



REVIEW

**FEBRUARY
2010**

**FUTURE
MEETINGS
2010**

17.30
*networking
for 18.15 start*

8 March
Rudding Park
Hotel

12 April
Cairn Hotel
(Safari)

26 April
**YORKSHIRE
BUSINESS
MARKET**
(11.00-18.00)
Pavilions of
Harrogate

10 May
Cedar Court
AGM

14 June
Majestic Hotel

19 July
White Hart Hotel

Review of Chamber Meeting + News Update

ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS

- Why should businesses use the new online social media for networking?
- Facebook is an important marketing tool for all types of businesses everywhere.
- Twitter is a powerful online tool that offers substantial benefits to businesses.
- LinkedIn is the ideal virtual business network to find connections to the right people
- NEW Harrogate Chamber group in LinkedIn – we ask all members to join FREE.

DISTRICT DEVELOPMENTS

- TESCO's latest Planning Application predicts massive queues on Ripon Road!
- Harrogate Chamber formally objects on grounds of traffic congestion and safety
- New Budget Hotel in grounds of Majestic Hotel supported but concerns over parking
- New Skate Park in Valley Gardens supported provided CCTV cover is monitored.
- NYCC proposes Council Tax increase of 3%. Harrogate's part is not increasing.

BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS

- Join a Chamber table at Ackrill Media Group Business Awards Gala Awards Dinner.
- Yorkshire Business Market Exhibitors can take a space from as little as £240
- Harrogate Chamber members have 15% discount if they book and pay by 28th Feb.
- Harrogate Hospitality & Tourism Awards Ceremony will be on Monday 7th June

Future Meetings

Monday, 8th March - Rudding Park Hotel, Follifoot, Harrogate 17.30 for 18.15

Promoting Harrogate

- for business and leisure tourism - the lifeblood of our local economy – including:
Welcome to Yorkshire; YD&H Partnership; HIC; LBIA; ATP; Harrogate in Bloom, et al

Monday, 12th April - Cairn Hotel, Ripon Road, Harrogate 17.30 for 18.00

Business Networking Safari + Buffet

B2B Chamber members only - limited capacity - pre-booking essential

Attendance FREE for one representative per company; £10 for second representative

PROMOTING HARROGATE BUSINESS

Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, PO Box 8, Harrogate, HG2 8XB

Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025 E-mail: info@harrogatechamber.org Website: harrogatechamber.org

USNG SOCIAL INTERNET NETWORKS FOR BUSINESS

A record attendance of almost 90, members and guests packed into the Old Swan Hotel on Monday 8th February to hear from three of North Yorkshire's social media experts and fellow Chamber members.

Why should businesses use online social media?

The evening began with a presentation by **Rachel Auty** of **Four Front Marketing**, who asked the question - 'Why should businesses use online social media?'

Rachel explained that it enables online communities to form based upon common interests. This naturally presents a great opportunity for businesses to tap into specific markets and become a part of these communities, raise their profile, build relationships and extract crucial feedback.

Rachel went on to answer a common misconception that Facebook is just for fun and not a serious business tool by explaining that it does have another dimension and has now evolved into an important marketing tool for all types of businesses everywhere.

She explained how some of the largest corporations in the world have a Facebook 'Fan' page, and to assess the commercial value of having such a page, as a business owner, you should consider the following:

- You can communicate directly with an audience that has already demonstrated an interest in your business by 'becoming a fan'
- Every new fan is a potential new lead
- You can interact directly, and build long-term trusting relationships
- You can engage your audience and make your fans 'like' you as a person/ brand
- It's a great opportunity to request feedback - Ask questions and start discussions
- All activity will contribute to raising your business profile and ultimately, bring in more business!

So, what next?

- Research your competitors and/ or similar organisations – what are they doing?
- Consider your social media strategy - how do you want to use it as a tool for promotion?
- Go on! Create a Facebook fan page
- Add a picture, business profile and your key business information
- Start to share thoughts, comments, news, offers, jokes, experiences - whatever you want!
- Attract fans - Use adverts, offers, link to Twitter, tell your customers, add a 'Become a Fan' link to your website Home page
- Post regular links to your website
- Consider your brand values and reflect these as much as possible

The rules...

- Little and often - An hour a week should do it!
- Interact! - Welcome any new fans, thank fans for reviews
- Be patient - Social media should be adopted as part of a long-term strategy
- Test, review, tweak - Learn and improve as you go
- Engage - Make your fans smile
- Be disciplined – Allocate set times each week to work on your social media activity
- Use social media as part of your marketing mix - it isn't meant to replace traditional marketing methods, but to compliment them
- Don't SPAM or go for the hard sell
- Try it - you might just like it!

Social media is here to stay, and online social networking is fast becoming a significant part of many businesses online marketing strategy. Here's some food for thought:

- While seven per cent of brands have not yet made use of social networking websites as part of their online strategy, 22 per cent have turned the channel into the focal point of their communications operations, while one-fifth use the medium in most campaigns.
- If you aren't using social media, chances are your competitors are or soon will be. What does that mean for your business?

Rachel Auty is a Freelance Marketing Consultant and Interim Marketing Manager specialising in strategic and online marketing within the B2B, retail, non-profit and events sectors.

Contact: Rachel Auty, Four Front Marketing
Tel: 01423 541810; mobile 07545 917044
E-mail: r.auty@fourfrontmarketing.co.uk

Tweet your way to success

Bob Tait, from Harrogate-based, full service creative agency **Mixd**, was next up, to help demystify the online phenomenon Twitter and in particular how businesses can embrace this powerful social networking tool as part of their own brand strategy. Whilst the room was entertained when Bob explained the basics of Twitter terminology, such as 'Tweets', 'Twetiquette' and 'Tweeple' (no doubt soon to appear in the Oxford English Dictionary), it was clear to Chamber Members the serious impact, both good and bad, that Twitter could have on their businesses.

Twitter has experienced unprecedented growth since its conception in 2006, with latest year on year figures showing an increase of 1,928 percent in unique users from June 2008 to June 2009; propelling it into the top 5 of all social networking sites. Contrary to popular belief, the majority of Twitter users (84%) are over 25, making it an ideal audience for the business community.

This powerful online tool, with so many users, offers substantial benefits to businesses including:

- a new and innovative way to drive new traffic to your website;
- online protection of your brand / reputation;
- customer support;
- opportunities to engage with a new audience to share opinions, tools and resources and demonstrate your knowledge; and
- the formation of networks and collaboration.

Bob went on to discuss case studies on a range of businesses who currently utilise Twitter, including Dell (international), BT (national) and Mixd (local), as well as touching on the basics for success; including:

- what to say in the 140 character limit;
- how to gain 'followers';
- how to brand your Twitter page;
- the basics of 'Twetiquette' (Twitter etiquette!);
- the use of add-on tools for business, such as search facilities, topic alerts and multi-users.

The informative 20 minute presentation provided a great insight into Twitter for Business, but there is so much more to benefit Chamber Members.

For further details, log on to the Mixd blog at www.mixd.co.uk, contact Bob on 01423 566043 or, of course, jump on <http://twitter.com/mixd> and send a Tweet to @mixd

Building Business Relationships

Finally, **Steve Phillip** of **Red fm** and **Linked2Success** put across a strong argument for considering that you are not really in business unless you have an online social media presence and explained the significant influence that the business networking site LinkedIn is having on connecting people in business globally, who are looking to achieve increased sales by finding more clients.

With over 55 million business users exchanging advice and reviewing products online, from small, one man bands to some of the largest Fortune 500 companies, Steve explained how business owners have the ideal virtual business network at their finger tips, without them ever having to leave the office.

The past 12 months have seen a significant trend that suggests that people have lost faith in many previously tried and tested sales approaches and that the business community, in general, prefers to do business with people they know like and trust.

Steve explained that for LinkedIn to work well it requires a consistent strategic approach and that it must be taken as seriously as any other form of marketing in your company. He also explained how this strategy should be approached, by having an Inbound passive marketing approach to get people to visit your profile and an Outbound more proactive and direct approach, by being prepared to offer something of value to other business users first, you can then ask for something in return.

Ultimately, the power behind LinkedIn is that it finds the right people and the connections you have with them.

Steve completed his presentation by explaining how to create a powerful LinkedIn profile that will sell your business for you and how to build a sizable network of other business users that ensures that your business brand is positioned on the equivalent of Oxford Street, rather than being hidden away down a cul-de-sac.

For more information about how to get the most from LinkedIn visit www.linked2success.co.uk or contact Steve directly on 07879 628708 or email steve@linked2success.co.uk

Steve's alter-ego is as Personal Branding Coach at **RedFM**, an organisation which runs programmes designed to help individuals and business owners to promote who they are and what they do and achieve their full potential. Find out more at: www.red-fm.co.uk

Special Offer for Chamber Members

Steve Phillip is offering Harrogate Chamber Members a discounted rate of £15 + VAT for his next seminar which is an **introduction to LinkedIn** on Wednesday 24th February from 6.30-8.30pm at the Cedar Court Hotel.

To book contact Steve at steve@linked2success.co.uk or phone 01423 544785 or 07879 628708.

DISTRICT DEVELOPMENTS

Revised Tesco Planning Application

Tesco have submitted revised planning application and have also offered to invest £377,000 over four years into improving local bus services and community buses.

However, their revised application has not addressed the concerns Harrogate Chamber has raised regarding traffic access and safety. They still plan to put a new traffic entrance on Ripon Road just 120 metres from New Park roundabout.

In their comprehensive traffic analysis, they admit that at peak periods there will be a queue of between 50 and 70 vehicles at the proposed new junction. There could even be up to 255 vehicles queues! They consider this addition to existing congestion should not be a problem!

Harrogate Chamber's stance is that the new junction would be totally unacceptable in view of the resulting extra congestion. This would be devastating for existing businesses on the Ripon Road and nearby, who already suffer from peak traffic congestion.

Chief Executive, Brian Dunsby, has spoken to the owners of the former gas works site, Northern Gas Utilities, who have indicated they might be able to take the gas tank out of service, as long as Tesco agree to pay for it to be demolished. This would ensure there was sufficient space to install a new much larger roundabout with a designated entrance to the Tesco store.

Tesco's latest plans can all be downloaded from the Harrogate Council website. www.harrogate.gov.uk

Harrogate Chamber have submitted a formal letter of objection to both Harrogate Borough Council with a copy to Tesco. It has now been sent to the local press who we expect will highlight what this means for Harrogate.

Members with personal experience of the New Park traffic situation, please get in touch with the Secretariat.

New budget hotel in Majestic grounds

Harrogate Chamber are supporting the plans submitted by the Barcelo Majestic hotel to build a new 3 star, 130 room budget hotel in their grounds, close to the Harrogate International Centre, with a direct pedestrian link into the new Exhibition Centre. The Chamber feels this will be a valuable addition to the bedstock in the town centre, although members expressed concern about car parking provision. Details are available on Harrogate Council website www.harrogate.gov.uk

Skate Park in Valley Gardens

Harrogate Borough Council has recently submitted proposals for a new Skate Park in the Valley Gardens near to the new children's playground. Harrogate Chamber will support this initiative, which is long overdue – provide that the CCTV cover is monitored.

NYCC Economic Bulletin

The latest North Yorkshire County Council Economic Bulletin has been received, which indicates the trends on items like VAT registrations, MD registrations, vacancies, job centre claimants, etc. This showed that things have improved slightly since the last edition. Members can receive a copy by e-mail on request.

NYCC Budget Review

North Yorkshire County Council has produced a detailed Budget Review proposing a modest increase of just under 3% on council tax for next year. A copy of the full presentation is available from the Secretariat on request. Harrogate Borough Council is not increasing their part.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Business Watch Sticker

The Chamber have recently taken delivery of the new 2010-2011 Business Watch sticker, which members can display in a prominent place. New members are receiving these straight away and all existing members will receive their new sticker following their renewal in March 2010.

ACKRILL MEDIA GROUP 2009-10 BUSINESS AWARDS

The glittering Gala Awards Dinner for the 2009-10 Ackrill Media Group Business Awards will be held at the Harrogate International Centre on 25th March 2010. Tickets are available at £60 each - if you would like to join other Chamber members on a Chamber table, please indicate this when you book and let us know too..

For tickets contact Ginny Long at Ackrills by phone on 01423 707402 or e-mail ginny.long@ypn.co.uk

President, Robert Whiteley, congratulated the ten Harrogate Chamber members who had been nominated under several different categories and wished them the best of luck. HCTC sponsors Small Business of the Year

YORKSHIRE BUSINESS MARKET 26th April 2010

Vice President, Stuart Pearson, reminded everyone that this year's Yorkshire Business Market would be the

place to be on Monday, 26th April 2010. There will be the opportunity to potentially reach 2,000 potential clients in one day between 11.00 and 18.00. FREE refreshments are provided throughout the day.

Exhibitors can take a space from as little as £240 - with Harrogate Chamber members being offered a **15% discount if they book and pay by 28th February 2010.**

This includes a FREE Exhibitors' breakfast after stands have been set up. For the first time this year, after breakdown, the event will be followed by a FREE drinks reception hosted by Business Link.

Discounted advertising is being offered to exhibitors by the Ackrill Media Group and the Yorkshire Post. Several Chamber members are also offering discounts on their products and services. Please ask Chamber Administrator, Maggie Hall for more details - info@harrogatechamber.org

Business Link Yorkshire are offering a series of six FREE Taster Workshops from 09.30 and there will be a complementary series of FREE Business Seminars on Networking, PR and Marketing. Full details can be found on the website www.yorkshirebusinessmarket.org where you can also download an Exhibitor Booking Form or Register as a Visitor.

Bookings are coming in fast and are well ahead of the same stage last year - so don't delay and miss out on this fantastic low-cost promotion opportunity.

FOCUS GROUPS

Promoting Harrogate

Harrogate Hospitality & Tourism Awards are open for nominations across nine categories of the industry. Don't forget to keep an eye out for deserving waiters, bar people, hotel staff, etc. and submit your nominations by 31st March 2010.

Full details and a voting form are on the Destination Harrogate website www.destinationharrogate.co.uk or look out for the nomination forms, which are available from the Tourist Information Centre.

The Gala Awards Ceremony will take place on 7th June 2010 at the Royal Hall.

Accommodation Harrogate is the new name for the former Hotels & Guest House Association with Sandra Doherty of Alexa House as the Chairman. The new website is www.accommodationharrogate.co.uk where you can find links to all the smaller hotels and guest houses in Harrogate.

FREE Harrogate Town Map - If you need a supply of the Harrogate Town maps to display or use in your premises, supplies are available at the monthly meetings of Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce..

Town Centre Improvements

Post Office Layout - Members are asked if they have experienced any problems with the new ticketing system in the town centre Post Office on Cambridge Road. Have you found it to improve your experience, or does it cause further congestion?

If so, please e-mail your comments to the Secretariat.

Traffic & Transport

Commercial Vehicle Pass - Members are asked for their thoughts on how much they would be willing to pay for a Commercial Vehicle Pass that would enable them to park in the town centre for unloading or to undertake service work. The Council are liaising with Harrogate Chamber to work out the best way forward for all concerned. Suggestions to info@harrogatechamber.org

Cheltenham Parade - Have you encountered any difficulties whilst driving up Cheltenham Parade since the white lines down the centre were removed? Send any comments to info@harrogatechamber.org

High Speed Rail Links - Harrogate Chamber is lobbying hard to ensure that high speed rail links do come to Yorkshire in the new plans mentioned by Lord Adonis recently - without forgetting the need for improved services to Harrogate -

Chief Executive, Brian Dunsby will be attending an East Coast Stakeholders meeting together with Harrogate Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Don MacKenzie. They will be putting forward the needs for Harrogate in the context of high speed rail and future re-timetabling of the East Coast.

If you are a regular train user, please send any suggestions for improvements to the Secretariat to be taken into consideration in future discussions with officials. Send comments to info@harrogatechamber.org

Transdev - Harrogate & District Travel have produced an excellent new map for their bus routes around the district which is exceptionally easy to use. A supply is available at the monthly meetings while stocks last.

Lack of A1 Signposting - Prue Keigwin of Utility Warehouse in Masham raised concerns about the lack of signage for Masham from the new section A1(M) in a southerly direction from Dishforth to Barton. Brian Dunsby confirmed that there was a similar problem in a northerly direction when you approach Wetherby.

Brian said he would raise this with North Yorkshire County Council, who would probably refer it to the Highways Agency.

Valley Drive Parking - A member expressed concern that apartments on Valley Drive were only allowed one parking permit per dwelling, where a lot of the properties were occupied by professional couples who each had a car to park on the road.

Brian Dunsby said at one time Valley Drive had become notorious as the street in Yorkshire with the largest number of parking tickets being issued. He said he would follow the issue up with the appropriate person at the Council.

SCAMS & SPAMS

HMRC e-mail scam

This problem has escalated so much, that HMRC have sent out a warning e-mail to alert people NOT to click on links in any e-mails purporting to be from HMRC and asking for details to be updated via a bogus web link. Please forward such e-mails to them at: phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk and then delete them.

Parcel Service e-mail scam

This e-mail scam is still causing problems with e-mails arriving that appear to be from DHL or UPS suggesting they were unable to deliver a parcel and asking you to click on a link or attached file to input your details so they can deliver.

Doing so will download a virus onto your computer!

Bank and Building Society scam

In a similar vein to the previous warnings, beware of e-mails arriving from any financial organisations asking you to update your details by clicking on a link. This will give fraudsters access to your account and you risk losing everything with no redress!

Virgin Media e-billing problems?

Again, e-mails are doing the rounds that purport to be from Virgin Media following a problem with your e-bill. This is similar to the other scams above, providing a link for you to log-in and update your bank details.

Don't ever be tempted to click on links in e-mails from any organisation who holds your personal information and asks you to update it in this way. If they do want you to update things, they will either write or e-mail you asking you to log-in in the usual way to do this.

Performing Rights Society Licence Demands

The Performing Rights Society (PRS) have been contacting a number of businesses in Harrogate, particularly guest houses and hotels, claiming that a licence fee is due to be paid for the privilege of playing music or having televisions in public rooms at their business, and threatening court proceedings if payment wasn't made.

Sandra Doherty of Alexa House has had reported several occurrences of this amongst her members. Apparently it is a genuine organisation and licences are available. The argument is over whether a television in a bedroom of a guest house is classed as a 'public room' and, therefore, whether it should be liable for a licence.

Peter Banks of Ridding Park Hotel added that the British Hospitality Association (BHA) have been in a dispute with the PRS for several years. He has refused to pay the licence for every single bedroom, for four years. Peter had recent contact with BHA who confirmed that televisions in bedrooms need to have a licence.

Sandra Doherty said she was taking legal advice as the matter is much wider-ranging than just guest houses and hotels. It could even affect offices that play 'hold' music on their phones - a PRS licence is required to play music in this way!

Robert Whiteley added that it is very difficult to get consistent advice from the PRS.

MEMBERS' FORUM

New Sales & Marketing Manager for HIC

Harrogate International Centre has a new Sales & Marketing Manager - Paul Phillips. Chamber officers are meeting with Paul to discuss future objectives for HIC.

Be a Confident Public Speaker - at half price!

Stuart Pearson of The Trinity Foundation is holding a master class on how to “**Be a Confident Public Speaker, Presenter and Communicator**” on Tuesday, 23rd February and Monday, 29th March.

Harrogate Chamber members are offered a HALF PRICE discount on the full delegate fee of £249 + VAT - that is just £124.50 + VAT. Find out more or book at: www.peakperformancepractitioner.com/presenting.html

Invitation to Ripley Castle

Enclosed with this newsletter is an invitation from Sir Thomas and Lady Ingilby to ‘An Evening to showcase Ripley Castle’s corporate facilities’. This will be held on Thursday, 4th March from 17.30-19.30 with a drinks reception and canapés.

If you would like to accept, please RSVP to Jenny Carter on 01423 770152 or jcarter@ripleycastle.co.uk

Opportunities with Saint Michael’s Hospice

Saint Michael’s Hospice has set up a new business initiative - **SAINT MICHAEL’S 500 BUSINESS CLUB** is a membership scheme aimed at the small to medium local businesses within Harrogate District who would like to support their local charity and meet other like-minded business people. Contact Sandra Dunning on 01423 876081 or sdunning@saintmichaelsospice.org

Saint Michael’s is also in the process of re-branding their retail van (a **Citroen Relay 1800 TD HDI LWB**) and is seeking 12 local companies who would like to benefit from advertising by displaying their logo on the vehicle for a period of 2 years. You may have seen the highly visible van in and around Harrogate – putting your logo ‘on the road’ in this way would enable it to travel up to 300 miles per week around the district. Contact Christine Norton on 01423 878190 or cnorton@saintmichaelsospice.org for further details.

Finally, Saint Michael’s is holding a ‘**Network&Nibbles**’ open evening at Leeds Bradford International Airport on Thursday 11th March from 18.00-20.00. This provides a great opportunity to meet airport directors and business partners, and to hear about the airport’s exciting development plans. For an invitation contact Christine Norton as above.

Work-related Driving Risks

Make sure you are able to navigate your way through the legal issues related to driving risks at work, at a seminar supported by Cicada Communications Ltd.

Managing Work-related Driving Risks is being held on 23rd March from 08.00-09.45 at the White Hart Hotel. See enclosed leaflet for full details. Attendance is free and includes breakfast and refreshments.

McCormicks Seminars

McCormicks Solicitors are running the following seminars in March and April:

31st March 18.00-20.00 at Hotel du Vin Harrogate **Directors** - A seminar for new and existing Directors. Topics include company formations, directors’ duties and the sale and acquisition of businesses.

27th April - 18.00-20.00 Hotel du Vin Harrogate **Charities** - A seminar for those involved in or thinking of setting up a new charity. Topics include trustees duties, protecting the charity’s name and regulatory compliance.

Both seminars are FREE. To book a place contact: Sonia Jones on 01423 537633 or s.jones@mccormicks-solicitors.com

Business Ladies around Harrogate

One of the presenter’s at tonight’s meeting, Rachel Auty of Four Front Marketing, has set up a new social forum for ladies in Harrogate together with Ella Gascoigne from StartupPR. The new group will be called ‘Blah’ - Business Ladies around Harrogate!

The next meeting will be held on 2nd March 2010 at The Kimberley Hotel, Harrogate (in The Terrace Bistro) between 12-2pm.

The group is free to join. Find out more by sending an e-mail to harrogateblah@googlemail.com

Lucy Bond - the new JK Rowling??

Lucy Bond, an Employment solicitor at Davidson Large, has recently had a short story published in an anthology entitled “Assassin’s Canon”. This collection is being printed by a publisher based in Harrogate called Utility Fog Press. Copies are available at a discounted price to Harrogate Chamber members from the website at: www.utilityfogpress.com

Don’t Miss Out on FREE Publicity!

Each month Members’ Forum is here for you to make announcements of anything interesting that is happening in your business or special offers you may wish to make for fellow members. Items mentioned at the meetings are usually reported in REVIEW along with business contact details where appropriate.

If possible send us a message when you receive the Agenda by e-mail so we are aware you wish to speak, and include a short description of your item so we make sure we include the relevant points.

NEXT MEETINGS

8th March 2010 - Rudding Park Hotel Promoting Harrogate

Promoting Harrogate - for business and leisure tourism - the lifeblood of our local economy is the topic for next month’s meeting at a new venue for Chamber meetings - the award-winning Rudding Park Hotel, Follifoot, Harrogate, HG3 1JH.

The speakers will be:

Peter Myers, Chief Executive,
West Yorkshire Tourism Partnership
Aviva Pearson, Chief Executive, (TBC)
Yorkshire Dales & Harrogate Tourism Partnership

Tony Hallwood, Commercial & Aviation Development Director, Leeds Bradford International Airport

Plus representatives from Harrogate International Centre and Harrogate in Bloom.

They will update us on their efforts to bring more visitors to the area for both business and leisure pursuits.

12th April 2010 - Cairn Hotel Business Networking Safari

The opportunity to meet up to 48 other businesses in one evening and enjoy a FREE buffet. Booking is essential for this event as space is strictly limited. Send an e-mail to info@harrogatechamber.org to book.

This very popular Business Safari provides an excellent business-to-business networking opportunity for providers of products and services to other businesses. It is not suitable for retail consumer businesses.

One representative per company can attend for free, but a second representative has to pay a nominal fee of £10. They must also 'hunt' in pairs with only one representative speaking per session.

10th May 2010 - Cedar Court Hotel Annual General Meeting

To accommodate the significant increase in numbers attending Harrogate Chamber meetings, the venue for the AGM in May has had to be changed from Hotel du Vin to the Cedar Court Hotel.

The Keynote Speakers will be announced at the March meeting.

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Harrogate in Bloom Business Competition

Harrogate in Bloom are inviting all business premises in the town to enter their Awards, based upon the external decoration of the premises. The size of the property doesn't matter, it will be judged on how you have used the space.

Entry forms were included in last month's REVIEW - please ask for another copy if you have mislaid it. Closing date for entries is 31st March 2010 with judging taking place on Monday, 12th April. The Awards will be announced in September.

Leeds City Region Consultation Event

Recently selected as one of two pilot city regions across the country, the Leeds City Region Partnership is working to drive forward economic recovery and a more prosperous economic future. To take this work forward, the Leeds City Region Partnership is developing an Innovation Capital Prospectus and Investment Plan.

They would very much value the views of Harrogate district businesses in shaping the priorities and actions that will form the basis for this Prospectus and are inviting Harrogate Chamber Members to attend a breakfast consultation event being held at Conyngham Hall Business Centre, Knaresborough, HG5 9AY on **Tuesday 23rd February 2010.**

You would be welcome for breakfast from 08:00am, with roundtable discussions beginning at 08:30 and lasting for approximately 1 hour.

In particular they would be interested to hear views on:

- How might we build upon our existing innovation assets and innovation-related activity?
- What would be of most benefit to your business or sector in enabling it to be more innovative?

- Is there anything of major significance that is missing?

Is there something that is a real strength for the LCR that if developed further could have a major impact on the LCR economy?

If you would like to attend please contact: Daniel Harper at Harrogate Borough Council email daniel.harper@harrogate.gov.uk or telephone 01423 799149.

NEW MEMBERS

Creative Design (Yorkshire) Ltd

(Printing, Design & Web Design)

Antony Scott, Sales Manager

Unit 19, Sycamore Business Park, Copt Hewick, Ripon HG4 5DF

Tel: 01765 600220 **Fax:** 01423 326479

E-mail: tony@creativedesignstudio.co.uk

Website: www.creativedesignstudio.co.uk

The Finance Director's Office LLP

(Accountancy & Business Advisory)

Jeremy Vaughan, Partner

The Old Barn, Pool Hall, Old Pool Bank, Pool-in-Wharfedale, Leeds LS21 1LH

Tel: 0113 284 1299 **Fax:** 0113 284 1299

E-mail: jeremyvaughan@fdsoffice.co.uk

Website: www.fdsoffice.co.uk

The Harrogate District Directory (Advertising)

Paul Steer, Partner

Rondebosch, Cut Throat Lane, Bishop Thornton, Harrogate HG3 3JT

Tel: 01423 771200

E-mail: thehdd@talktalk.net

Website: www.thehdd.net

LJC Supplies (Janitorial Supplies)

Laurence Chappell, Proprietor

56 Old Barber, Harrogate HG1 3DF

Tel: 01423 503652 **Fax:** 01423 301076

E-mail: laurence@ljcsupplies.co.uk

Website: www.ljcsupplies.co.uk

Millennia Computer Services Ltd (Computer Services)

John Thorpe, Director

Copthall Bridge House, Station Bridge, Harrogate HG1 1SP

Tel: 01423 790124 **Fax:** 01423 790224

E-mail: john@millennia.it

Website: www.millennia.it

THANKS TO OLD SWAN HOTEL

Many thanks to David Ritson, General Manager at the Old Swan Hotel, and his staff for hosting the February meeting and making sure we could fit the record number of attendees into their historic Garden Room.

For more information on the Old Swan's opulent accommodation, restaurant and function rooms:

visit: www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk/oldswan

or telephone 01423 500055 or fax 01423 501154 or -

e-mail: conference.oldswan@macdonald-hotels.co.uk

Employment agency guide to regulations

BIS has published updated guidance on regulations for employment agencies. The guidance covers an agency's responsibilities relating to pay, fees, health and safety, record keeping and assignments. The publication is aimed at recruitment agencies, modelling and entertainment agencies, executive search consultants and online job boards.

The full guide is at: www.berr.gov.uk/files/file53436.pdf

Guidance on charitable giving

The Cabinet Office has published new guidance on tax incentives for businesses who give to charity. The 'Guide to Giving for Business' sets out the various tax incentives for businesses to donate to charity and shows the different ways private firms can help charitable organisations, such as giving money, shares or equipment. Download the guide at:

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/308478/guide%20to%20giving%20for%20business.pdf

Anti-robbery guidance for retailers

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) has launched new security guidelines for retailers. The guidance provides a checklist for retailers, covering secure locations for cash transfers, improving security procedures and prevention techniques.

Download the guide at:

www.brc.org.uk/downloads/CVIT_Best_Practice_Guidelines_For_Retailers.pdf

Corporate identity fraud guidance

Equifax has published guidance for small and medium-sized businesses on how to avoid becoming the victims of corporate identity fraud, which is similar to personal identity fraud, but where criminals hijack company documentation at Companies House.

Download the guide at:

www.equifax.co.uk/efx_pdf/GuideToCombatingCorporateFraud.pdf

Guide to new training regulations

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has published guidance for businesses on the new regulations that give employees a legal right to request training. From April 2011, all employees who have worked for an employer for at least 26 weeks will have the right to request time for training. This guide covers what is expected of employers and what they must do when they receive a request.

Download the guide at:

www.dius.gov.uk/~media/publications/T/time-to-train-employer-leaflet

Online selling regulations for business

The Office of Fair Trading has published guidance for business owners on the Distance Selling Regulations 2000, which apply to the majority of goods or services sold via the internet, telephone or mail order.

Read the guidance at:

www.oft.gov.uk/advice_and_resources/resource_base/legal/distance-selling-regulations

Cross-border VAT changes for 2010

HMRC has published guidance for businesses on the VAT package for 2010. The package, which came into force on 1st January 2010, is designed to simplify VAT legislation across Europe and applies to firms that trade across the European Union.

Read the full guide at:

www.hmrc.gov.uk/VAT/cross-border-changes-2010.htm

UCI data protection guide

The Information Commissioner's Office has published a guide to the Data Protection Act 1998, which sets out practical examples on how the Act's principles apply in practice, as well as answers to some frequently asked questions on data protection.

Read the guide at:

www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/data_protection_guide.aspx

Use of Imperial measurements

Legislation has come into force that allows businesses to use both imperial and metric units of measurements. The Units of Measurement Regulations 2009 and the Weights and Measures (Metrication Amendment) Regulations 2009, came into force on 1st January 2010 and contain provisions that exempt UK firms from having to produce separate metric and imperial labels.

The Regulations also state that the UK will be able to decide on the use of imperial and metric measurements in the future. Read more at:

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.aspx?NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=409943&SubjectId=2>

Time to pay scheme extended

HM Revenue & Customs has announced that the Business Payments Support Service has been extended to include all partnerships. A spokesperson for Smith & Williamson accountancy firm told Accountancy Age magazine that, previously, the BPSS was unsuitable for partnership because the taxable profits are allocated to each of the individual partners. Partnerships can now arrange a joint agreement through the BPSS.

Read more at:

www.accountancyage.com/accountancyage/news/2255599/pay-lifeline-open-firms

Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, PO Box 8, Harrogate, HG2 8XB

Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025 E-mail: info@harrogatechamber.org Website: harrogatechamber.org

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