

Welcome...

to the first edition of the new quarterly Ballymoney Business Bulletin from your local Council's Economic Development Unit. We hope that you will find the information contained within helpful to your business in the Ballymoney Borough.

We will try to bring you all the news we can about anything that can help you with your business.

If you have any good news, don't be afraid to share it, it'll be good to hear amid all the recent doom and gloom. Just forward it to business@ballymoney.gov.uk for inclusion in the winter edition.

Rural Funding Available

The North East Rural Development Programme covers the council areas of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Larne and Moyle and it is part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). There are 6 measures in total:

- 3.1 *Diversification into non-agricultural activities*
- 3.2 *Business Creation and Development*
- 3.3 *Encouragement of Tourism Activities*
- 3.4 *Access to Basic Services for the Economy and Rural Population*
- 3.5 *Village Renewal*
- 3.6 *Conservation and Upgrading of Rural Heritage*

Three of these measures currently open, which will close on **23rd October 2009**; they are measures 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6. If you have an idea for a project around any of these measures, please contact the North East RDP office either by telephone on (028) 2563 8263 or by email: northeast.rdp@ballymena.gov.uk.

Measures 3.1 and 3.2 will reopen on 28th September and close on 27th November 2009.

Additional information is also available from the North East group's website: www.northeastrdp.com.

Green = Growth for Glover's

Ballymoney company Glover Site Investigations Ltd has gained new business and increased its turnover through the renewable energy and environmental markets.

The company offers a range of land investigation services, including site surveys, intrusive drilling, rock coring and reporting.

Having previously focussed mainly on providing services to civil engineering projects such as roads and bridges, in recent years Glover has increasingly applied its expertise to the wind energy and associated sectors. As a result, as the use of wind farms grows new business has been gained in external and export markets, including Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

The success follows an investment of over £80,000 in the company's IT systems, with support from Invest NI, part financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

This kind of commercial opportunity will be amongst many explored at Invest NI's Energy & Environment Conference 09, to be held in Belfast on 14 October. Over 500 companies are expected to take part, sharing ideas and hearing from international industry experts.

Details of the conference are available from:

<http://www.nienergy-environment09.com/>

New Manager for Ballymoney's Local Enterprise Agency

Mr Francis Ashe has recently been appointed as the new manager for Acorn the Business Centre. Joining him as business administrator is Mrs Cara Dallat.

Acorn the business centre offers practical advice and a wide range of programmes designed to help you start and grow your business, as well as business-start premises. For more details contact either Francis or Cara by telephone at: (028) 2766 6133 or by email to: francisashe@acornbusiness.co.uk or caradallat@acornbusiness.co.uk.

Tyco (formerly Sherwood's) Site Sold

Ballymoney's Tyco factory site (formerly Sherwood's) has been acquired by McAfee Properties in a multi-million pound property deal on behalf of a private investor. Legal services for the purchase were provided to the investor by Ballymoney solicitors Taggart & Sons of Church Street.

One of Ballymoney's landmark buildings, the Tyco factory's closure in February this year was a major blow to local people and the economy in the area. The news of this sale has therefore been welcomed.

It is believed the acquisition and development of this site will bring more jobs to Ballymoney and stimulate the local economy and business infrastructure. This has already been borne out to some extent, as two local buyers have already been found for parts of the site.

McAuley Engineering's is acquiring a portion to enable the expansion of their business, which is anticipated to bring new jobs to the Ballymoney area.

Ballymoney Church of God's purchase of 2.5 acres is to enable the expansion of their car park and potential future growth.

The prime site of approximately 10 acres with 200,000 sq ft of floor space occupies a very prominent location on the Garryduff and Ballymena Roads. The site is ideal for further division offering potential to new or existing businesses, and will be available for leasing. For further information about the remaining sites contact McAfee Properties on (028) 2766 7676 or log onto their website:

www.mcafeepropertiesandmortgages.com

Nominations call for NI Young Entrepreneur Awards 2009

Know someone between 16 and 30 years of age? Running their own business for less than 2 years? If the answer to both questions is yes, then that person could be the next NI Young Entrepreneur 2009 – as long as they don't miss the entry deadline - **Friday, 9th October 2009!**

Applications are now being accepted for this prestigious competition with a top prize of £5,000 and the recognition of being the best young entrepreneur in Northern Ireland. In total, there is more than £16,000 worth of prize money and over 30 individual awards up for grabs for Northern Ireland's top business talent.

If you would like some more details or want to nominate someone contact Advantage at awards@advantage-ni.com. Alternatively, you can enter online at www.advantage-ni.com/awards.

This programme is managed by Advantage, and supported by Invest NI and Eircom NI.

Taarup, and Twose, as well as a number of other dealerships.

Invest NI Innovation Vouchers

The Innovation Voucher Initiative is open to all NI registered companies with fewer than 50 employees and an annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total of not more than €10 million.

Eligible businesses can apply for Innovation Vouchers up to a maximum value of £4,000, which they can use against the cost of practical advice and expertise on specific operational projects from a range of specialised Knowledge Providers (such as universities, further education colleges or publicly funded research bodies).

The Innovation Voucher Fund, which is managed by Invest NI and funded through the Innovation Fund, allows you to focus on running your business while Knowledge Providers develop solutions to knowledge problems that could take your business to the next level.

The next call for applications **opens 1st November 2009** and **closes 30th November 2009**. If you require more information contact: Claire Herron, Innovation Vouchers Programme Manager on (028) 9069 8158 or Andrew Jebb, Innovation Vouchers Programme Officer on (028) 9069 8402 or go online to: <http://www.innovationvouchers.com/>

McAuley Engineering on the Global Radar

As a result of attending the Chicago National Safety Expo held in October last year, McAuley Engineering has agreed to collaborate with RU2 Systems Inc, an Arizona-based company manufacturing digital display Speed Radar trailers.

Under the agreement RU2 will supply McAuley Engineering key components and designs, which can then be manufactured by McAuley for sale in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This will see this Ballymoney company introduce an exciting new product that could reduce the incidence of speeding offences, and thus road deaths, in the island of Ireland.

McAuley Engineering, based in Ballymoney, was founded with precision machining as its core product and has since established itself as a premier supplier of sheet metal parts including the manufacture of sheet metal components.

Rapid Response NI

Free training and support is being made available to any Northern Ireland business affected by the current economic downturn.

The Further Education Rapid Response Northern Ireland (RRNI) Team are engaging with and responding to the needs of NI businesses and their employees during the economic downturn.

Support provided for companies will include survival audits, up-skilling and re-skilling training and a rapid response training portfolio. The portfolio of training and support available to each company will depend on the sector-specific needs of the company. It will provide local companies with a 'one stop shop' to access Colleges' full range of support and services.

For more information contact the Economic Engagement Managers at Northern Regional College: Nicola Curry, email nicola.curry@nrc.ac.uk, tel: (028) 7939 5238; or Irvine Abraham, email irvine.abraham@nrc.ac.uk or tel: 028 9085 6415.

Rea's of Finvoy - Steering Ahead

During a successful trip to Hangzhou, in China, Rea's of Finvoy's Managing Director, Mark Rea, negotiated the terms of an exclusive deal with Herotime Machinery Company, China.

As a result, expect the most advanced and versatile range of skid steer loaders to hit the market near you this year. Rea's of Finvoy, which is based in Ballymoney, will exclusively market the new range of CE-accredited skid steer loaders in Ireland and the UK.

This is a long-established family-run Ballymoney company, with over 50 years experience, dealing in both new and used agricultural and industrial machinery. Rea's of Finvoy is the main dealers for a number of market-leading agricultural machinery manufacturers such as JF, Hardi, Kverneland, Lely, McHale, Welger, Taarup, and Twose, as well as a number of other dealerships.

Ulster Bank - Business Achievers Awards 2009

The Business Achievers Awards 2009 is seeking nominations to recognise the achievements of entrepreneurs in our local community. Applicants are judged on: business milestones & achievements; business strategy; business financial performance; development of innovative products/services; importance of the business to the local area; and the leadership and vision of the entrepreneur.

There are 8 categories in total and businesses can enter up to two award categories, which are as follows:

1. THE ONE TO WATCH
2. EMERGING TECHNOLOGY
3. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
4. SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP
5. BEST BUSINESS START-UP
6. FAMILY RUN BUSINESS
7. GREEN BUSINESS
8. AGRICULTURE, FOOD & DRINK

The closing date is **31st October 2009** and further details are available from: <http://businessachieversaward.com>

Ballymoney for Business

Ballymoney Borough Council in conjunction with Acorn the Business Centre is currently developing a programme of information sessions for businesses in the area based on enquiries received to date.

To ensure that what we offer is what businesses want, please send us an email to business@ballymoney.gov.uk indicating which areas would be of most interest and help to you and your business; a few examples are given below, but please feel free to include your own ideas.

- ✉ IT/ICT
- ✉ Waste management and how to cut costs/save money.
- ✉ Sustainable Development – The Triple Bottom Line.
- ✉ Customer service.
- ✉ Training for Owners/Managers/ Employees
- ✉ Developing trade links
- ✉ Marketing your business

It would be helpful if you would also indicate whether morning, afternoon, or evening sessions are preferred.

Ballymoney Borough Council is also updating its database of businesses in the area. If you would like your company to be included, please forward the following details:

- ✉ Company Name
- ✉ Company Address with postcode
- ✉ Website
- ✉ Contact name and email
- ✉ Type of Business (e.g. manufacturing, retail)
- ✉ Number of Employees*
- ✉ Legal status, e.g. sole trader, limited company, plc, etc. *
- ✉ Whether you/your company are registered as an Invest NI client*
- ✉ Whether you/your company are VAT registered (your registration number is not required)*
- ✉ Whether you wish to receive information via email that is relevant to you and your business.

*This is required to ensure that only relevant information targeted at specific businesses is sent to you.

And Finally...

Companies Registry NI is Integrating with Companies House GB on 1st October 2009. Due to the transfer of files from Belfast to Companies House Cardiff, the Registry will be unable to order files from 21st September 2009. From October files can be ordered at the public counter or by phoning 0303 12345000; there will be a fee for this service. Please note that after 1st October 2009, all cheques for fee paying documents must be made payable to Companies House.

Northern Ireland will retain a registry function and presence, which means that the office will remain in Belfast and there will be a Registrar for Northern Ireland.

Companies are asked to note that Companies Registry NI/Companies House **no longer give companies 14 days to correct rejected accounts in order to avoid a late filing penalty.** To avoid a late filing penalty Directors must ensure accounts are properly delivered before the accounts due date.

More information is available from <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/companiesAct/niCompReg.shtml>

DETI provides information on the different types of **financial support made available to Northern Ireland's SMEs** to help them through difficulties arising from the current economic downturn is available from:

http://www.detini.gov.uk/cgi-bin/get_builder_page?page=4671&site=3&parent=245

From **1st October 2009**, the **new minimum wage hourly rates** will be £5.80 for workers aged 22 and over (adult rate), £4.83 for workers aged 18 to 21 inclusive (the development rate, and £3.57 for 16 to 17-year-olds (youth rate). Employers have a duty to ensure that employees are paid the right salary and that the right deductions are being made. More information is available from:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/TheNationalMinimumWage/DG_10027201