



SWINDON BUSINESS NEWS

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New era for Swindon Business News



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The Green Issue

How Swindon is moving into the fast lane for environmental innovation

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Swindon gears up for revolution in green technology and hydrogen fuel

A combination of hydrogen-powered vehicles, locally-produced energy projects and next-generation (4G) Wi-Fi could transform Swindon and place it at the forefront of the UK's green-tech revolution.

A feasibility study to show how the transport, communications and other infrastructure can be integrated to improve the town's economy, increase quality of life and reduce impact on the environment is to take place shortly.

Funding of £50,000 for the study has come from the Swindon-based Technology Strategy Board (TSB) under a Government-funded scheme looking at innovative ways to boost local economies.

Swindon Council is among 30 taking part in the TSB 'future cities' project and, depending on the results of the study, could gain the top award of £24m into bring its plans to fruition.

At the same time Swindon's existing open access hydrogen refuelling station – the UK's first when it opened a year ago on car giant Honda's South Marston site – is being further developed and will soon power a fleet of commercial hydrogen-fuelled vehicles operated by Swindon Commercial Services.

And a group of major businesses in the town, including Honda, BMW,



Swindon's hydrogen gas station

Nationwide and RWE npower, have teamed up to help identify economy-boosting green projects and look for ways of funding them.

TSB chief executive Iain Gray said of the future city project: "We planned originally to fund 20 feasibility studies but because of the number of high-quality initial proposals received from councils across the whole country we decided to increase the funding available so that 30 studies could be carried out."

The winning proposal will be announced next January.

The 4G-LTE hybrid network pilot project, which will take place under a partnership between Capita, Swindon Borough Council and UK Broadband, has been welcomed by

the Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP), which has identified more powerful broadband as one of the key infrastructure enablers to help regenerate the local economy.

SWLEP chair Paul Johnson said: "This is excellent – just what businesses need to remain competitive and get an advantage. We need to focus on supporting economic growth, job creation and business opportunities and this project will help do just that. With 89 per cent of our business base employing fewer than 10 people, we need excellent connectivity if they are going to be able to compete. We're delighted that the Borough Council is leading the way in acquiring the latest technology for the benefit of both the public and private sectors."

SWLEP said while it recognised the need for wider internet access to avoid 'digital exclusion', it supported a targeted approach that balanced universal access with the need to make superfast broadband available to existing and new businesses.

Unless strategic employment sites in Swindon and Wiltshire have all the facilities – including super-fast broadband – the area will not figure in the potential investment plans of businesses seeking to establish a presence in the UK, SWLEP added.

Four day week for Honda workers as Europe puts brakes on demand

Honda is to put a third of its Swindon workforce on a four-day week in the run up to Christmas, blaming the economic situation in Europe for its decision.

Workers on the new Civic and Jazz lines at the South Marston plant will go onto a four-day week next month, a three-day week in October and then a four-day week in November and December.

The Japanese car manufacturer reduced working hours in April and November last year after flooding in

Thailand disrupted supplies. In 2009 the plant closed for four months and all production was halted as the global financial crisis put the brakes on car sales across the world. The workforce was put on half pay.

The plant employs 3,500 people at its massive South Marston complex where it builds the Civic, Jazz and CR-V 4X. It also makes engines on the site.

A Honda spokesman said staff would not lose out as they are employed on flexible contracts that

guarantee they are paid for a 37-hour week. Jim D'Avila, regional officer for the Unite union, said: "The recession is biting deep and big successful companies like Honda are struggling to maintain a sensible level of production to retain everyone's employment. Something governmental has to happen otherwise people's jobs are going to be at risk long-term."

Honda recently took on an extra 500 new workers to build the new Civic at the Swindon plant. Most of the plant's output is exported to Europe.

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People

• Bower & Bailey Solicitors have appointed **Stephanie Nunley** as business development manager in their Swindon office. Stephanie, a fully-qualified solicitor who previously trained with the firm, will develop its key areas of practice in her new role. In particular, she will help promote the corporate, commercial property, probate, civil litigation and family areas of the practice. Stephanie is co-chair of the Bristol Association of Women Solicitors, an active member of MASS (the Motor Accident Society) and a fundraising ambassador for one of the Headway regional groups.

• Online marketing agency Toinfinity has appointed marketing specialist **Emma Pearson** to its Swindon-based team. In her role Emma will work closely with clients to develop their online strategies.

Emma gained a good grounding in all aspects of online marketing at a financial services agency in Swindon after completing a Marketing HND and CIM Diploma. In a short time she worked her way up to digital media planner and buyer, specialising in affiliates. It was here that Emma really developed her love of affiliate marketing and subsequently became the affiliate marketing manager.

• Chartered tax adviser **Laura MacDonald** has joined accountants Old Mill's Melksham office as assistant tax manager. The 30-year-old is the first dedicated tax specialist at the Wiltshire office and will work with the rest of the firm's tax specialists from its four other offices under new head of tax Victoria Studley. Laura is



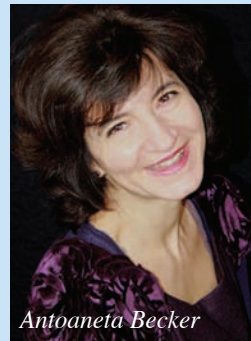
Emma Pearson



Laura Macdonald

the first of a number of new recruits to the tax team, which under Victoria will increase staffing by about 50 per cent. Laura, who previously worked at Douglas Home & Company and Chiene & Tait in Edinburgh, said: "My specialist area is capital taxes and planning issues and I hope to use my experience and the wealth of knowledge that my new colleagues both in the Old Mill tax team and those based here in Melksham have to be proactive in offering clients advice on how to save tax and also provide guidance on succession planning in order that the family assets can be passed on to the next generation in the best way possible." Victoria, who has worked at Old Mill for 14 years, said she is thrilled about her own promotion and very enthusiastic about expanding her team.

• UKTI, the Government's export help and advice organisation, has appointed **Antoaneta Becker** as its new China trade adviser for the South West. Antoaneta, who spent 20 years studying and working in mainland China, will bring a fresh perspective to the region's long-standing trade relationship with one of the world's biggest markets and fastest-growing economies. Antoaneta said: "I am well aware of the difficulties UK companies face in China navigating bureaucratic red tape and frequently-changing regulations. But nevertheless I'm determined to facilitate the China journey for those regional companies willing to accept the challenge and benefit from the big opportunities." The South West economic landscape enjoys many synergies with the industries endorsed and supported by the Chinese government as growth sectors, she said. "The pool of opportunities for both established China market players and newcomers is vast but relatively untapped. While the rise of China is easy to acknowledge,



Antoaneta Becker

businesses constantly need to catch up with the speed and depth of change and development in China's large and complex market space. Whether selling, trading, investing or franchising, China offers opportunities in abundance to UK companies, large or small." Antoaneta first went to China in 1987 as a language student and spent the next 10 years mastering spoken and written Mandarin and learning about China's history, culture and politics. She studied at Peking University – China's most prestigious academia – obtaining first a BA and then a MA in Chinese language and modern literature. In 1997 she joined the team of reporters and researchers of the Economist Intelligence Unit, the research arm of the Economist. Based in Beijing but travelling all over the country, she spent 12 years reporting on China's macro economic trends, doing field work in different regions and researching specific industries and companies. Fluent in Mandarin, she is versed in the subtleties of building trust and personal rapport in China's working environment.

• James Owen has been appointed head of energy and sustainability at Swindon Commercial Services (SCS), a company wholly-owned by Swindon Borough Council. James is tasked with delivering sustainable energy projects to businesses and governmental organisations as well as individual consumers. He has a diverse skills background and has spent the past 11 years in the renewable energy and sustainability sector, most recently working for the UK's largest solar developer. He has worked as a renewables specialist in the construction sector including stints at Galliford Try and Cyril Sweett. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.



James Owen

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Celebrating 10 years of bookings

Nexusvenue, the independent, international corporate venue finder, has celebrated 10 years in business – a period during which it has confirmed hotel revenue worth more than £22.5m.

The firm, based at Uffcott, near Wroughton, provides a free venue-finding service for businesses.

It was formed by managing director Sylvain Bouteiller with the aim of providing the best possible service to bookers of business-related accommodation, meetings and conferences.

Since then it has built many long-lasting and successful business relationships, with many of its clients sending messages of congratulations for the anniversary.

The firm works with a vast database of venues across the world and is very selective about the type it puts forward to clients.

It averages 3,000 bookings a year, from two nights' accommodation to private dinners, staff fun days and sales meetings, to seminars, roadshows and worldwide conferences.

Young inventor in the running for Make it in Great Britain award

Young inventor James Popper, whose CookerSmart fire detection system has been on display at London's Science Museum, will find out in a few weeks whether his pioneering product has been voted The People's Choice among the exhibits.

James, 20, from Cricklade, made it to the final in the Breakthrough category of the Government's Make it in Great Britain challenge, a nationwide competition to find the UK's next big pre-market products, processes and concepts.

As a result, CookerSmart has been showcased alongside other finalists' creations at a special Make it in Great Britain exhibition at the Science Museum since July. Visitors to both the exhibition and a dedicated part of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills' website, have had the chance to vote for the product or design they feel has the most potential in the Make it... Breakthrough category for 16 to 21 year olds.

CookerSmart is a unique and highly-innovative fire detection system, devised primarily, but not exclusively, for the kitchen, where 67 per cent of house fires start. CookerSmart detects fires rapidly by identifying the early infrared emission of flames, rather than smoke, alerting households to the danger more quickly than conventional smoke alarms and reducing irritating false alarms largely triggered by cooking. Swindon & Wiltshire's Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) is backing James.

Strong end to first half for IT specialists

Earlier client deliveries, operating efficiencies and deferred costs helped SciSys, the specialist IT and software firm, finish its first half of 2012 more strongly than had been initially expected.

The Chippenham-based group also said it had maintained a solid order book during the period ending June 30. As a result, its directors are confident that results

for the first half of the year will be consistent with current guidance for the full year, they said in a trading update.

The group, which also has a base in Bristol, supplies bespoke ICT software systems, IT-based business solutions and support services to a range of sectors spanning space and defence to media broadcast. Its interim results will be posted on September 26.

Security firm secures top industry accolade

Swindon-based Truston Security has been named as one of the best firms of its kind in the country by the national Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS).

An independent audit by the national body placed Truston in the top 15 per cent of all security companies in the UK for quality of service.

Lynda Moore of ACS said Truston "consistently provides an excellent standard of service to their clients and demonstrates a high degree of care to their employees".

Truston was self-funded as a start-up by Alison Charnock, Margaret Wilson and Ian Hedges nearly three years ago and is now responsible for the security of more than £1bn worth of business assets.

Mr Hedges, operations director, said the company's success was due to its personal service and keeping up with technological trends. "Our clients really appreciate the personal contact we have with them and our use of technology means that they are always able to speak to a human being 24/7," he said.

New era for Swindon Business News through link up with digital pioneers

County Business Publishing, the company behind Swindon Business News, has struck a strategic alliance with Swindon web-based television company UK Local TV and digital media firm Yantra Digital which will fast track the development of new products for all three companies.

Swindon Business News celebrates its 30th anniversary in October and since its launch has become a mainstay of the town's business community, reporting on - and reflecting - Swindon's dynamic culture of business, enterprise and innovation.

The newspaper, which was at the forefront of the development of web-based products in the 1990s, will benefit from a substantial investment from UK Local TV and Yantra Digital which will enable it to explore new ways to deliver its authoritative news and feature content via digital platforms.

For UK Local TV and Yantra Digital, the link-up with County Business Publishing will open new revenue streams and give them access

to new markets, particularly west along the M4 corridor where County Business Publishing operates websites and e-bulletins in Bristol and Bath.

Swindon Business News's website – www.swindon-business.net – will be upgraded to include rich content, including videos, to enhance its offering to readers and advertisers, giving them new and engaging ways of accessing its content and reaching a wider audience.

A weekly Swindon Business News e-bulletin will also be launched along with regular video briefings to ensure that Swindon Business News' output is as widely accessible as possible.

County Business Publishing editorial director Robert Buckland said the move highlighted the major opportunities being created by far-reaching changes now taking place in the media.

"Swindon Business News has always been in the vanguard of changes in publishing so we are delighted that, by teaming up with UK Local TV and Yantra Digital, we can stay ahead of the pack.

"Our reputation rests on the quality

of our journalism and our unparalleled understanding of the businesses scene in Swindon and across North Wiltshire.

"These will be developed further as we exploit new ways of engaging with our readers – whether that is through our traditional newspaper, our website, e-bulletins or, increasingly, through social media.

A UK Local TV spokesman said: "Swindon Business News has an excellent reputation and has been an important part of the business life in the town for 30 years. So we are delighted, through our investment, to be able to help it further develop and grow into a broader source of business news and information."

Yantra Digital managing director Gurps Nijjar added: "We have worked successfully with Swindon Business News for nearly a year on an informal basis as we developed our web TV offering. It was a logical step to make the arrangement more formal. It's a win-win-win situation for the three business and we look forward to working together on a raft of innovative projects in the coming months."

Yantra Digital shortlisted for national award

Swindon digital media agency Yantra starred alongside the cream of the UK's animation industry at the recent BRAVES – the brand video awards.

The agency was shortlisted in the Best Campaign Animation category with heavyweights Microsoft, Ogilvy, and Xerox in what Yantra managing

director Gurps Nijjar described as the biggest day in the life of the business.

Yantra was nominated for its work with Chippenham logistics group Wincanton which followed a brief to "demonstrate a new, innovative landmark development for Wincanton, the first logistics company in the UK to offer shared fleet services, demonstrating a complex new business model in just over three minutes to a target audience of more than 500 prospective clients". Yantra's animated film simply demonstrated the key

benefits, challenges and concept in a simple, clean and easy-to-follow manner. Yantra Digital offers animation and video services as well as Digital Media and creates campaigns using the richest media on the net. Gurps added: "We were privileged to be seen and recognised among such big brands, and hope we continue to create cool, powerful, cutting-edge media and stay ahead of the game." To see Yantra's nominated video, as well as the event showreel, go to: <http://thebraveawards.com>.

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Truck firm MAN suffers drop in profits as euro crisis hits its sales

Group profits have tumbled at truck and bus manufacturer MAN SE, figures for the first six months of 2012 show – but its Swindon operation boosted revenues despite tough UK market conditions.

The German-owned commercial vehicles and mechanical engineering equipment supplier said operating profits fell to €471m (£371m) compared with €762m in the prior-year period. The group blamed the decrease primarily on its commercial vehicles business where first-half operating profits dropped to €211m.

Chief executive officer Dr Georg Pacht-Reyhofen said the drop-off was due to the muted global economy and uncertainty from customers because of the eurozone debt crisis.

“The decline in Europe was offset by strong growth in Russia and other regions outside of Europe, although margins were lower in part,” he said. “Nevertheless, this shows once again that the decision to systematically



focus MAN on the international markets was the right one. Order intake in the power engineering business area fell by 14 per cent to €2bn.”

Orders at MAN Diesel & Turbo declined by 16 per cent although its Renk specialist gears business achieved a seven per cent rise in order

intake. This resulted in a six per cent drop in group-level order intake to €8.3bn.

MAN’s Truck & Bus arm, which has its UK HQ on Swindon’s Blagrove business park, generated revenues of €4.4bn in the first six months of the year, exceeding the prior-year figure by €110m.

Jazzbones getting IT right for GHS UK

Swindon creative agency Jazzbones has been working with IT support services company GHS UK to enhance its website’s performance and brand.

Jazzbones was initially set the task of creating a website that clearly showed off GHS’s full range of IT services and products. As an IT company, its website and identity had to be up to scratch in order to stand out in a crowded market.

GHS offers complete IT solutions to businesses, schools and charities of all sizes. With more than 30 years’ combined IT experience, it’s been adding value to businesses all around Swindon – and beyond.

Jazzbones helped to reposition GHS’s brand to reflect the size and direction of the company and its broad scope of services. Firstly, Jazzbones set out to refresh and update the out-dated logo, replacing

it with a much more contemporary and dynamic design. Then Jazzbones worked to improve the website – covering everything from user experience, the back end content management solution and search engine optimisation.

GHS director Grant Hume said: “It’s been a really exciting project. Right from the start, Jazzbones fully understood what we were after and managed to capture the essence of our brand. We’re over the moon with the results. Our logo is now totally refreshed and our website not only looks better, but it works better too.”

Jazzbones recently launched the website www.swindon.uk.com.

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Quarter of West law firms are facing closure as ‘Tesco Law’ and recession hit home

More than a quarter of South West law firms are at risk of going out of business over the next year as they face the combined challenges of the impact of the recession and the introduction of far-reaching reforms.

The warning comes from R3, the trade body for insolvency professionals, which estimates that more than 140 law firms in the

a range of different areas of law. With the introduction of Tesco law, new specialist firms will begin to emerge and they will be difficult for high street firms to compete with, partly because small practices cannot afford the level of branding and marketing that these new firms will be able to take advantage of.

“It is also unlikely that they will have the resources or the

140

Number of law firms in the South West at risk of failing

region could fail – 27.7 per cent of the total, higher than the UK average of 24 per cent.

The Legal Services Act – better known as Tesco Law – allows non-lawyers to invest in and own legal businesses, effectively opening the way for supermarkets to enter the market by offering low-cost services such as house conveyancing, wills and simple contracts. This will hit small high street firms hard, according to R3, as they will no longer be able to compete on price for these ‘bread and butter’ services.

R3 vice-chair for the South West and Wales, Ross Connock, said: “Traditionally a firm would practice

technology to compete with these alternative business structures.”

Partners in smaller firms also face the challenge of finding the funds by the end of this month to make their second tax payment of the year.

Unlike limited companies, Limited Liability Partnership (LLPs), partnerships and sole practitioners – which make up the bulk of law firms – are not directly assessed for tax on the business’ profits but usually arrange to settle individual partners’ liabilities. They usually build up a tax reserve to pay this – but with pressure on cashflow many will have difficulty in meeting the bill.

Royal Wootton Bassett firm providing advice for employees on range of critical illness cover

Statistics show that more people are recovering from a serious illness that, at one time, might have killed them or at least ended their working life.

With advances in medical science, the challenge for many people can be funding their recovery until they are well enough to return to work.

They often say if only they had taken out critical illness cover to provide the income needed to get them through a recovery period.

If Only . . . is a family-run Royal Wootton Bassett-based firm providing advice and guidance on regulated

insurance products. The name came from hearing people say ‘if only I could...’ or ‘if only I had done...’ The business says it helps take out of life some of those if onlys...

If Only . . . can provide tailored, well thought through asset protection solutions. The benefits are peace of mind through knowing that the family/business is fully protected in relation to the insured events.

During her training, If Only . . . director Emma Ryder had her eyes opened to the EU gender directive which ultimately is going to put a price

on women’s equality. She is urging women to review and arrange their protection policies as from the December 21 some insurance products are likely to increase significantly in price.

Contact service@ifonly.co.uk or call 01793 858210.



It’s our people power that counts

They may offer a hi-tech, online call-off and delivery service, but the people at Orchard Press say their clients still comment most on their customer service.

Managing director Paul Rowley says that he and his colleagues actually like the fact that they’re known for their people power as much as their print.

He said: “We’ve invested a lot in Orchard Online, our intelligent stock and storage service, and in the new Accura customer relationship management system, which customers see real benefit from.

“But many tell us that it’s the personal touches, combined with our almost obsessive commitment to reliability, that really sets us apart from other print companies.

“For example, we use our own

dedicated van driver Neil for deliveries rather than use a courier company – and customers love him.

“He will carry deliveries up several flights of stairs for customers and will even put the deliveries on the shelves if that’s what’s wanted. They also like the fact that we have our own in-house designers and that they have a familiar voice at the end of the phone if they want to talk to us.”

Cotswold Country Hats managing director Nick Jenkins, who has used Orchard Press for 10 years, said: “They provide an excellent service, excellent quality and are excellent people.

“The service is always very friendly, but also very efficient. Orchard always deliver on time and do what they say they will do.”

Paul Cattell, managing director of

Datwyler UK in Chandler’s Ford, Hampshire, said his company sticks with Orchard Press because the print firm is so responsive.

“No matter how little time they have to turn a job around, and we do give them incredibly tight timescales at times, they always deliver on time,” he said.

“They are amazingly responsive, and have never once let us down. Obviously, price is always a consideration, and they remain competitive, but great quality and reliability is also very important to us. Orchard just have the right combination of all those qualities, which is why we always use them.”

For more information call 01793 420642, email jason.grubb@orchardpress.co.uk or go to: www.orchardpress.co.uk

Law firm Withy King helps sprinter Katrina go for gold at London 2012 Paralympics

Athlete Katrina Hart is being sponsored by Swindon law firm Withy King as she prepares for the London Paralympic Games at the University of Bath's Sports Training Village.

Katrina, a 200m sprinter and University of Bath alumnus, has cerebral palsy and competes in the T37 class.

Withy King's £3,000 sponsorship is being used to cover Katrina's training and travel costs in the run up to this summer's Games – her second Paralympics. Katrina has run competitively at an international level since 2005 and won her first Gold medal for England at the Commonwealth Games in 2010, setting a new British record. In the same year she took home Gold in the 200m at the World Championships.

A neuromuscular condition affecting movement, posture and coordination, Katrina's cerebral palsy manifests itself in the left side of her body – affecting her arm and leg.

Withy King's specialist clinical negligence team has a national reputation for dealing with cerebral palsy-related claims.

Withy King partner and head of the clinical negligence team Simon



Simon Elliman and Paralympic hopeful Katrina Hart

Elliman said: "Katrina is a great inspiration for many people and we are really pleased to be associated with her. She is a real gold medal contender and I'm looking forward to attending the Games and seeing her compete."

Withy King has close links to a number of cerebral palsy charities and Mr Elliman has run half-marathons to raise money for several of them.

Katrina said: "I've always been

athletic – my two older sisters were sporty as children and it really helped to bring out both my confidence and my competitive spirit. I was also lucky enough to have great PE teachers throughout my school days – one of whom was also a GB athlete. She inspired me to think that anything was possible if you put your mind to it. I think it's brilliant that Withy King has got involved and helped to make it all possible."

National award for local chartered accountants

Chartered accountants Haines Watts have been named Auditor of the Year in the SME category at the annual FDs Excellence Awards.

The national awards, hosted by Real Business magazine and held in association with the ICAEW (Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales) and supported by the CBI, celebrate the work of finance directors and their service providers who contribute to the success of British business and sustainable growth. The results are based on votes by financial directors and key financial decision makers in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Respondents were asked to rate their auditor on service, value for money, ability to flag up risks and quality of audit partners. Haines Watts beat rivals such as Crowe Clark Whitehall, Grant Thornton, PKF and RSM Tenon Group to win the award.

Haines Watts Swindon office partner Mike Lloyd said: "It's this type

of award that matters to us because it's voted for by real business people not some academic panel of experts."

"Our core client base is owner-managed businesses and SMEs and so to get this endorsement means a great deal to us."

"We are proud of all of our staff who do an outstanding job for our clients day to day and who have contributed towards us winning this award."

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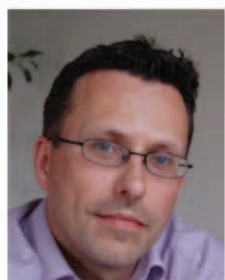
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Example 1: Jim wants to pay £10,000 off his credit card, saving around £1,800 interest charges p.a. He borrows £10,000 from his Company for 12 months and repays it plus 4% interest (£400). Additional Corporation Tax (CT) must be paid by his Company at 20% on the £400 = £80. After paying the additional CT of £80 he would still benefit by about £1,720 overall.

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EXPERTS

Resolving office conflict

Conflict Masters, the Wiltshire consultancy helping organisations tackle conflict in the workplace, continues its series of articles by director Sarah Crayford Brown. This month she asks why unresolved conflict between individuals leads to group conflict

I have watched in awe at the amazing success and the obvious cohesion between the British Olympic cycling and rowing teams. They have provided us with perfect examples of what a unified team can achieve. If only we could get our teams at work to operate at this level.

I say this as this year I have seen a marked increase in the number of group conflicts which I have been asked to mediate. If the relationship between two parties within a team has broken down it inevitably affects everyone else; often leads to the formation of cliques; and provides an ideal opportunity for creating misunderstanding.

So why does an unresolved conflict hold such power?

If we understand that conflict occurs when our needs or interests are blocked by another (or we perceive that this is happening), we can help others when they are in dispute to identify the need or interest that is important to them and how they perceive it is being blocked. Individuals often think the other person causes the conflict rather than appreciating that conflict is the feeling which comes from within ourselves and is akin to a strong feeling of loss. Understanding the source of our conflict provides the key to understanding what we need to do to resolve it.

So what is the best way to help a group who are in conflict?

Start by identifying someone who engenders equal respect and trust from everyone in the group and who is recognised for their conflict management skills. If you can't find someone in your organisation, look for an external person. They should begin by speaking to each of the people in the group individually, and in complete confidence. The purpose of these meetings is to enable each party to give their own, open and honest account and to ensure they feel that their views are important to finding the best solution. These one-to-one sessions also assist the facilitator to identify the key relationships within the group which have broken down and which are fuelling the conflict.

Next mediate the pairs of individuals who are in conflict with each other. If the mediation is successful, agreements will be made, in confidence, between these two parties to resolve their issues.

Only bring the whole group together once the two-party issues are resolved. Help the group to understand some of the theory of conflict so that they can relate their own feelings to the theory and provide an opportunity to reflect on how they and others have behaved and the impact it has had.

Finally, as a group, help them to agree an action plan for moving forward together.

For more information go to www.conflictmasters.co.uk or call Sarah on 01249 859417

Getting the business edge: IT simply applied

In his latest expert column, Ray Smyth of Swindon's The IPstore says that while IT is increasingly plug-and-play, its optimisation and management isn't. This requires an informed, proactive and engaged approach and for this, most organisations will need some professional help.

The components and solutions that make up the IT network on which your business or organisation depends are designed to carry out a particular role. Invariably they do this. However your IT network is not passive and inactive; rather it is very active, dynamic, adaptive and working in the background to simply keep up. You would literally be amazed if you understood the errors and problems that were dealt with automatically and without visibility of any sort, all of the time.

In recent years optimisation has become a specialist area of IT seeking to deal with a range of problems brought about by change in use, increase in data volumes and expectations of everything responding faster. The principle of optimisation can be applied to WAN, LAN, applications and storage and there is a wide and vibrant selection of vendors all claiming to help you avoid paying for more resources than you need, or losing business prospects because of unacceptably slow response time for staff, for example using a database or, increasingly, customers interacting with your web site.

In my experience the products and solutions on offer will do what they say. But the real challenge is do you actually know what is wrong in the first place? You need to, and there is no way around this and unless you employ a suitable qualified and experienced IT specialist, who by the way has access to a decent selection of suitable test and diagnostic tools, then you may waste your money and be left with that undiagnosed problem that is only set to get worse.

A detailed analysis based on nothing more than a review of your network topology will provide the expert eye with some highly dependable clues on possible root causes. With this some testing can take place with a view to relieving a pinch-point, bottleneck, or inadequately-sized data pipe. With victory in sight, remember that in resolving your number one optimisation problem, numbers two and three will move up the ranking – in other words, this may not be a one-problem, one-action cycle, again testifying to the need for some specialist help and an active approach.

While here I am focusing in on IT optimisation, it is without doubt one – just one – aspect of IT management that if not attended to will build up trouble and prepare to strike at the most inconvenient time, calculated to have the most adverse impact on your business operations. With no action on your part, all you have to do is wait...

The Green Issue

The Green Issue

138
g/kmUK average new car CO2 emissions -
down by 23% since 2000

Swindon is gearing up to drive

With the economy deep in the red, the green sector is one of the few areas showing any resilience.

According to the CBI, the UK grew its share of the £3.3 trillion global green market by 2.3% in real terms in 2010/11, reaching £122bn and accounting for around 8 per cent of GDP.

There are real advantages to embracing the green agenda, most economists and business organisations now believe.

But many fear politicians, conscious of the parlous state of the national finances and the tough conditions faced by most businesses, will drag their feet on pledges to embrace the green agenda.

CBI director-general John Cridland said last month: "The so-called 'choice' between going green or going for growth is a false one. We are increasingly hearing that politicians are for one or the other, when in reality, with the right policies in place, green business will be a major pillar of our future growth."

Analysis by the business group suggests that green business may have accounted for more than a third of all UK economic growth in 2011/12 with the sector now employing around 940,000 people.

The UK now has the ability to become a global front-runner in low carbon products and services, which could be adding £20bn extra in annual GDP by 2015. But the CBI warns that the Government needs to take the right



Fuel for thought: The open access Hydrogen station at Honda in Swindon

action to grasp this potential and avoid damaging the competitiveness of key industries.

With its engineering and technological heritage and its location on M4 corridor between the Thames Valley and West of England, Swindon could benefit more than most towns from the green agenda.

It is already surging ahead with a number of projects to position itself in the fast lane for green technology – among them the 'hydrogen highway' initiative which aims to make the town a lead player in the fuel of the future.

Car giant Honda, which is developing hydrogen fuel cell technology for its vehicles, has teamed up with industrial gases group BOC and Forward Swindon, the council's

economic development company, to develop an open access hydrogen refuelling station at Honda's South Marston plant (see P10).

An innovative scheme to produce the hydrogen at this H2 'gas station', which opened last September, by solar energy via an electrolyser is one of five pioneering projects backed by UK's innovation agency, the Technology Strategy Board – also based in Swindon – and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC).

The hydrogen produced will be used for materials handling vehicles and light vans at the plant as a way of demonstrating the use of fuel cell systems and hydrogen technologies.

Business minister Mark Prisk said: "The UK has innovative businesses

Country park's new boiler is hot stuff

Swindon's Green Flag award-winning Stanton Country Park is even greener following the installation of a biomass boiler by Capita Symonds, Swindon office, which undertook the innovative project on behalf of Swindon Borough Council

The boiler, a 30kw system linked to a wet heating system, heats the old farm house used by park rangers and community groups interested in environmental issues.

It has replaced electric panel heaters and will be fuelled by carbon-neutral biomass pellets.

The boiler has been approved by the Department for Energy and Climate Change's Renewable Heat Incentive and is set to contribute around £3,000 annually to the council.

A Capita Symonds spokesman said: "I am so

enthusiastic about this whole biomass project. It ticks so many boxes. The pellets are more or less carbon neutral, which is very important because SBC has a carbon reduction target of 20 per cent, which it hopes to achieve by 2013. Further tough targets have been set by the Government of a 34 per cent reduction by 2020 and 80 per cent by 2050. Biomass is all-round environmentally and socially beneficial."

Biomass boilers can be used domestically as well as commercially and are extremely easy to work. The Stanton Park boiler is totally automatic. It feeds itself from a 2-tonne fuel store, which should last about six weeks, and de-ashes itself. Staff empty the ash can once a week and it is intended to work the ash back into the park's soil to feed its plants.

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Value of global green market

£3.3
trillion

Drive innovation into the global green market

Hydrogen Fuel Cells: Are they the way forward?

By Adrian Swilonek

While the idea of having purely hydrogen-powered cars is very fresh in the minds of car manufacturers like Honda, the process itself isn't.

In 1839 the Welsh scientist Sir William Robert Grove took the familiar electrochemical process of electrolysis – which uses electricity to produce hydrogen from water – and reversed it, generating electricity and water from hydrogen. The invention was called the gas voltaic battery, but is now known as the hydrogen fuel cell.

In the middle of the 20th century the technology was further developed by the inventor Francis Bacon and by the 1960s General Electric of the US had developed the first ever practical fuel cell system for use in orbital space capsules.

In the 1990s the technology began appearing in city buses – but it is only recently that the automotive industry has started seriously looking at harnessing it for use in cars.

A fuel cell is, to all effects, a battery – except while a battery keeps its fuel inside, the fuel cell needs to be refilled. The process is very simple. The element within the cell is split, leaving the nucleus of the atom – consisting of neutrons and protons – and directing the

electrons through wires to produce an electric current. The only by-products are heat and water, which usually comes out as steam due to the heat.

The fuel in these cells, as the name suggests, is hydrogen. While hydrogen is the most basic and abundant element in the known universe, it's not an easy one to obtain.

And because of how light it is, any hydrogen that is not chemically bound, or physically restrained within a container, will float out of the atmosphere and into space.

The most common source of hydrogen is H₂O – water – which is highly abundant on our planet.

The problem is that to use the hydrogen from water it has to be split from the oxygen atom, which requires electricity for the process to take place. This electricity is usually obtained by burning fossil fuels, which defeats the purpose of having a non-fossil fuel powered car.

Another way to obtain hydrogen is via a process known as 'steam reformation'. This uses natural gas and high-temperature steam to produce pure hydrogen from the hydrocarbons within the gas. This again is very polluting, but it is the most widespread form of obtaining it – 95 per cent of America's hydrogen is produced this way, and 50 per cent worldwide.

developing world-leading hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. By developing a coherent capability and a vibrant industry, we'll be in a position to capture a share of the global market, encourage international partnerships and inward investment, thus growing the economy and creating jobs."

Energy and climate change minister Greg Barker added: "Hydrogen and fuel-cell technologies are at the cutting

edge of new low-carbon energy solutions. We need to see how these technologies can be integrated with other energy and transport products, and these exciting government-supported projects will do just that. We look forward to seeing the results."

Swindon is already at the forefront of fuel cell technology through the pioneering work carried out by Johnson Matthey at its plant in the town. Global

engine lubricants firm Castrol, also based in the town, is involved in a £2.5m project to improve the efficiency of heavy duty vehicles (HDVs).

The research, backed by the industry-led Energy Technologies Institute (ETI), has a target of halving the so-called parasitic losses caused by the churning of lubricant oil and component friction in HDVs' lower drivetrain systems, which can account

for more than 10 per cent of the energy lost by the vehicles.

It forms part of a £40m ETI programme designed to increase HDV efficiency in land and marine vehicles by up to 30 per cent and cut emissions by up to a third.

Chris Thorne, programme manager HDVs at the ETI, said: "Vehicle fuel efficiency could be increased by 2 to 5 per cent if lower drivetrain losses could be effectively halved, which means this project has the potential to make a beneficial step-change to the HDV industry."

Businesses in the town could also benefit from the Government's Green Deal, which starts on October 1 and will offer incentives for energy efficiency installations which reduce energy costs and help them meet Government targets to reduce UK carbon emissions by 80 per cent in

2050. Businesses of all types and sizes will be offered an individual energy efficiency package that best suits the needs of their building, says DECC – and that could mean work for firms involved in the heating and energy sectors and their supply chains.

DECC points out that a quarter of the UK's carbon emissions comes from the energy used in homes and a similar amount comes from businesses, industry and workplaces.

A DECC spokesman said: "The Green Deal is the Government's scheme to revolutionise the energy efficiency of millions of homes and businesses across the nation. This represents a huge opportunity for local companies to get involved as part of the Green Deal supply chain – from manufacturers and installers, to energy advisors and consultants.

Big Green Home Show to be staged at National Self Build & Renovation Centre

Designed specifically to meet the needs of anyone looking to undertake a self build, renovation or home improvement project, the National Self Build & Renovation Centre (NSBRC) near Junction 16 of the M4 is the only permanent visitor centre of its type in Europe.

With more than 200 exhibitors in its Trade Village, life-size exhibits in our Educational Journey, three full-size houses, eco solutions and sustainable technologies strewn throughout the centre, it really does have all the education, advice and support anyone needs to embark on their own property project. Visitors can also receive expert and impartial technical advice from the in-house self build and renovation experts.

As well as being the hub of the self build and renovation sector, the centre also hosts a full calendar of events including self build and renovation courses, eco workshops and two large-scale national shows a year, the next being the Big Green Home Show at the end of October. The centre is also a fantastic conference venue for businesses looking for an alternative location in the South.

NSBRC is currently in the transitional process of becoming a not-for-profit, Community Interest Company (CIC).

For more information about the centre and its events go to www.nsbrc.co.uk

Closed loop service gives Accord Office Supplies the leading edge

With 90 per cent of UK firms aiming to increase their recycling efforts and prepare for tighter green legislation, office supply companies are at the forefront of responding to customer needs to help improve their green credentials and cut costs.

Jason Thomas, director at Swindon's Accord Office Supplies said: "We've come a long way and are providing a range of services and solutions to help businesses improve their environmental performance and reduce overheads at a time when every penny counts."

One area Accord is leading the way in the sustainable business drive is with its innovative 'Closed Loop' service. The system works by collecting and securely shredding all waste paper, confidential and general waste. It is then turned into 100 per cent recycled Closed Loop Paper and delivered back to the

client to be used and recycled again. The fully audited process has proved extremely popular with a host of clients and recently won a National Recycling Award. The benefits are two-fold as Jason Thomas explains: "As well as helping cut stationery costs, Closed Loop ensures all confidential data is disposed of securely so you don't receive any fines for failing to destroy confidential waste."

Accord is helping its customers make 'green choices' by clearly highlighting environmentally-friendly choices in its product catalogues.

Its Envisage range of remanufactured printer toner cartridges, for example, has gone a long way in helping customers in the battle to reduce printing costs. With 15m toner cartridges ending up in landfill every year, Envisage provides a cost effective sustainable alternative, tested against

manufacturers' originals to ensure there is no compromise in quality. Accord also provides free recycling boxes and free collection to help make the whole recycling process easier.

Accord is continuing to look at ways it can use sustainable alternatives in its business operations. For example, the firm is set to launch a new Recyclabox from September. The easy collapsible delivery box is made from 100 per cent recycled waste that customers can return to Accord and can be reused for up to four deliveries.

It can help to reduce packaging waste by as much as 75 per cent. With environmental commitments on businesses set to increase, office supply companies will continue to play a crucial role in helping businesses in their quest to be green.

Further information visit www.accordoffice.co.uk



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The National Self Build & Renovation Centre

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549.3
million
tonnes

UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2011 - down 7% on 2010

Community solar project proves to be a winner

More than £4m has been invested in Westmill Solar Cooperative, the UK's only large-scale community-owned solar farm.

Covering 30 acres on the Oxfordshire/Wiltshire border near Watchfield with 5MW of solar panels, it could also become the biggest community-owned solar farm in the world. It will generate enough to power to provide 1,400 homes with their average annual electricity requirement.

The share offer for the solar farm closed on July 31 and was fully subscribed – meaning the money was raised in just six weeks. More than £250,000 a day was being invested in the final few days of the offer.

Director Adam Twine said: "It's been a hectic six weeks since we launched at the end of June, particularly in the last week as hundreds of applications came in each day."

"We've had over 1,500 applications, and the application for our youngest potential member was on behalf of Olivia, born just five days ago."

"There is clearly a real desire for this type of opportunity and I hope other communities

will feel encouraged by this tremendous response to find ways to set up their own projects."

Chairman Philip Wolfe said: "We are now working to bring together the balance of capital required, and we look forward to concluding the eventual purchase of the project in October."

"Community ownership of a photovoltaic installation of this scale in the UK used to be just a dream; now we're making the world's largest co-operative solar park a reality."

Almost 60 per cent of the applications came from people living within 40km of the site. Successful applicants will become members of the co-op on the successful purchase of the solar farm from seed funder Blue Energy.

All will have an equal say in running the solar farm as it is operated on a one member, one vote principle, irrespective of the size of an individual's shareholding.

Mr Wolfe added: "They will also have the satisfaction of being part of an exciting project that is breaking records and making history."



The directors of Westmill solar: Philip Wolfe, Adam Twine, Mark Luntley & Mark Shorrock on the day of the share offer launch on June 23

Green electricity supplier Good Energy begins trading on AIM

Good Energy, the Chippenham-based green electricity supplier, has listed its shares on the London Stock Exchange's AIM market following eight years on the lightly-regulated PLUS market.

The firm, the UK's leading 100 per cent renewable electricity supplier, said trading in its shares and interest from institutional shareholders had been low on PLUS and directors believed it was an appropriate time to trade on AIM.

The AIM listing raised £4m before expenses through a placing of 4,705,882 new ordinary shares at 85p each, giving the firm a market value of £10.6m on admission.

The move is part of the group's continued development with the board believing the increasing need to seek access to institutional investors to help continue this growth.

It said in a statement: "The directors also believe that admission to AIM will improve liquidity in the



group's ordinary shares and enhance the status of the company's brand and market recognition."

Last month the firm said it had passed the milestone of 30,000 electricity supply customers – an annual growth rate of 12 per cent – with more than 6,700 gas supply customers (up 47 per cent on the previous year).

Good Energy CEO Juliet

Davenport Davenport said: "This is a natural next step for Good Energy. AIM provides better liquidity for our existing shareholders and allows us to reach institutional shareholders for the first time. We look forward to continuing to grow both our customer base and our own generation capacity as renewables become an increasingly important part of the UK's energy mix."



Government green power subsidies could save businesses thousands

Rural businesses could save thousands of pounds on their energy bills thanks to generous Government subsidies aimed at encouraging them to use 'green' power.

Wessex Biomass, which is pioneering the installation of wood pellet fired boilers from its base at Stanton St Quintin near Chippenham, says its commercial clients are saving money by taking advantage of the RHI (renewable heat incentive) available to businesses.

Wessex Biomass managing director Peregrine Nicholls said: "The RHI is a new Government financial incentive designed to significantly increase the proportion of the UK's heat generated from renewable sources and reduce the UK's carbon emissions."

"While an announcement has yet to be made about the RHI scheme planned for domestic users, the one for businesses is up and running and, with Wiltshire being such a rural county, there will be many businesses out there which will qualify."

The RHI scheme is available to any commercial premises which are not on mains gas, but rely on oil, electricity or LPG for fuel. The wood pellets – cheaper than carbon fuels – are produced from virgin wood sourced from sustainable forests in the British Isles, making them carbon neutral.

Businesses can expect to get

a tariff of around £100 per kilowatt per year – a 35kw boiler, serving premises of 250sq m, would bring in £3,500 a year for 20 years, in addition to the fuel savings made by switching away from expensive oil or LPG.

A variant of the commercial RHI scheme – a district heating scheme – also means neighbouring domestic properties are eligible if they opt to use the same boiler.

Christopher Jerram, a director with chartered surveyors Chesterton Humberts, who lives near Malmesbury, has installed a 60kw boiler to service his own residence and a let cottage. By switching from oil, plus the RHI tariff, he expects to be better off to the tune of approximately £10,000 a year.

"The boiler is more expensive than a conventional boiler, but the pay back is estimated at only five to six years," he said. "Our boiler was due to be replaced anyway, and I was attracted to the wood pellets because of the savings we'd make and the 'green' factor."

Mr Nicholls added: "We are getting a lot of inquiries from businesses and even schools which are reliant on far more expensive forms of fuel. The real attraction is that not only are the wood pellets cheaper, but that the RHI tariffs are generous, and within only a few years more than pay for the cost of a replacement boiler. Plus they are much kinder to the environment."

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Annual waste in UK from construction, demolition and excavation

120
million
tonnes

Early contractor involvement key to sustainable construction, according to Britannia Construction

It's distinctive red white and blue livery is a familiar sight throughout Swindon and the South West. Britannia Construction and Civil Engineering has its roots firmly placed in this region, and as a company proud of its 50 year history, takes its responsibilities to sustainable business practice seriously.

Alongside its well-earned reputation for the quality of its build, and its ability to tackle the most challenging of engineering projects, Britannia's ability to work in live environments, ensuring that its sites are managed safely and providing innovative solutions to minimise its environmental impacts, are fundamental to its approach. Its recent completion of Victoria Dock in Gloucester is a fine example. The £2.7m project has not only been recognised with a Civil Award, but also a CEEQUAL excellent award from the civil engineering industry for its environmental quality and social performance.

Testament to the specialist craftsmanship that the Britannia team puts into its build projects, the same high levels of commitment are to be seen in other work throughout the South West, such as at the new Swindon Station Forecourt, and at Taunton's Castle Green. The company is currently working with Low Carbon South West and Brunel Industries on a collaborative project scoping and costing a low



Swindon Station Forecourt in the midst of redevelopment

carbon manufacturing facility in Avonmouth.

Britannia works with clients to ensure that best practice is integrated into projects from the outset.

"Sustainable construction makes both environmental and commercial sense," says Kevin Harris, Britannia's Environmental and Sustainability Manager. "The construction industry is responsible for some 120m tonnes

of construction, demolition and excavation waste every year – that's around one third of all waste in the UK. Waste costs money, so at Britannia we are committed to going beyond compliance on our waste management practice.

"Water and energy usage, materials sourcing and reclamation, environmental management and conservation, as well as community engagement are all integrated into



our business practice. Early contractor involvement in any project is vital, bringing a whole new perspective to the job gained from our previous experiences particularly with responsibly sourced low-carbon materials and associated installation practices."

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4.7%

Compound annual growth rate of UK organic food industry in the next five years

Partnership approach in Swindon fuels innovation

Swindon, a town known for its financial services and manufacturing may not, on first sight, appear to be high up in the green cities list.

However, Swindon is ranked in the "Top 10 highly innovative centres in the UK" by the government,* and there are a host of cutting edge projects underway which are designed to grow the low carbon economy here. Forward Swindon, the company responsible for economic growth and regeneration in the town, is working alongside Swindon Borough Council to make these projects successful.

The hydrogen refuelling station in Swindon is one such project. A joint venture between BOC, Honda and Forward Swindon, the UK's first open access station for hydrogen fuel cell vehicles launched last year to international acclaim, and is now in its second year of development. The next stage involves a broader project team, including Swindon Commercial Services (SCS Ltd), to pilot the use of hydrogen in a fleet of converted commercial vehicles, and demonstrate the ease with which other operators could develop their own hydrogen fuel initiatives.

Also, in early October, the "Hydrogen Highway" will come to life with a visit from the European Hydrogen Car Tour. A convoy of hydrogen fuel-cell cars from Honda, Hyundai, Toyota and Mercedes will be filling up at the Swindon's station as they drive along the M4 from Cardiff to London.

The "Future City"

Swindon is one of only thirty Councils across the UK to have secured a £50,000 government investment from a "Future Cities Demonstrator" fund to explore how the town can address long term challenges around the transport and energy.

The money pays for a feasibility study to scope out what could be done in Swindon to create a low carbon, sustainable and integrated infrastructure.

Once this phase is complete, we have the chance to win a single prize of £24 million for development and implementation.

The study kicks off shortly, to look at innovative ways that transport, communications and other infrastructure could be integrated to improve the local economy and reduce our carbon foot print.

The strength of this project is that it takes advantage of existing local expertise around hydrogen, district energy and 4G Wi-Fi and looks to see how they could be integrated, increasing the quality of life in Swindon in an "eco-friendly" manner and exploring how feasible it's going to be for Swindon to achieve.



Swindon partnerships

What do we mean by partnership working, and what are the benefits of the public and private sector working together?

If we are to develop the town as a 'centre-of-excellence' in green technologies, we need to engage key local stakeholders and draw on the experience of a specialist network of commercial organisations to contribute to our plans. As such the creation of a Swindon Hydrogen Group was proposed by GWE The Initiative and Forward Swindon, and a broader-scope Swindon Energy Partnership has been instigated by Swindon Borough Council.

Those involved in the groups so far include, for example, Johnson Matthey Fuel Cells, the Defence Academy at Shrivenham, RWE npower, Science Museum, Honda, BMW Group, The National Trust, Nationwide Building Society and Thamesdown Transport.

The remit is to identify opportunities in Swindon for the application of "green" technologies in public-private initiatives which will generate growth in the economy. This might take the form of bidding for project funding, improved procurement strategies, piloting commercial applications, or generally raising awareness about the value of investing in low-carbon technology.

In conclusion

Swindon's heritage of innovation and technological expertise lends itself to the growth of the "green" economy here. Swindon Borough Council and Forward Swindon are proud to be supporting these initiatives.

**Distribution of Innovation across UK Industry - BIS, May 2011.*



Representatives from BOC, Forward Swindon and Hyundai fill up a car with hydrogen at the Honda plant in Swindon

If you would like more information on any of the topics covered in this article, or can offer expertise to the groups, please contact:
 Stephen Cains scains@swindon.gov.uk
 Senior Planner, Sustainability and Infrastructure, Swindon Borough Council
 Lawrence Murphy, LawrenceMurphy@forwardswindon.co.uk,
 Economic Projects Manager, Forward Swindon



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**SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Lok'nStore buys freehold of its outlet at Elgin Industrial Estate

Self-storage company Lok'nStore has acquired the freehold of its store on Swindon's Elgin Industrial Estate for £925,000. This will be financed by drawing down on the company's existing revolving credit facility.

The store has been trading since 2001 in leasehold premises. Lok'nStore chief executive Andrew Jacobs said: "This acquisition is in line with our stated strategy of actively managing our portfolio and taking

advantage of opportunities as they arise to acquire the freeholds of our stores.

"Following this acquisition and the opening of three new stores over the coming year, Lok'nStore's self-storage business will be operating from 13 freehold sites, nine leasehold sites and three managed stores."

The store had an annual rent of £108,050, meaning there will be a corresponding £108,050 positive

impact to the company's EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) for the coming year. After this transaction 61 per cent of Lok'nStore's self-storage-space will be freehold and 39 per cent leasehold. Lok'nStore opened its first self-storage centre in Horsham in 1995 and now operates 22 sites in Southern England. It has a second Swindon store on the town's Rushy Platt Industrial Estate.

Cuerden relocates to South Marston

Expanding management consultancy Cuerden has relocated its head office to a new building on Swindon's South Marston Park in a deal brokers by property agents Loveday.

Cuerden Consulting, previously at Brinkworth, now occupies a 3,400 sq ft suite on the first floor of the prestigious Pavilion 2 building at South Marston.

Bradley Forbes of Loveday said: "We were delighted to secure Cuerden Consulting as a tenant at Pavilions and look forward to welcoming new occupiers in the very near future."

"Pavilion 2, which offers high-quality accommodation, is available to let on a flexible lease at a very competitive rent."

"We have the ground floor vacant, which offers occupiers suites from 1,500 sq ft up to 3,400 sq ft with ample parking. Opportunities also exist for



larger scale requirements where we can offer a stand alone building of 10,000 sq ft."

Iain Francis of Cuerden Consulting added "We are delighted to have moved into Pavilions 2, which

provides quality office accommodation to support our expansion."

Loveday let the suite to Cuerden on behalf of Wootton Bassett-based developer R J Leighfield & Sons.

Melksham food supplier takes more space

Independent food supplier Lovejoys Wholesale has leased more space at the Ashville Centre on Hampton Park West, Melksham, to accommodate its expansion plans.

Property consultants Alder King and Kavanaghs secured the deal on the 2,647 sq ft (245.9 sq m) building on behalf of a private landlord.

Lovejoys supplies fresh, locally-

sourced produce to restaurants, hotels, farm shops and school kitchens in a one-hour radius of Melksham.

All its dairy products come from farms in Wiltshire, Devon, Dorset and Somerset and all eggs are laid just three miles from its base. Vegetables are grown exclusively for the firm in nearby Bromham and the surrounding area.

Lovejoys already operated from a unit on Commerce Way at the Ashville Centre and, due to expansion, has now taken Unit C1 on a new 10-year lease at an annual rent of £14,000. Alison Williams of Alder King's Swindon office said: "It's encouraging to see one of the centre's existing occupiers succeeding in a competitive market and expanding in this popular location."

'62' plates on their way to Swindon's dealerships

New '62-plate' vehicles arrive in dealerships during the next few weeks as the UK's automotive sector prepares for one of its busiest times of the year – and a potential £5bn boost.

Industry body the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) expects around 330,000 new cars to be registered during September, with motorists spending in the region of £4.95bn on the latest new vehicles.

September is the second biggest month for dealers across the UK and accounts for almost a fifth of the year's trade, with the other plate-change month of March traditionally the busiest. More than 300 fuel-efficient, technology-packed models are currently on the market, representing one of the biggest ever choices for UK motorists.

SMMT chief executive Paul Everitt said: "September is a significant month for the UK motor industry and the wider economy."

"A strong month for new vehicle registrations will help put both on the right track."

"Franchised dealers have a fantastic range of exciting new models on offer, each with enhanced levels of fuel efficiency, safety, comfort and affordable finance."

These advantages make it a great time to buy a new car and motorists should visit their local dealer to secure a new 62-plate in September."

i40 continues its winning way on first birthday



A year from launch, the all-new Hyundai i40 has picked up a number of prestigious awards across Europe – a sign of success a popularity of Hyundai's first mid-sized (D segment) vehicle.

These awards include the Business Car of the Year 2012, Car of the Year, Company Car of the Year, Best Wagon, Strongest Residual Value (37.2 per cent), Innovation Award and Best Estate Car.

Senior vice president and COO of Hyundai Motor Europe, Allan Rushforth, said: "The all new i40 is a flagship vehicle for Hyundai – our first model in the highly competitive D segment that's designed and engineered in Europe, for Europe."

The i40 is available from the Swindon Hyundai dealership Pebley Beach.

Dom Threlfall, Pebley Beach director, said: "The i40 has proved very popular in the Swindon area. We have a few local companies that have added it to their fleet and as soon as they have been seen in the company car park, other employees have enquired about it, driven it, then the penny drops. Hyundai makes a very good alternative, with low BIK and low running costs."

Pebley Beach offers the all new i40 with Hyundai's market-leading five year triple care assurance package, comprising a five-year unlimited mileage warranty, five years' roadside assistance and five years of vehicle health checks.

Pebley Beach Hyundai can be found on West Swindon Motor Park, SN5 7SB, or call Helen in the fleet department on 01793 816819. Alternatively, visit www.pebley.co.uk

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Help us celebrate 30 years in business

In October Swindon Business News will produce a special edition looking back at business in Swindon in 1982 and at the town's progress over the past three decades.

To take part in this unique supplement contact Anita Jaynes on 01793 615393 or email her at anita@swindon-business.net



Expect stronger growth, says Avon Rubber as investment starts to pay off

A boost in orders for its protection equipment and higher sales of its dairy products should combine to give Avon Rubber, the Wiltshire-based specialist manufacturer, a stronger second-half.

The group, which has its head office and main UK plant at Semington, near Melksham, said investment in its brands, product development and distribution during the period between April 1 and August 7 had paid off.

As a result the business as a whole – whose products span respirators for civil defence and military personnel to milking equipment for the dairy industry – had progressed, the group said in an interim statement.

Full year order intake for Avon's protection & defence division is now expected to be up 38 per cent on the previous year with a significant element of this for delivery in future years.

Orders in hand from the US Department of Defense (DoD) will allow the division to deliver similar volumes of its M50 respirator in the second half of its 2012 financial year



Avon Rubber's
Viking 7
breathing system

to the first half. Spare filter deliveries to the DoD also accelerated during the period although the overall level of filter orders will be below that achieved in the previous year.

Avon said in the statement: "We expect filter demand to grow as more

mask systems are delivered although customer scheduling of filter deliveries remains difficult to predict."

Project Fusion, the group's new programme to expand and enhance its product range, remained on track to provide further organic growth from 2013/14.

The dairy division achieved higher sales of its Milk-Rite brand and its sales and distribution centre in China progressed in line with expectations.

Net debt at June 30 was £10.2m – £1.6m lower than at September 30, reflecting the timing of working capital movements and the significant investment made in product development during the year.

Looking ahead, the company said: "With improved operational performance from protection & defence and the dairy business performing strongly, we continue to expect that the results for the second half of the year will be stronger than the first half with year on year growth comparable with the level seen during the first half."

Manufacturing best practice event held at Swindon's BMW Mini plant

Small and medium sized manufacturers were able to see first-hand how continuous improvement can enable them to innovate and grow during a visit to Swindon's Mini body panel production plant.

The best practice event, arranged by the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS), showcased how it tailors manufacturing tools and techniques to make them meaningful and practical for smaller firms.

This helps them get onto larger companies' supply chains by becoming more familiar with some of the improvement methods used, such as team-based improvement, 5S, visual management and effective measurement.

MAS area director for South England Simon Howes said: "This event provided SME manufacturers with an excellent opportunity to experience best practice for themselves

and learn how some of the process improvements implemented by large enterprises such as Mini Plant Swindon could help to reduce costs and improve productivity within their own businesses.

"The tour of the factory floor was particularly engaging as it enabled attendees to get a rare glimpse of the plant's robotic operations and other automated machinery in action."

The visit also featured presentations by MAS and Mini Plant Swindon general manager Chris Mark, with practical examples of a successful approach to continuous improvement.

To find out more about MAS events visit www.mymas.org/events

Pictured right: (clockwise): Simon Howes, of MAS, David Noble, project integrator for Next Generation, Mini Plant Swindon; Andrew Phillips, MAS manufacturing advisor, and Jake Knight from Axminster Power Tools.



GWP named official UK distributor for EXOCASE

Specialist packing cases firm GWP Protective, part of the Cricklade-based GWP Group, has become the official UK distributor of EXOCASE, the world's first fully waterproof flight cases.

EXOCASE products are six times stronger than traditional flight cases due to their unique exoskeletal design, which the company says was inspired

by the stag beetle's tough exterior.

The cases can be specified to any dimension, material and colour and can be customised to suit any application with bespoke foam inserts. They were originally designed to meet the rigorous demands of the offshore industry but are now also used for a wide range of applications in the defence, security, aerospace, oil and gas, medical and

motor sport industries. In military standard testing, the cases proved to be effective at temperatures as low as minus 13°C and as high as 55°C. The system's IP (Ingress Protection) rating of 55 proves an extremely high degree of dust and water protection. GWP Protective is one of the UK's largest manufacturers of flight cases made to customers' own designs.

Queen Bee and Jurys Inn to host Girls' Night Out

Swindon-based event management firm Queen Bee Event Solutions and the town's Jurys Inn hotel are partnering for the next Girls' Night Out.

The event on September 6 runs from 7pm to 10:30pm and includes a free glass of bubbly and goody bag on arrival with discounts at craft and beauty stalls such as SHELLAC Nail Bar, Russian Doll Jewellery, Hot Stones Massage, Make up and Perfume counter, Reflexology and Henna. There will also be a very special Zumba demonstration.

The evening will also be raising funds for Refuge – the

domestic violence help for women and children charity.

Queen Bee managing director Michelle Chambers said: "This month we are trying something different. We are really excited to be partnering with the Jurys Inn. It's a fabulous hotel with a real boutique feel to it which I think is a perfect fit for the brand."

Tickets priced £10 are now on sale and can be bought online at www.lifeiswhathappens.co.uk, www.swindontickets.co.uk, in person at Tailor Made Beauty in Old Town, or by contacting michelle@lifeiswhathappens.co.uk

Swindon Chamber of Commerce News



Welcome to the first in a series of columns from Swindon Chamber of Commerce, featuring local events, activities and member news.

Swindon Chamber has exclusively teamed up with Swindon Business News to provide this invaluable service.

The chamber is recognised as the leading voice of business, representing micro to major multinational organisations; a Centre for Excellence providing international trade services and global representation; committed to long-term relationships with members and providing them with relevant, value-added services that help, support and protect regional, national and international business.



Heydar Faramarzi

Member News

A third-generation radiant gas heating system has been installed at Mini Plant Swindon as part of a £40m investment by BMW. Initially tested in a tool maintenance facility in 2008 - where steam heating to provide a comfortable working temperature would have generated an additional 1,300 tonnes of CO2 a year - it was expanded into all other major production buildings in 2009/10.

The system radically improved the working environment of the press shop and resulted in a substantial reduction in the cost both in pounds and in megawatts to heat the facility, resulting in an annual reduction in CO2 of around 6,000 tonnes.

Message from Heydar Faramarzi, president/lead ambassador, Swindon Chamber

"The Chamber's vision for Swindon is that the location will continue to be an innovative and growing economy where businesses are well-connected, surviving and thriving; be a great place for business start-up and growth; benefit from the town centre regeneration; and have effective and affordable connectivity and transport. We are committed to supporting business in Swindon and working to create the best environment for members to prosper."



EVENT DIARY

Swindon Chamber holds a Business Breakfast each month at the Swindon Marriott between 7.30am and 9.30am. Come along to network and gain insight into a wide variety of topics from our guest speakers. Each event costs just £16 plus VAT for members or £26 for non-members.

- Friday August 17 2012 – Step up to Innovate Leadership! Jeremy Marchant, Emotional Intelligence at Work and Tony Nutley, UK College of Personal Development. Jeremy and Tony will show how to improve business success by being an innovative leader.

- Friday September 21 2012 – Successfully Integrating Social Media into Business: David Wood, 3seven9. David will share some top tips on getting the best out of social media. 3seven9 designed and created the new Thames Valley Inward Investment Portal www.thamesvalley.co.uk

To book, go to www.thamesvalleychamber.co.uk/events



Swindon Chamber of Commerce is part of the Thames Valley of Commerce Group. If you would like to find out more about membership visit www.swindonchamber.org.uk or contact Rosemary Wells 07834 869562 or Ian Moore 07834 869561. If you would like to get involved, why not try our free Guest Membership which entitles you to attend two events. Sign up at www.thamesvalleychamber.co.uk and click on the Join Guest Membership button.