

IN BUSINESS



Check our website for information: www.sevenoakschamber.com E-mail: info@sevenoakschamber.com Tel: 01732 455188

“Credit Crunch/Recession”

Unfortunately, contrary to some reports, every day more and more businesses are closing which results in more unemployment in the area. Sadly chocolate lovers have now lost Thornton's which closed on Friday 28th August. Red Yellow & Blue, London Road are closing their shop and will be operating from their new website from the end of September. Visit www.thebabieswardrobe.co.uk. There has been no further news of a Job Centre being reopened in the town and we at the Chamber strongly feel that people need this service at this time. Who can afford the trip down to Tunbridge Wells to the Job Centre if they are unemployed and every penny counts? There have been reports of 300 or more applicants applying for one new position when they do arise. We can only hope that reports which say we are coming out of the worst recession since the 1930's are true and that we can all look forward to slowly getting things back to some kind of normalcy but we think that it will take a while until we see the economy as strong as it has been in the past years. We must all stick together and help one another as much as we can, the smallest gesture can mean a life line to someone who really can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Be it in the form of advice or even sparing half an hour of your time to give moral support, these are the things that help in these difficult times.

Job Club. The Sevenoaks Town Council is launching a job club to help with the unemployment situation in Sevenoaks. The first meeting will be held on Monday 5th October from 10am at the Council offices in Bradbourne Vale Road. Contact the Sevenoaks Town Council for more information: 01732 459953.

Sevenoaks Stag Theatre

The Stag has gone from strength to strength under the new management and has released a 'What's on' Guide with an excellent programme for September to December. The programme will please every palate as they are offering varied entertainment ranging from Stand Up Comedy to Ballet with, of course, the Pantomime at the end of the year which will be Dick Whittington. We wish the Stag and Chief Executive, Linda Larter continued success and prosperity.

The Chamber attends the Stag Community Arts Centre – Shadow Planning & Review Group meetings to discuss strategy for the long term marketing for the Stag. The marketing is being handled by Gabrielle Stapleton.

LATEST NEWS - Sevenoaks Town Council agree to sign the 25 year lease agreement. Under new rules the Stag's rent will be reviewed every five years by the Sevenoaks District Council.

The Best of Sevenoaks Business Show

It was with much regret that the Business show had to be cancelled due to actual commitment from Sevenoaks' businesses and the late withdrawal of key sponsors which meant that the event was no longer financially viable. We were very disappointed at this outcome but perhaps in the current economic climate it was not the right time for this venture.

Business Rates/Rentals

There has been much debate about the Business Rates in the press recently especially in the light of the fact that nearly a dozen shops have closed in the town and there are fears even more small businesses could follow. Opinion states that Rentals are ridiculously high followed by Business Rates which are to be revalued and based on the rentable value of properties – using figures dating back to April, 2008 before the recession hit. As the system stands at present all monies collected in business rates are collected by the district council and then passed onto central Government. Just over 21% of what was paid in comes back to the district. Cllr Peter Fleming has called for a change to the system, whereby business rates are set, collected and kept locally. Traders in the town have complained they have to pay for rubbish collection and ask what they are actually getting for their rates. The District Council are trying to provide real help to business including the opportunity to defer tax and business rate payments, help for small businesses to potentially halve their rates bill and free business health checks. To present a balanced view the SDC have also experienced a very difficult time trying to balance their books but still maintain the high level of service to the community. The recession has hit us all and the view that it has somehow passed over Sevenoaks is totally unfounded as we can all testify.

Open Evenings & Networking Events



The Free Coffee Mornings/Network Events at the Lodge Coffee Bar at the Stag have proved very popular with chamber members and businesses around the town on the 1st WEDNESDAY of each month. The Open Evening/Networking events on the 3rd THURSDAY of each month have been postponed during the summer months due to many members away on their vacations but resumed on 10th September when the event was hosted by the Sevenoaks District Council at their Argyle Road Offices. The evening was very well attended and was opened by Cllr Lankester, Chairman of the Council with Dr. Pav Ramewal giving a short talk on the difficulties facing the District Council in these times and their successes in the past five years. The Chamber speaker for the event was David Tudor, Barclays Bank who spoke on the bank's role in helping businesses through the recession. The Chamber is very appreciative of the time and effort that our hosts put in for the Open Evenings which help bring local businesses together.

WHY NOT BRING A COLLEAGUE ALONG AND INTRODUCE A NEW MEMBER: EARN £10.00 DISCOUNT

Chamber of Commerce 'Live at the Plaza'

The Chamber of Commerce is planning a social evening at the Stag, Plaza Suite on Friday 6th November. This event, organised by the Showbusiness Company Limited is open to all not just Chamber Members. The evening will include a super hot buffet, vocalist Shane Hampsheir and hilarious Comedy Entertainer Lloyd Hollett. So why not put a party together and bring your partner or colleagues and join us for this night of entertainment. The cost is only £28.50. Contact the office for more details.

Fairtrade in Sevenoaks

For more information about Fairtrade, please contact: Gwyneth Brearley at Gwyneth.Brearley@ukgateway.net or phone: 01732 762172.

Forum on the Chamber website

The Chamber has an interactive Forum on our website where you can have your say on any issues which concern you. You may also introduce your business or display any special offers you wish to advertise.

Just log onto: www.sevenoakschamber.com/forum to add an entry. The entry can be edited by you at any time to keep it topical. There is also a popular Events Calendar for the Sevenoaks area at www.7oaks.info/calendar where you can click the link to 'Add Your Own Event. Most of the events you see there are entered by the Tourist information Centre in Sevenoaks, who are now using the system to 'feed' event details through to locally published magazines.

News in Brief

The Sevenoaks District Council have released a survey which reveals satisfaction with the District. According to the results of a new opinion poll, Sevenoaks District residents are amongst the most satisfied people in Kent when it comes to their local area, local public services and feeling safe.

Geoff Newman, MD of Acorn Recruitment Consultancy, which has its head office in Sevenoaks, is celebrating having been named Kent Director of the Month (August) by the Institute of Directors (IoD). Congratulations Geoff.

Speed Networking Kent is attracting a wide range of businesses and professionals across the county. There are speed networking meetings being held across Kent & Surrey in September in Reigate, Tunbridge Wells, Medway, Guildford, Ashford & Sevenoaks. For more information: www.speednetworkingkent.co.uk.

Clarkson Wright & Jakes LLP sponsored a fun packed day at the London Borough of Bromley's Early Years Music Conference which was held at the Bromley Youth Music Trust on 17th June.

Paydens Chemist in London Road is installing metals shutters in its windows after fragrance and cosmetics were stolen when thieves broke in with a hammer.

FOR MEMBERS DETAILS DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUR DIRECTORY ON THE WEBSITE.

Discounts for Chamber Members

Did you know, some of our Chamber Members offer discounts to fellow Members??? Please mention that you are a Chamber Member when using any of our Member's many and varied services or look at our 'Benefits' section on our home page www.sevenoakschamber.com.

TO JOIN THE CHAMBER IT COSTS FROM JUST £8.33P PER MONTH!

Road works at the Bat & Ball

The road works at the Bat & Ball junction have been completed, to the relief of commuters and further disruption was feared with the closure of the main A25 along Seal Road but, fortunately, fears were unfounded and traffic moved smoothly around the town with no major disruptions.

Sevenoaks Chronicle

If you have a story concerning Sevenoaks, Chronicle reporters Stuart Woledge, Harriet Cooper or Amy Andrews will be at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre on Wednesdays from 2pm to 4pm, the Lodge Cafe, The Stag Theatre, Thursdays from 11am to 1pm and Tesco, Riverhead Thursdays between 6pm and 8pm. Email: reporters@sevenoakschronicle.co.uk. Or phone 01732 228000. The reporting team is now based on the ground floor at 54 High Street, giving them a greater opportunity to meet up with the public.

New Bus Service to Gatwick Airport

There is a new limited stop bus service connecting Sevenoaks, Maidstone & the Medway Towns to Gatwick Airport. It is currently running mostly empty due to lack of publicity. It runs every 2 hours round the clock every day of the year. In Sevenoaks it stops outside the train station (towards Gatwick Airport) and opposite the train station (towards Chatham). Full details are available from Sevenoaks Tourist Office. You can also book tickets in advance on the website: www.airportbycoachmedway.co.uk.

Information on our Web Page

Perhaps you are not aware that on our Web Page under 'Links' there are many informative sites to log onto from CAB to Eurostar to Inside No. 10! The other local Chambers of Commerce are also listed.

Traffic Report on the website

We have a new link on our Website – a Road Traffic Report. Just log onto our website, go to LINKS and get up-to-date traffic information.

News & Events around Sevenoaks

Looking for the latest news and what's on around the Sevenoaks town and district? Wanting to publicise your business event or announce a press release? Click on www.7oaks.info for its interactive community calendar and add your event / news item online.

Cash Machines - Alert

In recent months a cash card reading device has been used to target unsuspecting customers in Riverhead and the High Street branches of Barclays Bank. A few weeks' later CCTV cameras recorded a man removing a suspicious device from a HSBC cash machine, also on the High Street. In the case of Barclays Bank the card insert had been tampered with and a camera was discovered above the cash point by two men when one of their cards became stuck. The device is thought to be used to record people's pin numbers. Kent Police has warned the public to be extra vigilant when using these machines. Sgt Jon Turtle said: "Recently we have had a number of suspicious devices or suspicious incidents reported around banks in both Tonbridge & Sevenoaks."

Please report any suspicious devices to the police and be on your guard against being distracted when using these machines.

Cars broken into at Station's main car park

We would also like to mention that two cars were broken into with thefts of cash and a satellite navigation and a number plate taken whilst parked at the Sevenoaks station's main car park on Wednesday 9th September. If you have any information about this incident, please call 0800 405040 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 55111.

Kent Trading Standards

Kent Trading Standards are warning people to be wary of many scams that are taking place. For any advice please call Consumer Direct 08454 04 05 06 or Contact Trading Standards, Advice & Education, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8XU or log onto the website, www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent.

Please do not forget that the main function of the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce

Is being here for our Members and the business community. If you have any queries or issues, please feel free to pop in to discuss this or contact the office via email or telephone and we will do everything in our power to help and offer advice wherever possible.

Europages

EUROPAGES is a working tool for businesses with an international vocation, helping them to buy better and sell more in Europe.

www.europages.com gives access to the full EUROPAGES database: 600,000 businesses in 36 European countries

Recycling

Did you know you can 'recycle' your old bicycles at: www.freecycle.org.

Sevenoaks District has increased its recycling levels from 10% to 33% in the last 10 years.

Conservation Council

The website for the Conservation Council is: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/conservation.

Rogue Traders

If you want any advice about scams, contact Consumer Direct on 08454 040506 or if you want to simply report a scam visit <https://secure.consumerdirect.gov.uk/reportascam.aspx>.

Have you looked at the Chamber web site recently?

See the Links – on line business information “ONE SOURCE”

Citizen's Advice Bureau

For any advice on consumer issues, go to the Citizen Advice website, www.adviceguide.org.uk or contact Sevenoaks CAB on 01732 454443, email: info@sevenoakscab.org.uk.

Business to Business Brochure

It's not too late to let us have your A5 flyer. We are constantly sending out the brochure to new businesses and new Members. Promote your business and include your information in the “*Business to Business*” pack. The Chamber has been overwhelmed with the response to our request for new flyers and the membership pack is now more fully representative of all the members and the services they can offer.

Sevenoaks Summer Festival

The Sevenoaks Summer Festival was highly successful with fantastic turn-outs at the events and continues to prove more and more popular with the local community each year. Hopefully, this event will continue and entertain the district for many, many years to come.

Waitrose

Waitrose, plan to redevelop their store in Sevenoaks and are holding an exhibition in Room 1 at the Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, Buckhurst Lane, TW13 1LW on Friday 25th September 10am – 7pm and Saturday 26th September from 10am – 1pm. You can leave your feedback and comment on the proposals and representatives from Waitrose will be available to answer any questions.

Humour Corner

An economist is an expert who will know tomorrow why the thing he predicted yesterday did not happen today.

The income tax expert was visiting the school to talk about taxes. “I’m going to tell you now about “indirect” taxes. Can anybody tell me what an indirect tax is?”

“A dog license,” said Smart Josh.

“And why is that?” asked the expert.

“The dog doesn’t pay it,” replied Josh.

A store manager overheard one of his salesmen talking to a customer.

“No sir,” said the salesman. “We haven’t had any for awhile and it doesn’t look like we’ll be getting any soon.”

The manager was horrified and yelled after the departing customer, “Come back next week. We’re sure to have whatever it is you need.”

Irate, he turned to his salesman, “Never tell a customer we’re out of anything! NOW, WHAT DID HE WANT?”

“Rain,” answered the salesman.

Contact Details

Administrator: Avril Ferguson
info@sevenoakschamber.com
www.sevenoakschamber.com
01732 455188
Mobile: 07906 094445

Committee Members:

David Tudor, Barclays Bank
Doug Parry, Swinton Commercial
Kevin Aylward, The Showbusiness Company Ltd

Julian Gilchrist – Highland Printing (Resigned due to pressures of work)
Bob Smart – Ark Trading (Resigned due to pressures of work)

Elizabeth Dolding, Warners
Derek Griffin, Ditto
(Elizabeth & Derek will soon be joining the Board as Directors)

Office Address:

54 High Street
Sevenoaks
Kent TN13 1JG

Our Motto

Sevenoaks & District Chamber of Commerce founded in 1910 "... to promote and assist businesses to benefit within the community and for the community."



NEW MEMBERS FOR 2009 - WELCOME

Happen Web Technologies. Web Design.

Contact: **Andy Ross**

Telephone: 01959 525137

E-mail: andy@happenweb.com

Web: www.happenweb.com

Sainsbury's. Supermarket.

Contact: **Andrew Curry**

Telephone: 01732 742561

E-mail: manager.sevenoaks@sainsburys.co.uk Web: www.sainsburys.co.uk

Wells Associates. Accountants & Business Advisers.

Contact: **Sonia Kesby**

Telephone: 01892 507280

E-mail: soniak@wellsassociates.com

Web: www.wellsassociates.com

Glendale Horticulture Limited. Nursery & Plant Centre.

Contact: **Richard Burton**

Telephone: 01732 770999

E-mail: richard.burton@best4plants.co.uk

Web: www.bestforplants.co.uk

Kikodo Limited. Complementary Therapies.

Contact: **Stephane Burton**

Telephone: 01732 451839

E-mail: info@kikodo.co.uk

Web: www.kikodo.co.uk

E Holmes & Company Limited Insolvency Practitioner.

Contact: **Emma Holmes**

Telephone: 01732 465822

E-mail: emma@waitrose.com

Acorn Recruitment Consultancy Limited Recruitment Agency.

Contact: **Geoff Newman**

Telephone: 01732 464469

E-mail: geoff@acornrecruitment.com

Web: www.acornrecruitment.com

Catering UK Limited T/A Thai Square Thai Restaurant.

Contact: **Jeff Wilder**

Telephone: 020 7839 3000 Booking for the restaurant, please telephone, Area Manager Tang: 01732 462785

E-mail: jeffwilder@btconnect.com

Web: www.thaisq.com

Easistore Self Storage Limited Self Storage Facilities.

Contact: **Richie Wicks**

Telephone: 01732 862626

E-mail: richie.wicks@easistore.co.uk

Web: www.easistore.co.uk

Demelza Hospice Care for Children Hospice Care For Children.

Contact: **Donna Wells**

Telephone: 01580 714028

Email: laura.carey@demelza.org.uk

Web: www.demelza.org.uk

The Crown Point Inn Pub / Restaurant.

Contact: **Michael Wells**

Telephone: 01732 810669

Email: info@thecrownpoint.co.uk

Web: www.thecrownpoint.co.uk