

Sherborne Chamber of Trade and Commerce March 2009 Newsletter

What a hectic month – many traders have been off to trade fairs buying for next season. Within the Chamber we have been busy too as you will see from the following update!

March Open Meeting - 6pm Thursday 12th March Oxley Sports Centre, Sherborne

We are meeting on Thursday 12th March, 6pm at the Oxley Sports Centre, Sherborne. It will be an open meeting, so do bring a friend or colleague. Wine and nibbles be on offer, and of course the chance to chat to local business owners.

We have three presentations lined up. The first will be by Trevor Rogers, a local specialist in business continuity planning who has many years' experience. He will explain what can go wrong, how to develop your plan and practical steps a business can take to become more resilient.

The second speakers will be Discount - Age representatives Valerie Singleton and Nigel Houghton who will explain to us how Sherborne could become a model town for their scheme.

Finally Matt Nelson from the Oxley Sports Centre will offer us a tour of the facilities and will be handing out some free vouchers for use of centre.

I need to know numbers as soon as possible please, so please confirm your attendance to cordelia@sherbornechamber.org.uk or call 07594 805013.

Local businesses have their say.

Local business owners are being asked by Sherborne Chamber to give their ideas of how they could work together to make their business more successful in these difficult economic times.

Chamber of Trade President Thelma Drabik says: "Being a member of Sherborne Chamber of Trade gives you opportunities for networking, marketing and promotion. We want to give Sherborne every chance of success. We have a unique range of independent retailers and service providers who offer a good value quality shopping experience and a fantastic range of services."

Chamber of Trade member Liz Burt completed the survey last week. She remarked that we have made great strides forward and now have a monthly newsletter and lively regular meetings that have attracted many new members. Liz has suggested that a new, more contemporary logo could be a good idea to refresh the look of the Chamber and reflect the positive changes that are taking place.

If Gosia has not approached you already, have your say and look at the survey on the sherbornetown.com website. It takes about 5 minutes to complete.

Summer Hanging Baskets

The invoicing system is in place. Thank you Anthony for all your hard work. As we are about to start the summer hanging basket process, this will be most welcome. Arrangements and costs are being discussed, and we shall soon be in a position to offer baskets and watering through the Chamber once again.

The Three Wishes Pancake Race

This lovely event went really well. Great press coverage and community spirit.

Environment Conference and Workshop

Mike Burks of Castle Gardens attended on behalf of the Chamber and will update us in due course.

Steam Dreams Monday 13th April 2pm – 5pm (provisional times)

The Steam Dreams train 'Oliver Cromwell' will be arriving in Sherborne on Easter Monday. If this can be of any benefit to your business, do take advantage of it. In December nearly 400 people alighted from the train in Sherborne. Do contact me if you have any ideas about using this event to your advantage.

Marche de France

The French market looks set to go ahead in Sherborne this year. Discussions are underway between the Chamber, the Town Council and of course Mache de France to finalise location and dates. Having exhausted all other possibilities, we are looking at Cheap Street again, from the top to the Post Office – preferably on a Sunday. Concerns have been expressed by two members. Please let me know if you have any issues you would like to talk through before plans are made final.

New Member – Kings Arms, Charlton Horethorn

The King's Arms at Charlton Horethorne will open its doors on the afternoon of the 11th March 2009 for the first time in two years.

Tony and Sarah Lethbridge purchased this rural public house on the border of Dorset and Somerset and have completely renovated and refurbished, adding additional bedrooms and an extension.

Tony, Sarah and the team would like to invite Sherborne Chamber members and a guest to a VIP launch on 17th and 18th March from 5.30 - 7.30pm so they can enjoy a glass of wine and a tour of the new King's Arms at Charlton Horethorne.

Please RSVP with your preferred date to jackie@p-pr.co.uk or call Rowena or Jackie on 01202 896698 no later than 12th March 2009 as spaces are limited and are by guest invitation only.

Sainsbuys Exension

Chamber members Sainsburys have put in a planning application to extend their premises and increase their trading area, which will be predominantly

food-focused. Details are on <http://www.dorsetforyou.co.uk/> and you can contact Kirsty Anderson or James Harris on 0117 907 3400 to discuss any comments you may have or arrange a meeting.

Job Vacancy at The Present Finder

A growing family business selling Upmarket and Unusual Presents on-line, by mail order and via a retail outlet in Sherborne needs a General Assistant and more ...

We are looking for a confident team-player to join us in our busy Warehouse. Duties will include processing orders using computerised systems, packing parcels, handling customer queries and serving in our shop. You will be interested in e-commerce, and be numeric and accurate. Full time position. Salary dependent on experience and qualifications.

Application form available from tanyap@thepresentfinder.co.uk
www.thepresentfinder.co.uk

Blackmore Vale Shopwatch Column

Reporter Rosie Staal is writing a weekly feature called Shopwatch for the Blackmore Vale Magazine, all about shop openings, closures, changes on the street scene, commercial ideas for coping with the recession, and so on.

Sherborne businesses are welcome to contact through me if they have anything they would like to contribute. Share the news.

Chalk and Cheese

There will be a meeting on 26th March to discuss funding for business that are passionate about local food, love Dorset and care about sustainable tourism. See the chalkandcheese.org website for more detail.

Supply2.gov contracts

Small firms across the country are urged to sign up to the Government's Supply2.gov.uk website to take advantage of the thousands of Government contracts available.

More than 123,000 companies have already signed up to the website, which provides an up to the minute database of government contracts for small businesses wishing to supply to the public sector.

Suppliers who have signed up to the site receive advice on how best to access government contracts and a free daily email alert notifying them of new opportunities that are relevant to their business.

Secretary of State Lord Mandelson said:

"Every year the government spends many billions of pounds on public sector contracts. It is vital that we actively help small and medium sized companies take advantage of these business opportunities. In the current economic climate this is more important than ever. The supply.2gov.uk website is a crucial tool for this. SMEs often have smaller overheads, local knowledge and great flexibility. Often they can offer the public sector better value for money

than big business".

For more information please visit www.Supply2.gov.uk

Dorset Business

Sherborne Chamber is affiliated to Dorset Business. Please look at Sherborntown.com Chamber Advice Page for details of their member-to-member discount scheme and forthcoming events. I understand that there is a 'Meet the Neighbours' event planned in Sherborne in May.

Sherborne Chamber of Trade and Commerce AGM and Way Forward Meeting Tuesday 28th April, 6pm, at the Swan Pub, Swan Yard, off Cheap Street, Sherborne.

We shall hold the AGM on this date, drinks and nibbles will be provided. This meeting is open to members only. We shall also have an update on Way Forward progress. Agenda items to Cordelia please.

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter is due to go out on 3rd April, all contributions to me please by the end of March latest.

You are welcome to use the newsletter to tell fellow members and others who receive the newsletter about any offers or promotions you are running, achievements of your business or bring items of interest to the attention of others. You are also welcome to add interested parties to our distribution list.

If you read this and are not a member, please give me a call to discuss how the Chamber might be able to add benefit to your business.

Cordelia McFarlane

Sherborne Chamber of Trade and Commerce

Tel. 07594 805013

I am usually available for Chamber business Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am - 1pm.