

Wealden Business Breakfast

Myths and Misunderstandings – Valli Morison, Rix & Kay

Where: The Star, High Street, Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5TA

When: Tuesday 21st June 2011 from 7.30am-10.30am

Cost: £10.00 per head (including Full English Breakfast)



Many employers go along with general beliefs regarding employment law because they believe what they are doing is correct and it protects them from Employment Tribunal claims. However, this is not always the case.

This seminar will go through some of those myths and misunderstandings and will clarify exactly what the law states. Examples being: you can dismiss someone with no comeback during a probationary period, you have to have a written contract of employment, you have to consult for 30 days when dealing with redundancies, you cannot ask about child care arrangements during an interview, etc.

Networking Opportunity

During the breakfast there will be an opportunity to introduce yourself to the other delegates by taking 30 seconds to describe your business. At the end there will be the usual opportunity for informal networking.

Booking

If you would like to attend please register your interest by email to: E_regeneration@wealden.gov.uk
T. 01892 602886 and pay £10 cash on the day.



The venue for the Business Breakfast, The Star at Alfriston.

EDEAL merges with EDCC to form one Chamber of Commerce

Businesses in Wealden are set to benefit from the latest merger of complimentary services and resources following an agreement to bring Eastbourne & District Enterprise Agency Ltd (EDEAL) under the control of Eastbourne & District Chamber of Commerce.

The launch of the merger took place on the 7th April, and was attended by Ed Davey, Government Minister for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS). Both organisations will remain separate with all staff remaining employed by their individual organisations and will shortly begin working together from the Chamber's

Hyde Gardens, Eastbourne offices.

Ray Mason, who is to become Chief Executive of both organisations, commented "We are determined to build on past successes but we recognise the need for a membership organisation such as the Chamber of Commerce to evolve and adapt if it is to meet the needs of the 21st Century, let alone the challenges set by the current economic period". President, Christina Ewbank, stressed that "Our combined organisation will have greater resources – finances and people – to give an even stronger voice for businesses throughout

Eastbourne and Wealden".

The business support that EDEAL provides to businesses in Wealden will continue as part of a three year Service Level Agreement between Wealden District Council and EDEAL. We envisage that as a result of the merger there will be an opportunity for our businesses to access a wider range of support.



For more information contact:
T. 01323 489800 or
W. www.edeal.org.uk

Rural Development Programme for England – project case studies

The RDPE funding programme has awarded a total of £389,000 to 28 projects across rural Wealden since it began in 2009.

Small businesses based in Hailsham, Heathfield and all the rural parishes of Wealden, are eligible to 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. The funding programme will continue until 2013. Three projects that have been awarded money tell us how the RDPE funding has made a difference to their businesses.

Case Study: Forest Garden Shovelstrode

Forest Garden Shovelstrode, near Forest Row was awarded £35,000 of RDPE funding towards the setting up for an eco tourism project which created the Forest Garden Shovelstrode – a place for people to learn traditional woodland crafts. Accommodation is also provided in one of the two yurts set within the ancient woodland in Ashurstwood in the High Weald.

Owners Charles Hooper and Lisa Aitken explained the difference that the funding has made to this eco tourism project.

“The funding allowed us to complete essential renovations to an old stable block to form a kitchen and farm shop, shower and disabled WC facilities. A new road access and car parking area were created. The grant also helped with the funding of a storage barn and some basic traditional woodworking equipment”.

The harsh winter weather meant building works suffered plenty of delays, but fortunately a short break between snowfalls enabled owners Charles Hooper and Lisa Aitken to plant the first 20 trees of the Forest Garden.

Forest Garden Shovelstrode is now open and ready to start running courses in vegetable gardening, bee-keeping, green wood working, basketry, hurdle making and flint knapping and the yurts are also ready for their first guests.

**To get more information or book a course or yurt please visit W. www.forestgarden.info
T. 07957 621672**



Case Study: About the Girl



New business start up, ‘About The Girl’, has been going from strength to strength since being awarded £11,739 of RPDE funding to assist with buying the necessary equipment to start a new business in Chelwood Gate, importing, making and marketing attractive and affordable mastectomy lingerie. The company was founded by

Amy Bath in 2009 and specialises in beautiful post surgery lingerie and swimwear for women who have had breast cancer.

Amy is very pleased with how the business has developed; “Originally set up as an internet retail site, the funding has allowed us to develop the manufacturing side of the business through the purchase of an industrial sewing machine and equipment. As well as developing a sound marketing plan, we have recently been able to employ two part-time members of staff. We are now able to develop new products and our own ranges and with our new showroom about to open we are at the start of an exciting new phase of the business.”

The idea for the business grew out of Amy’s own frustration at not being able to find fashionable, sexy, feminine lingerie after her own cancer treatment.

“It was very important for me to feel confident and attractive after my surgery and I was determined to be able to dress as I always had – in pretty and delicate French underwear. I soon realised that there is very little choice on the market and became resolute to fill that gap with lingerie that makes women who have had cancer feel like the beautiful and courageous women they are.”



**W. www.aboutthegirl.co.uk
T. 01444 417791**

Case Study: Eco-Lodge Tree Houses 'Fair Oak Farm' in Mayfield

RDPE funding was awarded to Fair Oak Farm to add two eco-lodge tree houses to the site, using sustainable materials to construct bathroom and kitchen facilities around a studio space for living and sleeping.



Ian & Penny Ledger bought 'Fair Oak Farm' in 2006, and have seen year-on-year increases in demand for their luxury self-catering accommodation and are often fully booked at least six months in advance.

"Opting to do our own marketing and manage bookings ourselves was one of the best decisions we made early on. You need to dedicate the time and effort but I'm convinced it's largely why we have such great, friendly and appreciative customers" says Ian.

Now, after two years of planning and funding arrangements, their holiday accommodation is being extended to include two new luxury eco-lodge tree houses which will be available to book for self-catering breaks from Autumn 2011. Nestled in mature trees, the eco-lodges will have complete privacy with uninterrupted valley views of the stunning Wealden countryside. Each lodge is self-contained with its own wet room and kitchen, and can sleep two people.

"It's fantastic to have support from those that recognise the economic and ecological benefits a project like this has for our rural community, particularly from local residents and other small businesses. However, the planning and funding processes should not be taken lightly and satisfying their requirements may end up costing you a lot of time and money, so careful planning at an early stage is essential." says owner Ian Ledger. "We have already been approached by other land owners and are really excited about developing partnerships to expand our proven model."

W. www.fairoakfarm.co.uk T. 01435 884122.

If you would like more information about RDPE funding, please get in touch with the WARR Partnership

E. info@warrpartnership.org.uk

T. 01424 787400

W. www.warrpartnership.org.uk



Free heritage visits for landowners

If you own more than one acre of land in the High Weald, including woodland, you are eligible for a free visit from the High Weald's Cultural Heritage Adviser. The visit will give you the chance to:

- explore maps showing the historical development of your property
- learn more about its special landscape, archaeology & wildlife features
- understand its contribution to the beauty of the High Weald
- find out who can help you with land management.

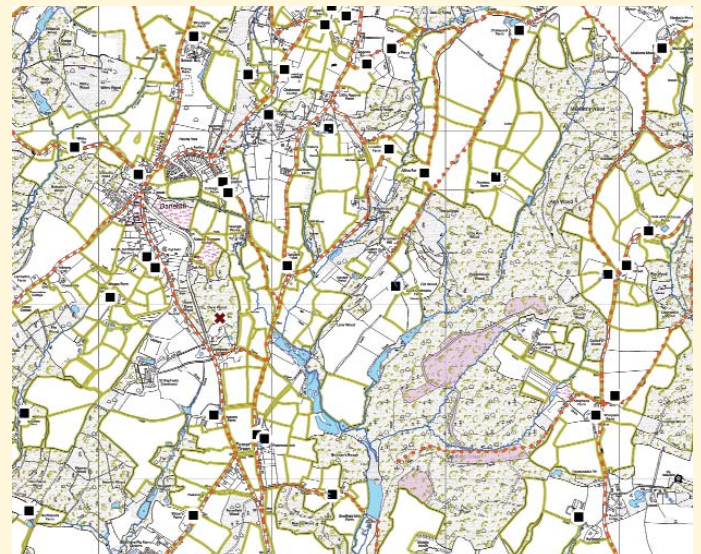
Following the visit you will receive digital historical maps of your property and specialists' contact details.

Contact Matt Pitts, Cultural Heritage Adviser

T. 01580 879500 E. m.pitts@highweald.org

M. 07879 117541

W. www.highweald.org/propertymanagement



A map illustrating some of the High Weald's many historic features: medieval field boundaries, sunken routeways, farmsteads, ancient woodland, heathland, wildflower grasslands and numerous small ponds created by industrial activity.

Countryside 2011 – showcase for rural activities, events and attractions

Be part of a free, high-profile promotion about what's on in the South East's countryside. The Countryside 2011 event directory is open to submissions about activities, events and attractions in a two week super-showcase. Meet the criteria set for the campaign? Please contribute your event or activity to the programme.

Find out more information at

W. www.countryside2011.org.uk



‘Common Sense – Common Safety’

Recommendations from Lord Young’s report on improving health and safety are already underway

“The aim is to free businesses from unnecessary bureaucratic burdens and the fear of having to pay out unjustified damages claims and legal fees. Above all it means applying common sense not just to compensation but to everyday decisions once again.”

Lord Young (October 2010)

Since 1974 The Health and Safety at Work Act has reduced our work related non-fatal accidents to the lowest and our fatal accidents to the second lowest in Europe.

Lord Young believes the Act has provided an effective framework and has made no recommendations to change the rules applied to hazardous occupations. However, he addresses the bureaucracy around health and safety, the fear surrounding the compensation culture and the role that health and safety professionals, the insurance industry, claims management companies and lawyers play.

Of particular concern is that small businesses, unsure of how to comply, often pay for ‘expert’ health and safety consultants. The report highlights the role that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities have in promoting a commonsense approach and providing clear and consistent advice. This is already a key role for Wealden’s Officers.

Judith Hackitt, the HSE Chair, said:

“Lord Young’s report is an important milestone on the road to recovery for the reputation of real health and safety. HSE welcomes it and will be actively pursuing those recommendations within our remit.”

Low hazard workplaces

Recommendation

Simplify the risk assessment procedure for low hazard workplaces such as offices, classrooms and shops. The HSE should create simpler interactive risk assessments for low-hazard workplaces and make them available on its website.

Action taken

HSE has now produced a 20-minute online risk assessment for offices with other web tools for similarly low-risk workplaces to follow www.hse.gov.uk/office (They already have ‘non-interactive’ example risk assessments for many businesses available.)

Raising standards

Recommendation

All health and safety consultants should be qualified and accredited to professional bodies and listed on a recognised web-based directory.

Action taken

A new Occupational Safety Consultants Register went live in January 2011 www.hse.gov.uk/oshcr/index.htm

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995

Recommendation

Amend the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, by extending to seven days, the period off work before an injury or accident needs to be reported.



Scalding due to hot water spill in a restaurant

Action taken

Consultation is currently underway. Contact Ron Griffiths on 0151 951 3599 or

- View the consultative document
- Respond to the consultation using the online questionnaire or download a form to complete.

Food safety and health and safety inspections

Recommendation

Combine food safety and health and safety inspectors in local authorities.

Action taken

Wealden Officers already combine both food safety and health and safety inspections wherever appropriate.

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

Recommendation

Make local authorities participate in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. This will mean that businesses serving or selling food to the public will be given a rating and results will be published online.

Action taken

From April 2011, Wealden has joined the Food Standards Agency National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, where the result of each inspection is classified between 0 and 5 and the public can check the ratings of any restaurant or food retailer. Businesses will have window stickers and certificates to display.



Changes to Local, Regional and National Tourism organisations

Wealden district level

Enjoy Sussex 2012 campaign



Enjoy Sussex is the tourism marketing partnership between Lewes, Horsham, Mid Sussex and Wealden District Councils. The four local authorities have been successfully working together since 2004.

Each year the partnership produces an Enjoy Sussex Visitor Guide. The 2011 guide has been very well received and we will shortly be inviting tourism businesses to join up to the 2012 campaign, which will be ensuring that the area (the districts of Horsham, Lewes, Mid Sussex and Wealden) is positioned well to maximise from the benefits of the Olympic events being so close to our beautiful destination.

W. www.enjoysussex.info

Sussex level

Changes to Visit Sussex

Wealden District Council has supported The Sussex Tourism Partnership (STP) since its inception in 2006. During March 2011 it was announced that the public/private partnership would be disbanded and replaced by Visit Sussex Trading Ltd, a new private sector led and self-funding membership organisation headed up by Nick Head of the Ambassador Hotel, Brighton.

Wealden District Council, like all public sector organisations, is currently scrutinising its budgets and support to external organisations. As such, we are waiting to decide if we will be investing any more money into the new Visit Sussex Trading Ltd company until a business plan is available.

Advertising for Enjoy Sussex members on the Visit Sussex website

We have previously held an agreement with the Visit Sussex group that our Enjoy Sussex campaign advertisers would be allowed a complimentary free entry on the Visit Sussex website. If you find that your business is no longer listed on the website, please submit your enquiry to Visit Sussex Trading Ltd via the Visit Sussex website using the 'contact us' form.

W. www.visitsussex.org

Regional level

Tourism South East (TSE)



There have been many changes at Tourism South East over recent months with 50% of the workforce being made redundant following the massive cut in core

funding that was once provided by the regional development agency – SEEDA.

Wealden District Council is an active member of TSE and for 2011/12 will be working in partnership with TSE to deliver elements of Wealden's Tourism Strategy. The Council will also be exploring the 2012 marketing opportunities being promoted by TSE to ensure we realise our Corporate Plan ambitions for tourism.

W. www.tourismsoutheast.com

National level

VisitEngland



VisitEngland is the national tourist board for England, responsible for marketing England to domestic and established overseas markets and for improving England's tourism product.

Tourism Industry Website – www.visitengland.org

In December 2010, VisitEngland launched its new business facing website: www.visitengland.org designed specifically to keep England's tourism industry up-to-date with England's national strategy, research and marketing opportunities.

Wealden District Council is aware that VisitEngland will be producing the 2011 Action Plans for the Strategic Framework for Tourism in England 2010-2020 in June. Marketing campaigns will be announced shortly, including the promotion of a new entry level assessment scheme to be administered at a destination level. The Enjoy Sussex Partnership is looking at possibly widening its assessed only policy to ensure a wider range of visitor accommodation can be supported by the local authorities involved.

Visitor websites

EnjoyEngland – www.enjoyengland.com

for Visitors looking to stay and enjoy England



Visit Britain – www.visitbritain.com

VisitBritain is responsible for marketing Britain worldwide.



All Wealden based Enjoy Sussex advertisers and website interim advertisers have had their details uploaded onto EnglandNet – the national tourism industry database which ensures data exchange and interaction between local destination websites and national/regional websites.

Wealden's Farmers' Markets

There are a number of farmers' markets across Wealden in which farmers, growers or producers are present in person to sell their own produce, direct to the public. All products sold are either grown, reared, caught, brewed, pickled, baked, smoked or processed by the stallholder.



This way we can be sure that everything on offer is truly local and when you spend money at the market, it's going right back into the local economy.

Four towns in Wealden District hold monthly farmers' markets which are listed below.

CROWBOROUGH FARMERS' MARKET

Fourth Saturday of every month
Pine Grove Car Park from 9am - 1pm
T. Sharon Hoggins on 01892 664064
E. sharonhoggins@hotmail.co.uk

HAILSHAM FARMERS' MARKET

Second Saturday of every month
Hailsham Cattle Market from 9am - 12.30pm
T. Janet Dann on 01323 833359
E. janet@highlea.demon.co.uk
W. www.hailshamfarmersmarket.co.uk

HEATHFIELD FARMERS' MARKET

Third Saturday of every month
Co-op Car Park from 9am - 12.30pm
T. Colin Williams on 01435 862798
E. heathfieldmarket@btopenworld.com

UCKFIELD FARMERS' MARKET

First Saturday of every month
Luxford Car Park from 9am - 1pm
T. Sharon Hoggins on 01892 664064
E. sharonhoggins@hotmail.co.uk

Free parking is available at all of the markets.

Farmers' or village markets also take place in various Wealden villages.

For more details go to:

W. www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Business_and_Regeneration/Tourism_Farmers_Markets.aspx



60 second interview

Janet Dann, Market Organiser at Hailsham's Market explains why farmers' markets are important.

Questions

1. How long have you been the Hailsham Farmers' Market Co-ordinator?

I have been the Organiser since we started in 1998, so nearly 13 years.

2. What is the most unusual local produce that a stall holder has sold?

I think the most unusual product that we promote is organic unpasteurised milk from P G Hook & Son of Longleys Farm, Hailsham. This is very popular not only at the Hailsham Farmers' Market but across the country as they also market it by mail order.

3. Why do people prefer to visit your Farmers' Market instead of going to the supermarket?

Because not only is produce such as cakes, bread, fruit and vegetables fresher and has travelled shorter distances, visitors can also talk to the producer and find out about animal welfare, recipes and baking methods regarding food, together with helpful tips and hints from our plant producers.

4. Are there any special requirements for local producers that want to sell their goods at the farmers' market?

There are no special requirements as such, but we do give preference to local producers to promote their goods.

5. What do you enjoy about being involved with the Farmers' Market?

I guess the best thing about being involved in the Hailsham Farmers' Market is promoting local, wholesome products to the general public. We also have an information stand where I display places of local interest as well as a wide range of recipes and tourist brochures.

6. Do you work together with the other farmers' markets across Wealden?

Yes, we work closely with Colin Williams who organises Heathfield and Sharon Hoggins who oversees Crowborough and Uckfield Farmers' Markets and meet quite regularly with the Economic Development & Tourism Team at Wealden District Council who are an invaluable help with advice on promotion, presentation and sourcing extra money.



South Downs – Celebration for Britain’s new National Park

Creation of the fourth largest National Park in England and Wales – the South Downs National Park Authority went live on 1st April 2011 when it took up its statutory responsibility for leading and planning the future of the UK’s newest National Park.

Stretching over 100 miles from Winchester in the west to Eastbourne in the east, the South Downs National Park encompasses large tracts of ancient woodlands, open heathland and the rolling downlands that culminate in the iconic chalky white cliffs at Beachy Head.

Background

The shadow South Downs National Park Authority began work on 1st April 2010. Unlike other National Parks the South Downs includes several major towns and has a population of over 100,000 people. It will be one of the largest planning authorities in the country dealing with over 4,000 applications a year.

It will be delivering most of this service through the existing local authorities allowing the Authority to focus on key planning decisions that impact on the future of the park.

National Park purposes

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Park’s special qualities by the public.

National Park duty

In carrying out its role, the Authority has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the communities living within the National Park.

The Authority is funded by central Government and run by a Board of Members which is comprised of:

7 National Members appointed by the Secretary of State, through an open recruitment process.

6 Parish council representatives nominated by the Parish Councils in the Park area.

14 Local Authority nominees drawn from the 15 Local Authorities covering the Park area with Adur and Worthing opting to share a place.



For more information:
W. www.southdowns.gov.uk

Government launches new Tourism Strategy

An action plan to help the British tourism industry was unveiled by the Tourism Minister, John Penrose MP. The Minister described it as a simple blueprint of practical ideas and positive steps we can take to achieve growth and which shows what can be done when government departments, businesses and agencies work together towards a common goal.

W. www.tourismsoutheast.com

Tourism Training Available with Tourism South East

Tourism South East has funding available to offer businesses support and training at heavily subsidised rates.

Sussex Training Courses - Summer 2011

- Welcome to the South Downs – one day course
- Lead, Motivate & Succeed – one day course
- Welcome All – one day course

**TOURISM
SOUTH EAST**

W. www.tourismsoutheast.com

T. 023 8062 5533

Seven Sisters Country Park wins environmental award

SEVEN Sisters Country Park has won its third award in a row for the outstanding environmental management of the site. Visitors’ services staff at the park were given a Green Tourism Business Scheme Gold Award. Staff and volunteers achieved a fantastic 86 per cent score across a wide range of measures for exemplary good practice, noted specifically for education, interpretation, information, habitat management, partnership working and promotion of non-car use.

Now that the South Downs National Park Authority is in full operation, the Country Park has reverted back to East Sussex County Council control.

A South Downs Joint Committee (SDJC) spokesperson said. “This award sets a great challenge for the County Council to persevere with this excellent scheme and continue the fine work being handed on by the SDJC.”



W. www.sevensisters.org.uk

WORKPLACE PENSION REFORMS

Government estimates suggest that around seven million people are not saving enough to give them the retirement income they want or expect. This they see as a real concern demographically speaking. From 2012, changes to pensions law will affect all employers with at least one worker in the UK.

The changes in a nutshell

Employers will need to:

- Automatically enrol certain workers into either the National Employment Savings Trust Scheme (NEST) or an alternative 'qualifying' workplace pension and to make minimum contributions into it.
- Make contributions on their workers' behalf
- Register with The Pensions Regulator
- Provide workers with certain information about the changes and how they will affect them.

When are the changes happening?

The changes are planned to start from 2012. The plan is to stage in automatic enrolment over a period of time, starting with large employers, medium and then small.

To help employers adjust gradually, the plan is to phase in the employer contribution levels – starting at 1% and then moving to 2% and finally 3%. The jobholders' contributions will also be phased in over the same period.

Who will need to be automatically enrolled?

All jobholders working in Great Britain aged at least 22 years old who have not yet reached State Pension age and are earning more than £7,475* a year (the income tax threshold at 2011) will need to be automatically enrolled into either an employer's workplace pension or NEST. *2012 figure to be confirmed.

Who is responsible for implementing the workplace pension reforms:

- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is responsible for the policy and legislation www.dwp.gov.uk

Article contributed from www.platinum-finance.co.uk T. 01903 875400

For more information visit
W. www.businesslink.gov.uk



New member joins the Team

The Economic Development and Tourism Team welcomes Sandra Bultitude as the Economic Development & Tourism Assistant.

Having worked for the Safer Wealden Partnership for a number of years, Sandra is experienced in dealing with concerns from local residents and businesses. Sandra will be joining the team as our Economic Development & Tourism Assistant taking on a number of duties and will work daily with local businesses offering them support and assistance.

T. 01892 602886 E. sandra.bultitude@wealden.gov.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: businesshelp@wealden.gov.uk

Economic Development & Tourism

Tel: 01892 602884/6/7
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 600 9006

EDEAL
0844 2640390

Sussex Enterprise
0845 678 8 867

Wealden Business Focus is published 3 times a year. If you would like to feature an article or raise a particular business issue for discussion, please submit details by **Friday 9th September 2011**. 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.

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