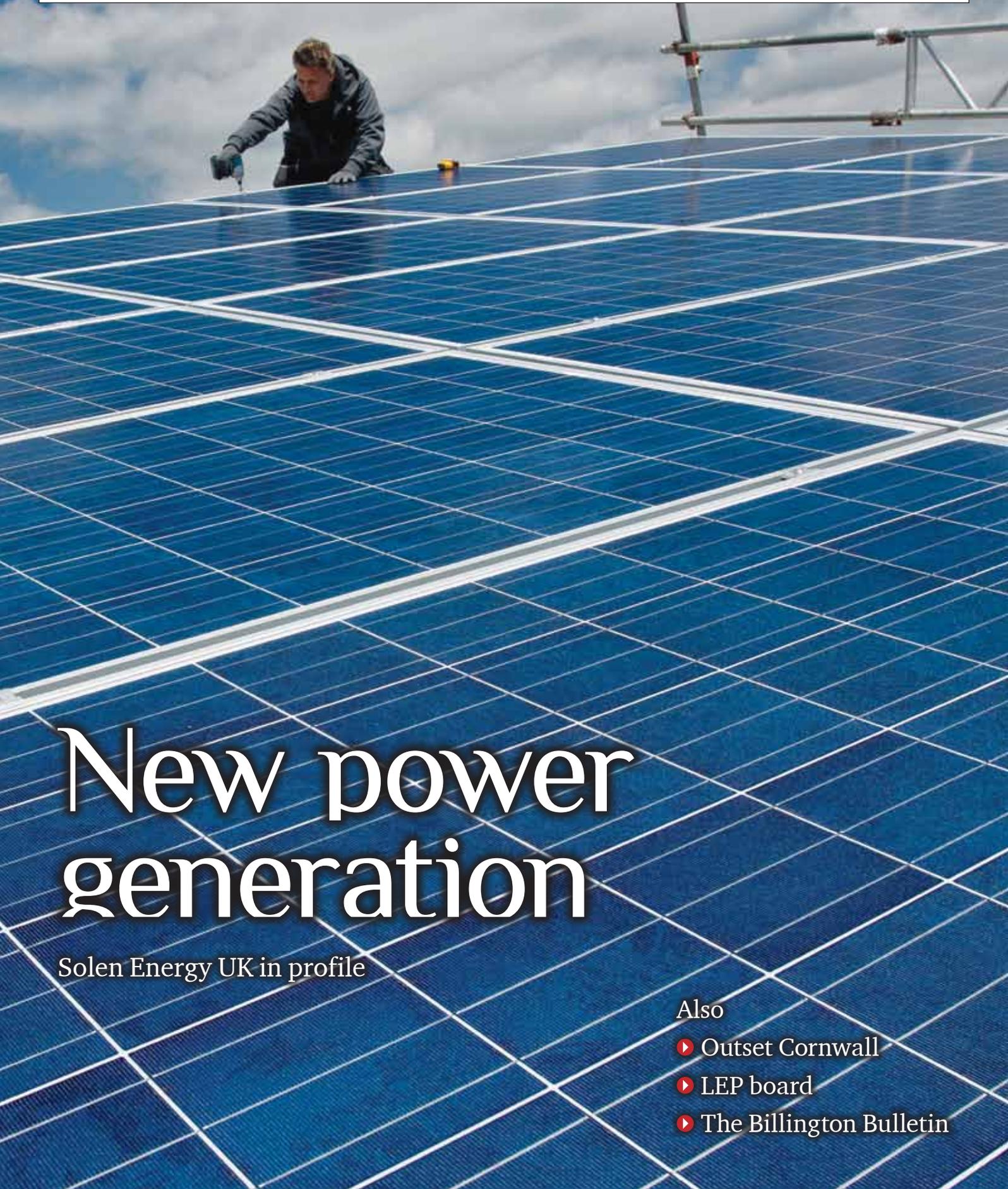


Business Cornwall

Issue 52

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July 2011



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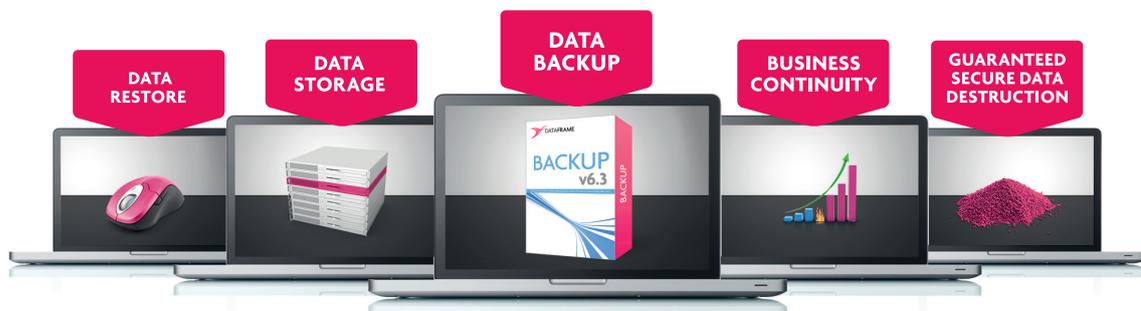
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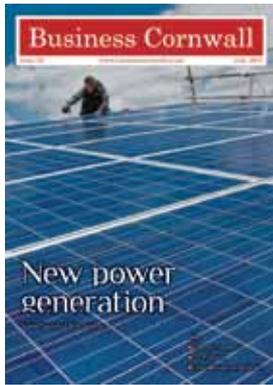
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Letters

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

Swerda-blerders!

Dear editor

Let's not get too pie-eyed about the RDA (see 'A Lasting Legacy?', *Business Cornwall*, June 2011). For instance, let's not forget that, without the timely intervention of *The Cornish Times*, Webb's Hotel in Liskeard would not be restored, in use and, hopefully, setting the benchmark for the future of that most important of Cornish town centres. Thank heaven for the genuinely free press!

Neither let us forget the bitter battle that ensued over the RDA's ridiculous sell-off of Cornish industrial estates. To be fair, I'm not certain that many people in the RDA thought this was a good idea and spent much time telling Cornish tenants, regenerators and business developers to blame the Treasury – whatever! Fact is, they got sold, and Cornwall's long-term recessionary weather-proofing, developed over thirty years, saw institutional landlords shove up rents and dumb down

maintenance. The worst of it was that the funds realised, raised on the back of intense hard work by many over years, almost completely disappeared from Cornwall.

And let us also not forget that it is too easy for facilitators to lay claim to the projects, passions and outputs of others because their facilitation was a required part of the process – the last spin of the valedictory cycle! And then there's a collection of structures around the place that have, as a young friend put it to me the other day: 'Blanded up Kernow big-time!'

I won't list my other favourite Swerda-blerders!

However, I was struck by one phrase in your interview with Stephen Bohane which I think and hope may be both premature and undesirable – you suggested that, as the LEP evolves 'Bohane is sure to be an interested bystander'. Well, I rather hope that Stephen, who has immersed himself in the Cornish economy, and has, as your article shows, learned from mistakes and gained much valuable knowledge along the way, and has never done less than work extremely hard, and with passion, does not end up as a 'bystander' on the growing 'heap of bystanders'.

We are casting aside too many talented and able people for the sake of elegant spreadsheet management and not thinking about harnessing talent, focussing passion and directing expertise – everywhere I turn at the moment I see good people, eager to give their skills and knowledge to Cornwall and the Cornish community, being sent home. Don't deride the public sector – its achievements are all around us.

I also see inexperience, lack of knowledge and hastily formed relationships meandering and floundering at a moment when we should be turning our collective attention to what comes next – the Cornish generated post-2013 regeneration programme – 'Dancing on Kernow's New Stage' or 'Kernow – the Heart of the Periphery!' This will require focus, knowledge, ambition, skill and tenacity.

I remember with gratitude Stephen Bohane's moderated tones nagging the Rural Cornwall Partnership to 'spend up' and 'keep your eye on quality'. That memory somehow, in my mind at least, is of the voice of many talents calling from the sidelines, not as 'interested bystanders', but as deeply frustrated and positive people apparently discarded but yet with professional energy and drive to give yet more to our Cornish future. Part of our challenge must surely be to tackle such glaring 'under employment'! 2013 is only a tomorrow away – like good crickets we need to be rubbing those back legs and making music, now!

Councillor Bert Biscoe, Truro

PS Excellent magazine – a real contribution to cohesion and evolution.



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Turning out the lights

The renewable energy sector has been the centre of attention for many in recent months

The Government's FIT review, understandably, didn't go down too well with many in Cornwall. It was just nine short months ago when Cornwall Council was busy telling us to prepare for a £1 billion 'solar gold rush'.

Carolyn Rule, the then cabinet member for the economy and regeneration, said: "These are very exciting times – Cornwall is in a fantastic position with this amazing level of interest in renewable technology.

"We need to make the most of this unique opportunity and we are working with the private sector to ensure that this huge investment brings real benefits to people in Cornwall in terms of new jobs, new infrastructure and business opportunities."

The Council was expecting a stampede of companies looking to develop large scale solar farms in Cornwall, which is said to have the best natural light conditions in the UK.

That is now unlikely to happen, however, and Cornwall is left counting the cost. While the domestic and small scale commercial schemes (less than 50kw) are proving extremely popular and will continue to go full steam ahead, the roll out of large solar farms has, in effect, been stopped in its tracks.

It was an issue high on the agenda of a roundtable debate we chaired late last month with Bishop Fleming at the offices of Cornwall Marine Network. A full write up will feature in next month's issue.

Meanwhile, we are also lending our support to a conference specifically aimed at the business community to be



held at the Eden Project later this year – Carbon Matters, It's no Longer Business as Usual. The event will look at how the low carbon agenda is impacting businesses and the challenges and opportunities presented.

More details of this, also next month. ▶

Nick Eyriey

Digestgeneral

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Canadians to buy South Crofty stake

A Canadian mining company is planning to buy into South Crofty.

Celeste Copper Corporation has entered into a conditional earn-in agreement with South Crofty owner Western United Mines (WUM), which will see it fund exploration and development over the next year in return for an initial 25% in the mine.

Celestes, whose initial financial input will be worth £4.7 million, will then have an option to increase its stake to 50% or 60% by September 2013, and could ultimately acquire 100% of the holding company.

WUM's CEO Alan Shoesmith said: "I'm delighted to report that this agreement has been reached. It represents another major step forward with our progress in getting South Crofty back into production."

In a statement, WUM said it would be making no further comment until completion or termination of the agreement.

Denis Clement, president/CEO of Celeste, added: "We are delighted to have the opportunity to participate in



▶ South Crofty: New investment

the expansion and redevelopment of the historic South Crofty mining region in Cornwall." ▶

Crowds flock to Royal Cornwall

This year's Royal Cornwall Show attracted the second-highest total of visitors in its history.

The three-day event saw 127,388 people pass through the gates. This has only ever been bettered in 2008, which drew crowds of just over 129,000.

Show secretary Christopher Riddle said: "It is good for Cornwall – and the region – that the show enjoys support from all sectors of the community – and from groups and individuals from a wide area of the south west and beyond."

Next year's show runs from June 7-9. ▶

Dragon teams with Cornwall College

High profile businessman Peter Jones, of Dragons' Den fame, is set to launch his Enterprise Academy in the south west after Cornwall College was named as the country's second regional hub.

Budding young entrepreneurs in the region will receive a kick start to their career from September when the Peter Jones Enterprise Academy courses will start at Cornwall College and Duchy College.

The Enterprise Academy was founded by Jones in 2008 to nurture young entrepreneurial talent through further education, where young people can develop

their business skills with the aim of setting up their own business. The only other hub in the UK is based in Buckinghamshire, which oversees courses run by colleges in the south east and north of England.

Jones commented: "I am delighted to welcome Cornwall College on board and would like to thank them for their support.

"We are in what the Prime Minister has called the UK's 'most entrepreneurial decade'. I believe that now is a critical time to engage and inspire our future entrepreneurs."

Cornwall College will also oversee



▶ Peter Jones: Declares himself "in"

courses run by the Enterprise Academy at South Devon College in Paignton and Kingston Maurward College in Dorchester. ▶

Truro aids Brewin profits

The Truro office of Brewin Dolphin has contributed to the group's 9.6% increase in pre-tax profits and a 7.8% increase in total managed funds.

The company, which specialises in investment management, has just published its interim financial report for the half year ending March 27, 2011. Total managed funds of £25 billion were achieved

and total income rose to £136 million – an increase of 12.5%.

Darryn Richards, head of Brewin Dolphin in Truro, said: "We have made good progress in Truro and our funds under management have increased. I'm very proud of the contribution the team has made to the group's results."

Jamie Matheson, executive chairman,

added: "Brewin Dolphin has continued to make good progress. The global financial and political situation remains uncertain but the markets in which we operate have continued to be fairly robust and our focus on the interest of our clients remains firmly at the heart of our business approach." ▶

Estate Agent expands

Just five years after founding his own company, estate agent Alastair Shaw is celebrating the opening of a second office on Cornwall's south coast.

He currently runs Alastair Shaw Coastal and Countryside Homes in Gerras on the Roseland Peninsula, and has now opened its sister office in the nearby fishing village of Mevagissey.

Shaw, who has more than 17 years' estate agency experience, said: "After selling homes in Mevagissey, Gorran Haven and the surrounding areas for many years from our Roseland office, it seemed the obvious next step to open an office more locally." ▶

Absolute's Pizza project

Absolute Design has completed the interior of the new PizzaExpress restaurant in St Ives.

It was Absolute's fourth commission for the national chain, having previously created interiors for eateries in Bath, Cardiff and Truro.

Maritime references abound in its latest project, and creative director Helen Blake explained: "We needed to create a contemporary harbourside space that wouldn't be crudely overt in its treatment of the key themes and would also engage repeat business.

"As with our other projects for PizzaExpress, we needed to get under the skin of the local area and draw on its existing styles and assets."

"St Ives, as a celebrated arts hub and historic fishing port, obviously had plenty to offer, but we needed to execute it in a refined way that would make people stop and think." ▶



Universities and the rural economy

A team from the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) has been up in the Highlands of Scotland this week at a conference examining how universities can benefit rural communities.

CUC director Dr Sue Brownlow delivered a presentation at the UNICREDS (University Collaboration in Regional Development Spaces) conference in Skye, explaining how the CUC has defined specific areas in which it can make the most significant contributions to the local economy.

The event brought together delegates from six European countries to debate and question the role of universities in rural communities, with particular focus on how universities can drive smart



▶ Dr Sue Brownlow: Skye presentation

specialisation in regional development and boost the local economy. ▶

Positive Parc

St Austell sign design and manufacturer Parc Signs is reporting positive signs of recovery in the local economy.

MD David Dunkley says the company has won a number of large contracts this year and its order book is already extending into November.

He said: "The year got off to a flying start with us winning a number of large contracts within Cornwall. These projects have led to a buoyant Q1 and Q2 and also seen us strengthening our workforce by employing new members of staff, both in design and manufacture." ▶

Stadium report published

The proposed Stadium for Cornwall could be a step closer to reality following the publication of the £120k Council-commissioned feasibility study.

In the report, stadium consultants Gardiner and Theobald recommend the

£24 million 'enhanced stadium' option, which includes commercial facilities and a business centre.

It says the scheme could create up to 400 jobs and, crucially, attract an annual visitor spend of some £3 million.

The report also identifies Langarth Farm, Threemilestone, as the best potential site for a stadium.

The Council has previously said that due to cutbacks it is unable to finance building the project.

However, the Cornish Pirates have offered to cover the running costs of the stadium for the first ten years, as part of their plans to compete in the highest tier of rugby union. ▶



Farmland prices rising

The price of agricultural land in Cornwall is continuing to rise, according to a leading local estate agent.

Miller & Son, which has 13 offices throughout Devon and Cornwall, reports an increasingly strong demand, with sale prices often far exceeding the guide price.

In the last week of May, 3.2 acres of grazing land near Mullion was sold at auction for £65k – more than double the guide price of £30k. ▶



▶ Farmland: Strong demand

Help for hire

Business Help and Support Ltd has introduced 'Help for Hire' to complement its existing range of services.

The initiative is designed to help small businesses cope better with holiday and sickness leave etc, by offering

a trained manager to cover the day-to-day running of the business during absence. ▶

Datasharp teams with Cisco

Truro-based telecoms company Datasharp UK has struck a new partnership with global giant Cisco.

Datasharp will join Cisco's partner community and help drive its portfolio of 'office-in-a-box' telephone systems and switches.

Traditionally, Cisco has been dominant in the Enterprise market and is now looking to replicate this success in the SME market.

Datasharp MD Jane Cockcroft said: "Cisco's SMB portfolio is directed at simplifying business communications at a compelling cost and is a great addition to our already strong offering.

"We look forward to a long and successful relationship with Cisco – a brand that is highly recognised and respected globally."

Meanwhile, the company has taken delivery of a new fleet of eco-friendly



▶ **Teamwork:** Datasharp's Craig Letheren (l) and Allan Williams (r) with Cisco product manager Russell Jones

vehicles, as it looks to drive down its carbon footprint.

The Truro-based telecoms specialist has received 12 Ford Focus 1.6 TDCi Estate vehicles from Vosper's, which will be used by its team of engineers.

Tel: 01872 266666 ▶

Superfast progress

Superfast broadband is expected to be available at half of Cornwall's telephone exchanges by the autumn of next year.

Business delegates at a special conference at the Eden Project heard that around half of the 100 exchanges in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are due to have been upgraded within 18 months as part of the Superfast Cornwall partnership between BT, the European Union, Cornwall Council and Cornwall Development Company.

The early stages of the roll-out will see a particular emphasis on East Cornwall with Liskeard, Callington, Gunnislake and Launceston among the next 17 exchanges to be upgraded. Also included are St

Austell, Bodmin, Truro, Falmouth, Penryn, Camborne and Redruth.

St Austell, which will be upgraded this summer, will also have the distinction of having some of the first areas in the UK to use the latest 'fibre to the premises' (FTTP) superfast broadband.

Nigel Ashcroft, programme director of Superfast Cornwall for Cornwall Development Company, said: "The scale of the engineering challenge is immense. A broadband infrastructure of this scale and complexity has never previously been tackled in Europe so Cornwall really is at the cutting edge with this programme. Superfast Cornwall is set to put Cornwall on the world map, expanding the horizons of all our businesses as well as acting as a magnet to high value businesses from elsewhere." ▶

New service in the Frame

Data management business, Forward ITC is relaunching and rebranding as Data-Frame as it launches a national service alongside its established local business offering in Cornwall.

The Mount Hawke-based business, which is managed by Rojer and Wendy Isaacson, has experienced substantial growth since launching five years ago.

It now offers national data management services and support packages for small to medium sized businesses, as well as a range of business continuity services for local customers.

Roger Isaacson said: "Good data management can make or break small and medium size business; often such companies don't have the knowledge or expertise in house to manage data effectively or securely. To reduce business risk, more and more companies are trusting our services."

The company, which is quality assured with ISO9001 and in the process of achieving ISO14001 and ISO27001, is offering a free 30 day trial consultancy period.

Tel: 08452 668997 ▶

Briefs

Black Cat Booster: Redruth-based Boosters Ltd and Black Cat, based near Truro, have teamed to develop an iPhone app designed to help businesses improve their marketing. The free application, known simply as 'Boosters' provides a quick route for companies to choose and buy promotional gifts such as pens, keyrings, mugs and coasters and thousands of similar items.

Cornish Innovation: Sea Communications' Big Design Challenge scooped best community web use at the Media & Innovation Awards 2011. Other local winners included the Cornish Food Market in the corporate web use category, (a co-production by Nixon Design, Packetship and SNA Software Systems Falmouth); The Parabola Project (designed by Venn Creative); and MailAway, in the collaboration between business and young people category.

Friends reunited: Two former south west journalism colleagues have reunited to expand the Plymouth PR firm text comms into Cornwall. Anthony Abbott and Joe Taylor, who worked together for a local news agency, have joined forces to open a new branch of the PR firm in Truro, building on the success it has enjoyed in Devon.

Lush life: Leading creative Sarah McCartney, former head of brand publications at Lush, is teaching a five-day course at University College Falmouth this month (July 11-15) in writing for business.

Surf's up: Padstow-based Harlyn Surf School has been embracing online marketing techniques to reach out to customers. A new texting service, developed along with FireText, combined with an email newsletter, in collaboration with MailAway, has, according to school owner Chris Rea, delivered instant results.

Falmouth welcomes new pilots

Falmouth Harbour Commissioners (FHC) has welcomed two new qualified pilots to the port.

Nick Gilbert and Tristan Gurd are busy settling into their new roles following a three-month training programme undertaken as employees of Falmouth Harbour Commissioners. Now they are authorised, they have become self-employed partners within Falmouth Pilots Partnership.

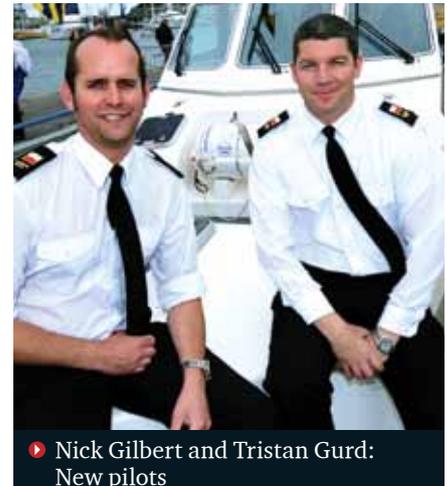
Pilots are responsible for anchoring and guiding ships through Falmouth's busy waters, and are essential to the maritime safety of the harbour.

Harbour Master Mark Sansom said: "We strongly believe in sustainable,

highly-skilled jobs and we are delighted to welcome Nick and Tristan as fully qualified pilots."

"Piloting is a vital part of what we do – we run a 24-hour service to control navigation of large vessels. The pilotage area is extensive and includes Falmouth Docks, Falmouth Bay, the Carrick Roads, Truro, Penryn and St Mawes as well as the Helford river, and the quarries on the east side of the Lizard."

Gilbert has travelled the world as a super yacht captain, while Gurd was previously a chief officer with Norfolk-line Ferries. ▶



▶ Nick Gilbert and Tristan Gurd: New pilots

Making a wave in Aberdeen

A trio of Cornish marine renewable energy organisations have just returned from promoting their expertise at a leading trade event in Scotland.

Wave Hub, A&P Group and leading research institute PRIMaRE, took part at All-Energy, the UK's largest renewable exhibition held in Aberdeen.

The Cornish organisations brought together by InvestinCornwall, the county's

inward investment service, highlighted Cornwall's position as a world leader in marine renewable energy.

Speakers from the organisations shared their insights into the latest developments in the sector at a specially organised seminar – "Cornwall: A Leader in Marine Renewable Energy".

Lucy Hunt, manager for Investin-Cornwall, said: "With over 300 miles of

coastline, rich opportunities to trial new technologies and a strong skills base Cornwall is the natural home for the growing marine energy industry." ▶

Preserving traditional skills



▶ Skills: Industry heritage

Cornwall Marine Network (CMN) attended a conference in the Netherlands recently to mark the launch of the Traditional Maritime Skills project.

The aim of the EU project is to record wooden boatbuilding skills that are in

danger of disappearing as masters of the trade retire.

The £1 million trans-national scheme is part of a partnership between Cornwall, Belgium and the Netherlands. Skills will be recorded in boatyards across these regions, which will then form part of readily-available online training packages.

CMN marketing manager Tim Bowbank, who represented Cornwall at the conference, said: "This was another important step towards our objective of preserving the industry's heritage."

CMN is hosting a two-day study visit for all partners of the Traditional Maritime Skills project this summer. ▶

Steamship Co buys Nike

The Isles of Scilly Steamship Company has acquired St Mary's-based Nike Engineering.

Providing marine and mechanical engineering services to the Isles of Scilly, the company will be known as Nike Engineering Limited and will continue to be based at the Porthmellin Industrial Estate.

The company will join the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company's existing businesses in Penzance and on the Isles of Scilly.

Current proprietors Nigel Broham and Keith Symons will be employed by Nike Engineering Limited and continue to offer a range of marine and automotive engineering services.

Kevin Ayres will manage the day-to-day running of Nike Engineering Limited along with Penzance Dry Dock, which was acquired by the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company in 2009. ▶

Trickys on ice?

Tolgus Mount-based hotel and restaurant Trickys is on the market with the possibility that an ice rink could be added to the complex.

Since taking on Trickys seven years ago, owners Greg and Tracey Michell have expanded the business by building a gym, beauty salon, and purpose-built function room.

Planning consent has also been gained for a further 25 bedrooms and

restaurant on an unused area of land on the site. Alternatively, the land could be used as Cornwall's only permanent ice skating venue.

Tracey Michell said: "We commissioned a report into the viability of the scheme which proved what we already knew, that locally there's huge support."

Trickys is on the market with Miller Commercial at a guide price of £2 million. ▶



▶ Rink: Vision of Tricky's future?

Regeneration boost

A proposed change to planning policy could radically boost regeneration in Cornwall, according to Alder King Property Consultants.

The Government has just finished consulting on a proposed amendment to the General Permitted Development Order in England that, if implemented, would allow the change of use of buildings in B Class uses (business) into C3 Residential use without the need for a planning application, in certain circumstances.

Consultation closed at the end of June with a decision from the Secretary of State expected shortly.

Alder King says that the proposals will promote the regeneration of commercial land and help bring empty commercial buildings back into use.

Surveyor Howard Williamson said: "This change in policy could encourage economic growth by encouraging developers to bring redundant commercial buildings back into use, whilst tackling the requirement for more housing." ▶

Window of opportunity

A Cornish project management firm has formed a new company to meet the growing demand for timber windows and doors.

Oghma Project Services Ltd, which is the approved project management services company for Kingspan in the south west, has launched Tor Windows to provide building companies across Cornwall and Devon with a range of engineered timber windows and doors.

Oghma MD Sean Parker said the launch of Tor came as a result of his experience in overseeing the ordering and installation of windows and doors on many of his own projects.

He said: "The demand for timber windows and doors is undoubtedly growing – particularly in some of the higher quality developments and building and refurbishment projects taking place in Cornwall and Devon." ▶

Spring falls flat for housing market boost

The hoped for spring bounce in the south west's housing market failed to materialise during May, as fears over the economy and lack of mortgage finance continued to depress activity levels.

The latest RICS UK Housing Market survey reported that the average number of completed sales per surveyor fell in the three months to May, to just 13.

Meanwhile, the average number of stocks per surveyor increased slightly to 60, as more properties came to market

and many stayed on surveyors' books for longer.

Turning to house prices in Devon and Cornwall, 46% more surveyors reported price falls rather than rises, representing the lowest reading since March 2009.

Many surveyors in the region cited the bank holidays for the flattening of demand. Meanwhile, new vendor instructions continued to rise, but stayed at relatively low levels (+11%). ▶

MP visits Boslowen project



▶ George Eustice MP with Bill Cawse

Camborne recently to view latest progress at the regeneration development.

Boslowen will include 396 new homes, spread over four phases of construction, on the old Holman Brothers factory.

Eustice commented: "When it comes to building our housing I have always argued that we should focus on brown-field sites first and should resist the temptation to allow mass house-building on green-field sites." ▶

Pick of the bunch

Redruth-based building firm, KPK Builders and Developers Ltd, has won a Green Apple Award in recognition for how its project has enhanced the environment.

Competing against 500 other nominees, KPK and architectural partner, Alison Bunning, won the accolade for a private project located at Kestle Barton near the Helford River. ▶

Local MP George Eustice visited Linden Homes' Boslowen development in

Brewer launches surf brand

Truro-based Skinners Brewery has launched two new beers to commemorate Cornwall's surfing heritage.

The beers are named after two famous local surf spots – Porthleven (ABV 4.8%) and Sennen (3.8%), and are the first products of the new 'Cornish Beer and Surf' brand of Truro-based Skinners Brewery.

Brewery chief executive Steve Skinner explained: "This is something we've

wanted to do for a long time and I freely admit there's a touch of the experimental about it.

"We wanted to create a brand where we can produce really unusual special-edition pale beers with genuinely different recipes and concentrating on exciting new hop types. Both these zingy beers are very pale." ▶



▶ Approval: European longboard champion Ben Skinner (centre), with head brewer Mark Standing (l) and brewer Dave Whitworth

Brewery profits from Festival



▶ Refreshing: Brewery team at Glastonbury

A taste of Cornish pub life returned to the Glastonbury Festival last month in the shape of St Austell Brewery's Cornish Arms.

Last year, for the first time, the brewery recreated a typical Cornish pub at the

heart of the festival, offering thousands of revellers the festival's only available cooled cask ale, selling over 30,000 pints.

Brewery marketing director Jeremy Mitchell said: "It was a brilliant showcase for Tribute and Proper Job, and by working with Tim Vigus, a St Austell Brewery tenant and his staff, the Cornish Arms also shone a light on the excellent talent in our pub estate." ▶

Ice cream and pasties

Kelly's of Cornwall and the West Cornwall Pasty Co have teamed up to offer 'the full Cornish' across the UK.

Under an agreement between the two companies, Kelly's ice cream freezers are being installed in 54 West Cornwall Pasty Co outlets around the country.

Kelly's brand manager Nina Lumsden commented: "The connection and synergy between both brands gives people a real opportunity to enjoy the food they love to eat when they're in Cornwall, outside of the county."

Based in Bodmin, Kelly's of Cornwall is the only ice cream made in Cornwall, available nationally through the multiples. The brand has seen consistent growth in the ice cream category and is currently worth £17.3 million in retail sales. ▶



▶ Kelly's: Pasty partnership

Falmouth bar fully loaded



▶ Loading: Falmouth gaming bar

A specialist gaming café and bar in Falmouth has begun forging links with international gaming publishers.

Having been established last year by University College Falmouth graduate James Dance, Loading has been slowly gathering momentum and recently secured support from a number of the industry leaders.

Dance explained: "I've been trying to get in touch with all of the publishers with mixed success.

"However, once Electronic Arts offered to step in and support us with titles, we've been getting more contacts and support from both publishers and press." ▶

Home from home

Spirit at St Mary's Hall Hotel on the Isles of Scilly has launched a new menu focusing on classic British ingredients and flavours.

Rare breeds meat from the hotel owner Clifford Freeman's Gloucestershire farm takes a lead role, and he explained: "From day one, food provenance has been vitally important to us at St Mary's Hall Hotel and the fact that the lamb, beef and pork come from our own herds is something we are extremely pleased about." ▶

Solar power FIT to burst?

The Government has confirmed the outcome of its Feed-in-Tariff (FIT) review and, as expected, it is not good news for large-scale commercial schemes.

While the tariff for domestic and small businesses projects remains unchanged, from August 1 it will be significantly reduced for larger stand-alone and farm-scale schemes.

For new schemes between 50kw and 150kw, it will pay 19p per kwh, which represents a reduction of over 42% on the previous rate.

For schemes between 150kw and 250kw, it will go down to 15p per kwh; while the largest developments from 250kw up to 5mw, it will pay just 8.5p per kwh – a 72% cut on current levels.

Energy and climate change minister Greg Barker said the changes were necessary to safeguard the future of the scheme for the smaller-scale users. He

explained: “Without action the scheme would be overwhelmed. The new tariffs will ensure a sustained growth path for the solar industry while protecting the money for householders, small businesses and communities.”

Solar Securities did have planning permission for a 5MW site near Bodmin, and may now have to think again.

Director Nick Richardson said: “We are obviously very disappointed having worked hard with the Department for Energy & Climate Change to find a solution that suited all parties. DECC’s announcement will cost Cornwall jobs and deny the Country significant economic growth in an exciting new industry.

“We dispute the Government’s concern about affordability as few large scale solar projects would be completed before April 2012 and with a budget of £860 million there was plenty of room



▶ Panels: The 5MW Trefullock development

to support a handful of solar farms in Cornwall at a cost of £1.3 million per year each.”

A 5MW development at Trefullock near Summercourt is set to beat the August deadline, however, with work on the 19 hectare site due to be completed by the end of the month. ▶

New green degree

A new degree programme has been developed to address the skill requirements for the Government’s low carbon agenda.

The programme, believed to be the first of its kind in the country, is set to run at Cornwall College Camborne from this September.

It is a direct response to the evolving business environment in which organisations are increasingly being required to consider the impacts of their activity on climate change.

Andy McKenzie, business development manager at Community Energy Plus in

Camborne, explained: “As the importance of carbon as a commercial commodity becomes more widely recognised, the carbon management and accountancy sectors are seeing a major up shift in demand for their services.” ▶

Carbon Matters conference

A free-to-attend conference at the Eden Project will be looking at ways how businesses can reduce their carbon footprint.

Carbon Matters – It’s no Longer Business as Usual; will be highlighting the commercial benefits and opportunities for embracing a low carbon strategy and how it can help a business’ bottom line.

A recent survey by Lloyds TSB Commercial shows that although 42% of south west businesses believe that becoming more sustainable will create increased opportunities, only 26% feel they are doing enough to capitalise on them.

A number of prominent speakers have already been confirmed for the event, which takes place on October 11, including Shaun McCarthy, chair of the Commission for a Sustainable London



2012; Dr Fernando Correia, research fellow at the University of Exeter’s Business School; and Mike Berners-Lee, author of the acclaimed *How Bad Are Bananas?* – *The Carbon Footprint of Everything*, a book which Bill Bryson, no less, described as ‘terrific’.

Business Cornwall magazine is supporting the event and will feature further information, including booking details, next month.

In the meantime, you can contact Paul Holmes from Eden Project’s commercial development team at pholmes@edenproject.com ▶

CEP secures fresh funding

A Camborne-based energy efficiency charity has secured £170k from the Government’s Transition Fund.

The funding will help Community Energy Plus (CEP) adapt to the changing funding climate and develop new services to sit alongside and financially support its education and fuel poverty prevention services.

Development Director Dr Tim Jones said: “It’s an exciting time to be working within the energy conservation sector. Businesses, organisations and householders are becoming increasingly aware of the need to become more sustainable and the advantages of energy efficiency and generating renewable energy.” ▶

Holiday company goes Classic green

A new scheme which green grades environmentally-friendly properties in Cornwall has been launched by specialist holiday lettings company Classic Cottages.

Thought to be one of the first holiday lettings companies in the UK to come up with its own in-house initiative, Helston-based Classic Cottages has highlighted and rated 16 of its properties across its portfolio in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset so far.

The 'Classic Green' scheme identifies holiday cottages where additional steps have been taken by the owners to be kinder to the environment and create less of a carbon footprint. Qualifying properties are identified with the 'Classic Green' leaf logo.

MD Anthony Skitt said: "As a responsible business, we want to make a practical commitment and contribution to protecting our environment." ▶



▶ Anthony Skitt: "Commitment"

Hotel Derek takes to the air

A Cornish company has launched a £2 million national advertising campaign to help turn it into a household name.

When thinking of Cornwall's best-known businesses, brands such as Ginsters and St Austell Brewery spring to mind, but perhaps not HotelDirect.co.uk.

However, the Truro-based hotel booking agency, which was founded in 1997, has a significant online presence and an annual turnover of £20 million.

And it has created a big-production 30-second television commercial, featuring the Superman-esque character 'Hotel Derek', which debuted on ITV, Channel 4 and Sky, last month.

The ad cost Hotel Direct £250k to create, and the company will be spending a further £2 million on television media costs within the next year.

Director Mark Wilson said: "We're already a strong company on the internet with over 1 million customers. The purpose of our new television campaign is to springboard Hotel Direct into a household name. The Hotel Derek campaign will dramatically present our brand and unique hotel deals to a much broader audience." ▶

No signs of 'staycation' boom



▶ James Finnegan: "New trends"

Despite earlier predictions of a 'staycation' boom in visitors to the south west, more than a third of hotels and tourism businesses are reporting fewer bookings than this time last year.

In addition to the 39% declaring a decline, 45% expect to see their income decrease for the year.

A majority (65%) have seen a big increase in last-minute bookings, while 43% say that this year's visitors are spending less during their stay.

These are among the top line findings of an early season snap survey, conducted by the tourism & leisure team at accountancy firm, Bishop Fleming.

Asked about bookings from international visitors, most respondents have seen little change, while more than 10% are noticing an increase in bookings from overseas visitors.

Meanwhile, 43% of respondents have noticed that their visitors have spent less than in previous years on extras, including food and wine.

Bishop Fleming tourism team leader James Finnegan said: "New trends are emerging, driven by the economic climate, the weather, and the internet." ▶

German carrier returns

Lufthansa has resumed its seasonal route from Newquay to Dusseldorf.

Germany's national carrier is back for the fourth successive year, and Al Titterington, Newquay Cornwall Airport's MD, said: "Having the German national flag carrier operating to and from Newquay is a huge bonus.

"This is great news for Cornwall's tourism industry with many of the region's international tourists coming from Germany. This also allows Cornish residents the chance to fly directly to the heart of Germany and avoid long road trips to other airports.

"The service saw extremely good passenger numbers last year with a 46% increase from 2010, which has led the airline to increase the aircraft size to meet demand for air services directly to Cornwall."

Newquay Cornwall Airport and the Headland Hotel have planned a series of joint marketing and press activities this summer to showcase Cornwall within the Dusseldorf catchment area with the view to attract even more inbound German visitors year on year. ▶

Accountant boosts board

One of Cornwall's largest independent accountancy firms has appointed three new directors.

Kelsall Steele, which employs nearly 60 people from offices in Truro and Camborne, has promoted Malcolm Peters, Clare Vaughan and Ross Martin.

Director Bernard Pooley said: "The appointment of three directors from within the company is testimony to the firm's commitment to continuous professional development.

"We encourage and support staff at every level to develop and expand their range of skills and qualifications. I am thrilled to welcome Malcolm, Ross and



▶ (l-r) Malcolm Peters, Ross Martin and Clare Vaughan

Clare as Directors and I am certain their achievement will inspire their colleagues and delight our clients." ▶

Waste not want not

One of Cornwall's fastest growing companies has just completed a programme of appointments to provide training opportunities across its business.

The Electronic Waste Company will be developing the new staff in key areas including sales, online presence, finance, IT and its central business operation, recycling.

New Adventure for YHA man

Adventure centre and charity BF Adventure has appointed a new chief executive.

Adrian Richards joins the Penryn-based organisation from the Youth Hostel Association in Cornwall, taking over from Tony Hogg, who retired from the post last month after five years.

Richards has 17 years experience working in the not-for-profit sector,

In total, eight new jobs have been created in two locations in Cornwall and at the company's third depot in Bristol.

The new appointments have led to a restructuring of other roles in the company, including the appointment of a new general manager, James Garland, and the promotion of Nathan Perring to UK transport supervisor. ▶

and while at the YHA was responsible for developing strategic partnerships, leading teams and implementing capital investment projects.

Departing chief executive Tony Hogg said: "BF Adventure is certainly in safe hands with Adrian's experience. He has a strong track record of creating positive change with lots of experience, which complements this organisation and the people it serves." ▶

A different Aspect

Cornish self-catering holiday specialist Aspects has recruited a new member to its marketing team to specifically look after the growing online business.

The company has named Stephanie Powell to the role of e-marketing developer through the Unlocking Cornish Potential (UCP) Scheme.

According to Aspects' business manager Damian Sargent, the internet is an

Datasharp names new MD

Truro-based telecoms company Datasharp has promoted operations director Jane Cockcroft to the role of managing director.

Cockcroft has worked closely with both former CEO and father Paul McIntosh and technical director Allan Williams, putting strategies in place and mapping the growth of the company.

Her new position recognises the success she has achieved steering Datasharp through new product launches and unleashing a strong push on marketing.

Additionally, Nicola Venter, who handles the company's corporate sales division, has been appointed as group operations manager. ▶



▶ Jane Cockcroft

increasingly important medium for communicating with customers.

He said "As part of our growth development we felt it was really important that we brought expertise in house." ▶

Lamb in the zoo

Cornish conservation charity Newquay Zoo has appointed a new marketing manager.

Carl Lamb has extensive marketing experience having worked for a number of high profile companies, including Granada Group, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust and Treasure Park near Redruth.

He said: "Newquay Zoo is involved in numerous conservation projects all over the world, and I am delighted to be part of an organization carrying out such valuable work." ▶



▶ Adrian Richards (r) with Tony Hogg

Core competencies

Oxford Innovation business adviser Andrew Farmer examines the merits of outsourcing

Outside influence

A key outcome resulting from the recession has been the reduced ability of a business to pass on cost increases to the customer.

Correspondingly, managers of SMEs are increasingly under pressure to improve the performance of product/service packages and reduce costs in order to compete.

In the context of the internet-created market transparency of pricing, there has also been an increased requirement for organisational flexibility and agility. Naturally, outsourcing of activities is integral to this approach and in turn this has led to an increased activity and dependency on external supplier relationships.

Approach

The traditional approach to outsourcing is often with a focus on transactional economics such as considering a “make or buy study”. This can often lead to a lowest-cost based approach, ignoring other critical factors such as the strategic fit and longer term management of the relationship.

Consideration must also be given to the process being outsourced in terms of the value added from the end customer’s perspective. How will the competitiveness of the organisation be affected by outsourcing? Will key competencies be lost? Or will the new relationship offer opportunities for growing innovation? Whilst cost is a critical factor, the new relationship must be seen in the context of creating potential wealth and increasing value to the customer.

Key factors

There will always be a need to consider the economic rationale for outsourcing. However, a simple numerical exercise of internal costs versus supplier price

may not be representative. A balanced viewpoint should also consider recovery of overhead, future product investment costs, transport costs and potentially a loss of flexibility and control.

If a contributory process or service is difficult to manage or produces unreliable results, it may just be attractive to outsource the problem. This is sometimes at best naive and often negligent. A new supplier may have more expertise but as the power base shifts their competency, or

otherwise, will need to be paid for. New skills are required in managing these complex relationships. How will the increased dependency on the supplier be managed?

Another consideration is whether the outsourcing weakens or strengthens the long term competitiveness of a business? To compete in a market, what competencies are required? Can a competitor offer better quality and value because of their expertise? Do certain skills require development and investment in order to meet long term sustainability?

Another consideration is whether the outsourcing weakens or strengthens the long term competitiveness of a business? To compete in a market, what competencies are required? Can a competitor offer better quality and value because of their expertise? Do certain skills require development and investment in order to meet long term sustainability?

..and in Summary,

Outsourcing cannot be simply seen as a means of reducing cost or passing on a problem. The detailed cost of an activity needs to be considered when evaluating the benefits of outsourcing. The effect on the long term competitiveness of a business also needs to be evaluated when outsourcing. Perhaps in essence we should start with the customer and work backwards? ▶

“If a contributory process or service is difficult to manage or produces unreliable results, it may just be attractive to outsource the problem”



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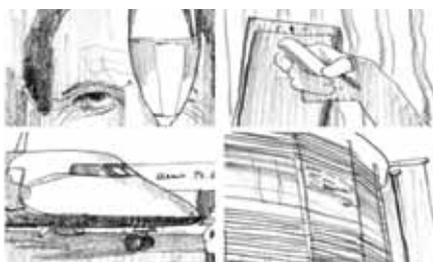
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Board games

Business Cornwall magazine introduces you to the members of the first board of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)



blocks are now in place for the hard work to begin.

Whether the LEP turns out to be a mere talking shop, or can seriously influence the economic landscape in Cornwall, we will have to wait and see. But its chance has now arrived.

After having to wait until late March for a chairman to be announced in the shape of Chris Pomfret, it had been

anticipated that the board would have followed a little more swiftly.

However, it's here now and was expecting to have held its first full meeting shortly after **Business Cornwall** went to press, to discuss its key objectives.

But even before the board was formed, the LEP has been making up for lost time and secured some 'capacity funding', to help it cover some early running costs, while it has also put in

It's taken some time and there may have been more than one or two hiccups along the way, but the building

Meet the board

Gaynor Coley

Gaynor Coley has played a key role in the Eden Project's success, initially joining as finance director in 1997 before being promoted to her current role as managing director four years later. Under her guidance, Eden has attracted nearly 13 million visitors, generating more than £1 billion for regional economy.

She is currently leading the strategy to extend Eden's influential environmental brand and programmes across the world.



Chris Loughlin

Chief executive of South West Water, Chris Loughlin started his career as a consulting engineer working in North America, Africa and the UK, before moving to the regulated utilities industry.

At British Nuclear Fuels, he held a variety of senior roles and became executive chairman of Magnox Electric, which at the time generated 11% of the country's electricity. Prior to being appointed as chief executive of South West Water in August 2006, he was COO of Lloyds Register, the quality and safety assurance organisation.

Joe Keohane

Although now running a chocolate company in Devon, Joe Keohane, along with business partner Nick Baker, is responsible for transforming a small Cornish microbrewer into a leading national player.

Keohane purchased Rock-based Sharp's Brewery in 2003, and steadily grew the company and its market leading Doom Bar brand, until industry giant Molson Coors came knocking earlier this year, buying it for £20 million. He hopes to have a similar impact at Browne's Chocolates in Okehampton – which he recently bought out of liquidation.



Richard Reed

Following a successful ten-year career within the water and petroleum industries, Richard Reed joined Falmouth-based marine drilling company Seacore. As commercial director, his acumen was soon recognised and he was promoted to managing director, a position he held for five-years until the acquisition of the business by European multinational Fugro in 2006.

Reed is currently a board member of Falmouth Harbour Commissioners and also works as a business coach within the Oxford Innovation business coaching programme in Cornwall.



Simon Tregoning

Simon Tregoning is chairman of one of the Duchy's most successful holiday home companies – Classic Cottages.

Tregoning cut his commercial teeth with the Bank of England and gained experience in management accounting and banking supervision. After five years he



an expression of interest to form a Local Enterprise Zone in Cornwall.

As for the composition of the all-important board, it features five members from the private sector and five from the public sector, with an 11th member being Pomfret as chairman.

Pomfret says he is “delighted to say they are a group of people with fantastic backgrounds and experience”.

And true, there is plenty of good experience there – the MD of the Eden Project, chief executive of South West Water, for example. However, it is perhaps a little surprising that of the private sector board members, only one – Classic Cottages chairman Simon Tregoning – runs a genuine business in Cornwall.

And Tregoning is keen press ahead with the task at hand: “Our geography and the simplicity of dealing with just two councils give us a unique opportunity

“They are a group of people with fantastic backgrounds and experience”

to really focus the activities of the LEP on the economic needs of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly,” he says.

“We will need to reflect the dynamism and energy of Cornish businesses to make the most of that opportunity, but I believe that we can make a real difference if we succeed in working together effectively.”

Some might raise their eyebrows at the inclusion of Joe Keohane, considering the fact that he runs a company in Devon, but his record in the Duchy was clearly seen as important, recently selling Sharp’s Brewery for big money to Molson Coors. His marketing nous will be vital.

He comments: “I am delighted to accept the position on the Cornwall and

Isles of Scilly LEP. I have built up a successful business in Cornwall and know first-hand many of the challenges that entrepreneurs face in the region. I would like to see the LEP become a practical and respected support organisation for business in Cornwall. The region is capable of so much and the LEP needs to be the catalyst in building a strong and sustainable business sector in Cornwall.”

Critics have long said the board should be representative of Cornwall’s key sectors and also feature small/micro business representation, which makes up the dominant proportion of Cornwall’s businesses; while others have disagreed, saying it should purely be representative of the best talent.

Looking at the composition of the board from the private sector, the latter argument has clearly prevailed.

Critics, most notably the Cornwall branch of the Federation of Small

joined the family business, eventually taking the reins from his parents, growing the company to what it is today with a staff of 33 and some 700 properties on its books across the south west.

Alec Robertson

Alec Robertson is the Leader of Cornwall Council. He was first elected in May 2005 and represents the Helston North Electoral Division.

After serving in the Royal Navy as a lieutenant in the seamen branch, he moved into the commercial and retail sector in London and gained a postgraduate diploma in management studies from Kingston University. Returning to Cornwall in 1993, he ran his own business for 13 years and has substantial experience in the licensed trade.

Philip Hygate

As chief executive of the Council of the Isles of Scilly, Philip Hygate will ensure that the islands’ interests are always on the LEP agenda. He has a track record of effective private sector partnership and enterprise support.

He is also a board member of the National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and has the Freedom of the City of London.



Chris Ridgers

Chris Ridgers is the Cornwall councillor for Mabe, and recently

assumed the portfolio duties for economy and regeneration from Carolyn Rule.

Prior to becoming a councillor, Ridgers worked for six years for a local insurance company with responsibilities including team leadership and marketing. He is a governor at Falmouth School and has a Masters in Business Administration degree.

Robin Teverson

Lord Teverson was MEP for Cornwall and Scilly in the 1990s and is currently a member of the House of Lords speaking on energy and climate change. He also chairs the House of Lords European select committee on foreign affairs, defence and development policy.

He spent the first 18 years of his career in the freight industry and more recently he has been chief executive of two regional venture capital funds based in the south west. He currently chairs Wessex Investors Limited.

Professor Anne Carlisle

Professor Anne Carlisle is rector and chief executive of University College Falmouth (UCF). Her background combines both arts and business and public and private sector.

Before coming to Falmouth, Professor Carlisle headed up research and innovation at the University of Wales Newport, where she led the development of a major integrated arts and business facility.



Businesses (FSB), are vocally unimpressed and have called upon the Government to draw up a 'model constitution' for the LEPs to operate to.

Chairman Kevin Oliver berates: "The makeup of the LEP board is meant to be reflective of the local business community. In Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly that means there should be strong representation of the small/micro businesses in the Duchy.

"Sadly, only one person who actually runs a genuine business predominately based in Cornwall has been selected to the LEP board. In addition the chairman has said that the LEP will be strategic and concentrated on a very small number of major projects. So although the LEP was granted on the basis of three core objectives to support our existing businesses it is not looking as if those core objectives will be met."

Pomfret is adamant, however, that all views will, if not necessary be agreed

with, will be listened to. He tells us: "I hope that as long as I am chairman of the LEP, we continue to listen and hear what people have got to say.

"But listening doesn't always mean you have to agree, because there will always be conflicting views and we will have to make decisions and we will make those decisions, but I hope we will have been seen as having listened properly and we will hold all of our major meetings in public based on proper evidence presented to us."

The public sector representatives, as expected, include Cornwall Council Leader Alec Robertson, and chief exec of the Council of the Isles of Scilly, Philip Hygate. There is also late draft for Mabe councillor Chris Ridgers, who only assumed economy portfolio duties a couple of weeks before the board announcement.

He highlights the importance of the private/public partnership and says:

"Recent economic progress, despite the difficulties resulting from the banking crisis, show what can be achieved if Cornwall Council actively engages with the private and educational sectors. Forging even closer relationships where all parties contribute to the development of economic strategy will ensure the delivery of the best possible results."

Lord Teverson will no doubt bring to the party a useful Whitehall contacts book, and he too, looks positively at the opportunities ahead.

"Just like the other directors I want to get on with the job and help build Cornwall's economy," he says. "It's a really strong team of directors, and I'm proud to be one of them. Times are difficult out there for all businesses. It's now up to us to show the new LEP can make a difference." ♦



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Zeitgeist

Somebody irritating you in the office? Why not live with them? Zeitgeist is somewhat surprised at some of this month's findings, including why it is now considered sexist for men to hold the door open for women

Look before you leap

Businesses are being urged to check the financial history of new and existing customers and suppliers to avoid getting their fingers burned.

A new report from the Institute of Credit Management (ICM) shows that a quarter (24.7%) of businesses do not use the payment performance data provided in B2B credit reference reports – despite the vital help it could provide in helping them avoid poor risk.

Last year more than 28,500 businesses went to the wall in the UK, and business information specialist Equifax says a simple check could avoid a lot of tears.

Businesses are failing to make use of publicly available data that could protect

“A quarter of businesses do not use the payment performance data provided in B2B credit reference reports”

their business from poor payers, according to new figures from the Institute of Credit Management (ICM).

A survey of Members found that a quarter (24.7%) of those questioned do not use the payment performance data provided in B2B credit reference reports – despite the vital help it could provide



in helping them avoid poor risk.

The survey also showed a mixed response to the usefulness of payment performance data in assessing credit risk for businesses. Around 35% found the information of limited or no use at all to them, 32% said it was useful and only 16% said the information was invaluable. ▶

86% unsure over data safety



A study conducted by data security specialist Imperva has revealed that organisations in the UK have not changed their attitudes to the threat of insider breaches despite the lessons of Wikileaks.

In its survey amongst IT security professionals, 86% could not categorically

“86% could not categorically state that they knew how many sensitive files their organisation had”

state that they knew how many sensitive files their organisation had – only 41% had an idea where sensitive files were stored on their networks while 18% admitted they didn't know.

In fact, less than half (43%) knew which users had access to sensitive files while 32% confessed that their organisation had lost data as a result of people abusing file access rights. ▶

Come live with me

Living with a colleague can actually help improve work relationships, a recent survey has showed.

The surprising finding declares that over half of flatmates surveyed in Easyroommate's poll had lived with a work colleague, with 65% reporting an improvement in work relationships as a result.

Only 18% of respondents said that cohabiting caused some conflict. ▶

Could try harder

Cornwall firms could be losing out to the competition by failing to make their businesses more sustainable.

A recent survey by Lloyds TSB Commercial shows that although 42% of south west businesses believe that becoming more sustainable will create increased opportunities, only 26% feel they are doing enough to capitalise on them. ▶

Sexism gone crazy?

Sexism in the workplace is a common theme in these pages, but Zeitgeist can't help but wonder if things are getting a bit silly.

According to research from the Society for the Psychology of Women, men who open doors for women are guilty of 'benevolent sexism'.

Other modern day no-no's include men helping women choose the right computer, or helping them carry bags and shopping etc.

And never refer to a group of men and women as 'guys', or offer to do the driving on a long journey instead of a female partner. ▶



SMEs **rise** to the

Business Cornwall hears from some of the new business ventures that have been finding success with the help of the Outset Cornwall scheme

With recent parliamentary claims that national unemployment has dropped at its fastest rate in over a decade thanks to the private sector, it is comforting to know that there are growing numbers of micro and small/medium sized businesses able to take up the slack created by large-scale public sector redundancies.

In fact, here in Cornwall, a popular and successful programme is working hard to ensure that lots more new small businesses are in the pipeline to create jobs within the county, and further boost our local economy.

The ERDF Convergence-funded Outset Cornwall programme continues to make waves across the county with its unique style of start-up support, reaching out to members of the community that are often overlooked by more mainstream services.

With almost 80 new businesses started (some already employing local people), and a client-base of over 1,000 budding entrepreneurs working towards starting their own business, it is hard to believe that the programme has only been going for 18 months.

“We had great feedback from visitors that sampled our product, which has given us the confidence to push forward in business and take the next steps”

“I have learnt so much from the Outset team, who have been proactive, informative and knowledgeable. I now have a clearly defined goal that is absolutely within my reach!” says Steve Patterson from PeakAwareness; a new company working hard to bring the new concept of laughter yoga to Cornwall as well as provide comprehensive motivational services to boardrooms across the county.

Exhibiting recently at the Royal Cornwall Show with its ‘Inspiration Station’, the Outset Cornwall team invited members of the public on board to discuss the benefits of giving themselves a job, and to better understand the challenges faced when starting up a new venture with low incomes, young families, disabilities or any other significant inhibitor.

Outset feels passionately about not only supporting the development of the individuals through training and mentoring, but also providing opportunities for clients’ new businesses wherever possible, and alumni are often presented with opportunities to get their new businesses in front of large segments of their target markets to help them

develop their company profile. This may be through events, online promotion, press activity, or presentations at one of the sister Outset programmes in the south west.

In Outset’s latest campaign, six clients won an exhibition space at the Royal Cornwall Show, and joined the Outset team to showcase their new businesses, getting access to the 130,000 people who attended the event.

The winning businesses were selected by a panel of independent judges from Niddocks, MPAD and Winter Rule, and each starred in a special radio advertising campaign in the run up to the show, working to further enhance their public profiles.

Joe Cockle of JNP Events comments: “Attending the Royal Cornwall Show gave us the opportunity to introduce our new business to the public, gain valuable feedback from potential clients and network with other exhibiting businesses.

“We got a significant increase in website activity after the show illustrating that people took an interest in what we do. We had great feedback from visitors that sampled our product, which has given us the confidence to push forward in business and take the next steps.”

Kate McEwen, programme director for Outset Cornwall, was delighted to be able to offer clients such a valuable prize in an important first year of trading.

“Comprehensively planning for the launch of any new business is vital, but this is only part of the journey,” she says.

“As many of our clients find out, after a business is launched it is hard work getting your products and services in



challenge

front of your target market, and often, very expensive! By offering this prize, we were able to give six deserving clients a platform from which to launch their new businesses effectively, enabling them to develop mailing lists, get feedback from sampling, and even sell products direct from their stand.

“It was also lovely for the team to see these clients and their new businesses flourishing in what is a very competitive environment. We wish to congratulate all the exhibiting clients on the efforts they made to stand out from the crowd and really start to make a name for themselves within the business community.”

Robert Peters from Potpig Woodburners, was one of the stars at the show, with his unique eco woodburners catching the attention of hundreds of passers by. He remarks: “I felt very honoured to have the opportunity to display my products at such a high profile event. There was a good cross section of people to get valuable feedback from, and I gained a much needed confidence boost. It was great meeting a comprehensive cross section of people and, of course, to make that all important sale! In future I will not hesitate to see the value in what I do as so many people cannot be wrong.”

Also exhibiting with Outset over the three-day event were Sharyn Williams and Pauline Giles from Cupcakes and Pupcakes, providing tasty treats for dogs and their owners, Ruth Gingell from

“There was a good cross section of people to get valuable feedback from, and I gained a much needed confidence boost”



Brillwater, Ben Hawkins from new artisan bakery, Da Bara and Steve Patterson from Peak Awareness and the Cornwall Laughter Club. Each have been through the Outset Cornwall programme and subsequently launched their new businesses.

“Outset Cornwall has given me specific ideas to help me find enough customers to make a healthy business out of my passion. All you need is a good idea, they will show you how to do the rest!” says Hawkins from Da Bara bakery, which has now launched its new bakery in Grampound Road.

Keeping dogs and their owners equally happy were the ladies from Cupcakes and Pupcakes, who attended the women-only group in St Austell, launched on International Women’s Day earlier this year. Sharyn says: “The Outset Cornwall programme has helped us to focus on what we need to do to establish a well run and successful business.

It was invaluable for us to meet like-minded women and use them as a focus group as the business idea developed.”

It was also pleasing to see so many Outset clients exhibiting at the Royal Cornwall show independently with their new businesses. Tony Sampson of Cornwall Solar Panels has employed two people as his business continues to go from strength to strength. “The ideas the advisors have are incredible. I have implemented many of them with great success and still have a list of others to work through! Outset has certainly helped fill my diary and I look forward to working with them in the future as I expand my business.”

Tina Care-Willoughby from Paws for Cake and Karen Davey from Just Bunting were also among the Outset clients enjoying the record-breaking numbers at the show this year.

Outset Cornwall would like to encourage anyone considering self-employment or launching a new business to get in touch. All support is fully funded, won’t affect any benefit entitlements and may just be the big break you’re looking for. ▶

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

**Mark Wright,
Piran Technologies Ltd**

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Power to the people

Despite recent cuts, the Government's FIT scheme still offers businesses incredible incentives to generate their own electricity. Indian Queens-based solar power supplier and installer Solen Energy UK is here to show how

Cornwall is rapidly becoming a hub for renewable energy. Wind turbines have been a common sight for a number of years now, while with the recent roll out of Wave Hub off the Hayle coast, hyrdo power is also coming into play.

However, prior to April of last year, solar power had few column inches in the press, and spent fewer minutes still in the thoughts of the public and businesses at large.

Homes and businesses that had photovoltaic solar panels on their roofs were few and far between, mainly because of the high costs involved. And as an industry in Cornwall, it didn't really exist.

That has all been changing in the past year, however, as the Government's

Feed-in-Tariff has removed many of the barriers to entry that existed before.

Where once being environmentally responsible was a costly affair, now it actually pays.

Correspondingly, many solar power companies have been emerging in Cornwall, keen to capitalise on the natural resources that make it the best region in the UK for producing solar energy.

One of the newest operators is Solen Energy, which has just opened a UK head office and warehouse in Indian Queens, while also having another branch up in Liverpool.

But while Solen Energy is new to the UK market, it has years of experience and expertise in the European market,

with operations in the Netherlands and Italy, as well as its headquarters in north west Germany.

In fact, Germany is the global leader in its field, and amazingly accounts for something like 40% of the world's renewable energy. The German market has benefited from Government incentives for a number of years.

"The market here in the UK is probably where Germany was six or seven years ago," explains UK managing director Frank Schulmann.

"The problem is that there is probably not enough information at the moment about how it works and the returns that are available. We are here to change that and show how we can be a turnkey partner.





Frank Schulmann

“There is no other company in Devon and Cornwall with our knowledge and experience. The Cornish market is under-exploited. We’re here to change that.”

Solen made the decision to expand into the UK shortly after the last Government announced its FIT scheme, and Cornwall was always the likely place to locate its business.

“I made my first visit to the UK last year,” says Schulmann, “and came straight to Cornwall. We didn’t want to be based somewhere like London, we wanted to be where our customers are, and that’s Cornwall. Our focus is very much on the Devon and Cornwall market.”

Sales and marketing Director Kevin Wood agrees and says: “Cornwall is absolutely the ideal place to base a company like this. We have the best quality sunlight in the country, so there are great opportunities for business owners to harness this energy.”

And while there is a healthy solar market in southern Europe, the Cornish climate is probably more suitable. You might struggle to convince the sun worshipper, but ten hours of Cornish sunshine is better than ten hours of Spanish.

“There’s a misnomer about heat, says Wood. “The panels actually work more efficiently in cooler temperatures.”

Targets

One of the main drivers behind the FIT scheme is to meet EU targets for the UK to generate at least 15% of its power through renewable energy by 2020. However, Government cutbacks led it to recently announce that from August 1 it would dramatically slash the tariff for the large scale developments.

But while this is sure to have a dramatic effect on the industry, for domestic and businesses the incentives remain unchanged, with the tariff unaffected for installations up to 50kw. And to give you an idea of the size of a 50kw scheme, the largest domestic fitting is only 4kw.

While Solen does service domestic contracts, it is the commercial and

agricultural sector that the company expects it generate its core business, with the company employing a dedicated agricultural salesman.

“Farmers’ barns, for example, are the perfect application,” says Wood. “Large buildings, which in many cases are not even being used.

“We’re also keen to work with owners of larger business premises, where we can design powerful systems that both reduce the energy bills and also generate income through the Government’s feed-in-tariff.”

“If you are a heavy user of electricity, you stand to benefit more. But to be honest, most small domestic users can justify it purely through the FIT.”

And the financial benefits are real and substantial. For example, an average domestic installation can be expected to return £990 a year from the tariff alone, not including the money made from exporting back to the National Grid or the savings made on electricity bills. A 50kw scheme would generate the business’ owner an annual income in the region of £16k, again not taking bill savings into account.

Wood explains: “All through the daytime, the system produces electricity which you use. You use it first, and what is left over goes to the National Grid. If you need more, you buy in the extra in the normal way.

“If you are a heavy user of electricity, you stand to benefit more. But to be honest, most small domestic users can justify it purely through the FIT.”

The service begins with Solen visiting a business premises or site to survey the space available, usually a rood which is in an elevated position to harness maximum solar energy. A south facing outlook is ideal for maximum efficiency, but not essential.

Solen’s specialists then design an appropriate system and provide support



What is the Feed-in-Tariff?

The Feed-in-Tariff (FIT) scheme was brought in by the Government in April 2010 to encourage the small scale generation of low carbon electricity; particularly by businesses, communities and individuals, not normally associated with the electricity market.

The scheme is not exclusive to solar power, it is also possible to qualify for the tariff through wind, anaerobic digestion and hydro schemes, although the solar tariff is by far the most generous.

As long as you have used an accredited Microgeneration Certification

Scheme (MCS) installer, energy providers are obliged to make regular payments at a guaranteed rate set at point of entry, which currently stands at 43.3p per kw hour for domestic installations of up to 4kw. This is index linked for the next 25 years.

In addition, you receive another 3.1p per kw for unused electricity exported back to the national grid.

While the Government's recent FIT review will have a dramatic impact on the larger projects with tariff cuts of some 70%, tariffs for schemes less than 50kw remain unchanged.



is here to stay. "The tariff has certainly encouraged the market since coming in last year," says Wood. "The technology has been around for some time, but previously it has just been too expensive. And now people are building in volume.

"The Government intention is to increase renewable energy and reduce carbon emissions, and also to drive the price down so when the incentives are taken away, it is still a good deal for people."

It may be a cliché, but solar panels do offer the proverbial win-win scenario. Not only are you doing your bit for the environment and producing clean energy, but you're actually making money out of it at the same time.

"Most businesses can expect a 12% payback within the first year of investing on solar pv technology," Wood says. "And you can't avoid the fact that it's a very sustainable energy source – it absolutely supports a company that's keen to be green and environmentally responsible." ♦

throughout the installation process, including accessing the feed-in-tariff and monitoring its effectiveness.

Unique

As a company, Solen is in the unique position in Cornwall of being a supplier and an installer. And it is keen not to be seen as competition to many of the smaller installers in the Duchy.

"There are lots of smaller installers in Cornwall doing domestic installations," says Wood. "We would rather they did the installations and bought the stock from us. We are treading a fine line, we don't want the installers to think of us as competition."

From its warehouse in Indian Queens, Solen stocks some 4,000 panels and ancillary stock, making it the largest supplier in the region.

"We can only handle so many installations," adds Wood, "but we will actually contract the installation work, so we are trying to create partnerships with installers, and they buy the kit from us, which is good for us and good for them. We won't turn domestic work down, but we may end up giving it to another installer."

The only obstacle is the initial financial outlay involved, which in the case of a 50kw development would be in the region of £140k.

However, for businesses that cannot finance the outlay, Solen can lease the system where the client gets the free electricity, and Solen keeps the tariff.

Schulmann says: "In Germany solar power is a very serious business and everyone understands it."

Including the banks. But that's not the case in the UK at present.

"Banks are very sceptical here," he says. "But that will change as they begin to understand it more. But it is a very safe investment for the banks, the safest."

The take off of the solar power market has been dramatic, and despite FIT cuts,



Kevin Wood



Contact

Tel: 01726 862470

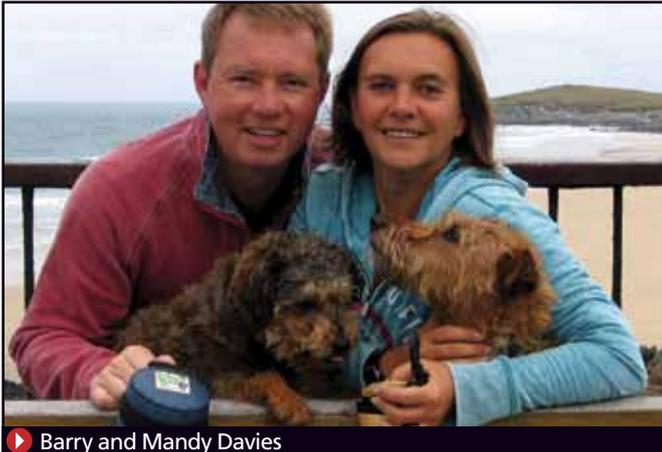
Email: Kevin.wood@solenenergyuk.co.uk

www.solenenergyuk.co.uk

Jess Billington; founder of treatalady.com provides her monthly round up of new businesses and news for entrepreneurs in Cornwall



Introducing....Duck Soup



▶ Barry and Mandy Davies

“We can appreciate Cornwall in comparison to our previous lives”

Continuously searching out lifestyle opportunities, the company has recently moved into baby products. Sticking to the neoprene theme, the first products to take to market

are dirty nappy stores, changing bags, changing mats and thermal bottle holders. The neoprene ensures hygiene, efficiency for wipe down and warmth and is perfect for mothers who use eco-friendly fabric nappies.

When asked what they most enjoy about business in Cornwall, they said – “It’s the space to think. We have done the daily hamster wheel with no time or space. People are much more willing to talk to you and because we don’t originally come from here we can appreciate Cornwall in comparison to our previous lives.”

Duck Soup’s five-year plan is commencing with funding from UKTI to go to California and spread the word; getting some American “Dicky Disciples” as Mandy calls them!

The aim is to establish retailers in San Francisco, LA and New York as well as focusing on a viral campaign via social media. For further information on Duck Soup or Dicky Bag please visit www.dickybag.com ▶

Duck Soup is a company making clever solutions for modern day problems. The Newquay twosome Barry and Mandy Davies are best known for the Dicky Bag; their neoprene creation for disposing of dog mess.

The company was established two years ago when, having a dog themselves they came across the age-old problem of being in the middle of nowhere swinging a rather unglamorous ‘poo bag’. The Dicky Bag was invented as a rather stylish bag attachment that works as a portable dog bin which is odourless, airtight, watertight and lightweight and comes in a multitude of colours, including an up and coming Swarovski crystal range (inspecting this it looks like a great double-up for a clutch bag girls!)

Barry and Mandy have appeared on various television programmes as well as having Dawn French as a brand ambassador with her very own Dicky Bag!

Sub-Liminal Design growth!

Liminal Design in Redruth is expanding its team after substantial growth over the last 12 months. Tim Hendy has merged his design business with Liminal following a successful period of collaboration between the two.

Tim brings ten years’ worth of local and national agency experience, as well as a background in print and brand strategy. Company director, Ryan McFarlane says: “Tim’s skillset complements our existing capabilities, adding a new range of clients and allowing us to focus on a more strategic lead approach going forward.”



▶ Tim Hendy and Ryan McFarlane

With an expanding portfolio, a new office at Krowji and a wide range of clients both in and outside of the County, Liminal has gained a well deserved reputation for its work and intends to use the new skills that Tim brings to offer added services and a new dimension. ▶

This comes following Mailaway’s new branding and website and is the third award they have been shortlisted for in the last three months; it is well deserved! ▶

Well done MailAway!



▶ Anna Penrose with award

The Media Innovation Awards were held in Plymouth last month. Created for media companies in the south west, there were 16 awards on the evening with 131 entrants in total and an impressive number of Cornish winners including

Sea Communications, Venn Creative and Nixon.

A special well done to our friends at Mailaway who won the Collaboration between Business and Young People award in conjunction with ECIF, Jarrang and Liminal Design.

Superfast Simplified

So everyone's talking about superfast broadband. It sounds amazing but all this talk of Cloud Computing, ADSL and Fibre to the Premises is completely beyond me and many other small businesses have also said they don't totally understand it. So here is what I have learned so far (in non-techie speak!)

- Faster processing and therefore the ability to send and receive larger images and files.
- The potential for videoconferencing – reducing and potentially eliminating the need to travel for our work. Designers will be able to talk over their designs on a video conference with the customer able to view the designs at their end and discuss them virtually "face to face".
- The ability to stream videos and online content better in high resolution.

- Better use of Skype – I currently cannot use Skype and work on my computer simultaneously whereas the new SFB will allow this.
- Remote working – again because of better connections and video conferencing.

This is basically what I have discovered so far. I am being told that it will help healthcare (online "virtual" diagnosis), education and potential investment for the county.

The truth is nobody knows for certain what superfast broadband will do for us but what stood out in my mind was a conference I attended at which Toby Parkins from UK Netweb said: "If we only use superfast broadband to go faster, then we are missing something."

I certainly think it gives us all; small businesses and large, a competitive advantage. ▶

Thinking of going solo...

Unlocking Cornish Potential is recruiting again for its successful Graduate Start-Up programme for Duchy entrepreneurs.

So, whether you are already up and running, or if you have that brilliant idea but would like to test it on a trained business eye, this could be perfect! I was one of the first graduates to trial this programme and found it incredibly helpful.

To apply, you and the business must be based in Cornwall, have a degree level qualification from 2001 or later, a strong work ethic and a sense of humour (not

mandatory but recommended when starting up!) If the business is already operating, it must be less than 12 months since trading started.

Successful graduates will be offered a financial support package; bespoke business skills training; 40 hours of mentoring from industry experts; regular meetings and advice from an experienced business coach as well as organised events and networking opportunities.

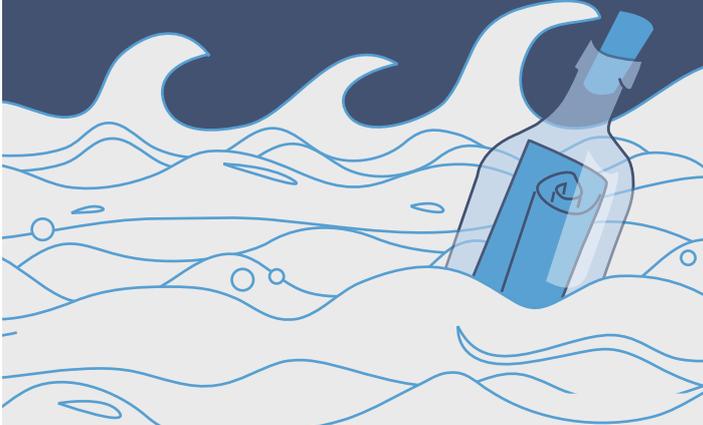
To find out more about the programme contact the programme manager Chris Phillips on chris.phillips@cornwall.ac.uk or call 01209 617664. ▶

Got a new business and want to be featured on this page or simply want a chat and some advice from someone who has been there and done it? – get in touch: jessica@treatalady.com



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Connected Cornwall

Pictures this month from the Greenbank Fal River Festival and the Royal Cornwall Show

Organisers of the Greenbank Fal River Festival are hailing this year as the best ever after over 100,000 people enjoyed the activities on offer.

Launched in 2006, the festival celebrates life on and around the river Fal and featured over 150 events over ten days.

The festival cast off in great style when invited guests sailed up the Fal onboard Falmouth tugs with the Beer Fleet, from King Harry to Falmouth harbour.

Highlights included the Fal Fish Festival, which was supported by the Greenbank Hotel and Stein's Fish & Chips and opened by Rick Stein.

Other activities included the Fal River Swim, which attracted record entries,

the Fal River Walk and Miracle Theatre launching its latest production, *The Death of Sherlock Holmes*.

The festival also coincided with the start of AZAB, the Azores and Back yacht race.

Festival director, Toby Budd, said: "Over the last three years the festival has grown and is now established on the Cornish calendar.

"It's been a brilliant year and there have been some great events."

As well as celebrating life on the river Fal, the festival also raises money for charity. Benefitting this year were ShelterBox, the RNLI, BF Adventure and Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust.

It was also, of course, the Royal Cornwall Show last month, which attracted its second highest-ever attendance.

Rural insurance company Cornish Mutual took the opportunity to lay on Cornish pasties, cream teas and cakes as a special 'thank-you' to its members at the annual Wadebridge event.

Hundreds of people visited the marquee over the three days and were treated to refreshments while helping to raise much needed funds for the Cornwall Air Ambulance through the sale of a charity cookbook. 

Greenbank Fal River Festival Charity Ball



All captions L-R **1** Stephanie, Mike and Alice Reynolds **2** Duncan Ayres (Greenbank), Steve Small, Steve Garvey, Neil Lentern, Iain Hooper and Scott Marshall (Air Ambulance) **3** Jo Beard, Lin Murrell, Thelma Warner and Bob Warner



Cornish Mutual Reception



1 Mavis and Geoffrey Masters 2 Barbara and Tom Dennis 3 Jane and Andrew Buxton 4 Geoff Smeeth and Dave Bersey (Cornish Mutual) and Brian Arthur 5 George Hocking and Mavis Watson 6 Pa and Michael Webber 7 Sam and Andrew Grage 8 Terry Nott (Cornish Mutual) and Valerie Hosking 9 Jeanette Bromley, Andrew Jeffries-Jones, Roger Bromley, Roger Hawkings and John Lawrance

Beer Fleet Launch



1 Amy Week, Adrian Eason-Bassett and Becky Lush 2 Laura Jepson and Tom Lay (ShelterBox) 3 Lady Mary Holborow and Betty Stoggs

The last word

Dan Parker – FireText Communications Ltd

Name: Dan Parker
Company: FireText Communications Ltd
Job title: Marketing Director

What did you want to be when you were young? **A traffic warden...until I realised what they actually did (I was only six).**

What was your first full time job? **Packing and shipping SCUBA diving equipment during my school holidays.**

What is your best quality? **I'm told I can be very polite. Hopefully that is true.**

What is your worst quality? **I can be pretty restless!**

What is your favourite book? **James Cracknell & Ben Fogle: Through Hell and High Water. Ever since reading it, I've been determined to cross the Atlantic...one day!**

What is your favourite film? **The Goonies – seen it twice this year already!**

What is your favourite restaurant? **The Gurkha in Falmouth – many FireText ideas come from that restaurant.**

How do you like to relax? **By doing something physical with friends. No, I mean...kayaking or playing sport (not very good at any of them though).**

If you could build a house anywhere in the world where would it be? **Some-where in the Alps – anywhere with great views and great skiing.**

If you could be a superhero, what superpowers would you like to possess? **OK, possibly not a real superhero, but would love to have Batman's gadgets and Bruce Wayne's lifestyle.**

Who was your teenage pin up? **Kylie Minogue! However, at university, my house-mates decided to cover my room in Mcfly and Busted posters one day – they stayed up!**

Can money buy happiness? **Yes of course...but the happiness may not last very long.**

Most annoying TV personality? **Harry Hill – he killed *You've Been Framed* for me.**

What has been the best moment in your career? **Winning Young Businessperson of the Year recently – the support was overwhelming.**

What has been the worst moment in your career? **Splitting my trousers whilst managing an all-female sewing team – highly embarrassing! However, they were fixed within minutes!**

If you only had £1 left in the entire world, what would you spend it on? **10 donuts to share!**

What's the best thing about Cornwall? **The supportive business community – without them launching a business would be far more difficult. Thank you!**

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life? **Be open to all advice – but realise you don't have to action it all.**

What makes you happy? **Putting a smile on someone's face!**

What makes you angry? **Negativity.**

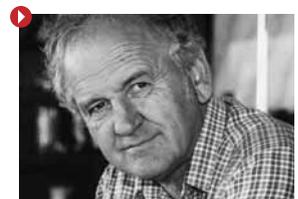
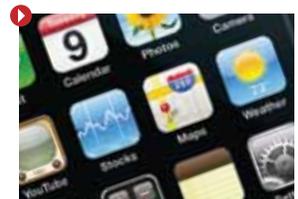
If you could invite any two people for dinner, who would they be and why would you invite them? **Gordon Ramsey and Jamie Oliver – I'd get them to show me a thing or two for my next dinner party.**

What could you not live without? **My iPhone – Matthew Clarke recently challenged me to live a week without it!**

Tell me a joke. **Where does the general keep his armies....Up his sleeves...!**

What's the greatest invention ever? **My Grandfather's emergency breathing valve (for SCUBA diving). It's saved so many lives including Simon Le Bon (I found out recently). The business he built from it inspires me!**

Describe yourself in three adjectives: **Ambitious, adventurous, friendly.**



What does *your* business need?

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- Better contacts?
- Local support?
- Information on the local business scene?
- Cost saving?
- Someone to listen?

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