

# Chamber News

## March 2013



Crawley's economy has received another boost after the Centre for Cities ranked the town in the top 10 in the UK for business improvement.

This report, called Cities Outlook 2013 and published in January follows the exciting news from Local Futures in November that Crawley is the seventh best place to do business in England.

Both respected think tanks have ranked the town highly in the past two months, with the Centre for Cities focussing on house building and improvements in the local economy since the recession. The report says: "Our research showed that Crawley's economy has not only seen a relatively large improvement in its economy between 2009-2012 but has also been ranked as one of the top ten cities to deliver much-needed housing."

Councillor Claire Denman, Cabinet member for Planning and Economic Development, said: "This report is yet more recognition for the steps we took during the difficult days of the credit crunch and then the recession.

"We took positive steps then to pay businesses quickly, to make faster planning decisions, to deliver on our capital programme, promote business support and innovative ideas like the Crawley Advice Shop to support residents in need. "We continue to actively support our economy, attract investment and promote our key employment areas.

Significant efforts are being made in the town centre and Manor Royal while on housing the council has completed its first own-build scheme. "We should also take heart from major investments in the town including the first phase

of Town Centre North with Land Securities and the opening of Tesco.com this week, creating 700 local jobs."

In the Local Futures research, Crawley was placed seventh out of all 325 English towns and cities on a Business Index measure that assesses how attractive places are for businesses to invest.

Crawley scored very highly on major factors of economic performance, human resources, environment and infrastructure. The town also scores very well on many of the attributes that make a town good to invest in including connectivity, the amount of commercial floor space it provides, good productivity and access to a good pool of labour.

Alfredo Mendes - Town Centre Manager - Crawley

## The global economy: a safer place

For the world economy, 2013 looks set to be a time of recuperation after the shocks of the past few years. Although the overall growth rate, expected to be around 3%, will be little different from last year, the global trade cycle has turned up, equity prices have rallied, and investor risk appetite has improved.

In western economies, the legacy of systemic banking failures and excessive borrowing (by governments and by households) continues to hamper recovery. In the Eurozone, where the damage to confidence has been greatest, stagnation is the best that can be expected this year, perhaps laying the groundwork for a more meaningful revival in 2014. Arguably the bigger risk comes from the USA, where contentious decisions about spending cuts and the debt ceiling still have to be taken.

As for emerging economies, it is becoming less relevant to think in terms of the BRICs, with growth being driven predominantly by China, its neighbours, and those more distant countries which supply it with raw materials. After nearly two years of cooling, China's growth rate is again accelerating, and it is expected to contribute around 40% to the expansion of global GDP in 2013.

## The UK economy: a change of tack

Last year ended on a downbeat note for the British economy with another quarterly fall in GDP. Business surveys were looking slightly healthier at the start of 2013, however, so the UK should avoid the dreaded 'triple-dip' recession.

But there is little prospect of anything better than a modest recovery this year, mainly because households' spending power is still being squeezed by a combination of sluggish pay growth and stubbornly-high inflation. Hopes that this would ease during 2013 have been dashed, and it will be 2014 before real earnings growth returns to positive territory.

Weak growth has contributed to undermining the public finances as tax receipts remain depressed. The big question now is whether this might prompt the Government to review the planned trajectory of spending and borrowing over the coming years. Meanwhile, with Mark Carney taking over from Mervyn King as Governor of the Bank of England at the start of July, it is widely expected that there will be changes in the way that monetary policy is operated and communicated.

Ian Harper - HSBC Bank, Crawley. Email : [ianharper@hsbc.com](mailto:ianharper@hsbc.com)

## Santander have just released The Town and City Index 2012

"The future of the UK's economy depends on the success of its businesses. Business growth needs to be encouraged and fostered. The more vibrant and successful British companies are, the more vibrant and successful households, consumers and the economy will be. Understanding how businesses operate, and what the necessary ingredients and catalysts are for them to grow and succeed is essential if we are to create the best environment to foster this success.

One element influencing a business's potential success is its location. It is clear that there are big differences between our towns and cities in terms of the business landscape. The varying strengths and weaknesses of a location's business environment impacts the type, health and lifecycle of the businesses present in that location. Understanding these strengths and weaknesses in a particular town or city and how they impact the business environment is essential to those, who have a stake in nurturing this business environment." Obviously this includes Crawley and Gatwick Chamber of Commerce. Five main criteria were used to measure what would ultimately be the best and worst places to do business.

### Enterprise

This uses nine measures to assess business vitality and sustainability in town and cities. The depth and breadth of the business stock (sector diversity and specialisation) is also supportive of favourable business conditions as it allows businesses in local towns and cities to respond to economic changes.

### Talent

This uses three measures to help identify if there are suitably qualified people that businesses can draw upon from these communities. A second important feature is that local communities have people of sufficient calibre to support business development: the argument here is that 'smart' places need 'smart' people.

### Connectivity

This uses two measures of how well connected businesses are in terms of internet provision. The internet has become a key tool for most businesses and how towns and cities have fostered and invested in an online and dynamic business environment has become crucial for their on-going development.

### Costs

This uses three measures of costs (CO2, average council tax bills, house prices) that employers and employees have to face to work in these communities. Finally, house prices may proxy for some of the financing costs that businesses face. This is because new businesses are typically reliant on internal sources of funding whilst existing businesses may use a primary residence as collateral against debt finance. (

### Well-being

This uses three measures of the wider economic well-being of communities. Prosperity, for instance, has a positive feedback on business. The table below shows the top 10 towns and cities in terms of their scores from each of the five domains. Cumulatively, it shows that the city with the best overall score in terms of favourable business conditions is Cambridge and Crawley is positioned at number 4 nationally

Rank	City/Town
1	Cambridge
2	Oxford
3	Edinburgh
4	Crawley
5	Worthing
6	Brighton
7	Reading
8	Aldershot
9	Bristol
10	Solihull

## National Director role for young entrepreneur

Successful young entrepreneur, Dan Wade, who at just 25 years old has been appointed Director of New Franchise Development for WPA, a national not-for-profit health insurance provider that are authorized and regulated by the FSA. Dan became a franchisee of WPA in 2009, having since won a number of awards for his outstanding customer care and commitment. "My success is largely down to my focus on the customers and links with the local community. I visit all my customers at least once a year to check and improve what WPA is doing for them. I also run seminars for my corporate customers to help explain what employees are entitled to. This saves the employer time and means staff appreciate their employer" says Dan.

Dan will still provide the cover and care for more than 1,000 local business people, ranging from self-employed sole traders to companies with a large number of employees in the Crawley and Gatwick area.

Dan's new role of National Director of New Franchise Development will involve meeting new franchisees at interview, training in customer care, mentoring in sales and successful growth methods. "I am thrilled about my new role as it includes meeting new franchisees around the UK and advising them about the good work that WPA does. I am meeting my first set of new franchisees in Taunton whilst they sit their 5day training course at the end of the month".

Berkeley Harris, Director of the National Franchise Team of WPA added "It takes a lot to promote yourself in today's hungry marketplace, but in the case of Daniel Wade it was easy. For such a young person Daniel has abilities and commercial awareness beyond his years.

A position was coming free to work within the franchise management team at WPA and when we considered the name Daniel Wade, you could see the illuminated faces all around reassuring us that we had made the right choice. Energy, ambition & a keen work ethic - I wonder how long we can keep this man for....!"

To contact Dan email [Daniel.wade@wpa.org.uk](mailto:Daniel.wade@wpa.org.uk) or phone 01825 983032



[wpa.org.uk](http://wpa.org.uk)

## Crawley STEMfest and the Big Bang South East - 2013

Businesses, professional organisations, universities and local authorities can all help inspire the scientists, technicians, engineers and mathematicians of the future when Crawley STEMfest and the Big Bang South East return this summer.

Crawley STEMfest 2013 is a month-long festival taking place in schools and colleges, in STEM Clubs and in the community in general during June, and it is aimed at encouraging young people to study and follow careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).

It is organised by STEM Sussex, the outreach department of the Faculty of Science and Engineering at the University of Brighton, in partnership with Crawley Borough Council and Central Sussex College, and will culminate with the Big Bang South East fair, at The Hawth on 2nd July, part of the biggest single celebration of STEM for young people in the UK.

Over 2,000 students aged between nine and 19 and their teachers attended the Big Bang South East 2012, enjoying an action-packed day of exciting and inspiring STEM-related interactive workshops and shows provided by businesses and other organisations from across the region.

### There are many ways organisations can support these events and help to enthuse young people, including:

- Providing activities in schools and colleges or in the community during Crawley STEMfest
- Having an interactive stand at the Big Bang South East fair
- Sponsoring an event
- Providing a prize for the regional heats of the National Science + Engineering Competition, which take place during the Big Bang South East
- Encouraging staff and colleagues to become involved by volunteering
- Providing services and/or equipment at the Big Bang South East.

CGG, the world's leading geophysical company, will again be the main sponsor of Crawley STEMfest 2013 and the Big Bang South East, and both events have the backing of the Minister of State for Business and Enterprise, Michael Fallon. He described promoting STEM to young people as "a vital part of supporting sustainable growth in the UK economy." Almost 40 schools and colleges have so far registered their interest in being part of these events, and a number of local businesses have already agreed to provide or sponsor activities.

• To get involved in Crawley STEMfest 2013 and the Big Bang South East, or for more information, visit [www.crawleystemfest.co.uk](http://www.crawleystemfest.co.uk), telephone 01273 644178 or email [crawleystemfest@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:crawleystemfest@brighton.ac.uk).

• For a flavour of the Big Bang South East 2012, visit the picture gallery at <http://www.crawleystemfest.co.uk/whats-on/photo-gallery-big-bang-se-2012>. We look forward to receiving your support for these very important events.

## Gatwick Update

Well, I did warn last time this will run for some time!

I did see a few members on 6th February, at the Crawley Borough debate, the first half of which was on the possibility of a second runway at Gatwick. I have to say, it was a disappointment, being far too short for many views/opinions to be aired, made worse by the microphone being hijacked at the end.

The second event members may like to consider attending, the Gatwick Diamond Economic Growth Forum, is an independent event on this subject, being organised by local PR agency, Chart Lane, on 23rd May, at the Arora Hotel, Crawley. Delegates will hear from speakers of considerable stature and expertise from the public and private sector on the Airport, infrastructure, the region's surface transport networks, growth sectors, and skills, all the building blocks of our future economy.

The aim of the Forum will be to provide independent and impartial consideration of the economic benefits of aviation growth, so that an informed response to the Howard Davies Commission can be made.

St Catherine's Hospice  
30 years of caring for local people



St Catherine's Hospice invites you to a **FREE Business Supporters' Breakfast**

Thursday 18 April 2013

08.00 – Breakfast and Networking  
08.30 – Presentations & Fundraising activity  
10.00 Close

Holiday Inn

Crabtree Park, Turners Hill Road, Worth, Crawley, RH10 4SS

Thanks to ILG for sponsoring this event



Special guest speaker: **David Gold**  
(Chairman of Gold Group International & West Ham)

Learn more about the expert end of life care we provide to local people and their families  
Presented by Shaun O'Leary (Chief Executive, St Catherine's Hospice)

'Charity of the Year' fundraising presentation  
Presented by Grant Ashley (Founder & CEO) & Jane Middlemiss (HR Director) of ILG

Find out how you can get involved in our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations

RSVP by email to [jennadurdle@stch.org.uk](mailto:jennadurdle@stch.org.uk) or [lisamuschamp@stch.org.uk](mailto:lisamuschamp@stch.org.uk) or call 01293 447365

Free parking

Thanks to **Holiday Inn** for their support



It's expected that sessions will be run between 8.00 am and 1.00 pm, with networking opportunities before and afterwards. Delegates will be required to pay an entry fee, currently thought to be £45, but that will be confirmed a little later.

For further information or to book a place, contact: Ross Sturley, Chart Lane, 01293 853285, 07774 980950, [ross@chartlane.co.uk](mailto:ross@chartlane.co.uk) Finally, if there are members against the proposition of a second runway at Gatwick, and who would be happy to propose that argument at a breakfast meeting, perhaps after the above, we could devote such a meeting to this vitally important topic. I would therefore be grateful if any member would let me know on this, a quick email to [paul.roe@reeves.co](mailto:paul.roe@reeves.co) would be very much appreciated.

Paul Roe FCCA  
Business Services Partner, Reeves & Co LLP  
[Paul.roe@reeves.co](mailto:Paul.roe@reeves.co)

## Dates for your diary



### Next Chamber meeting

**21st March – Event at Easistore – 5.30 - 7.30pm - To book email:  
greg.jenkins@easistore.co.uk**

**27th March – Members breakfast meeting – Premier Inn, Gatwick North  
Terminal (new) – 8.00am**

**24th April – Ramada Plaza – Members breakfast meeting – 8.00am**

Please contact [jose@crawleychamber.co.uk](mailto:jose@crawleychamber.co.uk) to book and/or for more details on any of the above or visit the chamber website [www.crawleychamber.co.uk](http://www.crawleychamber.co.uk) and pay online.

### Chamber executive portfolio holders:

Steve Rham - President [steve@s4b-shredding.co.uk](mailto:steve@s4b-shredding.co.uk)  
Matt Turner - Vice President [matt@creativepod.net](mailto:matt@creativepod.net)  
Lorraine Nugent - Publicity [lorraine@mediawordwaves.com](mailto:lorraine@mediawordwaves.com)  
Ian Harper - Economic issues [ianharper@hsbc.com](mailto:ianharper@hsbc.com)  
Madeleine Mills - Education [madeleine.mills@y-e.org.uk](mailto:madeleine.mills@y-e.org.uk)  
Paul Roe - Transport - Gatwick [paul.roe@reeves.co](mailto:paul.roe@reeves.co)  
Philip Hayden - Treasurer [philip@placedobson.co.uk](mailto:philip@placedobson.co.uk)  
Geoff Williamson - Community, Business and Environment [geoff@ituk.biz](mailto:geoff@ituk.biz)  
Mendes, Alfredo - Town Centre - [alfredo.mendes@crawley.gov.uk](mailto:alfredo.mendes@crawley.gov.uk)

### Publicity



Lorraine Nugent of Media Word Waves and editor of the Chamber monthly newsletter

If you, as a member, have news that you would like to share with other members of the Chamber in the next newsletter please let me know. If you require more information with regards to the publicity of the Chamber please speak to Lorraine or email [Lorraine@mediawordwaves.com](mailto:Lorraine@mediawordwaves.com)

## Enduring links key to practice success

Trust and strong staff relations are the secrets of a long working life at a leading Crawley accountancy practice.

They are also key to client retention for Richard Place Dobson, who are still servicing some clients after more than 60 years.

Staff at the practice, which services more than 100 charities locally and nationwide, have even been known to stay and enjoy their whole career at the firm.

Clients and staff alike praise the practice for its commitment to quality and to fostering enduring relationships. "Good service, polite, trustworthy and highly knowledgeable" says Peter Vallance, who has used the services of Richard Place Dobson for at least 60 years for his property letting business and Gatwick Aviation Museum charity. "As we have matured, so have they."

"Straightforward, to the point, reliable and courteous," remarks Angela van Beugen Bik, whose family have used the firm over a similar timescale. "I like the fact that Matthew Tyson, the Tax Director, trained at the firm and progressed from trainee to director," she adds.

Maggie Reid started work at the practice as a shorthand typist 51 years ago, progressing to payroll and company formations at the firm. "I was offered four positions at different practices locally but chose Richard Place Dobson because of the friendly atmosphere, flexibility and the opportunity to learn and branch out. I have never regretted my decision and am still given opportunities to learn," she says.

Client manager Melissa – a 'newcomer' of 10 years - loves the variety the firm offers. "If you show an interest in a particular field, they will make space for you," she says.

"The firm has a lovely approach. Everyone is supportive and no two days are the same. I deal with clients of different sizes and differing needs that I wouldn't get at a larger organisation."

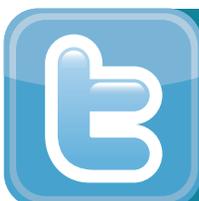
Sue Chinn started at Richard Place Dobson more than 12 years ago as a part-time accounts assistant and progressed to full-time client manager. "The four directors are all keen on workplace balance and have built a family atmosphere at the office," she says.

Melissa and Sue agree that the good retention rates of the firm are partly down to the "longevity and continuity of staff and the trust built up with our clients" as both have worked with many of their clients throughout their time at the practice.

All four practice directors are long-stayers themselves. Matthew Tyson joined as a trainee in 1988, becoming a partner in 1995. Phil Hayden, the longest serving director, joined the firm in 1976.

As the firm advocates: 'We don't just work for you, we work with you. We are not just here to ensure you meet your statutory obligations but also to help develop your goals and to get you where you want to be'.

[www.placedobson.co.uk](http://www.placedobson.co.uk)



**For all your design and print needs**  
**Follow us on Twitter**  
[@creativePod1](https://twitter.com/creativePod1)

creative pod

Tel: 01293 817228

Email: [hello@creativepod.net](mailto:hello@creativepod.net)

[www.creativepod.net](http://www.creativepod.net)