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CELEBRATING BUSINESS SUCCESS IN LEWISHAM

2006 Mayor's Business Awards Lewisham

"It has been a brilliant year for local businesses," said Steve Bullock, the Mayor of Lewisham, declaring himself overwhelmed by the standard of the entries to the 2006 Mayor's Business Awards. Speaking at the award ceremony at Blackheath Halls last month, he said he was delighted by the quality, breadth and standard of the entries – which included businesses as various as cycle manufacturers, photographers, cleaning companies, financial, legal and employment services, construction companies and craft workers, as well as fashion and food suppliers. He was especially pleased that more than 120 businesses had entered this year, 20 per cent more than put themselves forward last year.

"Local businesses make a huge contribution to the economy and the communities they serve," said the Mayor. "They drive the borough's economy and form a vital part of its social fabric, and these awards aim to recognise their contribution. Hearing the stories of the individual



Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham, Nichola Elvy from Building Health, winner of both the Lewisham's Company of the Year and Best New Business awards, Shane Dougall from Bartercard

award-winners only emphasises what they have to offer."

One of the most impressive stories was that of Nichola Elvy, founder and managing director of Building Health, a new business providing on-site occupational health services for the demolition and construction industry, which not only won the **Best New Company** Award but scooped the **Company of the Year** title, against stiff competition. "Two years ago, I was in a mother-and-baby psychiatric unit, suffering

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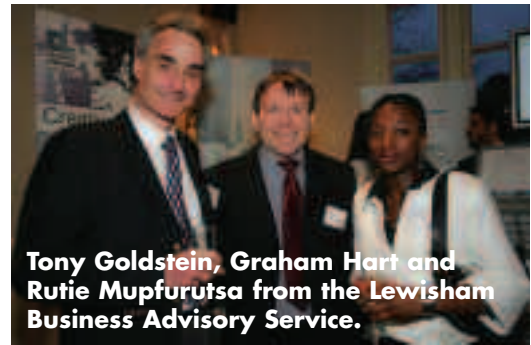
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from severe post-natal depression," she told the audience. "If what I have done can inspire anyone else who has had severe mental illness, then I have done a good job." Admirable though this sentiment is, this is not why Building Health won its award. The judges were particularly impressed by the testimonials provided by her clients, and by her shrewd recognition of a niche market. Having worked in occupational health for the Health and Safety Executive for years, she had realised that employers in the construction industry were having problems finding the specialist health services vital in an area where workers tend to have a lower than average life expectancy.



Geeta Cohli from Mount Tai Food



Tony Goldstein, Graham Hart and Rutie Mupfurutsa from the Lewisham Business Advisory Service.

"I'm delighted to have won," Ms Elvy says. "It is testament to the commitment of my clients to look after the health of their employees." It is also testament to the work of the Lewisham Business Advisory Service. "I literally walked into the office in January 2005, and a business adviser immediately came out to see me. We've been in constant contact ever since."

Graham Hart, Business Services Manager at Lewisham Business Advisory Service, says: "The borough has one of the highest rates of business start-ups in London, and our role is to ensure that local people have somewhere to turn for impartial and practical advice. In the past 12 months more than 300 people have attended our start-up training. Who knows, one of them could be a future winner."

Winning the Company of the Year award will be a great boost for Building Health, Ms Elvy says, both in terms of attracting new business and encouraging her staff. And it has already paid off in helping her to recruit new staff.

Employees at Mount Tai Foods were thrilled at the company's award for **Growth Business of the Year**, says Geeta Cohli, its general manager. Opened by the Yau family in 1998 as a Chinese takeaway in Eastdown Park, it is now a fully fledged manufacturing unit supplying pre-packed delicacies such as roast suckling piglet and aromatic duck to catering outlets across the world. It has taken over three adjoining buildings and spent £0.5 million refurbishing them; staff numbers have risen from five (all family) to more than 30; and turnover has grown from just under £0.7 million in 1999 to £2.5 million.

"We have a big sense of responsibility to maintain this growth and work for more," says Ms Cohli. "There is a big scope for growth in this sector, and this is only one step."

The Mayor's Award for Corporate Responsibility went to Customer Interpreter, a



Mount Tai Foods, winner of the Lewisham's Growth Business of the Year award

market research company set up four years ago by Catherine Shovlin, after two decades of working in the oil industry. "When you're in the thick of it, you don't always have the time or the viewpoint to see the market as a whole," she says. "We try to get into the customer's shoes."

She was delighted with the award, which highlights an angle of the business that she doesn't always make much fuss about. "Corporate responsibility is a given for us," she says, "not an add-on or an aside, as it can be in a multinational, for example. If a project is worthwhile but they can't afford to pay for our help, we often do it anyway. And it's a shared ethos – an integral part of our recruitment."

Ms Shovlin says winning the award will add extra credibility to her business, especially with the many public sector organisations she counts among her clients, and she is confident it will also help her to win new business.

"Getting into the customers' shoes" was a literal priority for the Lewisham Town Centre Managers, who sent "mystery shoppers" to all the businesses nominated for the **Best Customer Care** Award. They were looking to see how knowledgeable staff were about the products and services they were selling, as well as the kind of welcome they gave their customers. One of the benefits of entering this category is that the businesses are all given a comprehensive report on the findings. "Customer care gives small independent companies a real edge and allows them to compete with the

nationals," says Senior Town Centre Manager Jennifer Taylor. "We think it is hugely important to recognise businesses that perform strongly in this category and give them a pat on the back, which is why we sponsored this award. We were very impressed by the standard of everyone nominated."

Out of more than 25 businesses nominated in this category, covering sectors as diverse as financial services, specialist retailers and cleaning companies, the winner was Maggie's Café & Restaurant. It has been catering for the Lewisham community – "office workers, builders, families, young professionals and the elderly" – for more than 30 years. "It's great to be recognised, since the family has put in so much



The ceremony at Blackheath Halls

AWARDS



All photography by Andrew Brown

**Julie Sutch, South Lewisham Town Centre Manager,
Ian Soper, Acting Head of Economic Development, Lewisham Council,
Jennifer Taylor, Senior Town Centre Manager**

hard work over the years," says Oliver Khondoker, "and we've seen so many businesses fold after a few years." He and his brother, Anthony, have been running the business since 2004.

Maggie's website proclaims the Khondokers' mission: "To treat our customers with warmth and sincerity and make each dining experience as good as, if not better than the last, by providing a friendly service, good quality home-cooked food in a clean and fresh environment and all this at a reasonable price!" And the "mystery shoppers" sent to check out the restaurant and cafe clearly thought Maggie's lived up to its promises.

Mr Khondoker says: "The staff are encouraged to take the utmost pride in their work and to prepare food that's impeccable in quality and presentation. It is this added effort and personal touch that has won over so many of our customers."

There is always at least one of the managing partners in the restaurant, to monitor standards, and the staff know that their efforts will be rewarded with increased responsibility and promotion. "Like our customers, they tend to stick with us and we are proud to have so many long-standing employees."

Artefacts Edutainment, which organises community education projects and offers training to artists and community groups, never thought they would walk away with the **Best Social Enterprise** award, says Yvonne Phillip. "We assumed it would go to some well-established company. But we thought it would be worth applying, if only for the networking opportunity that the awards ceremony would offer. And applying is such a simple process. You just have to write 200 words, and if you know your business as well as you should, it's really easy."

Deptford-based artists Patricio Grose Forrester and Julian Sharples, aka Artmongers, were judged **Creative Business of the Year**, for selling their "cow bins" concept – customised wheelie bins designed as part of Lewisham Council's recycling campaign – to a bin manufacturer that plans to market them to primary schools. The **Best Use of Innovation**



**Catherine Shovlin from Customer Interpreter,
winner of the Mayor's Award for Corporate Responsibility**

award went to Canvas Opinion, which screenprints pop images onto canvas to produce vibrant affordable art. The **Safety Award** went to Care Outlook Ltd, which employs 64 staff providing services for more than 120 older people, for its efforts to prevent business-related injuries, and Goldsmiths College Students' Union took the award for **Environmental Excellence**.

The people of Lewisham also had their say, with local shoppers voting the Gennaro's family-run Italian delicatessen in Lewis Grove the **Most Popular Retailer in Lewisham** town centre.

Angie Le Mar, playwright, stand-up and Choice FM host, said how delighted she was to have been asked to compère the ceremony. "It's a real compliment to be involved, because I was born and bred in Lewisham, and it's where I live today. I applaud people's efforts on every level, and their successes in these awards will give them something to look back on with pride."



Maggie's Café and Restaurant, winner of the Lewisham Best Customer Care award

THE AWARDS IN FULL

- 
 - **Best New Business** (sponsored by Lewisham Council): BUILDING HEALTH
- 
 - **Company of the Year** (sponsored by Bartercard): BUILDING HEALTH
- 
 - **Growth Business of the Year** (sponsored by Gateway to London): MOUNT TAI FOODS
- 
 - **The Mayor's Award for Corporate Responsibility** (sponsored by the Mayor of Lewisham): CUSTOMER INTERPRETER
- 
 - **Best Customer Care** (sponsored by Lewisham Council): MAGGIE'S CAFÉ & RESTAURANT
- 
 - **Best Social Enterprise** (sponsored by London Development Agency): ARTEFACTS EDUTAINMENT
- 
 - **Creative Business of the Year** (sponsored by Creative Lewisham Agency): ARTMONGERS
- 
 - **Best Use of Innovation** (sponsored by the University of Greenwich): CANVAS OPINION
- 
 - **Safety Award** (sponsored by Lewisham Council): CARE OUTLOOK LTD
- 
 - **Environmental Excellence Award** (sponsored by Lewisham Council): GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE STUDENTS' UNION
- 
 - **Most Popular Retailer in Lewisham Town Centre** (sponsored by Urban Renaissance in Lewisham): GENNARO DELICATESSEN

All the award winners received a trophy and the Company of the Year also received £5,000-worth of Bartercard trade pounds.

AWARDS



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CHAMBER PRESIDENT'S HALF-TERM REPORT

A year has passed already. How am I going to get done everything I want to do in the second year of my presidency of your chamber? How did earlier presidents cope in just one year in office? These are just some of the questions I have been asking myself as my first year as your President draws to a close. Inevitably there have been both highs and lows over the previous twelve months although I can only think of one downside at the moment: and that is membership!

I had hoped that chamber membership would have grown quicker than it actually has; not that it's declined, far from it: the chamber now represents over 750 businesses throughout the 3 boroughs. This representation has been achieved by a steady increase in membership including the joining of several important retail Traders Associations. Notwithstanding this undoubted solid achievement in representation during my first year of office; I would like to be able to report to you at the end of my second year that your chamber represents over a thousand businesses. So how are we going to achieve such heady heights?

Firstly: I am going to nag you and remind you at every network meeting that I want you all to introduce at least one new member to the chamber in the next twelve months. Secondly: I am going to award you for doing so! For every new business that we sign to membership through your efforts we will, in association with Theatre of Wine, in Trafalgar Road Greenwich, present you with a bottle of award winning Nyetimber English sparkling wine. Nyetimber has been winning blind tastings against fine champagnes and has a growing fan club of wine critics throughout Europe. If each of you can bring along just one new member we will reach our target and be well on the way to our second thousand businesses!

Now the upside and there have been many of them, although I must single out the luncheon I attended on your behalf when HM The Queen opened the refurbished Danson House in Bexley and more recently the equally splendid occasion when the Chamber Patron HRH The Prince Philip, Baron Greenwich was on board c.s Cutty Sark in support of the restoration project. Equally

enjoyable have been invitations to preside over events such as the Business Works Awards and Volunteers Greenwich Awards; to judge the Shell STEP Awards and Bexley EBP's heat of the London Enterprise Challenge; attending the Lewisham Business Awards and the dinners of both the Mayors of Bexley and Greenwich. Another satisfying part of the job is to have had many fruitful discussions on your behalf with members of all 3 Councils, Greenwich Enterprise Board, University of Greenwich and enumerable other business organizations, all of which have furthered the Chamber's efforts in fully representing it's members at both local and London wide level. As importantly, I have also spoken on your behalf in favour of the proposed Thames Gateway Bridge and for the case for a Crossrail station at Woolwich.

I must also say how much I enjoy our monthly networking meetings; which as you all know are by far the very best in the universe. If you haven't been a regular attendee make a resolution now to change your ways! I must of course extend my grateful thanks to the team at the chamber who have wet-nursed me through the first half of my Presidential term of office. With the help of you all I look forward to an even better second half.

Stephen Nelson – President



The President welcomes Traders Associations as Chamber members

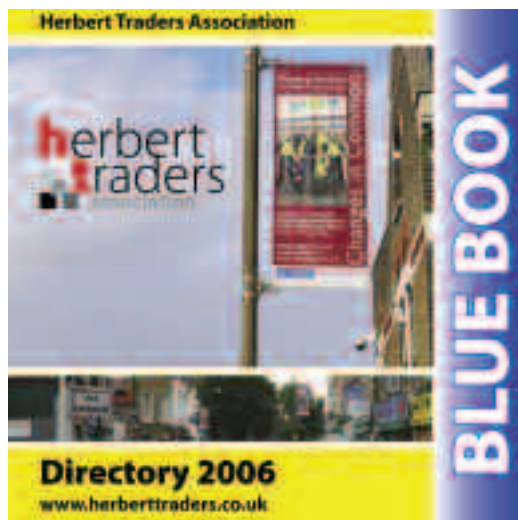
The Chamber President welcomes Traders Associations to the undoubted benefits of chamber membership in his half term report on previous page.

One of the associations recently joined are: Herbert Traders Association



In 1860 local brick and tile maker, Mr Gates, sold his land and pottery to the British Land Company, who developed it as the Herbert Estate. Up-market in character the Herbert Estate Development appealed to managers and scientists from the Royal Arsenal, and officers garrisoned at Woolwich. By 1900 Herbert Road had become a distinctive up-market shopping parade favoured by wealthy, middle class citizens due to its outstanding elegant shops and friendly attentive shopkeepers. The parade continued to flourish until the seventies, when the local economy went into decline with the closure of the Arsenal.

Herbert Traders Association was established in 1998 to benefit local businesses trading in and around Herbert Road.



The shopping parade is now undergoing a renaissance and is once again becoming a thriving local hub, regaining the pre-eminence it once held.

Since the outset of the Association the traders have met regularly promoting communication between businesses, and to represent and to lobby business interests at all levels of local government. This co-operation has helped bring significant development projects to the area such as the Neighbourhood Management Changes in Common programme, on whose management board Herbert Traders has been re represented by three voting members since its inception in 2002. One of the aims of the Changes in Common programme is to regenerate the local economy. The Liveability Project – designed to make the area greener, safer and cleaner is also currently underway and will be completed within the next few months transforming the Herbert Road area.

The ambition to constantly increase customer satisfaction encourages the traders to co-organize and influence a variety of public events such as the annual Herbert Road Street Party, attracting residents not only from Greenwich but also from Bexley and Lewisham.

A communications success is the Herbert Traders Association Directory - The Blue Book – produced in conjunction with the Changes in Common project.

Mike May, Vice Chair of the Herbert Traders Association said at the packed Chamber network meeting at the Heritage Centre in February: " Herbert Road is not only a local shopping parade, it covers pretty much all that you need on your doorstep. It brings together services, food and products from all around the world. You can taste flavours from all over the world, use all the services you need within a couple of minutes walk. The diverse mix of businesses with their attentive, caring shopkeepers is what makes shopping in Herbert Road an unforgettable experience in comparison to other shopping parades."

To find out more about Herbert Road services, order a free Blue Book Directory by simply calling 020 8312 5112 or e-mail aneta.wojcik@greenwich.gov.uk

For any enquiries Herbert Traders Association Chair, William Cicognani can be contacted on 020 8317 0098

I can juggle but please don't ask me to delegate

Why can't we delegate? It's quicker to do it myself. I know if I do it, it'll be done properly. I've always done it. Sound familiar?

Before striking out into this unfamiliar territory, remind yourself that delegation is not Pontius Pilate-style abdication of responsibility or the convenient passing of an unpleasant buck.

Delegation allows team members to use and develop their skills and knowledge to their full potential. Without delegation, the full value of your team is lost. Remember, you don't have the monopoly on great ideas so maximise the resources around you.

Easier said than done? Try this –

- Prioritise your work
- How much and what can you delegate
- Define the task
- Look at your skill base and choose the right person
- Ensure the person has authority to carry out the task

- Explain the reasons for the task
- State the desired outcome
- Give a SMART brief and agree deadlines
- Build in review steps for feedback in both directions

Above all – don't let them sink or swim. For everyone's peace of mind and to ensure your business continues to deliver to high standards, make time to let go gradually; it may take two or three times to achieve perfect results when delegating.

Like all the best jugglers, you're bound to drop the occasional ball but don't let that stop you improving your skills.

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Greenwich Council

APRIL NETWORKING EVENT

Over 100 members and guests returned after 20 years, to the historic 16th century Tudor Barn in Eltham for the April networking event. The delicious food was provided by new members, "Barbarellas catering"



It's the way he tells them



Mathew King



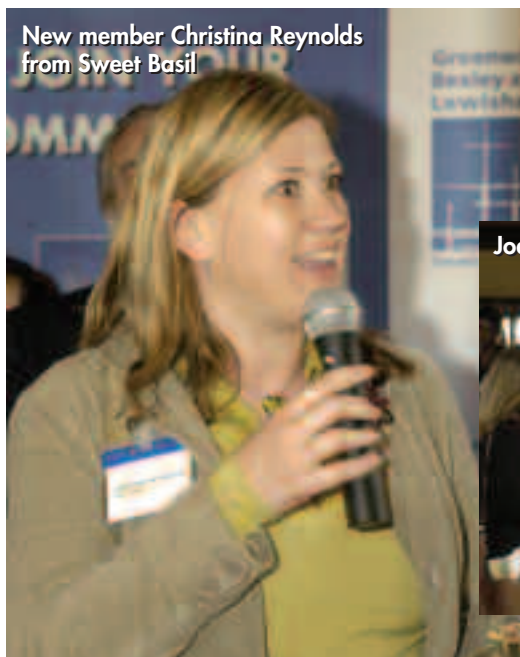
Richard Ryszyaski and Lyn Lawson talking to a prospective new member



Peter Beyan, St. Christophers Hospice



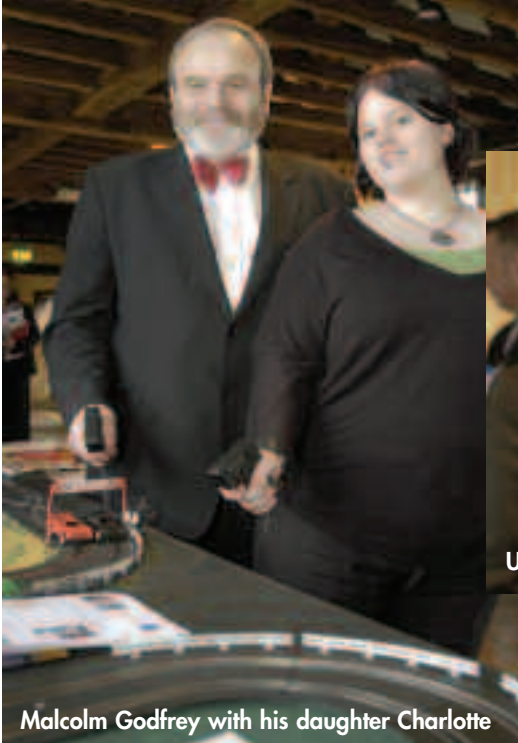
Nick Timmings from Timmings McGuigan Phull solicitors



New member Christina Reynolds from Sweet Basil



Joe Hehir from Barclays Bank with Tony Othen



Malcolm Godfrey with his daughter Charlotte



Umar Nasim from GLLaB with Mervyn Fernandez



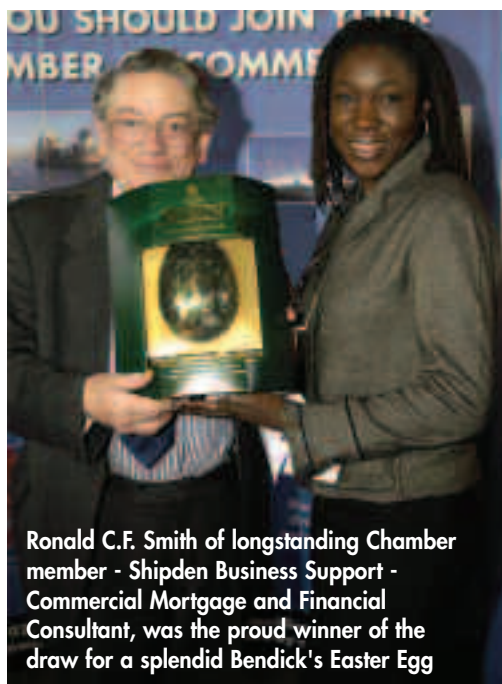
Members and guests listening to the presentations



Charmaine Chow, Grant saw and partners in conversation with a prospective new member



Richard Ryszaski



Ronald C.F. Smith of longstanding Chamber member - Shipden Business Support - Commercial Mortgage and Financial Consultant, was the proud winner of the draw for a splendid Bendick's Easter Egg

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Masthead Editor,

Re: Woolwich Crossrail Station.

I read with interest the report on your Crossrail meeting on 21st March at Firepower. I find it incredible to believe that in not putting a Crossrail Station at Woolwich it leaves a six mile gap between Custom House and Abbeywood.

Silly me I was under the impression that these projects were surveyed for various factors before being planned i.e. business viability access to employment etc. Obviously the people in charge have definitely not surveyed this project in any depth at all.

My company employs approximately 100 personnel from our Head Office in Blackheath and our employees travel all over London and the Home Counties. The Jubilee Line coming into North Greenwich was a big plus for our area, now that the Peninsula Development, which besides the business development it will bring, will also have 10,000 residential properties; we need this expansion of transport links as an essential plus to link up with the rest of the development in the South East and London.

EMS are a growing company and we wish to stay in this area but in common with most businesses we would seriously have to reconsider this if the area had no viable transport links. We believe the Crossrail Station in Woolwich to be of vital importance to this area to support the huge potential there is for development and urge the Crossrail Select Committee to reconsider their decision re a station at Woolwich.

Yours faithfully
For EMS (UK) PLC, Colin Bensley
Business Development Manager

Dear Masthead Editor,

It was a pleasant surprise to receive the return of my cheque and to be told I was now an honorary member. This is a very kind gesture of the chamber to honour Past Presidents in this way. The letter from Peter Wilson said that you would be glad to hear from P.P's. So herewith some anecdotes from the Chamber's past.

One occasion I remember is from when we used to invite the Woolwich Mayor and the Woolwich

MP to our dinner functions at the R.A.C.S restaurant in Powis Street. The Mayor on one occasion was a staunch Catholic and invited the chamber members to a religious evening at the Chapel of The Royal Naval College where he and his daughters gave a religious service. On his lunching with us later I thought I would ask him to say Grace (expecting some Latin Liturgy). He stood up and said SHALOM and sat down.

On another occasion we were lobbying to privatise the Royal Mail because of the bad service and invited the president of the post office union to address us. It was a good debate and was reported in full in the Kentish Independent.

In one way I was very lucky as a member of the chamber, the honorary chamber treasurer was my bank manager and the honorary solicitor was my solicitor, so this made my sale and purchase of my business very smooth and friendly.

Lastly my uncle Harry Blackman took over my grandfathers shop (opened 1910) in Calderwood Street (now rear entrance to Marks & Spencer). He was the Branch Secretary of the Woolwich branch of the National Federation of Retail Newsagents and in 1953 he joined the Woolwich branch as a member of the Woolwich Chamber of Commerce. I still have the receipt for the payment of the chamber fee. He went on to become the Registrar for Births Deaths and Marriage at Woolwich Town Hall. His son Howard Blackman was for a number of years secretary of the Woolwich Chamber of Commerce, so you see my links with the Chamber go back over many years, that is why I am so pleased to stay in touch.

Yours Sincerely,
Best Regards,
Jim Hoffman.

The present Chamber can of course trace itself back, through amalgamation, to the Woolwich Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber archives show that a meeting was called by J. Hoffman and held on 18 September 1978 at Angerstein Wharf, Horn Lane specifically to discuss ways of increasing Chamber membership to 1000. Jim Hoffman felt that the way forward was by introduction by existing members and that there should be some reward for this initiative. Emphasis was also to be placed on what the

chamber could actually offer new members. Proof perhaps, that history does repeat itself as reiterated by the incumbent President Steve Nelson. Ed.

Dear Editor,

A year ago we entered The Lewisham Business Awards, we did not win anything but whilst there met Steve Nelson. His pitch was irresistible and after a brief talk we decided to join the Chamber. This year we again entered for the awards and were delighted to be finalists in the Customer Care category.

Unfortunately the presentation evening clashed

with our taking part in the Environmental Industries Sector Unit seminar mission to Portugal. The mission was aimed at promoting UK environmental expertise in what is a growing market. Peter George representing GO Contaminated Land Solutions, took part in the seminar, speaking about an environmental project he had managed in Portugal. He would of course have preferred to be at the Lewisham Business awards but sacrifices have to be made for one's country.

Yours sincerely
For GO Contaminated Land Solutions Ltd.

Eur.Ing. Peter D. George B.Eng., Dip.EM,
C.Eng., MICE, MCMI, FRSH

COMPANY PROFILE: CAFFIN ROAD TRANSPORT LTD

A member of the Chamber for nearly four years, Caffin Road Transport Ltd is an independently run, family-owned business, which has been operating in the South East for over 35 years. They currently have two sites, 10,000 square foot at Blackwall Lane in Greenwich, and 20,000 square foot at Optima Park, Crayford. The business has developed over this time from one man and his vehicle, to 50 employees with over 30 vehicles, offering a wide range of services from contract distribution, to bulk-breaking and pallet storage for local companies, as well as for larger, blue-chip organisations.

The company's most recent acquisition has been an Interlink Express parcel franchise. Trading as Interlink Express South East, they have added next-day 9.30am parcel delivery to the services they can provide at the Greenwich depot. As part of the Geopost group, they can collect items from a 0.5kg parcel upwards, and deliver to most destinations in the world. By bringing this feature into their company, Caffin Road Transport can now offer a complete range of services to their customers, from bulk-breaking container loads of goods, to storing at competitive rates, picking and packing/order fulfilment, and finally delivering to destinations either locally or around the world.

John Jerome has been Managing Director since 1995, and has seen significant changes in the way the company has operated since he started working with his father twenty five years ago. He expanded the company's largest contract with a bathroom manufacturer to not only supply



distribution services, but to also provide a stock holding depot, with dedicated staff and liveried vehicles. More recently, he recognised that the internet was changing the way people shopped and that there was large growth in the home delivery sector. He realised that an Interlink Express franchise was the perfect way to expand into this sector, and that it would synergise with his existing business and offer an even better service to all his customers.

If you would like to discuss how Caffin Road Transport Ltd can offer you or your company a complete range of distribution and storage services, please contact John on 020 8293 9181 or email caffins@btinternet.com.

Caffin Road Transport Ltd is at Unit 5 Lawrence Trading Estate, Blackwall Lane, London SE10 0AR. Telephone 020 8293 9181. www.caffinroadtransport.co.uk

Interlink Express South East is also at Unit 5 Lawrence Trading Estate, Blackwall Lane, London SE10 0AR. Telephone 020 8305 2235.

Serco to take reins of London Development Agency's Business Link Service



Service company Serco will take over the running of the capital's small business support unit next year after signing a £60m agreement with the London Development Agency.

The move will ensure that thousands of small business entrepreneurs will continue to receive the free support they need to both start up new enterprises and expand existing ones to help London maintain its position as Europe's economic powerhouse.

Serco were selected for the three year Business Link operator grant following a five month tendering process and will take over responsibility of the service from Business Link for London in April 2007.

London Development Agency (LDA) chief executive Manny Lewis said: "Ensuring that small and medium sized businesses have access to the right type of support is a key area of development for the LDA. Over the three years, Serco will support more than half of London's business entrepreneurs including women and those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups (BAME) who sometimes find it more difficult to negotiate the business world.

"Together with Serco we can share expertise and experience to achieve the maximum impact for London's rapidly-moving economy, while at the same time providing value for money."

Over the three years, the company is anticipated to provide support for more than half of London's businesses.

Serco will be responsible for ensuring all businesses can access free information online or via telephone 24 hours a day – seven days a

week. It will provide information, diagnostic and brokerage services which will include advice on how firms can tap into 2012 Olympic business opportunities. Serco will also help businesses access other support providers in both the public and private sectors.

The company has proven experience in meeting complex customer needs and has delivered contracts in the public and private sectors. It currently operates the national business link website on behalf of the DTI and its Small Business Service. The agreement with Serco is subject to approval by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

Chris Hyman, Serco Group Chief Executive said: "We are very pleased to be chosen by the London Development Agency to contribute in this way to London's economic success. We share the LDA's ambition to encourage, advise and support small business across the capital to grow, thus maintaining and building on London's pre-eminent position as the best place to do business in Europe."

In April 2005, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) handed over responsibility for the Business Link network from the Small Business Service to Regional Development Agencies (RDA).

To use the existing service contact Business Link for London on 0845 6000 787, or visit businesslink4london website.

For media enquiries: please contact Andreas Christophorou at the LDA Media Team on 020 7954 0144; for public enquiries, please call 020 7954 4500. To contact Serco, call Graham Capper, Head of Media and Public Relations on 020 8334 4122.

MASTHEAD - circulation 3000 Monthly

Remember, if you would like to contribute editorial news items or wish to place advertising, please let us know. tel: 020 8293 3456 email: chamber@chamber-of-commerce.org.uk

Advertising rates are as follows:

- 1/4 page: £175.00
- 1/2 page: £250.00
- Full page: £450.00

CHAMBER BOARD DIRECTOR PROFILE: **DR LINDA HYDER**

Linda has been a Chamber Board Director since July 2005. Linda gained her PhD in Process Engineering and has been working as a Business Development Manager in the University of Greenwich for over 5 years, where she is primarily responsible for the promotion and co-ordination of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) activities. A KTP transfers knowledge and skills from a University into industry, via a graduate who works at a company on a specific project. That role enables them to go out into industry and to work closely with companies of all sizes. Greenwich University is a designated KTP office and Linda is the Secretary of the London & South East KTP Managers Regional Group and sits on the KTP National Forum Committee. Linda also leads other knowledge transfer projects working closely with the University's School of Engineering and School of Computing, transferring their expertise into industry.



A dedicated Chamber Board member, Linda feels that her work within Greenwich University is a positive asset in her efforts in helping to raise the profile of the Chamber. Being a very gregarious person Linda's leisure pursuits include dancing and generally socialising.

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Women in Business Forum

Queen Anne Building, Old Royal Naval College - 24th May 2006

CNT Associates in partnership with the University of Greenwich is hosting a "Women in Business" forum.

If you are looking for inspiration to help you to succeed in running a new or established woman led business or social enterprise, why not come along to this free event.

What will you get from the day?

- Practical advice on how to start and run a successful women from women who have been successful
- Clear advice on financial, technical and other support that is available to new businesses and start ups
- Networking opportunities with women business owners and support agencies and organisations
- A high profile inspirational speaker panel
- An optional tour of the magnificent Greenwich World Heritage site

Who would benefit from attending this event?

- Women who are running their own business
- Women who are thinking of starting their own business
- Organisations or individuals who support business or business start ups

The event is to be held in the prestigious Old Royal Naval College buildings, now the main campus of the University of Greenwich, located in the centre of Greenwich.

Speakers and panel members include

- Baroness Blackstone, Vice Chancellor of the University of Greenwich
- Alison Seabeck MP
- Liz Ogilvie, Director of The Enterprise Zone
- Rebecca Jordan and Kirsty Weir, Young Entrepreneurs of the Year and authors of In Good Company, advice for women in business
- Jo Barnett, Managing Director, CNT associates
- Caroline Fox, Managing Director, Twin Group
- Dr. Sarah McNaughton, of Momenta who is Regional Manager for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

You will also be able to meet, talk and network with sponsors and business support agencies. Confirmed sponsors include Business Link for London, The Enterprise Zone, Start International, PERA, Fly design, Twin Group and A and C Black.

Sponsorship Opportunities

Sponsorship of the event only costs £250, to take advantage of our sponsorship deal. If you are interested in sponsoring the event contact Gary Parker on 0778 662851 for more details

The event starts at 9.30 and finishes at 12.30 with lunch and networking and an optional tour of the World Heritage site.

Caroline Skelly - 020 8301 8660 or email caroline.skelly@cntassociates.com or call Gary Parker direct on 0778 6628512.

VET STAFF OR FACE JAIL OR FINE

Employers who fail to carry out checks on people employed to work with children or vulnerable adults could face a five-year jail term or fines of up to £5000 under a new Bill that was due to be introduced to Parliament in February.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill responds to a key recommendation of the Bichard inquiry (that followed the Soham murder case) for a registration scheme to prevent those deemed to be unsuitable from gaining access to children or vulnerable adults through their work.

The vetting and barring scheme, to operate from 2007, will introduce centralised, integrated pre-employment vetting, building on existing Criminal Records Bureau checks. The scheme will allow employers to make a simple online check of an applicant's barred status. Employers will be informed immediately if someone they employ becomes barred.

Currently, separate checks have to be made on List 99, a health service list currently operating under the Protection of Children Act, and the sex offenders' register. The inadequacy of this system was highlighted recently when Education Secretary, Ruth Kelly, cleared a sex offender to work in a school. Ms Kelly, said the new Bill would bring the vetting system for protecting children and vulnerable adults into the 21st century.

"This Bill brings forward root-and-branch reform I promised ensuring we have a far more comprehensive and co-ordinated system. I am acting to take ministers out of the vetting process. It will fundamentally reform and rebalance vetting procedures so that children's and other vulnerable people's safety is unequivocally the first priority," she said.

Suzanne Foe - Libra Consulting

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS

MAY FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Time	Event	Address	Contact	Tel No	E-mail
4	09.30 am	Inland Revenue Workshop End of Year for Employers	48 Woolwich New Rd, SE18 6HE	Central Booking Line	020 7667 4828, 4829 & 4830	
4	01.30 pm	Inland Revenue Workshop Becoming Self Employed	49 Woolwich New Rd, SE18 6HE	Central Booking Line	020 7667 4828, 4829 & 4830	
10	12.30 pm	Chamber Networking Lunch	Charlton House, Charlton Rd, Charlton, SE7 8RE	Eileen Wescott	020 8293 3456 020 8858 8850	bg-chamber @fiscali.co.uk
18	05.30 pm	Building Business	The Chainstore, Trinity Buoy Wharf, Orchard Place, E14 0JW		020 8223 7413	events @buildingeast.com
17	08.00 am	Business Breakfast Forum Meeting	The Phoenix Restaurant, Lewisham Way, SE4 1UT	Pauline Wilkinson	020 8694 4798	
23	10.00 am	Employing Ex-Offenders Free Half Day Seminar	HMP Brixton, Jebb Avenue, SW2 5XF	Jim Lockie	020 7378 9400	jim@rkl.org.uk
24	09.30 am	Women In Business Forum	Queen Anne Building, Old Royal Naval College	Caroline Skelly, Gary Parker	020 8301 8660 07786628512	caroline.skelly @cntassociates.com
25	09.30 am	Inland Revenue Workshop Self Assessment for the Self Employed	48 Woolwich New Rd, SE18 6HE	Central Booking Line	020 7667 4828, 4829 & 4830	
25	02.30 pm	New Construction Industry Scheme	48 Woolwich New Rd, SE18 6HE	Central Booking Line	020 7667 4828, 4829 & 4830	

JUNE FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Time	Event	Address	Contact	Tel No	E-mail
14	12.30 pm	Chamber Networking Lunch	Hall Place & Gardens, Bourne Rd, Bexley, DA5 1PQ	Eileen Wescott	020 8293 3456 020 8858 8850	bg-chamber @fiscali.co.uk
21	08.00 am	Business Breakfast Forum Meeting	The Phoenix Restaurant, Lewisham Way, Breakspears, SE4 1UT	Pauline Wilkinson	020 8694 4798	
30	07.00 pm	Midsummer's Night Dream Annual Gala Ball	Selsdon Park Hotel, Croydon, Surrey, CR2 8YA	Sarah Eldon	020 8768 4572	s.eldon @stchristophers. org.uk

The Chamber's Desk Diary & Directory

is now being collated for 2007. To be sure of reserving your advertisement in this prestigious journal contact Shaheerah Williams at the chamber office.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the Chamber.

Some names are familiar as we have met already at recent lunch meetings but we look forward to meeting you others in the near future. Details of future meetings are on the yellow page included in this newsletter - they are traditionally arranged for the second Wednesday of each month.

Advanced Technology Personal Computing

117 Longmill Road
Catford, London SE6 1UB
T: 020 8698 1774
Email: peter@atpersonalcomputing.co.uk
Contact: Peter Gordon
Information Technology

Apex Services

90 Winn Road, Lee, London SE12 9EZ
T/F: 020 8857 8488
Email: robhierp@aol.com
Contact: Robert Parkes
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Eltham, London SE9 5LU
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Email: orders@barbarellascatering.co.uk
Web: www.barbarellascatering.co.uk
Contact: Michael Isidorou
Business Catering

Fleetsure Services Ltd

Unit N14, Europa Trading Estate
Fraser Road, Erith, Kent DA8 1QL
T: 01322 441111 **F:** 01322 441122
Email: garywade.fleetsure@virgin.net
Contact: Gary Wade & Shaun King
Motor Trade

Greenwich Partnership, The

31 Thomas St, Woolwich, London SE18
T: 020 8921 6485
Contact: Jill Crumpton
Working for the regeneration of Greenwich

Herbert Traders Association

31 Herbert Rd, Woolwich SE18 3SZ
T: 020 8317 0098
F: 020 8854 7941
Contact: William J Cicognani
Traders Association

Newbrand Best Ltd

4-9 Block Z, Island Business Centre
24 Wellington Street,
Woolwich SE18 6PF
T: 020 8317 1326
F: 020 8317 5859
Email: chidinjoku@newbrandgroup.com
Web: www.newbrandgroup.com
Contact: Chidi Njoku
*Hotel & Hospitality
Industries Supplies*

Ted Prior - Toastmaster

"Foxton", Kirham Road
Horndon-on-the-Hill, Essex SS17 8QE
T: 01268 491651
Email: toastmaster@tedprior.demon.co.uk
Web: www.toastmaster-tedprior.com
Contact: Ted Prior
Toastmaster & Master of Ceremonies

Timmings McGuigan Phull


29th Floor, One Canada Square
Canary Wharf, London E14 5DY
T: 020 7712 1522 **F:** 020 7712 1732
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Web: www.tmpsol.com
Contact: Jacqueline McGuigan
Solicitors

Westpoint Financial Services

Island Business Centre
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T: 07939 383927
Contact: Victor Bitwire
Mortgage Broker


BEWARE!

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Join the debate.....

What makes a book *outstanding* and *brilliant*?

Who will be winners of the CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Children's Book Awards in 2006?



The Carnegie medal – now in its 70th year is awarded to an outstanding book for children.






The Kate Greenaway medal – now in its 50th year is for the outstanding illustrated book for children

For the past 4 years a successful programme has been run by schools in partnership with Bexley Education Business Partnership and Bexley Library Service to shadow these awards.

Pupils read and discuss the shortlisted books in their group over a number of weeks.

A celebratory borough event will be held on Friday 7th July where each school will present their choice, followed by a vote to discover Bexley's winner.

The benefits for the children are enormous:

-  Access to good quality books.
-  Reading and enjoying books.
-  Gaining knowledge and understanding.
-  Gaining confidence and communication skills by discussing the books.
-  Enhanced citizenship by joining in the national debate.

What can you do to help?

You can sponsor a set of the shortlisted books at £75 for a school. The books are donated to the school at the end of the project.

Become a named sponsor in the widespread publicity and press coverage of the project.

Keep children reading!

To find out more contact:

Bexley Education Business Partnership 020 8836 8347
or email: jean.tither@bexley.gov.uk



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Congratulations to Jacqueline McGuigan of Timmings McGuigan Phull, Solicitors on winning the April champagne draw. Timmings McGuigan Phull - new members of the Chamber - are a niche employment law practice based in Canary Wharf.

Left: The lucky winner receives her sparkling prize, courtesy of Makro Charlton, from Shaherah Williams.



Out With The Old And In With The New?

From the employer's perspective the answer to the above question will most certainly be "no" from October of this year, with the coming into force of new regulations outlawing age discrimination in the workplace. Now is the time for all employers to think about spring cleaning procedures, and to ensure that they do not fall foul of the new Age Discrimination law.

Up until now there has been very little in the way of statutory protection for older (or indeed younger) employees. We all know someone who has been made redundant in their 40s and has then not been able to get as much as an interview, let alone a job. From October this will hopefully begin to become a thing of the past.

It will become unlawful to discriminate against a worker because of his or her age. This will give protection not only to older people - the regulations will equally apply to the young. Discrimination will be outlawed at every stage - from recruitment through to retirement.

It will be possible to treat employees differently on the grounds of age but only where such different treatment can be objectively justified. So, for example, it may still be lawful to require an HGV driver to be at least 25 if an employer cannot get insurance to cover younger drivers.

Retirement will also be affected. No longer will

employees automatically retire at, say, 65. Every employer will have a duty to notify a worker as he or she approaches retirement that they have the right to request employment beyond retirement age. If an employee makes such a request then it must be considered in good faith. Failure to do so will result in a finding of automatically unfair dismissal if the employee goes to an employment tribunal.

The upper age limit of 65 for bringing a claim of unfair dismissal will be abolished. There is no lower age limit.

It is now time for employers to think about the future as the population becomes older and more people work into old age. It is probably no accident that the new law is emerging at a time when the pensions crisis is threatening havoc in the years to come. It is no longer a case of "out with the old and in with the new". The old may be around for quite some time yet!

This article was written by Nick Timmings who is an employment solicitor at Timmings McGuigan Phull, Solicitors which is a new law firm in Canary Wharf who have recently joined the Chamber. If you would like advice on how to prepare your business for these new changes then Nick can be contacted on 0207 712 1732 or nt@tmsol.com and via www.tmsol.com.

The Chamber's Greyhound Meeting

Come and join us at Crayford Dogs on 22nd May
£27 for a 3-course meal including entry and programme. Limited spaces available.
Contact Eileen on 020 8293 3456