

# SWINDON BUSINESS NEWS

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**Kick-start for  
new-look  
hospital**

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**Our 4-page special on  
Chippenham's success**

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Swindon Business News  
Green Special**

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## News Brief

### Swindon Business News Needs You!

Looking for a part-time role? Swindon Business News and its sister websites Bath and Bristol Business News (www.bath-business.net, www.bristol-business.net) have an opening for a part-time sales executive. You will be expected to sell print and web advertising while managing and developing your own stable of clients. You will be confident picking up the phone and in front of clients. The ideal candidate will be self-motivated, driven by targets and ambitious with a demonstrated interest in media. Interested? Call Anita Jaynes for more info on 01793 615393 or email anita@swindon-business.net

### Green IT promoted

Swindon-based BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT, has launched a scheme to encourage its employees to improve their Green IT knowledge.

The scheme, part of the Institute's support for Climate Week, encourages them to take the BCS Foundation Green IT Certificate which gives an understanding of the importance of IT in achieving an organisation's green objectives and looks at the regulations, legislation and policies, carbon energy accounting and how to create a green IT strategy. The syllabus also covers business benefits, costs, emissions and energy efficiencies.

### Coming up next month...

April's Swindon Business News will focus on the vital subject of finance for growing businesses. This feature will look at traditional and new ways of accessing funding and the various option available to expanding companies. We will also continue our regular series of features looking at aspects of exporting and will highlight the growing importance of supply chain management. Other topics covered will include the Swindon area's burgeoning design and creative sectors and the need for all businesses to protect their intellectual property.

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## Join us in backing Swindon

Swindon Business News is to launch a campaign to make sure the town's reputation as a great business location gets across loud and clear.

To coincide with the newspaper's 30th anniversary this year, it plans a series of articles, interviews and events to highlight what's good about the town and overcome its outdated negative image.

Full details of the campaign will be announced next month but plans are already in place to showcase

Swindon's innovation, creativity and advanced manufacturing prowess.

The campaign will also highlight Forward Swindon's ongoing plans to regenerate the town centre, along with the long-awaited redevelopment at Regent Circus and the development of the flagship Union Square scheme.

It will back ideas to promote Swindon as a forward-looking business centre, including video production expert Paul Dunn's plans for a Festival of Business Excellence in the town later this year.

The town is often said to have a poor image – but for most businesses based here, Swindon is a great location with huge benefits including its location and skilled workforce.

For businessman Ant Hodges, there was simply nowhere else he wanted to launch his internet marketing company.

And the success of HodgesNet, he says, is down to the business being based here in Swindon.

"It's a great town," he said. "Swindon should be a serious consideration for all those wanting to look for a central place to base their offices."

"We have almost instant access to many other towns and cities, plus the

collaboration with other complimentary businesses is something I love about the business community in Swindon."

Ant's clients are drawn from Reading, Oxford and Aldermaston. Swindon's superb transport links mean small, fast-growing businesses like his can easily target – and win – clients in Bristol, Bath and Cheltenham.

He is not alone. Hundreds of business people in Swindon have similar success stories to share – and Swindon Business News wants to hear them.

Full details of our campaign will be announced online at www.swindon-business.net and in next month's Swindon Business News.



Louise Hunt

## Corporate sponsor courted by young tennis player

Wanborough tennis ace and London Paralympics hopeful Louise Hunt is hoping a Swindon business will serve up much-needed financial sponsorship to enable her to continue to compete at the highest level.

Louise, ranked at world number 18 and the UK's number three for ladies singles, has already won 10 international singles and 20 doubles titles. But the costs of taking part in major tournaments, as well as the 25 hours of training a week she fits in alongside her studies at Bath University, amount to around £30,000 a year.

Even winning – and collecting the prize money – barely covers the cost of competing.

Twenty-year-old Louise, who started playing wheelchair tennis aged eight, is seeking £15,000 to cover her costs for the rest of the year, including preparing for the Paralympics, for which she will qualify if she stays in the

world top 20. Longer term, she is aiming to be among the medallists at the 2016 Games in Rio.

"The little I get in grants is not enough to cover tournament costs," said Louise. "Any money I receive through sponsorship will go towards paying for coaching, travel costs, equipment, entry fees and accommodation for tournaments so I can challenge for the London Games."

In return Louise promises a higher profile for any sponsor or multiple sponsors. "The coverage of Paralympic sport is increasing all the time and by playing in international tournaments I can offer national and worldwide exposure for the company," she said.

The sponsors will also gain visual brand promotion from logos on her kit and equipment while, as an experienced public speaker, Louise can also offer motivational speeches to sponsors' employees.

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## People

• **Mark Beard**, managing director of Swindon-based Beard Construction, has been appointed to Henley Business School's Strategy Board, joining a group of senior figures from international businesses, academic and government bodies that provide views and advice on its strategic development and performance. As the only construction industry member on the board, Mark will bring unique insights into the management challenges facing the construction sector, which represents seven per cent of the UK workforce.

• BMI Healthcare has appointed **James Lowe** as executive director and **Gillian Taylor** as director of clinical services at BMI The Ridgeway Hospital in Moormead Road, Wroughton. The pair's arrival at the hospital coincides with the completion of a £3.6 million investment programme that includes a new theatre and outpatient area. James' move to BMI The Ridgeway Hospital complements an already impressive career, which includes a successful period as director of operations at BMI The Alexandra Hospital in Greater Manchester.

• **Rosemary Wells** has taken up the new role of head of political and corporate engagement at Swindon Chamber of Commerce, part of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group. Rosemary will be the primary contact for Swindon businesses and the local public sector in

relation to the Chamber's activities and an ambassador for the delivery of business opinion. Rosemary will also facilitate the development of forums and events on topical business issues. Rosemary can be contacted via email

[rosemarywells@swindonchamber.org.uk](mailto:rosemarywells@swindonchamber.org.uk)

and would be delighted to hear from members. Swindon Chamber is also recruiting a sales resource to recruit new companies into membership. More details can be found at:

[www.thamesvalleychamber.co.uk/119/](http://www.thamesvalleychamber.co.uk/119/)

• Around thirty local businesses attended the Business Biscotti networking event in Swindon and met Sue Reeves, the founder of the unique networking organization. This was Sue's first visit to the new Swindon branch, held monthly since October at Basepoint Swindon, where she met attendees, and discussed their business issues and concerns. Sue, a successful professional photographer, gave a short talk about how and why she founded Business Biscotti in the UK almost two years ago.



Sue Reeves

## Events

### • Will SEO work for your business?

WHEN: Wednesday March 21, 8.30am-10.30am

WHERE: Jurys Inn, Swindon

CONTACT: 01793 680866 or  
[jo@digitaltradingcreative.co.uk](mailto:jo@digitaltradingcreative.co.uk)

### • Rabbit 2012

WHEN: Tuesday March 20

WHERE: Brunel's Old Station, Bristol

CONTACT: 01622 685078

### • Swindon Connections

WHEN: Thursday March 22, 6pm-8.30pm

WHERE: Lydiard House Conference Centre, Swindon

CONTACT: [www.business-scene.com](http://www.business-scene.com)

### • Active @ Work

WHEN: Thursday April 19, 10am-12pm

WHERE: Jurys Inn, Swindon

CONTACT: 01793 433571

### • Business Biscotti Swindon

WHEN: Last Friday of the month – between 9.30am and 11.30am

WHERE: Basepoint, Rivermead, Swindon.

CONTACT: Andy Entwistle on 07941 041364 or email [andyentwistle@salientsales.co.uk](mailto:andyentwistle@salientsales.co.uk) or visit [www.businessbiscotti.co.uk](http://www.businessbiscotti.co.uk)

### • Cool Ventures

WHEN: March 31, 10am-12.30pm

WHERE: Central Bath

CONTACT: 01225 580850 or email:  
[info@coolventures.co.uk](mailto:info@coolventures.co.uk)

• Send your events to Swindon Business News to [info@swindon-business.net](mailto:info@swindon-business.net)

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**Bristol Airport**  
0871 334 4344

**GWE Business West**  
08458 505066

**Swindon Council**  
01793 445500

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## Director of Business Investment c. £65k

Forward Swindon, the company responsible for developing the economy and delivering regeneration in Swindon, requires an experienced and skilled professional with corporate experience, to lead its work supporting existing businesses, and attracting new companies into Swindon.

If you have a tenacious and sales orientated approach, are content working to targets, and can demonstrate real success in business retention and expansion programmes, as well as inward investment, then you will enjoy the dynamic and success driven environment of the Forward Swindon team.

*For an informal discussion call Ian Piper,  
Chief Executive on 01793 429 256. Please  
submit a CV plus a statement setting out  
how you meet the person specification by  
Friday 23 March. A job specification can be  
found at: [www.forwardswindon.co.uk](http://www.forwardswindon.co.uk)*

**Forward  
Swindon**

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Youth charity to work with Prince's Trust

Swindon youth development charity Inner Flame is to work with The Prince's Trust to deliver its Team programme, a 12-week personal development course helping 16 to 25 year olds learn new skills and improve their confidence and motivation.

Participants take part in team-building activities, a week-long residential trip, a community project and two weeks of work experience during the course. They also get advice on how to write CVs as well as gaining a nationally-recognised qualification through a partnership with Swindon College.

Inner Flame trustee Graham Moates will be team leader of the first programme, scheduled to start on March 19. Graham said: "Too many young people feel they don't have the skills and talents to succeed in life. The Team programme really does help them turn their lives around."

More than 143,000 young people have benefited from the programme so far. Last year, more than three in four young people helped by The Prince's Trust moved into work, education or training.

Wincanton offloads stake in chilled logistics firm for £11m

Wincanton, the Chippenham-based logistics group which recorded a £75.5m first half loss, has sold its 20 per cent investment in Culina Logistics for £11m.

The disposal is in line with Wincanton's strategic objective of reducing its existing level of debt through the disposal of specific non-core operations. Shropshire-based Culina provides primarily chilled logistics to the food and drink industry across the UK. Wincanton's stake resulted from the two companies merging their chilled consolidation activities in March 2009.

The book value of Wincanton's investment in Culina, which is accounted for as an associate, is £14.5m and the profit after tax attributable to the company's investment for the year to March 31, 2011 was £1.2m.

Wincanton chief executive Eric Born said: "This is another important step in the reduction of our debt through the disposal of non-core investments and allows us to focus our attention on delivering profitable growth in the UK and Ireland business in the future."

Last chance for firms to get a great deal on exhibition stands for Rabbit 2012

With only days to go to Rabbit South West, the region's most dynamic B2B networking event and exhibition, a competition has been launched to win one of the last exhibition stands on offer.

Rabbit takes place on Tuesday March 20 at Brunel's Old Station, Temple Meads, Bristol, and delegates, who can register for free, will automatically be entered into a draw to win a 2m x 2m stand worth £280. To register and enter go to [www.rabbitevents.co/delegates](http://www.rabbitevents.co/delegates)

As a fully-fledged exhibitor, the winner will also be entitled to the exhibitor advertising package – up to £750 worth of pre-show and on the day advertising, including use of any promotional video on the huge TV screens throughout the venue.

All exhibitors at Rabbit are given every opportunity to connect with everyone in the room, multiplying their contacts in just one day – the first step towards growing a business.

Delegates will be encouraged to use the Rabbit mobile phone app to book meetings with exhibitors prior to the show and on the day, plus scan exhibitor codes that will upload directly to their contacts.

Exhibitors and delegates using Twitter throughout the day will have their tweets streamed live to the giant TV screens throughout the venue.

Delegate you will have the opportunity to attend inspirational seminars including The Power of Brand by Steve Fuller of Bath-based creative agency The House, Effective E-mail Marketing Campaigns by Martin Wright, founder of Bath and Bristol Marketing Network, and an interactive social media seminar presented by Dan Maudhub of Wonderful Creative Agency.

They will also learn how to grow their business using freely-available tools and techniques – plus the chance to network with some of the most forward-thinking business in the South West in an interesting and creative way.

Swindon Business News's sister website Bristol Business News is media partner for Rabbit South West and limited late availability exhibition stands are still available using booking code BBN20.

For more information call 01622 685078 or visit [www.rabbitevents.co](http://www.rabbitevents.co)



Brunel's Old Station

Merged property agents hit the road with four new branded Minis



From left: The Richard James And Home Finders letting team in their new Mini Coopers, from left, Jo Hill, Amanda Sweeny, Debbie Reay and Rebecca Barret

Two Swindon property agents are spreading the word about their merger by splashing out on four branded Minis.

Richard James, of the Swindon and Wroughton estate agency chain, and Sue Gidney, head of award-winning Swindon Homefinders, decided to join forces last year.

Since then the combined business has gone from strength to strength – and now the new fleet of corporate vehicles will give it a higher profile on the streets of Swindon.

Richard said: "It's always a challenge when two companies merge but we

are delighted with how things have worked out.

"It's largely due to the commitment of the staff and we wanted to reward their loyalty with new branded cars."

The agency's four dedicated lettings negotiators will be using the branded Minis – supplied by Dick Lovett car dealership – to go on viewings, for market appraisal visits with potential landlords, and to make property inspections.

"The lettings business is active with lots of tenants looking to rent," said Richard. "And with interest rates looking like they will stay low, it's a

good time for investors. Buy to let is back in business."

Richard James And Home Finders are the agents for the one and two bedroom apartments at Heritage Plaza in Churchward which is proving so popular that developer Thomas Homes is guaranteeing investors two years' rent with no management or maintenance charges.

Sue said: "On a number occasions we have had tenants waiting to move in as soon as the investor has completed the sale."

"The buyer has only had the keys in their hand for a couple of hours."

Zurich in top 25 best big companies to work for report for third year running

Swindon-based insurance group Zurich has earned a place in the Top 25 Big Companies to Work For report for the third year running.

The report, compiled for the Sunday Times, is widely recognised as the UK's definitive survey of workplace satisfaction.

Zurich, which has its UK Life business in Swindon and employs around 1,300 people in the town, improved its position in the table from 20th in 2011 to 17th this year.

Overall, Zurich's results show improvements in each of the eight areas measured by the survey.

The report included an in-depth look at the company, including an extensive, independent survey of more than 1,000 employees who gave their opinion on what it is like

to work for Zurich. Those opinions were compared against other large organisations and the 25 best-performing companies made it to the final list.

Zurich secured two additional awards in the categories Giving Something Back and Personal Growth, which recognised the company's Corporate Responsibility activities and its Learning & Development (L&D) function.

The Zurich Community Trust, the charitable arm of Zurich funded by the UK business and generous donations from employees in the UK, supports more than 600 charities each year. Last year, Zurich's employees donated £521,300 to support the programme as well as nearly 6,000 days of volunteering.

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# Swindon Town players kick-start new era at the BMI Ridgeway Hospital



**From left:** executive director James Lewis, project manager and theatre sister Sally Allman, director of clinical services Gillian Taylor, Swindon Town FC's Wes Foderingham and Jonathan Smith, staff nurse Fiona Snape and staff nurse Claire Fudge

Swindon Town goalkeeper Wes Foderingham and midfielder Jonathan Smith have cut the ribbon to officially open the newly-refurbished BMI The Ridgeway Hospital following a £3.6m investment.

The pair joined consultants, staff and patients at the official ceremony who raised a glass to the beginning of a new era at the Wroughton hospital – coinciding with completion of the refurbishment is the arrival of new executive director James Lowe and director of clinical services Gillian Taylor. Hospital executive director James Lowe said: "What a superb way to kick-start our new era. We're

extremely delighted that Jonathan and Wes were able to get time away from the pitch to help us celebrate our refurbished hospital."

The year-long investment programme included

- An extension to the hospital's main reception
- A third operating theatre
- Enlargement of the pharmacy and patient reception facilities
- Increased consulting suite with the addition of four consulting rooms
- A new sterile stores building
- A new car park for 30 additional vehicles.

Despite being purpose built in 1985, advances in technology and growing demand for private healthcare, meant the hospital needed to be upgraded.

The players also spent time signing autographs and posing for photos with patients, staff and consultants

After giving them a tour of the hospital so they could see the transformation for themselves, Mr Lowe wished them and the rest of the Swindon Town squad good luck in the Johnstone's Paint Trophy Final at Wembley later this month and in the push for promotion to League 1.

"We are all keeping our fingers crossed," he said.

## Renewable energy firm nets accolade

Freesource Energy, the renewables company based at Corsham, has been highly commended by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust for its work supplying free solar PV systems to homes.

The firm collected the accolade in the Climate Change Impact category of the Trust's fourth Corporate Green Awards.

People in more than a hundred homes have benefitted from Freesource's programme and are now enjoying significant reductions in their energy bills as a result of the free electricity generated by the roof panels.

Freesource Energy managing director Alex Lockton was presented with the award by broadcaster and author Philippa Forrester in front of 125 regional business leaders at a ceremony last week at the Wellington Barn, Calstone near Calne.

Freesource Energy's free solar scheme is now available for a limited time only due to imminent changes in Government subsidies. Anyone wanting to take part is urged to act fast as the programme is likely to close at the end of March.

Under the scheme, homeowners benefit from self-generated green electricity and up to 50% off energy bills while Freesource Energy and its funding partner receive what is known as the feed-in tariff – regular payments that energy suppliers are obliged to pay to generators of green electricity.

Owners of a four-bedroom house with a four-kilowatt peak solar panel system would typically save between £175 and £260 a year through the scheme.

This saving will increase as energy bills rise.

## HSBC joins up for China Consortium

Banking giant HSBC has become the latest member of The UK China Business Consortium, the Swindon-based group promoting British exports to China and supporting Chinese companies looking to invest in the UK.

The Consortium was set up last year by trademark and IP specialists Haseltine Lake, Swindon commercial law firm Clark Holt, Swindon and Bristol-based PR and marketing consultancy Vox, commercial property experts Whitmarsh Lockhart, also based in Swindon, and Reuben Internet, based in Highworth.

It is supported by UKTI, the Government's export advice body and members have already established trading links with China.

The consortium provides Chinese investors with professional advice on corporate and commercial law and intellectual property protection in Europe, expertise in commercial land and property, and support on PR, strategic relationships, corporate social responsibility and digital communications.

It has organised a display of Chinese art, hosted delegations from China and built up a good relationship with the Chinese Embassy in London.

Haseltine Lake managing director Lesley Evans, welcomed the move by HSBC, the largest foreign bank in mainland China.

"HSBC has its origins in China and Hong Kong as the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, and so was the obvious choice of banking partner," she said.

## Events group in equity fundraising

Events company the Arena Group, which has its seating division at Lambourn Woodlands, has completed an equity fundraising of £16.5m in a partnership deal with the specialist sports fund, Sports Investment Partners (SIP) and growth capital investor MML Capital.

The two investing companies have taken a significant minority stake in Arena, which designs and stages events across the globe. The investment supports the existing management structure with its plans to develop the global business.

The deal comes at the start of a busy year for Arena which will be designing and delivering services to create a number of iconic venues in London and elsewhere in 2012.

## IT firm seals software deal

Wootton Bassett-based IT firm Cherwell Software has supplied its Incident Management software management module to Hudson Hill Consulting, an IT consultancy, which is using it to better track and manage service desk incidents for its range of diverse clients, including Boutinot Wines, EM&I and Sale Sharks rugby union premiers team.

Hudson Hill said the Cherwell module fits its requirements for easily logging and tracking incidents, problems and change requests, offering a self-service portal to reduce calls and emails to the service desk and incorporating social media tools so the service desk can proactively share information in multiple ways.

## -OUTSOURCING-

## Punch above your weight and get seen by outsourcing PR and marketing

Outsourcing marketing and PR to an agency can be an efficient way for SMEs to afford the equivalent of their own multi-disciplinary PR and marketing department, according to Swindon PR expert Sue Pycroft.

Sue, of Old Town PR and marketing agency Vox, says new developments in social media and marketing mean that few individuals are now experienced in the full range of communications disciplines.

So companies employing just one or two marketing and PR staff will have a limited range of communications methods available to it.

Most SMEs find it too expensive to employ the number of professionals needed to cover the full range of disciplines.

"It is very rare to find one person

who genuinely has detailed knowledge and experience of, say, corporate communications, media relations, marketing strategy and customer relationship management, but is also au fait with the latest trends in social media," said Sue.

"So what can happen in companies with a small marketing department is that their marketing strategy becomes driven by the marketing employee's own specialisms or interests, rather than what the business needs."

Sue says that by outsourcing part or all of the marketing and communications functions, SMEs can punch well above their weight and access the marketing expertise normally only enjoyed by corporates, but still keep their communication activity within budget.

"The key is choosing an agency that can really deliver that breadth of expertise," Sue added.

"Ask to meet the people who would work on your account, so you get a feel of their approach and how they come up with solutions. You should also check out what other clients think of them – by picking up the phone, rather than just looking at a testimonial or LinkedIn recommendation."

"Check how long they've been in business, too – an agency with several years' experience is probably doing something right, and check if they're backed by a reputable professional organisation such as the CIPR or the PRCA, who subject their members to quality standards checks."

"Finally, listen to your heart as well as your head. The best work emerges when you all enjoy being together. The chemistry needs to feel good, because the perfect agency will soon be a part of your team."

For more information go to [www.voxonline.co.uk](http://www.voxonline.co.uk) or call 01793 511990.

Sue Pycroft, director of Vox PR

## Companies urged to save time and money with outsourced marketing services

Companies know that when the 'green shoots' start to emerge, they need the right resources to take advantage of the growth.

But what happens if they can't afford to recruit new employees or they need someone quickly?

Do they task already overworked staff or do they turn to a outsourcing consultancy? Glowtwig, the Swindon-based marketing resource for businesses to tap into as and when they need it, believes they should chose the second option.

Glowtwig's Anne Bradley said: "By outsourcing marketing activities, a company immediately gets the specialised skills and expertise needed without having to wade through a pile of CVs, interview candidates and wait for their notice period to finish. "The outsourcing company can get on with the job in hand straight away and the company gets the same service provided by an in-house marketing department."

Glowtwig provides flexible marketing support on a project, monthly or daily basis in clients' offices or off-site; on a regular agreement or as a one-off commission. "There are no long contracts, no ties – only realistic, sensible marketing," said Anne.

**glowtwig**

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 01793 701435





Above: Some of the artwork panels by Bruce Williams

# Tunnel vision to upgrade pedestrian routes

Two pedestrian tunnels under the railway through central Swindon are to undergo major facelifts to improve the experience for people walking between the town centre and sites north of the line.

Work on the Great Western Underpass, the former GWR workers' tunnel which leads into the historic Churchward quarter, has just started and includes better lighting and new artwork.

Artist Bruce Williams is creating 10 Railway Worker stainless steel, back-lit artistic wall panels to go on one wall of the tunnel while on the opposite wall, 500mm high stainless steel back-lit letters will spell out Swindon Works.

Bruce is known for his public art around Swindon including at Nova Hreod College.

The tunnel is the prime pedestrian route between the town centre and the Designer Outlet Village and STEAM railway museum. Making it more attractive is key to getting visitors to the Churchward attractions to also visit the town centre.

The Hawksworth Underpass which links Sheppard Street with the Hawksworth Estate and North Star will benefit from much improved lighting and cleaned up walls.

This route is primarily used by workers in the North Star offices such as BT, the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and the Research Councils UK (RCUK), students at Swindon College and visitors to the Oasis.

Forward Swindon, the council's economic regeneration company, which has commissioned the upgrades, admits the

tunnels have been off-putting for pedestrians.

Forward Swindon is overseeing a town centre master planning process, called Planning Swindon Together, which emphasises the importance of smaller scale projects as well as major, long-term improvement schemes.

Chief executive Ian Piper said: "One of the issues to emerge from the master planning exercise so far is the need for improved connectivity between the north and south of the railway line.

"These tunnels are used by commuters getting to and from work, or as a route between the two main shopping zones in the town. They represent relatively small scale investments by Forward Swindon that will make a real difference to people on a daily

basis." Swindon Borough Council deputy leader Cllr Garry Perkins added: "Not only will this improve the quality of hundreds of individual journeys every day, the artwork in the Great Western Underpass will remind people of Swindon's railway heritage and the justifiable pride that thousands of workers had in the magnificent machines they created."

Tina Cumpstey, centre manager at McArthurGlen's Swindon Designer Outlet said: "The renovation of the Great Western Underpass is a fantastic idea that will benefit all involved, it will allow for a pleasant and more importantly safe journey for customers who want to walk the short distance between both shopping zones." The work is due to be completed next month.

## 'Just in time' delivery system saves cashflow

Cricklade-based GWP Packaging has secured a contract with specialist educational supplier The Consortium to produce a range of bespoke packaging for the safe storage and delivery of its products nationwide.

GWP has worked with Trowbridge-based The Consortium for five years and has perfected a just-in-time delivery system which enables it to hold zero stock of packaging.

As well as the benefits of space saving, the cashflow advantages to The Consortium have been significant.

GWP also offers an online call-off system – a bespoke web-based portal

for The Consortium which allows it to order stock from GWP within a few clicks and without having to go through the whole traditional – and sometimes timely – ordering process.

The Consortium chief operations officer Mark W Barnett said: "Over time our needs have changed and GWP always respond swiftly with exceptional service. They know what we want and when we need it, and hold stock for us, and they never let us down."

"We feel they really understand our business, and they work very hard on the relationship."

## Save money and time with Orchard Online

A print service that lets customers place orders 24 hours a day and hold the printed products until they need them is taking off in Swindon.

Orchard Press's Orchard Online e-commerce service sets up each customer's own suite of print products and then allows them to call off the stock as they require it, with same-day or next-day delivery.

Orchard Press managing director Paul Rowley says once customers understand the benefits of Orchard Online's intelligent stock and storage service they are hooked.

"They realise that suddenly they can be totally in control of all their print, literally at the touch of a button, night or day," he said.

"Using it is just like buying any item from a retailer online. You have an account, have a suite of products to choose from – in this case, a dedicated suite of all your own printed material – you place the items you want in your shopping basket and press 'send' to place your order."

Paul says, for clients with limited storage at their offices, it is also a no-brainer.

"It immediately solves any storage problems they may have," he added.

"We set up a library for their print

products, then they place an order and call off the amount of stock they actually want at that point.

"That call-off is a trigger point for us to print off more in readiness for the next order, so they never risk running out. It's a win-win for the customer, because it means they can order larger print runs, irrespective of how much storage space they have at their own premises, knowing we can store it for them. And in doing that they are able to drive down their costs because, of course, larger print runs mean lower unit costs."

But Paul says Orchard Online doesn't just save clients money and space. It allows them to track their order history, as well as see images of all their collateral, from invoices and letterheads to leaflets and brochures.

"Several clients have made a point of telling me it's reduced stress around maintaining adequate print stocks," said Paul.

"It's cut out the email and telephone ping-pong and lets them get on with what they've really come to work to do – to run their businesses."

For more information on Orchard Online or for a free demonstration please call 01793 420 642 or email jason.grubb@orchard-press.co.uk.

## More than meets the eye

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# Advice on how to plan for the end of the tax year

**A**s we approach the end of the current tax year, Dominic Bourquin, tax partner at local accountancy firm Monahans, argues that all business owners should be undertaking a review of the business and personal tax affairs to enable them to maximise their wealth.

There are lots of opportunities to save tax and this is the obvious time of year to be checking that you are making the most of these.

As ever, there are changes to

various tax rates and some of the rules will be changing around others so it is important that you plan ahead and don't leave it to the last minute.

Obvious things to consider include:

- Use your ISA allowance, not forgetting the newly introduced Junior ISA for children under 18.

- Review your pension contributions to make the most of the new contribution limits.

- Ensure you make the most of the Annual Exemption from Capital

Gains Tax, and if you are considering a disposal ensure it meets the requirements for Entrepreneurs' Relief. -If you have company cars in your business check that they are



Dominic Bourquin

providing the most tax efficient solution for all involved.

- If you are planning capital expenditure, ensure the cost is incurred before the end of the tax year to take advantage of the current Annual Investment Allowance that will be considerably reduced next year.

- If you have employees, don't forget the various end of year returns you will need to complete for them.

- Check that you make the most of any National Insurance reliefs

currently available.

- And finally, if inheritance tax may be an issue for you, start now to plan around this by making the most of annual gift allowances etc.

This is just a taster of things to consider at this time of year to ensure you pay as little tax as is necessary. For a more complete guide to things you should consider, why not visit the Monahans web site to view our End of Tax Year Planning Guide or give me a call on 01793 818300 and I'll post you a copy.

## Old Mill named Best Small Adviser Firm

Financial planning and accountancy firm Old Mill has been named Best Small Adviser Firm 2012 at the Professional Adviser Awards.

The firm, which has more than 1,000 clients served by its offices in Melksham, Bath and Shepton Mallet, is delighted to have won such a prestigious award.

Now in their 10th year, the Professional Adviser Awards bring together top names from the advisory community to recognise and celebrate the best providers in investment and retirement planning.

Old Mill was among 11 firms shortlisted in the small adviser category. The award was presented in front of more than 500 people at a ceremony held at the London Hilton on Park Lane.

The firm's financial planning team is headed by partners Kevin Whitmarsh, Paula Hodge and Simon Cole.

Simon attended the ceremony and accepted the award on behalf of Old Mill from hosts Paul Daniels and Debbie McGee and Transact's Glenn Sweet.

Simon said: "Winning this award once again underlines the quality and professionalism of our staff. We are therefore extremely proud that all their

efforts have been recognised.

"At Old Mill we pride ourselves on looking after our clients by providing exceptional service including our own unique investment management proposition and through delivering the highest standards of advice and this is only possible through the dedication and hard work of our staff.

"In recent years, increasing numbers of people have become disillusioned with the standard of service they receive from the Financial Services Industry but through the drive for higher standards we are now seeing the emergence of a genuine Financial Planning profession."

The award is the third in just six months for Old Mill, which has 19 registered individuals amongst its 50 financial planning staff and, as a practice, has the exclusive Corporate Chartered Financial Planner status.

In August, financial planner Jamie Thompson won Best Paper at the Insurance Institute of Bristol's (IIB) 2011 Awards evening for an impressive performance in his Chartered Insurance Institute (CII) exams, and in November Duncan Parkes was named Chartered Financial Planner of the Year by the Personal Finance Society.



Laura Randall

## Accountants raise princely sum for charity

Monahans, the chartered accountants with offices in Swindon, Chippenham, Trowbridge, Bath and Glastonbury, have raised nearly £15,000 for the Princes Trust as part of its Million Makers Challenge.

Businesses taking part in the challenge had to raise a minimum of £10,000 for the trust over six months. Monahans, which held a variety of fund-raising events to reach the total, were ranked third in the region.

Monahans' fundraising team chair Laura Randall was honoured with the Charity Champion award at the prestigious Professional Adviser awards staged recently in London.

The Professional Adviser awards celebrate the very best in the financial services industry and Laura's award was in recognition of her ideas and drive in making the Monahans fundraising efforts so successful.


The Princes Trust helps 14 to 30 year olds from

disadvantaged backgrounds by sponsoring them through various initiatives with the aim of introducing them into the workplace or into business in their own right.

Monahans managing partner Mike Shawyer said: "This is a fantastic reward for what was an outstanding team effort.

"Their hard work and commitment to the Million Makers Challenge has paid off with this great result. We would like to thank everyone who has generously sponsored us or participated in the various events we have held over the last six months".


Among the fundraising events were the Great Monahans Bike Ride which went from the Glastonbury office to Swindon, the Monahans Quite Interesting Quiz for businesses and a summer barbecue where partners were 'wet sponged' for money.



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# Making a successful business sale

**O**n the face of it, selling your business should be simple. You find a buyer, agree the price and walk away with enough cash to sail around the world, pay off your mortgage or establish another enterprise.

For most owners looking to sell their business, the reality is very different. There are often numerous challenges to overcome, both during the sale process and potentially for years after the deal has been completed.

Swindon-based solicitors from Withy King's corporate, employment and dispute resolution teams advise on how to minimise the risks.

## What are my options?

"The most common deals are share sales which see the shareholders sell the company to a third party," said Alex Pyatt, corporate partner at Withy King.

"Asset sales, which involve the sale of the company's assets, are more common in smaller transactions or for deals where a company is selling off only part of what it does.

"Management Buy-Outs are happening less in today's market where banks are reluctant to lend in the way they once would and management teams are seldom able to raise money to finance the deal independently."

Management Buy-Ins are slightly more common than they used to be given that sometimes the only way that a team (who previously would have done a Management Buy-Out) can finance the deal is by bringing in an external investor to provide additional finance and to whom an additional share of the equity will go.

## Golden rules for structuring a share sale

### Find a good accountant

An experienced accountant will help you to structure the deal, research the market and find potential buyers.

### Heads of Terms

"We always recommend that Heads of Terms are drawn up at the start – usually just a couple of sides of A4 – setting out the most fundamental aspects of the proposed deal. This enables shareholders to raise any concerns at any early stage and in most cases, is shown to prevent disagreements arising further down the line," Alex said.

### Warranties under the Share Purchase Agreement

"This should reflect your Heads of Terms and will, unless you agree otherwise, apply to all shareholders, no matter how minor their stake," said Chris Kane, corporate dispute resolution partner at Withy King.

"You should take expert advice on how to avoid any uncertainty as this may lead to conflict and litigation after the deal has been done. In particular, you should look to limit your liability under any warranty claims, put provisions in place to ensure you get



Alex Pyatt



Malcolm Gregory



Chris Kane

paid such as personal and cross guarantees – if you've agreed to deferred payment – and include a mediation clause.

"We deal with a large number of disputes and the parties that find a solution through mediation save themselves huge amounts of time and money, not to mention the stress of dragging their affairs through the Courts."

### Realising the purchase price

"Most shareholders would like to receive their money on completion of the deal, but in today's environment, this scenario is unusual. It is more likely that payment will be deferred or possibly linked to an earn-out," said Alex.

"As the seller, you must ensure the Share Purchase Agreement contains clauses which protect your financial consideration, especially if it is linked to the company's performance. The terms need to be

looked at closely to ensure they reflect those aspects of running the business which are most likely to impact on its performance and therefore your entitlement to the earn-out."

### Employment

"You can enhance the value of your business by ensuring all staff have valid contracts of employment, complete with the necessary contractual obligations and restrictive covenants – for example, protecting your intellectual property, databases and customer relationships," said Malcolm Gregory, head of the employment team at Withy King. "This is particularly important where there is a risk that key employees may leave to join a competitor or set up on their own, either before or after the company changes hands.

"If you are involved in an asset sale, you will also need to remember that the Transfer of Undertakings

Protection of Employees Regulations ("TUPE") are likely to apply. In cases where the regulations apply, your employees transfer automatically to the new purchaser of the business on the same terms and conditions of employment. However as a general rule the regulations do not apply to share sales."

### Beware the DIY approach

"Sellers sometimes fail to budget sufficiently for the sale of their business but with careful consultation with your accountant and solicitor, aspects of the work can be undertaken yourself to make limited budgets stretch," said Chris Kane. "However, as we see time and again when we handle disputes on behalf of sellers and buyers, don't be tempted to cut corners – particularly when it comes to issues relating to warranties, liability and protection – as it may come back to bite you at a later date."

**For further information contact  
alex.pyatt@withyking.co.uk or visit:  
www.withyking.co.uk**

## CASE STUDY: EQUILIBRIUM WEALTH MANAGEMENT

It's not every day that a company buys one business and sells another within the space of four days, but that's exactly what Equilibrium Wealth Management achieved.

The seven shareholders at Equilibrium in Marlborough had been evaluating potential buyers for several years but when they met the directors at Perspective Financial Group – the 14th largest IFA group in the UK – they knew they'd found the ideal candidate. With negotiations well underway to sell the business to Perspective, Equilibrium set about bolstering its operation with the acquisition of another wealth management company, Abbey Meads Financial based in Swindon.

The deal was successfully completed before selling the newly combined businesses to Perspective just a few days later. Under the deal the shareholders realised half the agreed value on completion, with the remainder to be paid in two instalments, at the end of the first and second years post sale, conditional on achieving pre-agreed targets.

Sally Jones, a director at Equilibrium, which provides wealth management services to individuals

and companies, said: "Perspective is an ideal owner for the business in that they recognise the value of the Equilibrium brand and give us the freedom to continue to operate as we always have done in the best interests of our clients. Perspective also provides our clients – particularly our corporate clients – with additional resources and expertise which comes from being part of a large, national network.

"The sales process was intense, partly because it happened relatively quickly and partly because while we were having due diligence done to us, we were conducting due diligence on Abbey Meads. It was extremely time consuming but ultimately worth it as we have emerged as a stronger, more robust business with an exciting future. Withy King's practical advice and hands-on support throughout the process was invaluable."

All the directors at Equilibrium, including managing director Tony Apps, plan to continue working for the company, which was established in 1976 and now employs 20 people offering expert retirement planning, investment, tax planning and employee benefits advice and services to personal clients and businesses.



Sally Jones, director at Equilibrium Wealth Management



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# Transport links key to town's future

Chippenham's location on the M4 corridor between Swindon and Bristol has put it in the fast lane for growth over the past couple of decades.

Added to its position on main London-Bristol railway line, that has enabled it to successfully attract businesses that needed excellent transport connections.

But now the town stands at a crossroads. Should business development continue around its outskirts – with new roads and pressure on its green fringe – or should it go steered towards redeveloping existing areas within the town.

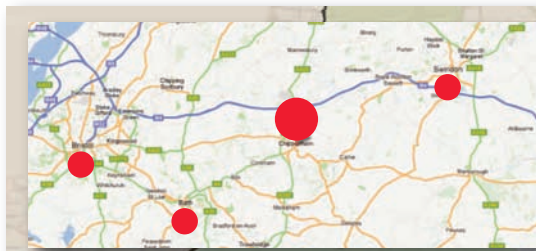
Junction 17 of the M4 – just a couple of miles north of the town – could also have a role to play in Chippenham's future, with a growing body of opinion suggesting that future growth should take place around the junction.

These arguments will be played out for years to come as the dust settles on Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy, the county's economic blueprint for the next 15 years.

The report paints a picture of a successful, vibrant Chippenham with new businesses in the ICT, rail systems and logistics sectors.

However, these new businesses will need space to locate and grow – and the Core Strategy approves the long-planned development at Showells Farm, south of the town, with a smaller scheme north of the town.

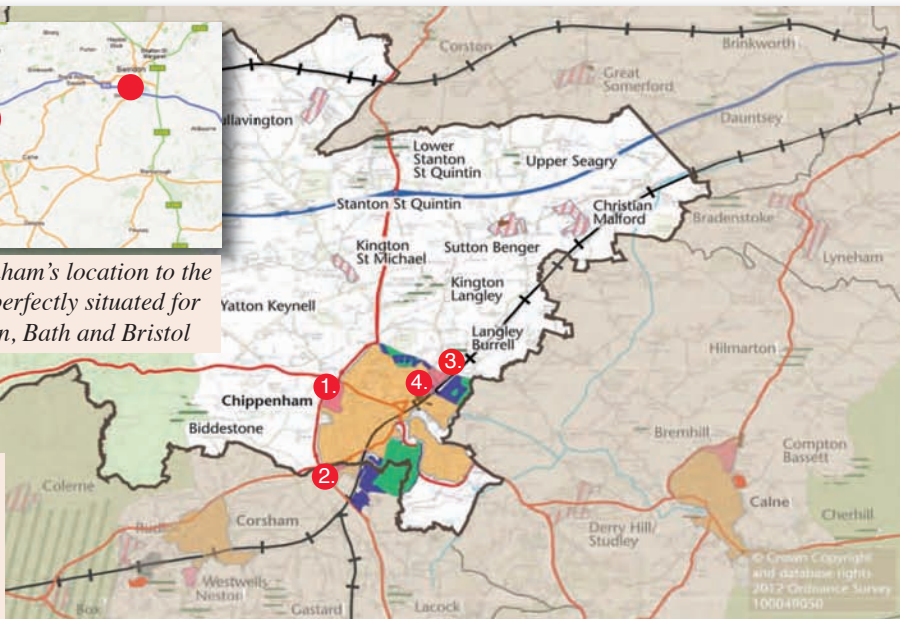
While Showells Farm has been on the drawing board for more than a decade – developer Crest has unsuccessfully sought planning permission on the 28-hectare site – the



*All the right links: Chippenham's location to the M4 means that the town is perfectly situated for doing business with Swindon, Bath and Bristol*

## Principal employment areas

1. Bumpers Farm
2. Methuen Park
3. Parsonage Way
4. Langley Park



smaller scheme would take development to the north of the ring road for the first time and could face substantial opposition.

The Core Strategy dismisses the idea of a business park at Junction 17.

But expanding Chippenham businesses at the moment – or those looking to move into the town – are faced with almost nowhere to go at present.

DTR VMS, the fast-growing automotive products group that was once part of Avon Rubber, is moving out of the town altogether.

The firm's dated factory on the 40-acre Bumpers Farm industrial estate, will not meet its requirements for expansion and with no building in the 100,000 sq ft range available in the

town it is moving to Trowbridge where it is to occupy a former factory.

The firm, which makes components such as hi-spec engine mounts for the global auto industry, received £3.1m from the Government's regional growth fund, supported by £11m of investment from its Korean owners, creating 21 new jobs and protecting 187.

Huw Thomas, director at chartered surveyors Jones Lang LaSalle and a veteran of the Chippenham property market, says other businesses are struggling to find suitable large buildings for expansion.

"These, on the whole, are manufacturing companies who want to stay in Chippenham," he said. "There are companies based on Bumpers Farm that are now in three or four building

due to expansion but can't find one building that is big enough."

Langley Park, the town's original industrial heart alongside the railway line, is being marketed as a mixed residential and business location but most observers believe the emphasis will be on housing.

The area is home to Invensys Rail and Westcode Semiconductors – both with roots in Westinghouse, the rail industry giant which originally dominated the area.

Chippenham has continued to attract office users to its showpiece Greenway Business Park on the M4 side of the town and Methuen Park and Turnpike Business Park off the Bath Road.

The latter is proving popular with occupiers, with one of the only design-and-build projects in the region completely there. Bechtel Direct, the

UK arm of a German information technology services group, is relocating from Bumpers Farm to an 8,200 sq ft office developed by Somerset firm Summerfield.

Managing director James Napp said: "Our business growth has consistently exceeded targets and the company needs to relocate to larger premises to help us meet future challenges."

"With our skilled and dedicated workforce we wished to stay in the area and were delighted to learn of the new phase being built by Summerfield at the site."

"The new Turnpike office fits both our expectations and needs." The company aims to be in its new headquarters by the summer.

The deal is the fourth and final stage of Summerfield's prestigious office developments at Methuen Park. The company's other buildings on the business park are already occupied by Herman Miller, Wincanton Logistics and Fleet Support.

Elsewhere in Chippenham, the derelict former Hygrade factory at Westmead is to be redeveloped by retirement homes group McCarthy & Stone. The high-profile site fronts onto the River Avon and planners hope to be able to open the waterside as public space. The river frontage in Chippenham is seen as a key driver to regenerate parts of the town centre. Close by on Bath Road developer ING has signed up as developer for the car park site where it plans a ground-floor retail scheme with car parking at first-floor level. The town's edge-of-town retail scene is also likely to be boosted by plans to split the former Focus DIY building on Bath Road into three non-food units. Two are understood to be close to getting tenants.

## Recruiter celebrates growth a year after business move

Independent recruitment business 24-7 Staffing has celebrated the first anniversary of its move to new purpose built offices in Chippenham by announcing a 74 per cent growth in turnover in the last financial year.

Founded in May 2004 and initially specialising in the driving sector, the firm had been looking to move for a few years.

Buying the new, larger premises in Timber Street represented a major investment for owners Julian and Melody Thompson but has allowed the business to expand into the industrial and commercial sectors and boost employee numbers to 12 across the two offices in Chippenham and Yate.

Julian and Melody believe that, as a commuter town, Chippenham is ideally located to serve clients and candidates.

The firm is working from 263 client locations within a 25-mile radius of each office, including 20 per cent of Swindon's Top 100 companies as published in the February edition of Swindon Business News, leaving plenty of room for future expansion.



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## Chippenham's Top 10 businesses

### 1. WINCANTON

Logistics

### 2. WAVIN

Pipe systems supplier

### 3. CAPITA SECURE INFORMATION SOLUTIONS

Financial and asset advisers

### 4. HERMAN MILLER

Furniture manufacturer

### 5. MW HIGH TECH PROJECTS UK

Engineering and construction

### 6. ALLIANCE PHARMA

Pharmaceutical manufacturer

### 7. SCISYS

IT developer

### 8. VECTURA GROUP

Developer of inhaler technologies

### 9. FSG HOLDINGS

Fleet management

### 10. DTR VMS

Manufacturer of dampening equipment

## 20 years of success for local agent

When estate agents and chartered surveyors Atwell Martin opened for business on January 2, 1992, the economy was - as it is now - in a bad state, but for different reasons. Interest rates, instead of being at 0.5 per cent as they are now, peaked at 15 per cent the following month.

Arguably not a great time to start but it was always felt that it was a good time to open and get ready for a better market which Robert Atwell and Andrew Martin hoped would be only around the corner.

The pair had spent the previous six months renovating 2 New Road, Chippenham (which is still occupied by part of the business) and, despite the recession, the new offices opened on time.

Fortunately good friends and contacts from the past supported the business through this time. Robert carried out much valuation and survey work, travelling all over the UK for a Business Expansion Scheme.

The new homes business flourished with support from Ideal Homes and Andrew developed the second-hand business and also a commercial department.

Due to Andrew's passion for Devizes, Atwell Martin opened its second office there in 1993. This was, and remains, a solid stalwart of the business and is now run by Angie Kirkpatrick who, incidentally, bought her house from Atwell Martin in 1992.

The business, despite the recession, continued to flourish and on the back of new homes business in Lansdown Park opened a third office in Calne in 1995. This office is now run by Jane Slusarczyk.

The new homes business grew and Atwell Martin dealt with Canning Lock in Devizes, Ferfoot Paddock in Chippenham, and Marden Mill in Calne to name but a few.

Sally Saunders joined and became new homes director

and remains so to this day. After an initial office in Regent Circus Swindon, Atwell Martin opened Old Town office in 2004. This prestigious office, now managed by Dan Beck, has flourished. The residential team are continuing to build the second-hand market and are concentrating on selling homes in Old Town and the surrounding villages.

A highlight for the business was winning the National New Homes Agent award in 2006. Sally and her team sold more than 900 new houses in this period, with the major development being Katherine Park in Corsham.

In 2005 Robert was invited to join the partnership of national agent King Sturge and Andrew decided to retire. The team carried on and George Humphreys, Sally Saunders and Lynn Atwell took the lead to push the company through the most successful period in its history, which only stopped when the recession hit in 2007/08.

During this time Robert's son Paul grew a very successful lettings department which was sold in 2009 and then started a new national based business called Veritas, dealing with facility management.

This is now a very successful business and Chris Atwell joined his brother to further develop the client base. Atwell Martin remains a very personal family owned business.

In May last year Robert retired from King Sturge and came back to join the family business. The team is now strong and the board of directors made up of people with extensive property experience. Miles Wilson returned in November 2011 to the Chippenham office having previously worked there for several years alongside Chris Scothern.

He is now at the helm as manager and with Chris Pomphrey oversees the residential agency part of the business. Their focus and objective over the next 12 months is to drive the business even further forward.

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## Chippenham software firm expands to Texas

Chippenham-based software firm Preactor International has expanded its global reach by establishing a subsidiary in Dallas, Texas.

The firm, which leads the world in manufacturing resource scheduling software, has partnerships with more than 400 companies around the world to sell its products, including its flagship Preactor which is used by more than 3,500 SMEs and large multinational companies in 69 countries and has been translated into 30 languages.

Preactor International's products allows companies to better manage and lower inventory levels and so reduce costs, yet still leave them able to respond to shorter lead times.

Although all the software development takes place in Chippenham, Preactor International established Preactor Software India in Bangalore, in 2005 and Preactor Europe in Lyon, France, in 2008 to help manage partners locally and to support the company's global growth. Today it employs 60 people worldwide.

The subsidiary in Texas has been opened with support from UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) South West.

Preactor International chief executive Mike Novels, one of the leading experts in planning and scheduling technology in the manufacturing sector, said: "We learnt very early on in Preactor International's growth that having partners overseas working within the markets we were trying to enter was invaluable."

"These partners were better positioned to provide timely support and integration for our global customers and they also helped to generate and accelerate sales in those markets."

Some 70 per cent of the firm's sales are overseas and approximately 90 per cent of these are through its well-established partner network.

"In order to maintain and increase the reach of this partner network and to support our drive into the Canadian, North American and Mexican markets, we were keen to establish a Preactor office in the USA," added Mr Novels.

"We had already seen first hand the benefit of establishing such offices in both Bangalore and Lyon, so a North American subsidiary was the next logical step."

Aware of the potential challenges of establishing a business in the States, Preactor International began talking to UKTI in 2010. As a result, International Trade Adviser Graham Symonds signed the company up to UKTI's Gateway to Global Growth Programme – a 12 month programme of strategic support tailored to the company's needs to help grow their business overseas. Graham was also able to secure Preactor European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) to support the set up of the business.

UKTI International Trade Adviser Graham Symonds added: "As the growth of their US customer base reveals, Mike and the team have really begun to establish themselves in the States now. Their recognition of when it was appropriate to establish a direct presence in the market is a key factor in maintaining sales momentum as was their ability to put together and execute a well scoped and fully-costed plan. I have little doubt that Preactor International will continue to enjoy significant success in the future and look forward to supporting them as they look to develop both new and existing global markets."

## State-of-the-art press at Fascia

Fascia Graphics, the Chippenham-based specialist print firm, has become the first UK manufacturer to invest in a new state-of-the-art press made by Japanese firm Sakurai.

The Sakurai MS80-SD will boost Fascia's performance, energy efficiency and lower its carbon emissions.

Fascia, the market leader for the production of membrane keypads and graphic overlays in the printed graphics industry, worked closely with Sakurai and its suppliers who took into account Fascia's need to continually improve its lean manufacturing processes.

As a result the servo-driven cylinder press has been built with

unique anti-scratch substrate paths, which reduce waste.

A bespoke system has also been designed with a heat exchange unit that cleans and recycles the waste air out of the drying line; significantly reducing energy consumption and running costs. Long-life LED lamps that function on demand also result in lower energy costs and safer operation.

Fascia engineering manager Michael Hole said: "This investment in the latest cutting-edge technology will give us a competitive advantage in the industry and at the same time cut our carbon emissions, improve our efficiency and support the environmental improvements we are continually making to the business."

"While this new line drastically increases our production capabilities, it also enables us to continue supplying product at a competitive price."

"In a marketplace where raw material and energy costs are continually rising, this addition will enable us to swallow some of these cost increases and maintain unit costs through leaner manufacturing."

The press has also reduced the amount of dust and debris entering the atmosphere because it has been installed within a positive pressure environment, with temperature and humidity closely controlled. This consequently reduces any downtime of the press during production and further waste.



## Methuen meets Mango

Chippenham's Methuen Park office complex has attracted Data analysis firm Mango Business Solutions to its cutting edge office space.

The firm is relocating from the Greenways Business Park on the other side of Chippenham to No 2 Methuen Park, a building owned and part-occupied by specialist software firm SciSys. Mango has agreed a 10-year lease with a five-year break.

The deal was brokered by Colliers International, whose offices specialist James Preece said: "This is a distinctive complex in a favoured

location with all the facilities you would expect from prime modern office space. Number 2 Methuen Park includes an on-site gym and café to ensure all staff are well catered for."

"We only have the first floor SW left and we are already seeing interest in it."

Mango delivers tailored training, consulting and application development allowing customers to harness the power of complex statistical analysis.

The company has grown rapidly over the past couple of years and, in addition to opening offices in

Shanghai and Switzerland, required much larger office space for its UK head office.

Colliers International acted for SciSys. Methuen Park has a competitive parking ratio of 1-200 square feet.

Office facilities include suspended ceilings, air conditioning, showers and kitchen, on site conferencing and a staffed reception.

In addition occupiers can hire the presentation suite located in the atrium. This has movable partitions allowing it to accommodate between 20 and 75 people.

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## Cost-cutting technology on offer at Bewley House

Bewley House in Chippenham town centre, which is owned and managed by HPH Commercial Property, combines a superb location with modern infrastructure.

State-of-the-art technology, on-site parking and proximity to the M4 and the town's high-speed rail line to London make the office building an attractive prospect for businesses looking for fast and reliable access, both digitally and physically.

Only the first floor of the 18,500 sq ft five-floor building remains available with 5,125 sq ft (476 sq m) of office accommodation.

Bewley House also has a further 3,000 sq ft of basement storage and 75 car spaces giving a parking ratio of approximately one space per 246 sq ft, which is greater than many office buildings located out of town.

The accommodation has been extensively refurbished in recent years to provide modern, bright, open-plan offices with a

kitchenette on each floor. There is full disabled access via a central reception area which leads to a 20-person lift to each floor.

The building is centrally heated with all common services managed by the landlords. There is a high level of security with each floor benefiting from a video entry phone system, swipe card access and intruder alarm.

Bewley House also contains a Voltage Power Optimiser (VPO) unit which manages the supply of electricity to all types of appliances in the building including all motor based equipment (such as the lifts and air fans), IT equipment and lighting.

HH managing director Lindsay Holdoway said: "Most modern and forward thinking companies are looking for good communication links, good transport links and ways to reduce their overheads. Bewley House is ideally placed to deliver all of this and more. Visit [www.bewleyhouse.co.uk](http://www.bewleyhouse.co.uk)

## HPH going the extra mile for its tenants

HPH Commercial Property, which owns a number of properties in Chippenham, has been providing accommodation to a diverse range of successful businesses across the region since 1955.

During that time it has earned a reputation for going the extra mile and offering much more than a standard tenant-landlord relationship, providing its clients with property expertise in a variety of areas including risk management, impact of new legislation and maintenance.

One key way in which the company actively helps its tenants is by providing advice, expertise and assistance in implementing cost-reducing measures.

HPH's properties are managed by an in-house team who work closely with the client to help them make savings, and at a time when all companies are conscious of cutting costs wherever possible, this has become a valuable resource.

Managing director Lindsay Holdoway said: "We help our tenants to tackle their energy costs and to ensure that their business is working as efficiently as possible. One of our most effective tools is power optimisation technology which helps our tenants to control the levels of power directed to specific appliances, ensuring that only the required power is used."

"We also help to tackle energy costs with central heating management systems designed to reduce heating costs by at least 30 per cent. This technology has many benefits. We are able to monitor heating systems in our buildings from our offices in Bath, and through this we can identify ways to help clients to heat their offices more efficiently."

"Our aim is to provide our tenants with a comprehensive network of support across the many different areas of building management, giving extra value wherever possible and helping our clients to save money in a variety of ways."

HPH regularly undertakes projects to help ensure its properties remain of the highest standard, including re-roofing buildings, re-decorating interiors and exteriors and fitting new kitchenette facilities.

The company also works closely with individual tenants to help determine ways it can support each operation in its business success, whether it is helping them acquire planning permission to change the use of the unit or providing a degree of marketing support or to create better signage.

For more information visit [www.hph.co.uk](http://www.hph.co.uk)

## Business Edge: IT simply applied

Ray Smyth of Swindon's The IPstore says: "Choose the IT your business needs and don't settle for a scruffy little compromise..."

If you can't obtain the correct tool for the job, is the best available compromise acceptable? Well only if it provides you with a desirable business outcome, but don't be too eager to trade down from what you really need.

In the early days of IT, chronologically not that long ago, the choice that businesses faced was between a poor compromise and bespoke development.

The former, available to everyone, was seldom anything more than experimental and the latter, restricted to a wealthy few, quite literally became a business distraction.

In a manner comparable to other more familiar technology battles – VHS vs Betamax, for example – TCP/IP has triumphed as the dominant network protocol giving rise to an enormous and diverse range of IP-enabled software and hardware with an awesome range of possibilities.

Proving to be a game changer, organisations that 'get it' are carving from a recession-ridden economy, a viable, dynamic and potentially wealthy future.

It is rare to find a business that functions without some IT, even if it's just a laptop and email. But these and their larger counterparts are missing out; IP-connectivity has created a rich and comprehensive set of business-technology building blocks. Most well-crafted IP building blocks are easy to use, especially in isolation. But their real value resides in precisely how they are assembled, the manner and extent to which they are made secure, and how they are collectively managed.

Young agile organisations are well positioned to take advantage of this business grade, IP revolution. They are unburdened and consigning their dinosaur-like counterparts to history.

Organisations that can create a clear and effective business strategy will always be in a strong place – its basic business. Using this foundation, not the other way around, they can progressively and continually erect and evolve a technology structure that supports, delivers and expands that strategy to produce new efficiencies and unique, edgy advantage.

You can create an IP network without becoming an expert, but it's much harder to translate a business strategy, an operational workflow, and the demands of ever increasing regulatory and legal compliance into IT. This does not make the case for expensive consultants who can provide a shopping list and the details of a traditional IT reseller offering the traditional and limited choice, all driven by their margin, not your requirements.

Defining, building and managing an IT network that is fit for purpose, your purpose, requires consultative, interactive and iterative mentoring that is continuous and persistent. It requires a new way of buying IT and a new kind of long-term partner to help you add value to your business.

A longer version of this article is available at <http://www.theipstore.co.uk/news-store>

## Microsoft reseller gains accreditations

CTS Retail, the Swindon-based Microsoft reseller, has added Windows® 7 and Office365 certifications to its portfolio, enabling it to offer the most advanced cloud-based services available for retailers.

As a leading software and services provider and a certified Microsoft Partner, CTS Retail wanted to further understand the technology behind these products so that it could support, install and configure the product effectively and efficiently for its customers.

CTS Retail's technical department has been equipped with new skills in

Microsoft® 7 configuration, enterprise desktop support and enterprise desktop administrator.

In addition, the department has also achieved certifications which will enable it to offer the cloud-based solution Office 365, which replaces the product set formerly known as BPOS.

CTS Retail services manager Nick Angel said: "Office 365 enables retailers to handle their IT requirements from virtually anywhere on almost any device and cloud-based services are something the team at CTS Retail are really passionate about."

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# Mayes says: Don't be paralysed by perfection

Lots of businesses and organisations that claim 100 per cent success, say they have never had a failure and that they are perfect. Do we really believe them? Do we really expect perfection?

If we expect perfection, we are setting ourselves up for a lifetime of frustration, disappointment and failure because let's be honest – none of us is perfect.

Striving for perfection or worse, insisting on it, costs a fortune in lost productivity, lost sales, lost opportunities, lost sanity and lost creativity.

Don't confuse having high standards and wanting to be the best with perfectionism. Perfectionism

accelerates doubt and mistrust of oneself when taken to an extreme.

We get so obsessed by wanting to make our product, project or process perfect, that we forget to check whether they offer any significant and commercially worthwhile benefit.

We take our eye off why we are in business in the first place to provide a product or service which our customers and clients want to buy.

That means producing something of real value, not a paradigm of perfection.

By creating a culture of perfectionism we paralyse our people by giving them impossible targets and expectations. This sets

people up to fail; an activity that unfortunately is still very prevalent in a lot of organisations. If nothing they do can ever be good enough and they are constantly reminded of exactly how far they have fallen short every time they will soon become demoralised, de-motivated and determined to find a new job!

**So instead of chasing perfection –**

• **Look to your organisation's strengths**

• **Encourage people doing things well**

• **Encourage your team to ask for help and make sure they get it**

• **Appreciate the work that is done**

• **Accept that everything can be better (but doesn't have to be)**

• **Look for opportunities rather than opponents**

• **Look for collaboration rather than division**

• **Look for success rather than precision**

Being in business is about quality, excellence, professionalism. These are admirable goals. But endlessly trying to get things absolutely perfect is a waste of time – the time our competitors are bringing new products to market.

So concentrate on creating products and services that are quite good enough, and selling enough.

Now that is perfect!

Peter Mayes, a Swindon-based consultant and coach, helps organisations and individuals get the best out of themselves.

He has used his skills and experience to help companies all over the world become more efficient, more productive and to move forward.

His areas of expertise include improving performance management, talent management, leadership coaching, team development, career assessments, coaching and mentoring.

*Peter and Swindon Business News have teamed up to look at some of the key obstacles to effectiveness and some of the major stumbling blocks to running a successful and productive team.*

## Cleaning and site services academy is launched by Fast Forward

The leading provider for cleaning and site services in the South West, Fast Forward, the business services division of New College Swindon, has launched a new Cleaning and Site Services Academy, offering a range of courses in cleaning, facilities, housing and security.

The Academy will be working with Asset Skills the Sector Skills Council for Facilities Management, housing, property, planning, cleaning and parking to provide courses of the highest quality.

Fast Forward has developed this popular academy in response to local business needs. These courses can offer improved effectiveness in the workplace, better use of resources, higher level of service delivery and customer service, and a more efficient and safe working environment.

A range of funded, free training is available for eligible

candidates across cleaning, facilities, housing, and security courses. Apprenticeship routes are available for those over 19 years. Literacy support is also available for any candidates.

Training can be undertaken in the workplace to provide a truly bespoke service tailored to suit your business needs.

Courses in the Academy include: Security, CCTV, NEBOSH, IBOSH, Food Hygiene, Fire Safety, First Aid, Team Leading, Risk Assessment, Facilities Management and Environmental Services. Qualifications are available from entry level right through to level 5, to suit a wide range of training needs.

For more information please contact Fiona at Fast Forward, on 01793 732887 or [Fiona.ambidge@newcollege.ac.uk](mailto:Fiona.ambidge@newcollege.ac.uk)

## Companies encouraged to offer work experience opportunities to youth

To guarantee competitiveness it is vital for the education and business sectors to work together to ensure that young people are equipped with the necessary skills and motivation to enter the workforce.

An effective way that employers can establish links with their local college is through the provision of work experience placements. Work experience offers many benefits and opportunities to students, enhancing their knowledge and understanding and preparing them for the world of work.

For employers, it provides an opportunity to help students develop an insight into the skills required by businesses, and raises awareness of

career opportunities within their company.

**Evidence suggests the employers do value work experience:**

89 per cent of employers look for work experience on a CV and 13 per cent will not interview those without it. It has been recorded that a further 55 per cent of employers believe it to be vital for future employees to have undertaken work experience.

Companies interested in offering work experience opportunities to young people, and that would like the support of Business First in identifying a suitable individual, can contact Sarah Ellis 01793 498946.

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for more information visit:  
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- Your business will gain new ideas and fresh enthusiasm, as well as a cost-effective, flexible solution to your recruitment needs.

For more information contact **Sarah Ellis** on (01793) 498946 or email [sarahellis@swindon-college.ac.uk](mailto:sarahellis@swindon-college.ac.uk) or visit [www.swindon-college.ac.uk](http://www.swindon-college.ac.uk)

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# Cineworld named for six screen multiplex



**And Action!** An artist's impression of the Regent Circus development

Cinema chain Cineworld has been named as the operator of the six-screen multiplex which will be part of Swindon's long-awaited £50m Regent Circus leisure scheme. The new state-of-the-art, all-digital cinema will form a key part of the development by Ashfield Land which will transform a neglected area of the town centre dominated by the derelict former Swindon College building. The proposed development has already attracted other major occupiers including supermarket giant Morrison's and a number of leading restaurant chains including Ask.

The Regent Circus scheme has detailed planning consent for a superstore, eight restaurants, a multiplex cinema, and a 450-space car park.

Andrew Fisher, managing director of Bristol-based Ashfield Land, said:

"The cinema deal is a major step forward for the Regent Circus project and is an important piece in the jigsaw for the transformation of this part of Swindon town centre."

"I am delighted to welcome Cineworld

to Regent Circus and I know they will provide the people of Swindon and visitors with a first class movie-going experience. To have so many enquiries from major occupiers demonstrates how attractive the Regent Circus development is and the tremendous appeal of a rejuvenated Swindon town centre. We look forward to making further exciting announcements very shortly."

Cineworld CEO Steve Wiener added: "We are very pleased with today's announcement of this addition to our estate of multiplex cinemas. We are extremely proud of having achieved our status as the most visited cinema company in the UK since 2009 and Regent Circus will only enhance our ability to provide entertainment to the residents of the greater Swindon area." Ashfield Land acquired the freehold in 2006 which facilitated Swindon College's relocation to a new £17m campus. It will fund the development with a mixture of debt and equity. Work on demolishing the existing college buildings will begin this spring.

## -FACT FILE-

- Cineworld Group, founded in 1995 by current chief executive Steve Wiener, is now the leading cinema group in the UK & Ireland.
- It operates 79 cinemas of which 73 are multiplex sites with five screens or more.
- Cineworld owns the largest 3D screen in Europe, measuring 24.4metres at the London's O2
- Last June it opened The Screening Rooms in Cheltenham, its first deluxe cinema offering customers an intimate and luxurious cinema
- A 10-screen cinema was planned as part of the ill-fated £200m Modus scheme in Granville Street
- Swindon's first cinema, the County Electric in Regent Street, opened in 1910.
- The last town centre cinema, the Cannon, closed in 1991. The building is now the Savoy pub.



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\* Entry otherwise costs £10 per person and £15 per couple on the day







## Highcross planning new industrial building at Kembrey Park

With Swindon experiencing a significant decline in the number of good quality vacant industrial buildings, Highcross, owners of Kembrey Park, have prepared plans for a brand new 35,000 sqft facility which will be known as KP35.

In 2008 when the recession took hold Swindon's total vacancy rate increased to well in excess of 3 million sqft. Since then this oversupply has reduced by half. Furthermore no new speculative development has taken place, meaning that companies seeking new premises are increasingly being frustrated by the limited amount of

choice. Coupled with a lack of land supply for new industrial development as well as ongoing funding issues for many developers, this trend is set to be exacerbated for some time to come.

Highcross have however recognised this need and have set about designing the new high quality detached KP35 building which will front onto Kembrey Street. It will have curtain glazed offices to the front, 70 parking spaces and 3 loading doors into the warehouse which will benefit from 7 metre eaves. The yard to the rear will be fully secured and gated.

Mike Morley of Highcross commented "Swindon is now starting to lack the right kind of facility for many new companies relocating to Swindon or indeed expanding within the town.

At Kembrey Park we have one of Swindon's best business locations and with a bare 2 acre site ready to be developed we can help satisfy this need'.

The joint marketing agents for the new property are Loveday and Matthews and Goodman who can be contacted on 01793 423344 or 0207 747 8847. Alternatively visit the website [www.KP35.co.uk](http://www.KP35.co.uk)

## Ergo Business Park welcomes new tenant

Global electronics company Wyrestorm Technologies has relocated to Ergo Business Park, Greenbridge, taking unit 22, a 2,170 sq ft, two-storey office property, on a new five-year lease.

Wyrestorm was based at Swindon's Basepoint business centre at Rivermead under its previous name of Grandbeing Technology. The group, which specialises in audio visual digital products, also has bases in the US, EU and Hong Kong.

It chose Ergo Business Park, which is next to the Greenbridge retail park, as it was able to agree a lease and take occupation swiftly due to the landlord's flexibility.

Chris Brooks of agents Whitmarsh Lockhart, said: "Despite the current economic landscape Ergo Business Park continues to attract image conscious, forward-thinking companies. The design-led approach, flexible space and competitive rents offered can only enhance any business profile from small start-up companies through to large organisations."

## Howard Tenens gains from planning change

Logistics group Howard Tenens has gained a variation to its existing planning consent for 240,000 sq ft of warehousing space at its Severn Distribution Park at Sharpness, Gloucestershire.

The change enables the firm, which has its largest distribution hub in Swindon, to market the site in three tranches so it can tailor building to prospective clients. Two additional smaller consents have been granted for 22,000 and 15,000 sq ft buildings.

The site already has 445,000 sq ft of modern warehousing space – the changes increase capacity of the site to 720,000 sq ft.

Severn Distribution Park, which offers multimodal transport potential via road, rail and water, is one of the



largest estates in single ownership in the South West.

A 24-hour operation with manned security, it is bonded, HMRC-compliant, and has bulk, racked and temperature-controlled warehousing, ground and dock levelers.

Space is flexible and is being marketed at expanding businesses, those with seasonal peaks and troughs and firms looking to reduce their costs and minimise their carbon footprint.



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# Annual sales driven up as MAN Truck & Bus increases its UK market share

MAN Truck & Bus, the Swindon-based heavy vehicle distributor, achieved its best ever annual UK sales last year despite a tough market.

The German-owned firm enjoyed a 73 per cent increase in UK registrations, taking total sales to 4,772 units in the under six tonne truck market.

The increase ranks the firm, which employs around 250 people at its head office and training school at Blagrove, third in the UK market with a 12.8 per cent share behind DAF and Mercedes.

The results came as the firm celebrates two decades in business in the UK and chief executive Des Evans joked: "It's taken us 20 years to be an overnight success."

"Having leapfrogged Volvo we are now chasing Mercedes."

MAN is also ranked second in the UK 6x2 tractor registrations league table with 19 per cent of the market, having sold 2,891 units last year.

"2011 for us was a tough year but a great year," said Mr Evans.

MAN's achievements came against a backdrop of challenging conditions for the UK truck market – both for vehicle suppliers and operators.



Des Evans

The total market of 37,384 registrations was 30 per cent lower than the 20-year average.

Operators are being squeezed by the combination of three factors that they can do little about – costs, credit and compliance, said Mr Evans.

And it was no use going to the Government for help. "They ain't listening" he said.

While the industry had looked to the Government for incentives, so far there had been nothing, he said.

The car industry had benefited from the scrappage scheme, he said. The owners of the 300,000 cars aged 10 years and over had been eligible for £2,000 each under the scheme. Yet for operators of the 40,000 trucks on UK roads over 10 years old the Government had done nothing.

Profitability is just three per cent on sales, he said, meaning for an operator running a truck for the average time of 300 days a year makes a loss for 291 of those.

Fuel bills had risen by at least 13 per cent, other operating costs such as tyres, repairs and maintenance, by five per cent while new compliance measures also added to the financial burden, he said.

This was taking place at a time when traditional routes of finance for most operators – overdrafts and asset finance from high street banks – were being cut back.

Better trained drivers could cut costs, he said, while MAN had introduced new finance packages to help its operators buy new and used vehicles.

Looking ahead, Mr Evans said he expected to market to stabilise over the next few years at around 40,000 registrations a year – with MAN determined to get a bigger share.

## Flagship 'intelligent truck' takes to the road

MAN Truck & Bus has launched what it describes as 'the intelligent truck' as part of its 20th anniversary in the UK.

The Swindon-based firm, which imports its vehicles from its German parent group, has named the limited edition – a version of its TGX vehicle – the Corinthian5.

The truck has been launched ahead of the London 2012 Games but MAN, which produced an Olympic-themed vehicle in 2004, has not been allowed to use any official branding from this year's Olympics – or even the word itself – as it is not an official sponsor.

However, MAN says the flagship truck, which is based on its existing MAN XXL cab, will feature innovative elements such as a driver's iPad2 communications and entertainment system along with leather seats and interior cab fittings.

It also boasts a lane guard system, electronic stability programme and adaptive cruise control.

Speaking at the truck's launch, MAN UK sales director Sandy Miller said: "We don't anticipate selling huge numbers of the MAN Corinthian5; it simply isn't that sort of truck."

"But, as a leading manufacturer in the heavy tractor market, we've been getting inquiries for some time now from our customers for a flagship model."

"This is a tremendous truck in many respects and its use of the latest technology and interactive systems have already led to it being described as 'the intelligent truck' by operators who have been involved in some of the development work with us."



**Super truck:** The Corinthian5 boasts elements such as driver's iPad2 communications and entertainment system along with leather seats and interior cab fittings, a lane guard system, electronic stability programme and adaptive cruise control.

# In Gear



## Yuasa Batteries announced as title sponsor of Honda's BTCC racing team

Yuasa Battery Sales has become the title sponsor of Honda Racing's Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) team in a new three-year deal.

The deal was announced at the unveiling of the team's brand new Civic at Honda's UK Manufacturing Facility in Swindon in March

The newly named Honda Yuasa Racing Team was announced as the Civic's 2012 racing livery was revealed for the first time.

This is the third year that Yuasa has supported the Honda Racing team and the long term deal as title sponsor will further enhance the brand recognition among consumers in the company's target markets.

Managing Director of Yuasa Batteries, Andrew Taylor, said: "Our 2011 sponsorship of Honda Racing proved a resounding success and was extremely beneficial in raising the profile of the Yuasa brand. Yuasa's partnership with Honda is very strong and the new title sponsorship provides us with the perfect springboard for our ambitious UK and European automotive aftermarket plans over the next three years."

"We are very pleased to add Yuasa's name to the team title and continuing our commitment to the team over the 2012 to 2014 seasons. With the sensational new Civic built to the BTCC's turbocharged Next Generation Touring Car (NGTC) regulations, we can look forward to another season of very exciting racing as Matt Neal and Gordon "Flash" Shedden take on all-comers to defend their titles."

Commenting on Yuasa's announcement, Honda (UK) managing director Dave Hodgetts said: "From a business and team perspective we've developed a great relationship with Yuasa. Today's news will allow us to take that relationship from strength to strength over the next three years, looking at innovative marketing and brand initiatives linked to the excitement of racing."

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## Used car business in the driving seat



Revving up for expansion: Ray Nenshi and Jean Jones

Brothers Ray and Ainees Nenshi are expanding their S&R Motors used car business with financial advice and support from Barclays Business.

The entrepreneurial pair, who started the business in 1996, have expanded it rapidly to a number of car lots across Swindon. Last year the business, with headquarters at Stratton Road, achieved a 12 per cent increase in annual sales and a 35 per cent growth in its mechanical division.

The recession has been challenging for used car firms like S&R with many buyers downsizing to smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles and multi-car households moving back to owning a single car.

But having bucked the trend, S&R is now looking to expand and take on three more vehicle technicians

to meet growing demand. Ray said: "We didn't realise how much the recession would affect the used car industry. Our bankers and accountant worked through every aspect of our business model with us during the downturn - how we pay our wages, monitoring cash flow as well as thinking creatively about how to diversify into new markets. We made sure we built a great team of advisors around us."

The dealership has up to 200 used cars at any one time and as consumers are looking for more value low-cost cars and changing cars less frequently, the firm has made a significant investment in introducing the latest technology and diagnostic equipment into its workshop. This means all servicing, repairs and preparation is undertaken in-house - an area of the business which has helped to reduce costs.

## BUDGET 2012

In association with Morris Owen Accountants

Swindon Business News has teamed up with accountants Morris Owen to bring unparalleled coverage of this month's Budget.

With current economic conditions leaving Chancellor George Osborne little room for manoeuvre, the Budget is likely to be long on politics and short on policies. However, as with all Chancellors, Mr Osborne is bound to pull a few surprises out of the famous Budget Box.

Swindon Business News's website - www.swindon-business.net - will be reporting on the Budget as it happens with instant analysis and comment from Morris Owen partner Rob Beale and a panel of experts drawn from Swindon's business community.

We will also be tweeting live Budget update while the Chancellor is making his speech in the Commons and then in April's Swindon Business News will provide a full round up with local comment and analysis from Morris Owen.

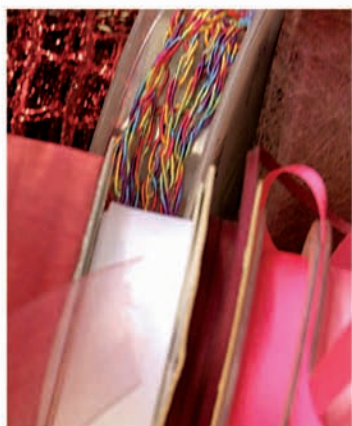
Rob Beale said: "With no money to play with we expect George Osborne to take with one hand in order to give with the other.

In order to help business, reversing the cuts in the Annual Investment Allowance limits from £100,000 to £25,000 would help - encouraging business to invest for the future is important.

"We are also expecting further changes to cut red tape for business owners, such as increasing company audit thresholds to remove companies from this requirement as well as putting more resources into HMRC to allow them to help business.

"Both from a political and economic perspective, the expectation is for an increase in anti-avoidance tax legislation to try to close the loopholes currently being exploited, perhaps with special focus on stamp duty and income tax schemes. It would also come as no surprise to see tax relief on pension contributions being restricted for higher rate tax payers.

"Finally, we expect the theme of the Budget to be that the Government is listening and is supporting families; accordingly we expect changes to the previously proposed withdrawal of child benefit for higher-rate taxpayers and further increases to the personal allowance to help lower paid workers."



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