

Runnymede Chambers of Commerce *Newsletter*



The independent
voices for
local businesses



Issue 1

Inside this issue: Chamber News • Member Focus • Business Focus



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The Woodcote motto – Live to Learn and Learn to Live – is at the core of our ethos. We place great emphasis on traditional values and boys are expected to treat others as they would wish to be treated. It has been interesting to note in these uncertain economic times that more and more parents are looking for this extra dimension when investing in private education for their sons.

With an average class size of ten, each boy can flourish as an individual and no-one gets “lost”. The boys play sport every day, and everyone has a chance to represent the school in teams, just as every boy has the opportunity to perform in school concerts and plays. These advantages, coupled with the fun environment at Woodcote, have ensured an increase in enquiries, despite what we read in the national press!

Scholarship Morning – 20th March 2010



Tel: 01276 472115 Fax: 01276 472890

Email: info@woodcotehouseschool.co.uk

Website: www.woodcotehouseschool.co.uk

Henry Knight, Headmaster,
Woodcote House School, Snow's Ride, Windlesham, Surrey GU20 6PF

Welcome

Our First Newsletter is here!

Good news is becoming thin on the ground as recession bites, but our first newsletter is a hopeful indicator that many businesses in Runnymede still remain confident about what they have to offer.

The Addlestone, Chertsey & Egham Chamber of Commerce work together to promote business between members and to promote local businesses within their communities.

When will consumer confidence return to the high street? Only time will tell. A recent survey suggested that as many as 40% of consumers have been directly affected by the recession. The knock on effect is massive, with high streets struggling as customers tighten their belts. Shop closures are becoming a worry and we have lost a number of old established businesses from both the retail and manufacturing industry in the second quarter of the year.

However, the financial services market is showing some signs of recovery, according to a report from the CBI. It has been noticed that customers are changing their buying habits, and low price and value stores are experiencing an upturn in business as people look for ways to make economies. Charity shops are becoming busier as consumers look for bargains, especially in clothing. But these are not the only businesses that prosper in when the economy contracts. It takes imagination and enterprise but many businesses do find the new ways of trading successfully in a recession, and trading out of recession.

The close coordination of our Chambers of Commerce means we have something to offer for every business. Size does not matter, neither does the type of sector. We can all promote our businesses by encouraging commercial growth and local prosperity in our communities.'

Anna Barry
General Secretary

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ADDLESTONE
CHERTSEY
EGHAM

Working Together

Supporting Businesses in the Runnymede Area

Addlestone, Chertsey and Egham Chambers of Commerce all support businesses in the Runnymede area.

Although the Chambers are separate we all work together on issues that affect all business in the Runnymede area and jointly hold network lunches once a month.

Chamber membership gives you a voice, the chance to be heard and an opportunity to influence.

The benefits of joining a Chamber of Commerce are:

- Excellent networking opportunities
- An opportunity to make business contacts
- A direct link to your local council
- A voice in local and national government for your business
- A relaxed forum to promote your business
- Help and advice on business matters
- Up to date local information and an opportunity to shape business in the area
- A strong link to the Runnymede Business Partnership

To join your local Chamber please contact:

Chertsey and Egham Chamber of Commerce
 Anna Barry
 Phone: 01784 460108
 Email: anna@chertseychamber.com
 Email: admin@eghamchamber.org.uk

Addlestone Chamber of Commerce
 Peggy Broadhead
 Phone: 01932 844465
 Email: thebroadheads@dsl.pipex.com

We look forward to welcoming you to one of the Chambers.

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Business Link

More Free Business Reviews for Surrey Businesses

Due to high demand, Business Link's Business Advice Clinics are now taking place in an additional four locations across Surrey – including one in Addlestone.

The clinics allow business owners to have a free Business Review with an experienced Business Link adviser. The one-to-one sessions, which last up to 90 minutes, will give attendees a confidential and impartial assessment of their business ideas and potential.

As well as Addlestone, additional clinics now take place regularly in Camberley, Epsom and Walton-on-Thames.

Business Link adviser, Ruth Lambert, said: "We aim to give companies an honest and considered view of their business situation – something which is especially important during these tough trading conditions. But there are also opportunities out there at the moment that an adviser could help you to identify. The sessions address various aspects of the business, with a focus on key dynamics such as financial management, sales and marketing and people development."

During the Business Review, the adviser takes into consideration sector, trading situation and whether the business is established or just starting out. Participants leave with an agreed written action plan, relevant information and reference points specific to their needs, and the offer of further guidance from specialists where appropriate.

Business Link customer, Richard Hurtley, owner of Lions Rampant, a company that sells luxury sports and leisure wear, said: "Being 24, I am well aware that there are gaps in my knowledge, particularly when it comes to strategic operations, but my business adviser has been a great help and I now have a very trusting relationship with him. I am a big fan of Business Link; I think it is a really good resource and wish that more people would use it."

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White Lodge Centre

Rendezvous, the purpose-built adult resource centre at White Lodge Centre, Chertsey, is celebrating a year since opening!

White Lodge Centre provides a range of flexible and creative activities and opportunities for disabled children, young people and adults, for their families and for carers across Surrey and the surrounding area.



The light and spacious state-of-the-art Rendezvous building has transformed the range of activities and opportunities that White Lodge Centre offers. We have the flexibility, space and resources to offer our services and membership to an increasing number of people across Surrey.

Our emphasis is on offering individual programmes geared towards a person's chosen lifestyle.

People can choose to get involved in courses from I.T. to the creative arts, from gardening to health and fitness. We also offer therapy sessions in our hydro pool and sensory room and a range of complementary therapies.

We have also expanded our outreach services and have increased the number of partners working with us. **The Bringing It Together (BIT)** programme offers people the opportunity to drop-in to Rendezvous during specific times to access a range of free advice from a number of different organisations, including; British Red Cross, Citizens Advice Bureau, Surrey PCT, Surrey Supported Employment, Deaf Plus, SID, Headway, NWSADP, SAVI and Scope.

At the centre of Rendezvous is Café Bradbury which provides a warm, welcome and friendly atmosphere. Here people have the opportunity to relax and socialise, whilst enjoying the fresh food that is prepared daily. Our covered terrace is an ideal spot for enjoying lunch in the warmer months!

For further information please call 01932 567131, email sbrooker@whitelodgecentre.co.uk or visit www.whitelodgecentre.co.uk



Riverdene Gardens



Riverdene Gardens is a Grade II listed Victorian house providing accommodation of a standard exceeding that of many hotels, with all the comforts of home.

The house is situated between Weybridge and Walton on Thames town centres, and within a short walking distance to many shops, restaurants and pubs. With stylish accommodation in five en suite rooms, the 120 year old Riverdene Gardens offers elegant and sophisticated comfort, whilst retaining the original charm and atmosphere of this Norman Show property.



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Tel: 01932 223574

Email: riverdenegardens@btinternet.com

Web: riverdenegardens.co.uk

Strode's College


Bumper Year For Adult Education At Strode's



Adult Education is booming at Strode's College with over 2,000 adults joining the part time courses offered last year in the day and evening, both in the college and at our 13 outreach centres. There are over 125 different subjects to choose from, including arts & crafts, computing, dance and music, food & wine, general studies, health & personal development, languages, business and vocational courses.

We are sure you will find something of interest to you inside, but if you don't, please get in touch and tell us what it is you want to learn.


Strode's College,
High Street, Egham,
Surrey TW20 9DR



Strode's Business School

Strode's College
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strodes.ac.uk

The Business School provides high quality courses and customised training for local companies and individuals. Courses cover subjects such as business practice, computer skills for business and languages for business. For further information contact: Philippe Labbe, Business School Manager on 01784 437506 ext 241 or email: plabbe@strodes.ac.uk

A photograph showing a group of people in a meeting room. A woman is standing and presenting to a group of people seated around a table.

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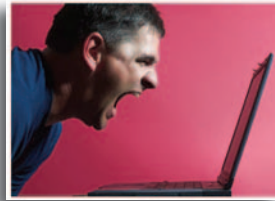
Ever lost a mobile phone and as a consequence lost all those numbers of friends and business contacts? Maybe you had the foresight to back them up to your PC so you can easily restore your numbers. Perhaps you have the numbers elsewhere, but what about the hours spent entering them onto your new phone?

Disasters do occur whether through fire, theft or other causes. I know of one local business which nearly had a full-scale disaster on their hands through an arsonist attacking a company in an adjoining building. Another local business was broken into and one of their servers was stolen over the Christmas period. Remember, the disaster probably will not be of your own making.

You can't wait till you have the disaster to then think about what to do. What would you do if a catastrophe occurred during your busiest trading period of the year? Surveys show that an organisation without an IT Disaster Recovery plan goes out of business within 18 months of a calamity hitting them. So ask yourself the question, "If disaster hit you today, are you prepared for the worst?"

A few years ago, IT Disaster Recovery plans were only drawn up by large corporate operations. However, with the greater use of IT in all companies and organisations, this means that even for quite small companies there is the need for some form of IT Disaster Recovery. You need to create an IT Disaster Recovery plan which takes time rather than money. Some of the simple things to think about in terms of building up your IT Disaster Recovery plan:

- You should have a physical copy of your IT Disaster Recovery plan available offsite. If it is stored on your laptop, PC or server and these are no longer accessible, how do you know what is in the plan?
- Depending on the size of your organisation, then it is advisable to create a disaster recovery team in anticipation of any eventuality.
- Does your business or organisation hold crucial data within your IT system which is fundamental to the running of your business or organisation?
- Is this information backed up on a regular basis?
- Where do you store the information?
- When was the last time you tried to restore the data?
- If information is protected by a password, do you have a complete list of the passwords and are they held securely?



Until recently tape backup was really the only option to use, but it had many shortcomings. Tapes degrade or snap, so they need to be replaced on a regular basis. Often a tape can be read on one tape drive, but not on another. So, it is no good having a tape backup, only to find out you can't read your precious data.

With today's technology you no longer need to invest in costly tape drives and tapes. You can now backup to disks and/or to a secure datacentre. Equipment aimed at smaller organisations, such as Sky Teledata's BizCon5051, is now available which doubles up as your onsite disk-to-disk backup unit; it also acts as a standby server in the event of a major server problem; and transmits your backup data, via an encrypted link to a secure offsite datacentre, for disaster recovery purposes, every day.

If you have drawn up a Disaster Recovery plan previously, how relevant is it to the current needs of your organisation? Your disaster recovery plan needs to be reviewed regularly to mirror the organisation as it evolves and changes.

Finally, one great way to see how good your disaster recovery plan really is, is to test your procedures in a mock disaster situation. Does the plan work? What things have you forgotten to include in your plan?

What is absolutely vital in today's business environment, is to ensure that your data is being backed up; that the data is held off site; and that regular restores are carried out to prove the system works. If you follow these simple steps then should you get hit by a disaster, you have a very good chance that your business will survive.

www.skyteledata.co.uk is happy to give further advice and assistance on Disaster Recovery and can be contacted on 02070966367 or info@skyteledata.co.uk

Arts & Crafts Market

Anna Barry started the Arts & Crafts Market in October 2004 due to the shortage of places in Runnymede, for those people who have 'cottage industries' at home making arts & crafts, to platform their wares.

The market started as a monthly event in Chertsey, which ran until the end of 2006. There are now regular events on Staines and Redhill high streets and occasional events in Lower Sunbury and at other locations.

Additional dates and venues are added to the website as they are confirmed and we ask that visitors check the site regularly to find out what is going on each month.

Only British handmade crafts are allowed to be sold at our events, not only to give our customers something unique to purchase and enjoy, but also to add something new to the towns we trade in, i.e. nothing is sold at our events that can be found in the high street shops or on a local general market.

All of the traders hand make and design their products, so at each of our events we have a selection of unique and reasonably priced products on sale. Most of the traders will take individual commissions and offer a repair service.

The selection of crafts vary from month to month and include such items as woodturning, jewellery of all types, art work and photography, a variety of hand knitted or sewn items, memorabilia, cards, and so much more.



The crafts people work together as a whole, helping each other to grow, individually and as a market. The ethos of the Arts & Crafts Market is of a cooperative, to succeed as a market means all the traders succeed with their business. This means that we have made great friendships and have a lot of fun at all our events. Which in turn means that all our visitors get a warm welcome and we appreciate it when they stop to chat to us too.

For more information please contact Anna Barry on 01784 460108 or email to anna@craftmarket.org.uk or visit the website: www.craftmarket.org.uk

All of the craft traders look forward to welcoming you to our next event.



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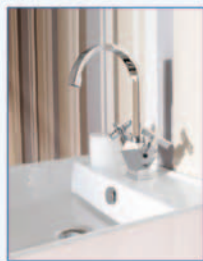
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Meher Oliaji of Karnak Travel in Egham has been at the forefront of a year-long battle to prevent the town being strangled by the proposed new Airtrack rail service from Heathrow. She has done this while managing a travel agency which she describes as “one of the last remaining full-range High Street travel agents”.

“We still offer a full IATA service, from our High Street office, which means you can walk in, or phone us, discuss trips to anywhere in the world, and if the best fare we can find is a published fare, we can have your ticket confirmed and issued within 5 minutes.

“It takes a little longer if you want to visit 4 countries in 7 days, or if you need to add hotels or cars or ferries, but it’s also more interesting for us, because making complicated trips simple is where our experience and skill comes in.”

The agency has 5 staff, and boasts that the four travel consultants have 75 years’ travel industry experience between them. That isn’t just a matter of knowing

about destinations, holiday companies, airlines, and fares, it’s also about knowing their customers, and considering what each client needs from their travel agent.

Meher, a former Chair of the Egham Chamber of Commerce firmly believes that, although much has changed in the 27 years she has been in Egham, there is a bright future for small town centres which foster distinctive businesses, and for independent businesses which can be agile and imaginative.

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Event Design

A Structured Approach

At some point in your career you may be asked to present something to an audience. The presentation may be informal, a small group or something larger such as a full blown seminar audience.

It often follows that if you are perceived as being a good presenter, then at some point you may be asked to design and present a seminar of your own. Designing an event from scratch is extremely rewarding. The sense of achievement, when things go according to plan is reward enough for the effort involved.



As with any successful campaign it starts with the planning stage:

A good starting point is to be very clear about what your objectives are, impart information, and offer solutions, change perceptions, open up channels of communication, the list goes on and on. So that you do not wander off the track write the objective down and everything that you do test it against that statement. If it does not pass the 'test', don't do it.

Have a clear understanding of what your audience needs are, apply the test method as above and take the appropriate action.

Select the best delivery method geared to the subject and the audience. You do not have a captive audience. Their bodies may be present, but their minds could be elsewhere if you are machine-gunning them with information from the word go.

Audience participation can be a great way to stimulate ideas and ensure that lessons are learnt and carried forward. Building in activities will break up the day and provide stimulation and interest. Again bear in mind what is appropriate. Using an ice breaker or problem solving exercise may work very well in a team building scenario, but may fall flat with a number of other audiences.

The key factor is to allow the audience to have a stake in the process. Arriving at solutions apparently independently, will always have more value than simply taking things on trust. Of course you are in control of the process and ultimately responsible for where you and the audience end up at the end of the session.

An advertisement for Douglas Signs & Design UK Ltd. The ad features a green header with the company logo and name. Below the header, there is a green box containing text about their services: "We have full in house capabilities to manufacture all of your signage requirements, including digital print, screen print, engraving, routing, metal fabrication and all types of illuminated sign solutions. Just talk to one of our experienced project managers and we will help to solve your sign problem quickly and to your satisfaction." To the right of the text are three small images showing different types of signage: a Subway sign, a KFC sign, and a sign for a building. At the bottom of the ad, there is a grey box with contact information: "www.douglas-signsLtd.co.uk", "Tel: 01932 564588 Fax: 01932 564146", "Unit 2, Chertsey Business Centre", "Gogmore Lane, Surrey, KT16 9AP".

The first few minutes of interaction with the group can set the scene for the rest of the seminar. It is good policy to clearly flag up the following:

What the seminar is about. The ground that will be covered. What they will take away with them. How the information can be applied and the expected benefits.

In addition, break out points, refreshment and lunch breaks should be flagged up. As well as placement of Fire Exits and

evacuation procedures, rest rooms and the policy on mobile phones. A dunce's hat and a suitable corner to stand in should be available. What you are trying to achieve is that everybody understands why they are there, what they can expect to learn and how they will benefit from the experience.

How the seminar progresses from that point depends on another set of experiences, which we cover in the adjacent article, "The Event - Make or Break".

The Event

Make or Break

It can be intimidating to face an audience eagerly anticipating the journey that you are about to lead them on. Or not, as the case may be.

Hopefully, if you have done your homework you will be brimming with confidence and looking forward to leading the group on a voyage of discovery. Unfortunately, a seminar audience in some respects copy our canine cousins and can smell fear at a hundred paces. It doesn't matter what you feel like inside, your legs may be like jelly, but the outward appearance of calm, measured confidence, not arrogance, personified in a big smile will give you a fighting chance. There is a danger that you may appear too 'easy going' and fall foul of the sometimes present, awkward character whose mission in life is to appear clever, often at your expense.

The last time I was saddled with one of these characters I received some help from the other delegates, specifically the one sitting behind the disrupter. The advice given was along the lines that "if you don't stop butting in with your idea of reality you could be eating lunch through a straw". A trifle harsh, but it appeared to do the job.

A safe start to the proceedings is to go around the group and ask for some basic information: name, organisation, position and what they hope to get from the training experience.

It is a good idea to make notes at this point. a fund of knowledge on which to base the delegates are looking to take away with confirming the content research you will material that you can include in the



You could of course find out that the word loosely, has very little relevance draw on at this point is the 'fast Failing that, well I leave you to fill when it happened to me, only emergency call which gave me ten put to very good use.

If you are running a one day in an 'activity'. An activity is usually certain aspects of the information given at the seminar. You can buy activity packs which are often paper based or you can plumb for the all singing and dancing kit variety which will enable you to build a model car large enough for two people or construct a bridge.

Be careful with the 'activity' you choose, some groups refuse to have fun and miss the point of the activity completely.

Towards the end of the seminar it is good practice to have a short session on 'what happens next', possible sources of further study can be signposted. A question and answer slot is often very useful in clearing up any points that have not fully been absorbed by the group or individual.

Evaluation forms, love them or hate them, are a great source of information and can provide some useful information on how the seminar was perceived and received by the group. Depending on the nature of the event, taking into consideration funding requirements, make the form as short and to the point as possible. A person on the door collecting them as people leave is a good way to ensure that you get a large enough sample on which to base an opinion.

You may wish to debrief the team after the event. It is good practice to try and improve every session that you deliver for the next group. Surfers who are looking for the perfect wave are in many respects like a presenter on a mission. Hopefully, you will at some stage in your career 'experience the perfect wave'.

Occupation and company will give examples. Having an overview of what them is at best a check list, hopefully have done or prompting some extra session.

session you planned, using the to your audience. A good skill to thinking on the feet routine'. in the blanks. My own preference, occasion, was to take an minutes of thinking time which I

seminar it makes sense to build a group task designed to explore