



Welcome

Welcome to the sixth issue of the Hertfordshire Prosperity newsletter. The newsletter aims to keep you updated with the work of Hertfordshire Prosperity and its partners.

Hertfordshire Prosperity generates leadership, confidence and integration to encourage the growth of Hertfordshire's economy, with membership drawn from a range of agencies throughout the county.

Four issues of the newsletter are produced annually and include general news, updates on key projects, a quarterly profile of a partner and much more.

If you would like to contribute a story to the next issue due out in December 2005, please email it to info@hertsprosperity.com

Click on the links below to access each story.

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Hertfordshire Prosperity Limited

At its meeting on 8th July 2005, the Hertfordshire Prosperity Steering Group agreed to form Hertfordshire Prosperity Ltd, a company limited by guarantee. The company has now been created and will become operational shortly.

The main reasons for this change are the need to become legally accountable, and positioning HP for future opportunities. Moreover, HP needs to diversify its resourcing to make it less dependent on solely EEDA funding. The Board of HP Ltd will include representation from the voluntary and community sector.

For more information, please contact Adam Wood at Hertfordshire Prosperity Ltd on 01727 813560 or by email to adamw@exemplas.com

Changes at EEDA

The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has recently been undergoing changes to its management structure. The new EEDA management structure is now available from their website (www.eeda.org.uk).

The changes of particular interest to Hertfordshire are:

- Head of Relationship Management - Neil Hayes has been appointed to this post.
- Relationship Managers (three posts) - Sue Walsh has been appointed to one of these posts. Sue has particular responsibility for Hertfordshire, and Bedfordshire & Luton. The remaining two posts have been filled by Paul Wood and David Wilson.
- Director of Business East - Jodie Chatterjee has been appointed.
- Head of Implementation - the new appointment will be announced shortly.
- Head of Renaissance - Jamie Merrick has been appointed to this post.
- Head of Enterprise - Kate Phillips has left and the new appointment will be announced shortly.

The new structure has also created four Product Teams that are based around the four EEDA products. These teams bring together a range of disciplines to look at each produce in its entirety (including a member of the Chief Executive's team). This is seen as being critical to making the products work.

For further information, please contact Neil Hayes, on 01223 713900 or by email to neilhayes@eeda.org.uk.

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Regional wet lab incubator project

Negotiations are currently at a key stage with an international pharmaceutical company to acquire their research laboratories to establish the Regional Wet Lab Incubator.

Since the last newsletter a demand study for the Wet Labs has been completed by PA Consulting. This confirmed the customer need and the viability of the project. Surveyors, architects and M&E consultants have also been appointed. A new company, Wet Labs Ltd, has been established to run the company, jointly owned by the University of Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire Prosperity Ltd, and Exemplas.

For further information, please contact Steven Read, Wet Lab Project Manager at Exemplas on 01727 813552 or by email to stevenr@exemplas.com

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IiC Herts - Update

IiC Business Plan

The first draft IiC business plan has now been submitted to EEDA. The IiC Partnership for Hertfordshire agreed the business plan at a special meeting held on Friday 23rd September. We now enter a negotiation stage with EEDA along with the other 8 sub-regional IiC Partnerships, and hope to receive approval to commence our IiC programme in Hertfordshire soon. Depending on the outcome of our discussions with EEDA, we have plans for pilot activities to run across the county in 2005/06.

For information on the Herts IiC Business Plan please contact: debbiea@exemplas.com

Mapping of Deprivation Research

Earlier this year Hertfordshire Prosperity commissioned consultants Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) to map deprivation in Hertfordshire, as part of the Herts Investing in Communities programme.

In addition to the final report on deprivation in Hertfordshire, OCSI created an Excel spreadsheet which provides all the background statistics on deprivation, broken down by location, ages, etc. Thus it is possible to search the spreadsheet for specific data (eg to access Education data on key stage 3 results in Broxbourne or numbers of children aged under 5 in low income households in Letchworth). National and regional data is included for comparison. There are also charts that present the information visually.

This data could be extremely useful to help design services and projects, and as evidence to support the promotion of activities to partners, including funders. We are delighted to be able to share this information more widely and hope it will help to improve services to disadvantaged communities.

The spreadsheet has now been made accessible on the Hertfordshire Observatory to download as a zipped executable file (due to its size). Instructions are provided on downloading and unzipping the file.

An executive summary of the OCSI report is available on the Hertfordshire Prosperity website at www.hertsprosperity.com/iic. The full report is available to download from Hertfordshire Observatory.

For further information, or if you would like to be emailed the direct link to download the spreadsheet, please contact Emily@iicherts.com or Debbie@iicherts.com

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Project Progress

Hertfordshire Prosperity supports a number of core and rural projects throughout the county with funding from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA). Each newsletter has an outline of a number of projects.

STEP Project



STEP Agent for Hertfordshire, Wenta Business Services have recently been awarded 'STEP Agency of the Year 2005' for the East of England. The award follows a successful summer for the programme with 19 companies across Hertfordshire taking part by taking on a student for an eight-week placement.

STEP stands for the Shell Technology Enterprise Programme, and represents a not-to-be-missed opportunity for small and medium sized companies. The scheme matches the skills of undergraduates to the requirements of participating organisations, and places the students for eight weeks to undertake a project.

This is truly a win-win programme. The students gain first-hand experience that will be invaluable for their future careers. The companies benefit from the enthusiasm, fresh ideas and creativity of the participants. Recent host companies have reported that improvements developed by their STEP students will save them as much as #37,500 per year. The students often carry out projects that the company may otherwise not have time for.

For more information on the STEP project, please contact Mick Dobson at the Wenta Business Centre on 0870 700891 or by email to mickdobson@wenta.co.uk

ERainbow

'The ERainbow project, funded by EEDA, is now in its third year. One of the main focuses has been the ERainbow website (www.erairnow.org) which has been recently updated and as a result has a brand new look and is more user-friendly. The website is an excellent way for members to communicate with each other and also to advertise their latest news/events. A wide range of news items is now being submitted on a regular basis and members are encouraged to continue to send in their news items (to erairnow@exemplas.com). If you would like to become a member please visit the website and complete the registration form.

The first few events in a series of planned events/workshops for ERainbow (and MBN) members have been held. 'How to Sell' and 'Sales & Negotiation Skills' were both presented by Saira Khan (from 'The Apprentice') and more recently, a 'Marketing Skills' workshop was held presented by the marketing expert Phil Allen. Extremely positive feedback has been received on all these events and if you would like to find out about the next events please contact Narmila Mutty.

Finally, the ERainbow project supports communication between Hertfordshire's minority ethnic community group and public sector organisations - so if you would like them be involved in any of your activities to achieve this, again please contact Narmila Mutty.

For further information on Erainbow, please contact Narmila Mutty at Exemplas on 01727 813419 or by email to narmilam@exemplas.com

4BEX

The 4BEX project offers businesses a range of professional training courses. The training is aimed at improving

the skills of the SME workforce and helping businesses prosper and grow. The courses range from health & safety to IT to business law and people management.



4Bex is in transition from being fully funded through ESF to working towards becoming a social enterprise, which may be ready to stand alone from April 2006. Courses are delivered locally and at times when SME's can attend (courses are 6pm - 8pm).

A new training diary is now available for courses and has been circulated throughout Hertfordshire. In an effort to cut costs, the diary has been redesigned to have a longer shelf life and refers people to the web site for bookings instead of including all course dates.

Web bookings (www.4bex.co.uk) have increased during the first half of 2005.

For further information, please contact Chris Haynes, Dacorum Borough Council on 01442 867805 or by email to chris.j.haynes@dacorum.gov.uk

Village Links

Now in its final year, this rural outreach service has been extended into the Three Rivers District Council area operating in Partnership with Three Rivers Citizens Advice Bureau offering home visits and advice from the Abbots Langley Bureau.

The service continues to operate as before in Long Marston, Markyate, Bovington and Kings Langley. Awareness of Village Links has been increasing thanks to adverts and articles in the local village newsletters and personal contact with local community leaders, such as parish councillors, parish clerks, wardens and village clubs and societies.

It has become clear that some of the elderly or disabled village clients needed to be visited at home for help with disability living allowance and attendance allowance forms. As these can take up to two hours to complete, it was felt that this was not appropriate in the normal course of an advice session when other clients might be waiting to be seen. Eight clients who were identified as needing this help were helped with successful claims in this way during the year. This represented approximately #14,000 of the total of #28,000 actual benefits gained for all clients over the period. It is hoped to continue to offer this as a service during the coming year as there is a definite demand for this.

For further information on Village Links, please contact Caroline Banks (Wednesday to Friday) on 07745 192107.

Two wheels

The Two Wheels Scooter / Cycle project is an innovative approach to tackling rural transport barriers for key target groups. The project was developed by the Hertfordshire Rural Transport Partnership, the Community Development Agency (CDA) for Herts and is supported by many other partner agencies such as North Herts District Council, Herts County Council and EEDA. It will tackle rural isolation, social exclusion and strengthen the economic base, not only by breaking the transport barriers, but also increasing and raising confidence of the young people participating.

The project will help predominantly young unemployed and disadvantaged groups from rural areas to access job opportunities, work, training and education where there is no alternative mode of transport available.

Without regular public transport and no car of their own, some young people are prevented from accessing employment or training opportunities. Without a job, or the skills to secure a job in the future, they cannot afford the means to get around. This project will provide a short-term solution to break this cycle so that young people can secure employment or the skills they need, and in the long-term, be able to finance their own transport.

The project is funding a co-ordinator post and the purchase of 12 scooters and 12 cycles in the first year. It will operate as a loan scheme with safety equipment and training provided to all participants. The scheme will initially run in North Hertfordshire, though funding is being sought to expand the scheme both in terms of the area and number of participants served.

For further information, please contact Kevin Green, project co-ordinator on 01707 695513 or email to kevin.green@cdaforherts.org.uk

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Partner Profile - Hertfordshire County Council

The structural changes affecting the economy in the early 1990s meant that Hertfordshire faced a new and major challenge of economic regeneration, whilst seeking to retain the quality of life and the environment of the county. Hertfordshire County Council working with the then key partners Hertfordshire TEC and the University of Hertfordshire responded to this challenge by initially developing a strategy around developing the skills of the workforce, regenerating key employment sites, promoting the county for inward investment and by helping to build partnerships based around that strategy. This ultimately led to the creation of Hertfordshire Prosperity.

To maximise the county's strengths and opportunities the county council was instrumental in adopting an award winning 'Bright Green' Industrial Strategy, for the development of a knowledge-based economy in a sustainable environment based on four component parts Knowledge, Innovation, Skills and Services. The Bright Green Strategy provided the framework for a joint partnership with Hertfordshire Prosperity's Economic Development Strategy in 1997.

Today the Environment Department's Regeneration & Partnerships Unit (RPU) provides a key resource for Hertfordshire Prosperity. The Unit is currently assisting on the review and roll forward of the County Economic Development Strategy. The RPU does not deliver services directly to local residents and businesses, but facilitates the provision of services through a number of partnerships. The Unit's role is to add value and to spread good practice.

With our partners in Hertfordshire Prosperity, our task can be illustrated (as below) and described as maximising the prosperity of the county, combating poverty and building stronger communities, in a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable manner. The Unit aims to address these themes through its expertise in:

- Research and intelligence
- Partnership development and networking
- Strategy development and review
- Capacity building
- Resource generation and management
- Project management



For further information about Hertfordshire County Council and the services it provides please look at the council's website at www.hertsdirect.org or contact John Pryor at john.pryor@hertsc.gov.uk

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