

Sherborne Chamber of Trade and Commerce April 2009 Newsletter

The focus this month is on planning ahead. If you do not have a good plan in place you cannot expect to succeed.

Summer 2009 Hanging Baskets

Following the wonderful display from our winter hanging baskets, we wish to continue the effect with our summer baskets. This is your chance as a trader to add some joy to the town in the current economic climate.

We have arranged that South Somerset District Council Environmental Department will again supply us with summer hanging baskets for Sherborne, which will be watered and looked after by Sherborne Town Council. The basket colours for this year will be red, purple and pink.

If you have taken a basket before, you will receive an invoice shortly. In accordance with our new system of accounting we cannot arrange delivery without payment. Please note that to guarantee your basket, the deadline for payment is 24 April 2009.

If you have not taken a basket before, and you are interested, you are welcome to join in. Please go to sherbornetown.com for more information and complete the order form. You are also welcome to contact Cordelia with any queries you may have.

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

Drinks and nibbles will be provided. We shall also have an update on 'Way Forward' progress. Please notify Cordelia of any agenda items you would like to be discussed at the meeting and let her know if you plan to attend. This meeting is open to members only.

Report on March Open Meeting which was held at the Oxley Sports Centre.

We held an interesting and informative open meeting a few weeks ago at the Oxley Sports Centre. We enjoyed wine and nibbles, served by Gosia, and of course the chance to chat with contacts old and new.

We enjoyed presentations by Trevor Rogers, a local specialist in business continuity planning and Discount - Age representatives Valerie Singleton and Nigel Houghton, who explained to us how Sherborne could become a model town for their scheme.

Ms Singleton called on businesses to sign up to the scheme to boost business and attract media attention. Some members had reservations about the scheme as they felt that the wrong sector of the community would be offered a discount. Further discussion will take place at the next Chamber meeting before a decision is reached whether to participate.

Mike Burks from Castle Gardens updated us on the Sunrise Environmental Conference that took place in Sherborne at the end of February, and outlined some ways in which businesses and the Chamber could be involved.

The final presentation at the meeting was Matt Nelson from the Oxley Sports Centre, who offered us a tour of the facilities and handed out some free vouchers for use of the fantastic centre.

Local businesses have their say.

Local business owners have provided us with well over 100 responses to our survey. We now need to look at the answers and decide how we can change. A big thank you to Gosia for all her hard work on this project. Thank you also to everyone who took the time to respond.

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. Is there anything special we can tell Steam Dreams about?

Marche de France

The French market looks set to go ahead in Sherborne this year and is scheduled for Sunday 31 May. Despite negative publicity, there is support for the event, which many feel raises the profile of the town. We have had only two negative responses after a high level of awareness regarding planning the event within the town. We hope that by holding the event on a Sunday it will be possible to keep most parties happy.

Sherborne Primary School Community Governor Required

Sherborne Primary School require a member of the community to become a governor, which involves working with the headteacher and staff to cover a range of responsibilities, including: making decisions about budgets and staffing, ensuring the curriculum is delivered and helping to raise overall standards of achievement.

Sherborne Primary has over 300 pupils. The school teaches children aged between four and eleven years old. It also offers an extended provision for working parents. The school has ECO status from September 2009.

No formal qualifications are required to volunteer as a governor, but applicants must be enthusiastic and committed to giving some spare time to the school.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children. The successful candidate will be subject to a CRB check at the appropriate level.

For further information contact Mr Kevin Roberts Headteacher on: 01935 812619

Oxfam National Book Promotion

Andrew Cordery, the manager of Oxfam has made us aware of Oxfam having a national book promotion in July. One of his volunteers had an idea of getting all the booksellers in town together to make a book trail for this event and perhaps having a stall in Cheap Street's market with all the booksellers represented. Would this be possible? Would any other booksellers be interested? Would it upset any of the other regular traders?

Please contact Andrew Cordery at Oxfam.

Swan Yard Disruption

Swan Yard will be re-surfaced during the period Monday April 27th - Friday June 5th. All business will remain open. Please let your customers know this should you have the opportunity to tell them.

Premises to Let

Positive PR are moving premises, and their existing smart, modern and eco-friendly offices are up to let. The premises are at The Old Fire Station, Ludbourne Road, Sherborne and comprise approximately 595 sq.ft., currently zoned B1 offices.

If you are interested contact the landlord on 01935 813176 or e-mail office@studio401.co.uk

Sherborne Town Guide

Do you need a further supply of copies of the guide? If so, contact Nigel Engert, Sherborne Area Partnership on 01935 816961 to let him know. See <http://www.sherbornetown.com/brochure.aspx> for the online version.

Special Show Discount for Chamber Members at Bath and West Showground Events

The first show is the Model Engineering, Model Making and Hobbies Exhibition, the UK's most interactive hobbies show (www.swmee.co.uk), which takes place over the weekend of 18-19 April at the Royal Bath & West Show Ground, Shepton Mallet. It will feature the widest range of models actively being shown and ridden or flown and driven anywhere in the UK.

The second event is the Footman James 30th Bristol Classic Car Show (www.bccsl.co.uk), which takes place at the same venue over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend (2-4 May). This annual gathering of vintage and classic cars will feature everything from spectacular pre-war collectibles to modern classics.

The discount code for chamber members for both regional shows is CCPR1, which will entitle you to a £2 discount.

Hobbies show tickets will be £6 (normally £8) - via www.swmee.co.uk

Classic car show tickets will be £7 (normally £9) - via www.bccsl.co.uk

South West Market and Coastal Towns Forum

This group was set up last year and acts as an informal and inexpensive conduit for sharing mutually useful information.

We have been put in touch with Hugh from D2, who facilitates the group. Is there a member who is interested in representing Sherborne to share information about trading during the recession with other towns in Dorset. Lyme Regis report a higher level of bookings for accommodation than last year (€ versus the £?) and Bridport think their independent shops are still doing well.

Please contact me if you are interested.

Sherborne Area Tourism Forum

This friendly and useful group meets every couple of months. It is important that a representative from the Chamber of Trade participates. I am unable to attend these meetings, which take place on Thursday afternoons at the Council Chamber. The next meeting is on Thursday 7th May. Would any chamber members who are interested please contact me.

Rural Enterprise Gateway and South West Business Link

We have some extremely useful information on our website regarding events and support available to help develop rural businesses in the south-west. Do take a look.

Environment Forum and Conference

A copy of the Environmental sunrise Conference report is on our chamber advice page on sherbornetown.com. The conference was held on 26th February and as you may well have seen or heard, it was a great success.

The key role now of the Environment Forum is to encourage implementation and support to groups and individuals who want to make a difference in the environmental area. This is increasingly important in business as customers like to see at least a consideration of environmental issues.

The next meeting of the Environmental Forum will be held at 18:00 on 23rd April, at the Council Offices in Newland, Sherborne. The meeting is open to all, and it would be great to see the chamber represented.

This meeting will discuss the implementation aspects and moving forward from the conference.

Please send Kevin Waterfall ideas for agenda items that you want to include, in relation to implementing environmental improvement activities, especially related to this report.

We are also investigating Green Business seminars which we hope to report back on soon.

2012 Olympic Opportunities for Local Businesses

There are significant business opportunities available for local businesses in the run up to the 2012 olympic games. A local company has already secured a contract to construct an accommodation block on Portland.

Core areas set to benefit include: tourism, building, community engagement, sports participation, culture, and associated infrastructure.

Go to www.london2012.com, click on 'get involved,' then 'business network,' then 'compete for.' You will then reach the registration/logon page. You can also look at the www.businesslink.gov.uk/region and www.southwestrda.org.uk/region

Business Rates

Sherborne Area Partnership and West Dorset Partnership have been actively working to keep business rates as low as possible. A letter has just been drafted to the Minister in charge of setting business rates.

The links below give information on new legislation announced by the Government this week that will enable businesses to spread payment of this year's inflation up-rating to business rates over three years.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1190659>

Business Rates Deferral Scheme 2009-10: Fact sheet

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1190988.pdf>

Sustainable Communities Act 2007 submission

I need to find a chamber member prepared to consider this short document. If you feel that you could be that person, please contact me asap. It needs to be done by the end of the month.

Dorset Business

Sherborne Chamber is affiliated to Dorset Business. Please look at sherbornetown.com chamber advice page for a link to their website, detailing the member-to-member discount scheme and forthcoming events. I understand that there is a 'Meet the Neighbours' event planned in Sherborne in May.

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter is due to go out on 1st May, all contributions to me please by the end of April 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.