

big horizons

Wirral's Business Newsletter
Spring 08 Issue 2



National recognition for Thinking Big

Wirral Council's inward investment marketing campaign has been shortlisted for an award at the prestigious Estates Gazette Property Marketing Awards.

The 'Think Big Think Wirral' campaign was launched last July in time for The Open Championship at Carnoustie and has proved to be a great success with over 700,000 hits to the www.investwirral.com website.

Wirral Council and its design partner Creative Lynx are shortlisted in the Public Sector category of the awards which promote best practice and reward excellence in Property Marketing.

The winner is due to be announced at an awards ceremony in London at the end of April which is seen as a major networking event for the property industry. Hopefully the evening will lead to further interest in what Wirral has to offer after the successful launch of the golf resort at MIPIM in Cannes in March.

The Council's inward investment website has seen increased visitor numbers to the site since the global property conference, with interest in schemes such as Wirral Waters, New Brighton and the Golf Resort, attracting huge interest.

WORK BEGINS ON £6M PREMIER OFFICES TO MEET MARKET NEEDS

“...A PREMIER OFFICE FACILITY IN A FIRST CLASS TOWN CENTRE LOCATION...”

Work has started on a £6.25m development that will create 30,000 sq ft of office space.

Wirral developer Felton Developments announced plans for the site on Grange Road East, which is on a disused piece of land in the heart of Birkenhead. The development site was chosen as an ideal central location that meets the demand for high quality office accommodation, from businesses choosing to relocate both within and to the area.

The six-storey offices will be able to accommodate up to 300 people at what is hoped will become one of Wirral's premier office locations. Felton Construction has begun working at the site, which is set for completion in December.

John Felton, managing director of Felton Developments, said: “This is an important commercial scheme that will provide Wirral with a premier office facility in a first class town centre location.

“The building has been designed to a particularly high specification in direct response to market demand and we have already entered early discussions with a number of potential occupiers.”

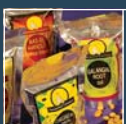
The development will incorporate a range of long-term sustainable benefits including movement-activated energy efficient lighting while recycled wood and paper will be used as energy sources.

Felton has been one of the region's most proactive development companies having constructed many thousands of square feet of high quality office and industrial floorspace in Wirral. Key projects include the development of business parks at Greenfields, Commerce Park, and The Coliseum.

Independent environmental assessors, BREAAAM recently gave the building a 'very good' rating. Felton Developments, which was formed in 1995, recently became a member of the public and private sector partnership, Wirral Investment Network (WiN).



Above:
An artist's
impression of
the new development



Seasoned Pioneers gear up to cope with the 'Delia Effect' p3



Merseyside councils back TMP p4

Wirral
We're thinking big



A word from the Chief Executive

The start of 2008 has seen a number of exciting projects take significant steps forward in their development.

Peel Holdings has taken the first step towards delivering their vision for Wirral Waters with a planning application for the Hydraulic Tower which is considered to be a key anchor to the north of the scheme.

We as a Council have signed up to a new three year funding agreement with The Mersey Partnership which will drive forward inward investment plans for the Liverpool City Region. Wirral has a key role to play in these plans at a time of unprecedented interest in what the borough has to offer from investors, businesses and developers.

Whilst our major development projects are progressing well, we have also received recognition for the 'Think Big Think Wirral' marketing campaign launched last summer. The campaign has been shortlisted for the Estates Gazette property marketing awards and is another encouraging sign that we are getting it right and Thinking Big.

Steve Maddox
Chief Executive, Wirral Council

MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT COMES TO A CONCLUSION

"...OUR AIM IS TO ENHANCE THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS..."

Wirral Council in partnership with Egerton House Wirral Ltd has been carrying out research amongst Wirral employers for the last six months in order to understand the many different ways in which they are approached by the public sector on accessing recruitment and training services.

The study, commissioned by Wirral's Economic Policy Team, is the first of its kind to be undertaken in Wirral. The Council hopes to use the findings to provide a solution to making accessing these services much easier in the future and improving communications between the public and private sector.



Liz Whaling from Egerton House and Jim Wilkie, Deputy Chief Executive of Wirral Council

Egerton House, Wirral's prestigious business and conference centre also works closely with Wirral Council on a number of initiatives and projects. For this particular project Egerton House employed two local graduates to undertake the work. Ben Lavell and Patrick Kenny, were recruited through Liverpool University's Graduate into Employment programme in September 2007 and have spent the last six months researching what recruitment and training services are operating in Wirral and how local employers access and rate them.

Kevin Adderley, Head of Strategic Development for Wirral Council, said: "The outcome of this research will provide a series of recommendations of how employment and training services in Wirral will be accessed in the future. Our aim is to enhance the lines of communication between the public and private sectors, proposing ways that support both businesses and public sector organisations in working effectively together under a common objective."

Hi-tech printer wins contract for Formula 1 steering wheels

A Wirral company has scooped a contract to print the steering wheels for the Williams Formula 1 team.

WTP Technics was set up in September by German-born Falk Zimmermann who has secured the sole UK distribution rights to a patented printing process that can decorate plastic, metal, glass and many other surfaces in a range of designs including camouflage, animal prints and wood grain.

WTP is based at the new Champions Business Park and secured a £76,000 funding package that included a loan from Merseyside Special Investment Fund's (MSIF)

Small Firms Fund to help them grow their business.

Mr Zimmermann said: "I lived on Merseyside before moving abroad again but when I decided to set up the WTP Technics, I knew this would be the best place to do it. The region has excellent universities and is a hub for creativity and technology which is important for a business like this.

"We've just secured a deal to print the steering wheels for Williams F1 which is a huge contract for us, along with new contracts with a large mannequin manufacturer in London and a fire surround firm in Wirral."

www.wtp-technics.co.uk





Spice aficionados gear up to cope with the ‘Delia Effect’

Wirral’s own spices and seasonings experts Seasoned Pioneers are preparing for the ‘Delia Effect’ after Delia Smith announced she is using a selection of their products to feature in her new book ‘How to Cheat at Cooking’.

The book is for people who don’t want to cook, think they can’t cook or simply don’t have the time to cook. On sale now, the book includes over 150 easy-to-follow recipes made with a range of readily available, pre-prepared foods and ingredients to help short circuit the cooking times and techniques. Ten of the extensive Seasoned Pioneers range of worldwide spices and seasonings will feature in the book including Moroccan Ras-el-Hanout, Goan Xacuti and African Tsire Powder.

Seasoned Pioneers director, Mark Steene who set the company up in 1999 after returning from travelling and finding authentic seasonings difficult to source and buy, said: “We’re delighted that our products are being used in the book. Because we use traditional recipes and methods to create all our spice blends it means you can create tasty, authentic dishes almost instantly in your own kitchen.”

The company already has a legion of celebrity fans - including Nigella Lawson, Antony Worrall Thompson and Rick Stein and uses only traditional

production methods - dry roasting and hand blending.

Seasoned Pioneers relocated to Stadium Court at Wirral International Business Park from Liverpool almost three years ago where they found a new build, high quality headquarters. Mark is now hoping that with the interest that Delia’s new book and tv show will inevitably generate, their plans for expansion can carry on apace.

“We’ve been reading about products and companies who’ve coped with the Delia effect over the years - such as the ‘little gem’ omelette pan and how the company had to take on 15 extra staff to cope with the demand! “We’re keeping our fingers crossed the same happens. Some of the recipes have been serialised in the papers and already those products are selling three times more than they normally would. We’ve taken on extra staff and everyone’s working overtime to make sure we get enough stock ready.

“We’re just a small team of seven, so we have been working flat out to build up stocks. Also, we’ve launched a boxed set of the ten ‘Delia’s CHEAT ingredients’ which Delia is using from our range and this is available from fine food outlets.” Mark’s spices are also available online at:

www.seasonedpioneers.co.uk

“...WE’VE TAKEN ON EXTRA STAFF AND EVERYONE’S WORKING OVERTIME...”

Below:
Mark Steene of
Seasoned Pioneers



News in brief

Funding package helps firm target US

Medical technology specialist Genial Genetic Solutions (GGS) has moved to larger premises in Wirral and is planning its expansion into the US market after securing a new funding package.

GGS produces laboratory equipment to help scientists analyse samples for genetic conditions, including cancer.

The business, founded in 2001 by managing director Lawrence Crees, has now secured a funding package of £440,000 including support from the Royal Bank of Scotland and a £150,000 loan from Merseyside Special Investment Fund’s Small Firms Fund. www.genialgenetics.com

First steps taken in Wirral Waters

The first plans connected with Peel Holdings’ Wirral Waters have been submitted to the local authority. Plans are set to begin with the redevelopment of the iconic Central Hydraulic Tower, at the Four Bridges, in Seacombe, into a restaurant and hotel complex.

The company plans to build a 105 square metre glazed extension to the Tower to provide waterside dining and add an outside terrace.

The hotel, located immediately to the south of the tower, would be run by a ‘three and a half star’ operator and provide 91 bedrooms. www.wirralwaters.co.uk

Go-ahead for new business units

Planners have approved a £1.8m plan to build 21 new business units at Arrowe Commercial Park.

Developer Spencer Holdings will deliver an extensive two phase refurbishment of the site. The new units will suit a variety of uses ranging from light industrial, warehouse or trade counter. Phase one will comprise of 10 units, while phase two will deliver the other 11. Sizes will range from 3,500 sq ft up to 100,000 sq ft.



COUNCILS BACK TMP

“...WE HAVE AN UNRIVALLED PRODUCT OFFER TO MAKE TO POTENTIAL INVESTORS...”

Liverpool City Region's six local authorities are stepping up their support for The Mersey Partnership's Inward Investment role with a new, groundbreaking three year funding commitment.

The agreement underlines TMP's pivotal role as the body responsible for Inward Investment, Economic Development and Tourism across the Liverpool City Region.

The significant financial support from the local authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St.Helens, Sefton and Wirral will allow TMP to plan and drive forward an ambitious inward investment programme in competitive national and international markets, working in conjunction with the Northwest Regional Development Agency and the local authorities.

TMP's new Sales Team will be working to generate leads and target companies which currently have no presence in the Liverpool City Region.

Chief Executive of The Mersey Partnership, Lorraine Rogers, said; "This is a groundbreaking commitment by Merseyside's six local authorities, who are united in support for TMP in its investment role for the Liverpool City Region. It clearly underlines the confidence they have in us to drive forward inward investment on behalf of the entire City Region."

Jim Wilkie, Deputy Chief Executive of Wirral Council: "Wirral Council is absolutely committed to working with The Mersey Partnership to drive forward the economic development of the City Region.

Wirral is currently seeing an unprecedented level of interest from developers, businesses and investors in what we have to offer, an offer that is further enhanced by Liverpool's continued renaissance. By working together we have an unrivalled product offer to make to potential investors."

Above:
The River Mersey -
The tie that binds us

Business awards launched

Wirral Investment Network has announced the date for this year's business awards ceremony. This exciting new event marks a great opportunity for businesses of all types and sizes to achieve much deserved recognition for achieving success in one of ten award categories.

An expert panel of judges will be aiming to identify firms that have developed in terms of growth, economic prosperity and job creation, making a significant positive impact upon the local economy.

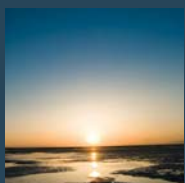
Award categories include Business Start up of the Year, Innovative Company of the Year, Business Person of the Year and the Janet Triggs Award for Creativity. Winners will be revealed during a lavish black tie gala dinner held in the grounds of Birkenhead School on Friday 6th June, 2008.

Jim Wilkie, WiN Chair said: "As Wirral's leading private and public sector networking organisation, we felt that it was vital to launch an event that recognises business performance within our area. There are countless businesses throughout Wirral that deserve recognition for their individual successes, be it in terms of job creation, financial growth or innovation."

For more information regarding the awards, please contact Gemma Henry, Wirral Direct on **0151 650 6926** or visit www.winpartnership.org



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Big Horizons is Wirral Council's inward investment newsletter.

If your business is looking to expand contact our business support team, Wirral Direct on: **+44 (0)151 650 6915** or email: helpdesk@wirraldirect.co.uk

For further information visit: www.investwirral.com

