BUY local

Issue 29

Hartlepoolenterprise

Dedicated to supporting business in the Hartlepool community

thefuture'sbright

We introduce image consultants House of Colour

stallsinthespotlight

Market Hall transformation captured on film

hartlepoolworldwide

Profile of award-winning exporters MNI UK Ltd

welcome

Welcome to the 29th issue of Hartlepool Enterprise, the town's monthly business newsletter.

The publication aims to bring you up-to-date with news from the business community, along with success stories, company profiles, top tips and development opportunities. Read by over 1400 enterprises in the town, it's the number one way to keep on top of all the latest business goings-on.

In this month's edition, we review Global Entrepreneurship Week 2009 which took place from 16-22 November. Participating alongside 85 other countries worldwide, the UK held enterprising competitions and specifically themed days, with young Hartlepool entrepreneurs being directly involved. A great way to encourage innovation and enterprise within the local community and beyond.

We also introduce a fantastic local business that offers colour analysis and image consultancy to discover your true identity and find a fabulous new look. A blend of Trinny, Susannah and Gok Wan all rolled into one, meet House of Colour consultant Jill Green. Even her name fits the bill!

Take a look at our diary pages this month, where you will find details of a great open day running at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on behalf of the North East Chamber of Commerce and exciting events scheduled for Hartlepool's revived indoor market.

For all enquiries relating to the newsletter, including contributions, how to advertise and mailing list additions, please contact Andrea Miles or Janet Day at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on **01429 867677**. Alternatively you can email **andrea.miles@hartlepool.gov.uk** or **janet.day@hartlepool.gov.uk**

northeastunleashes enterpriseacrossthegloble

November 2009 brought the sixth annual celebration of enterprise in the North East.

> The events of the week gave Hartlepool's entrepreneurs the chance to take advantage of opportunities on a local, national and global scale

This is the second year that the event, known as Global Entrepreneurship Week, saw the region become part of a worldwide movement with over 85 countries taking part.

This year's theme focussed on highlighting the role of enterprise in driving economic recovery, by encouraging millions of people to unleash their enterprising talents and turn their ideas into reality during the week 16-22 November.

Last year saw 446 events take place across the North East with over three million people attending 25,000 Global Entrepreneurship Week events in 77 countries. In the UK alone, 644,000 people attended over 6,300 events.

Highlights of this year's Global Entrepreneurship Week included the launch of the annual Make Your Mark Challenge, 'Don't be a Carbon Copy' – the UK's largest one-day enterprise competition which took place on 16 November. Other events held during the week included Women's Enterprise Day on 18 November, Social Enterprise Day on the 19th and Home Enterprise Day on the 20th.

65 students from English Martyrs School in Hartlepool participated in the Make your Mark Challenge along with 40 students from St Hild's Church of England Voluntary Aided School and a group from Catcote Business and Enterprise College.

Enterprise UK director of partnerships Pamela Hargreaves said: "Global Entrepreneurship Week acts as a catalyst to generate new ideas and connect people to organisations who can help them get their ideas off the ground to contribute to the regeneration of communities such as Hartlepool."

"The events of the week gave Hartlepool's entrepreneurs the chance to take advantage of opportunities on a local, national and global scale and to encourage aspiring entrepreneurs to think about starting their own business."

Supporters of the week include government departments such as the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and the Environment Agency; key business organisations such as the British Chambers of Commerce, the CBI, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Institute of Directors.

Global Entrepreneurship Week is co-ordinated by Enterprise UK, a campaign to unlock the UK's enterprise potential. For further details please visit **www.gew.org.uk**

a**fresh**start

Despite enjoying a good job working offshore and across the country, Michael Hannon was not content in working for somebody else and chose to take his knowledge and expertise to set up his own welding and fabrication business. He now has big plans for the future with a strong emphasis upon quality standards and the best customer service.

Established in 2007, M Hannon Services delivers contracts in steel fabrication, welding, pipework, rigging and erection, as well as providing site services, marine work and offshore labour supply. Clients include shipping agents worldwide, large scale engineering projects and authorities such as the highways agency.

Having worked in the engineering industry all his working life, Michael built vast experience working across the country at power stations, rig yards and offshore. However he realised that he could put his specialist knowledge and industry expertise to personal use by setting up his own business.

He explains: "I was in position of having a really good job but at the same time was really keen to be in charge of my own destiny and successes. I believed that the time was right so launched my own venture whilst still holding down my existing job as a back-up.

"I spent time speaking to local shipping agents and companies around Seal Sands and things took off a lot quicker than I'd expected. After starting the business in the November, I had quit my job by March and began operating M Hannon Services as a full-time venture."

The majority of Michael's workforce and labour supply is sourced on a contractual basis, using the finest tradesmen that Michael has come to work with over the years. He employs six members of permanent staff including 'right hand man' Nick Gibson who manages all projects from the office and is training to be a welder himself. As a time-served plater, Michael still plays a very hands-on role within the business, ensuring high quality standards are maintained at all times.

So how is business going so far for Michael? He says: "We have grown steadily since the launch of the business and are in the process of moving to larger premises on Graythorpe Industrial Estate. Since the recession the market has become extremely competitive and cut-throat in nature but I have worked hard to seek out new opportunities and have used our strong reputation to win jobs rather than having to resort to underhand tactics."

One such opportunity Michael exploited has resulted in the recent launch of subsidiary business, Skip Fab North East. Managed by Nick in the office, the operation fabricates skips to standard or bespoke sizes as well as undertaking on-site repairs.

Michael says: "The idea stemmed from the site services we offer our clients, which in most cases requires skip hire. The skip companies would ask me if they knew where they could source new units or whether we could repair their existing ones – this got me thinking and after conducting a bit of research I found there were no such suppliers across the region, with the closest being located in the Midlands.

"Skip Fab North East nicely fills this gap in the market and once again we pride ourselves on the quality of work and the skills of our tradesmen to deliver the very best. Word is spreading quickly, and this venture, combined with the strength of our core business services will hopefully secure future growth and prosperity for many years to come."

M Hannon Services can be contacted on **01429 293366** or **07871 218348**, and for further information on Skip Fab North East, please call Nick on **07906 635771**.

> "Since the recession the market has become extremely competitive and cut-throat in nature but I have worked hard to seek out new opportunities and have used our strong reputation to win jobs rather than having to resort to underhand tactics"

meet the NECC

A unique open day is being held this month to introduce the support and guidance available to Hartlepool businesses from the North East Chamber of Commerce.

> The open day will give business owners the chance to let me know about their enterprise and discuss how we can assist them in achieving their goals

Hartlepool Enterprise Centre will play host to the event which will take place on Thursday 10th December 2009 between 10am and 4pm.

Organised by Michael Wall, Account Manager of the North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC), the open day aims to give Hartlepool businesses an opportunity to see what support is available. Based in Hartlepool himself, working from an office within the Enterprise Centre, Michael will be on hand to welcome all types of business, of all sizes and from all sectors.

He emphasises that the open day is for members and non-members of the NECC alike.

Michael says: "The NECC has such a diverse range of products and services that are all geared towards making businesses more successful, and I'm confident people will be pleasantly surprised by what they will find."

"The open day will give business owners the chance to let me know about their enterprise and discuss how we can assist them in achieving their goals. Our help can be equally as beneficial to sole traders as it can to large international organisations."

"For visitors with limited time who would perhaps prefer just to briefly drop in, there will be a range of literature available to pick up, from a hassle-free and informal environment."

The NECC is the largest business support organisation in the North East and offers business advice, corporate events, recruitment, training, networking, international trade support and legal guidance. The Hartlepool office provides easy and direct access to the NECC for local businesses and it is hoped the open day will raise awareness on its presence along with the support available.

Michael concludes: "4500 businesses already turn to the NECC for support and guidance and I would like Hartlepool businesses to understand why this is and how they can personally benefit. I encourage any business owner to come along on 10th December, and I look forward to helping them in any we can."

Visitors to the open day are welcome to drop in at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on Brougham Terrace at any time between 10am and 4pm without appointment, where they will be directed from reception.

For further information on the open day, Michael Wall can be contacted on **07912 478962** or at **michael.wall@necc.co.uk**

marketactivity

HARTLEPOOL'S Indoor Market in the town's Middleton Grange Shopping Centre has undergone a revitalisation thanks to the hard work of Hartlepool's Enterprise Team.

A number of new businesses are flourishing despite the recession and the injection of fresh ideas and initiatives has breathed life into the existing businesses.

As part of the continued efforts to encourage shoppers to Buy Local, a programme of events has been planned in the run up to the festive period to keep shoppers entertained and remind them to Buy Local.

Saturday November 28

Make Your Own Personal Christmas Gifts. Sessions at 10.30am, 1.30pm and 3.30 pm.

Learn how to cross stitch and create your own personal gifts with In2Stitches. This event is for people of all ages and abilities. Bring your children or grandchildren along and teach them the joys of creating your own personal gifts.

The In2Stitches team will host creative taster sessions throughout the day and will be on hand to chat about the various craft groups in Hartlepool.

Saturday December 5

Christmas Card Crafts. Sessions at 10.30am, 1.30pm and 3.30 pm.

Learn how to make beautiful personalised cards for your loved ones this Christmas thanks to The Craft Workshop. Crafters will tell you all about the different materials available and the best way to create your own Christmas masterpiece and leave with your own hand-made card.

Saturday December 12

Taste of Christmas 1pm.

As part of the Buy Local campaign, Hartlepool's finest food produce will be on show to make sure you find out where you can Buy Local and support your local economy this Christmas. There will be delicious taster sessions and free samples to whet the appetite as well as the opportunity to pre-book your Christmas meat and food hampers.

Saturday December 19

Christmas Carols.

Get into the spirit of Christmas and sing-a-long to all your festive favourites.

Saturday December 19 to Thursday 24th

Charity Christmas Gift Wrapping.

Take the hassle out of wrapping your last minute Christmas gifts by taking them along to Hartlepool Market Hall to be beautifully gift wrapped.

Saturday January 9

The Healthy Chef

Now that we are all feeling the effects of the Christmas and New Year excesses, then it is time to start thinking about resolutions. Healthy eating is always top of the list of good intentions in January so why not give yourself a kick start by coming along to the Indoor Market to watch our healthy eating demonstrations with a top chef. There will be plenty of food to taste, recipe sheets,tips and advice to take back with you.

> "A number of new businesses are flourishing despite the recession and the injection of fresh ideas and initiatives has breathed life into the existing businesses"

one-2-one news

Congratulations this month go to Chris Benson of O'Connor Roofing Services who has recently won an Employer Engagement Award for Outstanding Achievement. Office Manager for the company, she has truly done staff and management really proud. Thanks to O'Connor's Training Co-ordinator, Louise Cockerill for sending us that great news.

Have you got something to shout about? Tried getting your stories in the local press to no avail? Then get in touch with us and let us promote your news.

Give us a call or send an email and let us know what's happening in your business. This could include:

- A recent success, new contract or award you have achieved
- A new recruit or promotion within your team
- How your business has fought against the recession and come out on top
- A new product launch or campaign you are looking to promote

By getting in touch, you will receive FREE coverage of your story, along with brief details on who you are, what you do and your contact details.

Not a writer? Don't worry, Hartlepool Enterprise can put the article together for you – just let us have the basic details and we will do the rest!

Call now on **01429 867677** or email **andrea.miles@hartlepool.gov.uk**

one-2-one

Involving your business and your ideas for your newsletter

Welcome to the latest edition of One-2-One, the magazine's dedicated page of interaction between us at Hartlepool Enterprise and you the reader. The idea is to encourage your thoughts on the monthly publication, your news and stories, and to ensure that your business is personally benefiting from the opportunities the newsletter presents.

One-2-One features competitions, offers and a chance to interact with Hartlepool Enterprise – in return you could win business prizes and opportunities to raise the profile of your company. See below for this month's fabulous offer.

Contact us now on **01429 867877**
or email **andrea.miles@hartlepool.gov.uk**

christmas extravaganza!

Join us in the Christmas spirit and book 3 x QUARTER PAGE ADVERTS FOR JUST £150!

With 1 x quarter page advert usually selling for £125, you will be bagging a saving of over £200! Simply call the Enterprise Team to place your booking and see your advert appear in the early 2010 issues of the magazine. A free design service is included if required.

Top marketers suggest a continual 'drip feeding' of messages to your target audience is the most successful technique, rather than blowing out on a huge one-off and short-lived campaign. Securing three adverts with Hartlepool Enterprise is a great way of achieving this, building an ongoing familiarity and awareness amongst our readers.

Hartlepool Enterprise has a circulation of over 1400 businesses in the town, and a high readership rate amongst recipients. Not a business-to-business provider? All of our business readers have their own homes and lifestyles too, so advertising your retail business in the newsletter can also have a great impact!

All adverts are subject to available space at the time of booking. Offer valid for bookings placed up to Thursday 31st December 2009. To take place of this fabulous offer, call **01429 867677** or email **andrea.miles@hartlepool.gov.uk**

BUY local

hartlepool indoor market bags of bargains

Our special focus on Hartlepool's Indoor Market initiative continues this month with another dedicated four-page supplement.

Read on to find the latest news on the programme and more views from the tenants themselves on what the project means to them.

market hall gets red carpet treatment

Building upon its extensive refurbishment programme and introduction of diverse new stallholders, Hartlepool's indoor market is now enjoying its moment in the spotlight following the launch of a film.

> The film is absolutely fantastic and showcases just what can be done when a council,businesses and the local community all come together

A four-minute-long video has been put together to document the transformation of the Market Hall in the town's Middleton Grange Shopping Centre.

The film, which has been watched by viewers as far afield as New York and Ireland, shows the Market Hall before a number of new stalls were opened and prior to the work completed by Hartlepool College of Further Education students to revamp the tired-looking facility.

It also includes interviews with stallholders and shoppers at the market's official re-launch in September, which was undertaken by Mayor Stuart Drummond and Hartlepool United footballer Adam Boyd.

Mick Emerson, principal economic development officer for Hartlepool Borough Council, whose team at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre is responsible for overseeing the regeneration project, said: "The film is absolutely fantastic and showcases just what can be done when a council, businesses and the local community all come together. We have had contact from councils all over the country asking us how the project was put together and wanting to emulate it."

The film, which can be viewed on You Tube, was produced under the Buy Local Hartlepool banner and aims to encourage people to do as much of their shopping in their local vicinity.

The Buy Local campaign has also hit the internet with a 'We Buy Local in Hartlepool' group on Facebook which so far has more than 170 members who have pledged support by buying local wherever possible.

Mr Emerson added: "The success of this project is dependent on the people of Hartlepool and their continued support. We really appreciate the fact that they have taken the Buy Local campaign to their hearts and in doing so are helping local jobs and the local economy.

"I hope they continue to show their support by shopping local and joining our Facebook group for more updates and information."

The Market Hall film can be viewed by visiting **www.youtube.com** and entering the search term "Buy Local Hartlepool".

a**view**from**within**

Following our series of profiles on existing stallholders within the indoor market, we speak to our final tenants to ascertain their views of the new campaign.

BUY local

Sandwich Express

Owned by husband and wife partnership John and Lynne Kinnersley, Sandwich Express has been based within Hartlepool's market hall for a good 15 years at least. A bakery come takeaway sandwich outlet, the stall sells a fresh range delicious sandwiches to suit all needs and tastes. It also sells cakes, savouries and pie, peas and gravy, with service with a smile as standard.

Initially sourcing its products from outside suppliers, the couple wanted to serve fresher food and not have to rely on third parties. Combining this thought with the desire to have their own bakery shop, they opened The Village Bakery in Norton High Street where they now bake their own produce for sale in the shop and on the indoor market stall.

Lynne explained: "It is difficult to get bread, cakes and savouries that are any fresher really, and we like to think this carries a strong appeal compared to some of the big name high street bakeries that serve mass produced pre-wrapped sandwiches and snacks.

"We are also extremely competitive on price and offer great value for money to our customers."

Having noticed a significant decline of the market hall over recent years, Lynne and John worked hard to run their own promotions, such as special offers to students, which certainly helped business but could only ever achieve so much by itself. They were therefore delighted to hear of the revitalisation programme planned for the market, which kicked into action this summer.

Lynne says: "The new-look decor and additional tenants have definitely brought a lot more people into the market, there is a nice mix of stalls now, more browsing taking place and all of the stallholders feed off one another.

"However I believe it is really important to maintain impetus on the campaign to prevent momentum being lost and it's vital to keep all of the new shoppers interested. That could be done through events, promotions or even nice seating areas, and we need to commit to this in the long-term."

The Kinnersleys also offer a local catering service – please call The Village Bakery on **01642 533366** for further information.

BUY local

Sewing the seeds of success

Local business Altered Images has boosted its sales potential by launching an outlet in Hartlepool's indoor market.

Owned and managed by Heather Smiles, Altered Images supplies embroidery and printing services for all types of clothing including t-shirts, sweaters, workwear and uniforms. Typical clients include hen and stag parties, local clubs and teams, corporate customers and public sector organisations such as the fire service and schools.

Having held a presence within its current premises at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on Brougham Terrace for eight years, business has been going well. Heather says: "The centre is a fabulous location, but it provides limited passing trade and there are many potential customers that simply don't know we are here.

"When I was informed of the new indoor market campaign and the opportunity to open a stall there, I grabbed the opportunity. I felt it was a great chance to increase publicity and awareness within the town."

> "When I was informed of the new indoor market campaign and the opportunity to open a stall there, I grabbed the opportunity. I felt it was a great chance to increase publicity and awareness within the town"

Altered Images' market stall opened in September and operates as a second outlet to the service provided at the Enterprise Centre. Customers place their orders at the stall, which are completed at the main premises and then returned to the market to be collected two or three days later.

So how has business been so far? "It has really picked up over the last few weeks," Heather comments, "Especially with the introduction of our bespoke Pools, Mackem and Geordie t-shirts! We are also hopeful of securing a big new contract shortly for which we would need a retail outlet, so this is ideal."

"The stall brings in a completely different clientele, attracting lots of browsing shoppers and local college students too."

Admittedly not having really shopped at the indoor market in the past too much, Heather now buys much of her personal shopping from fellow stallholders, including her groceries and newspaper, and has just ordered her Christmas turkey. She comments that camaraderie between tenants is extremely strong and that the opening of the new stalls has been beneficial to everyone.

She says: "The improvement programme has been a really positive move because the hall had almost become the land of the forgotten and was left to its own devices. It is now a vibrant market scene and I see it as the life source of the entire shopping centre.

"We now have to build upon this initial campaign to ensure long-term sustainability and continued success."

Want to know more?

For further information on the indoor market initiative, please use the contact details below.

Andrea Miles or Janet Day
Hartlepool Enterprise Centre
Brougham Terrace
Hartlepool
TS24 8EY

T: 01429 867677
E: andrea.miles@hartlepool.gov.uk

The indoor market initiative is supported by Hartlepool Borough Council, One North East, Make Your Mark, Hartlepool College of Further Education and Middleton Grange Shopping Centre.

collegeconnections

Last month saw the introduction of a brand new feature in Hartlepool Enterprise, College Connections. It reflects a new partnership between Hartlepool College of Further Education and Hartlepool Enterprise Team to encourage self-employment in the town and boost numbers of new business start-ups.

The aim of the Partnership is to develop and assist individuals in accessing business creation opportunities.

The main objectives are to:

- Identify support and promote good practice
- Develop services that add value
- Develop co-ordinated approaches to provide business support
- Develop a resource of entrepreneurial and business expertise
- Develop sustainable information/guidance systems on local and regional levels
- Train individuals where required
- Stimulate entrepreneurship and the development of business

innovationin**association...**

The partnership brings together an innovative collaboration between Hartlepool College of Further Education, Hartlepool Enterprise, local enterprise companies and business/community support agencies such as Business Link North East.

key target **groups**

The Partnership is aimed to principally benefit those who require support in setting up and/or developing their business, with specialist advice, guidance and access from Hartlepool Enterprise centre and Hartlepool College of Further Education.

getin **touch**

To book your free, no obligation appointment with the business support team, please call the College on **01429 292888** or Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on **01429 867677**.

colourful**career**for**Jill**

When it comes to boosting sales, clinching that deal and earning staff respect, we may consider rigid marketing strategies and expensive training courses, but colour analyst and image consultant Jill Green suggests that much of this is down to how we dress and the image we portray. Read on and be enlightened…

> "The consultancy services are fabulous for businesses too, either to educate employers on the benefits of appropriate dress or uniforms, or to hold workshops with staff"

Local businesswoman Jill Green offers colour analysis and image consultancy to clients across the North East region, taking them on a journey of revelation, education and self-discovery. A fully qualified franchisee of leading British consultancy, House of Colour, she welcomes clients to her professional studio at her countryside home in Hesleden near Hartlepool.

Customers range from housewives to executives, children through to the elderly, men and women alike and people of all shapes and sizes.

Setting up the venture in October 2007, Jill is formerly from Chester and spent 20 years of her career in the police force. She moved to the area after recently finding love with an ex-marine she had actually trained with many years ago in the police, tying the knot just two years ago. Having become disillusioned in her career, Jill decided to take the bold move into self-employment and has never looked back since.

She explains: "I had attended colour analysis and image consultancy sessions myself in the past which genuinely transformed my life, reviving my appearance and confidence. Since then I have been extremely interested and passionate in the discipline, so it was the perfect career move for me."

The House of Colour experience features three key services:

a) Colour Analysis (½ to ¾ of a day) – identifies the tone of your skin, eyes and hair and categorises you accordingly, providing a varied palette of outfit colours to choose from.

b) Image and Style (1 day) – analysis of your body shape and personality traits to recommend the best styles of outfit for any occasion.

c) Make Up (3 hours) – choose the right foundation, blusher and lipstick to match your skin tones and to achieve a natural and healthy glow.

Each of the above elements can be booked on an individual basis or to gain maximum benefits, as the complete 'journey'. They are delivered as informal group classes of up to six friends or relatives although larger groups can be easily catered for with the assistance of a second consultant.

Other services available include fast-track styling to cover the entire journey in one day, one-to-one appointments, a men's class, wardrobe declutters, shopping trips, scarf tying sessions and wedding advice.

Jill also provides clients with snacks and refreshments including homemade cakes, soup and sandwiches, making it an all-round experience in relaxation, fun and enlightenment.

She says: "The consultancy services are fabulous for businesses too, either to educate employers on the benefits of appropriate dress or uniforms, or to hold workshops with staff to advise on the importance of looking and feeling good, the do's and don'ts of office wear and what it acceptable when it comes to showing cleavage or bare flesh.

"The aim for all my clients is to build an integrated wardrobe of versatile garments that all complement one another and can be dressed up or down through the use of accessories. This enables more outfits to be created with fewer garments, achieving cost savings and a fabulous new look.

"To feel good on the inside, it is vital to look good on the outside, and with a bit of help absolutely anyone can achieve this."

For more information, enquiries and bookings, please contact Jill Green on **01429 835661** or **07837 870383**, or alternatively visit **www.houseofcolour.co.uk/jillgreen**

companyprofile MNI**UK**Ltd

For this month's company profile, we visited award-winning global company, MNI UK Ltd. Manufacturing steel identification equipment for a worldwide market, the firm has capitalised upon opportunities and adapted to economic conditions to ensure long-term growth and sustainability.

Based on Park View Industrial Estate off Brenda Road in Hartlepool, MNI UK Ltd is part of the MNI Group, a global supplier for marking, reading and identifying steel and non-ferrous products. The UK operation is led by Director Ian Stewart, a Hartlepool local who joined the company in 1983 as an electrical engineer.

The company has operated as a number of entities, undergoing a merger in 1996 to form Numtec and joining forces four years ago with other industry giant Magnemag to form MNI (Magnemag Numtec International). All design, manufacturing and R&D is carried out at Numtec's headquarters in Austria, with MNI subsidiary companies based in Germany and the USA as well as in the UK at Hartlepool.

Functioning as a sales and service facility and representative to the steel and aluminium industry, the Hartlepool site carries group responsibility for marketing, sales and after sales services to the UK and Commonwealth. This requires Ian to frequently travel to the likes of Australia, India, New Zealand and South Africa to meet with existing clients, new clients and to plant early seeds for potential sales in the future.

MNI manufactures specialist equipment to mark and identify steel products, including stamping machines, metal spraying systems, paint marking, systems for wheel production and scanning equipment.

Ian explains: "It is a highly specialised market with only a dozen or so competitors across the globe. We currently manufacture 13 types of machine for various applications although each specific piece of equipment is custom-made to individual requirements.

"With clients including steel manufacturers and the automotive wheel industry, we have found that our reputation sells more machines than any form of advertising ever could. We may not be the cheapest but we offer a premium quality product, reliability, customer service and industry expertise."

MNI UK employs eight members of staff in Hartlepool, most of which are former Corus engineers with high knowledge levels of steel plants and the manufacturing process. Enjoying extremely low staff turnover and a close-knit 'family' of colleagues, Ian knows that this has been instrumental in the company's success to date.

With the steel industry being one of the hardest hit by the recession, MNI UK has not been impervious to the harsh climatic conditions, however it has worked hard to improve efficiencies, cut costs and seek new opportunities to ensure long-term development and sustainability. This has included exploiting the massive growth market in India, which has led to a significant shift in the domestic / export sales ratio, as well as focussing upon the potential market within the Middle East.

In May this year, the team was surprised and delighted to be announced as winners of the Exporter of the Year category at the Hartlepool Business Awards 2009. Ian says: "The award really impressed the company owners in Austria and promoted the Hartlepool operation to the rest of the group worldwide. And it really boosted staff morale more than I ever could have imagined."

"It was also our first real contact with the local business community, which I believe is really important despite our clients being based hundreds or thousands of miles away. It is great that local businesses and residents may have some idea of who we are now and how we represent and promote Hartlepool on a global basis."

MNI UK Ltd can be contacted on **01429 234242** or alternatively visit **www.mni-group.com**

> "It is great that local businesses and residents may have some idea of who we are now and how we represent and promote Hartlepool on a global basis"

spread**the**word!

Mayor Stuart Drummond is urging everyone to support The Tall Ships Races 2010 by putting the event leaflets in any letters, cards and parcels they send off.

> The Tall Ships Races 2010 is the biggest event Hartlepool has ever hosted and we must take every opportunity to promote it

His message is particularly fitting to local businesses that send items of mail or couriered parcels across the country and even abroad.

"People who sell on Ebay could include a Tall Ships flyer in their parcels without it adding to the cost. There is a massive trade in this market with goods travelling round the world and it would be an excellent way to help promote our event next August," Mayor Drummond said.

And with Christmas just around the corner, the Mayor is asking people to add the flyers to cards and gifts that are being posted elsewhere in the country and overseas.

"The Tall Ships Races 2010 is the biggest event Hartlepool has ever hosted and we must take every opportunity to promote it."

The Tall Ships leaflets are available from the Council's Public Relations Office on Level 2 of the Civic Centre.

The Tall Ships' Races are an internationally acclaimed annual competition organised by Sail Training International and held every summer in European waters. Each year between 70 and 100 vessels from 15-20 countries, crewed by some 5,000-6,000 young people from over 30 countries worldwide take part in this unique event that combines four days of activities in each port with racing or cruising-in-company between ports.

The main aim of the event is to provide an opportunity for young people to develop their personal skills in a challenging and memorable sail-training environment and hence at least 50% of a Tall Ship's crew must be aged 15-25.

Hartlepool will welcome up to one hundred vessels and up to one million visitors when it hosts The Tall Ships Races 2010 in August next year. Hartlepool Borough Council has teamed up with PD Ports and Hartlepool Marina to organise the event.

The fleet will provide a magnificent spectacle between 7 and 10 August 2010 at the end of The Tall Ships Races. The vessels will have sailed from Kristiansand in Norway in the second and final race.

For further information log onto **www.hartlepooltallships 2010.com**, contact the Hartlepool Tall Ships office on **01429 523420** or e-mail **tallships@hartlepool.gov.uk**

building**schools** for**the**future

This month, Hartlepool Enterprise brings news of the nationwide educational funding programme, Building Schools for the Future. On a local level, Hartlepool Council is looking to involve local businesses in the associated works to improve the town's schools.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is the biggest ever school buildings investment programme. The aim of BSF funding is to rebuild or renew nearly every secondary school in England. It is envisaged, all secondary aged children and young people will have access to 21st Century standard facilities, with all secondary schools either renewed or replaced within the next 15 years.

Hartlepool Council believes that BSF is a fantastic opportunity to provide many future generations of the children and young people of Hartlepool with state of the art school facilities, through this multi-million pound investment, the overall plan for which was approved early in 2009. But even more importantly this investment will give the opportunity to enable all children and young people to achieve their full potential by shaping their learning to meet their individual needs.

Working together with schools, colleges and key partners the aim is to ensure that Hartlepool's future schools are at the heart of their local communities, with a range of services to transform learning for all ages. Inspirational facilities will help raise aspirations and lead to even greater success, at school and throughout later life.

The process of appointing a main contractor for the works is now well underway, with Balfour Beatty Construction Northern Limited and Kier North East being the two bidders developing their proposals at the current time. As part of this development process, both companies have joined forces with the Council's Economic Development Team to arrange events to meet local businesses who may benefit from the various works to be undertaken across Hartlepool.

Mick Emerson, Hartlepool Borough Council's Principal Economic Development Officer explained: "The council is very pleased to see that the two bidders for the main works in respect of Building Schools for the Future want to engage businesses in the development of their proposals.

"Because of the strict confidentiality of the bidding process this has meant that we have had to arrange two separate meetings, however I think it is incredibly important that businesses take the opportunity to meet the teams of both bidders and discover the extensive opportunities which will occur as a result of the contract being approved in the spring of next year.

"We anticipate that both events will be heavily subscribed so I would suggest that interested parties register as soon as possible."

Both events will take place at Hartlepool Historic Quay, with Balfour Beatty on 7th December and Kier on 14th December, with arrival from 5.15pm for a 6pm start. People interested in attending should register with Sue Stephenson at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on **01429 867677** or by emailing **sue.stephenson@hartlepool.gov.uk.**

> "I think it is incredibly important that businesses take the opportunity to meet the teams of both bidders and discover the extensive opportunities which will occur as a result of the contract being approved in the spring of next year"

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