

South Hams Business Newsletter

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www.southhams.gov.uk/business_index.htm



South Hams
District Council

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Working Towards Quality Jobs

Priority 2 – Creating the conditions for the growth and maintenance of quality economic activity.

'Quality jobs' for local people is one of the six priorities that South Hams District Council has identified for its activities. These priorities are considered in the work of all council services but it is the Economic Development Office that is charged with developing the strategy to deliver against this priority.

The Economic Development team produced the Prosperity Strategy 2002 -2007 to guide Council activities which have included:

- Identification of employment sites;
- Construction of employment units at Admiral Court, Dartmouth and Babbage Court, Totnes;
- Partnership in Devon Renaissance – to deliver economic projects in South Hams, West Devon, North Devon and Torridge e.g. redundant buildings grants, Defence Diversification Agency Technology Transfer;
- Promotion of ICT adoption to local businesses – particularly broadband;
- Drawing in European funding e.g. Admiral Court, and Babbage Court and Cycleau – transnational estuary management and development partnership project;
- Working with business sectors to improve marketing, networking and access to



external funding e.g. marine industries, food & drink producers;

- Contributing to national and regional consultations of local economic significance;
- Research into the local economy to identify trends and opportunities.

The district has responded well to these activities, for example half of the Technology Transfer project businesses are based in the district, while half of Broadband4Devon's business ICT support expenditure and 20% of Redundant Building grant applications occurred in the South Hams.

The prosperity strategy is now being reviewed and the process has included community consultation in June 2005 and elected Council Members; the business community and external partners will be consulted in July 2006 as part of the process.

Local Economy Performs Well

The council receives a regular report on the condition of the local economy. This is a very useful tool for comparing the trends over time or against the performance of neighbouring districts and the county as a whole.

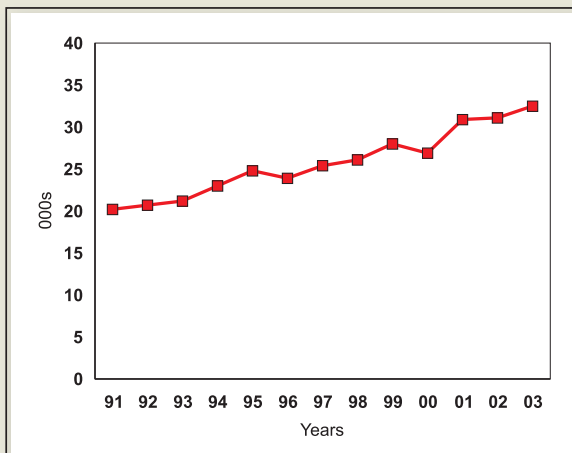
The latest South Hams report, based on 2003 data, states:

The South Hams economy is currently growing at a very satisfactory rate, averaging 8.1% per annum over the five years 1998 to 2003.

In more detail the economy as a whole grew by 7.5% per annum over the decade 1993 to 2003. Growth in the second half of the decade was stronger than that of the first half. The strongest growth sectors were distribution, transport and communication, business services and public administration.

The Latest Devon report shows the South Hams to be performing well:

South Hams' growth over the decade was almost 50% greater than nationally and the district came second in Devon (84.2%), only bettered by Exeter, when comparing gross value added per head to the national average in 2003. The strong expansion in the South Hams economy has resulted in a significant increase in the numbers employed. Correspondingly, unemployment in the working aged population currently gravitates at around 1.0% annually.



South Hams Employment

For more information visit:

www.southhams.gov.uk/index/business_index/sp-economic-development/sp-business-research.htm

Small Business Rate Relief

The Government has introduced a new scheme to help small businesses in England. The relief is in two parts: a discount and/or a reduced Business Rate multiplier. Help is available if the rateable value of your property(s) is under £10,000 for discounts and/or under £15,000 for the reduced multiplier. The relief can only be given on properties that you occupy in England and it does not apply to unoccupied properties.

Discounts:

You will get a discount on your main property if you occupy:

- Only one business property in England with a rateable value of less than £10,000, or
- One main business property, with a rateable value of less than £10,000 and other additional properties - providing the additional properties each have a rateable value of less than £2,200 and the combined rateable value of all properties is under £15,000.

For more information visit:

www.southhams.gov.uk/index/business_index/ksp_business_rates/sp-business-rates-discounts.htm

Redundant Building Grants

The purpose of the Redundant Buildings Grant (RBG) is to assist with the creation of new business premises and to help safeguard and create jobs.

Most types of buildings, regardless of age, which can be used for business premises, will qualify. A building must be completely unused or unusable for its future purpose in its current state.

Suitable Buildings:

- Space for manufacturing, service or creative industries and office premises
- Tourism facilities and activities (please see website below)
- Warehousing and distribution facilities that create jobs locally
- Agricultural and other land-based businesses not related to primary production



Grants:

- Minimum grant available is £10,000
- Upper grant limit is €100,000 (which is approximately £68,000)
- The rate of grant will be up to, but not normally exceed, 25% of eligible costs
- Grants to the private sector are governed by European State Aid rules.

Grants can cover up to 25% of eligible costs which can include those associated with building works, installation of services, ICT infrastructure, access and parking and professional fees. Grant aid for the upgrading of utilities can be provided if this will enhance an existing business activity within the premises.

Eligible applicants are: sole traders, partners, limited companies, co-operatives and charitable trusts provided the project meets the other criteria of the scheme.

For more information contact Devon Renaissance:

www.ruraldevon.org

Devon Renaissance Business Survey 2006

Earlier this year the Economic Development Office conducted a business survey in partnership with the other Objective2 designated authorities in Devon and with Devon Renaissance¹ funding assistance; thank you to all those who contributed. The results of the survey can be viewed at:

For more information visit:

www.southhams.gov.uk/index/business_index/sp-economic-development/sp-business-research.htm

A summary of a typical business in the rural programme area follows:

Summary of a Typical South Hams Business:

Description

- Is small, with less than 10 employees
- Has a turnover of less than £250k
- Is managed/owned by a man, aged between 35 and 54
- Is in a rural location

Plans

- Has limited growth plans
- Doesn't yet have a business plan
- Is not focussing on developing new products/services
- Has not developed a quality control system
- Does not yet have an environmental policy in place

Skills and Training

- Perceives that it will need to increase its skills base over the next 3 years
- Has experienced difficulties recruiting suitably skilled staff, particularly in regard to trade and professional skills
- Considers the skills shortage to be a constraint on the growth and competitiveness of their business
- Doesn't have a formal method of identifying training needs for staff
- Uses informal methods of training for staff

Business Advice

- Will seek business advice in the next three years, particularly financial advice
- Chooses Banks/Accountants as the primary advice provider
- Finds that the advice providers know more about their business than they perceived prior to engaging with that provider
- Finds that the advice providers provide advice of lower quality than they perceived prior to engaging with that provider

Flexibility

- Considers that working in partnership enhances the chances of local business success
- Regularly undertakes co-operative work with other local organisations
- Doesn't believe that working co-operatively could affect competitiveness adversely
- Believes that flexible working options are beneficial
- Does not feel able to offer flexibility beyond part time working

ICT

- Uses Broadband primarily for email and internet browsing
- May not have the skills/knowledge/equipment to fully exploit ICT
- Does not use the internet to trade

Constraints

- Considers that Road Access is the main constraint affecting their business
- Believes that Distance from Market/Customers and Obtaining Finance are other issues that significantly constrain business growth and competitiveness



Business Advice

The following items may be of interest; to access the full article simply copy the URL into your browser address bar and hit return

Highly Pathogenic Avian Flu

Avian influenza is a highly infectious notifiable disease affecting many species of birds, including commercial, wild and pet birds. Defra has a helpline for people who want to report dead birds or who need advice on avian flu.

For more information visit:

www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/ai/index.htm

Entry Level Guide - A Short Guide to Making Your Premises Safe from Fire

This booklet provides simple and practical advice to people responsible for fire safety in small and medium businesses.

For more information visit:

www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1500383

Enterprise South Devon

Free Workshops For SME Businesses

A series of completely FREE one-day workshops for South Devon's small and medium sized enterprises will be run in Torbay in 2006 and 2007.

Topics will include:

- Welcome series of courses
- Basic & Intermediate Food Hygiene
- Basic and Intermediate Health and Safety
- Basic and Intermediate First Aid
- Marketing
- Green Tourism
- IT

For more information visit:

www.enterprisesouthdevon.co.uk

Business Link

Profit from Intellectual Property Rights – 03 October, Tamar Science Park, Plymouth

Learn about the different forms of IPR such as patents, trademarks, copyright, know-how and other 'soft' IPR, how an SME takes

strategic IPR decisions and how to protect these assets and make money from them through licensing, joint ventures *etc.*

Getting a grant for your business

Getting grant-funding could really help your business develop and grow. But even experts can find it difficult to keep track of the hundreds of different grant schemes which keep appearing and then disappearing. This briefing outlines the kind of grants available to small and medium-sized businesses...

Developing People

The people employed by your business drive the sales, growth and the ideas pivotal to the future success of the organisation. Are your employees aware of the aims and objectives of your business or is there a communication gap? How do you ensure that the people working in your organisation are sufficiently motivated?...

For more information visit:

blinkdandc.com

News Items

From Environment Agency:

Business environmental news

Business environmental news rounds up all the most important environmental stories and developments for you - no matter what your area of business or level of expertise...

For more information visit:

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business

From dti:

Confident Consumers

The Confident Consumers section of the DTI web site provides policy information on a wide variety of consumer subjects and explains how we have strengthened safeguards for consumers in many areas, including e-commerce.

Better Business Framework

We are also implementing a reformed, simplified company law framework, which will enable enterprise and make it easier to set up and run a company. The pages on Company Law outline what we are doing...

Business Sectors

The issues covered in the DTIs sector-specific web sites are tailored to each sector and include topics such as... sector-specific schemes and initiatives; general business support; regulatory guidance; export assistance; market forecasts; research and development; and government policy...

For more information visit:

www.dti.gov.uk

From SWRDA:

Sectors and Clusters

The South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) has five economically important sectors and three emerging sectors that the Regional Economic Strategy identifies as being crucial for increasing economic growth in the years ahead.

Signing up to South West England's economic future

South West England's movers and shakers will be signing up to a vision of how the region's economy can move forward over the next decade. The SWRDA and representatives from the public and private sector will meet to decide the next steps for the Regional Economic Strategy 2006-2015...

New Marine Industry Training School Opens In Plymouth

A hi-tech training centre dedicated to raising skills and supporting Plymouth's marine industry was opened in Plymouth on 11th May [this has obvious benefits to the marine industry across South Devon]...

For more information visit:

www.southwestrda.org.uk

From Our South West:

Government support programmes to help your business

There is a lot of help available ranging from free telephone expert advice, site visits, free publications and on-line guides about best practice, grants, interest free loans and enhanced capital allowances...

For more information visit:

www.oursouthwest.com/SusBus/Intro.html#govprogs

From BBC Business: Q&A:

The Pensions White paper and you

The state pension age is to rise to 68 from 2044, as part of government proposals to strengthen pension provision in the UK. The link between the state pension and earnings will also be restored ...

UK airports in competition probe

Regulators are to examine competition in the UK airport industry, at a time when leading operator BAA is the target of a fierce takeover battle. The Office of Fair Trading is set to look into whether the market, which is dominated by BAA, is competitive...

Network Rail sees losses increase

Network Rail, the company that replaced Railtrack, has made an annual pre-tax loss of £232m, up from £47m last year. The increased loss is mainly down to paying interest on money it has borrowed to fix the railway network...

UK business investment increasing

UK business investment rose by 1.7% in the first quarter of 2006, and is up 2.8% on the same time in 2005, says the Office for National Statistics. Business investment in the three months to March was £28.879bn (\$54.4bn), as against £28.387bn in the three months to December 2005...

Further rise in UK unemployment

The number of people out of work in the UK has risen again, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has reported.

There were 1.65 million people classed as unemployed in the three months to May, an increase of 90,000 on the previous quarter...

For more information visit:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/default.stm>

From The Financial Times:

Pollution-beating cement

New smog-beating cement which could reduce city pollution by as much as 60 per cent is ready for market, its developers say. TX Active, the culmination of 10 years of development by Italian company Italcementi, can be used to coat buildings and roads and works by absorbing pollution from cars, factories and heating...

The building blocks of a simpler future are in place -

<http://news.ft.com/reports/digitalbusiness>

Imagine a future where IT systems are not created by computer analysts speaking the languages of Java and C but instead by business managers speaking the languages of supply chain, customer service or product development. It is a future made possible by Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) – an evolution in the way enterprise IT systems can be built...

March of the mini-multinational

GNI, a biotechnology start-up, that has fewer than 100 staff, is finding that diverse trends mean it no longer takes much scale to be a multinational. It has a presence in Tokyo and Fukuoka, Japan; in Shanghai, China; in Cambridge and London in the UK; and in San Jose in the US state of California...

For more information visit:

<http://news.ft.com/businesslife>

South Hams Website Business Pages

For those that do not know, the council website contains a business section containing information of use to businesses. The subjects include:

- **Planning** - applications, committee meetings, planning policy *etc*
- **Economic Development** - business information guide, statistics, Assisted Areas *etc*
- **Business Opportunities** - sustainable business, intellectual property, international trade *etc*
- **Tourism Information** - green tourism, cultural tourism, marketing *etc*
- **Business Rates** - rates calculation, how to pay, reductions and discounts *etc*
- **Licensing** - Licensing Act 2003, licence fees, types of licence *etc*
- **Trade Waste** - collection and prices, hazardous waste, recycling *etc*

The aim is to provide information on council services and effective links to partner service providers and sources of business advice and information.

www.southhams.gov.uk/business_index.htm

All our publications are available in alternative formats, such as large print or a language other than English.

Please contact us on:

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