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### 1. **£1,000 training grants up for grabs for businesses in Epping Forest district**

Skills for Economic Growth is a new Essex County Council programme that provides training grants of up to £1,000 for Essex businesses in the following sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing & Electronics
- Construction
- Creative
- Financial Services
- Life Sciences
- Low Carbon & Renewable Energy
- Offshore Energy & Oil and Gas
- Technology
- Transport & Logistics

For further information and to apply visit [www.essex.gov.uk/skillsgrowth](http://www.essex.gov.uk/skillsgrowth)

### 2. **Could you benefit from £5,000 worth of advice from a University Expert?**

A new innovation voucher scheme has just opened to help small UK businesses obtain government funding to help them develop and grow. The Technology Strategy Board is managing the scheme which enables start-up, micro, small and medium-sized businesses to access up to £5,000 worth of advice and expertise from universities, research organisations or other private sector knowledge suppliers.

The priority sectors for this scheme are:

- Agrifood
- Built Environment
- Space

#### How to apply

The application process is online. You can apply any time, with around 100 vouchers being issued once every 3 months.

Applications for Innovation Vouchers will be entered into a draw every 3 months. You will be informed if you have been successful or unsuccessful. If you are unsuccessful in receiving an Innovation Voucher you can try again. You can only have one live application at a time.

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## 1 | business briefing

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## The allocation dates for Innovation Vouchers are:

- 24 October 2012
- 23 January 2013
- 10 April 2013
- 24 July 2013
- 23 October 2013

For further information and to apply visit <https://vouchers.innovateuk.org/home>

The University of Essex would be happy to explore project ideas with you – contact Linette Edonya on [ledonya@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ledonya@essex.ac.uk)

## 3. Assistance for manufacturing businesses

Manufacturers in Epping Forest district and West Essex more broadly are invited to a free breakfast networking event in Harlow on 07 November from 8am to 10am.

Manufacturing is a key sector for the West Essex economy and we want to hear from you about your business support and skills requirements. Attendees will also be able to find out about the variety of support that is available to you.

At the event attendees will be able to meet and speak with representatives from:

- Growth Accelerator – Government backed service offering tailored business growth advice and support (for more detail see item 4 in this briefing)
- SEMTA – The Sector Skills Council for the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Sectors
- Essex County Council – Training grants of up to £1,000 available (for more detail see item 1 in this briefing)
- Harlow Council – The West Essex Skills Plan and what your needs are now and for the future

For further information and to book your place contact Vivien Kelly by email on [vivien.kelly@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:vivien.kelly@harlow.gov.uk) or telephone on **01279 446 450**.

## 4. Could Growth Accelerator offer the support you need to maximise the growth of your business?

**At present, 6% of the country's SMEs deliver 50% of the employment growth...**

**...in May this year, the Government set aside £200m to help more dynamic SMEs achieve similar growth....**

**...as a result a new service, Growth Accelerator, was launched...**

A summary of the 'nuts and bolts' of the service is detailed below. Or you might like to take a look at this video link which provides case studies and feedback from MDs who have used the service:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQ\\_dlr3eq34&feature=plcp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQ_dlr3eq34&feature=plcp)

### Growth Accelerator offers a business:

- **A Growth Coach**, adeptly selected from a pool of 800 experienced professionals, working with a business on an on-going basis who:
  - Δ Has a proven track record in helping small and medium sized companies accelerate and sustain their growth, in every size, region and sector
  - Δ Has made the same journey themselves so they know what it's like to fight for success
  - Δ Knows when to talk, when to listen, and how to generate ideas that will transform a business.
- **A Leadership and Management Training Grant**. Clients that receive support from the Growth Accelerator service also qualify for grant-funded leadership and management training support. It is a match-funded grant of up to £2,000 per employee which supports the growth-related training needs of senior managers.



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- **A series of workshops** designed to support and deepen the impact of coaching on the business's growth prospects.
- **A Personal Growth Manager** who will ensure the portfolio of services provided enables the company to reach its growth potential.
- An opportunity to be part of a '**Growth Community**' with 26,000 other high growth businesses so that experiences and best practice can be shared.
- **Excellent value.** The full package is worth £5,000. In addition there is the Leadership and Management training grant. The investment required is as follows:
  - Δ Micro and start-up businesses - £600
  - Δ Small businesses - £1,500
  - Δ Medium-sized companies - £3,000

For more information visit  
[www.growthaccelerator.com](http://www.growthaccelerator.com)

## 5. New construction apprenticeship agency is open for business

The Training and Apprenticeships in Construction (TrAC) agency – backed by both the South East and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnerships - is an innovative scheme led by construction companies to help meet the needs of the industry now and in the future.

It will work with over 2,200 construction firms of all sizes to actively recruit and place hundreds of new apprentices in the industry by developing skilled workers and find suitable placements for apprentices, promote careers in construction and arrange work experience programmes. Under the scheme TrAC will work with a wide range of contractors to find suitable placements for apprentices, normally for around six months. Once a placement ends, TrAC will find new work for the apprentice with another organisation.

If you are interested either as an employer or as a potential apprentice see [www.tracweb.co.uk](http://www.tracweb.co.uk) or contact Stewart Henderson, telephone **01245 433365** or email [stewart.henderson@essex.gov.uk](mailto:stewart.henderson@essex.gov.uk)

## 6. Do you work in the tourism sector? Look out for notification of our tourism summit in early 2013

Calling everyone associated with tourism in the area – do you manage a visitor attraction, restaurant, hotel or other type of accommodation? Are you involved in organising a festival in the local area or with a group promoting our local culture and heritage? If so, read on!

As reported in the last Business Briefing, One Epping Forest established a Tourism Development Taskforce earlier this year to better understand the scale of the tourism sector on our doorstep and to understand the growth aspirations and potential of the sector. Tourism is already a significant contributor to our economy with a total value of £183.3m (2010) but we think there is scope to further this.

The Taskforce's key emphasis is on 'doing'. In the last few months it has developed a website to promote what the area has to offer ([www.visiteppingforest.org](http://www.visiteppingforest.org)). The Group is producing a promotional leaflet and exploring other opportunities to market the broader Epping Forest district area rather than each hotel, attraction etc solely marketing itself as a stand alone entity.

We are planning a Tourism Summit to:

### A. Provide you with the opportunity to promote yourself to other tourism operators locally to benefit your bottom line

We propose that the Summit uses a 'speed dating' format to allow each operator to share information about its facility with fellow operators.

## 3 | business briefing

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*Epping Ongar Railway - one of the district's many tourism assets*

Work has identified that there is considerable scope for increased cross-promotion between different tourism facilities. For instance, a hotel can inspire guests on where they could visit during the day and an attraction could provide recommendation on where a visitor might stop for lunch or an attraction they could visit on another day.

## **B. Get your input**

We have conducted research to understand the tourism sector locally and potential opportunities for growth but we would like to benefit from your own experience. Our research is pointing to potential growth opportunities for tourism locally but we want to know if you agree with these and what you would like to add. To give an example, we understand that a significant proportion of our tourism stems from people 'visiting friends and relatives' so we need to better inform residents of what we have on our doorstep so they can act as ambassadors. One idea is that we develop a residents' campaign for next year to increase this awareness. The Summit will provide the opportunity to test and explore such potential initiatives.

We will provide more detail on the Summit shortly but please drop us an email in the meantime if you feel you would like to attend and to ensure you receive further details of the Summit as soon as they are released. Contact Vicki Willis by email on [vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk) or telephone **01992 564 593**.

## **7. Looking to start-up in business? Get free & 'straight talking' advice from HMRC**

EFDC is partnering with HM Revenue & Customs to deliver free face-to-face workshops for businesses and those looking to set up in business in the district. The latest in the series are detailed here. If you would

like to book onto a session email Vicki Willis on [vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk) with your name, business name, contact address and telephone number. All sessions will be held in Epping and run from 1100-1330.

## **Newly self employed- the basics - 15 November 2012**

Advice on registration, National Insurance, record keeping, and payments cycles, completion of tax returns, deadlines and penalties, where to get further help and guidance.

## **Business expenses and capital allowances for the self employed - 21 November 2012**

Allowable and non allowable expenses, how to treat assets, car, van and motor expenses claims, where to get further help and guidance.

One recent attendee of the 'Newly self employed' workshop who is in the early stages of setting up in business said "the workshop was great. It answered my questions and corrected my misunderstandings around the process of setting up as self-employed and National Insurance and tax implications. It was a great relaxed workshop with a straight talking and knowledgeable facilitator. Now I've grasped all this I can move onto tackle other priorities in setting up my business".

If you are interested in these sessions but the timings don't work for you take a look at [www.hmrc.gov.uk/webinars/](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/webinars/). Here HMRC offers a series of free online presentations or 'webinars' to give tax help to businesses and the self-employed. There are two types of presentation each lasting 30 minutes: live presentations/'webinars' which are available on set dates or pre-recorded webinars, which are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Alternatively, search for HMRC's own channel on YouTube where you can check out bite-size video clips.

For further information contact [vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

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## **4 | business briefing**

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### 8. Would your business survive a crisis?

Every year 1 in 5 businesses face a major disruption to their services. 1 in 10 of these will cease trading. If your premises were to suffer a crisis, how would you maintain your essential business activities?

The answer lies in Business Continuity Planning.

#### What is Business Continuity?

Business Continuity is about anticipating what crises could affect your business (e.g. a fire, a power cut, flooding, an IT systems failure, theft, restricted access to your premises) and identifying processes which will allow you to keep the disruption to a minimum and ensure that you recover from the crisis quickly.

#### Why is Business Continuity important?

Experience shows that businesses are more likely to survive a crisis if they have prepared for it. Business Continuity arrangements also build customer and insurer confidence in your business.

#### What is a Business Continuity plan?

A Business Continuity plan will identify all the requirements that are essential to keeping your business running. It should include a set of instructions about what to do at the time of a crisis in order to allow your critical functions to continue.

You should consider issues such as:

- How would you evacuate your premises in an emergency?
- How can you contact essential staff outside of business hours?
- What are your critical business activities?
- What software and hardware does your business rely on?
- Do you store back-up data and can you access this outside of your premises?
- What telecommunications does your business rely on?

- Do you have any alternative premises you can operate from?
- Can your insurance details be accessed outside of the premises?
- Do you rely on suppliers and can you access details of these outside of your premises?

#### Where can you go for advice?

This item has been written by Epping Forest District Council who take the lead in informing businesses in the area about Business Continuity. You can contact the Council's Emergency Planning Officer by telephone on **01992 564176**.

### 9. Putting Epping Forest district on the map – tour of the area by the Chief Executive of Stansted and North London partners

We all know that economies do not function according to administrative boundaries. Epping Forest district area does not operate in isolation but rather we have intrinsic links into London, Essex, neighbouring Hertfordshire and further afield. This might be in terms of supply chains, where we draw staff from, our customer base etc. Epping Forest District Council and partners therefore seek to work with economic partnerships beyond their own patch to ensure greater support for the local area. In this context, One Epping Forest hosted a tour of the district in early September for Nick Barton, Chair of the West Essex Alliance and Chief Executive of Stansted, Greg Clark, Chair of the London Anglia Growth Partnership and others in order to help further effective partnership working for the benefit of the district.

West Essex Alliance is a partnership of the private and public sector which exists to improve the economic prosperity of the M11 corridor area. Its priorities include campaigning for infrastructure improvements,

promoting the growth of existing businesses, encouraging levels of enterprise and increasing inward investment.

The tour gave partners a sense of the district – i.e. its both urban and rural nature, its proximity and transport connections with London. The visit also provided opportunity for discussion around emerging local economic priorities including support for the growth of the local tourism sector, to ensure the continued viability of our prized high streets and the scope for supporting food production locally. The tour took in Epping Ongar Railway, North Weald Airfield, Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey Marriott, Abbey View Produce Ltd (as an example of our glasshouse industry) and many of the district's other assets.

For more information on West Essex Alliance visit <http://www.westessexalliance.org/>

For more information on London Anglia Growth Partnership visit <http://www.nlsa.org.uk>

For any further queries contact [wwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:wwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

## 10. Calling all innovative rural businesses – get your nomination in QUICK for the Countryside Alliance Awards

Awards can be of great value to a business or organisation – receiving an award can help raise your profile and impress existing or potential clients and investors. The recognition can also bring a great boost to your team and a 'thank you' for its hard graft. Importantly however, recipients should seek to use the award beyond the hype of the awards ceremony i.e. add the accolade to your letter head or website etc.

The Countryside Alliance Awards are currently open for entries in the following categories:

1. Local Food Award
2. Daily Telegraph Village Shop/ Post Office Award
3. Enterprise Award
4. Butcher
5. Rural Start-up

In terms of other important details, you must complete your entry by 29 October 2012. The entry process seems quick and simple with just a short form to complete.

For further information visit <http://www.countrysideallianceawards.org.uk> or telephone **0207 840 9340**.

## 11. Register your company's need for superfast broadband

Essex County Council's local broadband plan, 'Superfast Essex Broadband', has been approved by central government and now plans can be put into action on selecting a provider for the service and allocating areas for upgrade. The aim of this project is to enable 90% of the Essex population to be able to receive superfast broadband by 2015.

As part of the plans Essex County Council, along with Epping Forest District Council, is urging businesses and residents to register their interest in getting superfast broadband by visiting [www.essex.gov.uk/ruralbroadband](http://www.essex.gov.uk/ruralbroadband)

This does not guarantee an upgrade, however areas with the most businesses and residents registered will stand a greater chance of being selected as one of the first areas for upgrade.

Epping Forest District Council's Portfolio Holder for Asset Management and Economic Development Councillor Anne Grigg said: "I would encourage our businesses and residents to register their interest. Many of the district's rural areas do find their broadband speed very frustrating. However, by registering your interest you can do something about this. Sign up, encourage your friends, colleagues and neighbours to sign up and Essex County Council will pass this information on to the selected provider and an upgrade plan can be put in place."

## 6 | business briefing

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*Lady Godiva in Waltham Abbey during the 2012 Olympics*

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### 12. Double funding success for Waltham Abbey

Retail guru Mary Portas has significantly raised the profile of our High Streets and town centres over the past year. In December 2011 Portas completed her government commissioned review of town centres. One of the early initiatives stemming from this was the Portas Pilot competition – with £100,000 up for grabs to improve your town. Despite its application Waltham Abbey was not one of the lucky 27 (out of more than 400 applications!) to receive support. You can check out the video which supported the Waltham Abbey bid on the following link - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exS9G878xbw>

Although this was disappointing news the town has since received the boost that it is inline to receive a government injection of £10,000 as kick-start funding to implement some priority elements within its original bid. We'll report more on this as things progress. Not perturbed by the rejection of Waltham Abbey's initial bid Waltham Abbey Town Partnership has been working with others to take forward a project to tackle youth employment issues locally.

In late August 2012 Epping Forest District Museum based in Waltham Abbey's town centre received the great news that it will receive initial funding of £27,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop its 'Museum at the Core' project before applying for a full grant later this year. This first round grant will help the museum to further ideas for extending the exhibition space, creating new open access storage facilities and providing a community learning space. The whole project sets out to realise the potential of Epping Forest District Museum, increase visitor numbers and improve displays.

### 13. Commercial waste – a quick guide to your responsibilities

#### Duty of Care

If you produce waste (and every business produces some waste, however small), you have a legal 'Duty of Care'. The Duty of Care applies to everyone involved in handling the waste, from the person who produces it to the person who finally disposes of or recovers it.

The collection of waste from businesses is not covered in your business rates. Commercial waste must not be disposed of within household waste collections provided by the council. Commercial waste passed off as household waste or placed in street litter bins could lead to prosecution.

Duty of Care is one of the main ways to combat fly-tipping.

#### Giving your waste to other people

There are some simple rules to follow including keeping your waste secure so it does not leak or blow away and if you give your waste to someone else (like a waste contractor) it is your duty to make sure that you:

- Check the person can take it - ask them to produce evidence that they are authorised to carry waste. If they cannot do this, do not give them your waste - contact the Environment Agency on **03708 506 506**.
- Ensure the waste goes to a proper site - licensed or exempt.
- Give the person a waste transfer note. Your waste contractor may provide you with this and help you complete the information required - but it is your responsibility to complete your part of the waste transfer note - this must include a description of the waste and be signed by both of you. Keep copies of your transfer notes for a minimum of 2 years.

Because of changes brought in by the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, the information required on a waste transfer note has changed. A sample waste transfer note and further advice can be found on the Environment Agency's website at:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/40047.aspx>

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, officers from Epping Forest District Council have the power to ask for your waste transfer notes. Failure to produce a valid waste transfer note may result in prosecution proceedings for failing to produce or keep the required documents.

As an alternative to prosecution you may be given the opportunity to pay a fixed penalty notice of £300 (reduced to £180 if paid within 10 days, rather than 14), but you will still be asked to produce waste transfer notes to cover waste removed from your property in the future.

To check that you are complying with your Duty of Care, can you answer YES to all of the following statements? If you cannot answer YES to these questions you should take action now to check and comply with the law.

- My waste is stored on my property
- My waste cannot escape from my property and is securely contained
- I have checked that my waste is collected by an authorised person
- I have waste transfer note(s) to cover all my waste collections and I keep the paperwork for 2 years.

For further advice contact EFDC's Environment & Neighbourhood Officers on **01992 564608** and see the Environment Agency's website as per the above link.

#### 14. Join Epping Forest Chamber of Commerce for a quiz to test your local knowledge!

Epping Forest Chamber of Commerce is hosting a quiz night in Buckhurst Hill on Saturday 27 October from 1830. Tricia Moxey will be Quiz Master charged with testing the local knowledge of all those who sign-up! Families and groups are welcome and the evening will also include a fish and chips supper. Tickets cost £7.50.

For more information and tickets contact the Chamber of Commerce's Secretary on **01992 652 682**.

## 8 | business briefing

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## One Shops Local - have you registered your business yet?

With over 200 local businesses registered, One Shops Local is a great way to promote your business to potential customers in the Epping Forest district, and it's **FREE!** Go to [www.oneshopslocal.com](http://www.oneshopslocal.com) to register.



[www.oneshopslocal.com](http://www.oneshopslocal.com)

### Any feedback?

This is a new format for the business update - we are investigating different ways of doing things. If you have any feedback please let us know, email: [vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk) or telephone: 01992 564593

### Sent direct?

If you have not received this briefing directly to your inbox and you would like to in the future, please email: [vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:vwillis@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

