

# IN BUSINESS



Check our website for information: [www.sevenoakschamber.com](http://www.sevenoakschamber.com) E-mail: [info@sevenoakschamber.com](mailto:info@sevenoakschamber.com) Tel: 01732 455188

## “Credit Crunch”

Several more businesses have closed in the town, namely Slug & Lettuce who closed their doors during the weekend of 9<sup>th</sup> May and Revival in Bank Street also closed its doors. Unfortunately, this seems to be the norm all around the country and the small towns seem to be some of the worst hit with the crisis. At various networking events in Sevenoaks the Chamber has met quite a few people who have been made redundant, right across the board, from professionals previously working in the city and also from businesses in the area who have had no choice but to reduce staff. There were rumours that the Job Centre was to be opened again in Sevenoaks due to this phenomena but this has yet to be confirmed.

## Sevenoaks Stag Theatre

The Stag is operating extremely well, with some performances sold out. Linda Larter, Town Clerk was appointed as the Chief Executive of the Stag Community Arts Centre and will hold the position for one year. We wish the Stag and all involved with the centre our best wishes for the continued success of the theatre.

## Parking

Jan van der Velde, Director, Kit for Kids, the Chamber Representative attended the parking meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> April. The Minutes from the meeting are available at the Chamber office.

## Sevenoaks Summer Festival

The Sevenoaks Summer Festival will be running from Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July with a terrific programme. Please support the celebrity artistes and local groups who are pulling out all the stops to provide a fabulous Summer Festival again in Sevenoaks. For more details please call Ray Russell, Chairman on 01732 742213.

## Empty Property Rate Relief

Several businesses in the town have expressed their concern about the Empty Property Rate Relief issue. The Chamber contacted Michael Fallon MP for Sevenoaks on this matter. Michael Fallon had received a letter from the RT Hon John Healey, MP who outlined the Government’s proposals. The gist is that businesses can pay 40% of their outstanding rates this year and defer the balance until the next year but this will mean that businesses then have to pay both next year’s rates and the balance from the current year which could have serious implications to businesses. In these very difficult economic times surely the Government could offer some other assistance. The Chamber will follow this matter closely.

## Open Evenings & Networking Events

The March Open Evening was held at Thai Square and the April event at Donnington Manor and both were attended by Chamber Members and guests. Attendance figures were slightly down on previous events but the Chamber feels this may be due to the present economic climate and pressures of work. The May Open Evening was hosted by Warners Solicitors and was attended by about 25 members and guests. The June Open Evening is being hosted by Easistore, Self Storage in Edenbridge in conjunction with the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce. The event will be a wine tasting and barbecue with WinEntwine which we hope will be well attended. Details at the Chamber office. The first informal Coffee Mornings/Networking event commenced at the Stag Theatre in the Lodge Coffee Bar on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May and was very well attended by Members and non-members and guests. Attendees were given a practical demonstration of the Forum and encouraged to register their business on the Chamber free site. The second Coffee Morning was held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June and was extremely well attended. Caroline Aitken of Acorn Communications was on hand to answer any marketing questions. The next Coffee Morning will be on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July.

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

## 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](http://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](http://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

In these difficult economic times, it is very heartening to receive some positive news from our Chamber Members.

**Baldwins Travel (Sevenoaks Travel)** in Dorset Street, have been voted UK's Best Travel Agency walking away with the 'Independent Travel Agent of the Year – London & The South East' prize at the recent Agent Achievement Awards at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London.

Sevenoaks based **Opus Networking Services Limited** is celebrating after exceeding a turnover of £1 last year, the Wickenden Road firm is now on course to grow that figure from £1.4m at year-end to £1.8m this year.

**Workplace Creations** is pleased to announce the success of its application acceptance into the AIS (Association of Interior Specialists). The AIS represents the whole spectrum of those involved in the manufacture, supply and installation of all aspects of interior fit-outs, refurbishments and design.

**Glendale Horticulture Limited – Coblands Nursery** is very pleased to announce that on 20<sup>th</sup> May the Learning Skills Council South East held its 2009 Awards Ceremony celebrating skills excellence. Coblands was awarded the certificate of 'highly commended' for its commitment and investment to training and development.

Congratulations to all these Chamber Members.

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

## Sainsbury's

The Chamber received notification from Sainsbury's, following consultation with the SDC, that they have decided to withdraw their planning application to extend their Otford Road Store. This is to allow Sainsbury's the opportunity for further discussions to take place with consultees on the proposals without compromising the District Council's deadline for determining the planning application. Sainsbury's remain committed to improving the Otford Road Store for customers and will update the local community when further proposals are brought forward.

## 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](http://www.sevenoakschamber.com).

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

## Sevenoaks Chronicle

If you have a story concerning Sevenoaks, Chronicle reporter Stuart Woledge is at the Sevenoaks Leisure Centre between 2pm and 4pm every Wednesday. Alternatively, Harriet Cooper will be at the Stag between 11am & 1pm and Tesco, Riverhead from 6pm to 8pm both on Thursdays. Email: [reporters@sevenoakschronicle.co.uk](mailto: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.

## Chamber of Commerce Move

In the Spring News letter we reported that we were, unfortunately, having to move offices again but the Chronicle have now decided to keep the Sevenoaks office open so the Chamber is able to stay at 54 High Street. Please feel free to pop in with any queries you may have on Monday, Wednesday or Friday mornings.

## 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](http://www.7oaks.info) for its interactive community calendar and add your event / news item online. Do watch this space for news of further planned developments on the web-site.

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.freecycle.org).

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

## Conservation Council

More of Sevenoaks' historic areas and buildings will be protected following a review of two conservation areas in the town. The Vine and Vine Court Conservation Area's were both reviewed and extended after Sevenoaks District Council's Cabinet approved revised appraisals in May. The appraisals and boundaries can be viewed online by visiting: [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/conservation](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/conservation).

## Public Consultation on Air Quality Action 2009

It seems after the public outcry at the pollution rates in and around Sevenoaks, Council officials have now said that there is nothing that can be done to improve the air pollution in some of the worst affected areas of the Sevenoaks District. The full article about this issue was published in the Chronicle dated 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2009.

## Roadworks at the Bat & Ball

There has been chaos at the Bat & Ball junction with roadworks along Bradbourne Vale Road being undertaken by Southern Gas Networks which has caused long delays for motorists and in some cases, caused tempers to reach boiling point. On average the disruption is adding 45 minutes to journey times. The Town Council has called a special meeting to discuss this with Kent Highway Services and Southern Gas Networks. As this area already has a very high pollution rate, it must cause concern for the increased pollution in the area.

## 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](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) or contact Sevenoaks CAB on 01732 454443, email: [info@sevenoakscab.org.uk](mailto:info@sevenoakscab.org.uk).

## Fairtrade in Sevenoaks

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

## 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.

### Humour Corner

So Bill Gates and the chairman of GM are arguing over which company is better. Bill Gates boast, " If cars grew in technology as fast as computers did, we would be driving v-32 instead of v-8, our cars would get 5000 miles to the gallon, the top speed would be mach seven. Anyway the sticker price for a car would be 50 dollars."

And which the GM replies, " Sure, but would you really want a car that crashes 4 times a day!"

A businessman dragged himself home and barely made it to his chair before he dropped exhausted. His sympathetic wife was right there with a tall cool drink and a comforting word. "My, you look tired," she said. "You must have had a hard day today. What happened to make you so exhausted?"

"It was terrible," her husband said. "The computer broke down and all of us had to do our own thinking."

## Contact Details

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01732 455188  
Mobile: 07906094445

## Committee Members:

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

## 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 2008/2009 - WELCOME

**Sonia Kesby – Wells Associates** - Accountants & Business Advisers. Telephone: 01892 507280.

**Richard Burton – Glendale Horticulture Limited** - Nursery & Plant Centre. Telephone: 01732 770999.

**Stephane Burton – Kikodo Limited** - Complementary Therapies. Telephone: 01732 451839.

**Emma Holmes – E Holmes & Company Limited** - Insolvency Practitioner. Telephone: 01732 465822.

**Jeff Newman – Acorn Recruitment Consultancy Limited** - Recruitment Centre. Telephone: 01732 464469.

**Catering UK Limited T/A Thai Square – Jeff Wilder** – Thai restaurant. Telephone: 02078393000, booking for the restaurant, please, telephone, 01732 462785

**Easistore Self Storage Limited – Richie Wicks** – self storage. Telephone: 01732 862626.

**Demelza Hospice Care for Children – Donna Wells** – hospice care for children. Telephone: 01580 714028.  
Email: [laura.carey@demelza.org.uk](mailto:laura.carey@demelza.org.uk)

**The Crown Point Inn – Michael Wells** – Pub/Restaurant. Telephone: 01732 810669. Email: [info@thecrownpoint.co.uk](mailto:info@thecrownpoint.co.uk)