

Hartlepoolenterprise

Dedicated to supporting business in the Hartlepool community



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Hartlepool celebrates latest VAT figures
 Business in the town continues to grow

open day success at Enterprise Centre
 And more similar days planned in the New Year!

principal matters
 We speak to Hartlepool College's top man

welcome

Welcome to the ninth issue of Hartlepool Enterprise, the town's monthly business newsletter. This is our final issue of the year, and we look forward to bringing you more great issues in 2008.

The newsletter aims to bring you up-to-date with news from the business community, along with success stories, company profiles, top tips and development opportunities.

In this issue, we celebrate news of another increase in

Hartlepool's VAT registration figures, which is a widely-accepted indicator of the number of businesses in any one area. This demonstrates that the effort from the Council and all related business support organisations in Hartlepool to grow and develop business in the Borough is truly paying off. Well done to everyone involved and to all of Hartlepool's new and existing businesses who have contributed to these figures.

This month we also look back

upon Hartlepool Enterprise Centre's open days, where its doors were opened to the public for special discount shopping days. Following a great response, more similar days are planned in the New Year.

Let us know your thoughts on the newsletter, and why not share your success stories or business news with us? If you want to feature as one of our profiled businesses, would like to add a colleague to our mailing list, or for advertising information please do get in touch with us.

For all enquiries relating to the newsletter, 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**

From everyone at Hartlepool Enterprise, we wish you a very merry Christmas and a very prosperous 2008.

business is booming in prosperous Hartlepool

Hartlepool Enterprise Team members are once more celebrating the publication of the most recent annual VAT figures for the Town, which again show that all the effort spent in encouraging people into business is paying dividends.

These figures are a testament to all the hard work of both the Council and our partners involved in helping people set up and grow local businesses

The figures for 2006, published during November of this year, again showed extremely positive signs both in terms of the new registrations and the stock of businesses retaining their registration level.

Not only are the results pleasing in themselves, but also make excellent comparisons to the other areas in the Tees Valley. For example, the net change in registrations for Hartlepool grew by 5% during 2006, while the average for the rest of the Tees Valley was approximately 1.5%. In addition, the rate of VAT

registrations when compared to Hartlepool's population now also exceeds a similar comparison for the whole of the North East.

Antony Steinberg, Hartlepool Borough Council's Economic Development Manager, said: "These figures are a testament to all the hard work of both the Council and our partners involved in helping people set up and grow local businesses. The numbers of VAT registered businesses have been growing year on year and this married to the fact that our actual stock of businesses is also growing has produced some excellent results.

Whilst we accept that these are not a full picture of the number of businesses started in Hartlepool each year, they are arguably the best indication we have and are the figures we are judged on by Central Government Departments."

Anyone interested in the full VAT figures can find information on the DTI's website **www.dti.gov.uk**

For full details on how Hartlepool Enterprise and the Council can assist new businesses, please call Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on **01429 867677**.

businessbrain

This month's Business Brain is delivered by Uel J. Readioff, Chief Executive of First Aid Today Ltd, organiser of "teach me 2 sell" workshops, and expert in customer service. Guest speaker at November's Hartlepool Business Forum Event, he offers top advice on how to maximise your sales through marketing, sales and customer service.

1) Marketing

First impressions really do count, so always present yourself and your business with enthusiasm, passion and positivism. The same goes for your corporate brand, so ensure it has a memory hook, a clear mission and is a good reflection of what you do.

In order to market your business effectively, you should prepare a marketing plan that details what action you intend to take, for example advertising, printed materials, incentives, PR, or a mixture of these. The plan should also consider what you want to achieve from the marketing and what your budget is.

Furthermore, you need to consider what message you should be promoting through your marketing - think about your Unique Selling Points (USPs) which make you different from the competition, as well as evaluating the Features, Advantages and Benefits of your business (FAB analysis).

2) Sales

Sales are an integral part of all commercial activity, and there are no rules how to make it work. A myth exists that either you are a born sales person or you are not, and that you need the "gift of the gab" to do it well. But this is not true - anyone can be trained to become a good sales person, and sometimes being too chatty in sales can be off-putting and intrusive.

Any good sales person will make the potential client feel relaxed and comfortable, and will build a rapport with them without being imposing. Confidence is important, as is knowing how to strike up a conversation and dealing with

difficult questions. If you send your staff on a sales training course, ask them to write a follow-up report to demonstrate what they learnt and how it will be applied to the business.

3) Customer Service

Good customer service beats price and big brands every time, and your business must learn to attract and retain customers.

The golden rules of customer service are as follows:

- Put your smile on every day like you do with your work clothes
- Lead by example - a positive and helpful approach will rub off on your staff
- Don't be pre-occupied with other things when dealing with a customer
- Be courteous - thank the customer for their business, address them as Sir/Madam etc
- Know your products but do not overwhelm the customer with technical jargon
- Don't over-promise what you can't deliver
- Empathise with a complaining customer and avoid confrontations
- Don't offer refunds too readily, try replacements, vouchers or renegotiating

Try creating a "Journey Map" that details your business's processes and procedures for each element

of customer service, such as refunds and complaints. It can be drawn out like a flow-chart so that you and staff can follow the map to ensure a standard level of good customer service is provided at all times.

Uel J. Readioff runs an ongoing programme of interactive, team-orientated workshops on the three areas covered in this article - marketing, sales and customer service. For further information he can be contacted on **0800 043 3281**

enterprising shoppers bring open day success

Two shopping days held last month at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre have been hailed a great success, and more are now being planned for the future.

The open days were really popular and it was great to see so many people turn up

The Centre opened its doors to the public on 8th and 13th November, welcoming visitors to meet the occupants, view their products and take advantage of a 10% discount on all purchases made.

Visitor numbers exceeded all expectations, with almost 100 people estimated to have turned out on one of the open days alone. They were treated to product displays, a wealth of company information and delightful snacks and refreshments from the in-house bistro.

The aim of the open days was to raise awareness on what the Enterprise Centre does, who the tenants are, and the type of products and services they offer.

Mick Emerson, Principal Economic Development Officer for Business at Hartlepool Borough Council explained: "Whilst the Centre is not designed to offer straightforward retail outlets, many of the businesses based here do have products to sell - whether that is items they have manufactured or through sales on the internet. I think this is a great opportunity for members of the public to browse around the building and see the range of items produced or sold from the Centre."

The Centre's tenants include businesses offering jewellery, lingerie, designer clothing, carpets and window blinds to name a few. Maggie Huntley, proprietor of specialist bra outlet Librata said: "The open days were really popular and it was great to see so many people turn up. From a personal point of view, it generated much interest in my business with a good number of sales too."

One of the visiting shoppers commented: "This is the first time I have been inside Hartlepool Enterprise Centre and I'm really impressed. I didn't realise how many different businesses were based here, and all of the different products that they sell. I will definitely be coming back!"

Following the success of the events, another shopping day has just taken place on 5th December. There was a wide range of fabulous products for Christmas on display, perfect for gifts and the home. The participating tenants were:

- **Big Chummers** - sports wear, work wear, plus made-to-order team wear
- **Clockworks** - silver hand crafted jewellery

- **Connoisseur Crafts** - bookbinding & repair, digital print services and card crafting products
- **In 2 Stitches** - knitting/needlework goods and workshops
- **Kameleon Embroidery & Printing** - school wear, work wear, leisurewear and hen/stag tee's
- **L'homme** - top quality men's designer wear at amazing prices
- **Librata** - exclusive lingerie, the finest dressing gowns and free gift-wrapping service
- **Masons Carpets** - quality carpets at affordable prices
- **Seaton Blinds** - suppliers of vertical, Venetian, roller and wood Venetian blinds
- **Hartburn Security & CCTV** - intruder alarms, CCTV systems, and home cinema installations

If you missed the event, and would still like to browse the Centre for your Christmas Shopping, you can contact Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on **01429 867677**

More shopping days are planned for the New Year - watch this space!



a fresh start

Physiotherapist Paul Gough was completely content in his job at Darlington Football Club, but when he set up his own clinic to treat the odd private patient, demand exceeded all expectations and he now runs a thriving business across three clinics.

Paul Gough Physio Rooms Ltd is a Physiotherapy and Health Care Clinic, which offers a complete physiotherapy service to the public, businesses, professionals, and occupational health departments. Based on Lower Church Street in Hartlepool, the business also operates two other clinics in Darlington and Durham.

Paul, still only 26 years old, grew up in Hartlepool and attended English Martyrs School and Hartlepool Sixth Form College. He went on to study BSC Hons Physiotherapy at Northumbria University where he became a chartered and state registered physiotherapist. In 2007, Paul also gained the Certificate in Education from Sunderland University, which allows him to teach and lecture in his field of speciality.

Paul's first job was at the Woodlands Hospital in Darlington where he worked as a physiotherapist in the treatment room. He later became Academy Physiotherapist at Middlesbrough Football Club and later progressed to Head Physiotherapist at Darlington Football Club.

The business first started taking shape when Paul set up a private physiotherapy clinic at Darlington Football Club, with the intention of seeing a couple of private patients on an afternoon after he had finished treatment with the players. Paul explains: "The clinic grew so quickly and became so successful that I decided to branch out to Durham and then gave it a go in Hartlepool. It got to the point where I was turning clients away because I was having to travel to away games

with the Darlington team."

"I therefore had to make the very difficult decision of leaving the Football Club to give the new business my full attention - a decision I've not regretted for one second!"

Paul now employs one secretary and two Chartered Physiotherapists, as well as two state registered podiatrists. In addition to the standard physiotherapy offered, the business provides a specialist footcare service, fast-track MRI scanning and injury prevention training. As part of this, Paul and one of his other physios Clair Fletcher, have designed a manual handling training course to demonstrate how to lift properly and prevent back injury. Clients include Hartlepool College of Further Education, and Paul is now looking to apply the course to care homes, nurseries and industry, and he encourages interested parties to get in touch.

During the process of setting up the business, Paul has received assistance from a number of sources: "I owe a lot of my success to Adrian Liddell of Atkinson Print, who started as a patient then became my landlord when I opened the clinic in Hartlepool, and he has also acted as a great business mentor to me." Furthermore, Paul has received sound advice from accountants, bank managers and solicitors, and is in the process of applying for a business grant through Hartlepool Borough Council.

The main problem the business has encountered is one or two larger organisations that use unregistered health care professionals, which are cheaper to patients but obviously not as competent

As a member of the Health Professions Council, Paul spends a lot of time and money to retain membership and develop his skills, to provide a full professional service to his clients.

Regarding the future, Paul is looking to create "a one-stop-shop" for all health care needs in Hartlepool, and as a development of this he would like to create a purpose-built facility in the town. He would therefore encourage speech therapists, massage therapists, cognitive therapists, chiropodists, beauticians, reflexologists, life coaches and dieticians to get in touch with him to become part of this vision.

Paul Gough Physio Rooms can be contacted on free phone **0800 043 8671** or alternatively visit www.paulgoughphysio.com



I therefore had to make the very difficult decision of leaving the Football Club to give the new business my full attention - a decision I've not regretted for one second!





drop in to **help** shape **town's future**

Hartlepool businesses are urged to come along to one of several 'drop in' sessions to help shape an important new planning blueprint which will guide how the town develops in the future.

“
The strategy will become one of the most important blueprints for shaping the development of our town for many years to come
”

The Core Strategy - which will replace parts of the existing Local Plan - will set out a vision of what kind of place Hartlepool should be by 2025 and lay down a series of broad policies to enable that to be achieved.

The policies will cover matters such as where future development should be concentrated, improving existing housing, measures to minimise the effects of climate change and improvements to transport links.

Hartlepool Council has started an initial round of public consultation and drop-in sessions have been organised at Central Library in York Road to help people find out more and give their views:

Monday 10 December
4pm-7pm.

Saturday 15 December
10am-12 noon.

Tuesday 8 January
4pm-7pm.

Monday 14 January
10am-1pm.

Saturday 19 January
10am-12 noon.

Hartlepool Mayor Stuart Drummond said: "The strategy will become one of the most important blueprints for shaping the development of our town for many years to come, so it's vital that people tell us what they feel it should contain."

The document can also be viewed at the Council's Bryan Hanson House offices off Lynn Street, at the town's libraries and on the Council's website at <http://planningpolicy.hartlepool.gov.uk/inovem/consult.ti> where online comments can be left.

Comments can also be e-mailed to planningpolicy@hartlepool.gov.uk or sent in writing to the Urban Policy Section, Department of Planning and Regeneration Services, Bryan Hanson House, Hanson Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7BT, to be received by Friday 1 February 2008. For further information, contact the Council on **01429 523280**.

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company profile

Yuill Homes

This month's company profile features house-building giants Yuill Homes. It is not only a household name but also a company close to many Hartlepool hearts after creating over 30,000 homes and employing generations of North East people since its inception in 1927.

The company prides itself on its progressive and groundbreaking approach, as well as its bespoke development solutions that bring together the requirements of the local market and the local community

It might be the grand old age of 80 this year but the award-winning Hartlepool-based company has never been so youthful and agile in the market place. Throughout its history, the firm has prided itself on its ability to anticipate and adapt to change and this progressive approach ensures it remains at the forefront of innovation - continuing to satisfy the demands of 21st century lifestyles.

Over the years its heritage and strong management team has grown with the company and Yuill Homes employs over 250 people and is currently operating on 12-15 developments every year.

The multi-award winning house-builder continues to embrace groundbreaking work at the forefront of modern construction and is actively incorporating renewable energy and environmentally friendly initiatives into its housing schemes.

Yuill has a clear strategy not only to build new homes but also to create thriving new communities, forming effective partnerships with a clear aim to deliver sustainable neighbourhoods. Positively engaged in the process of providing the best product for the regeneration and sustainability of communities,

Yuill Homes has a successful track record in partnership working, masterplanning and the delivery of mixed-use schemes.

Over its 80 years of trading, the Yuill Homes brand has become synonymous with premium build, quality and practice as well as smart design. The company prides itself on its progressive and groundbreaking approach, as well as its bespoke development solutions that bring together the requirements of the local market and the local community.

With people at the heart of its business, including customers, employees, partners and stakeholders the firm's culture is defined by its roots and wherever possible it strives to boost local economies by recruiting local labour, local suppliers and training new talent.

Although Yuill is best known for its residential homes, it also creates mixed-use developments, incorporating commercial property and affordable housing. One such example is at its Queensbury development in Longbenton for which it won RICS Renaissance Award for its regeneration scheme that met the needs of the community.

Yuill Homes' latest development, Trinity Square, is on its doorstep in Hartlepool and this scheme, just off Hart Lane, sees the house-builder work alongside Hartlepool Revival to breathe new life into the community. The exciting new development of more than 150 one, two and three bedroom homes is part of the multi-million pound regeneration of a Hartlepool neighbourhood. Showcasing the very best of designs for 21st century lifestyles and with a range of house types planned for the site from contemporary to traditional family homes, there's something to suit all tastes and requirements.

In addition to Trinity Square, Yuill is currently developing homes across the North East at Dales View, Consett; East Shore Village, Seaham; High View, Blaydon; Mickle Dales, Redcar; Queensbury, Longbenton; St Cuthbert's Mews, Middlesbrough; Village Gate, Howden-le-Wear; West Point Mews, Wallsend and Whitworth Park, Spennymoor, with St Germain's Gardens, Marske-by-the-Sea coming soon.

Yuill Homes can be contacted on **01429 266620**, or via their website at **www.yuillhomes.co.uk**

ask the expert

In this feature, our panel of business experts answer the most frequently asked questions from their industry. This month, the team from Hartlepool Business Development Centre reveal how they can assist local businesses and the key information you need to know.

Q What does the Business Development Centre do?

A Based at Hartlepool College of Further Education, the Centre works closely with the local business community to provide training, advice and support for businesses throughout the North East region. It can design and deliver courses specifically tailored to your industry or individual requirements, and trains staff at a time and place to suit, either at the College or in the workplace.

Courses can be delivered as short, intensive programmes, or can be less concentrated over a longer period of time. There are also courses that lead to qualifications, including Higher Education programmes such as foundation degrees and diplomas.

The Centre can support local businesses in allocating possible funding opportunities, arranging apprenticeships and it also provides excellent conference facilities and hospitality.

Q How good is the quality of training?

A The College has effective employer partnerships with 120 local companies, and Ofsted described engagement with employers as "Outstanding". It has also been recently placed in the top twenty colleges for work based learning in the whole of the UK

Q Do the courses attract funding?

A Many courses are subsidised and some can be provided free of charge through the Train To Gain programme:

- First Level 2 Qualification free of charge
- Level 3 qualifications for 19 - 25 year olds free of charge
- 50% funding for Level 3 qualifications
- 50% funding also available for a host of other training

The College will even allocate some of its adult budget to business training, providing over 60% funding on some courses.

Q What industry areas does The Business Development Centre work alongside?

- A**
- Business
 - Manufacturing and Engineering
 - Construction Trades
 - Gas Training
 - Early Years, Health and Social Care
 - Hair and Beauty
 - Hospitality and Tourism
 - IT and Computing
 - Skills for Life (Literacy, Numeracy and Communication)
 - Recreation, Sport and Leisure
 - Health and Safety

Apprenticeships are available in Engineering, Construction, Motor Vehicle, Catering, IT, and Business Administration. Ages of apprentices range from 16-59.

For further information, you can speak to a Business Development Adviser on **01429 292888**, or email hbdc@hartlepool.ac.uk Alternatively you can visit the centre at Hartlepool College on Stockton Street.

coffee break

This month's coffee break interview was held with **Nigel Stevens, Deputy Chief Emergency Planning Officer from the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit.**

Q What is the Emergency Planning Unit?

A Following the implementation of the Civil Contingency Act 2004, local authorities are now responsible for providing emergency planning. The decision was taken to assemble a joint unit across the four borough councils to specifically address this.

Q What are your key responsibilities?

A It is my role to promote business continuity to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across the Teesside area. This is to ensure that businesses are prepared for any type of emergency that may threaten personnel, buildings or operations and to have measures in place to resume normal business.

We have a Business Continuity Plan template that can be adapted to any organisation and I have already used this for nursing homes, hotels, law firms, colleges and the local authorities to name a few.

Q What is your employment history?

A My career background is within Emergency Planning - I spent 15 years in the Army and then began working for the former Cleveland County Council, later moving into Business Continuity Planning.

If you would like help in setting up a Business Continuity Plan, please call Nigel on **01642 221121** or email nigel.stevens@hartlepool.gov.uk You can also visit www.clevelandemergencyplanning.info

snap shot

Business Forum programme continues to be a hit

Hartlepool Business Forum's inspiring programme of events continues to run its course, and November saw a good turnout for the "Maximise Your Sales" seminar.

The event took place on 22nd November in the Sir William Gray Suite at Hartlepool Maritime Experience, the regular venue for the full programme. Guest speaker for the evening was Uel J. Readoff, Chief Executive of First Aid Today Ltd, organiser of "teach me 2 sell" workshops, and expert in customer service. The evening was informative and entertaining, and attendees left armed with great advice on how to boost their business.

The Business Forum programme of events takes a break over the Christmas period and will resume on Thursday 10th January 2008, with the "Start Up Road Show". Business support network representatives will speak at the event, giving valuable information on setting up a new business, building a client base and becoming established. As always, the buffet tea starts at 5.15pm with the presentations beginning at 6.00pm.

All attendees are welcome - for further information please contact Sue Stephenson at Hartlepool Enterprise Centre on **01429 867677** or visit **www.hartlepoolbusinessforum.co.uk**

yes vote for business improvement district

The occupants on Hartlepool's Longhill and Sandgate Industrial Estates have voted in favour of implementing a Business Improvement District to their area.

//
**a CCTV system
for the two
industrial
estates to
prevent crime
and vandalism
and to increase
security for
businesses,
employees and
customers**
//

The ballot closed on 9th November, with the result being revealed on 12th November. Of the votes cast, 80% were in favour of the proposal and this equated to 94% of the Rateable Value of those businesses that took part.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are locally controlled partnerships for improving the environment and economic performance of a defined area, and are covered by Government legislation. They allow businesses within that area to vote on proposals to fund improvements and services over and above what is provided by a local authority. The additional revenue for such improvements is obtained through the introduction of a small levy on all the occupants' business rates.

The Longhill and Sandgate Business Association actively pursued the setting up of the BID, in partnership with Hartlepool Borough Council, Hartlepool NDC and Hartlepool Police. The BID will run for a period of five years beginning April 2008 and will put a 2% levy (minimum threshold £100 and maximum threshold of £1,500) on the rateable value of all businesses in the defined BID area.

As part of this, occupants within the area will fund the monitoring of a CCTV system for the two industrial estates to prevent crime and vandalism and to increase security for businesses, employees and customers.

Maurice Brazell, Hartlepool Council's Business Liaison Manager, said: "We are delighted that businesses on the industrial estates have opted to implement the BID. It is a very positive step forward because it gives them a local voice and enables partnerships to develop between the private and public sectors."

Over the coming years, the BID will give businesses the opportunity to vote for further crime reduction measures to be implemented, as well as other forms of improvement to the industrial estates.

For further information, Maurice Brazell can be contacted at Hartlepool Borough Council on **01429 523511**

what's your story

This month's What's Your Story features Hartlepool College Principal, David Waddington. We retrace the journey from his first job in the furniture industry, through to running his own business, and securing the top job in Hartlepool Further Education.

David Waddington is the Principal and Chief Executive for Hartlepool College of Further Education, and has now been in the job for over two years. Prior to that, he was the Vice Principal and Deputy Chief Executive of the College.

In his role as Principal, David's key responsibility is to ensure the College provides an appropriate range of education and training opportunities to meet learners and employers' needs; and as Chief Executive, he must ensure the College functions well as a business and operates efficiently.

David was born in Middlesbrough and attended the town's High School, and later Middlesbrough College of Art. He studied furniture design at High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire and went on to study at the Royal College of Art in London. As a result of his extensive education, David came out with a degree in Design and two master's degrees in Design Management & Production and in Design Education.

His first job was in the furniture industry in High Wycombe, and soon David set up his own design business. A far cry from leading a further education college perhaps, but the link became established when David began working in design education, teaching at the Royal Masonic School in Bushey Heath for three years. Moving back up north in the mid 1970s, he started a new job teaching at Hartlepool College of Art, later moving to Teesside College of Art where he became Head of Design Studies. He left this position in 1990 to join Hartlepool College, up until which point he had still

operated his own design business on a part time basis.

Aside from his demanding role at the College, David is Chair of the North East Regional Committee of the Association of Colleges, a member of the Institute of Directors, and a board member of the Further Education National Consortium (FENC). David is also a trustee of "HOPE" - the Hartlepool Offenders Partnership Enterprise, which helps ex-offenders reintegrate back into society.

When asked about his approach to work, David commented: "It's all about serving the needs of our learners and local people. The more senior you become in your job, the more important this becomes. It is important to be flexible in your approach and adapt your services to the changing needs of the community."

Hartlepool College can assist local businesses in a variety of ways - it has its own Business Development Centre which offers training programmes, conferencing facilities, and business services. It offers traditional vocational education and an excellent 500+ apprentice training scheme which helps develop young people for a wide variety of companies in Hartlepool. The College also provides Higher Education courses through the University of Teesside in disciplines such as engineering, construction and health.

Regarding the future, David strives to continue to improve all elements of performance and student success rate. The biggest change that the College is set to face in the coming years is the redevelopment of the entire

town centre site, with a new land mark building, due to open in September 2010.

On a personal level, the demands of David's job means that he has little time for extra-curricular activities, although he is a keen sports fan and in the past has been a player, coach, president and chairman of Middlesbrough Rugby Club. He has a daughter who lives in Bermuda, his son works at Cleveland College of Art and Design, and he is a grandfather of four. He lives in the picturesque village of Hutton Rudby which has been his home for the past ten years.

If you are interested in how the College can help your business, please contact the Business Development Centre on **01429 292888** or visit **www.hartlepoolfe.ac.uk** David Waddington can be contacted on **01429 283802**.



It's all about serving the needs of our learners and local people. The more senior you become in your job, the more important this becomes. It is important to be flexible in your approach and adapt your services to the changing needs of the community





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