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Insight

APRIL 2017 | ISSUE TEN |

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THE BIG INTERVIEW

Mark Bretton, chair of the LEP,
explains why he thought it was
so important to get involved

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- Food reviews
- People in business
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- Company profile

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biz4Biz celebrate their successful first awards



A big welcome to Insight issue 10. Hot on the trail of our inaugural awards evening, the biz4Biz Board are delighted with our success and we want to thank all the businesses that took part and offer our sincere congratulations to all the finalists and of course the eventual winners. Rest assured, we will continue to provide ample coverage for all those that took part and our editor Jane is keen to hear your stories and provide coverage of your business achievements.

We are delighted in this issue to place Mark Bretton, Chair of the Herts LEP in the spotlight. Mark delivers some interesting facts about himself and the extensive work of the Hertfordshire LEP. We also provide details of the changes at the Stevenage Bio-science Catalyst following the decision by their hardworking CEO, Dr. Martino Picardo to sadly step down. We wish both Mark and Martino well in their respective new endeavours.

biz4Biz are delighted to highlight the Game Fair which will visit Hertfordshire and Hatfield House for the first time in late July. biz4Biz have managed to arrange a great corporate hospitality offer and we encourage you to book early at the payment portal www.biz4Biz.org/events/gamefair

Finally, we provide some particularly interesting coverage on Austins Funeral Directors and the very hard work by the late John Austin to obtain planning permission to provide the crematorium near Stevenage in 1997. Since opening 20 years ago, Claire Austin and her team are working hard to maintain its upkeep, as well as dealing with the families from over 40,000 local people who have used its facilities since it was opened.

We hope you enjoy our bumper awards issue.

Adrian Hawkins

Co-Founder & Chairman biz4Biz

Chairman Weldability Sif established 1925, Director and Trustee of the Weldability Sif Foundation, Herts LEP Main Board, Chair of Skills and Employment Board.

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NEWS

New leader to be appointed to drive next phase of campus development



Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst (SBC), the open innovation campus driving collaboration to improve healthcare, has announced that CEO Martino Picardo will be leaving at the end of June. Dr Picardo, SBC's first CEO, will return to his home base in Manchester from where he will continue to pursue opportunities

in the life sciences sector. The SBC Board has started the search for his replacement, and seeks a dynamic leader committed to growing SBC's unique collaborative ethos.

Since his appointment at the beginning of 2011, Dr Picardo has developed SBC into a leading UK life sciences hub, overseeing a range of milestones and unique initiatives. These include opening of the Incubator and Accelerator buildings in 2012, the launch of an open innovation challenge in neurodegenerative disease, and establishment of translational laboratories for the University of Cambridge and UCL.

He played a pivotal role in developing a thriving multi-party campus hosting MRCT's Centre for Therapeutics Discovery and the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult's Manufacturing Centre, along with bringing in partners such as GE Healthcare, Eli Lilly & Co, J&J Innovation and Sanofi. SBC recently celebrated its fifth anniversary since opening, during which time it has supported more than 50 tenants who have raised over £200m in funding while in residence.

The new CEO will be announced in due course.

Martino Picardo, CEO of Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst, said, 'Being CEO of SBC has been the most exciting role of my career so far. I've enjoyed every minute of leading this unique initiative, which wouldn't be the success it is today without the fantastic backing of the SBC team, Board and tenants. I would also like to thank our founder stakeholders GlaxoSmithKline, Wellcome and BEIS/ Innovate UK for their continued support over the past six years. Although I am very sad to be leaving, the time is right to hand over to a new leader to grow SBC in its next phase of development.'

Ian Tomlinson, Chairman of the SBC Board, added, 'Martino's vision, drive and enthusiasm have been key in making Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst such a dynamic and innovative life sciences hub. As well as leading development of the campus, he has been an important source of support to many tenant companies, and played a key role in the development of the life sciences sector across the UK. SBC's staff, tenants, partners and stakeholders join with the Board to offer him our sincere appreciation and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.'



STEVENAGE BIOSCIENCE
CATALYST
Open Innovation Campus

Investing in Great Britain



In a competitive business environment, it is important to continue to develop our market strongly. The launch of GREAT.gov.uk provides an excellent platform for this. As the International Trade Secretary of State - Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP - makes clear that “businesses that export are more profitable, have greater productivity and are more financially secure; [and] exporting contributes to local economies by growing business, and creating jobs and prosperity.”

The International Trade team believe that these are very exciting prospects. Given only 6-7% of UK export to high-growth economies, such as India and China, Dr Fox believes that some businesses have a product or service that could be exported, but mistakenly do not believe there is the demand. We need to help these firms facilitate growth into the global arena.

Overall, this strategy is great news for Britain, and its businesses. GREAT.gov.uk is where you can match market supply and demand, and attract new investors. I am wholeheartedly behind the decision to make this the first place businesses think of when they consider business abroad and would press local businesses to check this out.



£16m plans for Letchworth to bring 150 new jobs

Letchworth could gain an Aldi, Travelodge, café and fast-food restaurant if a proposed £16 million redevelopment plan gets approved. Hoping to get the work started by the end of this year on the four and a half acre industrial site off Avenue One, a spokesman said if all goes smoothly it will be a 12-month build.

The plans include parking for over 200 cars, a 73-room hotel, fast-food restaurant and a café both with a drive-through. It has not yet been confirmed which fast-food outlet and café will be planned for the site.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

For more information and to register online visit www.biz4biz.org/events.html

Thursday, 20th April 2017

The General Data Protection Regulation, Needham House Hotel, Little Wymondley

Friday, 23rd June 2017

Brexit Debate, Needham House Hotel, Little Wymondley

For more details of these events, visit www.biz4Biz.org or contact biz4Biz Secretariat on 01462 478031



biz4Biz awards NOMINEE NIGHT

On Thursday 12th January the biz4Biz nominees battled through the snow to attend our nominee night at Needham House hotel. It was a fantastic opportunity for all nominees to network with each other and discover all about the next stage in the competition. A presentation was given by biz4Biz board members Adrian Hawkins and Paul Beasley.



Jackie Lawrence and Bruno Le Coze



Alyssa's Dad, Alyssa Smith and Keith Middleton



Adrian Hawkins and Francis Hooke



biz4Biz
AWARDS2017



Ian Taylor, Mickey Kosowycz and Stuart Charter

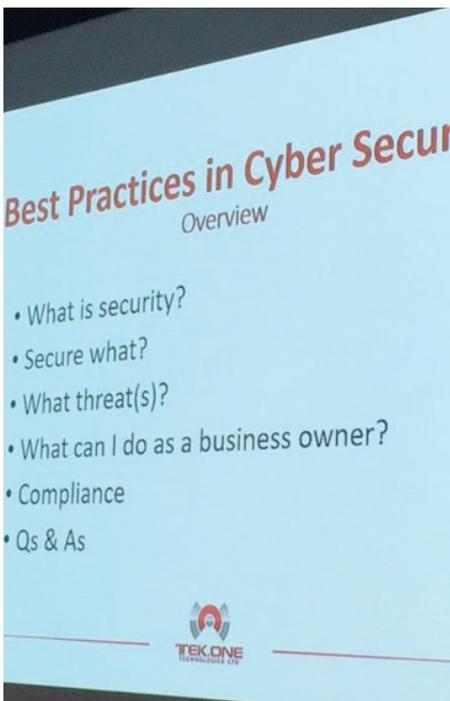


biz4Biz ConneXions

On Thursday 19th January, biz4Biz ConneXions held a breakfast meeting which featured Paul Attridge, Tax Associate at Moore Stephens Northern Home Counties Limited. He gave a short discussion about tax strategies that encourage growth, investment and innovation in businesses.



For more information about the **biz4Biz ConneXions** meetings check out our *Dates for your Diary* on page 7.



On Thursday 16th February, Salman Lone from TekOne Technologies held a biz4Biz breakfast meeting about protecting your IT, business systems and valuable data from cybercriminals.

TACKLING ONLINE LEAD GENERATION

WITH INBOUND MARKETING



For decades, businesses of every size have strived to find the recipe for successful lead generation. Fads have come and gone, telemarketing has dropped in and out of fashion and, with so many digital options, marketers' jobs have become more and more challenging.

Standing out from the crowd is more important than ever, but just how does your brand ensure it becomes prominent, rather than just becoming another pixel in all the white noise?

Instead of pushing your services and products on your customers, why not try pulling your customers in with some Inbound Marketing magnetism?

What is Inbound Marketing?

Put (very) simply, inbound marketing is designed to draw your customers to your business through:

- A clearly defined SEO strategy
- Great content
- Exciting and engaging social media
- Strong calls-to-action and conversion mechanisms
- Effective email marketing

The aim is to position yourself as a

trusted and desirable brand so that by the time potential customers want or need your products and services, they don't have to go looking for you... because they already know you!

This gives you a massive advantage over your competitors. If potential customers already know and trust you, they are far less likely to start researching other brands.

How does it work?

In a hugely fragmented digital world, the key to success is ensuring your brand is active for all the touchpoints on a potential customer's online journey.

At the first point of contact, your prospective clients know nothing about you, so you need to attract them with content they will find interesting and relevant, and educate them about your brand.

Having an active social media presence, SEO and blogs gives people the information they need to spark an interest in your brand, to become attracted to your company's ethos and

personality, and encourage them to visit your website.

All your touchpoints rely on having a single anchor point: your website. By directing your traffic to relevant landing pages with compelling calls-to-actions, you can then begin converting traffic into qualified leads.

And the journey doesn't stop there. Once you have converted your lead into a qualified sales enquiry and then into a sale, continue to use inbound marketing to encourage repeat business and inspire your new customers to become enthusiastic brand advocates.



GET IN TOUCH

We like to think we practise what we preach at Cariad Marketing. If you're looking to 'tackle online lead generation' or would like advice on any aspect of digital marketing, call us on **01992 582824**

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We are helping employees get to their place of work via improved transport and better broadband communications

Skills and employment

We are investing in the skills sets of school leavers to meet local employers' needs

Hertfordshire is perfectly placed for businesses to flourish with excellent transport links, close proximity to London and a higher than national average skilled workforce.

Hertfordshire LEP brings private and public sector partners together to help the county to realise its full economic potential.

Find out how we are working hard on your behalf to ensure that Hertfordshire remains a great place to live, work and do business.

Hertfordshire
Local Enterprise Partnership

www.hertfordshirelep.co.uk
info@hertfordshirelep.co.uk

Diary dates in Hertfordshire

HERTFORDSHIRE GARDEN SHOW

The season is approaching so now is the time to prepare your plants for the sun. There will be plenty of fresh ideas to make your garden look spectacular.

Saturday 29th April to Monday

1st May 2017 - Knebworth

Info: www.knebworthhouse.com



AN EVENING OF JAZZ AND SWING

Enjoy the music of Porter and others with the Potters Bar Choral society with a jazz band accompaniment.

Saturday 20th May 2017 - Potters Bar

Info: www.pbchoral.org



OPEN AIR CINEMA - MAMMA MIA

This all time favourite will be on a 24 ft outdoor screen at this fantastic Olympic venue to raise money for The Nightingale Cancer Support Centre.

Saturday 6th May 2017 - Waltham Cross

Bookings: www.nightingalesupport.org.uk

LETCWORTH FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL

Cooking demonstrations, taste trails, music and entertainment, this year's food and drink festival is set to be more successful than last with thousands attending.

Saturday 27th May & Sunday 28th May 2017 - Letchworth

Free entry: www.loveletchworth.com

CHARITY GOLF DAY

Teams of four, 18 hole golf play raising money for the Chilterns MS Centre.

Friday 12 May 2017 - Tring

Info: www.chilternmscentre.org

Have you got a forthcoming event that you would like us to include in our next issue?

Email: bethany@jabbercoms.com

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HARWOOD PARK

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Serving the local community for ten generations



HARWOOD PARK

A PLACE OF TRANQUILITY FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS

Tucked away on the outskirts of Stevenage is a beautiful, tranquil spot where families come to reflect and remember. With over 25 acres of lovingly tended gardens this special place is Harwood Park Crematorium and Memorial Gardens.

Established in 1997 by Austin's Funeral Directors, the crematorium and gardens are run and managed by the family-run firm which also has nine funeral arranging offices and is Hertfordshire's leading independent funeral director.

The beautiful gardens at Harwood Park are open daily and visitors are welcome at all times to tend memorials, leave flowers or simply enjoy the peace and tranquillity. Everybody remembers their loved ones in their own unique way and nowhere is this more evident than at Harwood Park where traditional memorials are complemented by living memorials including chestnut trees, rose bushes and beautiful shrubs.

Everybody's choice of funeral is different as well and to this end memorials are available to anyone, not only those whose funeral is held at Harwood Park's crematorium. Claire Austin, who is the tenth generation of her family to run Austin's, says: "Harwood Park is a



very tranquil place and as the living memorials grow and mature it really is a beautiful spot to spend time and remember your loved ones.

"We employ four full-time gardeners who ensure the grounds look immaculate at all times. We have many families who come here regularly to reflect and enjoy the peaceful surroundings and I know it holds a very special place in the affections of many people.

In the last 20 years over 40,000 families have celebrated the lives of their loved ones at Harwood Park. To commemorate the 20th anniversary Harwood Park will be hosting a special memorial service at 2pm on Sunday, April 23. Families are invited to remember their loved ones in this stunning setting. The event will be free of charge but tickets should be reserved by contacting Claire Austin at funerals@austins.co.uk

 This is a promotional graphic for a memorial service. At the top, it says "HARWOOD PARK Crematorium & Memorial Gardens" with a white dove icon. The main text, enclosed in a blue-bordered box, reads: "To commemorate the 20TH ANNIVERSARY of Harwood Park Crematorium, we will be hosting a special MEMORIAL SERVICE On Sunday 23rd April 2017 at 2pm". Below this, it states: "Tickets for this occasion are complimentary but should be reserved in advance by emailing: claire@austins.co.uk". At the bottom, it says "We hope you will join us."



★ A night of celebration ★ at the biz4Biz Awards 2017

biz4Biz are proud to announce the winners of the biz4Biz Awards 2017. On Friday 3rd March, businesses from all over Hertfordshire came together to celebrate and recognise the deserving winners. The sparkling evening was presented by the Rt Hon Michael Portillo at Tewin Bury Farm Hotel, Welwyn.

These awards were the first for biz4Biz and considering this, they have set the bar very high for the next one. Adrian Hawkins, chairman of biz4Biz said “We are delighted with the way the evening went and the feedback has been overwhelming. The time is right for biz4Biz to show that we are not only there to speak up on behalf of businesses in Hertfordshire but also that we are there to recognise and regard all the great things that are being done.”

The awards began in August 2016 with online nominations and a voting



The biz4Biz Awards team, from left: Jane Males, Bethany Conway, Alexis Hawkins, Jennie Hawkins

process ending 31st December 2016. This was followed by nominees from the top 20 of each category being invited to attend a judging day in January. Undoubtedly the judges had a difficult task to choose the winners, as Adrian confirmed. “A look at the list of our finalists shows just what a tough task our judges had.”

With a total of 12 awards won, there was a sense of achievement for all winners and finalists for coming so far in the competition and having the edge over their rivals. Congratulations to all award winners from this year.

To watch the video of our biz4Biz Awards night 2017 go to www.biz4biz.org



Adrain Hawkins

“ I thought the evening was superb. A real quality event and definitely a step up on the others. Thanks again and see you soon. ”

Pete Farrow
General Manager, Needham House



Paul Beasley and Emma Hayter



Rt Hon Michael Portillo

JOCA was our chosen charity of the night. JOCA is a welfare committee that began at the Welwyn Garden City Rugby Club. After losing two young players through suicide, a handful of team mates felt they had a responsibility to offer support and guidance. Mental illness is an often unspoken about issue and is sadly the biggest killer of young men in the UK aged 22 to 42. JOCA services are free of charge.

joca@welwynrfc.co.uk
www.jocawrfc.co.uk



Sue Topham, JOCA



“ Thank you very much for having us, it was such a pleasure to perform for you ”

Siren Quartet



“ Having the company’s commitment to outstanding customer service, exquisite jewellery designs and our bold and innovative marketing strategy recognised in this way is hugely rewarding to us. ”

Alyssa Smith
Owner, Alyssa Smith Jewellery





“ I would like to congratulate you and the team for a very slick and well run event. It was very evident that a tremendous amount of hard work, commitment and planning had gone in beforehand but wow what a professional awards event that would equal or surpass any other. ”



Matt O'Conner
Managing Director, John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd





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Sponsored by The Careers and Enterprise Company



Best Retailer - Alyssa Smith Jewellery
Sponsored by biz4Biz



Outstanding Contribution
Johnson Matthey

Sponsored by biz4Biz



Best Executive Venue - Tewin Bury Farm
Sponsored by George Hay Accountants



Best Family Business - JJ Burgess & Sons
Sponsored by Richmond House Group



Best Professional Services - iQuda
Sponsored by Needham House



**Best International Business
Rothamsted Research**
Sponsored by BBW Solicitors



Best Innovation - Display Plan Ltd
Sponsored by Hertfordshire Growth Hub



Herts Exporter - Altro Ltd
Sponsored by biz4Biz



Judges' Award - reallymoving.com Ltd
Sponsored by biz4Biz



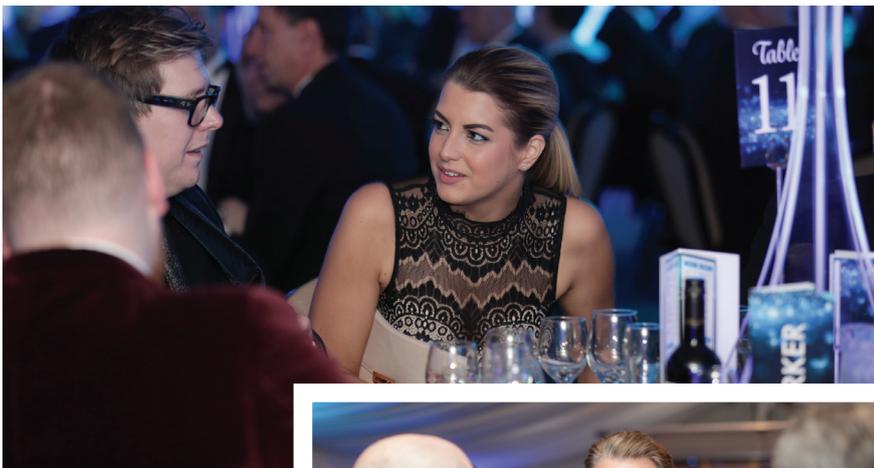
Business of the Year - Aztek Logistics
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“What an amazing event! Having been through a detailed panel interview process, we joined the vibrant business community of Hertfordshire at Tewin Bury Farm and waited with baited breath as the biz4Biz award winners were announced”



Rosie Rogers
COO, reallymoving.com Ltd



biz4Biz
AWARDS2017



Michael and Tristan Bond





“ Thanks for having us along for the ride. It was an absolute pleasure to be part of an event supporting our local community ”



Production Plus



Mark Bretton and Rob Case





Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Mark Bretton is Chair of Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and a managing director at leading global professional services company Accenture. Mark took over as Chair of the LEP Board in June 2016. Here he outlines why he felt it was so important to get involved, and what he sees are the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing the county.

Tell us a little about your current role at Accenture and your background

I joined the regional leadership of our Operations business three years ago. My role is to help bring new opportunities and I'm currently focusing in the utilities market where I've had considerable success previously. Before joining Accenture, I spent 8 years with Tata building their European outsourcing practice, 3 years with Royal Mail transforming their Customer Services operation and over 17 years with Siemens and Plessey in a variety of commercial and leadership roles including some very challenging programmes at the Home Office.

As an MD in a global company what made you want to volunteer your time to sit on the LEP Board?

As well as my main role I have been involved for many years in a variety of extra-curricular roles. I sit on the Business Leaders Council for the charity Teach First, was the regional Inclusion and Diversity Lead in two companies and as an ex Reserve Army Officer more recently appointed as MD Sponsor for our UK & Ireland Military Veterans programme.

THE BIG INTERVIEW

Mark Bretton, Chair of the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership explains why he thought it was so important to get involved



Tim Peake: the British European Space Agency astronaut opening the Airbus Foundation Discovery STEM Centre in Stevenage. Hertfordshire LEP invested £1m into the project aimed at encouraging the next generation to pursue careers in engineering, technology and science.



When I was approached I hadn't heard too much about LEPs but I was keen to put something back into the county where I have lived for most of my life. I have seen many facets of the challenges that we face locally, notably in helping people improve their skills to realise their real potential and be attractive to our local employers. The Strategic Economic Plan that we have is already making an impact and I was keen to help the LEP really deliver the benefits that this plan promises.

What does the role of LEP Chair involve?

The past 9 months have been really hectic as I get to meet many of the key personalities in the region from business, local and central government

and education. I have the privilege to chair a very talented board who are supported by an equally talented executive team. One of the key successes recently has been the award of funds for the third growth deal. This will allow us to invest in some really significant programmes. The process to bid for the funds, present our case to government and then steer it through the LEP board for approval was a major team exercise and I am really proud of what we have achieved. Now we need to deliver!

One other area where as LEP Chair I have a role is in the Hertfordshire Forward Strategy and County Leaders Steering Groups. This has exposed me to the wider challenges of healthcare

and policing where I think businesses can have a real role to play, either encouraging our workforce to be fit for their work and home lives or working to help offenders adjust back into society where having a steady job is a known contributor to stopping people reoffend.

We then, of course, have Brexit to plan for, more of which will become clearer in the coming months.

When I look back at the past few months there are two things I hadn't expected to do. One was dining in the Great Hall at Hogwarts which is part of the excellent Harry Potter World attraction and the other was to meet an astronaut. The LEP has coinvested



“
The toughest challenge is ensuring that we have the right workforce for our businesses to thrive
 ”

in a STEM centre at the Airbus site in Stevenage and we were honoured to be joined for the opening by Tim Peake.

What do you consider to be the most pressing challenges facing the county?

Housing is always top of the agenda and we do need accommodation for our growing population. Then there will always be a discussion on transport and infrastructure. For me, however, the toughest challenge is ensuring that we have the right workforce for our businesses to thrive. Skills is something I've been keen to pull up our agenda, building on the work we are doing with Skillmakers and The Careers and Enterprise Company. We are therefore taking a leading role in and around the new Apprenticeship Levy programme.

And how is the LEP making a difference?

Our role is all about helping accelerate growth. I see this in the following ways:

- Improving transport and broadband communications



THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

- Helping to create healthy, prosperous town centres
- Building lasting connections between schools and business
- Accelerating Research and Development for commercial success

Top Skills development: Welder Training Bays have opened at both West Herts College campus in Kings Langley and Oaklands College in Welwyn Garden City after investment from Hertfordshire LEP.

Above The Careers and Enterprise Company: Monk's Walk School pupils visit Ocado as part of The Careers and Enterprise Company programme being delivered by Hertfordshire LEP in partnership with local employers.

- Encouraging new inward investment
- Unlocking new growth and job creation

So we are ambitious for the future. The message we want to promote is one of partnership, securing investment, strategic leadership for growth and above all being the voice of business whether that's locally or in Whitehall as Industrial Strategy and the plans for Brexit play out.

What would you say is Hertfordshire's strong selling point, and how can the LEP build on that?

Our strapline is that Hertfordshire is "Perfectly placed for business". That is our strongest selling point, but what Hertfordshire has to offer must be continually refreshed and remain differentiated. It's our job in the LEP to help make this happen.

How do you relax?

I am a keen golfer as is my wife Leah so it's something we can share. We have two daughters, Amy and Sarah, who are both due to graduate this year. Getting all four of us together is a challenge, but great when we can. I have had the privilege to travel widely through work and we all enjoy seeing other countries and getting to know their people. Even after what must be many hundreds of flights, maybe more, I still see each trip as an adventure, something new to see or to learn.

What advice would you give to a young person embarking on their career?

Do something you really enjoy and because it's something you want to do. You may be at work for many years so starting off as you mean to go on is important. Don't be afraid to make changes either because the world of



Above Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst: Hertfordshire LEP secured £3m to accelerate the second phase of development at Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst, which is celebrating its fifth birthday this year.

Below Hertfordshire LEP contributed £1.8m to provide high quality business accommodation to help start-ups and SMEs prepare for growth.



work you enter will change hugely as your career progresses.

What is your motto?

Rather than my motto, I'd like to think I would be given a very simple epitaph: "We were led quite well by a normal bloke."

What is Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership?

Hertfordshire LEP is one of 38 local enterprise partnerships tasked by the Government to grow their local communities by investing in its people, places and businesses.

We are a major player in the local economy and have secured over £300m Government and EU funding to date to support major projects and programmes across the county.

We are committed to partnership working and bring together the expertise of public and private sector partners to help identify and solve key issues.

Find out more about how we are accelerating growth:
www.hertfordshirelep.co.uk;
 if you would like to get involved call
 01707 358744.

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CLASSIC BRITISH FAYRE, WITH A FRENCH TWIST

Aubrey Park Hotel shows Marketing Executive Bethany Conway their fabulous food after becoming finalists in the biz4Biz awards



Nestled between Hemel Hempstead and St. Albans, Aubrey Park Hotel is set amidst quiet woodland with 9 acres of rolling countryside setting the scene. Head Chef, Lee Robinson has really made the menu his own in the time he has been there.

The spacious restaurant has a very natural feel with a simple collection of brown and green tones contrasting to create a fresh atmosphere. With full height windows running along the complete length of the restaurant, there was plenty of light coming through.

We were delighted when our starters arrived by the presentation of both dishes. Mine, scallops served with a

broccoli and cauliflower risotto and minted pea puree. Scallops can be very versatile so the accompaniments can often be down to personal opinion, but the creamy risotto and undertones of mint complimented the scallops perfectly. My colleague's starter was a homemade crab ravioli paired with spaghetti vegetables. Tangy and sweet to contrast with the creamy lobster sauce that covered the soft crab-filled pasta parcel.

After some deliberation I chose the duo of pork belly and braised cheeks for my main course. My initial thoughts were of how autumnal the dish appeared. A compilation of brown, orange and green all standing out against each other on the white plate. The aroma was



intense and the vanilla and apple mash was sweet, balancing the other strong flavours of the dish. My colleague had ordered the chicken stuffed with mushrooms. A striking dish and a hearty looking meal served in a bowl with a wide rim that really drew attention to the meal itself. The chicken was tender and was served on a three bean cassoulet that delivered a rich tomato flavour. The mushroom filling was thick and guided the moist chicken to a taste adventure.

Our time at Aubrey Park Hotel had been fantastic so far, therefore we decided to sample the desserts on offer. I had chosen the pot au chocolate unsure of what I was expecting. I was in for a treat. A ramekin with what looked like chocolate sponge inside arrived on a plate with a dollop of both thick clotted cream and a dark fruit berry

compote. As I dipped my spoon into the sponge, a runny chocolate sauce erupted from within like a chocolate volcano. I was ecstatic as a fond lover of chocolate. This was finished off with a light dusting of powdered sugar.

My colleague decided to go for the deconstructed lemon meringue pie. What appeared to be simply a mound of lemon sauce and soft meringue on top, a surprise shortbread piece was underneath. There were also drizzles of passionfruit and strawberry sauce garnishing the plate adding to the mixture of flavours. Overall it was a very sweet dish and a perfect end to the meal.

The staff at Aubrey Park Hotel were very caring and attentive. I can vouch that Head Chef Lee Robinson's food is worth discovering without breaking the bank. I wouldn't hesitate to return.



About the chef

Head Chef of Aubrey Park Hotel, **Lee Robinson** has worked in the kitchen since October 2015. A chef for a running total of 21 years, he began his voyage of food in London before spending a short amount of time in Paris, France. Lee has a flair for classical French food and this is prominent in his dishes.



Stevenage 
Community Trust

Business supporting local people in need

Stevenage Community Trust awards grants to organisations and individuals across Stevenage and the surrounding villages to fund projects and equipment to ensure charities, voluntary groups and sports clubs can provide invaluable support to local residents from all walks of life.

“Thanks to local companies and individuals, we have given over £1m in grants since 1990.”



To find out more call 01438 525390
or visit www.stevenagecommunitytrust.org

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

PROFILE

Name: Alexis Hawkins

Job title: Commercial Director
and Events Co-ordinator

Company: Weldability SIF and
Extractability

What town do you live in?
Stevenage, Hertfordshire



What is one thing that must always be in your fridge?

Chocolate, ketchup and prosecco!

Who is your favourite chef?

I don't watch a lot of TV, especially cooking programmes, but I am a fan of the 'Bake-Off' and anything cake/dessert-related so I would probably say Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry. I like the uncomplicated and modern-take on the dishes Lorraine Pascale and Rachel Allen create too and it is nice to see an increase in popularity for female chefs.

What is your favourite recipe from them?

Mary Berry's lemon drizzle cake is a classic and always gets the 'thumbs up' from those I bake it for.

Where is your favourite place to eat in Hertfordshire for a business date?

The Redcoats Farmhouse and Needham House Hotel (a wonderful recommendation courtesy of the recent review in Insight!)
The Fox at Willian is a firm favourite for business lunches too.

What is your favourite dish from there?

Most menu's are seasonal but a chateaubriand (if shared ... although I am not ashamed to admit I could probably eat the entire thing myself!) or a nice fillet steak / beef burger and fries.

What is your favourite recipe to cook at home?

Stir-fry's, homemade curry's, burgers or Mediterranean-style chicken and veggie casseroles.

What is your idea of food heaven?

You may be hoping for answers along the lines of 'Fillet of Scotch beef with truffle oil, braised leeks, a ballotine of foie gras and red wine jus' ... but to be honest, it is probably a good pizza or something with french fries!

What food can you not stand?

Oysters and mussels, although I have eaten both in recent months and they weren't as unpleasant as I recall. I am told I 'eat with my eyes' however (and I would probably agree).

What is the strangest thing you have ever eaten?

Probably crocodile ... but I thought it tasted just like chicken!



Where is the best restaurant to let your hair down after a hard week's work?

Misya Meze Grill on the high street in Stevenage Old Town. The food is fresh and tasty, the staff are welcoming and accommodating and the atmosphere is always buzzing. I highly recommend it.

What is an ideal snack?

I should say fruit, but in truth, it would be a packet of crisps!

Is there anything that you haven't tried but would like to?

I will always try something once. I cannot think of anything in particular, other than a variety of dishes / cuisines from countries I haven't yet had the opportunity to visit but if 'new' food is offered to me, I will always try it (now there's a challenge!) I would especially like to visit Italy and try some traditional Italian food, one day.

What is your favourite tippie?

Prosecco is very popular and a lovely celebratory drink, without breaking the bank (unless you go through an entire case in one night!) It is nice to follow a good meal with a fruity cocktail every-so-often, too.

GET IN TOUCH

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Hertfordshire LEP secures £43.95m further funding to boost growth

Latest award brings total investment package for county to over £265m

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has secured a further £43.95m in the latest award of Local Growth Funding. This is on top of £221.5 million of government funding giving a total expanded Growth Deal package to date of £265.45m for the county. Nearly half of the latest Growth Deal funding is to be allocated to support the regeneration of Stevenage, with the remainder to be invested in key projects across the county.

These include Hertfordshire's new Enterprise Zone and the creation of a new innovation hub at BRE (Building Research Establishment) which will provide vital incubation space for start-ups and early stage SMEs and help to accelerate research and development for commercial success.

Additional investment will also be made in further education colleges to

help ensure that skills development is tailored to meet the current and future needs of local employers and help to deliver thousands of new apprenticeships, as well as key infrastructure interventions to relieve congestion and unlock future growth.

Mark Bretton, Chair of Hertfordshire LEP, said: "This latest round of Growth Deal funding means we can continue to target investment where it is needed most. Hertfordshire LEP enjoys significant support from the business community and as such we are able to secure high levels of private investment leverage for all our Growth Deal Funded projects. The confidence of business to co-invest is why we continue to benefit well from each Growth Deal, as this new settlement demonstrates.

"Whilst the regeneration of Stevenage remains a priority for us we are

continuing to invest in other key projects across the county, in particular our young people to ensure that they have the workplace skills to enable our businesses to continue to grow and help our county fulfil its tremendous economic potential."

The latest round of projects approved for Growth Deal 3 funding are:

- £19.38m to support a number of major projects to help regenerate Stevenage town centre; combined with the £12 million already allocated under Growth Deal 1, this secures over £31 million public investment in the town. Part of the package of funding is critical to help unlock the first phase of development (known as SG1) which will deliver 800 homes, new vibrant retail units around a revitalised square and a new civic hub, with a library, health facilities and council offices. This first phase of regeneration is already scoped and ready to take to the market as early as April 2017.

In addition investment will be made to improve transport links with the town centre, including car parking facilities and the creation of development opportunities between Town Square and Lytton Way. The final element of funding will bring together land ownership to develop the area around the Marks & Spencer site and Marshgate area of the Town.

- £3.76m for the newly created



BRE Innovation Hub outside render (Mowat & Company)

Hertfordshire Growth Deal

For 2015/16 to 2020/21 Hertfordshire LEP has secured...

Growth Deal 1
£199.2m

Growth Deal 2
£22.3m

Growth Deal 3
£43.95m

Total Growth Deal
£265.45m

Impact

By 2024/25 this Deal will deliver over **11,000 jobs** and **16,500 new homes**

Some of Hertfordshire LEP's priorities and projects

Enabling flagship sites for housing and employment

- **£31m** for the regeneration of Stevenage town centre.
- **£6m** for the regeneration of Hatfield town centre.
- **£2.56m** for the regeneration of South Oxhey.



Enabling transport connectivity

- **£87.85m** for Metropolitan Line Extension.
- **£27.4m** for A120 Little Hadham bypass.
- **£18.5m** for improvements to the A602 between Stevenage and Ware.
- **£6.5m** to construct a new bridge at Essex Road, Hoddesdon.



Growing jobs and providing support for key sectors

- **£3.76m** to newly created Enterprise Zone.
- **£2.5m** to the Knowledge and Science Innovation Centre at the University of Hertfordshire.
- **£3m** for the Stevenage BioScience Catalyst.
- **£1.8m** for the Ambition Broxbourne Business Centre.



Growing the skills base

- **£10.1m** for the new Dacorum campus at West Herts College.
- **£1.04m** to Airbus STEM education centre in Stevenage.
- **£0.8m** for a STEM centre at Oaklands College.



EU funding

Supporting our businesses and people

We have also been allocated **£55.3m** of European Structural and Investment Funds to support economic growth, enhance our skills base, increase the competitiveness of our SMEs and improve employment opportunities.



Leveraging **£460m public and private investment**



Growth Deal + EU funding = **£320.75m** for Hertfordshire

Enterprise Zone including, £3.06m to establish a new £12m open innovation hub at the BRE (Building Research Establishment) campus in South West Herts. The project will entail the replacement of an outdated, structurally-unsound, 1960s office block with a new build facility offering incubation space to start-up and early stage SMEs as well as research functions from larger organisations and global research institutions. A further £0.7m will be spent on improving the infrastructure to the Enterprise Zone and feasibility work.

- **£7.75m** to provide loans/grants to skills providers to ensure that they continue to meet the current and future needs of local employers. Such a fund will enable Hertfordshire LEP to support local FE Colleges to restructure as a result of agreed Local Area Review recommendations and is expected to help deliver up to 1,800 apprenticeships, of which 900 could be new jobs.

- **£5.1m** to support the second phase of development at West Herts College's £14.5m Dacorum campus. The flagship campus will add to the transformation of Hemel Hempstead's town centre and also enable the college to dispose of land both in Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley to residential developers which may result in around 145 new homes. The new campus is expected to provide up to 855 apprenticeships, of which 435 will be new jobs, and support 1,029 full time students and 1,266 part time students.

- **£6.5m** to construct a new bridge to improve access to a major employment area at Essex Road, Hoddesdon, providing growing employment opportunities including the creation of up to 400 new jobs.

- **£1.96m** to relieve congestion on the A10 roundabout near Buntingford and support future development in and

around the town, including the creation of up to 805 new homes.

The Rt Hon David Gauke, MP for South West Hertfordshire, said: "This Growth Deal will provide much needed investment to support the development of our new Enterprise Zone with improved infrastructure to attract new businesses into the area and foster a culture of innovation with the establishment of a new incubation hub at BRE."

The Rt Hon Mike Penning, MP for Hemel Hempstead, said: "I am delighted that £5.1m is to be invested to support the second phase of development at West Herts College's new flagship Dacorum campus, enabling it to help deliver skills provision to meet the demands of the modern jobs market. The campus's position in the centre of Hemel Hempstead will further benefit the town centre's ambitious regeneration plans."

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PEOPLE IN BUSINESS

biz4Biz
AWARDS2017
WINNER



FACT FILE

Name: John Gourd

Job Title:
Site Planning and
Services Director for
Johnson Matthey

Interests:
Family, football (Arsenal
season ticket holder)
and hockey

What do you do in your current job?

I am responsible for the running of the Royston site – which employs about 2000 people and is the company's largest site. I also manage the site's external relations.

What was your first paying job?

Working on a market stall, in all weathers, selling shoes.

What are your strengths?

I'm a good listener and I'm very comfortable dealing with people – in my experience building good quality, open relationships is a key principle in business.

What is your favourite thing about working in the industry?

It's a fast-paced industry and the next challenge is never far around the corner.

What drew you to the business industry?

I fell into it really – I took on a commercial role many years ago, enjoyed it immensely and have stuck around.

What do you consider your best business decision or idea?

My best decision was to accept the post of Chair of the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership – it was a fantastic and thoroughly enjoyable few years.

In your opinion, what makes a good team player?

A good collaborator, someone who is prepared to listen to other people's opinions, ideas and thoughts.

What motivates you?

I strive to continuously improve what we do, not to rest on our laurels.

Who or what has been your biggest influence or inspiration?

My father.

What advice would you give to the 18-year-old you?

Sign up for the Johnson Matthey pension scheme as soon as you start work there – don't view it as an unnecessary expense and delay joining, you'll regret it in later years!

What are you most proud of?

Our two children, Patrick and Isabel, who are 10 and 8 years old. Seeing them grow up is an absolute privilege.

What book are you currently reading?

John le Carre's Tailor of Panama.

What is your ideal working environment?

My natural inclination is towards an open, vibrant, working environment, however, I am conscious that there are times when you need peace and quiet to get things done.

Who is your hero and why?

Saint Maximilian Kolbe, who volunteered his own life in place of a stranger in Auschwitz. I read a small booklet about him when I was young and his bravery and sacrifice has always stayed with me.

Five words that describe you?

Approachable, determined, loyal, sociable and friendly.

If you hadn't worked in business, what would you have liked to have done?

I would have loved to have been an architect, but I lack the artistic skills.

Finally, if you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would you be and why?

I was lucky enough to go to Mustique on my honeymoon – it is a beautiful island that is totally unspoilt and secluded.



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RETAIN STAFF

Show me the money

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Attracting and retaining staff is key. Potential recruits not only look to see how much you're paying, they also want to know the benefits you offer. A good benefits package demonstrates that you're a good employer.

Unlike salary, benefits aren't always easy to understand. You may offer a generous benefits package, but is it clearly explained, do staff realise just how generous you're being? Staff can't value something they don't understand.

Of course, you'll offer a pension – you've got to do that. But do your staff know if you've opted to offer more than you're legally required to?

And what about you?

Are you clear what your benefits package includes and how much it's costing? Are you sure that you're mitigating some of the costs of providing employee benefits? For example, there is an increased tax deductible allowance that employers can spend on paying for pensions advice for their staff.

What about your senior staff?

Are you providing employee benefits to help them plan for their future and protect their families in a tax efficient way?

If you need some advice on your current benefits package, or you would like to discuss introducing one, call Corporate Services Director Ian Jenkins on 0333 241 3350 or email ijenkins@rhg.co.uk. Or visit us at www.rhg.co.uk.

RHG and the Richmond House Group are trading styles of Richmond House Financial Services Ltd, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The FCA does not regulate taxation and trust advice.



KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

According to the Institute for Family Business (IFB), two thirds of UK businesses are family owned – 4.7 million in total. Of these, over 17,000 are medium and large businesses. They also report that family businesses employ about 12 million people and, in 2015, paid £133 billion in tax.

Of course, if you're part of a family business in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, London or beyond, you already know how important they are, not only to the economy but also to your family. You'll also no doubt recognise the IFB's description: 'Family and non-family staff report a greater sense of loyalty to family businesses. They also tend to be more committed to the success of the business and are more passionate about what the business stands for. Family businesses are less driven by short-term financial results and are prepared to sacrifice short-term gains for the achievement of longer-term goals.'

At Richmond House Financial Services, we've been advising family

businesses in the Hertfordshire area for over 50 years. So, we know that they are a source of great pride and a valuable employer of family members. However, like all firms, family businesses face many challenges. Two such challenges are succession planning and staff recruitment and retention.

A PWC report, 2016 Family Business Survey – 'The 'missing middle': Bridging the strategy gap in family firms, found that 43% of family businesses don't have succession plans in place, with only 12% making it to a 3rd generation. In the same research, PWC found that 58% of respondents believed that one of the key challenges they face over the next five years is the ability to attract and retain the right talent.

Our experience has helped local businesses to develop appropriate succession plans and put in place benefits packages that help to recruit and retain the best staff – it's no longer just about the money. We've also helped business owners address other issues, including tax-efficiency

in the face of potential inheritance tax liability; treating all family members fairly (including those not involved in the business); retirement and selling the family business. We also understand that these issues are made more complex because the finances of the firm and the family are often inextricably linked.

Our 35 strong team is based in Stevenage. We're an independent, privately owned firm of Chartered Financial Planners and we're happy to talk and happy to help.



If you need some advice or would just like to discuss your business's situation, call our Corporate Services Director Ian Jenkins on 0333 241 3350 or

email ijenkins@rhg.co.uk.

Or visit us at www.rhg.co.uk

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LATE PAYMENTS LEAD TO SMALL BUSINESSES LOSING OUT



KEITH MIDDLETON

Director biz4Biz,
Partner George Hay
Chartered Accountants

Roughly 5.5 million small businesses reside in the UK and research suggests that around half have experienced late payment, with the total owing at £26.3 billion.

Late payment has long been an issue for small-to-medium sized enterprises, holding them back in respect of growth and making it difficult to compete with larger suppliers and businesses in the marketplace. It is clear that the consequences of late payment for smaller enterprises do not uphold a strong, fair for all, economy, or a business culture that places importance on good payment practice.

Building an economy fit for all was the focus of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and HMRC have now published guidance to help large businesses report on their payment practices ahead of new measures set to take effect from April 2017.

The new measures require large businesses and limited liability partnerships (LLP's) to publically publish details, twice a year, on the time taken to pay their suppliers, with failure to do so deemed a criminal offence. It is intended that this will highlight bad practice and help SME's to make informed business decisions, plus potentially recoup some of what is owed.

It will be interesting to see if these measures work and at George Hay we will work with clients to monitor any improvement in debtor days. In business we are all aware of 'Cash is King'; a company may have all the revenue in the world but without good cash flow it can easily fail which is certainly not good for individuals and the economy overall.

ARTICLE 50 THE EXIT IS AHEAD



ADRIAN HAWKINS

Co-Founder & Chairman biz4Biz
Chairman, Weldability Sif, established
1925. Director and Trustee of the
Weldability Sif Foundation,
Herts LEP Main Board,
Chair of Skills and Employment Board.

Nine months on from the EU Referendum of the 23rd June 2016 and our Prime Minister, Theresa May, has finally delivered a letter, triggering Article 50, to the EU Council President, Donald Tusk who said on receipt, “No reason to pretend this is a happy day and... We already miss you” It is a sad state of affairs that has created a 52% for and 48% against decision to leave the EU, but the EU only has its past actions to consider for the UK coming to its decision and much of the relationship can now be

spared by the delicate treatment we receive on reaching our new EU trading arrangements. Much is made about the relationships the UK holds with the Member states of the EU, but the world has moved on in trading terms and the EU has become less of an “Economic Community” by WTO standards. In fact, commentators state that taking part in EU trade is costing more inside the bloc than out!

We should now pay tribute to the sterling work, carried out by Her Majesty the Queen, whom has diligently remained the figurehead of the Commonwealth and has managed to maintain the UK’s close connections with 52 Member countries, 31 of which are considered small states with populations less than 1.5 million. The remaining 21 members are significant in direct comparison with the 27 EU countries that will remain after Brexit. There will be clear opportunities that will arise in the coming years, with many countries around the World, that value the quality and innovation of the products and services supplied by UK companies and the association with the Union Jack as a brand. The reduction in the value of

Sterling abroad has just made products produced in the UK more affordable and the decisions by vehicle manufacturers in the coming months to expand operations and supply chains here, will simply endorse this view and provide us with more confidence.



There are very few Politicians that could claim to say they have seen this EU process from the start to the finish.

The Rt Hon Peter

Lilley, MP for Hitchin & Harpenden was a Trade Minister at the time the UK joined the EEC in the 1970’s and his views are highly regarded given this breadth of knowledge. We will have an opportunity to understand Peter’s views and his thoughts on the UK’s path for the future and debate these with Peter. We are therefore delighted to recognise the anniversary of the Brexit decision on the 23rd June 2017 with our very special biz4Biz Brexit Debate, and we invite you to join us and book your places now at <http://biz4biz.org/brexit-debate.html>

Providing a coherent voice for businesses in Hertfordshire

The network for forward-thinking professionals

- CEO Policy Forums with an emphasis on creating a business friendly policy
- Strong links to the Hertfordshire LEP
- Regular lunch and breakfast meetings for networking and interaction with a topical guest speaker
- Educational/factual trips e.g. European Parliament, Houses of Parliament, Jaguar Tour, Gherkin
- Business Support and Mentoring Service with free 60 minute 1-2-1 consultation for new members
- biz4Biz magazine – Insight.
- New members entitled to a FREE profile in the magazine and reduced rate advertising
- biz4Biz Blog

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<http://www.biz4biz.org/join.html>



biz4Biz provides a coherent voice for businesses in Hertfordshire. We aim to influence and shape policymaking and encourage investment by engaging with local/central government, relevant public sector bodies and local organisations to promote the county as a great place to live and do business.

biz4Biz has broadened its activities to represent the interests of businesses and people. Its networking, local government liaison and charitable involvement aims to benefit the residents, commuters, workers and business owners who contribute to Hertfordshire life.

biz4Biz is a not-for-profit company that is run by a board of directors who are all experienced business people.

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For more information contact
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