

South Hams District Council

Business e-Bulletin



News and Events from the Economic Development Unit

25 November 2009

Editor: Carol Trant

carol.trant@southhams.gov.uk

Business Rates Revaluation Poster

The image below shows the large poster that has been installed at Follaton House just before the courtyard on the way to our main reception.

Clearly, the poster intends to draw attention to the Number 10 website petition in an effort to encourage people to log-on and register their support for our campaign.

The main story behind the campaign appears a little further down in this e-Bulletin.

Protect our businesses - Sign up now!

South Hams District Council is calling on people to join its campaign to stop the implementation of the recently announced revaluation of business premises.



Many local businesses are facing huge rate rises

South Hams District Council has asked the Prime Minister not to implement an increase in the valuation of business premises in the current economic climate.

There is real anguish at the response these announcements have had on local shopkeepers; many are facing rises measured in terms of hundreds of percent. This at a time when trade is reflecting the downturn, leading

to the closure of many shops. The fear is that in the present difficult economic times many more local shops will close and the future of struggling market towns will be further threatened.

If you would like to sign the petition, you can do so at:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/businessrate/>

For more information see our website www.southhams.gov.uk

Please help us to help our local businesses



Welcome

Welcome to the November edition of the South Hams Business e-Bulletin.

We intend to use this slightly revised medium to pass on items of interest and hope to increase the frequency.

Please let us know if you find this acceptable and, moreover, what we might do to improve its relevance for the small business community.

We are very happy for you to pass on a copy to other businesses that may not have received it; however, it would be a bonus for us to receive any new recipient's email address so that we can build on our circulation list and include them in future mailings.

We hope you enjoy this latest, albeit quite brief, edition.

Carol Trant
Business Support Officer
South Hams District Council
Follaton House
Plymouth Road
Totnes
Devon
TQ9 5NE
01803 861267

Top Story

Business Rates Revaluation 2010

Protect Our Businesses – Sign up now

Number 10 Downing Street has approved the South Hams District Council's call for a **petition** not to implement an increase in the valuation of business premises in the current economic climate.

The Council therefore wishes to urge the business community to log-on to the Number 10 website and sign the petition. The link to do so is:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/businessrate/>

The deadline for the petition is 06 January 2010.

Background to this story:

At its Full Council meeting on 29 October 2009, South Hams District Councillors unanimously supported a motion proposed by Deputy Leader, Cllr Bill Hitchins, expressing grave concerns about the detrimental impact of the revaluation of business premises, particularly in the current economic crisis. The motion was seconded by Cllr Cathie Pannell.

The Council also totally endorsed the earlier comments by the Leader, Cllr John Tucker, and the district's Town Mayors in a letter to the Regional Minister, Jim Knight MP. The letter dated 15 October 2009 told the Minister about the anguish felt by local businesses and the prospect of big rises in business rate bills and how the future of many businesses in the South Hams could be threatened. The letter concluded – "Is there any hope you can give us that this draconian decision will be reversed?"

Diary Dates

South Hams Business Forum on Thursday, 26 November 2009

Businesses are invited to attend the annual South Hams Business Forum on Thursday, 26 November at Follaton House, Totnes, starting at 6:30pm. The meeting provides the Council with an opportunity to consult with the business community on the Council's proposed spending plans for 2010 / 2011.

This year's guest speaker is John Reeves, Group Valuation Officer for the South West Valuation Office, a very good orator with years of experience, who will be providing a presentation on the 2010 Business Rate Revaluation and which will include answers to some of the most frequently asked questions such as:

- ~ Why have rateable values changed?
- ~ Why have ours increased?
- ~ How do we know the values are accurate?
- ~ What can we do if we think they're wrong?

There will be an opportunity for other questions and answers.

Given the Business Rates, topic, it is possible that the available space will be limited. If you would like to book a place, please contact Carol Trant, Business Support Officer on 01803 861267 or email: carol.trant@southhams.gov.uk

Articles

Your Guide to Help in Difficult Times:

To view or download a copy of the Council's above publication, please go to:

http://www.southhams.gov.uk/index/council_index/nav-council-policies-plans/supportduringeconomicdownturn.htm

This Guide intends to provide sources of help for businesses and individuals in the face of some hardship at a time when economic fortunes are generally at a very low ebb. The booklet has been compiled in partnership with colleagues at West Devon Borough Council.

Business Growth & Diversification Fund:



Business Growth & Diversification Fund

The Business Growth & Diversification Fund (BGD) is a small grant scheme that aims to assist businesses to grow and diversify by investing in both capital and revenue activities. The grant intervention is 30% of eligible project costs - Minimum £1k / Maximum £10,000.

Eligibility:

Under the RDPE programme, projects that are funded must fit into one of 3 themes:

1. Diversification into non agricultural activities (311)
2. Creation and development of micro - businesses (312)
3. Encouragement of tourism activities (313)

To apply for the scheme:

- A business trading address in the South Devon Coastal area.
- Less than 10 full-time employees.
- Have an annual turnover of less than £1.7 million.
- Latest set of accounts with a robust business plan.
- If planning is required – the application must either be approved or submitted.

What can be funded?

- Purchase of equipment (but not replacement or upgrading of existing equipment).
- Installation of new technology.
- Product development and testing.
- Technical support to lead to business growth.
- Introduction of a new marketing technique.
- Improving energy efficiency / reducing environmental impact / waste minimisation.
- Adaptations / improvements to premises.

What cannot be funded?

- Vehicles
- Basic ICT equipment and software, such as office computers, printers etc.
- Actions to meet Health & Safety or other statutory requirements.
- Ongoing costs, such as overheads for utilities / staff.

How do I apply – and who do I contact?

Contact Cathy Heath, South Devon Coastal Project Officer; she can advise you whether or not your proposal will be eligible for the grant.

Alternatively, visit the website www.southdevoncoastal.org where there will be an automatic on-line process to check the eligibility of your project.

If your project appears to be eligible, you will be invited to submit an application. If your project is ineligible, we will try to direct you to an alternative funding scheme that may match your requirements.

Dates for your Diary

Christmas Farmers Markets

Kingsbridge - 05 December 2009 (The market will include demonstrations on how to make wreaths & swags and how to make Christmas pudding truffles whilst being serenaded by classical musicians).

Venue: The Town Square Time: 9.00am – 1.00pm

Dartmouth - 12 December 2009

Venue: The Old Market Time: 9.00am – 2.00pm

Kingsbridge - 19 December 2009 (with musical entertainment)

Venue: The Town Square Time: 9.00am – 1.00pm

Totnes Christmas Festival

Late Night Shopping in Totnes on Tuesday evenings – 8, 15 & 22 December from 6pm. The festivities will include a diverse range of musicians and entertainment located throughout the town.

Candlelit Dartmouth – 11 & 12 December

Late Night Shopping in Dartmouth on Friday, 11 December. There will be entertainment around the town of Dartmouth by a range of street entertainers including samba and percussion bands parading through the streets on both Friday evening and all day on the following Saturday. There will be candlelit dinners to round off the evening.

For more information please refer to: <http://www.candlelitdartmouth.co.uk/>

Borrowed Snippet

Number 10 – Furnished Holiday Lets Petition

South West Tourism continues to lobby Government against the new Furnished Holiday Letting Rules, and a petition is also available to sign on the 10 Downing Street website.

[To sign the petition click here](#)

How to contact us

By telephone: 01803 861267

By email: carol.trant@southhams.gov.uk

By post:

Business Support Officer

South Hams District Council

Follaton House

Totnes

Devon TQ9 5NE