

RELOCATE & INVEST



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RELOCATE AND INVEST IN SUFFOLK

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JULIAN MUNSON

Acting Chief Executive, Suffolk Development Agency



SHELINE CLARKE

Editor SuffolkBusiness Magazine

SCOTT RUSSELL

In the first of our series focussing on local Entrepreneurs, Suffolk-based Scott Russell definitely has the Midas touch: every business he's ever established turning to gold within a matter of years

Still only 36 years old, Scott has notched up under his belt a remarkable seven highly successful businesses, including NEG Telecom, which has just come eighth in The Sunday Times' annual Tech Track 100 league table, NEG's sales figures rocketing a remarkable 266% a year between 2004 and 2006.

The son of market traders in East London, Scott started his first business when he was just 16 years old selling car polish door to door. He then diversified into nail polish remover, chestnuts, oven-cleaner, jewellery and so on. Until, that is, he got a feel for telecommunications.

"When I was 19 I spotted an advert that said you could earn £100k a year selling photocopiers. I didn't get the job but they told me about this new company 'Mercury'. I followed that up and became the top sales guy for 'Mercury' becoming UK Sales Manager of the Year by the time I was 21. I could see money in selling phone systems so I decided to do it on my own. I set up a company 'Network Europe' in 1992 and went on to sell a division of it in 1998. That was my first big hit of money," he says.

"It was then that I discovered there was more money in selling a business than actually running it. My sweet spot is to grow a business within a three to five year period and then sell it at the end. So I'm always looking at ways of making my companies saleable. Take my seventh business, 'Paddy and Scott's', my Suffolk-based coffee company. People pay a ridiculous amount for a cup of good coffee in this country. So we, my business partner Paddy and I, created a gourmet "Mamma would be proud" coffee roast: that's our unique selling point. We launched it 11 months ago in Suffolk and we're now the fastest growing coffee company in the UK with 240 national retail outlets stocking it; 30 restaurants and cafes using our signature blend; and we're just in the process of supplying Paddy and Scott's 'Coffee in a Box Café - a complete stand alone or in store café' - into five locations, including one in Greek Street in Soho."

Scott is completely unphased by this meteoric success. After all, he's a self confessed serial entrepreneur.

"A good entrepreneur is not a risk taker. A good entrepreneur takes calculated risks based on a working knowledge of the market place. Entrepreneurs can usually seek out an active investor who can bring a skill set to the table that they don't necessarily have. You have to make it realistic for investors."

"I landed in Suffolk six years ago. I'd just sold the business and decided that I wanted a different lifestyle. Suffolk's a great county. A beautiful place to bring up a family. Great links to everywhere. And apart from anything else, Suffolk's businesses are incredibly



TOP: SCOTT RUSSELL. ABOVE: SCOTT WITH HIS BUSINESS PARTNER PATRICK BISHOPP

loyal - I haven't lost a single account here. I think the county under sells itself."

Talking of selling, when will 'Paddy and Scott's' be up for grabs?

"I'm really passionate about the coffee business. When I've sold telephone systems no one has ever said "thanks", understandably they just expect it to work. The feedback from the coffee is great. I really like that. Do I want to sell this business or take on Starbucks? I think I want to take on Starbucks. Then again, if Nescafé came along..."

The great thing about the start of the New Year is that while you take stock of the last twelve months you inevitably look forward to future with a renewed vigour and optimism. That's certainly the case for the Suffolk Development Agency (SDA).

2007 was a vintage year for Suffolk, one of the major highlights being the opening of the new University Campus Suffolk. This is fantastic news not only for the County but also for any businesses seeking to relocate or expand here. Suddenly there's a growing, dynamic, young workforce on the doorstep, providing a massive boost to the local economy and employers.

This issue has a particular focus on ideas, innovation and networking and we are pleased to introduce a running feature on Suffolk entrepreneurs starting with one of the county's leading lights, Scott Russell.

Talking of networking, there has been a lot of this going on within the technology sector. The sector has long been considered a prime mover for the County, particularly given that BT's flagship Adastral Park is located on Martlesham Heath near Ipswich. As a result, the SDA has been delighted to work in partnership with the IP-City Group and BT delivering a series of very high profile networking events at Adastral Park. The last one is due to take place in March with a presentation from Sir Digby Jones, Trade and Investment Minister.

Of course, that's just the tip of the iceberg. I suggest you watch this space with interest.



It has been another exciting year for business in Suffolk with many of the development you will have read about in previous issues of Relocate & Invest starting to take shape.

The £1 billion redevelopment of Ipswich Waterfront, for example, has reached a pivotal point recently with the topping out ceremony at Regatta Quay - one of the most ambitious schemes - that combines residential apartments with commercial units and leisure areas.

As an indicator of the how the wider Suffolk economy is developing, we have included the recent findings of Suffolk Limited 2007, a report compiled by financial and business advisors Grant Thornton that combines the performance of the top 100 firms ranked by turnover into a composite business report. The report reveals that business here is booming with turnover of Suffolk Ltd up by 10%, operating profits up 22% and average salaries growing by 3%.

We also report from the west of the county, in particular Newmarket, where I met up with the event co-ordinator for the town's thriving business association who explained how they are working to enable local businesses to really benefit from the town's most famous industry - horse racing. There is also news of commercial developments in the town as well as in Haverhill, which is also close to the Cambridge border.

As ever, Suffolk Business is proud to be involved with Suffolk Development Agency's work, and in particular its twice yearly news bulletin, and recognise the agency as a driving force in attracting businesses to our county and supporting their onward success.



A PRIME LOCATION

- Home to the UK's largest container port at Felixstowe handling approximately 40% of the UK's container trade
- Part of the Greater Cambridge Area, a world class technology location
- Home to BT's Adastral Park, one of Europe's leading technology parks
- 60 minutes from London and the East Midlands
- 40 minutes from London Stansted, Europe's fastest growing major airport
- Encompasses Britain's most easterly point, just 125 miles (200 km) from mainland Europe
- A third of England's population live within 80 miles (130 km) of Suffolk
- Home to a range of internationally known companies including BT, Fujitsu, Bayer, Bosch-Atco, Nestle-Purina, Copella (Pepsico), Wisdom and Sanyo
- Very attractive employment rates and commercial property costs
- A first class quality of life



ON THE MAP: BABERGH

Constable Country at its finest, Babergh is an attractive and prosperous area located in South Suffolk along the Essex border, boasting a long tradition of enterprising entrepreneurship that extends way back to Suffolk's Medieval wool and silk industry. Largely rural in character but with excellent communications by road, by rail and sea, plus a number of thriving industrial estates, very competitive property prices, and an enviable quality of life, Babergh is well and truly open for business

With a population of approximately 84,000 and covering an area of 230 square miles, Babergh contains several small towns and villages, many of which still retain their original outstanding character and appearance, Lavenham and Long Melford amongst them: the two towns Sudbury and Hadleigh remaining the key economic drivers in the district.

Of course, its proximity to London and Stansted Airport (both only an hour or so away via the A12 and M25); its easy access to the Midlands and the North via the A14, and likewise, to mainland Europe via Felixstowe Docks (the largest container port in the UK), quickly dispels the out-in-the-sticks myth, and goes a long way to explaining why so many major companies - Siemens, Waitrose, Canon Avent, Celotex, Pix Europe, Nestle Purina, Delphi and Copella - have made Babergh their home.

And naturally the good news is spreading. Sue Dawes from Babergh's Economic Development Team is very pleased, reporting that, "Babergh has seen a lot of new growth and investment over the last 12-18 months particularly in Sudbury and Hadleigh, and we're delighted that investors see the potential we have to offer."

Along with the Suffolk Development Agency, Babergh's Economic Development Team work closely with companies seeking to relocate or expand their business interests in the district by offering

a wide range of support and advice. And with obvious successes, it must be said. One notable example being the take up of land and newly constructed units at Crockett Road, Hadleigh and Church Field Road, Sudbury: both locations now virtually operating at capacity. But not only does this show great team work, it also demonstrates the impressive commitment of local developers, expanding companies and inward investors to grow Babergh's economy.

The multi-award winning Adnams Brewery, which has just opened its latest boutique Adnams Cellar & Kitchen Shop in Hadleigh, is another indicator of the growing investor commitment to Babergh. In fact, confidence in the town couldn't be greater as Sue explains: "We are extremely pleased that Adnams has chosen Hadleigh. Apart from revealing confidence in Hadleigh itself, it also demonstrates the buoyancy of this attractive market town which is proud to host a number of specialist independent retailers in harmony with the shops that provide the important day-to-day requirements."

Hadleigh's confidence is clearly catching. Because moving westwards the last three-year period has marked a period of significant regeneration and investment to the historic market town of Sudbury, making it one of the most liveable towns in the eastern region.



LEFT: LAVENHAM
ABOVE: ADNAMS CELLAR & KITCHEN SHOP IN HADLEIGH

None of this happens in isolation but is the consequence of serious hard work and forward planning. And good partnership working is seen as a key factor in the District's success. An excellent example of this has been the establishment of the Farthing Road Action Group, which is now working to address a variety of issues on the Farthing Road Industrial Estate: the Estate being one of the largest industrial areas in Babergh with around 80-90 companies trading from it, occupying an outstanding position on the southern edge of Ipswich.

Liaison between Babergh District Council, Suffolk County Council, and a number of businesses on the Estate has led to the formation

of the Farthing Road Action Group it's major remit being to improve both the working environment for residents and visitors alike. The thinking being, that if it works the Farthing Road Industrial Estate will become a beacon of excellence for other industrial estates around the County facing similar challenges.

Finally, remember that old adage, "the best things in life come in small parcels"? Open this one up and you'll find an excellent business proposition within it that ticks all the boxes - competitive property prices, a great location, good connections, and an enviable quality of life. We'll throw in that priceless Constable landscape for free!

IN THE HOT SEAT

Richard Nicol, SDA Board Member

What's your background?

I spent most of my career in the research department of BT: my early research in the coding and compression of television signals for digital transmission. The topic of my PhD and the techniques that I worked on (with others, I hasten to add) now enable the digital TV transmission systems in common use worldwide. I was Head of Research at BT when I left the company in 2001. I then worked for three years with the Cambridge MIT Institute and remain as an independent Consultant to BT and UCL. I also recently became the chairman of a national Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN), a £3M government funded initiative supporting the Telecoms and Broadcasting sectors in the UK

How do you see Suffolk's ICT sector developing over the next 10 years?

We have the UK's largest concentration of ICT professionals in



Richard Nicol

SDA Board Member

Suffolk at Adastral Park plus several very successful ICT companies. Like the national KTN I mentioned earlier, the IP-City network promises to be a very valuable complementary activity

supporting the broad ICT sector and the users of ICT across Suffolk and the Haven Gateway. By bringing people in our area together from large and small companies, the universities and colleges through events, seminars and workshops, the IP-City network can help identify opportunities for its members to grow their business as well as become a valuable local conduit to the national network.

I see the local opportunity as very exciting - BT's £12 billion 21st Century Network concept leads the world while the networking opportunities that IP-City will provide should open up many opportunities for growth.

Does the SDA have a role to play in that, and if so, what?

The SDA has been a strong supporter of IP-City. We provided initial funding, that is, when we had more freedom to invest directly than we do at present. I'm pleased to see that the initiative still features strongly in our strategic plan. In recent times we have provided infrastructure facilities and the conduit to EEDA for

funding. In addition, our database of Suffolk businesses should ensure that all companies in the county who are able to benefit from the IP-City network could be contacted.

The real value of partnership working?

Innovation is a contact sport - it is through collaboration and the combination of different skills, cultures and needs that new wealth and job creating opportunities can arise.

Why should ICT companies relocate or expand their business in Suffolk?

A highly skilled workforce, much stimulated by BT's presence over the last 30 years; a superb environment (coast and countryside); affordable housing when compared with other parts of the South East; and improving transport links. University Campus Suffolk is an exciting development, and when combined with Suffolk New College, must represent the largest investment in the educational infrastructure in the UK today focused on growing skills for the 21st century economy.

CUTTING EDGE

NETWORKING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Former director general of the CBI Digby Jones is to lead a high profile finale to Networking in the 21st Century symposia at BT's Adastral Park

IP-City and the Suffolk Development Agency have joined forces with key business partners: BT, UK Trade & Investment, Autonomy, IBM, the Cambridge Network, Suffolk New College and EEDA, to host a series of new networking symposia 'Networking in the 21st Century', the final one which is due to take place at BT's Adastral Park in March 2008.

IP-City was formed by a group of businesses and organisations in 2000, its primary purpose being to make the area a focus for hi-tech enterprise and commercial competitiveness. With over 300 participating members joining since then, IP-City has supported a number of significant initiatives across a range of areas, one of these being a network of business and innovation parks, including ongoing developments at Adastral Park, Felaw Maltings, Framlingham Technology Centre, Havens Innovation Park, and the new IP-City Centre, located in Ipswich Waterfront, (currently undergoing a multimillion pound renaissance), all providing an essential component in the sector's commercial infrastructure by engendering a focus for networking and investment opportunities.

Over the past 18 months there has been an ongoing review of the IP-City and the Cambridge 2 Ipswich Hi-Tech Corridor initiatives, now combined into The IP-City Network. The intention being to reinvigorate these existing enterprise and innovation networks, and thereby promote better connections between hi-tech businesses across Suffolk and beyond.

Led by Julian Harris, Chair of The IP-City Network Steering Group and founder of Smart421, a series of meetings took place with EEDA, SDA, Ipswich Borough Council and a number of private companies to secure funding to host a series of high profile networking events. Explaining that the underlying purpose of these events was to build a strong database of proactive companies and advance connectivity, Julian says:

"I became Chair of The IP-City Network Steering Group a year ago and decided to try and get going some high end events to help build networks within the industry itself and also to promote the area to hi-tech companies in other parts of the country and overseas. We want a thriving network of people who want to be part of a network. Everybody needs everybody else: big companies need small companies for innovation; small companies need big companies as customers. Plus with Ipswich only an hour and fifteen minutes from London, the great local talent here, cheaper office rates, plenty of staff, the new IP-City Centre, I thought, let's find those companies and encourage them to come here. There should be twenty Smart421's in Suffolk, not one."

The upshot of the meetings being that BT offered to host a series of high profile events at Adastral Park under the overarching title



of 'Networking in the 21st Century'. The business imperative being to help determine the market demand and interest amongst the hi-tech community and public organisations to support the formation of a progressive hi-tech business-to-business network.

The first two of 'Networking in the 21st Century' symposia took place in June and October 07. Both events were warmly received by delegates and included presentations from two key speakers: David Cleevely, Chair of the Cambridge Network, and Phil Dance, BT's Chief Information Officer for Technology covering all aspects of BT's IT infrastructure.

The final event 'Innovation in the Global Economy' is taking place at Adastral Park on March 19th. Delegates will get the chance to hear from leaders in both the private and the public sectors (including the Minister for Trade and Investment, Lord Digby Jones) about the global innovation economy and the challenges and opportunities it poses for companies in the UK and specifically in the East of England.

As Julian Harris hands over the Chair of IP-City to SDA Board Director Richard Nicol, he is delighted with the progress made so far: "I've been really impressed by both the quality of the 'Networking for the 21st Century' symposia particularly regarding the high profile key note speakers, and the turn out of delegates. Of course the intention is to turn it into an active network, ideally with 100s of local hi-tech companies becoming members of it. I believe that everyone's goals are aligned in Suffolk at the moment. I'd just like to see more hi-tech companies coming into the area."

For more information about attending the 'Networking for the 21st Century' please visit www.ip-city.com.



FORMER DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE CBI, DIGBY JONES



BUSINESS BY ASSOCIATION

NEWS BITES

■ An estimated £8 billion will be invested on offshore renewable energy around the East of England coastline over the next ten years. At the heart of this huge business opportunity will be OrbisEnergy, a 3,000 square metre worldwide centre of excellence for offshore renewable energy. It will be an innovation and incubation centre for offshore renewable business; it will provide technology transfer and acceleration; likewise it will provide numerous business development opportunities including offshore supply chain access and networking; and of course, there's those all-important links to higher education research facilities in the area.

■ MILSOM HOTELS is reported to be planning to convert Kesgrave Hall, near Ipswich into a restaurant with meeting rooms and bedrooms in a £4 million venture with Colchester-based property developer The Hills Group, creating around 60 jobs.

■ PIX EUROPE, a fast-growing Indian owned group which supplies power transmission products, is doubling the size of its warehouse capacity in Ipswich. "Because of our current level of growth, we were running out of warehouse space quickly" said Stewart Booth, operations director. "We're located on the Farthing Road Industrial Estate, Ipswich and the existing 18,000 sq ft warehouse had become too small. The Ipswich logistics centre, and offices are the hub of our operations, providing storage for onward distribution of our products, throughout the UK, and to 17 countries in Europe". A new combined 33,000 sq ft warehouse features enhanced access facilities, for speedier unloading of containers, and loading of outgoing shippers.

■ HEMCORE, the UK's only commercial hemp processing company, has expanded its operations with the construction of a new £3.6 million industrial hemp processing facility near Halesworth in Suffolk. When running at full capacity the facility will employ 35 people and enable Hemcore to process 50,000 tonnes of hemp straw a year. The new facility is installed in an existing building at the Halesworth Business Centre. The site was selected to ensure it was close to the majority of existing hemp growers, many of whom are in the East of England. This is also an area where the growing base is expected to expand rapidly as the demand for hemp products continues to increase.



ABOVE:
KESGRAVE HALL.

RIGHT:
ORBISENERGY

- Thinking of relocating your business to Suffolk?
- Expanding an existing business?
- Log onto www.choosesuffolk.com, the Suffolk Development Agency's free to register commercial land and property database.
- With over 750 commercial properties and a team of professionals at your fingertips, choosing Suffolk has never been easier.
- Contact Vimmi Hayes & Kevin Wright at business@choosesuffolk.com or dial 01473 694418 for details.

Newmarket is known as the home of horse racing, but it also plays host to a thriving business organisation which is growing in strength and influence. Sheline Clarke spoke to Jo Morgan, events manager of Newmarket Business Association



Jo Morgan

Events Manager
of NBA

From her office in Cleveland House, Old Station Road in Newmarket where she runs her own event company as well as organising NBA's networking events, Jo Morgan has a lovely view of stables and the gallops beyond. It is a beautiful view and one typical for businesses lucky enough to be operating out of Newmarket.

The business association that Jo helps function in a meaningful and proactive way for the benefit of its members was formed some 15 years ago and evolved from the town's Chamber of Trade. Back then there was a demand to form a more dynamic group that welcomed all sorts of business, from large multi-nationals down to one man bands to encourage members to do business with each other and to really capitalise on their unique location.

Not only is Newmarket famous for its race course and for being the home of the Jockey Club, but it also ideally situated in the centre of East Anglia with easy links to Cambridge and Ipswich, Standed and the Capital.

"There are some fantastic businesses in Newmarket, but many felt they were in the shadow of the horseracing industry here. We felt that was a great shame," said Jo. "So we work to bring businesses together, raise their profile and show that there is more to Newmarket than just horseracing."

This year saw business events linking in with the July Festival to make it a celebration of Newmarket; a complete collaboration between racing, business and community.

"It's a buzzy town and a great place to be," said Jo. "My job is to raise the profile of the association and engage new members." The association meets once a month, usually at a breakfast meeting, when there will either be a speaker to address delegates or the meeting is given over to pure networking. Jo's signature speed networking events have also proved popular and then there are the annual awards which offer recognition to the local business community in 11 categories.

Jo took over as events manager in 2002 and has been instrumental in turning around its networking events which are now regularly attended by upwards of 40 people. "You have to be able to make it worth their while coming to events," she explained. "Networking is absolutely essential if a business is to survive because it's all about communication with other people. Opportunities don't just fall into your lap, you have to go and look for them and by developing lots of links with fellow members you will find opportunities arising. Eventually your name or your company's name goes to the top of people's minds when they have specific

requirements that you can help them with. That's what we aim for and the feedback is very good."

Being a member of the association also means a wider connection within the region's business scene. The association is building relationships with organisations such as Suffolk Development Agency and Business Link, as well as operating as a satellite to Suffolk Chamber of Commerce.

"It's not always convenient for people based in Newmarket to go all the way to Ipswich for a breakfast or lunch meeting – our members prefer to focus locally, and we are always delighted when Chamber officials come over to some of our events. The Chamber has been very supportive."

And Jo has even helped the chamber with some of its events, including those ever popular speed networking events.

"You have to be very strict and make sure that it is well planned, and that you have a very big whistle!

"But most of all it's about opportunity. We are a friendly and comfortable group and welcome all sorts of business people along from some very diverse organisations, which always makes for an interesting mix. Looking forward we are already planning events for the Newmarket Festival next year to really engage businesses and showcase their talents in an effective and fun way. My advice to anyone who is thinking of getting involved is to simply come along and try it out and then make a decision."

The details of all events organised by Newmarket Business Association can be found on the website www.newmarketbusinessassociation.co.uk



ANALYSIS OF TOP FIRMS REVEALS

Business is booming for Suffolk's top firms, according to the new edition of an annual report, writes business correspondent Sarah Chambers

The latest Suffolk Limited study, now in its seventh year, found that among the county's top 100 businesses, turnover has risen 10%, and profits before tax are up by more than a quarter on the previous year. At the same time, the study, carried out by accountants and business advisers Grant Thornton, found that average wages for Suffolk Ltd staff grew by 2.9% to £20,519. However, it found the number of people employed by Suffolk Ltd fell by 2,163 to 30,744. Operating profits rose 25%, while profit before tax was up 29%.

The report combines the performance of the top 100 firms ranked by turnover into a composite business report. Transport and motor retail is still the largest sector, but took a reduced share of Suffolk Ltd's turnover, dropping from 29% to 24%.

Both retail and wholesale distribution and the service sector saw growth to become the second and third largest sectors. Services saw a 71% rise in turnover, increasing its share of Suffolk Ltd from 13% to 20%.

Haulage also performed strongly, with operating profits up 15%. Only food and agriculture and technology suffered a fall in operating profits. Property and construction celebrated a 65% rise in profits and saw its sales increase by 9%.

Manufacturing made up 10% of Suffolk Ltd's turnover, generating 22% of its profits. The retail and wholesale distribution sector's operating profits rose by 37%. Acting chief executive of Suffolk Development Agency Julian Munson welcomed the findings of the study.



FELIXSTOWE-BASED HAULIER MARITIME TRANSPORT WAS NAMED AMONG THE STRONG PERFORMERS IN THE STILL DOMINANT TRANSPORT AND MOTOR RETAIL SECTOR

"The signs for this year are positive with both turnover and profits rising significantly within the top 100. Major construction and regeneration projects across the county continue to attract greater levels of investment as well as supporting local companies through contract opportunities and this is reflected in a relatively buoyant local economy," he said. In a local labour market where the average wage was below the national average, news of an increase in average staff wages among the top 100 firms was welcome, he said. Graham Shorter, partner at Grant Thornton's Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds offices, said businesses were rebounding strongly after relatively poor figures last year. "This year's results paint a much more positive picture of the trading and profitability of

Suffolk Ltd," he said. "With the exception of food and agriculture, which appears to have been hit even further by unfavourable market conditions, most sectors have rebounded strongly from the relatively poor results in last year's report to deliver a really strong year - the most profitable since Suffolk Ltd started seven years ago." The largest employer was the East of England Co-operative Society with 5,243 staff. Combined turnover for the top 100 was £5,341million this year, and profit before tax was £137million. Last year, profit before tax was lower than for the previous three years at £106million. The fastest-growing company in Suffolk Ltd with a turnover growth of 126% was Suffolk Life Group, which administers self-invested personal pensions and topped the fast growers table for the services sector. The

transport and motor retail sector's top grower was John Grose Group Ltd, with a 24% increase; retail and wholesale distribution. East of England Co-operative Society was the retail and wholesale distribution sector's top grower with a 62% increase. SLP Holdings Ltd, an oil and gas industry engineering firm, was top in the manufacturing sector with a 62% rise. In food and agriculture, British and Brazilian Produce Ltd saw the biggest growth at 68%, and in property and construction, civil engineer the Breheny Group saw a 41% turnover increase. The minimum turnover level for inclusion in the report was around £13million this year. The average number of employees per company fell from 329 to 307, a 7% decrease. With the exception of the services sector, all sectors were

BRIGHT FUTURE IN SUFFOLK



JOHN GROSE REPORTED A 24% RISE IN TURNOVER ACHIEVED BY MOVING FROM A SINGLE FRANCHISE FORD DEALER GROUP TO A MULTI-BRAND REPRESENTING NINE FRANCHISES. PICTURED IS MANAGING DIRECTOR MIKE KIFF



THE EAST OF ENGLAND CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY DOMINATED THE RETAIL AND WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION SECTOR WITH A TURNOVER OF £396MILLION

employing fewer staff than last year, with food and agriculture cutting its workforce by 1,414 following a tough trading year and various site closures. The retail and wholesale sector remained the largest employer in Suffolk Ltd by a considerable margin. Suffolk Ltd shareholder funds saw a £202million or a 24% increase over the previous year. Turnover in the transport and motor retail sector was £1,263million, £1,054million in the services sector, £1,116million for retail and wholesale distribution, £543million for manufacturing, £19million for the technology sector which saw a sizeable drop in turnover from last year's £28million, £501million for property and construction, and

£844million for the food and agriculture sector. Debtor days showed an improvement within Suffolk Ltd, with a fall from 33 days to 31 days, and services continued to have the lowest debtor days at 14 days compared to 22 days in the previous year. Meanwhile manufacturing debtor days increased from 52 days to 56 days, and food and agriculture saw a rise from 34 days to 37 days. Transport and motor retail debtor days increased from 33 days to 35 days. The findings of the Suffolk Ltd report were revealed at an invitation-only event at Trinity Park, Ipswich. Guest speakers were chief executive of Zetar plc Ian Blackburn and chief economist of HSBC Bank Dennis Turner. www.grant-thornton.co.uk

HOME DEVELOPER'S SUCCESS IN SUFFOLK



JAMES HOPKINS, EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF HOPKINS HOMES, WHICH REPORTED THE HIGHEST OPERATING PROFIT IN THE PROPERTY AND COSTRUCTION SECTOR

EAST Anglian developer, Hopkins Homes, has just had its most profitable year since it was established in 1992, and gained a mention in the Suffolk Ltd report as "reporting the highest operating profit in the sector (property and construction) of £14million".

The independent Suffolk-based developer has had its best September since 2002, with sales up by 40% from September last year.

James Hopkins, executive chairman of Hopkins Homes, comments: "By building traditional family homes that stand the test of time, we are helping to meet the local housing demand whilst creating a truly sustainable, high calibre product for the people of East Anglia. People desire skilled craftsmanship and classic design. They like the fact that a Hopkins Home will not date, but will still have as much elegance in years to come as it does today.

"I'm incredibly proud of everyone at Hopkins Homes. We have had to work hard, but essentially, I think we have got the market right, and that is proven by our sales figures. Overall, we have had an outstanding year and intend to continue this into 2008, expanding our presence in East Anglia and affirming our position as the region's most successful developer."

An estimated 562,000 new homes are needed in East Anglia by 2026. The region is one of the few continuing to experience natural population growth, improved transport links making the area more desirable to commuters and a perception that the region offers high quality of life and value for money in terms of housing.

The award winning, family owned developer specialises in building character-filled family homes in the choicest locations. Skilled craftsmen use the best traditional techniques and building materials to produce homes of the highest quality designed to harmonise with the local architectural vernacular.

£1BILLION DEVELOPMENT OF

Ipswich Waterfront is going through a massive redevelopment programme that will revitalise the whole area. As well as residential properties there will also be commercial units, hotels, leisure facilities and a university campus. Property writer Dave Vincent brings us up to date on one of the flagship projects, Regatta Quay

Estimates put the amount of investment in building and development around Ipswich Waterfront, under way or already committed, at around £1 billion.

The building work alone is a major boost for the local construction industries.

And, as such, it is one of the largest development projects in Europe and will only be out-stripped when construction gets under way in earnest on the 2012 Olympic sites in East London. There has been a tendency to see the Ipswich wet dock area as a mainly residential scheme but newer projects include commercial elements; shops, bars and restaurants and more hotels are now following on.

One of the fastest growing projects is Regatta Quay, alongside the Old Custom House at the town centre end of the wet dock, which includes 315 apartments.

It is part new-build and part regeneration of existing buildings. The £84 million City Living Developments scheme is on target for completion by the end of 2009 with early phases well advanced. The 13 storey C block is on schedule for completion in spring next year with Shamrock, the conversion of a former dockside Maltings, similarly advanced.

Now the commercial elements, a total of 42,000 sq fit, are being marketed by Douglas Duff.

Garry Coaley, chairman of City Living Developments, said: "There has already been a lot of interest in the commercial side which is now being launched."

"We already have a commitment by the some customers and have pre-let the ground floor bar restaurant to the national chain, and we have other restaurant interest."

Commercial clients include an international yacht charter company. The bar restaurant will be on the ground floor in the quayside Shamrock building (block D).

There will be various A3 commercial uses, shops, bars and restaurants, some ground floor and some with mezzanine floors. Regatta Quay will also include the Red Rose Chain theatre company headquarters which brings another leisure use to the area. It will have a 250 seater theatre and is set to open in 2009.

City Living Healthcare are also investigating whether to include health care within the scheme.

"We are actively looking at providing a local health centre, perhaps a doctors' surgery and a dentist," explained Mr Coaley. "There will be a lot of people living in the waterfront area to use local services like this."

"If it went ahead it would be in Block B, the final phase, alongside Key Street."



Although City Living Developments is based in Middlesex it has a rapidly growing presence in East Anglia. Samatha Kirk, director for sales and marketing, said: "We have a strong commitment to East Anglia and especially Ipswich and Norwich. We specialize in city centre regeneration schemes and unusual sites."

Mr Coaley revealed they were looking at taking on at least one more Ipswich Waterfront development site to follow on from the Regatta Quay project.

More information about the commercial property is available from Douglas Duff on 01473 211933.

OLYMPIC PROPORTIONS



GUESTS AT THE TOPPING OUT CEREMONY AT REGATTA QUAY

CEREMONY MARKS EXCITING STAGE IN DEVELOPMENT

A MAJOR milestone in the Regatta Quay development has been celebrated with a topping out ceremony.

The ceremony, performed by Ipswich Borough Council chief executive James Hehir with the help of Garry Coaley, chairman of City Living, took place on the roof of the imposing new building, the third of four phases of the City Living development which is taking shape on the waterfront. The bare bones of the building are in place, and the next phase of development is in hand. The first 13 apartments within the building are due to be finished in early spring of next year.

"Come Christmas time you'll start seeing scaffolding coming off," said City Living managing director Graeme Whyte.

He said they were "very excited" at reaching the latest stage of work, and said building was on schedule.

The scheme is rapidly taking shape, and an area of the ground floor in an old brick building next door, the "Shamrock", is set to house a prestigious Pitcher and Piano bar, an exclusive chain owned by the Marston's brewery group, developers said. They also revealed that one of the penthouse suites in the Cambria development, with stunning views of the quay, has already been snapped up for £400,000 despite its unfinished state.

Mr Hehir said it was "great" to see the mixed developments taking shape. "All right we have got to put up with the disturbance for two or three years," he said. "By the end of 2009, the place will be transformed. It's exciting. It's nice to be part of something that's going well."

He pointed out that a lot of people from Ipswich were moving into the new waterfront flats as they became available, and felt the commercial activity at street level would animate the area.

"It's important that this place has a life, and that it's not a cold area," he said.



JAMES HEHIR PITCHES IN

STATE OF THE ART FACILITY OPENED

ICI Imagedata has celebrated the opening of a new administrative and research and development facility at its Brantham site, on the Suffolk-Essex border, outside Ipswich

The company, which employs 120 people locally, is one of the leading international manufacturers of specialist coatings and digital imaging products.

The new building – named Linnet House after one of the many bird species that nest on the Stour Estuary bordering the plant, which is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest – includes new product development laboratories, conference and demonstration rooms and state of the art machines for manufacturing new products on a pilot scale. David Gee, executive vice president of ICI plc's regional and industrial business, of which ICI

Imagedata forms part, visited the site to perform the official opening ceremony. Ken Dowling, ICI Imagedata's managing director, said: "We are delighted to be moving into this new facility. It is a fantastic place to work and provides a perfect environment in which to develop and market the exciting new products we will be launching over the coming years."

KEN DOWLING, LEFT, WITH DAVID GEE



TIME FOR TEA AT RANSOMES

An old established firm of tea and coffee warehouse has moved to a new unit in Ipswich's Ransomes Europark and are diversifying into more general cargos

Buchanan Butlers Warehousing Services (BBWS) have taken Unit 33 on Bluestem Road, The Exchange, in a letting through agents Fenn Wright acting on behalf of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund.



Stuart McDonald at Fenn Wright commented: "We are pleased to have completed the letting of Unit 33 to BBWS on behalf of our clients. Ransomes Europark continues to be a very popular location and is rapidly expanding. We trust that this unit will enable BBWS to continue to develop its business."

BBWS in its current form dates back to 1982, but its roots are much older. Connected to the early tea industry, the firm was founded in the late 18th Century, when tea drinking was rising dramatically in popularity. Initially at Butler's Wharf on the Thames, the firm expanded rapidly to sites all over the country. In recent years BBWS has expanded from Felixstowe via Nacton Road to the 10,100 sq ft unit at Bluestem Road. Manager Teresa Finch, who has been with the company for 20 years, says there is still a place for the traditional role of tea and coffee warehousing, but the new unit will concentrate on diversifying into other cargo areas.

"We are grateful to Fenn Wright who have undoubtedly smoothed the transition to our new premises. We are now looking forward to expanding our business in Suffolk and diversifying into new areas of cargo," she said. Fenn Wright's commercial department also manages The Exchange, the area of Ransomes Europark where Unit 33 is located, and have done so for the last decade.



MEP VISITS GENZYME AT HAVERHILL

World-leading biotechnology company Genzyme is celebrating 25 years in operation at its Haverhill site in the west of Suffolk.

As part of a series of events to mark the anniversary, MEP, Richard Howitt visited the Haverhill premises to learn more about the company's history, activities and aims for the future. The tour included a detailed review of the site's performance, including progress on the £18m manufacturing plant expansion for its second generation renal failure drug Renvela, due to commence operation early next year. The party also visited the recently acquired FlexiLamp site, in the process of being redeveloped as part of Genzyme, increasing its output and employment potential in the town.

Mr Howitt, pictured centre, met with, from left, Dr Simon Cousins – vice president and general manager Haverhill operations; Peter McDonnell – senior technical director; Tim Grosset – assistant director, European programme management and Wills Hughes-Wilson, director of health policy europe.

Genzyme opened their Haverhill operation on December 6th 1982. Employees of Genzyme will be celebrating this Silver Anniversary at a gala event.

STATIONERS FIRST IN AT NEW DEVELOPMENT

Plans have been submitted for a speculative development of 40,000 sq ft, at the 35 acre Kings Warren Business Park on the outskirts of Newmarket

It is the second scheme launched by Cambridge based property company Wrenbridge in a joint venture with the landowner.

One fifth of the site has been pre-sold to John Dickinson, one of the UK's leading stationery products companies, known for its Basildon Bond and Oxford Black 'n Red brands.

The proposed new development, named Kings Court, will consist of a scheme of 12 small units, totalling 20,000 sq ft, and one single 20,000 sq ft building, designed as a headquarters, which can be split, if required, into two 10,000 sq ft units. All of the units will be offered on a freehold and leasehold basis.

Ben Coles, Director at Wrenbridge comments: "Now that all the infrastructure is



KING'S COURT

going in at Kings Warren, following the pre-let to John Dickinson, a whole host of opportunities have been opened up. The new units will offer much needed space to small and medium-sized businesses. "Our planning application for Kings Court is due to go in and we hope that consent will be achieved early in the New Year with an immediate start on site anticipated in order to have the buildings ready for late summer 2008". Savills and Redmayne Arnold & Harris will act for Wrenbridge as letting agents.

INDUSTRIAL ESTATE SOLD



Wrenbridge has also announced that it has completed the sale of Cliff Road Industrial Estate, Ipswich. The 100,000 sq ft property situated on Toller Road, has been sold for £5.4 million to J. Laing. Wrenbridge originally bought the property, comprising of five separate units, when the scheme was 70% let. The company has since let the remaining 30,000 sq ft and successfully increased the rental income from £3.50 to £4.50 psf.

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