Inside this issue...

Find out how Stirling Bagpipes has increased online sales

Business profile
Monaghan & Hornal / Sun Harvester Solar Systems

Special features
Providing information on working from home and trading online

Business Panel feature
Programme of events for 2012

Interview with...
Andy Richardson, Chief Executive of Stirling Development Agency
Welcome

This edition of Stirling Eye announces some exciting new ventures that Stirling Council is engaged in to deliver additional support mechanisms to the local business community. This includes joining the East of Scotland Investment Fund (ESIF), which provides local businesses with an additional route to access finance, with loans of up to £50,000 available to new and growing, small and medium sized enterprises.

The Council has also joined the Supplier Development Programme and is delivering information and support to local businesses through a programme of free training events. The objective is to help local businesses unravel the public sector tendering process and increase their success rate when tendering for public sector contracts.

The interview with Andy Richardson, Chief Executive of the Stirling Development Agency provides an update on a number of new developments aimed at enabling economic recovery in the Stirling area. This includes a pre-let to Waitrose at the former Burghmuir Industrial Estate, Stirling, that will create 180 new jobs, open up new supply chain opportunities and provide Stirling with wider retail choice.

Although the financial climate has been extremely uncertain, the Stirling Development Agency has continued to invest in making its development sites viable so that it can respond quickly to demand as the economy recovers. This has included securing planning consent for a new employment development at Kildean, on the western edge of the city and putting relevant access and infrastructure in place.

As always, the range of new business activity reported in the local business news section shows that despite the economic climate, Stirling’s small businesses continue to thrive. It is also pleasing to see well-established local companies featured, such as Stirling Bagpipes and Sun Harvester Solar Systems, who continue to develop their services, whether through increasing online sales or taking advantage of new technology, to remain competitive in the tough economic climate.

Please can I take this opportunity to remind you that you can contribute to consultation on Stirling’s Draft Proposed Local Development Plan up until 16th December at www.stirling.gov.uk/localdevplan.

Contact us...

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Visit: www.thewritepeople.co.uk

Councillor Scott Farmer
Depute Leader of Stirling Council and Portfolio Holder for Economy, Tourism and Finance

DID YOU KNOW?

Stirling Eye is distributed for free to over 3,000 local businesses. First published in 2007, Stirling Eye comes out three times a year.

Cover photo: Alan Waldron, Owner of Stirling Bagpipes located at 8 Broad Street, Stirling. A variety of bagpipes are handcrafted on site and the business combines a manufacturing workshop with retail outlet. www.stirlingbagpipes.com. See page 17 for case study.

Photo taken by Rhonda Peebles, The Wee Photo Shop - www.theweephotoshop.co.uk.
Introducing Stirling Council’s Head of Economy, Planning & Regulation

Kevin Robertson is the new Head of Economy, Planning & Regulation at Stirling Council. Formerly Head of Planning, Regulation & Waste, Kevin has widened his remit to cover Economic Support, Tourism and City Centre Management. Kevin is also responsible for Planning, Building Standards, Licensing, Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Animal Health & Welfare services.

Kevin has worked in local government for 30 years and has extensive experience in strategic development and leading service improvement, working in partnership with key agencies. Kevin is a Director of Forth Valley GIS Ltd., and represents the Council on various bodies supporting business growth and tourism development.

Kevin said: “I am really looking forward to the challenge of this role, particularly in the build up to 2014, which will be a huge year for Stirling’s economy. We must maximise the opportunities for local businesses and tourist attractions over this period, and create a lasting legacy of sustainable business growth and investment.”

Kevin is also focused on the new Local Development Plan, which sets out a vision for sustainable development required to meet economic, social and environmental objectives over the next 20 years, while safeguarding the valued natural and historic environment of the Stirling area.

Kevin added: “The Draft Proposed Local Development Plan updates the Council’s planning framework, providing a positive approach to development to meet the needs of housing, business, retail and supporting infrastructure, and accords with the objectives of our ‘Open for Business’ Economic Strategy. It is important that everyone affected by the Draft Proposed Plan puts forward their views.”

The Draft Proposed Local Development Plan was issued in October and is open for consultation until 16 December 2011. For more information or a copy of the Draft Proposed Plan, please visit www.stirling.gov.uk/localdevplan, contact Planning on 01786 442522 or email ldp@stirling.gov.uk. Stirling’s economic strategy Open for Business is available to download at www.stirling.gov.uk/strategies.

Stirling Development Agency secures Waitrose

Stirling Development Agency (SDA), the 50/50 joint venture between Valad and Stirling Council, confirmed in September that it had reached an agreement with Waitrose to operate the food retail element of its regeneration of the former Burghmuir Industrial Estate, Stirling.

The SDA received outline planning permission earlier this year to use the Burghmuir Road site for retail development. A detailed planning application has now been submitted.

Proposals will now include a Waitrose store offering 25,000 sq ft of trading space, a further two retail units totalling 21,600 sq ft and a car park providing around 295 spaces.

It is anticipated that the Waitrose store will create up to 180 jobs with the two additional units expected to generate even more new local employment opportunities.

Nigel Keen, Waitrose Director of Development, said:

“We welcomed the opportunity to be part of such an exciting regeneration project that could meet our aspiration to have a store in Stirling and deliver long-term benefits to the city.

“We look forward to working with the Council, local traders and the community to develop this proposal, one which will bring significant investment to Stirling and help encourage residents to shop locally.”

Councillor Scott Farmer, Portfolio holder for Economy, Tourism and Finance and a Director of the SDA said:

“I am delighted that SDA has secured Waitrose. Our recent residents’ survey highlights that attracting retailers to Stirling is one of our priorities for improving the quality of life for local people. This is a very positive step towards realising our regeneration plans for Burghmuir and bringing new jobs to Stirling. It underlines that Stirling’s partnership Economic Strategy ‘Open for Business’ is delivering on the Administration’s economic priorities and we welcome this resounding vote of confidence from a principal retailer in the dynamism of the Stirling economy.”

Nigel Keen, Waitrose Director of Development

www.stirling.gov.uk/stirlingeye
Thank you

Thank you to everyone who completed the Stirling Eye feedback form and congratulations to the prize draw winner, Craig MacFarlane from Stirling Cycle Repairs.

We are always looking to improve the content of Stirling Eye and in response to the feedback received, we have extended the local business news section and are looking to include more features on businesses from Stirling’s rural villages in future editions.

Prize winner Craig runs Stirling Cycle Repairs Ltd which began trading in 2007, with steady growth year on year. Initially operating from home, the company relocated to Stirling Enterprise Park and then in April 2011, moved to 2 Alloa Road, Causewayhead, Stirling.

Craig said: “The most recent move has been a great success, making the company’s services more visible and accessible to a wider range of customers.”

www.stirlingcyclerepairs.co.uk

Ready for winter

Inverallan Landscapes Ltd is ready for the worst of the weather this winter having invested in the latest snow and ice clearing equipment.

The company, which is based in Stirling, maintain their own stock of rocksalt and liquid de-icer and can offer local businesses a winter maintenance service tailored specifically to their needs.

Inverallan Landscapes managing director John Maxwell said: “We decided to diversify the landscaping business into gritting and road clearing after a substantial period of downtime last winter due to the severe weather conditions. A key aim of our new service is to give local companies a cost effective and reliable 24/7 snow clearing and gritting service.”

www.inverallanlandscapes.co.uk

Grave Care Scotland

Not everyone can say that they set up a business after having a sleep... but for Stirling based Scott Williamson, this was the case.

Scott set up his business Grave Care Scotland.com after he woke from a dream wondering who looks after graves when relatives can’t manage. After a bit of research he discovered that graves were often untended due to people moving away; not being able to get to the cemetery due to old age or illness; or indeed through being too busy at work.

Through his business, Scott cleans graves by hand, lays flowers on special anniversaries and takes pictures for relatives or ancestors of the people laid to rest.

Scott said: “It makes me happy knowing that I have helped somebody. I have already carried out work for people who live as far afield as Australia and Canada. Most of my work is done locally in Stirling and Clackmannanshire cemeteries, but I have gone as far as Brora to clean a head stone dating back to 1850.”

www.gravecarescotland.com

Making money from nothing

Stirling based CRM software company SalesAgility is making money from nothing by delivering consultancy and development services for software that can be downloaded for free.

Managing Director Greg Soper said: “We’re unusual in that we only work on Open Source software. This means that the software is completely free, so anyone can acquire it without charge.

“Our business model is to add value through expert knowledge. We only deal with one application called SugarCRM, delivering consulting and software development services.”

SalesAgility moved to Stirling Business Centre from Denny in January 2011. Greg said: “We love it here. It’s a good business centre and close to the city centre.”

80% of SalesAgility’s work is outside of Scotland, with customers across the globe in addition to England, which is their main market.

SalesAgility’s Advanced OpenSales for SugarCRM was awarded global ‘Project of the Month’ by SugarCRM in August 2011.

www.salesagility.com
Beatson’s gain major productivity benefits with CPL IT Services

A recent project undertaken by Dunblane based CPL IT Services has increased the performance and reliability of IT systems at Beatson’s Building Supplies’ head office in Alloa.

Mark Northway, Financial Director of Beatson’s said: “A key benefit has been faster processing of our IT systems, which has meant that essential reports that previously would take up to two hours to complete are now completed in less than half an hour. Ultimately this has allowed us to spend more time with our customers, increasing customer satisfaction and retention.”

Craig Millar, Technical Director of CPL IT Services, said “At CPL we know business can be tough just now, with companies needing to focus on their core business and on future growth, not dealing with IT issues – that’s why we are here to help.

“Our services are aimed at helping to increase business productivity, reduce downtime and protect IT systems.”

First autism therapy of its kind in Scotland

Stirling University graduate, Ruth Glynne-Owen, is coming back to her roots and is determined to make a difference for pre school children with developmental and communication delays, through her recently launched charitable organisation, Speur-Ghlan.

Set up in Stirling University Innovation Park’s Beta Centre, the new charity has received £10k lottery funding for a pilot project. Focusing on seven children initially, the project has already made a huge difference to the lives of families attending the individual and group intervention sessions, tailor made for each child to match personalities and abilities.

Ruth said: “The historical way to look at early signs of autism and communication challenges in the UK is to ‘wait and see what happens’. But there is 25 years of research to show that early intervention in such cases results in massive improvements in development for the individual.”

Lynn Blakie, the Park’s Business Development Manager, said: “The vibrancy of this new project and the obvious dedication to the organisation by Ruth, is an exciting injection of enterprising spirit to the campus.”

www.earlyinterventionscotland.org

Fit for business

Stirling lads Neill Miller and Liam Mailer have left their 9-5 office jobs and set up a new business called Fit Body Boot Camp.

Neill and Liam are both passionate about fitness and met while training at their local gym. Their new business offers a fitness and fat loss workout programme, with classes designed to help participants shed unwanted weight in the shortest time possible.

Neill said: “The best bit about our new business is being able to help people achieve their fitness goals and lifestyle choices. Unlike traditional health clubs, our clients never feel intimidated or have to deal with overcrowding. And best of all, we never yell or treat people like they are in a military boot camp!”

Fit Body Boot Camp provides members with access to all of the classes run by the business and dietary and training advice from its qualified trainers.

www.fitbodybootcamp.com/site/Stirling-fit-body-boot-camp
Exciting times ahead down on the farm

Briarlands Farm at Blairdrummond near Stirling is entering an exciting new phase over the winter. Work has started on the visitor attraction’s new building, which will house a new tearoom, toilets and retail area, offering a cozy retreat for days when the weather isn’t so good and activities to keep the children amused. The business will also extend its operating season in 2012, staying open all year round.

Joanne Inglis, owner, said: “This is an exciting time for the family. We are currently looking for new staff to help move the business forward, with various full time and part time positions available from March 2012 when the farm will reopen to the public. The jobs include a kitchen supervisor and kitchen assistants, an animal assistant, as well as staff to help deal with admissions and customer relations.

“If you are interested in joining our team, please visit the website for more information and to download an application form.”

www.briarlandsfarm.co.uk

Art classes at new studio in Balfron

A brand new art studio has opened its doors in the creative Stirlingshire village of Balfron.

Established by Glasgow School of Art graduate Ewen Duncan, art4you Scotland offers day and evening art classes and weekend and holiday art courses from brand new premises in a spacious converted byre at Ballochruin Alpaca Farm & Campsie Cottages.

Ewen, a former television set designer who now lectures in art, said: “Our new studio is in a fantastic setting, allowing us to use the Campsie Fells, the River Endrick, or even the alpacas that have made Ballochruin Farm such a popular stop for local walkers, as the back drop for our art classes.”

Ewen started art4you Scotland last year, running a very successful first season of classes at Balfron High School. Now, he and wife Claudia have teamed up with the owners of Ballochruin Farm to offer a truly rural artistic experience to both local people and holidaymakers.

www.art4youscotland.co.uk

Excellence award for Culcreuch Castle

Culcreuch Castle Hotel & Estate in Fintry has been awarded a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for 2011. The award is based on customer feedback and as such the team at the Castle are justifiably proud of the achievement.

Director & General Manager Robert Reynolds said: “We are extremely proud to be given this prestigious award from the world’s leading travel site and are especially pleased for all the staff at the Castle who have made this possible. They all work extremely hard to look after our guests from all over the world. A lot of the comments are from wedding couples who held their weddings here and it is always great to know that they have happy memories of their special day.”

Culcreuch Castle host around 85 weddings a year and contributes quite substantially to the local economy.

Robert continued: “We are also pleased to announce the appointment of our new Head Chef John Cable, who has introduced a new bar and restaurant menu.”

www.culcreuch.com
New and relocating businesses in the Stirling area include:

**CloudArt**
Located in Kinbuck, CloudArt is a new business that creates cheerful walls that look good. The business designs bright, stunning images, and there’s one for every wall. CloudArt also do portraits and commissions.
Tel: 07769 975390
www.cloudart.co.uk

**Jo-Jo’s**
A new continental cake shop located on Murray Place, Stirling city centre. Jo-Jo’s specialises in Italian cakes and biscuits.
Tel: 01786 359015

**Kama-Sutra Stirling**
Kama-Sutra, a Glasgow based chain of Indian restaurants recently opened a new restaurant in Upper Craigs, Stirling. The restaurant specialises in traditional Indian cuisine.
Tel: 01786 470999
www.kamasutrarestaurants.com

**Renewable Advice Bureau Ltd**
A new family run business offering free ethical advice on installing renewable energy systems. The business opened in the summer and is located in St. Ninian’s, Stirling.
Tel: 01786 472525
www.renewableadvicebureau.com

**SOCREATE**
SOCREATE is a new Dunblane based business providing original, versatile and effective graphic design solutions across a wide range of media.
www.socreate.co.uk

If you have recently set up a business in the Stirling Council area and would like a mention in Stirling Eye or would like to report a business news story, please contact Joëlle Russell on 01786 442778 or email russelljl@stirling.gov.uk

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**Hassle free web-presence**
Deanston based Johanna Welander recently established Abeoweb, a new business specialising in content managed web development for SMEs and start-ups.

Johanna’s background is in computing science, web development and information management.

Johanna said: “From speaking with local businesses I recognised that existing content management solutions required a deeper knowledge of computing than many businesses had, or that the ‘easy-to-use’ solutions were simply too inflexible to suit their needs.

“Our goal is to provide companies with a web-presence that will work right from the start, that is easy to manage, is professionally designed and is tailored to grow and change with the business. Custom features are easily added and goodies like SEO, e-mail management, social network integration, design and user friendliness are all incorporated ‘out-of-the-box’ with our solution.”

www.abeoweb.co.uk

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**Coffee Kiln opens within Buchlyvie Pottery Shop**
Diane Harrower recently joined forces with Alison Borthwick to open the Coffee Kiln in the remodelled Buchlyvie Pottery Shop.

Diane said: “This has been a fantastic venture and I am delighted to be able to provide new job opportunities in the village, with the Kiln already employing Meggan, Kyle and Katie. We offer excellent coffee, home baking, homemade soup and light lunches and a full range of porcelain pottery is still being produced on the premises by Alison Borthwick and is available to buy, plus other handmade gifts, jewellery and cards.”

Alison Borthwick said: “The coffee shop offers a unique and interesting relaxed environment to meet friends and family or just to enjoy the atmosphere and watch the world go by.

“It also really compliments my pottery business, offering customers the chance to try before they buy, as I make the Kiln’s coffee cups!”

www.buchlyviepotteryshop.com
Big beasts in line for community arts award

A partnership between United Auctions (UA) and the Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum has been shortlisted for a community award at the Arts & Business Scotland Awards 2011. The successful ‘Big Beast’ exhibition was supported by Scotland’s leading livestock auctioneers and ran from June to November last year. It showcased the best of the animal paintings in the Stirling Smith collection, demonstrating the historic link between art and agriculture in the City.

Attracting more than 17,500 visitors, the exhibition and accompanying series of agri-related talks encouraged engagement between the farming community and the arts.

The nomination comes at a significant time for the Stirling Smith’s Development Fund Appeal, which is raising money to secure the Gallery’s future. Funds are needed for every aspect of the Smith’s development, including a complete refurbishment of the building and updating the displays.

Chairman of the Stirling Smith Trustees, Cllr Colin O’Brien, said: “We’re delighted that this partnership is being recognised nationally. We’re keen to expand the involvement of the local business community in this way and I hope that more Stirling companies will consider becoming ‘Corporate Friends’ of the Smith.”

www.smithartgallery.demon.co.uk

Renowned Dunblane artist takes up residence at Stirling Castle

Dunblane-based Iona Leishman is Historic Scotland’s first ever artist in residence and is based at the Castle until early 2012. Described as a rising star among Scottish painters, Iona welcomes visitors to her studio on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 1.30 - 3.30pm. Historic Scotland now stock a printed range of her new work in the Castle’s three gift shops.

Iona said: “It’s tremendous to be offered the chance to become the artist in residence for Stirling Castle. My weeks are busy with my community and school group work for Historic Scotland, in addition to the hours of quiet, contemplative work that I need to produce my paintings.”

Iona received sponsorship for her residency from Forth Valley company, Sterling Furniture Group. As a first time sponsor of the arts, their generosity attracted match-funding from Arts and Business.

Iona’s new Castle work will be exhibited and for sale in the Castle’s Exhibition Room from 1 December onwards, 9.30am - 4.15pm seven days a week. Entry is included in the price of the castle ticket.

www.talkingmats.com

Start-up award for Talking Mats

Stirling based Talking Mats Limited has launched as a social enterprise and received a start-up award of £20,000 from First Port, which supports social entrepreneurs in Scotland. The award will allow Talking Mats to extend its range of communication tools and training courses for people with communication difficulties.

Joan Murphy, Co-Director, said: “We are delighted with the award and to have been able to establish Talking Mats as a world leader in the field of innovative communication tools. We are located on campus at Stirling University Innovation Park and have developed Talking Mats through the blend of speech and language therapy expertise and research conducted at Stirling University.”

www.talkingmats.com

printing.com on the move!

The Stirling branch of printing.com has relocated to a newly refurbished unit at the entrance to Stirling Enterprise Park.

After five years on Cowane Street, Stirling, franchise owner James Harrop found that one of the main issues for his customers was the lack of parking and wanted to offer them a better location to visit the store.

The business is now located opposite the free car park at Stirling Enterprise Park.

James said: “It’s an excellent location for popping in to discuss your requirements and much more practical for collecting your goods, without the stress of having to find a parking space in the busy city centre.”

www.printing.com/?source=F137

Did you know?

Iona Leishman is the granddaughter of one of Dunblane’s most famous citizens, John Reith, first director general of the BBC.
Local entrepreneur notches up another new business

Stirling based Nancy Villanueva has opened a new hairdressers and beauticians in Bannockburn, Stirling, adding to her existing portfolio of businesses, which also includes Nancy’s Deli and Central Catering.

Eternal Hair & Beauty provides an upmarket one-stop-shop for all beauty services, including hairdressing, nails, facials, massage, non-surgical lipo and tanning.

Nancy said: “The unit next door to my deli business became available when its previous occupier, a hairdresser, relocated. I decided it presented a good opportunity to refurbish the premises and open a quality hairdressers and beauticians. I have already created a number of new jobs, employing three hairdressers and two people on the beauty side.”

www.eternalbeautyandtherapy.co.uk

Do you have Green Expectations?

Many companies now insist that their suppliers, or contractors, have green credentials. That is why Colleen Kennedy set up a new environmental management systems business in Stirling called Green Expectations Limited. The company aims to help businesses across Scotland realise the cost saving potential in reducing their environmental impacts.

Colleen said: “Most businesses don’t account for their waste, energy, water and transport costs or realise that by reducing usage reduces costs. Most businesses main concern is making money and I want to show them that there are significant financial savings to be made by going ‘green’, and how easy it can be. This not only reduces costs but by implementing an environmental management system, including ISO 14001, businesses can meet environmental obligations, and by promoting these green credentials, they can gain a competitive edge.”

www.greenexpectations.co.uk

Helping to improve workforce performance

Stirling businesses Knead to Relax and Positive Performance have teamed up to form Positive Performance Scotland. The business combines extensive expertise in delivering on-site training and consulting in interpersonal skills and ergonomics, with off site occupational health therapies.

Wendy Chalmers Mill, Co-Founder, said: “Our philosophy is simple – a healthy, fit, happy and motivated workplace exceeds the average corporate objectives and maximises staff potential. Our research tells us that 80% of the workforce suffers to a greater or lesser degree from headaches, neck and shoulder pain and / or lower back problems. These ailments compromise performance, increase absenteeism and cost Scottish companies billions. We offer an effective solution to this.”

In addition to high-level training, consulting and coaching that can be delivered in the workplace, the business incorporates the Knead to Relax massage and osteopath clinic at Castle Business Park, Stirling.

www.positive-performance.com

www.stirling.gov.uk/stirlingeye
Entrepreneur of the Year

Congratulations to Ann-Maree Morrison, Director of Stirling based Labels4Kids who has been named Entrepreneur of the Year 2011 in the Specsavers Every Woman in Retail Awards and Independent Online Retailer 2011 in the Online Retail Awards.

Stirling mum Ann-Maree established Labels4Kids in 2005, an online business selling a wide choice of personalised name labels and stickers for children.

Ann-Maree said: “I am absolutely delighted with the awards. It is fantastic to receive recognition for all the enthusiasm and energy I have put into the business. Labels4Kids is growing rapidly and I plan to go global in 2012, having recruited franchise consultants to help expand the business internationally as a group.”

www.labels4kids.com

Business kick starts new services

Growing Dunblane business Little Kicks recently expanded into new areas of activity. Already established in providing football coaching to children aged two to seven, the business has developed classes for toddlers and has started running weekly sessions in local nurseries.

Business owner Andrew Henderson said: “Following demand from parents and carers, we have tailored classes specifically for children aged from 18 months to two years three months. The classes help children learn the basic concepts of football and develop the gross motor skills and social skills needed to play and participate. The goal of the sessions is to develop the key attributes – sitting, waiting, taking turns, listening, concentrating and following instructions.

“Our new service for local nurseries involves a coach working with staff to cover key elements in the Curriculum for Excellence. Children’s imaginations are fired when they take part in games where they try to capture cakes, go on train journeys and defend castles and most importantly have lots of FUN.”

www.littlekicks.co.uk

City spa celebrates first birthday

Sonas Therapy Spa, Stirling’s first boutique city spa, recently celebrated its first birthday. Owner Shona McCandlish reported that since opening its doors on Baker Street, the spa has received great reviews and is going from strength to strength.

Shona said: “I decided to open Sonas Therapy Spa as I identified a niche in the market to provide boutique spa and beautician services to the city’s residents. We also provide a quality service for the many visitors and tourists who come to the city and want to indulge in some pampering.

“Our specialist areas are Dermalogica facials, advanced waxing and hd brows.”

www.simplysonas.com
Monaghan & Hornal, a family run business, was established in 1971. Originally a plumbing and heating business located in Dunblane, the business diversified into the solar energy market in the 1980s and now also trades as Sun Harvester Solar Systems from Imex Business Park, Stirling.

**Progression into renewables**

Jim Hornal said: “The first solar thermal system I saw was on Tomorrows World in 1981. I recognised the potential and importance of clean energy and manufactured our own thermal panels for a short while. I then established a relationship with a Welsh company called Filsol Ltd who were industry leaders in thermal panel manufacturing and began purchasing the latest systems from them and still do to this day. They are the only UK company that I am aware of that manufacture the component parts of their systems in the UK.”

**The solar market**

Monaghan & Hornal were the first company in Scotland to supply and fit solar thermal panels. During the early 1980s, most of their custom was from one off residential customers interested in lowering carbon consumption and saving money, but since then, the market has widened and they now also supply and install systems for housing associations, universities and schools.

In addition to solar thermal panels, the company also supply and install solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. Blair Hornal explained the difference: “Thermal panels use energy from the sun to heat water, while PV panels use the energy to produce electricity.”

While the business found that demand was traditionally strongest for solar thermal systems, which offered a better return on investment, this has now changed to PV systems due to the introduction of the Government’s Feed In Tariff (FIT), which is both RPI linked and tax free. The FIT allows households and businesses to sell electricity back to the national grid at approximately four times the average rate. This rate is currently being reviewed and is likely to change by April 2012. Currently, the return on investment of a PV system is approximately 8-12% per annum and the system should fully pay for itself in around 8-10 years.

The Government is committed to lowering greenhouse gasses by 42% by 2020. As part of this drive to lower carbon consumption, the Government has announced a new Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), which is expected to lead to a resurgence of interest in thermal panels.

Blair said: “Up until last year, we were installing about 400 thermal systems per annum, but this has decreased lately as PV is now providing a better financial return. From only a couple of PV systems per annum, we are now installing about 300 and the market is still growing.”

**Customer base**

Blair said: “We cover all of Scotland and the north of England. We find that the biggest demand for our solar systems is from Aberdeenshire, the Scottish Borders, the Highlands and the Western Isles.

“We have found that people in rural areas tend to be more environmentally aware and also generally have higher fuel costs, making them more likely to invest in renewables. People in cities are far more transient and tend to be less willing to commit to such an investment.

“**Local supply chains**

Blair said: “We use local trades wherever possible and buy locally, such as from Edmundsons in Falkirk, Plumbline in Springkerse and McDonald Engineers in Glenrothes.

“We also work closely with Stirling companies, including ICE Heating, W.D. Harley architects, Lasting Impressions sign writing and Farmore IT.”

www.sun-harvester.co.uk
Stirling Business Panel

Stirling Business Panel – Executive Group update

The Executive Group has now completed a review of the Business Panel, introducing more formal structures. It is now focused on organising and planning events to help and support Stirling’s business community in 2012.

The Executive Group is pleased to announce two new members - Gordon Bell, Executive Director of Stirling Enterprise Park and Catriona Cripps, founder of Wildcat Solutions.

Past, present and future

The Panel held a networking event at the macobert on 25th October to bring members up to date with what has been achieved since the Panel was launched in March 2009 and to outline some of the plans for 2012.

The Panel was privileged to have John Rendall, CEO of HSBC Scotland as its keynote speaker. HSBC opened a new Stirling branch on Murray Place in August and has clearly demonstrated its commitment to the city and the business community in a very short space of time.

For those of you who weren’t able to make the October event, here is a quick summary of the key issues that have been raised by Panel members and how the Panel has been working to address them:

Lack of support for businesses
Response – Following on from the successful Funding & Innovation Event held in 2009, a similar event is planned for 2012.

Lack of funding for businesses
Response – Stirling Council recently joined the East of Scotland Investment Fund (ESIF) providing another potential channel of funding for new and existing businesses (see page 14 for more about ESIF).

Parking issues
Response – The Business Panel was consulted during development of Stirling Council’s parking strategy and improvements have already been made within the city centre. The Business Panel Executive Group now has established links with the Roads & Transport Service of Stirling Council and will be better able to represent the views of the business community if any future changes take place.

Lack of affordable business space
Response – The Stirling Business Panel and its members have been specifically consulted as part of the process of producing a new Local Development Plan for Stirling. Two workshops were held to allow local businesses to present their views and make an input into the consultation process. The Draft Proposed Local Development Plan was issued in October and is open for consultation until 16th December.

Securing public sector procurement opportunities
Response – Many local businesses would like to secure more public sector work, but report that they are put off applying because the current procurement process is too intimidating or they do not think that their business is ‘big’ enough. Following on from a successful procurement workshop held by the Panel in 2009, Stirling Council has recently joined the Supplier Development Programme (SDP), which is designed to help businesses develop the confidence and skills to tender for contracts and to improve the success rate of tenders by local businesses (see page 22 for more about SDP).
Not already a Business Panel member?

Please contact Bill Fortune (Business Partnership Executive – Stirling Council) on 01786 443172, email panel@stirling.gov.uk or join online at www.stirlingbusinesspanel.org.

MEMBER PROFILE

Catriona Cripps, Wildcat Solutions

Catriona ‘Cat’ Cripps has been a solid supporter of the Stirling Business Panel since its launch in 2009 and the Panel is delighted to welcome her to the Executive Group.

Catriona was born and raised in Glasgow before spending four years at the University of St Andrews where she gained an Honours degree in Psychology. She then moved to Surrey to take up employment as a Trainee Programmer for a pharmaceutical company, but spent most of her time there in ‘business’ rather than IT. A move to Scotia Pharmaceuticals in 1994 brought the opportunity to relocate to Stirling, and from there she moved to Royal Bank of Scotland as a contract Business Analyst.

Catriona started her own business in 2002 with the help of Stirling Enterprise and launched Wildcat Solutions in 2008. Catriona said: “Wildcat provides small to medium sized companies and organisations with consultancy, training and advice on the software and systems they need to run their businesses efficiently. With a good understanding of both small and large business needs, we take the time to understand the business and provide systems to meet both current and future requirements.”

Catriona spends her free time in her garden, which she is gradually taming, or hill-walking which she enjoys combining with photography, and she is an active member of the John Muir Trust.

When asked why she joined the Business Panel, Catriona replied, “I joined the Panel in order to engage with other local businesses with a view to developing strategic partnerships.”

Stirling Business Awards 2012

The Stirling Business Panel is proud to announce that 2012 will see the launch of the Stirling Business Awards. Demonstrating a commitment to Stirling and to the local business community, HSBC has kindly agreed to be the main sponsor.

The awards ceremony will take place in October at the new Forth Valley College Campus at Kildean and the Stirling Business Panel is grateful to the College for generously allowing it to use the wonderful new facility.

The awards are intended to provide an opportunity to present the best that Stirling has to offer and to celebrate the depth and strength of the business community.

Award categories and entry forms will be available early in the New Year on the Panel website – www.stirlingbusinesspanel.org . You can also subscribe to the Panel weekly bulletin through the website to receive more information and updates.

Stirling Business Panel Events – 2012

The Stirling Business Panel is hosting the following events with its partners in 2012:

- **January** - Seminar on new Pension legislation due in October 2012
- **February** - Supplier Development Programme Workshop
- **March** - Spring Trade Fair
- **April** - Workshop/Seminar by Co-operative Development Scotland
- **September** - Funding & Innovation Support Event
- **October** - Stirling Business Awards 2012

For more information, please visit www.stirlingbusinesspanel.org .

Panel now has its own You Tube identity

Stirling Business Panel now has a You Tube presence, having joined the legions of Twitter users some months ago. At present, it has one video on show, but if you have something you would like to share, please send a short clip to info@stirlingbusinesspanel.org .

www.stirling.gov.uk/stirlingeye  STIRLING EYE  Focus on the local economy
Stirling Council has become the newest member of the East of Scotland Investment Fund (ESIF).

ESIF is a consortium of ten east of Scotland local authorities working together to provide loan finance to new and growing small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) within the east of Scotland.

ESIF offers loans of up to £50,000 to new and growing Stirling businesses.

Councillor Scott Farmer, Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Tourism & Finance said, “In the current economic climate, Stirling Council is pleased to be joining the East of Scotland Investment Fund. We are now in a position to offer local businesses, through the Fund, an additional route to business funding and ensure that good, commercially viable proposals do not fail from a lack of access to finance.”

The Fund also aims to encourage and support the creation, development and growth of businesses within each of the ten local authority areas. This will in turn contribute to and strengthen the economy in terms of jobs, growth and wealth.

As a public sector owned fund, ESIF can provide up to 50% of the funding package required to help start up and growth costs for businesses. At least 50% of the balance of any funding package must be provided by the private sector, usually from the owners, directors and the bank.

ESIF has secured funding of £5 million from the ten local authority members, the Royal Bank of Scotland and the European Regional Development Fund. The fund will help to directly improve the business birth rate and growth potential of those supported, as well as making a major contribution to job creation in the process.

For more information on ESIF, visit www.eastscotinvest.co.uk or telephone 01786 443172.

Rural Stirling Business Space Study

Stirling Council recently conducted a study in association with the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park to find out more about demand for business space in rural Stirling.

As Stirling Eye went to print, partners involved in the study were finalising the study recommendations and meeting to discuss how to deliver them. A full update will be provided in the next edition of Stirling Eye.

Joelle Russell (Stirling Council) provided more information on the study findings:

“The study was aimed at identifying the location and nature of demand for business space in rural Stirling. In addition to a comprehensive review of literature/policy and consultation with local property agents and managers, a survey was conducted with rural businesses.

“We are grateful to the 196 businesses that responded to the survey, providing information that has helped to highlight a shortage of affordable business premises in the rural area, particularly in the Callander/Doune/Thornhill area and the south western villages. Demand is predominantly for small flexible and affordable business premises, providing mixed-use space, such as a combination of retail, storage and production space, or office and storage space.

“Another issue highlighted by the study is the historic market failure in development of new business premises in Stirling’s more remote villages, such as Killin.

“There isn’t an easy fix to address the market failure in provision of business premises in rural Stirling, but discussions have begun between the Council, National Park, Stirling Enterprise and Stirling Development Agency to identify possible solutions.”

The full study findings are available at www.stirling.gov.uk/projects.
Stirling pupils contribute to R&D

Five senior pupils from Stirling schools won bursaries from the prestigious Nuffield Foundation to spend their summer holidays working in research and development with Scottish firms and institutions.

Wallace High School’s Craig Wardlaw impressed staff at Stirling-based GR Advanced Materials Ltd., where he investigated how to decrease particle size to produce a viable rubber crumb ink.

John Hamilton, Senior Scientist at GR Advanced Materials, said: “It was good to have a young person in the lab who was keen to learn about our work. The project was long enough to allow Craig to do useful work independently after the initial training period. We would be happy to run another project and we would recommend the scheme to other science-based businesses.”

As a result of his experience, Craig is considering a career in chemical engineering. Of his experience within the workplace he commented: “The people were the best thing. It gave me an appreciation of what goes on behind the scenes – it is amazing how much goes into producing a carton of ink.”

Scientists at the University of Stirling also benefited from the pupils’ work, with Claire Watson from McLaren High School investigating non-lethal DNA extraction protocols for the endangered pine hoverfly. Fellow McLaren pupil Stuart Berrow conducted a study to demonstrate the expression of signalling molecules in embryonic mouse brains by in situ hybridization at the University of Edinburgh. Two Balfron High School pupils also undertook research, at the University of Stirling and the University of Glasgow.

Nuffield Foundation Science Bursaries offer up to 1000 bursaries a year, for S5 pupils to work alongside scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians. The 4-6 week research or development projects are well-defined from the start, have an outcome that is achievable within the time available and make a contribution to the work of the host organisation.

As Craig pointed out: “Not only does the student gain new experience, the employer gets someone who will bring in new ideas – and that can only be good for business.”

Businesses interested in hosting a pupil next summer can visit www.techfestsetpoint.org.uk/activities/nuffield for more information.

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30 second interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Rik Sangha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Managing Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business:</td>
<td>Lix Toll Garage, Killin, FK21 8RB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief company description:</td>
<td>Independent Land Rover dealer and contractors to all recovery clubs (AA, RAC, Greenflag, etc.) and local police. Petrol station with convenience store. Car and commercial repairs, 4x4 and car hire and M.O.T. testing station for class 4, light 5 and class 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you get to work?</td>
<td>Walk as I live on site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is your favourite place to eat out? Why?</td>
<td>The Old Flax Mill, good food and close to home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think the Stirling area could most benefit from?</td>
<td>It already caters for all our needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your favourite colour?</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the best thing about doing business in Stirling?</td>
<td>It’s central with fast access to everything and everywhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think the biggest issue is for businesses in the Stirling area?</td>
<td>Winter weather, competing with multinational franchises (i.e. large supermarkets) for fuel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the biggest issue for your business?</td>
<td>Affordable housing to attract skilled staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your favourite shop?</td>
<td>Dobbies Garden Centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your greatest ambition?</td>
<td>To own and run an organic farm.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lix Toll Garage: 01567 820280 www.lixtoll.com
TRADING ONLINE

The internet has opened up new opportunities for businesses to buy and sell goods or services online and plays an increasingly important role in the way products and services are purchased.

A website can be accessed from anywhere in the world giving businesses of any size affordable access to the mass market. With a professional looking website you can compete on an equal footing with larger competitors and if your web site can process payment information, your businesses can now be open 24 hours a day!

This feature focuses on the free support available through Stirling Enterprise (STEP) to assist local businesses to trade more online.

Business Gateway training events

STEP delivers Business Gateway support services on behalf of Stirling Council. This includes delivering regular free Business Gateway training events, open to all local businesses. Included on the programme of events are four classes specifically aimed at helping businesses to do more trade online:

What You Need To Know Before Setting Up A Website
A website can be a very important tool for your business. This workshop looks at the things you should consider before you set up your website, such as domain name, how to maintain your website, and required software.

Improve Your Search Engine Ranking
This workshop will give you the knowledge and skills to use search engine optimisation techniques to improve your search engine ranking, attract more visitors and improve your website’s performance.

Trading Online
This workshop will give you the knowledge and skills to set up and manage an effective e-commerce website. It also addresses what is required from a legal and regulatory perspective.

Get Real Results From Your Website
This workshop gives you an understanding of what makes a good website and the factors that make a website successful (or not). The outcome of the workshop is a strategy improving your website to bring tangible and measurable results.

For a list of forthcoming training events available to Stirling businesses, please see the back page of Stirling Eye or visit www.bgateway.com.

Website marketing tips

Stirling Enterprise IT Adviser Graham Lambie provided Stirling Eye with the following useful tips on maximising the impact of business websites:

- Use an internet search engine to find relevant key phrases that accurately describe your business products and services and take note of any competitor sites.

- Prepare a marketing spreadsheet for the index/home page of your site, including details such as title, description, keyword and alternative text for website images.

- Add the marketing content to your index/home page source code or, if a web designer has constructed your site, email the marketing sheet for them to add.

- Repeat the above for the internal pages of your site, focusing on the most important pages and best-selling products first.

- Establish a links/resources page to exchange website addresses with other relevant sites. This will give your site increased exposure on other websites, and will contribute to an increase in Google page ranking.

- Check your site navigation is clear with most significant pages, including the home page, accessible from any page on the site.

- Regularly add interesting and topical content to your homepage.

- Look to integrate some social media elements, e.g. Twitter, Facebook.

- Try to construct pages for human users – they will be purchasing your products not the search engines.

- Keep control of your website marketing and make changes if your existing strategy isn’t working.

- Be patient – it can take time to create a profitable web presence. There are other marketing methods such as email marketing and paid advertising which could be a consideration after the above improvements have been carried out.

Graham Lambie,
Stirling Enterprise
European project to increase your e-trading capacity

Stirling based businesses are eligible for support from a new European funded project that provides businesses with a free web audit, leading to the development of an e-business strategy. The project aims to support the growth and IT/e-commerce awareness of businesses and potential entrepreneurs by developing their e-trading capacity.

The objectives are to:
- give participating SMEs the skills and capacity to create an effective web presence
- encourage businesses to make maximum use of IT to benefit their business
- help businesses complete a web audit and formulate an e-business strategy
- enable clients with suitable products and services to trade on-line and widen their networks

The support includes an introduction to new technology and information on trading online. There is also a specialist advisory service on business growth to complement the e-commerce activities and support for rural businesses in their own area through a programme of roadshow events and mobile advisory/IT support. For more information, please contact STEP on 01786 463416 or email step@stirling-enterprise.co.uk.

For more information on free Business Gateway IT and business support delivered by STEP please refer to:
Start Up Street: A focus on King Street

At the start of September the first steps were taken on the journey to find a solution to the range of vacant units on King Street, Stirling city centre. Sessions were held to seek public views on potential uses, engage with individuals proposing imaginative business ideas and to get input from experienced business professionals.

The Start Up Street workshop sessions were facilitated by Snook Design, and supported by Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS), with the Stirling Arcade providing the venue.

Andy Kennedy, Stirling City Centre Initiative Manager, explained the idea behind the Start Up Street project to Stirling Eye.

“The most common city centre issue I hear comment on is King Street. It is a key street in Stirling, linking the old and the new areas of the city, but for a range of reasons, has a consistently high level of ground floor vacancies.

“The Start Up Street project has been designed to tackle the complex issues surrounding regeneration of King Street, engaging with its many property owners.

“It is an ambitious attempt to try and find a new role for King Street, to help it survive as a 21st century high street. Although we are still at early stages of the project, one of the main elements embarked on at the workshops was to start mapping the key people and skills base available in Stirling and layer that with the demand for those skills and attributes. In my view, matching local demand and supply, is the only way that we can try and ensure that commercial activities that take place in King Street are sustained. We are currently pulling together the findings from the events, including identifying how to overcome barriers to progressing the initiative.

“I have seen a number of regeneration projects across the UK providing rent incentives targeted at streets with high levels of vacant properties. Some have been more successful than others, but in the main, they fail when the project funding for the property rent runs out. That is not regeneration of a high street; it is merely a short-term fix that masks the underlying problem. Start Up Street is taking a more innovative approach, trying to get under the issues to find a range of solutions. The project will take time, but the reward will be a long term solution for King Street.”

For more information, please visit http://wearesnook.com/snook/2011/08/30/re-imaging-the-high-street-an-invitation-to-participate/

Provide work experience for Stirling’s future graduates

The University of Stirling actively encourages students to recognise that work experience (of any kind) can provide them with so much more than extra money. It offers them the chance to enhance their employability, investigate careers of interest and develop their skill set.

The Employment Zone & Job Shop at the University offer a free vacancy advertising service and would like to work with Stirling businesses to develop all kinds of opportunities for students to gain work experience. This could be a regular part-time job, seasonal work, a one-off project, volunteering or simply the opportunity for students to work shadow in your organisation.

If you would like to help Stirling’s future graduates gain valuable work experience, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the University of Stirling’s Employment Zone & Job Shop on 01786 467070, or email employerlinks@stir.ac.uk .

www.careers.stir.ac.uk/
Andy Richardson, Chief Executive of Stirling Development Agency

The Stirling Development Agency (SDA) is a 50/50 joint venture between Stirling Council and Valad Property Group, established to deliver asset and development management across a portfolio of commercial properties. Stirling Eye met up with Chief Executive Andy Richardson to find out more...

Andy, what is your background?
I have worked in property for 22 years, initially in a retail agency and investment role at Rydens, before moving to Montagu Evans. I then joined Valad (formerly Scarborough Group) to head up their Scottish office.

What is the SDA’s remit?
The SDA portfolio has two distinct elements. It holds an investment portfolio of office, industrial and retail premises accommodating over 100 tenants. It also holds a development portfolio that comprises of nine strategic sites suitable for commercial development.

The purpose of the joint venture is to promote social and economic activity through the proactive management of its investment and development portfolios.

What has the SDA delivered so far?
The SDA has completed Castle Business Park, which now provides 230,000 sq ft of office space to accommodate up to 2,000 employees. Occupiers include the regional headquarters for HSBC and Robertson Group.

To date we have also completed 220,000 sq ft of industrial development at Broadleys Business Park and secured planning permission for an additional 90,000 sq ft of office and warehousing, where we continue to explore opportunities to bring new employment to Stirling.

What are the plans for future development?
Despite the difficult economic climate, the Council and Valad have continued to invest in the SDA to position the assets within the portfolio in order that they can respond to occupational demand. This has recently paid dividends following the announcement that we have secured a pre-let to Waitrose, for a new 37,300 sq ft store, which will create 180 new jobs. Other retailers have shown considerable interest in the remaining 21,600 sq ft. Construction is due to commence in spring 2012.

The redevelopment of our Station Road site, opposite Stirling train station, will also start in spring 2012. Plans consist of ground floor commercial units, with 62 affordable housing units above.

As part of the regeneration of the Forthside Quarter, we are facilitating the delivery of a 60-bed hotel, family restaurant and bar, which is due to be trading by 2014. In addition, we have delivered a planning consent for 125,000 sq ft of offices adjacent to the rail station where discussions are ongoing with a number of businesses.

One of our biggest development sites is Kildean, on the western edge of the city. We have secured consent for up to 400,000 sq ft of employment development, which will allow us to deliver a second phase of Castle Business Park and promote complimentary activity, such as a new crèche, family pub/restaurant and ancillary retail.

How has the recession affected regeneration?
The impact on capital values has meant that SDA has adopted a different approach to deliver solutions. Continued investment by Stirling Council and Valad to put in place planning consents and infrastructure will now allow us to respond positively and quickly to occupational demand as demonstrated with Waitrose.

We continue to invest in our existing portfolio with specific focus on employment, this includes the strategic sites at Crookbridge, for 100,000 sq ft foodstore and Millhall, where our focus is on industrial, office, leisure and mixed use proposals.

We are on the verge of announcing a number of exciting new developments – look out for more information in the next edition of Stirling Eye!

www.stirlingdevelopmentagency.co.uk

STIRLING EYE Focus on the local economy
Business space developments

Industrial

As initially reported in the last edition of Stirling Eye, recladding works are now well underway in relation to the former TNT building in Broadleys Road, Springkerse Industrial Estate, Stirling. According to the sole letting agents J&E Shepherd, interest is already being shown in the building, which extends in total to around 1,160 sq m (12,500 sq ft).

Sandy Falconer of J&E Shepherd can be contacted on 01786 450438, email sandy.falconer@shepherd.co.uk for opportunities at this location.

Another new occupier, water purification supplier Daqua Ltd, has been secured for a terraced unit development at Whitehouse Road, Springkerse Industrial Estate. Other businesses at this development include Zanart Ltd, Kilted Campers, Stirling Bike Hire and ACF Cleaning Ltd. Only two units of 110 sq m (1,186 sq ft) remain for lease.

Further information on remaining space at Whitehouse Road is available from Allan Imrie of Allied Surveyors Scotland on 01786 450291, email allan.imrie@alliedsurveyorsscotland.com.

Office

With a diversity of office space on the market, activity continues with lettings being secured within Stirling including the city centre and Castle Business Park as well as Touch Estate near Stirling.

Well positioned within the city centre, Wallace House’s latest occupier is local MSP Bruce Crawford who has leased a third floor suite extending to around 67 sq m (720 sq ft). Andrew Peel of Graham and Sibbald, joint agents with Savills, commented: “This recent letting highlights the building’s strategic location and its accessibility with both on-site and public parking nearby. Two suites each of around 93 sq m (1,000 sq ft) now remain at this location.”

More information on space at Wallace House is available from Andrew Peel of Graham and Sibbald on 01786 463111, email apeel@g-s.co.uk or Kate Graham of Savills on 0131 247 3821, email kgraham@savills.co.uk.

Also in the city centre, chartered surveyors J&E Shepherd have completed a move to larger and better-equipped offices in Gladstone Place.

Some space remains within the Gladstone Place property and further information can be obtained from Sandy Falconer of J&E Shepherd on 01786 450438, email sandy.falconer@shepherd.co.uk.

Traditional office space is also available within Ross House in Melville Terrace, Stirling and further information can be obtained from Marion Ross on 01786 471038, email marion.ross@morrisonross.co.uk.

Mann Island Finance, the UK’s largest independent car and finance broker, has sub-leased 230 sq m (2,474 sq ft) of space within Carseview House, Castle Business Park from SEPA for their Scottish headquarters. James Barr represented Mann Island Finance and Knight Frank advised SEPA.

Will Sandwell of James Barr said: “We carried out a full search for Mann Island Finance, subsequently identifying and acquiring this office suite off market. Carseview House provides our client with high quality accommodation in an established and prominent business location.”

First and second floor office space at 8 Spittal Street, Stirling city centre, is due to become available in the near future. The space extends to 929 sq m (10,000 sq ft) and will be available for sale.

Further information on the office space at Spittal Street is available from William McVicar of McVicar Chartered Surveyors – Estate Agents on 0141 331 1003 or email mcvicarsurveyors@hotmail.com.

The latest occupier at Touch Estate is expanding IT company Efficient Client Services which has leased two units extending to 185 sq m (2,000 sq ft) within Touch Business Centre. This follows successful lettings to roofing specialists Scotia Ltd and Wallingford Hydrosolutions Ltd, who took space in the Old Laundry Building earlier in the year.

Margaret Plews of Touch Estate commented: “Efficient Client Services are a welcome addition to Touch Business Centre. The move has allowed them to offer their training services on site. With serious interest being shown in our remaining available space, I am hopeful of further lettings in the near future.”

Further information on Touch Business Centre and conference and events opportunities at Touch Estate is available from Margaret Plews on 01786 448899, email Margaret@touchestate.co.uk.
Looking for commercial property? Visit www.stirling.gov.uk/property

Retail and leisure

JD Wetherspoons propose to develop a bar/restaurant, beer garden and new shop front at 8A Spittal Street, Stirling city centre. The building was previously used for office and retail.

Within Raploch, Sainsbury’s new extension is well underway. Nearby at Kildean, the new Forth Valley College campus is nearing completion and infrastructure works, including access, are also well underway to enable future business space developments close by.

Raploch URC leads the way with Scotland’s first mixed use, low carbon development

‘Regeneration project aims to create green model for future’

The Raploch Urban Regeneration Company (URC) has commenced work on Scotland’s first ever mass timber, mixed use, low carbon development, which will create a mix of eco-friendly apartments and commercial units.

Funded by the Town Centre Regeneration Fund the building will be constructed by Cruden Homes East and located in Raploch’s Huntly Crescent, in the shadows of Stirling Castle. It will comprise three commercial units (two at 76 sq m and one at 96 sq m) on the ground floor and three two-bedroom apartments on the first floor. The development is due to be completed by spring 2012. It is anticipated that the build will support six jobs in the local area.

Construction of the development began in August. To meet its low carbon targets, the building is to be constructed from cross laminated timber and to specifications that are recognised for their advantages in terms of sound absorption and transmission, air-tightness and thermal conductivity. Minimum micro-renewable equipment will be installed, to include solar thermal panels for heating water and air source heat pumps for heating in the domestic units.

In addition, an electronic building monitoring system will be installed in order to measure the amount of energy used by the building in kilowatt hours. This information will be downloaded to enable the URC to analyse the data and the efficiency of the building as a low-carbon structure and enable the end user to monitor their own energy usage.

www.raploch.com

Works under way for Forth Valley College Stirling Campus, Kildean

Planning applications update

The following planning applications with a significant business focus have been submitted to Stirling Council since the last edition of Stirling Eye (August 2011) and are still being considered, pending a decision:

- An application by TESCO stores for erection of Class 1 food store, change of use of Lodge House to Class 2 for tourist information office, erection of petrol filling station, car parking and associated access and landscaping (4,200 sq m gross supermarket) on land to south of Kippenross North Lodge, Dunblane.
- An application by Gladman Developments Limited for erection of Class 4 business use, access road, car parking and other associated works and environmental improvements (4,074 sq m gross business space) at land some 100 m north of Dunblane Cemetery, Barbush.

The following planning applications have been approved:

- An application by JD Wetherspoon for change of use from former offices and retail unit to a public house with new beer garden, new shop front and plant (514 sq m) at 8A Spittal Street, Stirling.
- An application by Burn Stewart Distillers for change of use of former canteen building to form distillery visitor centre including associated new car parking facilities (1,940 sq m) at Deanston Distillery.

The following planning application has been withdrawn:

- An application by Ms Elaine Hopely & Ms Deborah Colvin for change of use from dwelling house to café with seasonal external seating area (108 sq m) at Bridgehaugh Cottage, Stirling.

Planning applications correct at mid-October 2011.

Planning schedules can be viewed at www.stirling.gov.uk/planningschedule
Supplier Development Programme

Applying for public sector contracts can be a daunting task. To help with this, Stirling Council recently became a partner with the Supplier Development Programme. The programme is a partnership of Scottish Councils and the third sector. It is designed to help businesses be ready and able to seek out and tender for exciting business opportunities with the public sector and successfully apply for these contracts.

If your business is located in the Stirling Council area you can access its services FREE of charge. By joining the programme, your business will be offered information, support and training events to help unravel the tendering process.

An additional benefit of joining the programme is that by becoming more able to tender for Scottish contracts, your prospects will improve when competing throughout the UK where there is an annual public spend of £40 billion.

Examples of the free training events your business could be attending include:

- **A Guide to Procurement**, Stirling, 28th Nov 2011: A seminar designed to give you tips from experts on successful tendering and ultimately improve your knowledge of the procurement process.
- **Love My Tender Workshop**, Stirling, Feb 2012: A series of three workshops covering topics such as finding opportunities, understanding the tendering process, collaborative working and compiling winning tenders.
- **Environmental Policy Workshop**, Stirling, date TBC: The aim of this workshop is to increase your environmental awareness and to improve your ability in the tendering process on the basis of environmental credentials.
- **Health and Safety Policy Workshop**, Stirling, date TBC: This workshop is designed to increase your awareness of health and safety aspects of tendering to improve your ability in the tendering process.

Register now to find out more at [www.sdpscotland.co.uk](http://www.sdpscotland.co.uk) or contact Sandy Frickleton (Stirling Council) on 01786 443403, email frickletona@stirling.gov.uk.

‘Buy with Confidence’ Trusted Trader Scheme

In response to local consumers, concerns about ‘rogue traders’, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils Joint Trading Standards Service has joined the national ‘Buy with Confidence’ – Trusted Trader Scheme. The scheme provides consumers with a list of local businesses that have given a commitment to trade fairly. Every business listed has undergone a series of detailed checks before being approved as a member of the scheme.

The Buy with Confidence scheme, launched in 1999, is now the largest such scheme in the UK, with more than 50 local authority Trading Standards Services administering it.

The Buy with Confidence scheme and vetting process are designed with consumer protection in mind. In order to become a member, a business must first apply to join the scheme and must then pass a set of tailored background checks relating to their customer service. Local Trading Standards Officer Brian Wilson said: “For businesses to become members of the scheme each applicant will have their complaints history reviewed and will receive a visit from Trading Standards. Good references are required from previous customers and applicants must agree to abide by the scheme’s code of conduct, which requires them to follow the letter and spirit of the law.”

Businesses who become members will be able to use the recognisable ‘Buy with Confidence’ logo.

Local traders interested in joining or seeking additional information are asked to contact Brian Wilson (Stirling Council) on 01786 442931 or to email bwc@stirling.gov.uk.
Take care of your business premises this winter

Many buildings in the Stirling area suffer if they are not properly and regularly maintained – especially from the effects of winter weather.

While putting off repairs may save money in the short term, it inevitably results in an even bigger bill later on. Dealing with defects as they arise is the most cost effective way of looking after your building.

The effects of winter
Last winter saw a number of buildings suffer as a result of the snow and severe temperatures. If you own your business premises, it is a good idea to inspect your building after spells of bad weather, looking out for loose/missing slates or tiles; loose masonry etc, remembering to include boundary walls and fences in your checks.

Shared responsibility
Particular problems can occur where buildings are in shared ownership and the inaction of one or more people or businesses affects others. It’s really important for owners to get together and co-operate to ensure that common repairs, such as roofs in tenements, are carried out. It’s also important for owners to realise that disrepair of their property can adversely affect an adjoining property.

What can the Council do?
If a neighbouring property to your business is not being maintained, you can contact Stirling Council who can require that repairs be carried out in the following circumstances:
- Failure of an owner to contribute to common repairs
- Disrepair of one property affecting an adjoining property
- Disrepair which is likely to cause further deterioration of a building
- Immediate action is needed for reasons of safety or to prevent damage e.g. a burst pipe in the property above
- Where there is a public health issue e.g. penetrating dampness
- Where there is a risk that a building will become dangerous if a repair is not carried out e.g. crumbling masonry above a pavement or even garden walls that have become defective

Where necessary, the Council’s Housing Service and Environmental Health Service can take action against owners who fail to maintain their property to a satisfactory standard, depending on the particular circumstances. Building owners should be aware that failure to carry out any works required in some formal notices served by the local authority is an offence that can be subject to prosecution. For advice on these matters, relating to defective property, phone the Environmental Health Service on 0845 2777000 and ask for the Public Health Team.

If you own a building that deteriorates to the extent that it becomes dangerous, the Council’s Building Standards Service has powers to ensure that it is made safe, if necessary by carrying out the works and recovering the costs from the owner/s. For advice on dangerous buildings phone the Building Standards Service on 0845 2777000.

If you are a building owner, you can be held responsible if someone is injured as a result of disrepair of your property.

RACMSA Rally of Scotland 2011

Friday 7th – Sunday 9th October
As the penultimate leg of the 2011 Intercontinental Rally Challenge, the RACMSA Rally of Scotland 2011 delivered fast-paced action within some of the most beautiful scenery in the world with Norway’s Andreas Mikkelson finishing almost half a minute clear of his nearest rival to take the trophy. The High Corrie stage in the Trossachs in particular drew thousands to the Stirling area on the Sunday. The stage was also transmitted live on the Eurosport network to 64 countries and over 125 million homes worldwide.

The Ceremonial Start of this exhilarating and hard-fought rally took place on Friday 7 October on Stirling Castle’s esplanade. Watched by hundreds of spectators, the traditional ceremony took place accompanied by an exciting fireworks display and music by the Royal Burgh of Stirling Pipe Band and Clanadonia.

www.msaevents.co.uk/rallyofscotland
An increasing number of businesses are now being run from home, whether it is due to choice or necessity. There are things that you will need to verify, or take into account, before deciding to run a business from home.

If you are uncertain about what permissions will be required, it is always worth contacting the relevant organisation before you begin working from home, the advice is free and it may save you time and money in the long run. This feature outlines some key issues that you may wish to consider...

**Useful things to know:**

**Business rates**
If part of your home is set aside exclusively for business use, you may have to pay business rates on it. The decision on how much you will have to pay is made by your local Valuation Office. If you are liable to pay business rates on part of your home, the domestic council tax bill for the rest of your home may be reduced.

Contact: Assessor for Central Scotland. Tel: 01786 892200  
www.saa.gov.uk/central

**Insurance**
Most domestic home and contents insurance policies do not cover business activities. You may need to take out business and specific contents cover as well as increase the security of your home.

You also need to consider public liability insurance, employers’ liability insurance and check that your vehicle insurance policy includes cover for business use.

**IT and communications**
At least one extra phone line would be useful in addition to your personal phone. This means customers and suppliers can contact you on a dedicated number thus avoiding the possibility of a family member answering a business call.

IT security is a crucial issue and you should make sure you have a firewall and antivirus software in place to protect your PC from attack by viruses or malicious software.

**Further advice and support**
Stirling Enterprise provide a free of charge, comprehensive Business Gateway start-up advice service.

Contact: 01786 463416, email step@stirling-enterprise.co.uk

**Taxation issues**
Before setting up, you need to check whether running your business from home will have implications on your personal tax situation. For example, if you use part of your home exclusively for business purposes, you may be liable to pay Capital Gains Tax if you later sell your home.

www.hmrc.gov.uk/cgt/businesses/basics.htm

**Transport**
If you are planning to operate as a sole trader and plan to use your own car for business travel, you should keep detailed records so that you can separate your business from your private mileage.

**Using your home**
If you are a homeowner you will need to check whether there is a clause in your mortgage agreement restricting the use of your home for business activities. If there is, you will need to discuss this with your mortgage provider. If you are a tenant of a private landlord, council or other housing association, you must get permission from your landlord before starting a business from home.

**Utilities**
If you run a business from home, you are entitled to claim a proportion of your utility bills as a business expense before tax. Your accountant can advise you on how much you can claim.
Running a business from home

Regulations that you should be aware of:

**Building warrant**
You may need a building warrant if you are planning to build, alter, extend or convert part of your home.  
Contact: Stirling Council Building Standards. Tel: 01786 442828, email info@stirling.gov.uk

**Document retention**
Businesses must keep records of all receipts and expenditure for tax purposes. If you are registered for VAT, you must keep records of all the supplies you receive, sales that you make and a summary of VAT for each period covered by your VAT return. You must keep these records for six years after the year they relate to.  
If you employ staff, you must keep all wages, salary and National Insurance (NI) records for six years. If you keep confidential or personal information, you must comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Health and safety**
It is a legal requirement for every business, including home-based businesses, to carry out a health and safety risk assessment of the workplace.  
Contact: Stirling Council Health and Safety Team. Tel: 0845 277 7000, email eoadmin@stirling.gov.uk. Please also see www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg226.pdf

**Planning Permission**
If you intend to work from home, you may need planning permission. For example, converting an outbuilding into an office, or making your home primarily a place of business needs planning approval before any changes can be made.  
Contact: Stirling Council Planning Department. Tel: 01786 442515, email planning@stirling.gov.uk. For the National Park area, contact: 01389 722024, email planning@lochlomond-trossachs.org

**Trading licenses**
A wide range of businesses will require a license, regardless of whether or not they operate from home, some of which are:  
**Animals** – Licenses are required for any animal related business, whether it be breeding, boarding or keeping dangerous or wild animals.  
Contact: Stirling Council Environmental Protection Team. Tel: 0845 277 7000, email info@stirling.gov.uk  
**Children** – Childminders must, by law be registered with Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS).  
See: www.childminding.org/become-a-childminder and www.scswis.com  
**Food** – If you are planning to start a food business, you must register your premises 28 days before opening. The Food Safety Team will assist you to ensure that you meet the necessary regulations.  
Contact: Stirling Council Food Safety Team. Tel: 0845 277 7000, email thefoodteam@stirling.gov.uk  
**Various business activities** – There is a variety of businesses that require a license, for example, businesses that provide acupuncture, alcohol, fireworks, window and wheelie bin cleaning, private hire, fund raising and much more.  
Contact: Stirling Council Licensing Department. Tel: 01786 443288, email licensing@stirling.gov.uk

Case study

www.cloudart.co.uk

Dunblane based Sally Henderson took voluntary redundancy and set up her own business, CloudArt. The business creates, designs and supplies images, and more recently, provides a mosaic portrait service made from customers’ personal images.

Sally shared her advice on running a business from home:

- “Make sure you dedicate space specifically for your business. This overcomes the difficulty of separating work and home life, creating a better work-life balance.”
- “Networking is very important. You need to get yourself and your business name established and build relationships.”
- “Attending networking events and travelling to the events takes up a lot of time. e-Networking is what I am doing now. I can take an hour out of my day and network online at my desk, taking video calls and promoting my business whilst saving a lot of valuable time - this also helps with the loneliness of working from home!”
- “I went on a STEP business start up course and learnt lots of things about business as well as working from home. Without this course I would have floundered a lot and I’d highly recommend it.”

www.cloudart.co.uk

Did you know?

Stirling Council’s Economic Support and Tourism service can provide business advice and assistance on a range of topics. If they are unable to answer your query, they will look into it and get back to you, saving you and your business valuable time.

Contact: 01786 443028, email melvillel@stirling.gov.uk

Some of the information in this feature was sourced from COBWEB Information for Business.
How to help stop environmental crime

Waste crime is particularly harmful to Scotland’s environment. It costs the taxpayer millions of pounds every year to investigate and clean up, and waste – especially hazardous waste – can potentially harm both the environment and human health if not stored and disposed of correctly.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has teamed up with Crimestoppers to tackle this issue. The partnership will enable members of the public and businesses to give information anonymously about environmental crime and criminals through Crimestoppers’ 24 hour hotline and their website.

The waste industry has grown considerably in recent years, which has prompted a number of illegal operators to enter what is becoming a very lucrative market.

Examples include:
- illegal landfill sites;
- unlicensed skip hire operators;
- large scale and persistent dumping of waste;
- unlawful collection, storage and breaking of scrap cars;
- unauthorised collection, storage and export of waste electrical and electronic equipment.

These operations run with an unfair commercial advantage over legitimate operators and can lead to serious environmental damage. There are also recognised links between environmental crime and serious organised crime groups and SEPA has been working closely with partner agencies such as the police to disrupt and deter these activities.

To report an illegal waste operation or an environmental crime anonymously, call Crimestoppers’ 24 hour hotline on 0800 555 11 or visit www.sepa.org.uk.

Need to source skills for a new project?

Bright Green Placements can help Stirling businesses access the skills of students, providing a portfolio of three student and graduate placement programmes. Each of the programmes can help you move forward projects that you have in mind, but maybe don’t have the resources or the time to do.

The team at Bright Green Placements work with you to assess your requirement and pull together a project specification which will be beneficial to both your business and the student / graduate you choose. Once this is done they will advertise your role, sift applications and shortlist for you as well as organising your interviews and mentoring the students and graduates while they are on placement. The programmes now run flexibly and full time through the year and are open to all sizes of business in all industries.

The Environmental Placement Programme, Step Classic and Graduate Step Programmes all offer your business the opportunity to progress projects quickly and at a time that suits you. Placements can be in areas such as EMS, ISO14001 and carbon management for the Environmental Placement Programme; science, technology, engineering and business for Step Classic; and in any discipline for Graduate Step.

All of the Bright Green Placements offer your business a low risk, cost effective way to engage with dynamic, driven and knowledgeable students and graduates from all of Scotland’s Universities.

For more information on the programmes please contact Louise Evison on 0131 561 6305 or email louise@thebusinesspartnership.org.uk. www.brightbusinesspartnership.org.uk
New businesses at the Stirling Arcade

The Stirling Arcade has had a busy year, welcoming a number of new businesses, including:

- **Cibo e Vino** – a licensed Italian café and delicatessen, now open until late on Thursdays, Friday’s and Saturday’s. [www.ciboevino.co.uk](http://www.ciboevino.co.uk)
- **Hogshedd pub** – the well-known Hogshedd pub chain is opening an establishment at the top of the Arcade.
- **Ruby’s Cup Cakes** – a café specialising in quality coffee and cupcakes. [www.rubyinthedustvintage.co.uk](http://www.rubyinthedustvintage.co.uk)
- **Ruby in the Dust** – a vintage clothing boutique. [www.rubyinthedustvintage.co.uk](http://www.rubyinthedustvintage.co.uk)
- **Straitwurly** – a gift shop specialising in personalised handmade crafts and gifts. The shop also sells a range of customised 80s bicycles. [www.folksy.com/shops/straitwurly](http://www.folksy.com/shops/straitwurly)
- **Sweet Treats** – a business selling luxury handmade body products. [sweettreatsstirling@gmail.com](mailto:sweettreatsstirling@gmail.com)
- **Thunkit** – featured in the last edition of Stirling Eye, the motorcycle accessories shop opened earlier this year and recently expanded into a bigger unit at the top of the Arcade to provide a larger display area. [legendschangepgear@gmail.com](mailto:legendschangepgear@gmail.com)

Catriona McAlpine, Marketing Manager at the Stirling Arcade said: “There is a real buzz about the Arcade at the moment with a wide range of quality independent retailers selling quirky and boutique products and a number of specialist health and beauty service providers. It is fantastic to see the central space within the Arcade utilised as seating areas for the new food and drink outlets, adding to the relaxed shopping experience.

“I am delighted that Hogshead is opening a pub in the old Pizza Express unit at the top of the Arcade, facing out onto King Street. This is a fantastic development for the Arcade, drawing in higher footfall and extending our evening food and drink offer.”

[www.stirlingarcade.com](http://www.stirlingarcade.com)

Screen Stirling

November will see the launch of a new filming location website for the Stirling area. Developed and managed by Stirling Council, this website brings together information on various potential filming locations in the area and offers the possibility of registering your venue / property as a location.

There are many benefits to encouraging Stirling’s image as a ‘film-friendly’ area. Film tourism accounts for 10% of the total value of tourism to the British economy, which amounts to around £1.8 billion per annum. Over £28 million of direct local expenditure is generated in Scotland each year through filming activity attracted by the Scottish Locations Network (which includes Stirling Council’s film liaison service).

If you live or work in the Stirling area and would like to register your residential or business property as a potential location or if you are interested in filming in the area then please register at [www.screensstirling.com](http://www.screensstirling.com).

[www.screensstirling.com](http://www.screensstirling.com)
Back from the future

Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER recently funded a study visit to Sweden for a group of local people to learn about super-fast ‘next generation broadband’. Below, Tony Teasdale, Director of Rural Stirling Housing Association, gives us his personal view of the study visit:

“We caught my breath at the end of an appropriately high-speed visit to explore the development of ‘next generation broadband’ (NGB) in Sweden I was left with a range of impressions:

- “We got enough glimpses – through the windows of trains, planes, buses and automobiles – to confirm the physical beauty and ‘otherness’ of the country. Our itinerary took us from the historic capital city of Stockholm, up to Luleå – just south of the Arctic circle - and finally back south to the vibrant and expanding hi-tech city of Linköping.

- “The closeness to nature, and remoteness of much of the country, reinforced the magnitude of Sweden’s achievement in developing NGB. Over 26% of households throughout the country now benefit from fibre optic cable links – compared with less than 1% in the UK, taking the Swedes to 3rd in the world – with countries above them being much more urbanised. The desire for NGB is not just a fixation of the young but appears to be generally entrenched within the population.

- “This achievement has been largely based on the work of locally owned and controlled ‘open access networks’ that have levered open a market encouraging competition with the former monopoly telecoms supplier. The networks have pioneered the laying of the infrastructure, in a manner akin to the spread of the railways in the 19th century. The fibre has been hungrily tapped into by individual households, businesses and public service providers and has reached many of the remotest communities – right down to local consortia of farmers who have invested the sweat equity to dig the trenches for the fibre themselves.

- “We were welcomed by enthusiastic people at the networks and communities we visited. We learned about the potential benefits and got a glimpse of the possibilities for the future. On a visit to a modern hospital in Luleå we saw how high quality video conferencing allowed for patients hundreds of miles away to have their consultation with a specialist in the hospital whilst sitting, for example, in their local GPs surgery or in a mobile mammography vehicle. The advantages in terms of quality of services, staff time savings, reduced time off work/child care and transport costs – as well as the peace of mind for patients – were clear to see. And it got us all thinking about the applicability to other areas of life.

- “We also gained an impression of the differences between Sweden and our own circumstances that will make bridging the gap more of a challenge: Our own telecoms giant seems relatively unwilling to make things easy for local communities to open up access to ‘dark’ or unused fibre that is already in place. And, the Swedish telecoms regulator is also more proactive in encouraging such a process.

The resounding view from everyone on the study visit was that NGB is the future and we should all be preparing to help make sure that it happens within our communities.”

Links to the full report and a video summarising the study visit are available at www.fvl.org.uk

FVL LEADER would like to encourage local people and businesses to ensure that they have completed the current broadband survey on the Stirling Council website www.stirling.gov.uk/broadbandsurvey as well as including NGB in any local action plan contributions they make to help build the case for more pilot initiatives and investment in broadband infrastructure.
ClacksMax wireless broadband contract has been awarded

The Forth Valley is set to lead in rural broadband with wireless broadband company, Briskona, awarded a tender to provide high speed internet connectivity to areas within the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Council areas. Initially targeted to cover Tillicoultry, Throsk and Touch Estate, the service will offer speeds of up to 12Mb.

Briskona’s Managing Director Steve Bluff said: “Briskona is delighted to be working with Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils and Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER on this exciting opportunity. The tender was to cover Tillicoultry, Bandeath / Throsk and Touch Estate; however we are planning a much more ambitious rollout.

Our high speed broadband is scheduled to start connecting customers in time for Christmas, with test customers starting in November. Prices will start from £19.99 for broadband only, with no telephone line required. Phone packages and bundles can also be added, with phone calls costing less than traditional UK landline charges. Customers will be able to keep their own phone and existing telephone number.”

Briskona intend to employ local installations teams and are keen to hear from experienced installers. They must have a track record of similar work, such as satellite TV, and have their own vehicles, requisite insurance, ladders and PPE. Briskona will provide training, customer premises equipment (CPE’s) and installation materials.

Briskona is also keen to hear from potential customers who are interested in taking part in trials.

To find out more about being part of the installation teams, please email jobs.clacksmax@briskona.com.

If interested in taking part in the trials, please call 0845 415 4498.

The ClacksMax project is being part-financed by the Scottish Government and the European Community Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER 2007-2013 programme.

DID YOU KNOW?
The Scottish government was recently allocated £68.8m in broadband funding by the UK government. Ensuring access to next generation high-speed broadband for all parts of Scotland by 2020 is a key priority for the Scottish government.

Latest LEADER Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forth Valley &amp; Lomond Local Action Group</td>
<td>Next Generation Broadband Study Visit</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Action Group</td>
<td>Real Jobs Falkirk, Muiravonside Project</td>
<td>£1,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falkirk Council</td>
<td>Dale Bridge Project</td>
<td>£36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slamannan Environmental Action Group</td>
<td>Blinkbonnie Wildlife and Sensory Park</td>
<td>£25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gartmore Development Trust</td>
<td>Gartmore Hall Pre-Development Costs</td>
<td>£22,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callendar Estate</td>
<td>Cycle Trails Signage and Orientation</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More information on the Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER programme is available on the website www.fvl.org.uk where you can also download an enquiry form.
### Economic facts

#### Population and Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2003-2010 % Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Population</strong></td>
<td>86,370</td>
<td>86,370</td>
<td>86,930</td>
<td>87,810</td>
<td>88,190</td>
<td>88,350</td>
<td>88,740</td>
<td>89,850</td>
<td>4.0% 3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working Age Population</strong></td>
<td>53,667</td>
<td>53,268</td>
<td>53,588</td>
<td>54,310</td>
<td>54,367</td>
<td>54,341</td>
<td>54,530</td>
<td>55,361</td>
<td>3.2% 3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Households</strong></td>
<td>36,454</td>
<td>36,658</td>
<td>36,958</td>
<td>37,164</td>
<td>37,328</td>
<td>37,555</td>
<td>37,789</td>
<td>38,048</td>
<td>4.4% 5.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Records of Scotland

#### Employment Rate

**Figure 2: Employment Rate (as % of people aged 16-64)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Population Survey (Nomis)

#### Unemployment Rate

**Figure 3: Unemployment Rate (as % of people aged 16-64)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(September) 2006</th>
<th>(September) 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Claimant Count with Rates and Proportions (Nomis)

#### Employment

**Figure 4: Number of People in Employment within Stirling Council area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2008-2010 Change</th>
<th>2008-2010 % Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>47,400</td>
<td>46,500</td>
<td>46,200</td>
<td>-1,200</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>2,604,600</td>
<td>2,530,700</td>
<td>2,451,800</td>
<td>-152,800</td>
<td>-5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey (Nomis)  Note: Figures exclude farm agriculture

#### Enterprise

**Figure 5: New Business Starts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>-205</td>
<td>-38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>21,468</td>
<td>20,808</td>
<td>21,383</td>
<td>23,468</td>
<td>25,041</td>
<td>20,028</td>
<td>15,726</td>
<td>15,439</td>
<td>-6,029</td>
<td>-28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Committee of Scottish Clearing Bankers

#### Business Survival Rates

**Figure 6: 3 Year Survival Rate of Newly Born Enterprises**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business Demography (Office for National Statistics)

#### Business Density

**Figure 7: Number of Active Businesses per 10,000 Population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business Demography (Office for National Statistics)  Notes: Active businesses cover PAYE and VAT registered businesses only
Active Businesses, Business Births and Business Deaths

Figure 8: Businesses in 2009 – Percentages based on Stock of Active Businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stirling – Number</th>
<th>Stirling - %</th>
<th>Scotland - %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Births</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Deaths</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock of Active Businesses</td>
<td>3,435</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business Demography (Office for National Statistics) Notes: Active businesses cover PAYE and VAT registered businesses only

Industry

Figure 9: Employment by Industrial Sector (%), Stirling, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Stirling 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry &amp; fishing</td>
<td>0.7%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, quarrying &amp; utilities</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor trades</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport &amp; Storage (inc postal)</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; food services</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; communication</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial &amp; Insurance</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific &amp; technical</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business administration &amp; support services</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration &amp; defence</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, recreation &amp; other services</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey (Nomis) Notes: * data excludes farm agriculture

Qualifications

Figure 11: % People Aged 16-64 Qualified to SVQ Level 4+ (or equivalent) and % with No Qualifications, 2010

Source: Annual Population Survey (Nomis)

Occupational Distribution

Figure 10: Occupational Distribution of Workers (%), Stirling, 2010

Source: Annual Population Survey - Workplace Analysis (Nomis)

Visitors to the Stirling Area

Figure 12: Tourism Revenue, Tourist Days and Visitors to Key Attractions in the Stirling Council Area

Source: Moffat Centre Visitor Attraction Monitor; Mugdock Country Park; Blair Drummond Safari & Adventure Park

Earnings

Figure 13: Median Gross Weekly Earnings of People Working Full Time

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (Nomis)
Spirit of Stirling Whisky Festival

Plans for Stirling’s first ever whisky festival are gaining pace with the announcement of a raft of well known distilleries and brands who will be attending the event to be held next year.

12th May 2012 will see THE inaugural whisky festival open its doors in Stirling’s Albert Hall where visitors will be able to take a whisky taste-tour of Scotland, all under one roof.

Distilleries and brands confirmed so far include anCnoc, Arran, Balblair, Glenfarclas, Glenglassaugh, Glengoyne, Old Pulteney, Bruichladdich, Tomatin, Glen Garioch, Auchentoshan, Bowmore, Dalmore and Jura. This is only the first tranche of confirmed distilleries and brands. More will be announced in due course.

Visit the Festival website to learn more and to purchase tickets - www.spiritofstirlingwhiskyfestival.co.uk

Forthcoming events/training

Free Business Gateway training events:

November 2011

22nd morning – Falkirk – Master Selling Skills Part 1
22nd afternoon – Falkirk – Master Selling Skills Part 2
24th morning – Alloa – Book Keeping Part 1
24th afternoon – Alloa – Book Keeping Part 2
29th morning - Stirling – Get Real results From Your Website

December 2011

6th morning – Alloa – Marketing Your Business
6th afternoon – Alloa – Advertising & Promotion
6th evening – Stirling – Marketing Your Business
7th morning – Falkirk – Book Keeping Part 1
7th afternoon – Falkirk – Book Keeping Part 2
8th evening – Falkirk – Trading Online
14th morning – Alloa – Get Real Results From Your Website
14th evening – Stirling – Advertising & Promotion

January 2012

17th morning – Falkirk – Improve Your Search Engine Ranking
18th morning – Falkirk – Managing Cash Flow
18th morning – Stirling – Improve Your Search Engine Ranking

To book your free place, call 0845 609 6611 or check www.bgateway.com for up-to-date listings.

Business start-up workshops

Stirling Enterprise (STEP) run free training and awareness sessions specifically for people looking to start up their own business. Forthcoming training dates are:

January 2012

10th evening – Stirling – Start-up Awareness Session
17th evening – Stirling – Business Planning
18th evening – Stirling – Marketing
24th evening – Stirling – Finance
25th evening – Stirling – ICT

For more information on the business start-up workshops, please contact Denise Mallinson on 01786 463416.

Women Into Business

The next Women Into Business event is the Christmas Showcase, which will be held at Stirling Enterprise Park on the evening of 7 December 2011. For more information please phone 01786 463416.