



BUSINESS FOCUS ON LOUGHBOROUGH

and surrounding areas

Free facility for firms in Charnwood

MAKE headway with your business marketing by advertising your company on the world wide web – for free.

This facility is dedicated to any business operating in the Charnwood area. What will probably come as a surprise is the fact that this highly versatile cyber-forum and directory is just one of a number of initiatives from Charnwood Borough Council designed to get your company noticed and networking with others.

Register with www.charnwood-business.com today and this simple step will get you noticed, not only by the 1,600 other business which have already registered on the site's directory in the last 18 months, but anyone who logs on to this site. Best of all, it won't cost you a penny.

You can keep it simple and just add in your contact details, but if you want to make the most of this totally

free advertising space, you can create a link to your existing business website and email and let people know exactly where you are with a location map.

But best of all, you can add and edit your own page content – and again, it's a totally free service. Your web-space is suitable for images, documents, or just plain copy, but because it is controlled by you and not another company, you can decide what to put on it and when.

The directory in particular is something of a pet project of economic regeneration assistant Ray Hurst, who is largely responsible for the dramatic growth of the directory, from 45 entries to its current figure of 1,600 and rising – something which he has accomplished since taking on the challenge in July 2006.

"It's a permanent window that you can change as and when you want to," he says. "We provide you with a

guidebook once you've registered, but it really is simple to use.

"I've seen a huge range of ages and abilities master their own web page relatively effortlessly, but if you do have a problem and there's something you can't do, give us a ring on 01509 634 534 and we'll do it for you.

Charnwoodbusiness.com is far more than a directory – the site is also a useful and intelligent information source for business news, with regular feeds from the national and local press, and Leicestershire Economic Partnership.

Other information includes the latest available commercial property with a search facility, grants and the latest changes to legislation which may affect your business.

There's also a Business of the Month feature, which gives a different business an entire month of extra free advertising.

What's more, there's also a continu-

ally-updated calendar, featuring business-related events, such as training courses, meetings and forums, such as the first ever South Charnwood Business Forum, which took place in September, attended by 54 Charnwood businesses and 95 attendees.

Ray says the forum, including Trading Standards, Business Link, the Prince's Trust, Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce and Syston Chamber of Trade, was such a success that there will be another one taking place for North Charnwood in early 2008.

Look out for advertisements in the local press.

To gain a flavour for the kind of event in store, log onto charnwood-business.com and read Ray's report on the inaugural event.

To contact Ray, call him direct on 01509 634 534, or email him on Raymond.hurst@charnwood.gov.uk

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NEW: Loughborough Wharf

A great time to invest

LEICESTER may currently be hogging the limelight in terms of redevelopment scale, but the more observant entrepreneurs will have noticed that Loughborough's skyline has accommodated its fair share of cranes in the last 18 months.

That means there's never been a better time to invest in this market town's future than now.

Sounds like great business move? Then it's time you found out more about one of the most recently-formed organisations fighting Loughborough's commercial corner – the Loughborough Town Centre Partnership.

This represents a golden opportunity for your company to be heard, whether you're a shop, service or leisure provider covering the Loughborough area.

This pro-active body was

formed in March 2006 to draw shoppers and leisure seekers to the town like a magnet, to ensure a maximum level of sustainable funding is continually achieved for the town and to enable the town to stand its ground commercially and socially with its larger service centre rivals.

At the same time, the body aims to preserve the wonderfully traditional character of the town.

Its formation is perfect timing – millions of pounds have already been poured into projects such as Loughborough Wharf, which has taken 18 months to complete, the pedestrianised inner relief road, linking up the town's Churchgate shops with Market Square, and the new Magistrates' Court, due for completion any time now.

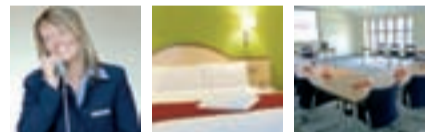
"We wanted to bring together

all the stakeholders in the town centre because we thought the whole would be greater than the sum of the parts," says partnership chairman Adrian McInnes.

"Our original founding members were the Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Charnwood Borough Council, Crime out of Loughborough (COOL), the Market Traders' Federation and the Showman's Guild. We also have businesses and service providers in the town as members."

They may only have been in existence for 18 months, but they've already achieved a great deal, including the on-street Jurassic Loughborough event, the Churchgate shops festival event and the publication of the handy 'Find it in Loughborough' leaflet, listing the contact details of shops and services in the town.

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**£70,000
funding**

THE Loughborough Town Centre Partnership has received £50,000 from Charnwood Borough Council and a total extra £20,000 from its corporate champions, including Loughborough University, pharmaceuticals giant Astra-Zeneca and construction firm William Davis.



Charnwood

Leading in Leicestershire

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