



President's Foreword

It has been a fabulous 12 months for Crawley. There are cranes in the sky at the old Sussex House site, and the expansion of the County Mall is progressing well. The companies on the Manor Royal Industrial Estate are now beginning to work closely together and there is a strong sense of community between them. The closing day for the Manor Royal BID ballot is 28th April. If companies vote in favour of the BID (Business Improvement District) they will remain bonded together for the next 5 years. This is guaranteed to drive improvements to the estate forward.

Recently Crawley was ranked 7th and 4th best place to do business in the country by two independent reports which is fantastic for the economy and should encourage inward investment to the town. With all this good news, it seems a shame to be stepping down as President of the Chamber, a position I have had the honour of holding for four and a half years.

My reason for leaving is that I have taken a change of career, which takes me out of Crawley and into London. I shall be working for a Norwich based manufacturer of Emergency Lighting called P4. S4B is strong and will continue to grow under the leadership of Mike Potts, who you will meet at future Chamber meetings. I joined the Chamber in 2006 and was elected onto the Executive Committee in 2007. In 2008 I had the pleasure of being elected President. I am pleased to have been able to lead the Chamber through some tough economic times, particularly when we have seen other groups struggle for membership and recognition.

The resilience of the Chamber is down to the strength of the Executive Committee and loyalty of its members. I would like to thank you all for your support. I live in Crawley and will continue to watch the press for Chamber activities.

Steve Rham, President - Crawley & Gatwick Chamber of Commerce
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Sam French of Sam's Kitchen wins Young Start-up Talent – Gatwick

The winner of the £50,000 prize fund for the Gatwick Diamond's entrepreneurial initiative, Young Start-up Talent 2013, was announced at an impressive show at the Lingfield Park Marriott Hotel & Country Club Hotel with an impressive staging, lighting and video production put together by SeeThat and AV specialists Avensys on Thursday 28th February 2013.

Sam French, age 21 from Crawley, who attended Hazelwick School was announced as winner of the project with his business Sam's Kitchen www.sams-kitchen.co.uk.

Sam said, "This has been a fantastic journey and I have thoroughly enjoyed it. The best thing is making like-minded friends with the other competitors. I have met great people during the process such as the judges and sponsors through this experience." Sam's very proud mum said

"Sam is driven by passion, he has always been desperate to run his own business and to be his own person. We are very proud of him."

Sam and some of the other finalists have already received several offers of business deals from those that attended the event.

The evening was hosted by Chamber members and the founders of the competition, Lorraine Nugent, MD of Sussex PR agency Media Word Waves, and Matt Turner, MD of Creative Pod.

The other finalists for the Gatwick Diamond were Alessandro Tricarico of Clear Window Cleaning, Josh Stacey and Sam Rose of The Purple Card, Summer Shayne of Hiremyclothes.com, Olivia Harrison and Zak Lambri of Fashion Shak and Dylan Gillah of If Clothes were Songs. All of the finalists had a trade stand at the event to further showcase their businesses.

Young Start-up Talent continued

Jane McGill, HR Business Partner for British Airways and judge of the Gatwick Diamond initiative was very impressed with all of the finalists and announced at the evening that British Airways have awarded all the finalists a free flight to a choice of three European destinations – Nice, Barcelona or Amsterdam.

Special guest speaker Stephen Mason who is a true entrepreneur, running several large businesses with a combined turnover of over £60million told the audience of his entrepreneurial journey and passed on tips to the youngsters. "In watching the video, I would have chosen Sam as the winner and it is Sam that I would invest in".

Matt Tyson of Richard Place Dobson and one of the judges commented "I think Sam is a loveable character and very infectious with a fabulous product. Dean Orgill from Mayo Wynne Baxter, another judge said "All the Finalists were very impressive; the future is bright for all of them". We heard from Henry Smith MP for Crawley who narrated the DVD that was shown during the event and commented "Sam is an incredibly engaging and humorous guy. He demonstrates real spirit and has massive potential in his business. I am in awe. I know that he will be able to develop his business. Finalists from previous years, George Fisher and Timothy Armoos also spoke at the event about the opportunities that Young Start-up Talent has created for them.

The winner of the 2012 prize fund, Toby Gillett of Sobiblio, also spoke about their highs and lows of his first 12 months and ongoing plans for the future of the business. Toby talked about the media frenzy after winning and his radio interview on BBC Sussex which was played to the audience. Toby mentioned about how the judges of the initiative had set up a meeting with the MD of Penguin Digital and has since worked with Penguin on a new digital project. Toby said "Speaking at this event brought back all the nerves that I felt this time last year – well done to Sam, I sincerely hope that he goes on to succeed!"

A video of the Dragons Den style final that was filmed by SeeThat at the offices of Thales a few weeks ago was played to the audience with the help of AV specialists Avensys. Each of the finalists had the daunting task of standing in front of a panel of the eight judges, plus numerous cameras and studio staff from SeeThat, and was put through a series of challenging questions about their business idea.

"It was a tough choice", said judge Lorraine Nugent, "all of the finalists were excellent, and I am sure, like last year, many of the finalists will go on to run their own successful business, winner or not."

www.youngstartuptalent.co.uk

Sticking to the plan

George Osborne's Plan A hasn't worked. Almost three years after the Coalition government came to office the underlying budget deficit is getting bigger, not smaller; the UK has been stripped of its prized 'AAA' rating by one of the ratings agencies; the economy is inhabiting a twilight world between mild recession and negligible growth; And the much-vaunted rebalancing is barely discernible. Meanwhile, the burden of public sector debt is still rising, having reached 73.8% of GDP (£1.16 trillion) in January.

The upcoming Budget on 20th March could therefore have presented the Chancellor with an opportunity to reassess the government's economic strategy. After all, if a plan isn't working it's usually a good idea to have a serious rethink. But the Prime Minister's speech, delivered at a car components factory in West Yorkshire on 7th March, in addition to rubbing the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) up the wrong way, also made it pretty clear that U-turns are not on the agenda. He even played the TINA card ('there is no alternative'), much beloved of politicians.

Needless to say, there are always alternatives. It's just that they may carry risks, or be politically and/or ideologically unpalatable. At least the Prime Minister's speech served to dampen expectations from those on either side of the argument who have been clamouring for action. On the one hand, Vince Cable has called publicly for the government to borrow more in the short term to fund investments in housing and infrastructure, which are almost universally regarded as a good way of pump-priming a sickly economy. On the other hand, Dr Liam Fox (from the right wing of the Conservative party) has advocated a freeze in public spending for at least three years, a raft of tax cuts, and an end to some universal benefits. About the only thing that Messrs. Cable and Fox agree on is that the government should stop ring-fencing large chunks of public expenditure, such as health, education, overseas development, and pension benefits.

Ian Harper - HSBC Bank, Crawley. Email : ianharper@hsbc.com

Employers to design their own apprenticeships

Employers will be empowered to design and develop their own Apprenticeship standards and qualifications, so they can address skills shortages that are threatening growth, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg announced this month.

The entrepreneur Doug Richard carried out a review last year which called for the quality of Apprenticeships to be improved. He also said Apprenticeships should be more focused on the needs of employers as some businesses find they are not tailored enough to their requirements, with many citing this as the main barrier to taking on an Apprentice. The government's response sets out its plan to redefine Apprenticeships to build on their success and make them among the best in the world. It will also raise standards, overhaul qualifications, assessment and delivery, and place Apprenticeships firmly in the hands of employers. Employers from car manufacturers to accountancy firms will be able to directly design the Apprenticeships that suit their business – working with training providers to give Apprentices the skills they need to do the job, in the office or on the factory floor.

The government's plans include:

- employers putting recognised and meaningful industry standards at the heart of every Apprenticeship. This will help employers who say Apprenticeships are not sufficiently tailored to their needs, or relevant to their sector, acting as the biggest barrier to hiring an apprentice [CIPD research Sept 2012]
- every Apprenticeship should be targeted at a skilled job, involving substantial new learning that will provide the foundations for a career and a springboard for progression
- training and accreditation of existing workers who are already fully competent in their jobs should be delivered separately
- Apprenticeships should be focused on the outcome: clearly setting out what Apprentices should know and be able to do at the end of their Apprenticeship
- Apprenticeships will move to a final holistic test which has the full confidence of employers
- all Apprentices will work towards a level 2 qualification either through GCSEs or functional skills in English and maths, from August 2014, if they have not already achieved this.

Speaking at White Light, an entertainment lighting specialist company that is tailoring its Apprenticeships to its needs, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg said: Apprenticeships are at the heart of our drive for a stronger economy, equipping people of all ages with the skills employers need to prosper and compete, often in a global market. They give hard-working young people the chance to aim high for their dream job.

The government's response, "The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Next Steps from the Richard Review", sets out the government's long term vision for Apprenticeships, together with its proposals for achieving this. The consultation will run until 22 May 2013 and to add your views on the recommendations please go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-apprenticeships-in-england-richard-review-next-steps>.

Maddy Mills - Young Enterprise



Matt Turner wins Business Person of the Year!

The winner of the Gatwick Diamond Business Person of the Year Award is Matt Turner, MD of Creative Pod. The Award was sponsored by Santander Corporate Banking.

The winners of the Gatwick Diamond Business Awards were announced in front of an audience of over 500 of the top business people in the Diamond.

Hosted by Alexander Armstrong and held at the iconic Effingham Park Hotel, the Awards Dinner was the culmination of hundreds of hours of hard work by the sponsors, judges, organisers and the entrants themselves.

"This year was another record year for entries" said Jeremy Taylor of Gatwick Diamond Business, founder of the Awards. "With one of the largest business audiences in the Region, the Awards recognise the quality, diversity and achievement of some outstanding businesses and the people who work in them."

Gwyn Price, Regional Director of Santander, said "Matt is entrepreneurial, dynamic, and always looking for the next opportunity, even on holiday! He has grown a number of small businesses from scratch off the back of self confidence and belief, an eye for opportunity and boundless energy. He understands how profit-making and social responsibility can work with equal success through his passion for education and charity. Matt is a keen supporter of the Gatwick Diamond, its institutions and its future success."

"The competition this year was very hotly contested and there were any number of businesses that, in any other year, could have been winners" continued Jeremy. "Some of the judges have asked if we can recognise some of the entries that didn't make the final three and I hope they will try again in 2014. We also know that some of the entrants have been approached to work with the judging companies. That means local businesses are now supplying some of the biggest and best businesses in the Gatwick Diamond."

Senior commercial bank manager joins award winning business

With over 40 years in the banking sector, Alan Trace, a highly respected Senior Manager for Lloyds TSB Commercial has joined Extech as Regional Development manager.

Whilst working at a senior level within the SME sector, Alan's knowledge and experience of various industries has enabled him to help a number of his clients grow and realise their dreams.

Extech are an award winning IT Managed Service Provider and Microsoft Gold Partner, who offer a wide range of services, from fully managed IT and support to SAP Business One implementation and consultancy.

Andrew Hookway Managing Director of Extech says "Alan brings a wealth of experience to our organisation and we look forward to working alongside him as we take our business forward"

For further information on Extech please visit www.extech.co.uk or email atrace@extech.co.uk



Dates for your diary



Next Chamber meeting

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

Please contact 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 and pay online.

Local contract win with Crawley Town

Crawley based Innovation Fire and Security Ltd have won a contract to provide Crawley Town Football Club with all their maintenance and monitoring of their security systems for the next 36 months.

Peter Frake, Director at Innovation Fire and Security Limited first met the management team of the Club at a Crawley Chamber of Commerce event that the Club were hosting for members and entered into a discussion about the Club's growing fire and security requirements.

"In entering such an agreement it gives a growing and ambitious company like ours the publicity and recognition locally we having been trying to achieve for some time" commented Peter Frake.

"It's a breath of fresh air knowing that people like chief executive Richard Low are prepared to listen to the proposals of small local companies and what they can supply against those often offered by a large national corporate. We have now completed a full system upgrade which moving forward will offer total control and flexibility to the football club both through the equipment choice and what it offers and user friendly operating platform."

Richard Low, Crawley Town Football Club CEO added, "Using local companies as our favoured suppliers is part of a new initiative we are developing. A football club like ours can play such a massive part in the community but is often overlooked that local companies need our help as well. We are particularly lucky that Crawley has some excellent, forward thinking companies like Innovation Fire and Security Ltd. It was an easy decision for us to make when we saw just how good the services and products are".

The fire and security specialists have been in Crawley for 25 years and deliver a design, installation, commissioning and maintenance service to all type of client and their premises.

Peter mentioned that "By protecting and applying security measures you can not only bring peace of mind and deter potential intruders, it can also ensure that you are complying with your insurance policies. By installing a security system, you will give reassurance and peace of mind to your staff and customers."

www.innovationfs.co.uk

Chamber executive portfolio holders:

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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



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