

IN BUSINESS



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

“Credit Crunch”

The credit crunch/recession has hit Sevenoaks with several businesses closing and unemployment reaching around the 1000 mark. House repossessions are also on the increase. All these statistics are very worrying for everyone here in Sevenoaks so what can we do? If you are experiencing difficulties then contact your Bank and discuss any problems you have, let us try to pay promptly for any services we use, buy locally to support our economy and support one another wherever we can to try to weather this very difficult time ahead. The British spirit always wins through and we will all get through this period but realistically times will be tough. Please contact the Chamber if you have any questions or need advice at any time and we will do our utmost to assist in any way we can. Calls have also been made to re-open a Job Centre in Sevenoaks as the unemployment figure rises.

Sevenoaks Stag Theatre

The Stag opened again in January with the pantomime, Cinderella which proved to be highly successful with performances nearly sold out for every show. This is a very positive sign for Sevenoaks Town Council who were awarded the contract to run the venue. The cinemas opened for the half term break and thereafter the complex will officially open in April. We hope that the people of Sevenoaks will support the Stag after the difficult times they have experienced over the past few years.

Parking

New plans are being drawn up to increase the cost of on-street parking in several of the town's streets. The plans are to increase the cost of non-residents parking permits at several roads near the station. Those to be affected are St. Botolph's Road, Ashley Close, Ashley Road, Chestnut Lane & Morewood Close. The SDC hope to increase the price of a 10-hour stay from £4 to £4.50. This is expected to generate £8000 per year. District Council spokesman Steve Mandaluff said “the new charges were being brought into create greater parity between parking in streets around Sevenoaks station and the station's car parks which currently cost £5.40 per day.

Sainsbury's

Sainsbury's have now submitted a planning application to the SDC for improvements to the Otford Road store. Sainsbury's undertook pre-application consultation during February which included two public exhibitions at the store on 11th & 12th February. Feedback from these events was generally positive. However, a number of issues were raised to which Sainsbury's gave consideration before submitting their application. All the information on this application is at the Chamber office if anyone is interested. If the application is successful it could potentially offer 200 new jobs. This would be a very welcome prospect for job seekers in the area in the light of the unemployment figures released and we will wait to hear the outcome of the proposal.

Open Evenings & Networking Events

Our Open Evenings for the new year started with the February 19th event hosted by Geoff Newman, Acorn Recruitment. This event was very well attended by Chamber Members and Acorn clients with nearly 50 people present. Michael Fallon MP for Sevenoaks gave a very informative talk on the state of the economy and was available to answer any concerns that local businesses had on this issue. Geoff Newman gave a brief talk about Acorn and its history. The next Networking/Open Evenings are being hosted by Thai Square on 19th March and Donnington Manor Hotel on 16th April.

On 28th January, the Chamber held its first Coffee Morning, at Sevenoaks Business Centre, London Road, which proved to be a huge success with many members coming along for an informal chat, coffee and to see a short practical demonstration about our new Forum on the website. Our first Networking lunch of the year was held at House on the Hill on 4th March which was attended by 16 members and the lunch and networking was enjoyed by all.

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

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.

Forum on the Chamber website

The Chamber now 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 yourself 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. **The site has been very successful in the past few weeks with many Members and non-members registering their businesses and having their say on the General discussion section.**

News in Brief

Chamber Member, Clarkson Wright & Jakes LLP, Orpington, have been officially ranked with the First Class Coveted Best Company Accreditation Award. CWJ are one of the largest legal firms in the South East and was awarded the prestigious One Star Best Company Status which acknowledges the firm as a "First Class" employer. CWJ will now be listed in the 2009 Best Companies Guide as one of the top 640 companies to work for in the UK. In these times of 'doom and gloom' it is very uplifting to hear that some businesses 'are' flourishing and we can make it through the hard times ahead.

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.

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!

Sevenoaks Chronicle

If you have a story concerning Sevenoaks, the Sevenoaks Chronicle report James Daly is now available to speak to you every Wednesday at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre from 2 – 4pm. Or contact James at 01732 228000 or email: reporters@sevenoakschronicle.co.uk.

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

Crime in Sevenoaks

There have been several incidents of car thefts in and around Sevenoaks with 2 cars stolen from the Donnington Manor Hotel parking area in Dunton Green, two cars also stolen from Ivy House Lane and two V/W golfs stolen after thieves broke into the owner's home to steal their car keys. The cars have disappeared without trace. In the media there were predictions that crime would increase in these difficult economic times, so we must be vigilant with our possessions as far as we can. There have also been incidents of the theft of petrol from parked cars in Sevenoaks during the early hours of the morning.

News and 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.

Kent Trading Standards

Kent Trading Standards are warning people to be wary of many scams that are out there at present from "investing" in overseas companies to approaches by two builders offering to clean the surface of drives. 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.

Conservation Council

Conservation maps are now on the SDC website: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/conservationareas.and minutes of Conservation Council meetings are available at the Chamber Office.

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/reportscam.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.

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.

Fairtrade in Sevenoaks

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

A-Boards in the town

The Chamber was visited by an Enforcement Officer from Kent Highway Services to ask the Chamber's position on the A-Boards outside shops in Sevenoaks. Avril Ferguson, Administrator thought that businesses could not afford to pay out another cost in these very difficult economic times but could understand if the boards were placed in an inappropriate position that they could potentially cause an accident to visually challenged pedestrians, the elderly or parents with small children. Most of the businesses in Sevenoaks do keep their boards within the bounds of their property but the matter is being discussed with Kent Police and Sevenoaks District Council.

Public Consultation on Air Quality Action 2009

The SDC has designated 11 AQMAs including the M20, M25 and M26 motorways, parts of Sevenoaks, Swanley & Westerham town centres, sections of the A25 through Seal, Riverhead and Bat & Ball, part of the A20 at Farningham and Swanley. If an AQMA is designated the local authority must then produce an ‘Action Plan’ of measures it will take to reduce air pollution to acceptable levels in the affected areas. A new plan has recently been produced and the Council is seeking the views of the public, adjacent local authorities and various organisations on our proposals. The plan can be viewed on the Council's web site www.sevenoaks.gov.uk or at the Sevenoaks offices on request. If you wish to make any comments on the Action Plan please write to Malcolm Webb at the SDC address or email at air.quality.consultations@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

Chamber of Commerce moving

Unfortunately, the Chamber office is having to move again as Northcliffe Media, parent company of the Sevenoaks Chronicle are re-structuring its South East operation so will be closing the High Street Offices and moving staff to Tunbridge Wells. We at the Chamber are very disappointed at the prospect of moving again as we are nicely settled at the top of the High Street. But hopefully we will find another office soon in the town. Chamber members will be advised as soon as we have the matter settled.

Our Motto

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

Humour Corner

A young executive was leaving the office at 6pm when he found the CEO standing in front of a shredder with a piece of paper in hand.

“Listen” said the CEO, “this is important and my secretary has left. Can you make this thing work?”

“Certainly,” said the young executive. He turned the machine on, inserted the paper and pressed the start button.

“Excellent, excellent!” said the CEO as his paper disappeared inside the machine. “I just need one copy!”

A shopkeeper was dismayed when a brand new business much like his own opened up next door and erected a huge sign which read ‘BEST DEALS.’ He was horrified when another competitor opened up on his right, and announced its arrival with an even larger sign, reading ‘LOWEST PRICES.’

The shopkeeper panicked, until he got an idea. He put the biggest sign of all over his shop. It read ‘MAIN ENTRANCE!’

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Kent TN13 1JG

Committee Members:

David Tudor
Helen Page
Doug Parry
Helen Breeze
Julian Gilchrist
Bob Smart
Kevin Aylward



NEW MEMBERS FOR 2008/2009 - WELCOME

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

Better Body Shop Sevenoaks Fitness & Personal Training Centre.

Contact: **Jason Crow**

Telephone: 01732 749640

E-mail: jason@betterbodyshop.co.uk

Web: www.betterbodyshop.co.uk

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: **Paul Collings**

Telephone: 01732 862626

E-mail: paul.collings@easistore.co.uk

Web: www.easistore.co.uk

Demelza Hospice Care for Children Hospice Care For Children.

Contact: **Laura Carey**

Telephone: 01580 714028

Email: laura.carey@demelza.org.uk

Web: www.demelza.org.uk

The Crown Point Inn Pub / Restaurant.

Contact: **Angus McLelland**

Telephone: 01732 810669

Email: info@thecrownpoint.co.uk

Web: www.thecrownpoint.co.uk