



2009 May/June Newsletter



Eastern and Coastal Kent



Training your staff will prepare your business for the road ahead

Skills shortages threaten productivity, competitiveness and demotivate staff. Everyone values training but how can you choose the right training – and at the right price?

Train to Gain is designed to make sure your business gets the training it needs and your employees the right skills to do the best job.

South East based coach transport service Countryliner, is showing a commitment to driver training. 200 of its drivers have taken qualifications through Train to Gain. This commitment to training has resulted in greater job satisfaction for their workforce and improved staff retention rates.

Train to Gain gives you:

- Training tailored to your business requirements
- FREE and impartial skills and training advice
- Training providers sourced just for you
- Subsidised training programmes*

Want to know more?

Call **0845 751 2288**

info@traintogainse.co.uk www.traintogain.gov.uk

*Subsidised publicly funded training programmes are subject to eligibility and availability.

Channel Chamber is the official BCC Accredited Chamber of Commerce for East Kent working with the local chambers in Dover and Thanet to create a single voice for the local business community. Members of Channel Chamber are entitled to free membership of Thanet Chamber ensuring networking and business-to-business opportunities from Dungeness to Margate.

T: 01303 270022 F: 01303 270476 www.channelchamber.co.uk info@channelchamber.co.uk

Our future. It's in our hands.



Your recruits are the future lifeblood of your business

Apprenticeship training provides your employees with the expertise that's directly relevant to your business. Trained apprentices will:

- Be more productive
- Work to a high quality standard
- Be more inclined to stay with your business

Over 36,000 organisations in the South East are already enjoying the benefits of Apprenticeships.

One such company is Phoebe's Garden Centre Ltd, based in Catford. Mike Jordan, Managing Director of Phoebe's says: "A large proportion of employees of our company from the General Manager down have been through Apprenticeships and a variety of other programmes. I feel I have gained a professional, well presented, capable workforce with a positive attitude to the work they do."



Mike Jordan, centre, Managing Director of Phoebe's Garden Centre with his apprentices.

If you would like to know more call

08000 150 600

or visit apprenticeships.org.uk



Advertise your Apprenticeship vacancies free of charge on the national Apprenticeships website.

Support the Health and Wellbeing of Your Staff

Channel Chamber of Commerce is inviting members and other Shepway-based organisations to take part in an exciting workplace health initiative designed to help improve staff wellbeing, morale and productivity too.

Good Health Means Good Business – What's it all about?

Our new workplace health programme – Good Health Means Good Business, will encourage local employers (organisations of all types and sizes in the private, public, not-for-profit and voluntary sectors) to support a healthy workforce.



With people spending as much as half their working lives in the workplace, it is already widely acknowledged that the place and nature of work can have a substantial effect on health. Many organisations have already come to the conclusion that the health of their business can be improved by developing a healthier culture throughout all their activities, thereby improving the health of their employees. By adopting the philosophy of prevention, rather than cure, paying attention to health at work can also be cost effective.

How can my organisation get involved?

There is no cost to participating in our programme and registration is easy. Just complete the Registration Form and Channel Chamber will arrange a meeting with you to discuss the next steps.

1. **Nominate a volunteer workplace health champion.**
2. **Undertake an audit of what is already being undertaken in your workplace.**
3. **Adopt an action plan that involves a series of initiatives – each designed help you contribute towards a healthier workforce.**

Will our staff really benefit?

Most definitely Yes. Employees benefit from the support given to make healthier choices and adopt healthier lifestyles. Employers will also find that by introducing a range of health promotion activities and workshops in the workplace, employees feel more valued and develop increased morale.

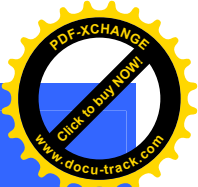
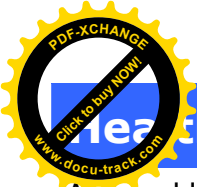
What's The Chamber's View?

Peter Hobbs, Chief Executive of Channel Chamber commented - "Channel Chamber is delighted to be working with the local health authority on this new initiative which will actively encourage employers across Shepway to create healthy workplaces, boost staff morale and help the fight against sickness absence levels.

From the research we have already undertaken it looks as though a great deal may already be happening in Shepway, but the employers involved may not be celebrating this or actively encouraging their staff to participate.

Here on the Channel coast we have a wonderful opportunity of encouraging our workforce to adopt a healthier lifestyle and to promote the wide range of sports and leisure activities that are available to everyone. It's a win-win for employers and, as a morale booster it may help lift the gloom that currently surrounds our local economy"

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Health at Work Awards

As an additional benefit, in March 2010, Channel Chamber with the help from our Sponsors – Eastern and Coastal Kent NHS and other key partners will present a series of district-wide Health at Work Awards to celebrate the achievements of local employers and the network of workplace health champions.

The Awards will be an integral part of the Chamber's membership marketing programme and will be featured within all communications to local businesses throughout the year.

Did You Know?

£13.2 Billion is the cost of absence from work, to the UK economy, annually.

The average employee takes **almost 7 days off sick each year.**

The average direct cost of absence in 2007 was **£517 per employee** (3.1% of payroll)

For more information visit: www.cbi.org.uk

Basepoint First "Good Health Means Good Business" Employer



Basepoint are committed to promoting a healthy workforce. Which is why Basepoint at Folkestone are supporting a pro-active approach by Channel Chamber of Commerce to encourage local businesses to take part in their new 'Workplace Health' programme. Basepoint Folkestone are keen to include the business community at the Folkestone Enterprise Centre where they own, manage and let commercial premises to over 50 businesses.



To kick-start the programme for Basepoint they are working with Banantyne's Health Club who are located next door to the Centre. Banantyne's will arrange a fitness class, just for the tenants of the Centre. With

a gentle exercise class of either Pilates or Yoga, which is hoped will encourage further exercise for the tenants and their staff. Another option to get healthy is a 'Stop Smoking' class in conjunction with the NHS Stop Smoking campaign.

Business Benefits

- ◆ Take the lead in health improvement promotion
- ◆ Healthier staff = increased productivity= profits
- ◆ Support an 'employer of choice' culture
- ◆ Good practise
- ◆ Enhances your Health and Safety policy
- ◆ Added value customer service
- ◆ PR opportunities
- ◆ Corporate social responsibility

Staff Benefits

- ◆ Staff personal development
- ◆ Staff Wellbeing
- ◆ Empowered to make healthier choices
- ◆ Reinforces a work-life balance
- ◆ Transferable skills
- ◆ Able to enhance service to customers
- ◆ Allows individual social responsibility

RotaWalk 2009

Once again the Rotary Club of Folkestone will be holding a sponsored walk on **Sunday 12th July 2009** along the seafront from Folkestone to Hythe, and back. The walk is an ideal opportunity to raise sponsorship from friends or colleagues and the proceeds this year will be divided between Folkestone YMCA and the Rotary Community Fund. It can be 7 or 5 miles depending on what route you take. **(or 7.5 miles if you take a detour at one of the excellent local bars along the way... The Editor)**

This year's main charity is the Folkestone YMCA that supports young people at every stage of their lives. From providing housing, training and sports facilities to helping young people and their families. Many groups and organisations have had tremendous success in raising monies for their chosen charity and this may be, for example, a hospice, Cancer Research, Red Cross, perhaps a scout group or local charity for the handicapped. There are prizes available and you may even come in fancy dress if desired.

It's easy to register for the walk, **simply contact Stephen Alleyne on 01303 250194.** For further details of the RotaWalk please visit the **club's website at www.folkestonerotary.org**

Check Your Rate/Rent Levels for Free

Following our joint SBRR campaign with LeaseholdersUnited (LHU) in September 2008, when we were able to save members some £90,000 in small business rate relief, we are delighted to announce our 2009 campaign launching LHU's Rent Rates and Capital Values product.

In today's declining market for commercial property rents, we thought you would be interested to see LHU's view on what you should be paying. The database has been developed by Chartered Surveyors over the past 5 years. This information can be accessed at www.leaseholdersunited.com. Click to register a few details using affiliate code Channel Chamber and then add your property details. You will receive a confirmation email, and will then be able to go one the site and check under "Cost Minder" what the current rent should be based upon their view of the current economic climate, prediction for 2013 and rates/services charge and insurance estimates. This information is being provided to you for free to try on the understand that the agreement is a simple one, for one month LHU have given all Channel Chamber members access to the full paid functionality of their web site. This includes free membership and 5 free credits worth £100.

In return LHU ask that you complete the questionnaires at the top of each page, to provide feedback as to how well the LHU site and its products work for you. Completion of the surveys is not compulsory, but filling them in would be in the spirit of Chamber membership. In terms of your time, checking out the full functionality of the site, will take a bit of time (It is well worth it), but filling in the questionnaires will only take a minute each, and there are 10 of them. At the end of the month, the free period will expire. There is no commitment to purchase; however, should you wish to join LHU membership is currently only £50 per annum.

Please take advantage of this offer, find out what you should be paying for Rent, Rates, services charges and buildings insurance in today's market, where you could relocate to, what that would cost and sources of local professional property advice.

Spire St Saviour's Hospital

Formerly a BUPA and Classic Hospital; Spire St Saviour's is now part of the Spire Healthcare Group. The Spire Group is the second biggest provider of Private Hospitals in the UK. This means that the local friendly atmosphere provided by Spire St Saviour's can continue whilst being supported by a national organisation.

At Spire St Saviour's we provide a full range of services including: Cosmetic & weight loss surgery, physiotherapy, MRI and CT Scans, Radiology etc with access to over 100 Consultants covering an extensive range of treatments.

Mark Griffiths on 01303 233757
www.spirehealthcare.com/stsaviours

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