

Business Cornwall

Issue 50

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May 2011

Business Week 2011

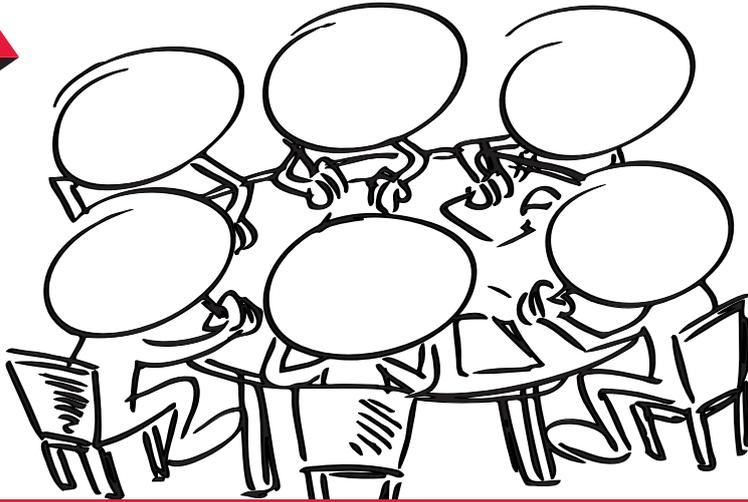
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Cornwall Business Week

Also

- ▶ Commercial property
- ▶ New LEP chairman
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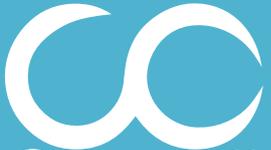
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Letters

Email your letters to nick@businesscornwall.co.uk, alternatively post them to the address at the front of the magazine. We endeavour to print all correspondence to the magazine, good or bad, as long as they're not going to get us into trouble with the lawyers!

Ferry Link feelings run high

Dear editor

Re: 'MP calls for coalition of the willing' (*businesscornwall.co.uk*, April 4, see also p9).

Andrew George came to Scilly to ask us which option we preferred. At the meeting over 90% of us put our hands up to Option A. He has ignored the wishes of the Islanders and its council.

Cornwall Council passed Option A, sadly he has not accepted what the majority and elected wanted but sided with the nimbys & do nothings. The Scillonian has had its numbers cut to 434, BIH are not taking bookings beyond this October.

Are Andrew's chickens coming home to roost?

Mike Brown, on website

Dear editor

Destroyer tries to turn into the creator.

He (Andrew George) is the main reason the scheme got turned down – he obviously had influence over the minister – a Lib Dem and used it to destroy a £65 million investment in the town.

The people of Penzance can see through it. Years of careful consideration and planning wasted.

Antony Richards, on website

Dear editor

I find it incredulous that Andrew George believes himself the right person to chair this type of meeting, given the damage he has caused so far. His political games have cost his constituency vital investment and now is the time for him to think about stepping down from his post rather than attempting to step up to the mark.

I note that he has not automatically invited the (Penzance) Chamber of Commerce to his select gathering, despite it representing over 400 businesses both in Penzance and the IoS.

I am all for getting together to try and build some kind of bridge and salvage some kind of good from the mess. But I cannot consider this a realistic opportunity for cohesion with Mr George at the helm. He lacks any credibility.

Pheona Lowell, on website



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Lovers of networking rejoice!

Networking has always been an important part of the Cornish business scene, and it goes into overdrive this month with Cornwall Business Week.

It is probably the most important week on many people's networking calendar. Businesses will be coming together on Truro's Lemon Quay for the third Business Fair (May 18), organised by the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce.

And they will be reconvening the following evening at St Mellion International for the rather swanky affair that is the Cornwall Business Awards, organised by the Cornwall Development Company.

The standard of this year's entries has been higher than ever, again providing ample evidence, if it was ever

needed, of the business talent we have here in Cornwall.

Turn to page 26 for a full preview of all the events taking place during the week. You can also check out our website for news of any extra dates added since going to press.

Also in this month's issue of **Business Cornwall** magazine, we take a look at the local commercial property sector is faring after some particularly hard years. And while the recovery is fragile, there are some encouraging signs.

The recovery is reported as "fragile" in the wider economy as well, according to the British Chambers of Commerce latest Quarterly Economic Survey. Traditionally, the picture in Cornwall has been a little different to the rest of the country, but currently the same story is being reported.



We also meet the newly-appointed chairman of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP, Chris Pomfret. He has a huge task on his hands and is clearly a glutton for punishment. But if his tenure proves successful, it will surely be one of the most notable achievements on what is an impressive CV. ▶

Nick Eyriey

Digestgeneral

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Fragile recovery

The British Chambers of Commerce's (BCC) latest Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) suggests that while the UK economy has returned to positive growth, the disappointing results highlight the fragility of the recovery.

The Q1 survey, combining 6,000 responses from businesses across the UK, is likely to have been negatively affected by the weather-related disruptions in December; however, this aside, the overall picture is still worrying, says BCC.

Cashflow and price pressures continue to constrain businesses, with 80% of manufacturing firms stating that the cost of raw materials is intensifying pressures to raise prices.

While balances for the manufacturing sector remain positive and exports are still strong, there has been a worsening across all the key balances, pointing to a choppy economic environment in Q1. The service sector shows mixed results. Though many balances have risen in the last quarter, the improvement, reports the survey, is slight and still inadequate.

Business confidence is also fragile, with national figures suggesting that manufacturers are much less confident



▶ Richard Glover: "Policy detail"

of increasing their expected turnover and profitability over the next 12 months than they were in Q4 2010.

The picture in Cornwall is broadly the same, which, as Cornwall Chamber chief executive Richard Glover points out, makes a change. He said: "For once, the figures for Cornwall follow the national pattern. In the past we have bucked the trends but the impact of increased costs and falling confidence has hit us, too.

"We agree with the BCC that the real test of the pro-business rhetoric coming from the Government will be whether the policy detail provides more than warm words." ▶

Plymouth Uni to run TIC

The University of Plymouth has been confirmed as the operator of the new £13 million Tremough Innovation Centre (TIC) in Cornwall.

Plymouth has signed a 25-year management contract to deliver on behalf of Cornwall Council, which owns the site adjacent to the university campus at Tremough.

The University of Plymouth already operates the Pool Innovation Centre, which opened last July.

TIC will house up to 70 businesses with two shared meeting rooms, break out rooms and a conference facility, and is expected to create over 140 jobs for the local economy. ▶

Dame 'Steve' on pleasure of giving

Businesses should consider giving something back to the communities that support them in times of economic hardship, a leading philanthropist has said.

Addressing Cornwall Community Foundation's Cornwall 100 Club at The Cornwall Hotel and Spa recently, Dame Stephanie 'Steve' Shirley told businesses that they can get a lot out of supporting local groups and causes.

Dame Steve, 77, who was a female pioneer in the world of computers in the 1960s, has given away large chunks of her £150m fortune in the years since she sold her businesses and retired.

She spoke of the "pleasure of getting involved" that donating money gave her, and said: "If it is local, you can see the effect of what you are doing.

"There is a warm glow of satisfaction you get when you can see the results of your gifts in action. Two or three, or four or five years on you can say 'yes, I made that.'



▶ Dame Stephanie 'Steve' Shirley: "Warm glow"

"There is a lot of poverty in Cornwall and it is the local support that the Community Foundation is so good at." ▶

CCB conference

Cornwall's annual performance-boosting conference takes place later this month, bringing together management and marketing experts to share their knowledge and experience.

The free event in Truro on May 25 gives companies the opportunity to attend short practical sessions on project management, leadership, marketing and web design.

"We listen to employers in everything

we do and have put together this event in response to demand and customer feedback," said Tamsyn Harris, from Cornwall College Business (CCB). "The event ties in with our performance-boosting short courses, which are designed to be practical and accessible to those in employment."

To book a place, call CCB on 0800 731 7594. ▶

Camborne to reveal BID plans



Camborne is set to reveal plans to become Cornwall's fourth Business Improvement District (BID).

The town hopes to follow in the footsteps of Truro and Falmouth, and most recently Newquay, in setting up a BID, which could create a ring-fenced fund of over £500k over a five-year period to improve the town environment.

A presentation evening is being held at Camborne Rugby Club on May 9 (6pm), where businesses can learn more

about how the BIDs work, and what has been achieved by the Truro and Falmouth schemes.

George Le Hunte, chairman of BID Camborne Steering Group, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for businesses in Camborne to have their say on what should be done to improve our town, and to really make it happen."

If the general feedback to a Camborne BID is positive at this early stage, consultation with businesses will take place during 2011 leading to a spring 2012 ballot, meaning that project delivery could begin in April 2012 with funds available until March 2017. ▶

Briefs

Farming: Cornwall Farmers has teamed with Countrywide Farmers plc and BOCM PAULS to strengthen its feeds business. The agreement and will see the farmer-owned co-operative further develop and sell its own Pinnacle range of compound feeds through a new supply agreement with Countrywide Farmers. The BOCM PAULS feed range will now be available from both Cornwall Farmers.

Branching: Cornish outdoor education centre BF Adventure has welcomed Truro Tree Services as its latest corporate partner. Truro Tree Services will provide the charity with split wood and chippings as well as free tree surgery services.

Biting: A Cornish dental laboratory is expanding its business after being chosen to join a specialist denture clinic network. Dental Precision, which employs 18 people from its base just outside St Agnes, has joined Changing Faces Denture Clinics.

Lending: Lloyds TSB Commercial has formed a specialist team in Cornwall to help the local property sector. Relationship manager Peter Watts said: "By establishing this team in Cornwall we are aiming to further increase lending to the right businesses at a time when the SME property sector needs confidence and stability."

Crashing: Saltash-based John Richards Shopfitters has gone into voluntary liquidation, owing 260 creditors in excess of £1 million.

Selling: Magazine printer St Ives Web, which employs 300 people at its plant at Roche, has been sold to Walstead Investments in a deal worth £20M. It will be merged into Walstead's Wyndeham Press Group and be known as Wyndeham.

Recruiting: Cornish recruitment company Talent Cornwall is offering a new service where employers can spread the recruitment cost over a year. And if the recruit leaves in that time, the payment stops.

Goonhilly plans develop

Goonhilly Earth Station (GES) Ltd has signed an agreement for a consortium of universities to use the large telescopes for radio astronomy purposes.

The consortium of Universities "CUGA" includes many of the UK's leading radio astronomers.

Operations director for GES Ltd, Piran Trezise, said: "This deal with CUGA represents the next piece in the jigsaw by bringing in university-based researchers to enable world-class research to be carried out right here on site."

Meanwhile, GES is continuing to pursue public funding to support the considerable private investment needed for Goonhilly's redevelopment. CEO Ian Jones said: "Our intention is to place Goonhilly firmly back at the forefront of pioneering technology by re-purposing



▶ Goonhilly Earth Station: Big plans

existing infrastructure and one of our key goals is to promote space and science." ▶

RDA confirms assets sale

The South West RDA has confirmed that it will be selling its assets across the region worth over £40 million.

The Government, which is closing all the RDAs across the country, said 'packages' of major assets can now be sold to three local authorities in region (Cornwall, Plymouth City and Gloucester City councils).

In addition to the local authority sales, some 33 assets across the region will be sold separately at open market value. In managing these sales, the RDA says it will only consider offers matching this open market value to ensure full value for the taxpayer.

Business Cornwall understands that one of its more high profile assets, the Wave Hub, will stay in public ownership. ▶

Low Carbon Grant launched

A new £5 million Low Carbon Grant Fund to help Cornish businesses reduce their carbon footprint has been launched.

A call for applications was launched at the end of April and will be followed by a workshop to provide more information and to respond to questions from potential applicants.

Applications for a minimum of £70k of Convergence

investment up to a maximum of £1 million can be made. In all cases this investment must be matched by the applicant at a rate that will be dependent upon the size of business and project proposal.

It is anticipated that successful contracts will be issued in the autumn. ▶

Insurance skills shortage

The managing director of Truro-based general insurer Cornish Mutual fears there is a shortage of skilled professionals looking to work in the insurance industry.

Alan Goddard said: "I think we need to educate people so that they understand that it can be very satisfying with salary and skills development delivering long-term rewards.

"It's hard to attract good-quality people to work in the insurance industry in the West Country unless they're already looking for a change of lifestyle, rather than for career reasons."

Cornish Mutual is working with learning providers to develop its own, in-house staff development scheme. ▶

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Expansion for East Points West

Falmouth-based marketing consultancy East Points West has launched a new social enterprise division.

The new division will offer consultancy advice to existing and start up social enterprises as well as creating new events that will offer a social enterprise dimension.

James Melville, who started the firm in April 2010, said: "We have been working with a number of social enterprises both in Cornwall and across the UK and we now want to establish a new division which reflects our current work within this area." ▶



▶ James Melville: New launch

Zantra snaps up JAD units

Bodmin-based IT specialist Zantra Technology has been on the acquisition trail.

It has acquired the JAD Logic and JIS businesses from Plymouth-based JAD Group, to fuel its further growth in the south west.

MD Karen Broad explained: "JAD Logic and JIS are long-established businesses with a real track record of success providing

both solutions support and managed services in the IT sector.

"As such, they complement our team at Zantra and enable us to provide a wider range of technology service and support that bring real and measurable business benefits to our clients." ▶

Creative battle

Cornish creative businesses have five nominations in a variety of categories in the 2011 Media & Innovation Awards.

Sea Communications is nominated in the Community Web Use category for its Bid Design Challenge project, while Gendall Design is up for the same award for Dott Cornwall.

Penryn-based Venn Creative will be battling it out with Nixon Design in the Graphics section of the awards, while MailAway has been nominated in the Collaboration Between Business and Young People category.

The winners will be revealed at a ceremony in Plymouth on Thursday June 9. ▶

Business chief's skills concern



▶ Adam Chambers: "Concern"

Despite accounting for nearly a sixth of all businesses in the south west and employing around 144,000 people, the creative sector is facing more challenges than most when it comes to business growth.

That's the opinion of Adam Chambers, chief executive of Peninsula Enterprise, which delivers the Business Link Skills service.

He said: "The situation is all the more a cause of concern when one considers that many employers within the sector are saying that lack of experience and specialist skills are the main obstacles for

Briefs

Film star: A bespoke video made for a Cornish hotel's website has proved to be an instant success. Sideways Cornwall's short film for the Scarlet Hotel has increased time spent on the home page by 70%

Googled: Eight Wire marketing coordinator Liz Parsons has achieved a professional qualification in Google Adwords, the UK's most widely-used online advertising program.

Rock on: Bodmin-based PR company Barefoot Media has been appointed to promote the Rock Oyster Festival (June 17-19), a three-day event celebrating the best of Cornish produce and entertainment, in aid of Cornwall Hospice Care and The Army Benevolent Fund.

Standards: Truro-based event management company Event Cornwall has been awarded the British environmental standard BS8901.

Organic: Skincare company Spiezia Organics has teamed with Seasalt Clothing to launch a Soil Association certified 100% organic lip balm. Seasalt will be selling the balm in store and online.

In the Media: Plans have been unveiled for a new recording studio in Cornwall. Farmhouse Media hopes to develop a disused barn near Constantine into a multimedia hub for businesses. A former piggery, the building project has been designed by the Falmouth-based Architect Richard Tosic.

recruitment to help them grow, yet 85% of creative and cultural businesses have no specific entitlement to funding support for training.

"Clearly, there is a need to more closely align higher education with the practical needs of businesses in this field and for employers to obtain impartial advice on skills development and to focus much more attention on vocational training such as creative apprenticeships." ▶

Minister “supports” Docks plans

Shipping Minister Mike Penning has backed Falmouth Harbour Commissioners’ (FHC) proposals for the future of the port, which could create hundreds of jobs over the next five years and safeguard the local economy.

During a two-hour visit to Falmouth Docks last month, Penning was given a guided tour of the harbour and learned about the vital role the port plays in the Cornish economy.

David Ellis, FHC chairman, briefed the minister on plans for the future, including the Port of Falmouth Development Initiative, and FabTest – Falmouth’s

proposal to become a test site for marine energy devices.

Penning said the port had his “full support”. He said: “Coastal shipping and ports play a vital role in the economy and we need our ports operating to the best of their abilities.

“I’ve been out to see the area where the dredging is needed and it seems to me that this is very important for Falmouth. We need to protect jobs, create jobs and create growth.”

Proposals include modernising ship repair facilities, upgrading wharves at the Docks, improving bunkering



services, a new state-of-the-art 290 berth marina and providing new super yacht workshops and offices. ▶

Marine fact finding trip

Local marine leisure providers gained a valuable understanding of French maritime businesses when they visited Finistère in western Brittany recently.

The three-day trip focused on sharing best practices, innovation ideas and developing partnerships to support the

sustainable development and growth of the marine leisure sector in the Atlantic area.

Businesses on the trip included South West Lakes Trust, International Metre Yacht Management, the West Cornwall Luger Industry Trust in Newlyn, and Surf Action.

The group gained a behind-the-scenes insight into the vibrant marine activity that dominates this coastal pocket of France, touring watersports outlets, boatyards and tourism centres. ▶

New apprenticeship scheme



Cornwall Marine Network (CMN) has launched a new apprenticeship programme to help drive business growth in the marine sector.

CMN says benefits of the scheme to marine businesses include up to £1,750 in cash grants available per apprentice and help with recruitment.

CMN apprenticeship manager Steve Taylor explained: “We source and match businesses with suitable apprentices, saving them time and costs. Alternatively employers can sign-up one of their existing employees for the scheme.”

Tel: 01326 211382 ▶

Ferry project marooned

Government ministers have revealed that they are unable to support the Isles of Scilly Ferry project in its present form.

It is not necessarily the end of the road, however, as they said the Government is keen to work with Cornwall Council, the Steamship Company and other stakeholders to develop a “simpler, lower cost solution” for the Isles of Scilly Ferry service.

However, the Council has also now distanced itself from the scheme, saying it is not their responsibility.

Local MP Andrew George is trying to pick up the pieces and has called for a “coalition of the willing” to help rescue the project. ▶

A FabTest

Falmouth Harbour Commissioners (FHC) has submitted a licence application for an energy test site in Falmouth Bay.

The Falmouth Bay test site, known as FabTest, would enable developers to cost-effectively trial wave energy devices in calm waters with easy access to the shore, prior to linking up to Wave Hub. It would

not be connected to the grid.

The project is a partnership between FHC, Wave Hub, the University of Exeter, A&P Group, Cornwall Marine Network and Mojo Maritime. ▶

Final lap of luxury

A Cornish five star luxury holiday hamlet has completed its final development phase with the opening of a fifth listed self-catering barn conversion.

Listed Luxury at Old Lanwarnick is located at Duloe near Liskeard and was developed by owner Joanna Somerset-Wood and her partner Michael Harvey from a group of derelict farm buildings in a small hamlet recorded in the Domesday Book nearly 1,000 years ago.

The completion of the conversion of the two-bedroom Blackberry Barn completes the accommodation side of the project, but here are plans to introduce new holiday and wedding opportunities to the business.

Somerset-Wood said: "We fell in love with this place as soon as we saw it and could see how it could be developed. In the event we had to remove 17 buildings before we could make a proper start but



▶ Joanna Somerset-Wood: Vision

we were superbly supported by the local conservation officer and Charles Hunt, our architect." ▶

Cornwall a "super destination" says Minister



▶ Malcolm Bell: "Highly encouraged"

VisitCornwall along with its counterpart, Visit Devon, has welcomed comments made by the Tourism Minister identifying the two counties as being 'super destinations', prime for targeting overseas visitors.

John Penrose considers Cornwall and Devon, alongside London, in their attractiveness among high-spending overseas

visitors and urges the tourism bodies for the two counties to work with the local tourism industry to promote the region.

Malcolm Bell, head of tourism at VisitCornwall, said: "We are highly encouraged to be recognised in this way but with limited budgets our promotional spend has to be thoroughly considered and underpinned by the drive for effectiveness and maximum return on investment.

"To attract visitors from other overseas destination we require the support of VisitBritain and following Mr Penrose's positive views for the region, we would like to see Cornwall and Devon featured alongside the likes of London in its £100 million drive to make Britain the must-see destination."

Meanwhile, VisitCornwall has launched a micro-site for lovers of all things Cornwall – ilovecornwall.co.uk. ▶

From coast to coast

Mullion-based holiday let company Cornish Cottages has revealed plans to expand its business outside the Lizard Peninsula.

Since rebranding 18 months ago, the business has enjoyed steady growth, and is now looking to let properties on the north coast, as well as Penzance, St Ives and Lands End.

Marketing and communications manager, Sharon Sandercock, said: "With bookings continually growing and with a high volume of new visitors and repeat customers taking their staycation in our beautiful county, we are now looking to expand our portfolio of properties in these particular areas to meet this demand." ▶

Record year for Nettleton Group



▶ The Bay Hotel: Strong trading

A Cornish hotel group has reported a record year of results with combined turnover up by ten per cent.

The Nettleton Group comprises The Bay Hotel, The Esplanade Hotel and Fistral Spa, all in Newquay, and most recently acquired Boringdon Hall Hotel in Devon.

Director James Nettleton said: "We are very fortunate to finish 2011 in a secure position, largely as a result of some very hard work on the part of our staff and also a solid focus on continually gauging and reacting to the marketplace and the needs of our consumers.

"We are completely committed to strengthening the quality and appeal of our products on an ongoing basis. 2011/12 is potentially going to be a very tough year – it's vital that hotels improve on their current strengths and make changes where necessary. Competition will be fierce but we believe that those who take a proactive approach will stand to benefit in the long run." ▶

Tourism goes Wild

Wild Card has been appointed the lead domestic PR agency for VisitCornwall.

Wild Card, a consumer brand specialist with offices in both London and Truro, won the business through a tender process, culminating in a four-way pitch.

VisitCornwall's marketing manager Penny Woodman said: "We are looking forward to working with the Wild Card team to build on Cornwall's enviable position as the UK's number one visitor destination, generating across the year exposure for Cornwall's quality tourism offering." ▶

A Clear future

Environmental company Clear-flow Ltd has moved into brand new, high quality workspace that has cost more than £867k.

The build, which received £425k ERDF Convergence investment, is located at United Downs Industrial Park, and will receive a BREEAM Excellent rating – a measure of a high standard of environmental performance in commercial and industrial buildings.

Clear-flow Ltd, which was founded in 1982 and is a disposer of liquid waste, had previously operated from two sites about eight miles apart in Bissoe and Camborne as well as a depot in Newton Abbott.

MD James Hustler said: “We are extremely proud of the building which is a step change on where we were before. It reflects our desire to enhance the environment whilst saving us money through improved efficiencies.”

Carleen Kelemen, director of the Convergence Partnership Office, added: “The ERDF Convergence investment in this high spec new build will allow a well-established company that has grown steadily over the decades to expand even further.”

The project has provided 580sq m of hybrid workspace and will create 15 new jobs. Architects were Robertson Partnership with CSA Architects as BREEAM



▶ New home: Clear-flow offices

assessors and the construction was carried out by Cathedral Builders.

Business Location Services handled the ERDF Convergence application. ▶

Border crossing



▶ Border control (l-r): David Rayment and Paul Clahane

Torbay-based residential property management company TMS Group has its eyes firmly set on Cornwall following the acquisition of a Saltash business.

TMS has acquired the property management division of Hunt Associates for an undisclosed sum. It hopes the deal will help boost annual turnover by £100k.

TMS group chairman David Rayment said: “Acquiring the property services aspect of Hunt Associates’ business is an important step in our growth strategy. The 34 schemes we’ve gained through this acquisition gives us a much stronger

footing in south west Cornwall and a good launch pad from which to develop our client base in the wider county of Cornwall.”

The acquisition will see Hunt Associates’ proprietor, Paul Clahane, join TMS in a consultancy role. ▶

Domino’s plans for Cornwall

An international fast food company is set to open in Truro shortly as part of an ambitious plan to expand across Cornwall.

Domino’s Pizza has paid the owner of Trafalgar Stores, just off the Trafalgar Roundabout, a ‘substantial amount’ to buy the business and turn it into a takeaway.

The deal which was negotiated by Miller Commercial property consultants includes a parcel of land behind the shop for a car park. The fast food company’s plans include a £250k extension and fitting for the store as well as paying out more than £100k to create enough car parking.

Domino’s Pizza’s acquisitions surveyor, Tom Poulton, said the company



▶ Trafalgar Stores: Pizza delivery

wants to get a foothold in every major town in Cornwall. ▶

Tremough contract for Leadbitter

University College Falmouth (UCF) and the University of Exeter (UoE) have announced the appointment of UK contractor, Leadbitter Group, to undertake the next phase of development at the Tremough Campus in Penryn.

With a combined value of £49 million, the contract will include the construction of three major projects – UCF’s Academy for Innovation & Research, UoE’s Environment and Sustainability Institute, and The Exchange.

The Leadbitter Group is also the contractor for Cornwall Council’s Tremough Innovation Centre (TIC), which is being constructed on land adjacent to the Tremough Campus, due for completion this autumn. ▶

Driftwood is best in Britain

St Agnes pub the Driftwood Spars has been named Britain's Freehouse of the Year by The Publican magazine.

Landlady Louise Treseder collected the award at a ceremony in London last month, hosted by comedian and TV presenter Dara O'Briain.

She said: "This is absolutely amazing and I'm so proud of my team for helping us win this award."

The Publican judges were looking for evidence of financial success, a pub that

offers something unique, investment, long-term development plans and excellence in staff training.

Fellow shortlisted pubs from Cornwall included the Rashleigh Arms in Charlestown, the Kings Arms in St Just and the Fountain Inn in Mevagissey. ▶



▶ Toast: Driftwood named best freehouse

Keeping it local

A new business has been set up near Hayle promoting the delights of locally-reared pork.

A Pig of my Own is the brainchild of Shirley Cookson, who breeds and rears rare breed pigs with an emphasis on

British Lops, the most endangered of British pigs.

Since moving with her family to their smallholding, the goal has been to keep rare breeds, and help preserve them from dying out through encouraging people to

buy a pig at around eight weeks old, and ultimately having it delivered months later as meat cuts of their choice.

Being internet-based, the business can reach customers far and wide, but Cookson is hoping for local customers to keep the 'food miles' down. ▶

Stein (Jill not Rick) in spotlight



▶ Jill Stein: Highly influential

Jill Stein has been named among the Top 100 Most Influential Women.

Women from across the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industry celebrated their achievements at an awards ceremony held at the Savoy Hotel.

The Women 1st Top 100 acknowledges the 100 most influential women who have demonstrated their commitment, passion and success for both personal growth and industry recognition.

Jill Stein, of The Seafood Restaurant in Padstow, was named in the list alongside the likes of Alex Polizzi, Delia Smith CBE, Angela Hartnett and Nigella Lawson.

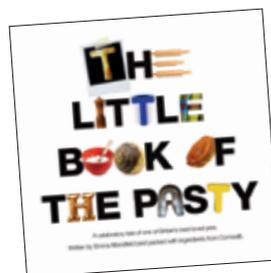
Whilst Rick's name is recognised worldwide, Jill has been instrumental in running and inspiring the growth of the company which includes six restaurants, accommodation, a cookery school, pub and four shops. ▶

Pasties in print

The Cornish Pasty Association (CPA) has launched a pasty book to continue celebrating achieving protected status for its Cornish Pasty.

The Little Book of the Pasty, which was commissioned to renowned Cornwall-based author, Emma Mansfield, features facts and the history of Cornwall's most iconic food.

Alan Adler, chairman of the CPA, said: "After receiving PGI status, the CPA wanted to leave a legacy for the Cornish Pasty. The Little Book of the Pasty is an absorbing account of the history of our region's most famous food product and it truly demonstrates the Cornish passion for pasties."



The book is available through independent bookstores and tourist attractions in Cornwall, on Amazon and in selected Waterstones. ▶

Fish supplier expands

Leading Cornish seafood supplier Fish for Thought has expanded into new premises in Bodmin.

Previously based in St Columb, Fish for Thought has invested heavily in the new 6,000 sq ft premises to meet its goal of rapid growth over the next three years.

The factory refurbishment was funded solely from the company's own reserves and it received no grant funding.

Fish for Thought supplies a number of top Cornish and London restaurants, as well as direct to consumers via its website. ▶

Stags appointment

Tiffany Chambers has joined the rural property consultancy of Stags' Truro office as a surveyor.

Over the past few years she has worked for Strutt & Parker and Lister Haigh, covering all aspects of rural professional practice, and also worked with the commercial firm Vail Williams.

In her new role with Stags, Chambers will be covering all aspects of rural property surveying, providing advice to owners and occupiers on property related issues across Cornwall.

She passed her Assessment of Professional Competence last year and is now an accredited member of the Royal Institution



▶ Tiffany Chambers

of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and is a probationer with the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV). ▶

Francis Clark in Cornwall

South west chartered accountant Francis Clark is on a recruitment drive in preparation for opening its first office in Cornwall.

The company, which has offices in Exeter, Plymouth, Torquay, Tavistock, Taunton and Salisbury, is moving into new premises on Malpas Road in Truro.

Partner Giles Hutchings said: "We consider ourselves to be best of breed

accountants and business advisors and want to recruit local talent who share our objectives.

"We are looking to build on our reputation and establish a dynamic Cornwall practice based on local expertise and local knowledge." ▶

Valuer returns

Estate agent Miller & Son has added an experienced valuer and surveyor to its Truro-based commercial and business transfer department.

Steve De'Ath has worked in the industry for 25 years covering all aspects of both commercial and residential agency and specialising in land development and estate management throughout the south west.

His primary role with Miller & Son will be the valuation and sale of commercial,

industrial and retail premises throughout Cornwall and west Devon.

He worked for the Miller family 20 years ago before moving on to broaden his experience, working with both major regional house-builders and in asset management. ▶

Full of Energy

Cornish sustainability company Enact Energy has appointed a new marketing manager.

Judith Ball joins the Tolvaddon-based company having served as global marketing manager for ecoFridge – a manufacturer of an environmentally friendly refrigeration system designed for the logistics industry.

In addition, former UK projects manager John Moores has been promoted to head of sales. ▶



▶ Steve De'Ath

Thomason joins 20/20

Falmouth-based design and build company 20/20 has recruited former Absolute brand manager Simon Thomason.

Thomason has worked on a number of design projects in the leisure industry, and will work closely with Hannah Linford on 20/20's interior design projects.

Managing director Jaimie Sibert said: "Together with Hannah's designs and Simon's expertise in branding and project management, our team gives solutions that are both good looking and hard working." ▶



▶ (L-R) Hannah Linford, Simon Thomason and Jaimie Sibert

Sharp move for holiday firm

Penzance-based West Cornwall Cottage Holidays (WCCH) has strengthened its customer relations team.

The firm has named Sarah Sharp as head of client services. MD Austyn Hallworth said: "We are very excited that Sarah has decided to join the team. Her range of skills will complement the existing team brilliantly.

"She ran a very successful company serving the holiday home sector in Cornwall and we are delighted to have attained her services for the future benefit of both our owners and customers." ▶



▶ Sarah Sharp with Austyn Hallworth

Man for all seasons?

Former Unilever executive Chris Pomfret is named first chairman of Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)



After a few false starts, the LEP is starting to take shape following the appointment of its first chairman. Now the hard work can begin.

Chris Pomfret's task to lead the LEP forward and help influence Cornwall's economic direction will be a tall order, but his CV gives him every chance.

It was originally envisaged that former CBI chief Sir John Banham would be the LEP's first chairman, although these plans had to be abandoned following a decidedly lukewarm private sector response to his draft prospectus.

So following a formal recruitment process, we welcome Mr Pomfret to the part time role. And while his dealing with the Cornish business scene has been limited, his experience and achievements in the wider commercial world is undoubted.

No one could have spent so many years in senior marketing positions with

a company like Unilever if he had nothing about him.

The considered opinion in business circles is give him time. One of the big drawbacks of the Cornish business landscape is the lack of blue chip companies on which marketing expertise could be seconded to the LEP. But in Pomfret, maybe we have the next best thing.

“I am delighted that he has agreed to lead the LEP in shaping our economy over the coming months and years”

The recruitment panel was headed up by Cornwall Chamber chairman Martin Follett, and he professed himself happy the LEP had got its man. “I am delighted that he has agreed to lead the LEP in shaping our economy over the coming months and years,” he said.

Cornwall Council Leader Alec Robertson was pleased that they had got a man of Pomfret's “calibre”, while Philip Hygate, the chief executive of the Council of the Isles of Scilly, pointed to the “level of gravitas” Pomfret will be able to bring.

While critics will be deeply disappointed that someone with a track record closer to home could not have been appointed, Pomfret is keen to stress his full-time residency in Cornwall, and his “intimate” knowledge of Cornwall.

He said the partnership between the public and private sectors was key to the LEP's success, although he also made it perfectly clear that he is his own man. “The day I'm told what to say by the council is the day I'm out of here,” he said.

But it is the private sector's relationship with itself which might cause him most trouble, and it is perhaps a shame there is no mention of him being a United Nations diplomat on his CV.

For there are vocal sections of the business community that have been most unhappy with the recruitment process, feeling their voices have not been listened to.

And it has created much confusion. While an FSB employee sat on the recruitment panel, the elected FSB leadership glowered from the outside. FSB Cornwall chairman Kevin Oliver, in particular, has expressed his serious misgivings with how the whole recruitment process to the LEP has been conducted, claiming at local level, the FSB had been frozen out.

Away from Cornwall, the latest rumour to break out surrounding the LEP is the news that the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) had been selected by the Government to lead a national network for the new LEPs, to act as an “advocate” in Whitehall.

While, apparently, other business groups such as the IoD and FSB will be represented on this, they claim to not have been consulted.

Miles Templeman, IoD director general, said: "We are surprised and disappointed that the Government has appointed the BCC to head this £300k quango with no consultation or discussion with other business groups.

"We question seriously the need to spend £300k of taxpayers' money on a body whose purpose is to lobby national government on behalf of LEPs. No case has been made to us for this."

Phil Orford, the chief executive for the Forum for Private Businesses echoed the "surprise and disappointment", while Andrew Cave, the FSB's head of public affairs, said it "smacks of a top down approach which is the antithesis of localism".

Ultimately, the LEP will be judged by results. But for all the vocal backers and detractors, the truth is probably that the

Chris Who?

Chris Pomfret has over 30 years' experience in consumer goods marketing, particularly food, with one of the world's leading international companies – Unilever. He has worked in the UK, Trinidad, Brazil, France and the Netherlands and has had national, regional and global responsibilities for marketing and strategic development.

Until mid-2003 he was the business director for Frozen Foods in the UK responsible for the UK's largest grocery brand, Birds Eye. He then worked directly for the Unilever Corporate

Development Director on Marketing and the environment, until leaving to form his own marketing consultancy in 2004.

Pomfret is also a senior associate of the University of Cambridge Programme for Industry, which specialises in adult learning programmes on sustainability. He is also a trustee of a major children's charity Chase, which provides care for children with limited life expectancy and their families in the south of England.

Favourite leisure activities include golf and sailing.

majority of business people are not that bothered either way, suspecting the LEP will be just another expensive talking shop.

Perhaps it is this section that Mr Pomfret will find it hardest to engage. ▶

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Working with business from Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

"I didn't sleep last night after yesterday, it was really more beneficial than expected and I have a plethora of ideas on my mind."

**Mark Wright,
Piran Technologies Ltd**

Resource Efficiency Collaboration Clubs Reduce your energy costs...together

25% of Cornwall & Isles of Scilly based businesses cite 'Reducing costs' as their primary objective for 2011*

**Collaboration Survey 2010, PFA Research Ltd*

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Audio dynamite

You can now not only read about the latest business news developments on businesscornwall.co.uk, but you can listen to them too

An increasingly popular feature on the Business Cornwall website has been the regular podcast updates from Kernowpods.com.

The podcasts have helped give businesscornwall.co.uk an extra dimension, bringing audio interviews with many of the Duchy's top business leaders, and an 'almost live' coverage of business events up down the county as they happen.

In recent weeks KernowPods' Matthew Clarke has reported from the International Women's Day celebrations at the Cornwall Hotel; the Convergence Conference in Newquay; and the launch of the Trencherman's Guide in Padstow, to name just a few among many.

He was also at **Business Cornwall's** recent roundtable debate on the LEP, providing instant reaction from the panellists following the discussion

The podcasts have also been on top of many of the latest developments affecting the Cornish business sector, and in the past month or so has provided instant reaction to the Budget announcement, and the Council's ambitions to turn the Duchy into a renewable energy observatory.

Tim German, renewable energy and partnerships manager for Cornwall Council's Green Cornwall Programme, shared the Council's concerns over the Government's Feed in Tariff review, and plans to turn the Duchy into a centre for sustainable energy.

He said Cornwall ticks all the boxes. He said Cornwall enjoys the most sunlight in mainland UK for solar power; has the best opportunities for geothermal power with plans moving forward; the best wind opportunities; not to mention the sea resources as well.

He told Clarke: "We've met with Chris Huhne (Secretary of State for Energy



▶ Matthew Clarke records local business reaction for a podcast on the Budget 2011

and Climate Change) personally and are having this dialogue saying to him use Cornwall as an observatory to help support your activities as a Government for renewable energy.

"The podcasts offer a fresh choice of ways to stay in touch"

"We have all the mechanisms in place, local authorities are perfectly placed to deliver those for you. Devolve those responsibilities down and we can manage it through planning also through our economic development proposals based around achieving a low carbon economy."

businesscornwall.co.uk featured exclusive podcast content from Kernowpods when BT unveiled its plans for superfast broadband in Cornwall last year, and recently updated the current situation as the first homes and businesses got connected.

Most recently, we featured a podcast examining the progress of an initiative from the Convergence funded Partner to Succeed programme – Collaboration Clubs.

Clarke spoke to some of the businesses that attended the clubs at the

Pool Innovation Centre and heard at firsthand how a better understanding of collaboration can form an important part of a company's growth strategy.

Business Cornwall's editorial director Nick Eyrie explained: "Through the magazine and the website, we aim to provide as comprehensive a coverage of the Cornish business scene as possible.

"Different people like to stay in touch with the local business scene in different ways, whether it be through the traditional medium of the magazine through their letterbox, or through the daily news updates we provide to their online inbox. In the same way, the podcasts offer a fresh choice of ways to stay in touch."

If you would like to learn how podcasts from KernowPods.com could help your business and business events, contact Matthew Clarke on 01209 610890. ▶

kernowpods

Hear it here first

Listen to all the latest podcasts at businesscornwall.co.uk, in association with kernowPods.com

The phrase 'Knowledge Economy' is widely used to suggest a positive modern economy. But, asks Peninsula Enterprise CEO Adam Chambers, what does it really mean – and what potential is there for Cornwall to exploit the opportunities it provides?

Knowledge is power

A knowledge economy is one that no longer relies on basic manufacturing, physical capital and low-cost labour as the predominant pillars of its economic activity. Instead, it produces, uses, shares and deals in knowledge as the primary source of economic growth and wealth-creation. Critically, this results in the creation of high-value jobs that help to build regional prosperity.

The UK has been moving towards becoming a true knowledge economy over the last half century, as a country whose goods tend to be intangibles like research, financial services, culture and education. More recently, the internet revolution has accelerated this process, enabling small and large knowledge businesses to trade globally from anywhere in the UK and, indeed, anywhere on the planet.

All this means that Cornwall has as much opportunity today to ride the knowledge train as anywhere else. Indeed, with its industrial heritage now long in the past, and with its world-renowned environmental beauty, the county should be strongly placed as a magnet for the kind of creative, progressive businesses and people that drive the knowledge economy.

Clearly, it is home to many of such people and organisations, and I have regularly written about them in these pages. However, new research commissioned by Peninsula Enterprise from The Work Foundation London suggests that Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are lagging behind the rest of the UK, both in the presence of knowledge-intensive industries and in the academic achievements of their young people at GCSE and A-level.

This is not to say that the county is facing unique or insuperable difficulties, and there are many areas of encouragement. These include a substantial rise

in the proportion of people employed in knowledge industries in Cornwall (up to 43.1% from 40.6% in recent years), and the fact that 39.6% of employees work in highly skilled jobs as managers, professionals and associate professionals.

While both these figures are still below the national average, they do show that Cornwall has a strong pool of highly skilled individuals. The challenge facing us now is to create demand for these higher-level skills that develops and grows in the years to come.

The research shows a lack of opportunities for new graduates and other highly skilled individuals. This is a key issue

that needs urgently to be addressed in the years to come – particularly if public spending cuts reduce the number of skilled jobs available in the publicly funded health and education sectors.

I for one, though, am confident that the future of Cornwall lies in the knowledge and skills of its people and its businesses, thanks in no small part to its excellent position to capitalise on the growth of the low-carbon economy and the creative industries.

More than that, the strength of the Cornish brand has long been a mainstay of our economy. Today, that brand is evolving as companies like Penryn's Engineered Arts, which has sold its robots across the world to organisations including NASA, help give the county a global reputation for innovation and technological excellence.

So looking ahead, Cornwall's business community needs to grasp such opportunities and work with the local authority to sell the county's special strengths more powerfully than ever before.

I believe that this is the key to unlocking the county's latent potential – and it is exactly where the forthcoming Local Enterprise Partnership, which will see unprecedented levels of co-operation between the public and private sectors, should focus much of its attention. ●



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Enterprise**

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Peninsula Enterprise delivered Convergence support through the Business Link service in Cornwall and The Isles of Scilly, with investment provided by the South West RDA and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Convergence Programme.

Bailiffs and Sheriffs

Chris Parkman, MD at insolvency practitioner Purnells, explains who might be best to enforce a Court Judgment

The right person

This article is the third in a series of how best to enforce your judgment in order to reclaim the money owed to you by one of your customers.

The particular focus is on whether statistics (and common sense) show whether a County Court Bailiff or a High Court Sheriff (enforcement officer) is most effective.

So who do you choose? Both Bailiffs and Sheriffs are authorised to remove and also sell any items collected from your customer debtor if you have an unsatisfied judgment.

Bailiffs

A County Court Bailiff works under the instruction of a form called a Warrant of Execution. County Court Bailiffs are required to write to the debtor before they attend for collection, whereas Sheriffs are not required to do.

A Bailiff is a salaried civil servant employed by Her Majesty's Court Service to enforce judgments up to £5k. Irrespective of whether the bailiff collects in money or not, he still gets paid!

Sheriffs

By contrast, a Sheriff is not a salaried employee like a Bailiff, and instead earns his fees only upon collection from a debtor.

In addition, a High Court Sheriff has certain powers that a bailiff does not, for example, they are authorised to force entry into commercial premises without notice to the occupier, giving them the advantage of surprise.

A High Court Sheriff works under the authority of a document known as a Writ of Fieri Facias, known as a 'Fi Fa', which can be issued when a judgment is transferred to the high court through submitting form N293A obtainable from hmcourts-service.gov.uk.

This will usually take between five and 21 days to be transferred and will require a court fee of £50 which will be repaid to you, together with all other related expenditure, and 8% interest once the collection of the debt proves successful.

But who has the higher financial incentive in reclaiming?

As you can see, the main difference between a County Court Bailiff and a High Court Sheriff comes down to their financial incentive or lack of such an incentive. This in turn may affect their motivation.

“Statistics show that collections from enforcements taken on by the High Court Sheriffs surpass the national average”

Statistical Analysis Statistics show that collections from enforcements taken on by the High Court Sheriffs surpass the national average, which is currently quoted

to be 67p in the £1 (Ministry of Justice 2009) by 40%, bringing their average success rate to 93p in the £1.

Therefore, given the choice it would perhaps be advantageous for you as a creditor to consider taking the necessary steps to transfer your existing judgment to the High Court in order that you might then instruct a Sheriff.

For more information on effective ways of reclaiming money due to you, please read our previous articles by visiting our website (purnells.co.uk/profile/Articles-on-Insolvency).

When applying for the transfer of a County Court Judgment to the High Court we always recommend that you instruct your regular solicitor. 📞



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Don't panic!

Harland Accountants' Deborah Edwards has some timely advice for businesses struggling under the media hype of economic doom and gloom

Plan in advance

Regular readers will have seen our Budget comment in last month's edition. General feedback from local business people was that we got the general sentiment surrounding the budget spot-on. Phew!

Budgets come and go, grabbing the headlines, yet in their wake leave a trail of lasting effect that can have a huge impact on the success and failure of small businesses in Cornwall, particularly in the thing that matters most... cash flow.

An increase in National Insurance and a top end suppression of the basic rate tax band coupled with reduced corporation tax rates begs the question regarding the merits of incorporation. Or is the increase in the personal allowance too big a carrot to stick to your sole trade or partnership? To the untrained eye, it can be difficult to know exactly what to do for the best.

At the beginning of April, we received confirmation that the National Minimum Wage was going up to £6.08 from October 2011 for over 21's. OK, so this won't affect this summer's seasonal workers but it will hit the pocket next season with margins already being squashed from the top down by consumer pressure to spend less

Combined with the media hype that causes us to panic and tighten our purse strings, it can be tempting to shut up shop altogether and buy that round the world ticket. So, what do I recommend? Firstly, don't panic! Plan in advance. Our local small businesses really are robust when it matters and have the flexibility to adapt to change quickly no matter what the market or the government throws at them.

It has been great to see many of our clients, whom we support with management accounts, actually bucking the trend because they are keeping a close eye on their figures. These businesses usually prepare detailed forecasts and can anticipate cash flow shortages or ad hoc expenditure. Be smart. Know your costs and know your margins and just as importantly, know that not every sale is worth your while.

Try to keep things local to stimulate the local economy and look to re-assess your supplier arrangements and negotiate in return for loyalty. Look at ways of doing things differently to attract new clientele. The phrase 'if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got' just doesn't cut the mustard these days. Have a Plan B, if something isn't working, be able to spot the signs and change tack.

Remember we're all in this together. All our businesses are co-dependent

on the existence and success of other businesses as suppliers and contractors. Unlike the Budget, we pride ourselves on delivering a partnership that goes beyond dipping in and out once or twice a year but creating a long lasting and supportive relationship with small businesses whom we are proud to call our clients.

To find out how we might be able to support your business call 08453 883 274 for an informal chat. ▶

“Try to keep things local to stimulate the local economy and look to re-assess your supplier arrangements and negotiate in return for loyalty”



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Zeitgeist

Among the clutch of this month's research must-haves, Zeitgeist reveals the best potted plants to have in the office, and how we're greener at home than the workplace

Dreams on hold

Dreams never die, they maybe just get put back a little.

That's the conclusion of a report from retirement and protection specialist LV=. It says that despite the economic gloom, Brits still have aspirations such as that idyllic holiday or dream home, but realise they may have to wait until their retirement years to fulfil them.

When it comes to their dream home, one in three (33%) have had what they consider their ideal home. Of those who have not yet achieved their ideal home 41% hope to do so in the future.

Unsurprisingly, affordability is the main reason most people are not yet in

“One in three (33%) have had what they consider their ideal home”



their ideal homes, but 14% are hopeful that as they reach retirement, their dream home will become a reality.

When it comes to travel, LV='s research found despite keeping their holiday dreams pragmatic, the majority of people have not followed their ambitions – 55% say they have not yet been on their idea of a perfect holiday, of which most 78% hope to still achieve later in life or in retirement. ▶

Greener at home than work



A recent survey conducted during Climate Week (March 21-27) found that an overwhelming majority of Britons are taking “positive action” when it comes to tackling climate change.

85% of those questioned were taking steps, with 54% believing it is down to each individual to take responsibility.

Recycling tops the list of things that the UK public does at home in a bid to prevent climate change, with nine out of 10 people saying they recycle on a regular basis.

However, it is a different story in the workplace. The Aviva survey showed just 18% had a climate change policy at their

“Recycling tops the list of things that the UK public does at home in a bid to prevent climate change”

place of work, although they are very keen that the same practices they carry out at home in regard to recycling and energy saving are implemented by their companies.

Among the most important things people said should be instigated at work were:

- Recycling (63%)
- Turning off idle printers (60%)
- Using low energy bulbs (59%)
- Turning off lights (48%)
- Using solar powered heating (40%)
- Turning down the heating (33%) ▶

Online shopping fears

According to a YouGov survey, one fifth of British adults have been victim of online fraud.

The study reports that 21% of those surveyed had been caught out online, while 88% of shoppers had either been a victim of fraud or were worried that it could happen to them in the future.

Interestingly, fears over online security increased with age.

Meanwhile, 95% of online adults indicated that they have made purchases online, with 70% of those stating they pay for goods at least once per month.

And 64% of online shoppers had abandoned a purchase due to issues relating to speed and difficulty in making a payment. ▶



85% IP unaware

Small businesses need to do more to protect their innovations, according to a new report published by the intellectual Property Office.

The Intellectual Property Awareness Survey shows that just 15% of small companies have ever sought advice on safeguarding their ideas.

Only 11% of firms overall assign responsibility for managing intellectual property (IP) right, compared to 43% of larger companies. ▶

Big, bold and fleshy



Zeitgeist has been around the block long enough now to realise that there is research for just about anything, including what potted plants work best in the workplace.

So if you have been dogged by that dashed dilemma of what piece of fauna to place in reception, thanks to ‘workplace enrichment company’ Ambius, we can help.

For that big and bold statement (and apparently a favourite with office staff), it recommends a Kentia palm, or perhaps

“Expensive but elegant and pretty robust in low-light areas”

a Monstera deliciosa (a cheese plant to you and me).

For brightening those dim areas in the office, how about a Rhaps excelsior – the Lady Palm? “Expensive but elegant and pretty robust in low-light areas”.

For improving air quality, Spathiphyllum species and hybrids are good says Ambius, while for those tight areas where office space is a premium, tall thin plants such as Dracaenas are an absolute must. ▶

Farmland in demand

According to rural farm consultant Smiths Gore, farmland prices in England rose to a record high in the first quarter of 2011.

Prices lifted 4% to £7.9k per acre, showing an underlying strength not reflected in other markets.

Just over 16,000 acres were marketed in January to March, the same as last year. In total, 92 farms and parcels of land over 50 acres were marketed in Q1, the biggest proportion being in the south west. ▶

Water, water

If you don’t drink enough (water that is), productivity rates in the workplace will suffer.

According to the National Hydration Society, a 1% decrease in hydration levels can produce a decrease of up to 20% in production levels.

Its findings discovered that men or women who were dehydrated were more likely to feel tired and sluggish and needed

significantly more concentration and effort compared to those fully fluidly refreshed.

A daily water intake of around two litres a day is recommended.

And a top tip if you’re not sure whether you are dehydrated or not – (ahem), check the colour of your pee. If’s its dark yellow, you need some water. ▶

Government bad for business?

New online research from YouGov’s SME Omnibus survey has revealed that nearly half (48%) of senior decision makers in SMEs believe Government policies introduced since the General Election have been bad for them.

While just 26% believe the new policies have been good for businesses, exactly half believe the ‘Big Society’ will make no difference to their business.

“The most popular measure was for additional pressure to be placed on banks”

Senior decision makers were also asked which measures the Government should be concentrating on most to help small and medium sized businesses. The most popular measure for nearly a third of all respondents (31%) was for additional

pressure to be placed on banks to make finance more easily available.

Creating a competitive tax regime also proved popular with senior decision makers (28%). 15% would choose to lower VAT and 13% wanted the Government to lower personal income tax. ▶

Graduates earn £12k more

Degree holders have earned an average of £12k a year more than non-graduates over the past decade, according to ONS statistics.

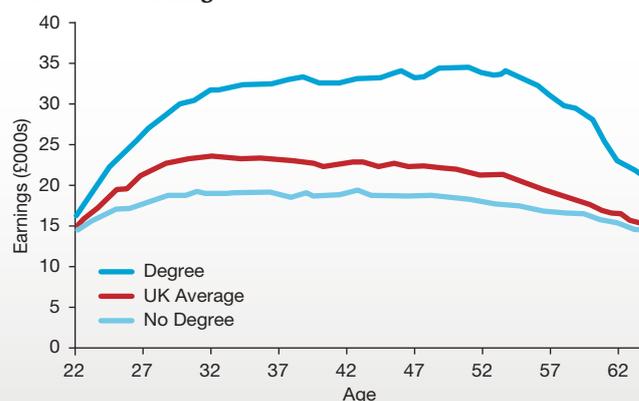
After adjusting to allow for increases in earnings over the period, the data show that graduates aged 22 to 64 had median salaries of £29.9k compared with £17.8k for non-degree holders.

Earnings are similar for those aged 22 at around £15k regardless of whether they have a degree or not.

For those without a degree, earnings increased for each year of age, levelling off at the age of 30 and peaking at the age of 34 at £19.4k

For those with a degree, earnings increased faster for each year of age. They also increased for longer, levelling off at the age of 35 and peaking at £34.5k at the age of 51. After this point average wages decreased as it is more likely that the high earners were able to retire and leave the labour market. ▶

Graduate earnings



Source: Office for National Statistics

First impressions last

Struggling to gain new business? Oxford Innovation business coach Mike Jobson explains the importance of 'brand personality'

Giving the right image

Psychologists tell us that there are only three reasons why we buy anything. In making a purchase decision we consider: -

- 1 The functional reason – what the product does for the customer, or what problem does it solve for me?
- 2 How the product makes me feel?
- 3 How the product makes me look?

Assuming that your product or service 'delivers' in a functional sense, do you take these other, more emotive, factors into account when designing your marketing communication plan?

Have you considered the following questions when considering your brand?

Who is the target customer?

What can we do to ensure that we are making the right impression with our target customer or consumer group? Firstly, understand who the target customer is.

Unless you have clearly defined who you are targeting you run the risk that your communication will fail to resonate. You need to be talking to the target in a way that they understand.

Does my brand have a personality?

Understand the essence of your brand before you brief the design agency, not the other way round.

A brand should have a personality that will appeal to the target consumer group, motivating us to buy. We as potential customers may not even be conscious of these feelings, or that we have made them based upon what we take the brand personality to be. Indeed some brand owners may not have considered these elements at all.

Why is this important to small business owners? Whether you are deliberately trying to create a brand personality or not, what you say and how you say it influences both existing and potential purchasers.

What impression does my brand give my target customer?

Every client interaction with your company will create an impression in the mind of everyone who is touched by your communication. Your web site wording, for example. Are the key messages about the brand offering clear and concise? We all buy solutions to problems that we have, is it clear to potential customers what the main benefits or solutions will be as a result of the purchase?

Does my brand inspire confidence?

In terms of your sales literature or even your web site, does the wording fill me with confidence that you are a business who knows what it is doing? Do you have testimonials from current clients that inspire a feeling of confidence?

“Unless you have clearly defined who you are targeting you run the risk that your communication will fail to resonate”

If I am a procurement person

looking at your company as a potential supplier, your company's client base should give me a feeling of confidence. If you are supplying the likes of IBM or Boeing, then you must have the capability to keep those demanding customers happy. If I am to recommend you to my MD, I am very conscious that I am potentially putting my reputation on the line. This is where the “how it makes me look” element comes into play.

Are my messages clearly displayed?

Importantly, have you critically analysed the content of your web site wording from the point of view of your target group? Ensured that your marketing communication touches the customer's emotional needs as well as functional requirements?

The addictive nature of web browsing can leave customers with a limited attention span. I may have found your web site; but be assured that in this time poor world, I will move on to your competitor's site if I don't “get it” in terms of your offering. And I may never return.

You only get one chance to make a good first impression. ▶



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Health at Work

A healthy workforce is a happier, more productive workforce, explains Workplace Health Coordinator Rachel Faulkner

Fit for the job

Having a healthy and productive workforce should be every organisation's ambition, especially in today's competitive business environment. The key to survival and success is taking care of the most important asset, the staff!

The workplace is a key setting for improving health. Over half the UK population spends an estimated 60% of their waking hours at work; therefore the workplace is undeniably an important setting for promoting a healthier lifestyle.

“The Healthy Workplace Awards gave us a structure to introduce the programme even though we are the smallest company to have achieved an award”

Cost of Ill Health

- In 2006 around 175 million working days were lost due to illness and it is estimated that the annual economic costs of sickness absence and ‘worklessness’ is over £100 billion.
- Average [annual] cost of absence per employee was £666 [CIPD 2008].
- Those who smoke six cigarettes a day or more have a 34% higher incidence of being absent than non-smokers and a 10% higher incidence of being absent for longer.
- Stress related conditions and musculoskeletal disorders are now the most common reported causes of sickness absence.

The Benefits to YOU:

- Help to attract and retain employees
- Increase productivity
- Lower absenteeism
- Reduce workplace injuries
- Improve work-ability among older employees
- Enhance corporate image
- Improve workforce morale
- Contribute to controlling insurance costs

Free Support in Cornwall

The Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Healthy Workplace Award is a county standard of good practice and quality mark of health and wellbeing in the workplace.

Its aim is to act as a toolkit to encourage employers to think about ways to improve the health and wellbeing of their employees.

Free NHS Support can be offered in the workplace, ranging from health checks to stop smoking support; from mental health awareness training to healthier eating advice.

Good Practice

In recognition of its on-going dedication to its workforce's wellbeing, Rodda's achieved the Gold Healthy Workplace Award.

Nicholas Rodda, MD of the company, comments: “Our employees are at the heart of our family business. It makes good commercial sense to ensure that whenever possible, the people who make up our company are happy and healthy.”

Rodda's is one of only a few companies in Cornwall to implement wellbeing procedures, such as free six monthly health checks (carried out by the Duchy Hospital), 24-hour counselling facilities, free fruit, and weight management classes; all with the end goal of promoting a happier and healthier working environment.

Creamery operative Mark Cooper comments: “I thought that I was fit and healthy and had no concerns about having a health check. To my surprise I was informed that I had high blood pressure and was referred to my GP. Because of this health check, I am now receiving medication and monitored closely by my GPs practice.”

The Silver Award went to Event Cornwall. Director Claire Eason-Bennett says: “Since the knowledge and skill of our team is our primary asset, supporting the staff and volunteer team at Event Cornwall through developing a healthy workplace was an obvious evolution for us. The Healthy Workplace Awards gave us a structure to introduce the programme even though we are the smallest company to have achieved an award.”



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Web: www.behealthyatwork.org

Blue skies ahead?

Business Cornwall takes a look at the Alder King Market Monitor 2011 and discovers a silver lining to the dark clouds that have been hanging over the commercial property market



While there is evidence that the worse may over, recovery in the commercial property market is a delicate flower.

Generally speaking across the south west, commercial property consultant Alder King reports a steady improvement in 2010 compared to the market lows of 2009, and highlights “increasing activity levels” moving forward.

It says office take up levels stabilised over the past year, with key centres such as Bristol, Gloucester and Cardiff witnessing significant improvement. Demand for industrial space also picked up across the region.

The company’s Truro office reports a similar story in Cornwall. Although supply for office space continues to outstrip demand, as it has done since 2007, take up in 2010 did increase on the previous year, with the most active sectors being reported as the financial and professional sectors, with several longer-term requirements being met.

Alder King says that supply of office space increased both in town and out of town locations, with a trend of moving into modern Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant premises.

Not surprisingly, given the market conditions, the average headline rent fell

for the third consecutive year, “in some cases quite notably”, according to Alder King. “Significant incentives” continue to be offered.

Indeed, at £10.50 per sq ft, the Truro area has the most competitive office rents in the south west, especially when compared with Bristol (£27.50), Plymouth (£16) and Exeter (£16.50).

The story was similar in the industrial space sector, with demand remaining reasonably consistent throughout 2010, and up on the previous two years. The cards continue to lie with the occupiers, however, taking advantage of market conditions and in many cases

negotiating incentives, with a trend towards short-term leases.

Headline rents dropped slightly to £7 per sq ft, which unlike the cost for office space, is at the higher end of the south west average. Indeed, only industrial space in Bristol is more expensive. And the report says that with short-term leases and other incentives, it expects that “true levels of rent” may not be maintained over the next year.

In the retail sector, the Alder King Market Monitor records occupation levels within the city remaining high (unlike many other Cornish centres), although average headline rents did drop slightly.

Out of town rents remained steady at £20 per sq ft. Alder King reports that the Newquay Road Retail Park is to be refurbished, with Wren Kitchens paying £18 per sq ft.

Compared to other areas in the south west, Yeovil had the lowest headline rent

at £80 per sq ft, with Bath and Cardiff the most expensive at £250. Only Taunton was cheaper than the Truro area in the south west for out of town retail space.

The recession continues to make developers cautious in the leisure market in Cornwall, with few transactions or developments in the pipeline, although the report did highlight that proposals for the Stadium for Cornwall, continue to progress.

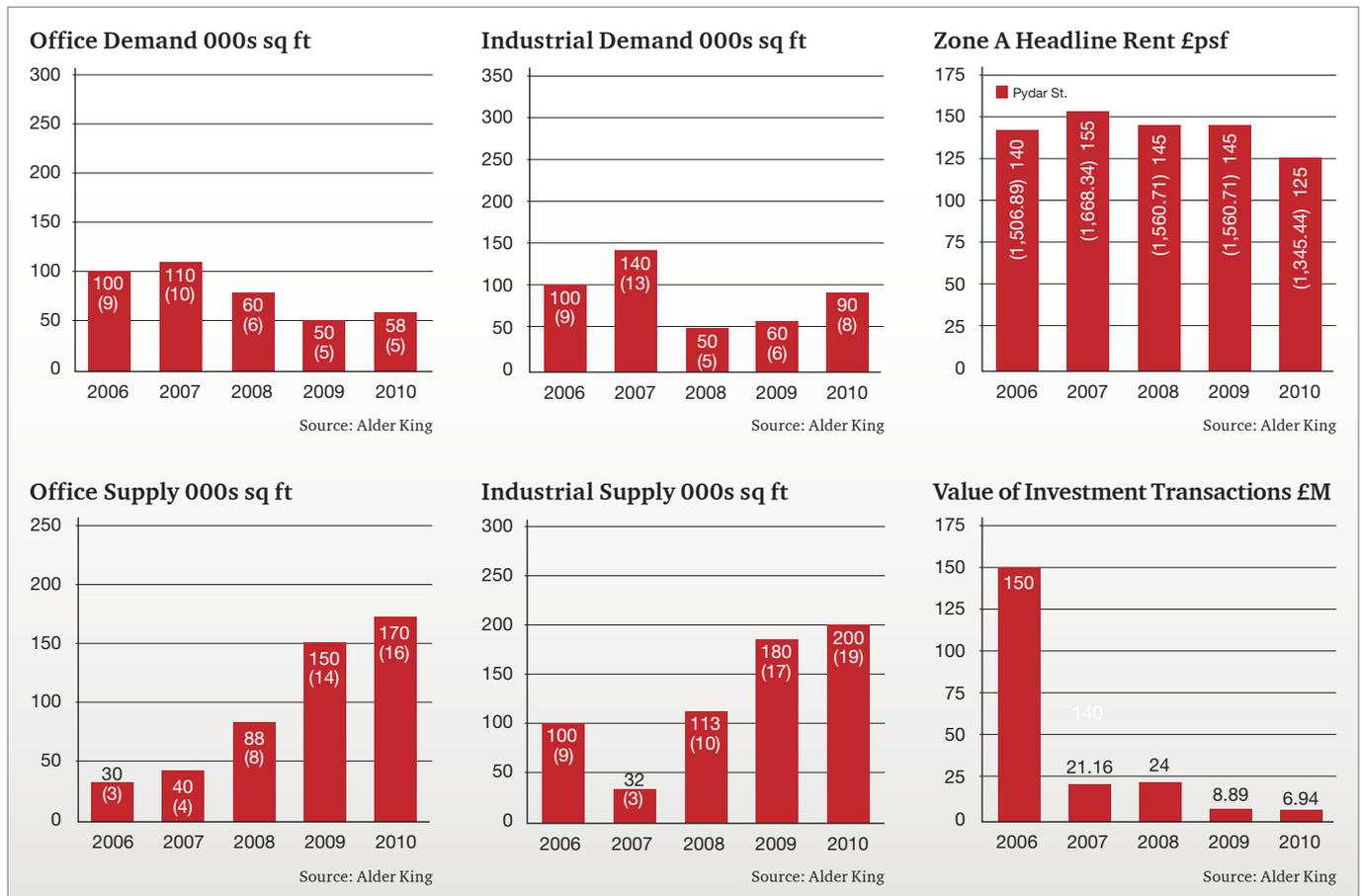
However, it reports a significant rise in leisure headline rent from £13 per sq ft to £25 per sq ft. It illustrates this with the development at Falmouth’s Discovery Quay, with Rick Stein’s Fish & Chips and Warren’s Bakers taking space and paying rents in the region of £25 per sq ft to £30 per sq ft.

The value of investment transactions fell 22% in 2010 compared to the previous year, a million miles away from the halcyon days of 2006, where the local investment figure reached £150 million.

It reported two transactions of note during 2010 in the retail sector, the most significant of which being the building let to WH Smith in Pydar Mews, Truro, which was sold by CBREi to Red Kite Property Asset Management for £5.04 million, reflecting a net initial yield of 5.37%.

Alder King offered just one office transaction of note during 2010 in its Market Monitor, with Broadcasting House on Phoenix Wharf, which is let to the BBC, sold at auction in December for £850k, reflecting a yield of 6.23%.

Alder King reported prime yields for retail, retail warehouse, offices and industrial were 6%, 6.25%, 7.25% and 7.25% respectively. ▶



Focus on Cornwall

From business seminars and trade shows, to glittering awards ceremonies, Cornwall Business Week (May 16-20) will be looking to highlight the very best of Cornwall's commercial sector

The Cornish business sector will very much be the focus of attention later this month for the annual Cornwall Business Week.

A number of events are being held across the Duchy, and wider afield, during the week beginning May 16, showcasing the best of Cornish business.

Highlights will include the third annual Business Fair, hosted by Cornwall Chamber of Commerce and Industry, on Truro's Lemon Quay on May 18.

The fair will build on the success of last year's event, and again will feature a wide selection from the Duchy's commercial sector exhibiting their business services.

In response to feedback from the last event, this year there will be an

increased accent on networking, with a larger dedicated area set aside for those all important business discussions.

Cornwall chamber chief executive Richard Glover commented: "In changing times, improved knowledge and greater connections bring real advantage. The Business Fair aims to bring together companies across Cornwall to trade, to talk, to pass on shared knowledge and to strengthen the business community."

Cornwall Business Week isn't confined to Cornwall, and indeed you couldn't get much further away than Aberdeen.

As networking continues apace on Lemon Quay, a delegation led by InvestinCornwall and including A&P, Wave Hub and PRIMaRE, will be presenting at Scotland's leading renewable

show – All Energy – explain just why Cornwall is leading the way in marine renewable energy.

Nick Blandford, business services manager for the Cornwall Development Company, said Business Week provided the perfect platform to highlight and celebrate what the Cornish business sector could do.

He said: "Cornwall Business Week is a great opportunity to not only showcase the business success that exists in the county, but also provide the opportunity for businesses to network and establish what support and expertise is out there that could benefit their business."

Carolyn Rule, Cornwall Council's Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration added: "I am delighted to be supporting Cornwall Business Week.



Pic: Toby Weller

“The Business Fair aims to bring together companies across Cornwall to trade, to talk, to pass on shared knowledge and to strengthen the business community”

“The Council has a key role to play in ensuring effective public and private sector partnership stimulates growth in the local economy. Cornwall Business Week provides an ideal platform to both celebrate and support the diverse range of companies in the county and all the talent that exists.”

Arguably the highlight of the week for many is the annual Cornwall Business Awards.

Now in its sixth year, the awards recognise some of the outstanding achievements from Cornwall’s commercial sector over the past 12 months.

Last year The Scarlet Hotel was crowned Winner of Winners, also picking up Best New Business in Cornwall and Best Website Awards.

This year, a total of 14 categories will be up for grabs at St Mellion International on May 19. TJ International will be aiming for a hat-trick of wins in the Best Use of Technology category, while Rachel Jones of Falmouth’s Fit ‘N Fun Kids will be hoping to be named Entrepreneur of the Year for the third time in four years.

Other companies on the shortlist include Datasharp (employer), Schoolcomms (growth), MailAway (business innovation) and Teagle Machinery (international).

Fruigi, Mounts Bay Veterinary Centre and TJ International are the three finalists in the **Business Cornwall**-sponsored Customer Focus category.

ShelterBox boss Tom Henderson is a finalist for the Business Leader category,



The Scarlet Hotel:
2010 Winner of Winners

along with Eric Nicholls (Spiral Construction) and Paul Wickes (Cornwall Marine Network).

There are many more events taking place throughout the week. To find out more go to www.cornwallbusinessweek.co.uk. And it’s not too late to get involved. If you have an event that you want promoting, then get in touch and the details will be incorporated on to the calendar. ▶

Events Diary

May 17

Cornwall Business Support Networking Evening (CUC, Export Cornwall and CDC)

Catch up on the changing landscape of business support. This will be your chance to update your contact list, let everyone know who you are and what you do, and find out what everyone else is up to.

Time: 5.30pm-7pm

Location: Lander Gallery, Lemon Street Market, Truro

Email: marian.bond@cuc.ac.uk

May 18

Cornwall Chambers – Business Fair

Time: 9.30am - 5.00pm

Location: Lemon Quay, Truro

Email: richard@cornwallchamber.co.uk

Online marketing: how it all fits together

Four leading Cornish internet businesses will be launching an online marketing

ebook, a free downloadable resource aimed at helping businesses to make the most of the tools available to them.

Time: 8.30am - 10.00am

Location: Hall for Cornwall

Email: anna@mail-away.co.uk

Cornwall: Leading the Way in Marine Renewable Energy

Join InvestinCornwall and the A&P Group at a special event during All-Energy. Speakers include representatives from A&P, Peninsula Institute for Marine Renewable Energy (PRIMaRE) and Wave Hub.

Time: 2.00pm - 3.30pm

Location: Room 9, All-Energy Conference, Aberdeen, Scotland

Email: kathryn@investincornwall.com

May 19

Falmouth & Penryn – Helping Cornwall to Grow

A Blend of leading local and inspirational business speakers, break out

groups and workshops, and business networking sessions.

Time: 9.00am - 12 noon

Location: Falmouth Hotel, Falmouth

Email: andy@bizwords.co.uk

Finance in Cornwall “open for business”

Quickstep guide to finance and support available to SMEs in Cornwall, run by Winter Rule. Short series of presentations providing owners/managers opportunity to engage with fund holders and support agencies on a one to one basis.

Time: 8.00am - 12 noon

Location: Trellisick Gardens, Feock, Nr Truro

Email: asmith@winterrule.co.uk

Cornwall Business Awards

Time: 6.30pm - late

Location: St Mellion, Saltash

Email: tash@investincornwall.co.uk (tickets required)

Connected Cornwall

Pyjama networking and a tasty serving of Bangers and Splash on this month's menu

More than 130 business people attended Oxford Innovation's Bangers and Splash event at Tregenna Castle Hotel in St Ives to hear marketing and entrepreneurial advice and insights from two leading experts.

Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones, aka The Black Farmer, gave delegates a run through of his career highlights and discussed the key factors in his success.

And Brett Donahay from global marketing consultancy eatbigfish, offered some thought provoking ideas on developing challenger brands and innovation in their businesses.

And the Bangers and Splash seemed to go down well with delegates. Emily Anderson from Sideways Cornwall said: "It was such an inspiring and engaging day which has really sparked my imagination as to how our business can become a challenger brand."

Meanwhile, what must be Cornwall's first pyjama networking event took place at Starbucks on Chiverton Cross, as the forerunner to this year's Cornwall Twestival event, which raised fund for the Cornwall Community Foundation.

In total, some £4.5k was raised from the event, which culminated with live music at The Beach Hut at Watergate Bay.

Also this month, we feature photos from a Sporting Heroes dinner jointly held by Coodes and Savills at St Mellion International, which helped raise £3k for the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute.

And Truro-based general insurer Cornish Mutual held its AGM recently at the Royal Showground in Wadebridge.

Chairman Gerald Blewett gave a speech to the company's Members before they enjoyed a specially prepared lunch and refreshments during the event. ▶

Bangers and Splash



All captions L-R ① Dan Parker (Firetext) and Toby Parkins (UKNetWeb) ② Tom Telford (3 White Hats) and Stafford Sumner (Jarrang) ③ Robert Rush (PFA Research), Melinda Rickett (Creative Edge) and Michelle Blenkinsopp (Shell Belle Couture) ④ Laura Bower (Treasure Trails) ⑤ Jayne Tarasun (Flock Follies) and Roger Grimshaw (Oxford Innovation) ⑥ Speaker Andrew Finley (Oxford Innovation)

Cornwall Twestival



1 Tim Bryant (YTKO) and Claire Thayers (Cornwall Community Foundation) 2 Twestival Committee 3 Twitter Bear and Charlotte Ryall
 4 Mark Smith (CPR Regeneration) 5 Natalie Blachford (DCA), Amy Weeks (Event Cornwall) and Becky Palmer (Sapience HR)
 6 Jess Billington (Treatalady.com) and Emily Anderson (Sideways Cornwall)

Sporting Heroes



1 Cllr Pat Harvey and Richard Pollock (Coodes) 2 Simon Abdilla (Lloyds TSB) 3 Ed Coode (Coodes), Jeremy Harvey (Coodes), Heather Fell (pentathlete), Paul Cressy (Savills), Paul Burrows (R.A.B.I) and Vin Cox

Cornish Mutual AGM



1 Cornish Mutual members Carol Hurd, Annie Hawkey and Bobbie Rounsebell 2 Gerald Blewett (Cornish Mutual) and Cornish Mutual member Reg Nicholls 3 Robert Parson, Joan Ball (Cornish Mutual) and Pamela Parson

The last word

Claire Thayers – Cornwall Community Foundation

Name: Claire Thayers
Company: Cornwall Community Foundation
Job title: Fund Development Manager

What did you want to be when you were young? **I wanted to work on a racing yard... thought it would be the perfect job, ride out in the morning, and then do the admin during the day, and schmooze the owners at the races!**

What was your first full time job? **Receptionist for a firm of accountants in Cheltenham – seems a lifetime ago!**

What is your best quality? **My humour!**

What is your worst quality? **Trying to cram too much in and being late!**

What is your favourite book? **Loved *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*.**

What is your favourite film? ***Amadeus*.**

What is your favourite restaurant? **Sam's on the beach at Polkerris – great place to chill and enjoy a G&T.**

How do you like to relax? **Little time to do that – but my favourite thing to do is to invite my friends round for a slap up meal and a few glasses of wine!**

If you could build a house anywhere in the world where would it be? **Anywhere that is hot!**

If you could be a superhero, what superpowers would you like to possess? **Superman I guess, so that I could fly anywhere in the world, as and when I wanted!**

Who was your teenage pin up? **Starsky... now I am showing my age!**

Can money buy happiness? **No... but a DB9 would help!**

Most annoying TV personality? **Dale Winton! Can't bear the fake tan!**

What has been the best moment in your career? **Spending the day with Martin Hesp from the Western Morning News, and visiting some of the amazing**

groups in the county that the CCF have helped – humbling!

What has been the worst moment in your career? **Walking through the whole of Mcvities with my skirt tucked in my knickers!**

What do you begrudge spending money on? **Food that I could cook just as well at home!**

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life? **What goes around, comes around!**

If you could invite any two people for dinner, who would they be and why would you invite them? **Michael Palin to talk about his travels and Stephen Fry for his wisdom and wit.**

What makes you happy? **My children.**

What makes you angry? **Money being wasted.**

What could you not live without? **My horses.**

Tell me a joke: **A man runs into a pet shop, puts a bomb on the counter and says 'you have one minute to get out' a tortoise at the back shouts 'you !?!*!'**

What's the greatest invention ever? **Mobile phones.**

What's your favourite holiday destination? **India.**

When is honesty not always the best policy? **If people get hurt.**

What's your #1 ambition? **To make people happy.**

What was your luckiest break? **Being asked to work for the Foundation – life changing!**

What would you like to be doing in five years time? **The same (or being a kept woman!)**

Describe yourself in three adjectives: **Loyal, hardworking, funny.**



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Turn *it* around 