



Conference success



Colin Carmichael



George Chandler



Paul Barrett

C4B's successful Associates Conference attracted an audience of over 100 local businesses and organisations to the Harris Suite at Kent Cricket Club's St Lawrence ground in Canterbury on October 14. Delegates enjoyed a full English breakfast and networking session before hearing from keynote speaker, Colin Carmichael, Chief Executive of Canterbury City Council. Mr Carmichael set the ball rolling with his thought-provoking presentation on the future for business, which emphasised the need for the city council and local businesses to work together to encourage business growth in difficult times.

A2 slip roads

He was followed by George Chandler, Regeneration Project Manager, Kent County Council, who updated delegates on the progress of the A2 slip roads. C4B's major projects team has lobbied hard for the slips and associates welcomed news that the on-slip road at Wincheap is now scheduled for completion in summer 2010.

C4B Chairman, Paul Barrett, then invited the heads of the C4B project groups to outline how their initiatives can help businesses survive the economic downturn.

Environment update

Clive Relf, Chair of the Environment group, spoke about the green pledges made by local businesses, the city council's EnviroPlus Award scheme, and the development of a new green policy for home businesses. He explained how installing a smart meter can help cut energy costs and urged delegates to take up Business Link's offer of a free meter trial.

Enterprise and education news

John Beattie, who heads up the Enterprise group, reviewed the success of C4B's Support4Business initiative, and invited businesses to make the most of this free mentoring scheme. Professor Jan Druker, Chair of the Education and Skills group, provided an overview of the projects that are helping businesses to benefit from closer links with education, including initiatives that enable local businesses to tap into the skills of graduates or undergraduates during a job placement or internship. She also encouraged employers to contribute to the development of the new 14-19 school diplomas.



Clive Relf



John Beattie



Caroline Fowler



Dawn Hudd



Jan Druker

VOICE

Diary dates:

Launch of Canterbury City Partnership (CCP)

Barretts Jaguar Showroom
Wednesday, 12 November 2008 5.30pm

For more information, contact Paul Spree on 01227 862532 or email: paul.spree@canterbury.gov.uk

Flying Start Rally

Canterbury College
Wednesday, 19 November 2008 12.30pm – 5.30pm

For more information or if you're interested in attending, please telephone Nicola Burr, Canterbury Christ Church University on: 01227 782531 or email: nicola.burr@canterbury.ac.uk

Business Month March 2009

Once again, the City Council's Local Economy Team will be organising a series of events during March 2009 as part of Business Month.

For more information, contact Paul Spree on 01227 862532 or email: paul.spree@canterbury.gov.uk

New visitor economy group

Caroline Fowler, who is the lead officer on C4B's new Visitor Economy group, spoke about the need to attract more visitor income to the district and invited business owners to get involved and help take the new group forward.

New strategy

Dawn Hudd, the city council's Assistant Head of Economic Development and Tourism, outlined the council's new Local Economy and Tourism strategy, and its aim to make the district an excellent place to live, learn, visit and invest in.

Leader of Canterbury City Council, Councillor John Gilbey, brought the conference to a close with a vote of thanks to C4B for its input and the valuable contribution local businesses are making to the district.

Photos of the conference can be viewed online at: www.canterbury4business.co.uk

If you have a query or would like to get in touch with any of the C4B project group leaders, please contact Paul Spree on 01227 862532, or email paul.spree@canterbury.gov.uk

C4B gets business project on track



Left to right: Martin Crowther, Managing Director, Autojoy Ltd; Anna Benson; Roger Cowley, Sales Director, Autojoy Ltd; Danny Cooper, Support4Business

Thanks to Support4Business, C4B's free mentoring scheme for local business owners, Herne Bay company Autojoy Ltd was able to get an important business development project off the ground.

Autojoy, which sells professional car cleaning products and supplies to car sales showrooms, car washes and valeting companies through its online webshop, www.autojoy.co.uk, first contacted Support4Business in February for advice on the best way to take the business forward.

"We already sell our quality detailing and valeting products to a wide range of private and commercial customers in the UK and abroad, and want to diversify into other markets," explained Autojoy's Managing Director, Martin Crowther.

Support4Business mentor Danny Cooper helped Autojoy identify a course of action, which included customer database analysis and development but unfortunately, at the time, Autojoy had no one available to take on the project.

Support4Business contacted the student placement team at Kent Works who identified a Canterbury student looking for IT work experience. Anna Benson, aged 15, spent two weeks with Autojoy, helping to develop a new database and review the webshop operation.

She made a real contribution to the business, according to Sales Director, Roger Cowley: "Our database is crucial to the future success of Autojoy and Anna helped us put down firm foundations for the future."

The updated website now enables customers to manage their own accounts and access over 300 products.

Danny Cooper said: "This was win-win situation that benefited both business and education. We're delighted that Support4Business was able to help both parties achieve their goals."



How to join C4B

If you're in business in Canterbury district, you need to know what's going on in the area. Join C4B as an associate and we'll keep you up to date with news of activities, events and initiatives.

There's no cost to join, just visit:

www.canterbury4business.co.uk

where you can join on-line, or phone 01227 862532.

Green pledges grow



Six months after the successful Business4theEnvironment conference, C4B has received a total of 76 green pledges from local businesses and organisations.

Computer company ADM has appointed a 'green police' team that meets every Friday to discuss tactics. The company has removed 80% of its landfill bins, introduced four recycling collection areas, and has purchased a compost bin and an electric bicycle which engineers will be using in Canterbury.

Solicitors Furley Page has developed a comprehensive environmental policy which includes a focus group made up of 'staff champions'. The company is working with the focus groups to identify and action environmental issues, such as energy savings, and hold scheduled reviews.

Whitefriars management has implemented a scheme to recycle coat hangers, and has processed more than 7,000 since the beginning of May. International freight forwarder John Shirley Ltd has replaced oil-burning boilers with wood pellet burners, which the company estimates will save it around £7,000 a year.

Clive Relf, Chairman of C4B's environment group, said: "This is an excellent response and shows how many local businesses are working quietly behind the scenes to develop or improve sustainable practices. Many of the companies were inspired to make a pledge following the conference; others had been thinking about 'growing greener' and the conference effectively put the seal on their resolution".

For more information about the pledges and green tips for business, visit: www.canterbury4business.co.uk.



Green awards opportunity

Business owners in the Canterbury district now have an opportunity to win a green award for improving or implementing sustainable workplace practices through the city council's new EnviroPlus Award Scheme.

Businesses that sign up for the EnviroPlus scheme are given a 'star' rating based on their environmental credentials and are then entered for an EnviroPlus Award in one of three categories.

The awards will be presented at the next C4B event.

If you have a green scheme in your workplace and are interested in joining the award scheme, please contact Helen Bennington on 01227 862253, or email helen.bennington@canterbury.gov.uk or visit: www.canterbury.gov.uk/enviroplus.