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Insight

| OCTOBER 2015 | ISSUE FIVE |

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Insight

CONTENTS

News	4
Matt Hamnett: A little more conversation	6
Forthcoming Events	7
biz4Biz: Firkin and Gherkin	8
Herts LEP: Supporting your business	10
Tim Baugh: UK threatened by skills shortage	12
Emma Brindle: The living wage	13
Victoria Sandberg: Points for tenants to consider	14
Sas and Yosh: Hertfordshire's dynamic design duo	15
Andrew Sykes: A new element discovered	16
Herts Growth Hub: Support to businesses	17
Aztec Logistics: Delivering confidence locally	19
Townhouse: QR Codes	20
Jillian Lillico: Local procurement strategies	21
Keech Cottage: Children's hospice appeal	22
Adrian Hawkins: Private sector to the rescue	23

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THE PERFECT SOLUTION TO KEEPING OUR GREEN BELT SAFE

The Hertfordshire LEP has identified the North Herts area as an Economic Development Zone given that North Herts, South Cambridge and South Beds have historically been linked with the Engineering manufacturing sector. It's a tough world in the Engineering sector with a workforce average age of 57 years, a high demand for new entrants and a lack of modern facilities in Hertfordshire's Colleges. The Engineering sector contributes 27% to the UK's GDP and 87% of those companies in the sector are employing fewer than 10 people. It will take time to re-establish training facilities, attract the next generation of skilled employees into the sector and rebuild the employment base; possibly a generation.

So how do we consider injecting life back into the economy of North Herts? The UK is a Consumer economy. Hertfordshire is seen as a commuter dormitory for workers travelling to London, Milton Keynes, Cambridge and Oxford and many choose to live in Hertfordshire for the proximity and the desire to own a piece of our green and pleasant land. There has been much debate in recent months regarding a new Garden City in North Herts to house our growing population. Such a project would be funded by central government and would stimulate the local economy when the building work commences. We need this project now more than ever. It will provide a perfect solution to these two issues and it certainly seems like the ideal fix to me.

Adrian Hawkins

Co-Founder & Chairman biz4Biz

Chairman Weldability Sif established 1925, Director and Trustee of the Weldability Sif Foundation, Director and Trustee of the North Herts Studio Schools Trust.

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NEWS

biz4Biz Connexions launched

biz4Biz Connexions is a monthly business networking event for senior managers, directors and CEOs of Hertfordshire-based businesses that offers:

- Networking – grow your business contacts
- Informative speakers on topics of interest to Herts-based business leaders
- Advice from a variety of experts to help you grow your business
- Access to educational seminars on a wide range of topics from finance and tax to HR, marketing, IT and leadership.
- A copy of the latest biz4Biz magazine

Our inaugural event takes place at the Letchworth Hall Hotel on Thursday, 26 November from 7.00 until 9.00 am. Our guest speaker is Adrian Hawkins who will be speaking about his role as Board Member on the Herts LEP and specifically his chairmanship of the Skills and Employment Board and the work they are doing to address the skills shortage in Hertfordshire.

To register and pay for the event visit www.biz4biz.org/connexions.html



About our speaker; Adrian Hawkins has 40 years' experience in the gases, equipment, welding and cutting markets. Adrian started Weldability in 1981 acquiring Sif in 2003, a company established since 1925. Adrian is Chairman of Weldability Sif.

Adrian is a professional member of the Welding Institute and a serving member of their educational board.

Adrian is an entrepreneur, having an avid interest in the mechanics

of business and is co-founder and Chairman of biz4Biz.

Adrian is a Fellow of the Institute of Sales and Marketing, Chairman of the North Herts Studio Schools Trust and Director of North Herts College.

Adrian is also a Director of the Hertfordshire LEP Main Board and chairs their Skills and Employment Board for Hertfordshire, as well as representing the LEP on the Business Forum and Growth Hub Board.

SMALL BUSINESSES SHOW SIGNS OF GROWTH

The Federation of Small Businesses has released the results of its latest Small Business Index (SBI), that revealing confidence has picked up markedly in the second quarter. Growth and investment intentions are the highest since the SBI began in 2010 and nearly two thirds of small businesses aspire to grow in the next three months – the highest figure

Businesses view their prospects for the coming months very positively. Nearly two thirds of SBs aspire to grow in the next three months – the highest figure ever seen with productivity increasing compared to the wider economy. Annual output per hour for workers rose 1.4% year on year in Q4 2014 among small firms, compared with 0.3% in the economy as a whole.

We also have the highest ever number of firms planning to invest in their business, too – nearly one third plan to over

the next 12 months.

Firms that have employed new staff rose to 8.9%, a sharp increase from 2% reported 12 months ago.

However, many businesses says the cost and availability of workers with the right skills is a barrier to growth



GREAT NEWS FOR APPRENTICESHIPS IN WATFORD

The Member of Parliament for Watford has been appointed Apprenticeship Adviser to the Prime Minister. Conservative MP Richard Harrington launched the Watford Apprenticeship Programme in 2012 and will work to help the government to reach its target of creating three million apprenticeships by 2020.

Since 2010 more than 3,300 apprenticeships have been created in the Watford constituency and unemployment has been more than halved. Minister Nick Boles has also nominated Richard Harrington to host any future Apprenticeship Ambassador Network events that are held in the House of Commons.

7TH ST ALBANS DRAGONS' APPRENTICE CHALLENGE

Teams of Year 12 students from local schools and colleges will be competing in the 7th St Albans Dragons' Apprentice Challenge until the end of January 2016. Their aim is to raise awareness and vital funds for local charities. The Competition launched on 24 September and each team was paired with a business mentor and a charity or community group. Over the next four months, guided by their Dragons, the teams will develop business strategies and deliver their ideas. The aim is to turn £100 of seed capital into £1,000 or more and with all profit generated going directly to the beneficiaries.

The annual challenge was started seven years ago by the Centre for Voluntary Service in St Albans but now covers the whole of Hertfordshire. To date it has generated over £289,000 for 155 Hertfordshire-based charities and community groups. These include The Hertfordshire Society for the Blind and The Abbeyfield Society to The Harpenden Trust and Verulam Community Radio.



A LITTLE MORE CONVERSATION AND A LOT MORE ACTION PLEASE?



I hear employers talk frequently and passionately about their expectations of young people joining the workforce and how, all too often, those expectations are not met. They are understandably frustrated, if not exasperated, that their pleas go unheeded or misunderstood by the education system.

I sympathise. We recently launched the Hart Learning Group with a clear intention to do something different. The Group includes North Hertfordshire College, the Hart Schools Trust and a discrete new business, Hart Learning and Development. We see it as our job to prepare young people for the (sometimes harsh) realities of the world of work, and to help our business clients improve and grow.

Hart Learning and Development is the focal point for our Group's engagement with business. It's a business that

strives to add real value for our clients and their employees by helping them engage with and invest in emerging talent. In launching that new business, we want to start a real conversation with business and we want to make a difference.

Through a series of round table events, online discussions and polls over the course of the autumn, we will develop an employability standard that will truly reflect Hertfordshire businesses' expectations of their new recruits. We'll then reflect that standard across all the courses we deliver to help young people prepare for and progress in work – including our apprenticeship and traineeship programmes. We also want to embed the standard in the full time programmes we offer at North Hertfordshire College.

We launched what we're calling our 'employability conversation' at an event hosted by the Chair of the Hart

Schools Trust, Adrian Hawkins, on Thursday 16th September. A brilliant range of Hertfordshire businesses joined us, including AIRBUS, Falkland Press, Ramsey Healthcare, Hertfordshire County Council, Morgan Sindell, Weldability and Novotel.

The session delivered some really clear messages for us. Colleagues said they needed their new recruits to be punctual, consistently attend, be presentable, motivated and show a real willingness to work hard. Communication skills, with an emphasis on written and verbal communication, we also highlight as being critical. For attendees, that meant the ability to talk and listen to colleagues, managers and customers in a professional manner. Attendees also said they were looking for young people to have a practical sense of how the workplace worked – the business and performance environment.

Building on that great start, we'll keep the conversation going throughout the autumn. We want to hear from as many Hertfordshire businesses as possible; to get involved check out www.hartld.co.uk or join the conversation on Twitter (@hartld, #ALittleMoreConversation). As we progress the conversation, we'll also swing into action – because that's what really matters!

MATT HAMNETT

CEO of the Hart Learning Group, and Principal of North Hertfordshire College

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CEO lunch at Falkland Press with guest speaker Sir Oliver Heald QC MP



Falkland Press has delivered reliable, innovative and highly professional managed print services to businesses of all sizes for over 35 years. Their strategy is to invest in the latest technology, their team and processes to ensure their service to their customers is consistent, reliable and professional, making them not only one of the UK's leading commercial printers but also a trusted Partner in print.

Sir Oliver Heald QC MP was first elected as an MP in 1992 and has lived in the constituency since 1981. In July 2007, Sir Oliver returned to the back benches after 13 years' continuous service on the Conservative Front Bench. From November 2007 to September 2012

he was a member of the Work and Pensions Select Committee and from March 2008 to September 2012 was appointed to the Committee on Standards in Public Life. In September 2012 he was appointed Her Majesty's Solicitor General for England and Wales where he helped oversee a modernisation of the Criminal Justice System with new digital working. He also won all his cases in the Court of Appeal for unduly lenient sentences and argued successfully for the tightening of laws on Female Genital Mutilation. In May 2015 Sir Oliver was re-elected with an increased majority. Throughout his time as an MP, his focus has been on representing everyone in North East Herts.



Jaguar experience at Castle Bromwich

What does it take to bring to life some of the most technologically advanced cars in the world? The Tour at Castle Bromwich offered an exclusive insight into the creation of their cars. biz4Biz had a unique opportunity to witness the entire production process from sheet metal to Jaguar car. They experienced the electrifying moment power pulses through a Jaguar and the incredible sound its engine makes firing on all cylinders for the first time. If you have ever wondered how a Jaguar is brought to life, you already own a Jaguar or are considering buying one, here's your chance to read the full story in the next edition.



DATES FOR THE DIARY

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

Friday, 6th November 2015

Lunch meeting at Falkland Press, Letchworth GC 12 - 2.30pm

Thursday, 26th November 2015

biz4Biz Connexions, Letchworth Hall Hotel 7am- 9am

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



EVENTS

Firkin and Gherkin

biz4Biz's latest event took us from the old to the new, all in one day. Our day started at the McMullen Whole Hop Brewery in Hertford which has been run by the McMullen family since Peter McMullen established it in 1827.

The new, state of the art, brewery is built on the same site as its two predecessors and continues to use the 60-metre deep well that gives the brewery its unique supply of fresh spring water.

The brewery still uses 'whole natural hops' as it believes using processed pellets or hop extracts are not good for the image of traditional and authentic brewers of fine cask ales. We learnt that for the brewing process you need malt, water, hops and yeast which needs to be mixed, stirred, boiled and fermented. There is, of course, more to it than that which is why there is such a variety of beer in this country!

Fergus McMullen, Production and Sales Director is passionate about the family business and is determined it will remain that way. The family owns 100% of ordinary shares and continues to build the public house estate. Joining the very profitable wet-led pubs are 7 Baroosh smart bars in prime locations, 35 large food destinations and 11 Chicken and Grill concepts specialising in rotisserie chicken. There have been two 'new builds' in recent years which are successful but what is just as important is that 'viable'



establishments are kept going based on excellent relationships with tenants.

Fergus then introduced the group to McMullen Cask Ale, Country Bitter and Stronghart during a tutored tasting before we headed off to Baroosh for some lunch. Fergus told me that Baroosh bars were designed with the 35 year old woman in mind; they all have large windows enabling the customer to see what is going on inside before entering the premises!

Carrying our gifts of beerboxes we boarded the coach for the journey to 30 St Mary Axe, more affectionately known as the Gherkin. On arrival we made our way to Standard Life's offices on the top floor where we were met by Dr David Stubbs, Executive Director at JP Morgan and Katie Trowsdale, Fund Manager & Analyst at Standard Life.

David gave an update on the economic markets explaining that volatility has picked up of late and is akin to 2011 with the stock markets undergoing a bad couple of weeks.

Things to be aware of:





- Commodities are weak.
- Dollar having a pretty good year.
- Europe; weak currency but seeing a real movement in the economy.
- Chinese stock market is extremely volatile which is having an effect on domestic and world economy. Old China is old news and they are trying to support employment/economy but it is not a collapse.
- Emerging markets have spluttered, add that to political issues and understandably there is no confidence to invest.
- Developed Markets are having a bit of a bad time but there is strength in the developed world and Europe is improving.
- The strong recovery in US housing is having a positive effect on construction, white goods etc. and equity funds are targeting this market.
- UK housing market is improving but we also have an acute shortage of housing to address.
- Eurozone could be better but has been adversely impacted by Greece. Eurozone does have sustainable growth and we are investing again.

So, good news for European earnings which could continue and lots of good reasons to like Europe. At home,

we don't see interest rates rising to previous highs. Investors need to diversify more and expect less! Allow rebalance e.g. 6.5% return.

Katie then gave a presentation on portfolio construction in a global market.

- Know what you own and why you own it.
- Don't believe everything you hear.
- You have plenty of time

Ensure you are given informed and appropriate instruction.

Diversification leads to the difficulty of choice. Correlation is the key to a balanced portfolio and there are four steps to achieve this:

- Strategic asset allocation
- Tactical asset allocation
- Fund selection and portfolio construction
- Rebalance and review

We then had a Q & A session:

- Advised not to have a 'one time' portfolio; drip fed with more lower cost and less expensive investments, bearing in mind the effect of pound cost averaging. When markets are low, buy more units, drip feeding into a sustained, diversified portfolio.

Worst thing is putting money into just one area.

For future investments

Be aware of:

- Spain elections
- EU Referendum
- US Presidential election
- Oil
- Mining; not sustainable dividends due to over-investment for over a decade – the key is what you pay

Consider:

- Japan
- UK property; strong market going forward in prime retail, industrial and residential

In lieu of payment for the brewery tour, tasting and lunch, Fergus asked that a donation be given to his charity Keech Hospice Care BraveHert Appeal – raising money to expand the Children's Hospice At Home Service across Hertfordshire to enable the children helped to increase from 150 to 400 a year. biz4Biz was delighted to donate £360.00 to this very worthwhile cause. For more information on this appeal please turn to page 21 Louise Case biz4Biz Secretariat.

WHAT ARE WE DOING TO SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS?

Welcome to the latest round-up of Hertfordshire LEP news. In this issue we report on how our partnership approach is helping to create the right conditions for economic growth in rural parts of the county.

Enterprise Zone bid to bolster economy in west Hertfordshire

An ambitious bid to create an Enterprise Zone in west Hertfordshire – with the potential to create thousands of highly skilled jobs - has been submitted.

The zone could also attract hundreds of new businesses and help unlock key development sites. Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) along with St Albans City and District Council and Dacorum Borough Council submitted the bid to the Government for an Enviro-Tech Enterprise Zone to bolster the economy in rural west Hertfordshire. The application falls within the M1/M25 Growth Area, one of three areas identified by the LEP with potential for significant economic growth.

The bid concentrates on the LEP's priority sectors for economic growth, with the emphasis on environmental technology. If successful, the Enterprise Zone will help to support and develop the existing enviro-tech sector in west Hertfordshire. It will help to attract more businesses to the area thanks to its excellent national and international transport links.



Hertfordshire

Local Enterprise Partnership

The multi-site bid covers Maylands Business Park, Hemel Hempstead and land in Dacorum Borough, west of Green Lane. Other sites include underused land and buildings at the Building Research Establishment (BRE) and Rothamsted Research.

The bid also addresses potential economic development land near Buncefield, identified in the St Albans consultation draft strategic Local Plan, but still subject to the Local Plan process.

The projects have been developed in response to the Government's invitation to LEPs across England

to bid for new enterprise zones in partnership with local authorities. This was announced in the summer Budget. There are currently 24 Enterprise Zones in England. The Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department for Business will decide which schemes will get the go-ahead later this year.

Benefits for companies operating in Enterprise Zones can include discounted business rates. The wider benefits for communities include attracting business and creating jobs.



LEP Board Member, Councillor Julian Daly, who is also Executive Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning

and Conservation for St Albans City and District Council, said: “We are long-term champions of The Green Triangle’s aim to make the most of the green technology ‘know how’ of BRE, Rothamsted and the University of Hertfordshire. An Enviro-Tech Enterprise Zone will help us advance The Green Triangle’s agenda.

“It can bring new firms and highly skilled jobs to the county which will be welcome.”

The Green Triangle is a partnership organisation involving three leading research institutes - BRE, Rothamsted Research and the University of Hertfordshire.

Supported by St Albans Council and Oaklands College, The Green Triangle aims to establish Hertfordshire as a globally renowned centre of excellence in green technology.

Grants available to small firms in rural Herts

Micro and small businesses in Hertfordshire’s rural areas may now be eligible to apply for EU funding up to the value of around £140,000.

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) grants are designed to assist with capital investment to create new jobs.

Grants of over £35,000 are available to firms fewer than 50 employees in officially designated rural areas. Small and micro businesses in or near small towns including; Buntingford, Braughing, Much Hadam, Radlett, Bovingdon, Redbourn, Wheathampstead, Kimpton, Knebworth and Ashwell are eligible to apply.

The grants are limited to 40 per cent of project costs and are capped at a maximum of €200,000 (approx. £142,000).

Projects must create two or more full-time jobs and can be used to support activities such as:

- Expansion of workshop facilities to increase productive capacity
- Investment in equipment and machinery
- Farm diversification activities, including rural tourism, contributing

to wider rural growth. Speculative commercial property development is not a priority for this call.

For other current EU project calls and related news stories, visit www.hertfordshirelep.com/european-funding.aspx

Find out more about your LEP at www.hertfordshirelep.co.uk
Call: 01707 358744 or email info@hertfordshirelep.co.uk



Hertfordshire
Local Enterprise Partnership

Perfectly Placed for Business

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 create the right conditions for growth and help the county to realise its full economic potential.

We are transforming the economy through the delivery of our ambitious programmes in these key areas:

Enterprise and Innovation

Strategic Infrastructure

Skills and Employment

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

Visit: www.hertfordshirelep.co.uk
Email: info@hertfordshirelep.co.uk



UK COMPETITIVENESS THREATENED BY A SKILLS SHORTAGE



The UK government has finally announced that the Hinkley Point power station will go ahead with expertise and financial backing from France and China. At the same time, contracts are being put out to tender for work on the HS2 high-speed rail line - firms in Spain, France, Germany, the Netherlands and China have expressed their interest in bidding. It appears that the country that opened the world's first nuclear reactor and built the first rail line no longer has the expertise to build nuclear power stations or high-speed rail lines without help.

However, these major projects will create work in the UK, although both could suffer from a lack of workers as the UK faces its biggest skills shortage for a generation. The construction industry accounts for about 7% of GDP and is facing a severe skills shortage, especially in London and the south-east. A recent survey by the recruitment consultant Manpower found that UK construction companies are turning down work on larger projects due to a shortage of skilled labour.

Meanwhile, the Royal Academy of Engineering estimates that the UK needs to recruit and train 75,000 engineers every year until 2020 to meet demand. It says the current figure is too low at around 22,000 per annum. The UK's productivity (output per

worker) also lags behind our EU rivals like France and Germany. If the UK's productivity matched that of the USA, the UK economy would be 30 per cent bigger than it is now. There are numerous factors that affect productivity; poor infrastructure, red tape and over-regulation, a lack of affordable housing and so on, but the skills shortage is high up on the list and is something that needs addressing.

So how do we address this crisis? Apprenticeships are now available in a wide range of careers, from advertising to law and information technology. However, the attitude in schools needs to change. Many schools discourage pupils from taking up apprenticeships and believe a university education is all that counts. This view needs to be challenged.

Most young people are unaware of the vast array of career opportunities open to them in the workplace, much less the skills they need to secure them. There needs to be better careers advice at school, which should involve the business community so that young people can make informed decisions about possible careers and future education options. Young people need to see that employers value apprenticeships and practical degrees in science and engineering and that they offer a path into a secure, well-paid career. They need to be made aware of

the skills that will be in demand when they leave school.

And let us not forget adult learners. The pace of technological change and the need for people to work beyond 65 means some workers will have to retrain to equip themselves with skills employers need. We should value the concept of lifelong learning to improve and upskill the UK's workforce to ensure the UK remains competitive, drawing on the potential of older workers and those who did not fare well at school, but want to return to education later in life.

It is, therefore, disappointing to see more cuts to the further education budget, which will impact on the ability of colleges and training providers to provide much-needed vocational training to plug skills gaps. We will pay a heavy price for such short-sighted policymaking.

As a leading global economy, we need to invest money in developing and maintaining a highly skilled workforce so that the UK improves its productivity and remains competitive.

TIM BAUGH

Partner at Howardsgate
Directorbiz4Biz

TALENTHQ'S VIEWS ON THE LIVING WAGE AND HOW THIS WILL IMPACT ON RECRUITMENT



EMMA BRINDLE
Director at TalentHQ

When the living wage is introduced next year around six million people are expected to be affected and the Office for Budget Responsibility suggests extra costs to employers could lead to around 60,000 job losses.

From next April, employers must pay £7.20 an hour to workers over the age of 25, rising to £9 by 2020. The present minimum wage for over-21s is £6.50.

As a recruitment consultancy owner, I deal with a lot of small businesses looking for staff and I feel those in the retail, hospitality and care sectors will be most affected. Morgan Stanley analysts warn that the minimum wage “represents one of the biggest new structural challenges for UK retailers

since the advent of the internet . . . and would be hard to overstate the importance [of the policy] to the industry.”

Following a survey of over 2,000 employers, James Hick, MD of Manpower Group Solutions stated “The national living wage is sending shockwaves through the UK labour market”. Mr Hick said employers were scaling back recruitment plans and job prospects were at their weakest since the final quarter of 2012.

Chancellor Osborne wants the rate to rise to £9 by 2020 and sees it as part of a ‘contract with business’ suggesting that tax cuts will offset more investment by companies in their staff.

But it’s not all doom and gloom; the Trades Union Congress has argued that the introduction of the minimum wage in 1999 was accompanied by similar warnings from business about its negative impact on jobs but employment rates went on to hit “all-time highs”.

“There is no future for Britain as a bad pay, bad jobs economy,” said Nicola Smith, TUC head of economics.

“Higher pay is good for business and good for growth. Trade unions stand ready to work with employers and government to achieve the productivity gains that we know will deliver both employment growth and higher earnings.” As a recruitment consultancy in the hub of this historic

‘Living Wage’ increase, we feel it will be the smaller companies that will be most affected. We foresee an increase in employers taking on more self-employed workers, more zero hours terms and even an increase of illegally paying under the threshold of the national living wage. Maybe the best thing we can do as businesses, is focus our efforts on creating more jobs; increase internal career opportunities for employees, develop the skills of existing staff and invest more in apprenticeships.



POINTS FOR TENANTS TO CONSIDER BEFORE SIGNING HEADS OF TERMS FOR A NEW COMMERCIAL LEASE

By Victoria Sandberg, Solicitor in the Commercial Property team at Longmores Solicitors LLP



If you are interested in taking on a new lease of commercial premises, you will probably be asked to sign what is known as “heads of terms”, which set out the main points that have been agreed. Until the lease itself is actually signed, the heads of terms are not binding – on either the landlord or the tenant. However, we would always recommend that you take advice from a solicitor before signing the heads of terms, as they are the starting point for the solicitors to draft and negotiate the form of lease.

Although not binding, it is likely to be quicker and easier to finalise the lease if the heads of terms have been properly considered. If an issue is not clearly agreed on the heads of terms, it can take some to-and-fro negotiations between the landlord’s and the tenant’s solicitors to agree the point. Obviously some issues are legal ones and will have to be negotiated between the solicitors. However, there

may be other points of principle which could be included in the heads of terms.

Alterations

Completion of a lease is often held up while the tenant provides details of its intended fit-out works to the landlord and then waits for the landlord’s approval of these. A well-advised tenant will not complete its lease before a licence for alterations is entered into, particularly if the works are fundamental to its business. Wherever possible, provide details of your works to the landlord/its agent at the outset, so that if possible the landlord’s “in principle” consent can be obtained at the heads of terms stage.

Repairs

Many leases still require the tenant to take on a full repairing liability, even if the lease is only for a short term. If the lease is for less than say 5 years, or if the property is obviously in a poor condition, ask the landlord whether your repairing liability can be limited to the state in which the property is at the date of the lease, as evidenced by a schedule of condition.

Service Charge

Many leases require the tenant to contribute to a service charge which, depending on the length of the term and the nature of the premises, may be unreasonable. If you are only taking a lease of part of a building

and will not benefit from many of the services covered by the service charge, ask whether the landlord will agree to a “cap” on the service charge, so that you will not be required to pay more than an agreed maximum amount.

Break clauses

If you will have a break clause in the lease – i.e. a right to terminate the lease early – ask the landlord to agree that the break clause will be unconditional. At the very least, try only to agree a condition that you have paid the annual rent up to the break date.

Any conditions attached to break clauses must be strictly complied with or the lease may not terminate on the break date. This is a contentious issue and solicitors often spend a long time negotiating conditions. However, if the conditions are set out on the heads of terms, the position is made clear and it should be relatively easy for the solicitors to agree the wording.

These are just some of the points to consider but as said above, it is always worth taking advice before signing heads of terms. The heads of terms will also deal with issues such as the amount of rent payable – if you have any concerns regarding the amount, consult an independent surveyor. Remember, the letting agent acts on behalf of the landlord, not the tenant.

DESIGN DUO BRINGING JAPANESE KAWAII AND ENGLISH ECCENTRICITY TOGETHER

Sas and Yosh are the design duo who are bringing Japanese kawaii and English eccentricity together with a riot of colours and cool illustration. Their designs are being described as unique, modern and quirky, their limitless creative minds and passion for design are clear.

Their beautifully hand-designed contemporary homewares collection for adults and children includes wallpapers, mugs, aprons and tea towels. Sas and Yosh also create exclusive bespoke designs for clients who want one off wallpapers, textiles and bespoke design for their business. Visit Sas and Yosh at www.sasandyosh.com

What process do you go through to reach the finished product?

The process starts with hand drawn illustrations done by both Sarah and Yoshie. Then we scan in the images and put the designs into repeat patterns in photoshop, the patterns are then coloured with a mixture of digital and hand created ink blots. The final pattern designs and illustrations are always created in a variety of colour ways to give us different options for wallpapers and textiles.

What do you use for inspiration?

Our inspiration comes from all sorts of places. Yoshie is interested in Western art and Sarah has a love of Oriental art. We are also inspired by the world around us; nature and animals, patterns from different cultures, folktales and fairytales and anything colourful.



What is your top tip for those wanting to start a business like this?

Absolute joy and passion in creating your work. You need to want to be doing it all the time! Days, evenings, weekends, we work all the time so you need to enjoy it. Also an ability to quickly pick up all the new skills you will have to know for running your business, accounts, tax, website design, finding manufacturers, constant social media etc... there's a lot to do besides designing!

Tell us about some of your bespoke work for businesses?

Sas and Yosh love to collaborate and work on design briefs for businesses, architects and independent creatives. We produce illustrative designs and patterns for textiles (inc interiors and fashion),

magazine and web illustration, stationery design and brand logos. We also create exclusive bespoke digital designs for clients who want one-off wallpapers and textiles. Either for private residential projects, interior designers or hotels/restaurants.

What businesses have you worked with in Hertfordshire?

We started Sas and Yosh last October and our first job was to produce the illustrations for local business LittleFlea.co.uk for their gorgeous children's brands website. We also created logos for 'Little Buds' and 'Little Conkers' local child minding services and have some upcoming work for RositaLollipop.com. Then more recently the 'Radcliffe' wallpaper and we are currently working on a 13m mural for the Neo Natal unit at Lister.

We also do lots of work internationally and have created web illustrations for thisistheantidote.com; Suzanne Duckett of 'Tatler Spa Guides' gorgeous wellness website. We have also been creating stationery and textile/pattern design for companies in New York (Cabbages and Kings), Berlin and Tokyo (10for1, KOKKA, LOFT). Our homewares were recently being showcased in a creative project in the ISETAN department store in Tokyo.



A NEW DISCOVERY OF THE HEAVIEST ELEMENT YET KNOWN TO SCIENCE



ANDREW SYKES

Director biz4Biz, Chairman RHG
Insurance Broker

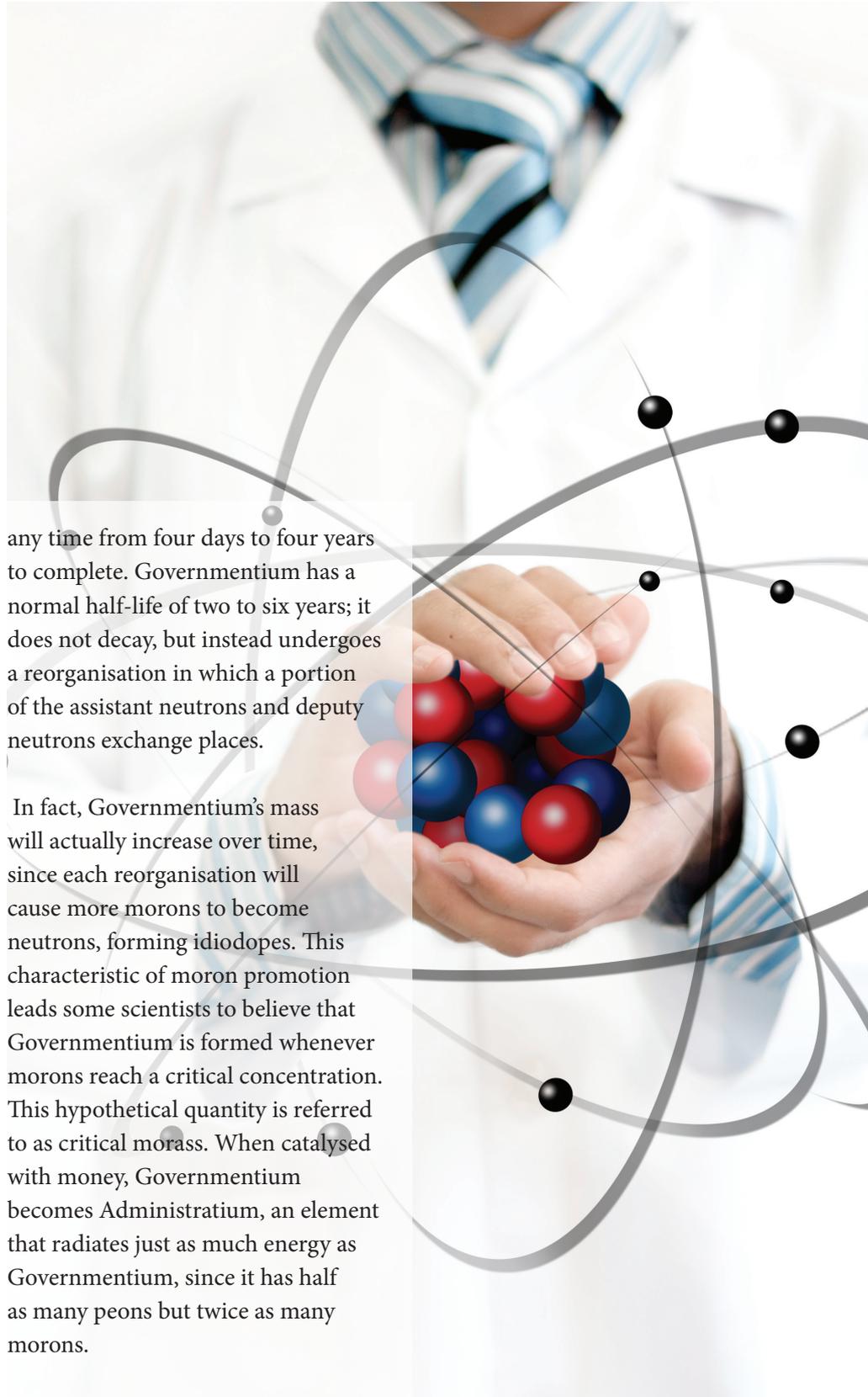
Recent hurricanes, floods and bank chaos are proof of the existence of a new chemical element. Research has led to the discovery of the heaviest element yet known to science. The new element, Governmentium (Gv), has a single neutron, 25 assistant neutrons, 88 deputy neutrons and 198 assistant deputy neutrons, giving it an atomic weight of 312.

These 312 particles are held together by forces called morons, which are surrounded by vast quantities of lepton-like particles called peons. Since Governmentium has no electrons, it is inert. However, it can be detected because it impedes every reaction with which it comes into contact.

A minute amount of Governmentium can cause a reaction (that would normally take less than a second)

any time from four days to four years to complete. Governmentium has a normal half-life of two to six years; it does not decay, but instead undergoes a reorganisation in which a portion of the assistant neutrons and deputy neutrons exchange places.

In fact, Governmentium's mass will actually increase over time, since each reorganisation will cause more morons to become neutrons, forming idiodopes. This characteristic of moron promotion leads some scientists to believe that Governmentium is formed whenever morons reach a critical concentration. This hypothetical quantity is referred to as critical morass. When catalysed with money, Governmentium becomes Administratium, an element that radiates just as much energy as Governmentium, since it has half as many peons but twice as many morons.



HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH HUB

Specialist support services and growth opportunities for the county's business community

Hertfordshire Growth Hub is a local service offering established businesses access to the highest quality, locally-sourced support and expertise to realise their growth ambitions.

Expert advice on-hand

With key sectors such as pharmaceutical, construction, creative media, advanced manufacturing and engineering predicted to generate local economic growth, the Hertfordshire Growth Hub has been set up with a team of experienced advisers specialising in areas such as finance, innovation & technology, skills development and sales & marketing. The adviser team will provide in-depth bespoke support and events for high growth Hertfordshire SME businesses which have been trading for a minimum of two years.

For those with ambitions of starting a business or in their early years of trading, the Growth Hub has strong links with local partner organisations in the county, enabling pre-starts and start-ups to find their way to the latest services tailored for their stage of business.

The service also works hand-in-hand with the Government's flagship Business Growth Service: a national



support service for businesses that aspire to rapid growth and are looking for specific funding and support to achieve their ambitious business goals.

Encouraging collaboration

Situated within easy reach of London, Hertfordshire is home to a wealth of talented people and centres of excellence, providing the perfect place for businesses to flourish. The Growth Hub facilitates collaboration between specialists and businesses, and offers a free online Marketplace giving the opportunity to reach more

customers and find resources for your business.

Get in touch

Contact Hertfordshire Growth Hub on 0844 725 5575, enquiries@hertsgrowthhub.com or visit www.hertsgrowthhub.com

Based at BioPark in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire Growth Hub is a partnership between the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), local business support specialists Exemplas and the University of Hertfordshire.



Hertfordshire Growth Hub

Local support and advice for Hertfordshire businesses

Providing a coherent voice for businesses in Hertfordshire

The network for forward-thinking professionals

- Strong links to local MPs
- CEO Policy Forums with an emphasis on creating a business friendly policy
- Strong links to the Hertfordshire LEP via LEP Board Member and biz4Biz co-founder and Chairman Adrian Hawkins
- 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 for biz4Biz members
- biz4Biz Blog



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.

biz4Biz

For more information contact
Louise Case, biz4Biz Secretariat
01462 47803 | • secretariat@biz4biz.org
www.biz4biz.org

AZTEK LOGISTICS DELIVER CONFIDENCE TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

At Aztek Logistics Ltd we understand how important a reputation can be to any size of business, getting your product from A-B is essential to you and your reputation. We deliver confidence to local, national and international businesses, by ensuring that your deliveries arrive on time, every time and in perfect condition.

From humble beginnings in 2003, we have developed into a well respected, highly trusted and professionally-run logistics operation. Our seven acre site in Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, is home to more than 70,000 sq ft of secure, bulk and racked warehousing and a secure yard area covered by CCTV, alarm systems and barrier entry. In addition to this facility we have recently expanded into another 30,000 sq ft of warehouse space locally, to enable us to handle the additional stocks that we are being asked to hold. We have plans to extend our warehousing at Works Road, Letchworth by a further 30% to include a 12m high-bay storage facility, capable of holding a further 4,000 pallets.

This level and grade of warehousing allows us to offer many services such as cross docking, pick and pack, container de-stuffing and loading and repacking facilities. All of this is tracked through our warehouse management system, which allows clients to access their stock information via a web portal in real time.



We operate a modern, fuel efficient fleet of vehicles that runs the length and breadth of the UK and onto the European continent – whether it be parcels or pallets or over-size freight, we are able to offer a solution.

Becoming a shareholder member of Pallet Track network in 2010, enabled us to continue our constant push for improvement in technology, which has helped us to provide cutting edge services such as online proof of delivery with track and trace, online job entry, and signature capture.

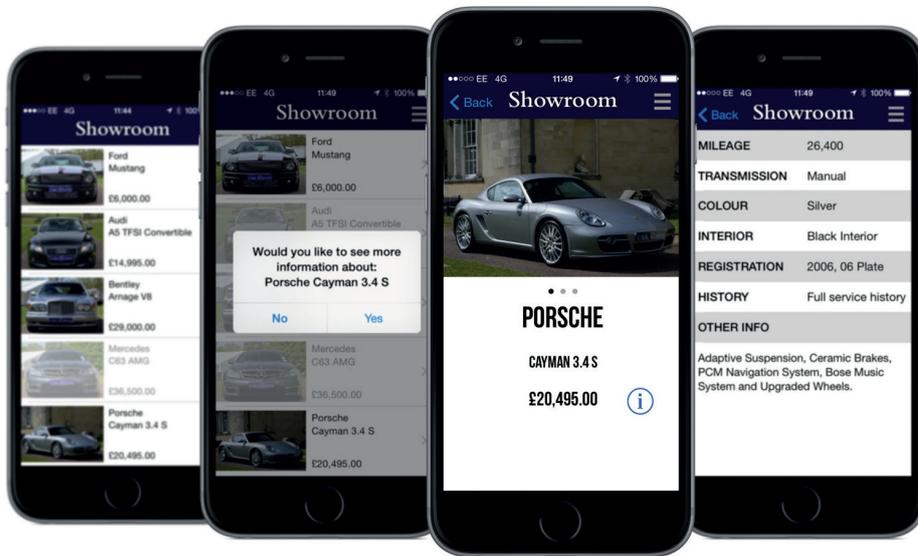
We are able to offer collections both within the UK and Worldwide and have a dedicated, experienced worldwide delivery team on hand.

Aztek Logistics Ltd has recently been presented with FORS Gold accreditation by Transport for London, along with just 24 other general haulage companies in the UK. We are also members of the United Kingdom Warehousing Association (UKWA) and the Road Haulage Association (RHA) and are in the process of attaining our British Retail Consortium (BRC) accreditation for storage and distribution.

For more information please contact Aztek on 01462 689 480 or email info@azteklogistics.co.uk www.azteklogistics.co.uk

AZTEK
LOGISTICS LIMITED

QR CODES? WHERE WE'RE GOING, WE DON'T NEED QR CODES...



Though contrary to the famous quote from Back to the Future, we still need – and love – cars. None more so than innovative, Hitchin-based firm ‘The Car Agents’ which specialises in sports, prestige and classic vehicles. So when The Car Agents met with leading expert on proximity marketing and iBeacon technology, Townhouse Creative, to come up with a showroom experience like no other – the end result was always going to be pretty exciting.

The Car Agents wanted to create a customer experience that was immersive and reflective of the high-end, high-spec cars on display in their Queen Street showroom. Hertfordshire-based consultancy Townhouse Creative specialises in the use of iBeacons – the latest in location-based technology – and develops unique experiences for visitors to retail, hospitality and leisure sites.

The Townhouse team delivered a system to The Car Agents that enabled customers to freely move around the showroom, whilst instantly having all the information they needed about a particular vehicle sent to their phone, simply by moving into its proximity.

The technology involved includes a cloud-based content management system (CMS), where information about each car can be uploaded. An iBeacon placed in each vehicle emits a signal, which is picked up by The Car Agents app installed on the customer’s phone.

Richard Malloy, Director, Townhouse, said, ‘We wanted The Car Agents’ showroom to feel like an experience. Our aim was to aid in the sale of the vehicle without the customer feeling they were being ‘sold to’. This is the perfect way to get detailed information about the vehicles directly into the hands of the customer.’

Each vehicle on show at The Car Agents would produce a large amount of content – such as exterior colour, interior colour, transmission type, engine size, service history, registration and features specific to that vehicle. Townhouse standardised how the information was entered into the CMS, allowing for quick input of all data. The next stage was to develop an iOS app that would push out the content of each vehicle to a user’s mobile device but in a non-intrusive manner.

Josh Michell, General Manager, The Car Agents, said, ‘From our first meeting we were impressed with Townhouse’s knowledge and enthusiasm – they were full of ideas immediately. Not only has this trial been a great success, there is so much potential to do even more with the iBeacons because the content can be changed at our convenience. We place an emphasis on customer experience rather than volume of sales and we want customers to be able to browse our high-end vehicles at their leisure. The non-intrusive nature of the experience meant that all the information was there when needed. It’s been a genuine talking point and the customer feedback has been fantastic.’

To find out what iBeacons and proximity marketing can do for your customers visit www.townhousehq.com

DESIGNING AND DELIVERING LOCAL PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES



JILLIAN LILICO
Managing Director
Demeter Development

The Croxley Rail Link Watford, Energy from Waste Plant Hatfield and the A10 M11 Growth Corridor Transport Package are all multi-million pound projects due to take place in Hertfordshire. With these definitely generating large and small contract opportunities for materials, services and works, it seems like a great time to talk about local procurement.

So what is local procurement?

Local procurement is the process of buying (procuring) services, supplies, and works packages from local sources to maximise the retention of procurement expenditure within the local economy. For the purposes of this article, “local” is defined as a business with a Hertfordshire trading address.

Think of the large corporates, stately homes, housing projects and public sector organisations in Hertfordshire, as well as the above-mentioned infrastructure projects and ask yourself this question, “Is my business directly/indirectly supplying products or services to any of these local projects or organisations?”

So, why might local procurement be beneficial to your business and the Hertfordshire economy?

While there should be no geographical constraints on businesses earning revenue and profit, buying from local businesses can offer the following advantages.

- Reduced logistics costs to decrease operational costs
- Increased responsiveness to improve customer satisfaction
- Lower inventory levels to improve cash flow

In the economic context, if your business secures local contracts, it could be argued that you in turn will create jobs locally, and hopefully, spend more with local suppliers creating a multiplier effect.

So, think about your own business again.

Where are your suppliers located? Could procuring locally offer you the above-mentioned local procurement benefits? Where are your clients located? Are there policy interventions

“enablers” to help you win business from local construction and infrastructure projects?

In answer to the last question, enablers do exist. The most effective is the use of Section 106 (S106) planning obligations to get developers and their main contractors to identify and advertise contracts locally. London boroughs actively use S106 for this purpose and have proven success in helping London companies secure contracts on local infrastructure projects. Precedents include the Battersea Nine Elms Development, Supply Brent and the City of London Corporation S106 which specifies a 10% local procurement target on selected city-based developments.

So, should there be a local procurement “call to action” in Hertfordshire?

Should more be done to introduce your business to buyers on local housing and infrastructure projects and to provide you with information on upcoming supply chain contracts? Interestingly, although part-funded by Hertfordshire, the procurement strategy for Croxley Rail Link makes no mention of local procurement. *Is this a business opportunity lost? If designed properly, local procurement strategies can be used to develop Hertfordshire-based supply chains in the construction, tourism/leisure, and creative and low carbon sectors, among others.*

Hertfordshire's Children's Hospice, Keech Hospice Care BraveHerts Appeal

Sadly, some children suffer a serious illness from which they will not recover. The type of support they need is known as 'palliative' care. It may surprise you to learn the charity, Keech Hospice Care is Hertfordshire's children's hospice, and the NHS commissioned provider of children's palliative care for the county. Keech offers many different services to address the physical, social, psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of children and their families who are affected by life-limiting conditions. Keech also provides a comprehensive range of specialist paediatric support 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

Currently, up to 150 Hertfordshire children are cared for by Keech but many more need its help. It's estimated there are more than 900 very sick children with life-limiting illnesses in Hertfordshire, 400 of whom need the help of a hospice every single year. Therefore, it is imperative Keech grows its high quality palliative services.

As many children are too ill to travel, Keech plans to take its full children's hospice service to them – to their homes, schools and hospitals across Hertfordshire. With your help, together we will expand Keech's existing community nursing services into a full Children's Hospice at Home service for Hertfordshire.

This is the plan

Stage One: Develop access to Specialist Palliative Care in Hertfordshire.

This would take the form of a full mobile team of clinical nurse specialists,

palliative nurses and assistant practitioners who would be supported by a range of other professional

“During the awful months of chemotherapy, we were referred to Keech for help”

therapists and a 24/7 consultant doctor. The service would also be underpinned by a 24 hour telephone helpline.

Stage Two: Provide Keech Community Hubs in Hertfordshire.

Children and their families need access to emotional and psychological support through a range of therapies that augment their medical and nursing care needs. This will be developed in the community hubs established on each side of the county to ensure local access to all of Keech's services.

Stage Three: A Palliative Care Register.

My Care Co-ordination is an electronic register which is managed by a co-ordination team. It supports and helps

families in finding their way through the system and increases the level of care they might need at any particular

time. It also enables a register of families to be kept to ensure Keech knows who may need its help and for the charity to be able

to proactively offer the best support to these families.

Keech needs to raise £1.5m to make Stage One a reality. Together, with your support, the hospice is uniquely qualified to be able to make this happen. The charity already provides much of this care to more than 150 children in Hertfordshire, year on year. Keech has the expertise, connections, links with local hospitals and their own consultants to be able to make this difference. Currently, only one in three Hertfordshire children get the hospice care they deserve.

For more information on the BraveHerts Appeal please visit www.keech.org.uk/get_involved/brave-herts



Which child would
you choose?

Together we can choose them all.
Please get in touch: fjmcullen@mcmullens.co.uk

THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO THE RESCUE



The Private sector is credited with creating 2.1 million new jobs in the past 5 years but despite this marvellous feat against the odds of bank failures and a global recession, still we are to be criticised by a Government Minister for employing the wrong people! As always with politics, often a barb aimed at the private sector is designed to create obfuscation and hide the real issue, which is that we still fail to control immigration correctly, by which I mean clearly identify those entering our country. Net migration has soared to an annual record high since 2005 of 330,000, prompting a government minister to accuse businesses of being too reliant on foreign workers.

James Brokenshire, the immigration minister, admitted that the figures were deeply disappointing but then criticised companies. “With nearly 100,000 non-EU students remaining in the UK at the end of their courses

and British business still overly reliant on foreign workers in a number of sectors, there is much more to do,” he said. The idea appears to be that rather than encouraging the best international talent to stay here, we train them up and kick them out, so it is our competitors who benefit.

When will we simply learn to discern the capability of those wanting to come to Great Britain, establish if they have a skill which we desperately require and properly prepare for them setting up home in our country. How difficult can it be to establish this detail (just like the Americans do currently) before they arrive in the UK using an online portal? With major population movements across North Africa and Europe currently, surely it is not beyond the wit of man to consider taking our fair proportion of these poor people into our society.

With major skill shortages throughout the various trades across the UK

we must get to grips with ensuring that the right people can come to our Country. Blaming the private sector for employing anyone is clearly derisory and astonishing to say the least. We have a great society but our education sector still fails to promote skills training with any real passion and parents are still too focused on sending their children to University as the only method to secure them a bright future. Whilst we are turning the tide in this respect we are fast running out of skilled personnel to re-industrialise this nation so that we can sell the products we manufacture in the UK abroad and pay off our national debt. This also seems like a great reason for building New Towns and Garden Cities nationally including the one we should be building here in North Herts at Odsey/Royston and save our Green Belt for another day.



ADRIAN HAWKINS

Co-Founder & Chairman biz4Biz
Chairman, Weldability Sif, established 1925. Director and Trustee of the Weldability Sif Foundation, Herts LEP Main Board Director, Director and Trustee of the North Herts Studio Schools Trust.



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