



Heartbeat

News and views from the Worcestershire Ambassadors

New chair flies the flag for Worcestershire

and Hewett Executive Talent as its new chair, taking over from outgoing chairman Ivan Knezovich from West Midland Safari Park.

"I am delighted to take on the role of Chair and thank Ivan for all the great work he has done over recent years," Louise, who is also a Patron of St Richard's Hospice and a Fellow of the University of Worcester. "The Worcestershire Ambassadors are committed to increasing awareness of the range and strength of business expertise and top quality organizations based in the county. We are keen to support local business by influencing policy and developing a cohesive approach with other significant organizations such as the I.O.D, Chamber and University. We aim to showcase local business and promote Worcestershire in its entirety. This is a unique county, providing a perfect location for developing entrepreneurs surrounded by wonderful heritage and beautiful countryside," she added.



Louise Hewett

THE WORCESTERSHIRE AMBASSADORS has announced the appointment of Louise Hewett of Hewett Recruitment

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Ambassadors support Buy Local campaign



Worcester News' Lauren Rogers

THE WORCESTERSHIRE AMBASSADORS are enthusiastically backing the

Buy Local: Buy Here campaign being run by the Worcester News which is aimed at supporting local independent businesses such as shops, restaurants, pubs, markets and farm shops. The newspaper is encouraging readers and the broader Worcestershire community to use local businesses, supporting them through the recession. This philosophy fits perfectly with the Worcestershire Ambassadors' philosophy of promoting all that is great about our county, and creating links to benefit each other.

The campaign launched in late April and at the time of going to print with Heartbeat, it was set to culminate with a special Buy Local Day. The Worcester News is running this project with support from Worcestershire County Council, Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council, Malvern Hills District Council and eco bag manufacturers Jutexpo. In addition, the newspaper will be encouraging reader recommendations of favourite local businesses to build into a Buy Local directory.

Worcester News editor Kevin Ward said: "Buy Local has been hugely successful so far. It has been very well received by local businesses, many of whom are displaying the campaign poster.

"Our stock of 5,000 Buy Local eco bags was exhausted after just a fortnight, such was the demand for them from readers.

"We now look forward to the culmination of the campaign on July 4 - Independents' Day - when we hope the whole of Worcestershire will go out and spend money with their local independent businesses."

Trish Haines, chief executive of Worcestershire County Council, said: "We are delighted to be involved with the Buy Local initiative. Supporting local businesses and residents through the current economic climate is crucial to us and this is a really positive and constructive way of encouraging growth on our high streets, shop corners and market places by bringing communities together, and helping local people find the best of local services and produce."

Tickets unmasked for the Worcestershire Ambassadors' Ball



Phil Dutton and Kathy Leather

THE VENETIAN THEME has been unmasked for the Ambassadors' 2009 ball taking place on 12 September 2009 at Spring Grove. Last year's ball raised £21,000 for local charities and the Ambassadors are aiming to raise a similar figure at this year's event.

The highlight of the evening will be the internationally acclaimed Operababes who will be performing for the 400 guests. The evening will also include a four course dinner and a 'last night of the Proms' finale.

Ambassadors' Chair Louise Hewett comments: "This year's Ball promises to be even bigger and better than the last! The Operababes have performed at Buckingham Palace and the Royal Albert Hall; they are hugely talented and have already created a lot of interest from our members. This, combined with the masked Venetian theme all adds up to a very glamorous event in aid of great causes," she smiles.

The 2009 Worcestershire Ambassadors' Ball is raising money for St Richard's Hospice, Primrose Hospice and Kemp Hospice. To book your tickets please contact louise@hewett-recruitment.co.uk

From the Chair



Louise Hewett

“IN MY ROLE AS Chairman of Worcestershire Ambassadors and supported by a hugely talented and enthusiastic management group, I feel confident we can begin to achieve significant progress towards our goals over the next two years.

Since January, we have developed a new strategy and designed fresh material and website to truly reflect our ambitious plans to promote the social and economic prosperity of the county.

New alliances have been forged with the Chamber of Commerce and the Institute of Directors to ensure our members have access to fully integrated support, advice and the

resources they need to help them grow and succeed. We have already extended these alliances to encompass Worcester University with its impressive Business School and will be doing the same with other organisations that will prove to be of mutual advantage.

Our relationship with Worcestershire County Council enables us to influence policies and provide a sounding board for decision making.

Worcestershire Ambassadors are passionate about their county and we are currently recruiting a limited number of like-minded individuals who believe in ‘all things Worcestershire’ and have the influence and enthusiasm to make a difference.

Ambassadors are a great bunch of people who know how to enjoy themselves and we have lots of opportunity to do just that at our fundraising and social events throughout the year....culminating in our fabulous annual Ball! We will continue to raise funds for our chosen charities, St Richards, Primrose and Kemp Hospices.

I’m looking forward to the next two years and will only be satisfied when we can all look back and see the evidence of our combined endeavours and the benefits it has brought to the county and its community. There has never been a better time to work together for the good of Worcestershire.”

Green means business

IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC climate it would be easy to think that being green at work would fall by the wayside. The Sustainability Team at Worcestershire County Council shows how businesses can still be green and help their profit margins.

Matt Stockford, Sustainability and Regeneration Assistant at Worcestershire County Council manages the Green Directory, an on-line listing of businesses offering green products and services. It also contains top green tips and simple tactics to help businesses become greener. “Putting a few easy measures in place can make a big difference to a business’s carbon footprint and will help to cut costs,” Matt explains. “For a relatively small cost, businesses can buy an electricity monitor and see

almost immediately energy reductions and savings. And of course, simple things like switching off monitors and lights can make a huge difference.”

And for those businesses keen to go greener still, the Council runs the Worcestershire Climate Change Pledge, through which businesses can show their commitment to tackling climate change with initiatives such as reduced energy usage or a staff travel plan.



My Worcestershire



Andrew Grant in Worcester Cathedral

ANDREW GRANT, managing director and founder of Andrew Grant Estate Agents, Deputy Lieutenant of Worcestershire, former High Sheriff of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, a Patron of St Richard’s Hospice and Worcestershire Ambassador has lived and worked in Worcestershire all his life. Thanks to his many roles which take him all over the county (and beyond), he is ideally placed to describe precisely what Worcestershire means to him.

Go west young man

From prep school education in Chaddesley Corbett to a successful career as one of Worcestershire’s best known business figures, Andrew Grant’s name is perhaps one of those most synonymous with this county. It is interesting then to hear what his favourite thing about his home county is. But when asked, Andrew cannot pick just one thing. Indeed, as he talks, his enthusiasm grows and he cannot help but add to the list of what he loves about the county. It is however, the subjects of

West Worcestershire, culture, history and the business calibre of Worcestershire which come to the fore.

West Worcestershire is, Andrew admits, his favourite geographical part of the county: “I have lived in several parts of West Worcestershire including Shelsley Beauchamp and Wychenford, and indeed still farm in 600 acres in the Teme Valley. It is my firm belief that the amazing landscape in West Worcestershire, with its stunning views across to the Welsh Hills at least equal, if not better, other parts of the country that people rave about, yet the Teme Valley is a wonderfully kept secret.”

Culture, history and so many great businesses

When it comes to specific favourites, Andrew Grant is passionate on the subject of Malvern, which like the Teme Valley, he feels is a largely undiscovered secret outside of the area. “Malvern has much to offer many different types of people,” Andrew smiles. “For example, there is so much culture on offer in and around Malvern; just look at the reputations of the Malvern Theatres, the English Symphony Orchestra and the Malvern Festival, amongst much more. Since the 1930’s, the cultural heart of Malvern has been growing and growing and is now really something to enjoy, learn from and be proud of,” he adds. Historically too, he loves everything that Worcestershire

has to offer. This history is epitomized for Andrew in his favourite building: Worcester Cathedral, where influences extending from the 10th and 11th century continue today across the city and county.

All in all, Andrew Grant’s wide range of Worcestershire based business and personal experiences throughout his life mean that the only place that could possibly tempt him away from his home county would be Italy! “Our central location on the M5 corridor and the communication network with the rest of the country including London make Worcestershire a great working location,” Andrew says. “I am always impressed too by the level of encouragement and support given to new, start up businesses as well as those organisations moving into the area. As a whole, the county boasts some phenomenal enterprises, and has a very forward looking business mentality. We even combine outstanding sporting and business acumen with Worcester Rugby Club and Worcestershire County Cricket Club, which are both great pioneers. For me personally, doing business here in Worcestershire works successfully in so many ways, not least because I can make best use of my time, going to work AND travelling easily back home each day,” adds Andrew.

And if that means going back home to the stunning views of West Worcestershire, one would have to agree.

Welcome new Ambassadors

Welcome to the following:

Kevin Ward, Editor, Worcester News
Donna Nixon, Director, Urbanism Ltd
Guy Mucklow, Managing Director, Postcode Anywhere
Mark Smith, Relationship Director, Lloyd TSB Commercial Banking
Rod Laight, Reddifast Steels Limited
Chris Akers, Managing Director, Titan Steel Wheels Ltd
Sharon Priest, Investment Manager, Hargreave Hale
Lord Cobham, Hagley Hall
Jon Lewis, Director of Insolvency, Tenon Recovery
Jeremy Clarke- Morris, Partner, Kendall Wadley
Caroline Leah, Director, Caroline Leah PR Limited
Rebecca Widdowson, Solicitor, Hallmark Hulme LLP
David Lawrence, Lawrence Recycling and Waste Management
Andrew Stanbridge, Stanbridge
Huw James - Redwood Healthcare
Carl Theakston - Chairman of ESP Ltd
Nick Vincent - Three Counties Showground
Jill Angell - Marketing director Fish4Dogs

Spotlight on.... Rabjohns LLP

Ian Smith



HEARTBEAT INTRODUCES a new series of Spotlights on Worcestershire Ambassadors, launching the series with Ian Smith at Rabjohns.

Ian is the Chairman of Rabjohns LLP Accountants. He became a Worcestershire Ambassador 3 years ago, and has lived in the county all his life.

Rabjohns are accountants, specialising in advising owner managed businesses in the SME sector and working very closely with their clients. Ian is proud

that Rabjohns has won awards locally and nationally for both its client service and tax advice, and boasts a client list that reads like a Who's Who of the Three Counties with names such as Worcester Warriors, Worcestershire Cricket Club, Morgan Motors, Malvern Theatres, Eastnor Castle, Harris Brushes, and Russell & Dorrell to name a few. The firm aims to prove you don't have to go to a major city to get top quality advice. He runs the firm along with his partners David Cornelius (another Ambassador) and Doug Robshaw.

As part of an International Association called Kreston which gives Rabjohns

world-wide client coverage, Ian can truly fulfill the Worcestershire Ambassadors' philosophy of promoting the skills and strengths of Worcestershire to the broader world. "It is when we travel to our international conferences that I am a particularly proud Ambassador," smiles Ian. "I'm delighted to say Kreston visitors to the UK are nearly always brought to Worcester. The combination of our glorious countryside, Rabjohns' new refurbished offices and the Cathedral next door is an incredibly impressive combination!"

As a leading Worcestershire firm, Rabjohns also understands the value of Corporate Social Responsibility and has an active CSR programme. Ian himself is Deputy Chairman of Young Enterprise locally and many of his team act as advisers. They work closely with a number of local charities but particularly St Richard's Hospice and The Duckworth Worcestershire Trust. In addition, Ian is a member (one of 35) of the Clothiers Company - Worcester's Trade Guild which can trace its history back to 1511, whilst also finding time to sit on the University Business School's Advisory Board.

A true local lad, Ian was educated at Hawford and King's School, before then meeting his wife in the City and playing rugby for Worcester. Today, as a member at Worcestershire Golf Club, working in College Yard, and living on an idyllic farm in the Teme Valley, Ian says: "I can honestly say I would not want to live or work anywhere else!"

News in brief

Canal restoration

The Droitwich Canal Project Business Day in April was attended by numerous Ambassadors, keen to support the project and fellow Ambassador Viv Hudson, who has championed this project which will significantly enhance the local economy. The £11.5 million project will restore sections of the canal to link the Worcester and Birmingham Canal to the River Severn running through Droitwich, to bring an estimated additional £2.75million a year of expected additional visitor spend to the region.

"I believe it is really very important that the Worcestershire Ambassadors become aware of and are able to promote this project which will help put Droitwich on the map for tourist and help our local economy," said Viv Hudson.

Good cause

Throughout the coming year, the Worcestershire Ambassadors are supporting three worthy causes, local hospices: St Richard's Hospice, Kemp Hospice and Primrose Hospice. In addition to the Ball, other Ambassadors' events will be supporting the sterling work of these three local charities.

Click on

Click on the Ambassadors' new URL and website for up to date information on every aspect of the Worcestershire Ambassadors including networking and events. Take a look now at www.worcestershireambassadors.com.

Legal eagle

Talbots Solicitors, practicing in Worcestershire and West Midlands, has appointed Grace Trenchard to its team of specialist lawyers. The team advises on all aspects of family work, including divorce, children and financial matters.

Worcester BID team says YES to Severn

Severn Communications has been selected by the Worcester BID steering group to deliver a high-profile campaign designed to highlight the benefits of the city's proposed BID (business improvement district). A BID is a partnership between local businesses which have voted to invest collectively in local improvements with the aim of boosting trade. Severn was selected following a five-way competitive pitch and will spearhead communications in the run up to October's vital ballot when businesses will be asked to vote yes to the proposed scheme.

Welly telly for Worcester College

Worcester College of Technology got its green fingers and wellies out recently when it was featured on the Spring Gardening Show edition of BBC Gardeners' World.

The Malvern Spring Gardening Show (7 - 10 May) launched its first Spring Fashion Day this year, giving centre stage to students at Worcester College of Technology, School of Art and Design who designed outfits for the four presenters of Gardeners' World and held a series of fashion parades throughout the show.

Your very good health

Health conscious male Ambassadors and other local business men attended Prostate Checks held earlier this year at Sixways. The checks, organised by the Worcestershire Ambassadors with consultant David Baxter-Smith and the phlebotomy team from Droitwich Hospital saw 68 men tested, of whom seven were referred for further investigation (ten per cent referral is the norm).

Ambassadors' Derek Fradgley spearheaded this initiative and commented: "We have had several requests to make this an annual event, and I am in touch with Worcestershire Acute NHS Trust to see if we can enlist their help and possibly extend the range of tests to include other men's health matters."

'Lovely' Library

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S Malvern Library has been nominated as one of the 'loveliest' in England by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, one of just four to receive the national commendation.

"Malvern Library offers the community so many things. I would like to encourage anyone who hasn't been down to their fantastic library to pay a visit and find out why it's thought of so highly," said Kathy Kirk, the County Council's Strategic Libraries and Learning Manager.

Malvern Library is one of the most popular in Worcestershire with an average of 31,000 items being issued and more than 25,000 people visiting every month. For more information on how to join The County Council's free library service residents should call in to their local library. People can also now join on-line and find out more about the service at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/libraries



Have your say

HAVE YOUR SAY on a burning issue. Heartbeat's new 'Have your say' feature allows you to do just that. In this issue, John Leftwich gets on his soapbox.

Have you ever stopped to consider why it is that charities exist at all? Surely, in a perfect society, the needs of all

constituencies would be perfectly served by the state. True, but that utopia will never be achieved and looks increasingly untenable with the passage of time.

And so it is that many of us try and fill the gaps, in some cases chasms, left by government. And we do so with a passion and vigour that is a testament to the goodwill of mankind. Often this is based on personal experience. For my part, I was oblivious to the work of MacMillan's nurses until my mother was dying of cancer last year and I experienced the majesty and dignity of their work at first hand.

So now here we are on the cusp of a real dilemma. The burden of debt carried by the country will inevitably lead to a diminution of social service provision well into the

future. And as businesses and individuals, our own finances are not as strong as they once were.

All this at the very time when the financial climate is exerting more pressure on those most at risk: young people already on the fringes of society are becoming even more disillusioned and alienated, single parents unable to provide adequately for their children, those suffering from depression are increasingly at risk, the list is almost endless.

Unfortunately, they all need our charity now more than ever before at a time when we are least inclined to offer it.

So just perhaps the real measure of our society is not how many and how much

our MP's have fiddled on their expenses, but how we collectively respond to the needs of those who need us most. On their behalf, I ask you, please don't stop giving.



John Leftwich

Worcestershire's Beating heart

Some reasons Worcestershire is so great - past, present and future

- Britain's fastest growing university - applications to study at the University of Worcester have risen by more than 100% over five years. In its annual University Guide, the Sunday Times wrote: "A university that invests in first-class facilities, with a good teaching reputation, set in a historic cathedral city - it is easy to see why Worcester is growing in popularity faster than any other university in Britain."
- Phase three of the Malvern Science Park was opened on 17 May by HRH Princess Royal, doubling its original capacity and already creating 30 new jobs from companies based there.
- West Midland Safari Park won Best UK Attraction for Children 2009.
- Worcester's St Richard's Hospice is celebrating 25 years of care for patients and families in Worcestershire. The Worcestershire Ambassadors are delighted to support St Richard's together with Kemp Hospice and Primrose Hospice as their chosen charities this year.

Worcester Warriors play



Spotlight on...Lawrences Waste - not a subject to be rubbished



Some of Lawrence's waste fleet

WASTE IS ONE of the hottest topics on everyone's agenda, from families at home to global Governments. The size and scale of the problem is immense and the unhappy statistic that one third of all the food bought in the UK is wasted is well documented. So when it comes to waste management, no-one is going to rubbish a company who is driving waste forward. The company in question is Lawrence Recycling and Waste Management in Kidderminster. As new Worcestershire Ambassadors, this issue of Heartbeat welcomes them and finds out some more about their world of waste.

Reduce, re-use, recycle

From its beginnings 25 years ago, Lawrences has grown from a small skip hire company to become a leading UK force in its field. Now running with two different companies, Forge Recycling and Lawrence Recycling and Waste Management, their overall mission is to recover and divert waste from landfill. "Landfill tax is high and is going up every year," comments Lawrence's Customer Relations Manager Alison Powell. "Pre-treatment regulations mean that any waste going to landfill has to be pre-treated first, and that's where we come in, to divert it from going to landfill and to reinforce the 'reduce, re-use, recycle' philosophy.

Lawrence's new 16 acre site (of which 6 acres is indoors) makes this the biggest indoor recycling site in the United Kingdom. Add to that venture capitalist investment of £10 million, including a state of the art £1million new plant for Forge Recycling (currently being installed and due to be commissioned imminently), and it's clear to see why Lawrence Recycling and Waste

Management and Forge Recycling are making a difference to waste, getting their industry, customers and consumers talking and creating a benchmark for waste standards.

Plastic fantastic

The capital investment is undoubtedly impressive, but equally so is the passionate and pro-active approach the company takes to waste. There are many different types of waste and Lawrences is keen to work across the board, driven by its clear goal each time of diverting waste from landfill. From closed loop recycling with utilities companies to recycle and re-use their construction and demolition waste, to worm farms producing compost from Lawrence-supplied waste, and from separating plastics for recycling to re-make into new products to wet and dry waste, Lawrence's expertise is being noted across Worcestershire, the UK and even further, positioning them as a true Ambassador for the county.

The company has expansion plans which look set to be realized, thanks to Forge Recycling's impressive site and plant. A new fleet of vehicles, recruitment and enhanced website are all on the agenda too. An education programme for schools is even in the offing, bringing organised school parties to learn, view and improve their green credentials!

Future growth

"We are very proud of what we are achieving and excited about future growth," says Alison Powell. "The waste issue will not go away, and we are one of many organisations committed to making more of the waste we have, whilst still running a successful, commercial enterprise."

For further information on Lawrence Recycling and Waste Management, please visit www.forge-recycling.co.uk