

NEWS

Cheltenham Business Pride Newsletter • Autumn 2008

Willans named *Business Pride* Business of the Year 2008



Willans Solicitors have been named as the Cheltenham Business Pride 'Business of the Year'.

The award was given on behalf of the annual Cheltenham in Bloom event by the council's economic development team to the local firm who demonstrated not only a good floral display, but a pride in their business and a strong contribution to the local economy and social life of Cheltenham.

Supporting the local community

Margaret Austen, managing partner at Imperial Square-based Willans, who collected the trophy from council chief executive Andrew North, said: "We are surprised and delighted to receive the Business Pride award. Willans has been a part of business life in Cheltenham for over sixty years and we like to support the local community in as many different ways as we can."

Willans have been actively involved in many aspects of the town, from sponsoring local events and festivals to taking part in litter picks. Partners in the firm have acted throughout the year as trustees or honorary secretaries to the Cheltenham Festivals, art gallery and museum, and the Holst Birthplace Museum. It was also one of the first to sponsor a litter bin under the Tidy Cheltenham Group's sponsorship scheme.

Councillor Chris Ryder, chair of the Cheltenham in



Willans' Margaret Austen receiving the Cheltenham in Bloom Business Pride Trophy from Borough Council Chief Executive Andrew North

Bloom Committee, added: "We are delighted that the new Business Pride trophy was part of this year's prize giving ceremony. This award highlights all of the fantastic entries from local businesses from across the borough. They take a great deal of pride in their properties, making the town a brighter, better place to live and work for us all. We congratulate Willans on their award - they have been supporters of Cheltenham in Bloom for many years."

Since Cheltenham Business Pride launched in June, it has attracted over 150 local businesses to join, with a remit to support and celebrate local businesses' success and to provide financial and business support across the borough.

FREE Business Pride event announced

Wednesday 26 November will see the first ever Cheltenham Business Pride event staged at the Express by Holiday Inn, at Dunally Street.

The **free** event, which will take place from 10am until 5pm, will have guest speakers from **HSBC** and **Lloyds TSB** showing how local businesses can manage their finances through the current credit crisis. In addition, **Mike Wharburton** from Grant Thornton LLP and BBC Radio 2 & 4 Luminary, will be offering a slightly different take on the financial crisis. Speakers from **The Oriel Group** and **Cheltenham Borough Council's** economic development team will complete the line-up. A **free buffet** with networking opportunities will be included on the day.

Cheltenham Borough Council chief executive, Andrew North, urged local businesses to attend this unique event:

"Our economic development team has been working hard with partners The Express by Holiday Inn, to deliver a worthwhile and valuable event that local businesses in Cheltenham can attend.

"These businesses can now benefit from key information from industry experts to help them steady the ship during this credit crunch."

New Kingsditch business centre unveiled

In conjunction with Cheltenham Business Pride, the all-new Kingsditch business centre was unveiled in early September, to much acclaim.

Located at both the Vibixa and CF Roberts buildings, this new centre complements the existing one opened in March at the Lansdown industrial estate. With a £15,000 contribution from Cheltenham Borough Council's Business Pride scheme, the centres offer training, conference and meeting amenities to locally based employers located at Kingsditch and via AVM Ltd at Lansdown. Organisations now have access to many different areas of support whilst being encouraged to build networks and collaborative working. Many small-medium enterprises (SMEs) who do not carry the full range of specialist business expertise in their organisation e.g. human resources, training, marketing and purchasing, can now actively engage with their local centre, due to this innovative solution that supports their needs.



L-R: Caroline Rawlinson and Hillary Allison from Vivid PR Consultancy who promoted the event; Graham Philpot (CBC); Keith Rog (Parklife); Jenny Moss (CBC); and Sue Baldwin (Vibixia)

A unique approach

Keith Rog, Parklife's business advocate for the Cheltenham area, manages both centres on behalf of Parklife, for the use of local businesses. "This latest and exciting development of the new business centre at Kingsditch will allow local businesses the opportunity to access free training, hold regular trader meetings, all within a central point," he said.

"The unique approach of Parklife extends to all areas of business support and the encouragement of networks and collaborative working, hence the development of this latest business centre situated on the Vibixa and CF Roberts premises. Small businesses at Kingsditch who do not carry the full range of specialist business expertise in their organisation can now access support and materials to enable them to remain

competitive and add to the economic vibrancy of Cheltenham."

Vibixia's Sue Baldwin also supported the project, highlighting the fact that any local business on the estate could take full advantage of these new facilities and that it was "great for local businesses based in Cheltenham."

Long-term benefits

Jenny Moss, Cheltenham Borough Council's (CBC) economic development manager, said:

"Business networks are a great way for us to understand and act upon local business issues.

"Under our Business Pride banner, we are delighted to support this new centre, as we believe it will provide long-term benefits to enterprises in the Kingsditch area".

Grab a Grant this year

If you fancy sprucing up your shopfront, improving your company's environmental image or simply to get a website for your industrial estate, then now is the time to get your hands on some free cash!

Thanks to Cheltenham Borough Council, all you need to do is put in your bid for 50 per cent, and we'll match fund your project up to £2000, until the Cheltenham Business Pride grant fund closes for applications on **27 March 2009**.

www.cheltenham.gov.uk/businesspride

For further information

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