

January -
February
2010

Hastings and St Leonards Town Centre Partnership

Town Centrepoint

From 22nd February you can
get Town Centre latest news
on
www.1066enterprise.co.uk/tcp

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Huge demand for Town Centre Management's services in 2009

The recession has brought with it a huge demand from town centre businesses and new entrepreneurs for advice and support services. Existing businesses have sought advice on a wide range of subjects including franchising, marketing, improving customer service, downsizing and crime prevention. New entrepreneurs have sought help not only with finding suitable premises and business planning but also with such things as market testing and grant availability.

Since April 2009, TCM has directly advised 322 businesses, including 164 sole traders and 17 new entrepreneurs. We have "sign-posted" 57 businesses to 1066 Enterprise's Business advisors and 27 to the Council's Retail Vitality and Cultural grants programmes. We have advised 20 businesses on Home Office security grant bid writing, encouraged around 60 new businesses to join Shopwatch and 16 more have joined Barwatch

130 businesses have taken advantage of the "Custom Eyes" business support project including a combination of free mystery shopper, customer experience enhancement courses and business advice.

There has also been a larger than usual demand from businesses for promotional space in the town centre. Several have taken advantage of the TCM membership scheme which offers up to 5 day's free promotion as part of its benefits package.

If you businesses needs advice - call 01424 205516

The 1066 Business Awards

The 1066 Business Awards 2010 are now open for applications. After feedback from last year's awards, a few new categories to watch out for this year are:

- Eatery (Restaurant / Pub / Cafe) of the Year
- Young Achiever of the Year
- Investor in Training Business of the Year
- Customer Service Business of the Year

The awards are a great way to raise the profile of your business locally and get some recognition for all your hard work! A full list of categories can be found at www.1066businessawards.net/categories

The deadline for submissions is **Friday 19th March**. The ceremony is on Friday 30th April at Azur Marina Pavilion, and it's an evening do this time round. Tickets will be £35 + VAT and details of the guest speaker will be announced shortly.

Developments Update

Jerwood Gallery & Stade

Work has now started on the Stade site, with temporary toilets in place and contractors starting on the junction improvements.

The contractor working on the open space, community facilities and café will start after Easter when the coach park will close. Subject to 'land swap' agreements going ahead, the Jerwood Foundation expect to start work on their gallery in May. All work is on schedule to be complete by June 2011.

Following concern about the loss of parking spaces the Foreshore Trust was approached about the use of Pelham Place and Rock-a-Nore car parks by residents permit holders. The Trust agreed, so anyone with a residents parking permit - not just for the Old Town - can now park in those car parks from 1800 until 0900 without further charge. This could provide a welcome fillip to town centre businesses too!

University Centre 2

The University Centre on Havelock Road is now fully occupied and more space is needed to meet demand for additional courses from a larger number of students. Additional facilities for the University Centre in the Post Office building have recently received planning permission. The Post Office will continue to operate from the ground floor, accessed from Cambridge Road. The University Centre will be accommodated in the remaining building, with a new rear extension.

New College to celebrate Springtime with a Festival Week



Sussex Coast College Hastings will celebrate springtime with a Festival Week in their new Station Plaza Building.

Spring Festival 2010 from Sussex Coast College Hastings is a five-day series of events to celebrate the milestone of the new Station Plaza campus ahead of the official opening of the College in September. All the events will take place in the vast atrium space of the new college building.

A variety of events and workshops will take place appealing to all stakeholder groups. Every day will have a main event which invited groups or the wider community will be encouraged to attend.

Events schedule:

Sunday 7th March 10am - 6pm - *International Women's Day* A day of free food, performances and activities for all the family.

Monday 8th March 11am - 4pm - *Food Festival*. Free tasters of dishes from around the world, prepared by chefs from Hastings' best restaurants.

Tuesday 9th March 7 - 8pm *The Hastings Song* An awe-inspiring free concert celebrating Hastings and the sea. With an original score. Free tea and coffee. Suitable for all ages.

Wednesday 10th March *An Introduction to Station Plaza* Private reception, by invitation only.

Thursday 11th March 11am - 4pm *An introduction to Station Plaza* Free guided tours of the new college building. Free tea and coffee for all visitors.

Friday 12th March *The Big Debate* Local schools' political discussion (by invitation only).

For more information about the new College go to
www.sussexcoast.ac.uk

Return of business confidence signals need for more support services

Business optimism has returned to pre-recession levels according to Business Link research.

48% of SMEs surveyed for the South East Business Monitor expect their turnover to grow in 2010. This compares with 30% in March 2009 and 43% in July 2008.

The research also found that 1 in 3 SMEs are preparing for better times by training staff or investigating training options and over half expect to expand in the medium term.

Other findings include:

- The Business/Financial services sector is the most optimistic - 1 in 5 intend to take on staff, which equates to over 60,000 jobs if each business takes on just one employee.
- Across all the sectors, 18% of SMEs expect to grow their staff numbers in 2010.
- 61% of those with growth ambitions indicated a need to seek business support.

Businesses can call 1066 Enterprise on 01424 205500 for information about the range of business support services or go to www.1066enterprise.co.uk

Welcome news - Pedlars - people who supposedly trade on the move but more often than not are static - could face regulation by local authorities and instant fines in future if they flout the rules.

Expert opinion differs on Christmas retail sales figures

UK retail sales values rose 4.2% on a like-for-like basis from December 2008, when sales had dropped 3.3% according to official figures

Food sales growth picked up to its strongest since June and wintry weather gave a good boost to clothing and footwear. Homewares sales showed further gains but against larger declines a year ago. Furniture slowed but health and beauty picked up, helped by Christmas gifting. Non-food non-store sales (internet, mail-order and phone sales) in December were 26.5% higher than a year ago compared with 16.9% in November.

Stephen Robertson, Director General, British Retail Consortium, said, *"These are stronger figures than we dared hope for. After a surprisingly muted November, this is the best total sales growth for a December since 2005 and goes well beyond just making up for the sales fall the sector suffered a year ago. The figures were certainly helped by the comparison with last December's terrible results but customers clearly felt more confident about spending than they have for some time. Sales growth was also helped by the VAT cut dropping out of the 12-month comparison, December being the first and only month where the 15% rate is the same as a year earlier."*

However, Verdict Research has produced a report that suggests the widely reported success of the UK retail sector over the Christmas period may not be as realistic as the raw figures suggest.

The report points out that retailers had benefited from £14bn of extra trade from those businesses that went bankrupt in the latter part of the year e.g. Woolworths, Bay Trading, Rosebys, Zavvi, and Principles and from people bringing forward purchases to avoid the increase in VAT on January 1st.

There might also be other one-off factors behind December's strong retail showing including the cold weather boosting sales of warm clothing

Verdict predicts that 2010 will still be "tough" on the High Street predicting that consumer spending will only grow 1.1% this year, the second lowest rate of growth since records began in 1966.

For more information about TCM

- Phone

01424 205516 or
01424 205518

Fax:

01424 205519

E-Mail:

rob.woods@1066enterprise.co.uk

Community Partnership Fund helps disabled residents to enjoy the town centres

Inspired thinking by Hastings Borough Council has brought 3 separate organisations closer together as part of a Community Partnership funded project.

Town Centre Management, Shopmobility and the Dial-A-Ride service have worked together throughout 2009 to increase access to Hastings and St Leonards town centres for disabled and elderly residents.

The results have been inspirational - none more so than in August 2009 when, after a joint advertising campaign, Shopmobility recorded an astonishing 280% increase in wheelchair hires over the same month in 2008. The hire rate in Winter has inevitably slowed down given the poor weather conditions so the huge increase in hire fees in the Summer was very welcome.

Dial-A-Ride, a door to door wheelchair accessible transport service has been equally busy, having exceeded its forecast for bus journeys to and from Hastings and St Leonards town centres by around 100%.

The Partnership has proved beneficial in other ways. Hastings Area Community Transport Services (who run Dial-A-Ride) took advantage of the free business planning and support services provided by 1066 Enterprise and Shopmobility has benefited from involvement in the "Custom Eyes" business support project.

For more information about Shopmobility scooter and wheelchair hire call 01424 447847 or go to www.hastingsshopmo@btconnect.com

For Dial-A-Ride services contact 01424 436868

Home Office funding for small retailers will reduce crime

Town Centre Management and the Safer Hastings Partnership have worked together successfully on partnership bids for Home Office funding in support of the independent retail sector.

The successful funding bids include

- 100 new Shopwatch radios to expand the Shopwatch scheme
- New radio transmitters to give St Leonards and the Old Town improved radio reception
- Crime Prevention packs including such things as forged note detectors for retailers outside the Shopwatch area

Our congratulations go to Mel Bonney-Kane, Executive Director of The Hastings Trust and Simon Hedges, director of the F-ish Gallery who were married in Hastings on Friday 5th February.

A funding bid has been lodged with the Heritage Lottery Fund in support of the America Ground celebrations planned for the 4th July

The celebration will be a day long festival with music, arts, performance and other activities to celebrate the area.

It will be a family focused event and will attract people from all over the town to get involved in fun activities. In-kind volunteer time has already been secured as well as contributions in the form of pro-bono design work, donations of stalls and a web presence.

The St Leonards Business Association and TCM have joined forces to produce 10000 map guides to the car parks in St Leonards. The guide aims to encourage more people to shop in that part of town.



Advanced Leadership and Management Training

How would you like to improve your team's productivity by 10%?

We are delighted to offer you a personal invitation to this bespoke leadership development training. Designed for Senior Managers and Business Leaders, in conjunction with Martin Riley, of Re-Bal, the training examines seven principals of leadership:

Planning, Managing the Culture, Scanning Performance, Problem Solving, Implementation, Relationships and Influencing

Additionally we will work with you on a one to one basis prior to the workshop to examine your own aspirations for the day. Following the workshop there is further consultation with the facilitator to help you put the course contents into practice in your business.

Date: 18th March 2010. **Venue:** Bannatyne's Spa Hotel, Hastings.
Time: 0830 – 1700 hrs. **Cost:** £500.00 plus VAT.
(£50.00 deposit payable upon booking your place)

Please note if you have 5 or more employees you may be eligible for a training grant from Skills South East which would effectively cover the cost of this training. We will check your eligibility for you and help you with their application process

**For more information call Ian Smallwood
07920 820 510**

Central Area Management Board

**will take place on Tuesday 23rd
February 5.45pm for 6pm start
at Hastings Town Hall.**

Bexhill to Hastings link road

Driving regeneration for people and businesses

If you wish to receive email updates please send your email address to the County Council

Contact

E-mail: bhlr@eastsussex.gov.uk
Or call during office hours on: **0345 60 80 193**

Website

For regularly updated information about the road visit eastsussex.gov.uk/linkroad

Shaping Hastings - The Big Map

Are there any potential development sites where you live?

We need to identify land for new homes, new places to work and new places to shop in the town. Drop-in sessions have been organised for you to express your views to the planners about where these should go.

Please come along to any of the events below and give us your ideas to help Shape Hastings up to the year 2026.

Monday 22 February
The Bridge Community Centre, 361 Priory Road
Hastings TN34 2NW. 3pm - 7pm

Wednesday 24 February
Tilckin Community Centre, Tilckin Road,
St Leonards TN38 9RA. 3pm - 7pm

Thursday 25 February
Town Hall, Queens Road, Hastings TN34 1QR
12noon - 8pm

Monday 1 March
The Magnet, 1 Christchurch Courtyard, London Road
St Leonards TN37 6GL. 3pm - 7pm

For further information, please call our Planning Policy Team on 01424 451098 or email fplanning@hastings.gov.uk

Follow 'ShapingHastings' on [twitter](#) or find us on [facebook.com](#)

