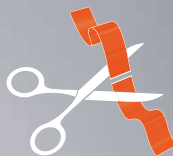
Why is there a need for a Local Business Partnership?

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.

**We want to work
with you to make
regulations work
without the red tape.**



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**.

Opportunities with Train-to-Gain

Train to Gain is a national service, funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), that helps businesses improve productivity and competitiveness by ensuring their staff have the right skills to do the best job.

In the South East England, Train-to-Gain is already working with 30,000 organisations in both the private and public sector, from large organisations to small businesses, the self-employed and volunteers – and in all kinds of industries.

Impartial advice on skills

At no cost or obligation to you, independent, impartial and comprehensive advice from a qualified skills broker can help you:

- Identify your organisation's training needs, source the best training solutions, and identify available funding.
- If you already know your training needs, help you to find the right courses and training providers.
- Direct you to a range of government-funded business support services.

Your skills broker can ensure your business has all the skills needed to succeed. They can provide you with:

- Recommendations on the skills training solutions most suited to the business, and help with selection of the most suitable training providers.

To find out more, contact Alison Claire on **07595 106318** (for businesses with less than 1000 staff), or Steve Reynolds on **07894 608540**.

For more general information call **0845 751 2288**, email **info@traintogainse.co.uk** or visit the Train-to-Gain website at **www.traintogain.gov.uk**.

Real help for businesses on offer

Businesses are being urged to take advantage of a range of business support packages on offer to help them through the economic downturn as part of a public information campaign



The campaign, which will feature print, radio and online adverts has been launched to promote the new 'Real Help for Businesses Now' guide on the Business Link website - bringing together support from across government in one easy-to-access place.

Businesses can find out how to:

- Access business loans and long term finance help.
- Manage cashflow.
- Get a business 'health check'.
- Reduce waste and save money.
- Get time to pay tax bills.
- Get funding to support training, improve staff skills, recruitment and advice on managing or avoiding redundancy.
- Deal with staff restructures and other major business changes.

For more information and to find out about the support available go to <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp> or call **0845 600 9 006**.



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 Framallico 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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Designed and produced by Graphics

