

Outer Hebrides Business Gateway e-bulletin

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Who are we and what do we do?

Business Gateway provides expertise in every aspect of business start-up and growth ranging from, but not limited to:

Business Planning

Recruitment

Exporting

Marketing

Health & Safety

Online Trading

Sourcing Premises

Finding Funding

Our Location:

Stornoway:

Business Gateway
Development Department
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
James Square
9 James Street
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2QN
Tel: +44 (0)1851 707307

Uist:

Business Gateway
Development Department
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

FOOD & DRINK

- SCOTLAND'S SPECIALITY FOOD SHOW – JANUARY 2011
- CONGRATULATIONS TO CAFÉ KISIMUL

TOURISM

- TOURISM INTELLIGENCE SCOTLAND

CONSTRUCTION & TRADE SERVICES

- CnES: Buy with Confidence SCHEME

COMING SOON IN 2011

- PROCUREMENT TRAINING EVENT
- TRADITIONAL BUILDING SKILLS COURSE IN STORNOWAY

OUTER HEBRIDES BUSINESS GATEWAY NEWS

- OUTER HEBRIDES SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE SCHEME
- COMHAIRLE SUPPORT TO BUSINESS – INFORMATION LISTINGS
- BUSINESS GATEWAY & 'EVENTS'
- OUTER HEBRIDES BUSINESS DIRECTORY

LOCAL NEWS, INFORMATION, EVENTS & TRAINING

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND UPDATES

Taigh Cheann a'Locha
Lionacleit
Isle of Benbecula
HS7 5PJ
Tel: +44 (0)1870 604917

Email: businessgateway@cne-siar.gov.uk

Office hours

9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday

General Links

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Business Gateway website

For loan and business advice and information.
www.cne-siar.gov.uk/eds/business.

Business Gateway

Well worth a visit for a range of information, advice and ideas on starting and running a business.
www.bgateway.com

The Princes Scottish Youth Business Trust

Offers start-up and development funding and advice to young people aged between 18 and 30 with a business idea.
www.psybt.org.uk/Regions/WesternIsles

Flexible Training Opportunities – still available to March 2011
The benefits of training are invaluable, for businesses of all scales and for individual employees, with this in mind Skills Development Scotland are now making it more affordable to undertake training and train staff by meeting businesses halfway. Up to March 2011 they'll refund 50% of the cost of up to 10 training courses – to a maximum of £500 per course.

e.g If the training costs £1200, they will refund £500. If it costs £300, they will refund £150 – it effectively means you could double your training investment. Anyone from sole traders to businesses with fewer than 50 employees can apply for up to a total of £5000 towards training costs.

DWP - Work Choice Programme

From 25 October 2010, a new Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) supported employment programme called Work Choice replaced the existing WORKSTEP and Work Preparation Programmes and the Job Introduction Scheme. Work Choice is a voluntary programme which supports disabled people who have more complex needs, primarily those who are likely to need more intensive specialised support, to find employment or to retain their position when they have entered work.

Employer Recruitment Initiative

For all young people these days finding a job is tough, but imagine how much tougher it is for someone facing barriers to employment. For some young people circumstances such as coming out of care make it hard to get the start they need. That's where the Employer Recruitment Incentive comes in. Skills Development Scotland will provide you with a payment of £1,000 if you take on a young person as an employee or Modern Apprentice. To qualify for the Incentive employers will need to take on a young person aged 16 – 19 who has faced barriers in the past or who has completed an SDS employability module.

For more information please contact Skills Development Scotland on:
01851 707 334 or 0800 783 6000
or visit their website at www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk

HEALTH & SAFETY

Healthy Working Lives

The Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives is the national

Outer Hebrides Business Directory

The most complete local online listing of businesses and organisations in the Outer Hebrides. Please contact us if you would like to have your business listed – it FREE!
www.businesshebrides.co.uk

Highlands & Islands Enterprise

Economic Development Agency operating across the region with local offices in Stornoway and Benbecula. A wide range of useful information and links for growing businesses and community organizations.
www.hie.co.uk

Live Hebrides

Offer local businesses and organisations a wide range of knowledge and expertise about the latest IT solutions available to them and the benefits of broadband.
www.livehebrides.com

Outer Hebrides Chamber of Commerce

For information relating to issues facing island businesses, networking and related opportunities.
www.hebrideschamber.com

The Business IT Guide

Operated by e-skills UK and assisted by Highlands & Islands Enterprise offering useful hints and tips on IT solutions for small businesses as they have found that small businesses in the UK are losing millions of pounds from lost revenue due to not being adequately IT literate. Please visit them at:

centre of expertise in Scotland in relation to protecting and improving the health of those in work. Services include:
Adviceline – free to call national advice-line 0800 019 2211 – providing information on a range of workplace safety and health topics.

Adviser, Support + Workplace visits - by Advisers providing free practical, face to face advice on any issue relating to occupational health, safety and welfare.

Templates & Resources – tools to support organisations deal with a range of workplace safety and health issues.

Training & Events – training and awareness sessions covering a range of health topics and designed to develop employers understanding, knowledge and skills.

For further information contact either of the local advisers:
Norma Macleod (Health Promotion Adviser) 01851 708925
Stephen Hodges (Occupational Health & Safety Adviser) 07768 165516

www.healthyworkinglives.com

or for regularly updated information about Health & Safety matters visit the government website where you can also subscribe for a regular Health & Safety Executive e-bulletin.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm?ebul=gd-stf>

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Starter for Six: Enterprise Training for up & coming Creative Entrepreneurs

Applications for the 2011 Starter for Six programme are now open to individuals & teams with a strong business idea in the arts and / or creative industry sectors.

The programme offers four days of training giving participants new tools and ways of looking at their businesses, coaching & mentoring support between each training session, opportunities to network with likeminded people and the opportunity to pitch for £10,000 of investment support on completion of training.

If you work in the creative sector and have an innovative and sustainable business idea, are either pre-start or within your first year of trading and can attend scheduled training dates in a set location you should visit the website to find out more:

www.scotland.businessitguide.com

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - 'Socio Economic Update'

Regularly published, contains useful information on the local economy

www.cne-siar.gov.uk/factfile

Creative Industries focus on the arts, crafts film, and television, publishing, and new media sectors if you are operational in this sector the following links are worth a look:

Aim-Hi

An online forum for the Creative Industries sector - please feel free to register your interest and visit the site at <http://s4.invisionfree.com/aimhi/>.
www.aim-hi.org

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - The Creative Industries

Publishes a periodic newsletter on the website.

www.cne-siar.gov.uk/eds/creativeindustries

www.culturalenterpriseoffice.co.uk/starterfor6

The closing date for applications is Monday 31st January, 2011

Creative Industries Advice Line & Support – Extended Hours

The Cultural Enterprise Office for Scotland provides comprehensive information to assist creative and cultural businesses in starting up or developing. They have easy to access online resources and they work intuitively to complement the enquiries they receive – covering everything from networking to funding, events to training.

These resources complement the free Enquiry Service which can be accessed by telephone or email. They can answer quick questions or more complex enquiries that require follow-on support.

The scope of the Enquiry Line 0844 5449990 provides you, wherever you are in the country, with access to our services even if your base is some distance away from our nearest office and Regional Adviser.

Enquiry Line Now Open Until 8pm Every Wednesday

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Social Business Trust launched

Six companies have invested £10 million between them to launch a new service to help social enterprises grow. The service, entitled the Social Business Trust, will benefit from cash and staff expertise from management consultants Bain and Company, legal firm Clifford Chance, bank Credit Suisse, accountants Ernst & Young, private equity firm Permira and media firm Thomson Reuters. The trust will run over three to five years and will help social enterprises with laying foundations for good operational infrastructures.

For more information:

<http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/news/rss/article/1045940/>

10m-service-launched-encourage-social-enterprise-growth

FOOD & DRINK

Scotland's Speciality Food Show 2011

This event is being held in the SECC 23-25 January, if you are serious about building new business opportunities in Scotland and meeting hundreds of buyers over the course of three days, please see below for more information.

<http://www.scotlandfoodanddrink.org/events/event-info/157/scotlands-speciality-food-show-2011.aspx>

Congratulations to High Scoring Island Business Café Kisimul, the Barra restaurant specialising in Asian food has come fourth in the final of the 'Newby Teas Tiffin Cup'. The competition is held in the House of Commons with finalists being nominated by their constituency MP, after a round of regional heats finalists are selected to attend the ceremony in London. Restaurant owners Pauline & Rohail beat off competition from a further 73 establishments to finish in a very respectable fourth place.

TOURISM

Tourism Intelligence Scotland

TIS is where forward thinking businesses go for easy to use practical insights to inspire them to get ahead... Gathering and using market intelligence to drive innovation is a quick, easy, cheap and effective way to improve business. TIS offers businesses the opportunity to access, share and understand a range of useful information. TIS can help businesses to get ahead and stay competitive. By registering with TIS, you will receive their newsletter 'Ear to the Ground', each of the free guides as they are produced and be the first to know about forthcoming events and workshops. You can register at Tourism Intelligence Scotland or contact the team on 0131 449 8838 or info@tourism-intelligence.co.uk.

CONSTRUCTION & TRADE SERVICES

'Buy with Confidence' – Supporting Businesses, Protecting Consumers

The Buy with Confidence scheme supports Western Isles building trades businesses while giving protection to the island's consumers. Member companies are independently checked by staff from the Comhairle's Trading Standards Service against the set partnership rules on trustworthiness and compliance with the law.

Only businesses that pass stringent checks can they display the Buy with Confidence logo. Details of approved firms are available on the Comhairle website:

<http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/buywithconfidence/index.asp>

You can also give us your views on how member businesses are performing. If you've had good service from a company not in our scheme, you can recommend them for membership.

For further information: 01851 709577 mmacsween@cne-

siar.gov.uk

COMING SOON IN 2011

Procurement Workshop

Following on from the success of last years Supplier Events which covered the topic "Public Sector Procurement" the Comhairle & Business Gateway are looking to hold further events in the first quarter of 2011 focussing on the Tendering Process and Tender and Pre-qualification Documentation together with an opportunity for suppliers to discuss forthcoming tenders.

Business Skills Workshops

Please also remember that Business Gateway offer access to a full range of business training opportunities from in-house staff training to workshops and one to one sessions, if you have a training need for you or your staff do not hesitate to get in touch and see if we can help.

If you would like to know more or wish to register your interest please contact the local Business Gateway office on:

01851 707307 businessgateway@cne-siar.gov.uk

Traditional Building Skills Courses

The Comhairle's Planning Service is currently organising a programme of training courses in Traditional Building Skills over the next 10 months. These are being developed as part of the Stornoway Townscape Heritage Initiative. Although aimed primarily at construction personnel there will be opportunities for homeowners and residents within the Stornoway Conservation Areas. All the courses will give essential practical information on the use of traditional materials and skills for building relevant to buildings/materials used in the Stornoway area but applicable elsewhere.

If you would like to know more or wish to register your interest please contact:

Ian Wilson, Townscape Heritage Initiative Project
Manager/Conservation Officer 01851 709535 iwilson@cne-siar.gov.uk

Outer Hebrides Business Gateway News

Outer Hebrides Small Business Assistance Scheme – OHSBAS

The Outer Hebrides Small Business Assistance Scheme (OHSBAS) is financial support to aid start up and development of small businesses across the Outer Hebrides. Not all businesses are eligible, but if you wish to develop your business or you have aspirations to start a new enterprise you should speak to Business Gateway today to see if you would qualify for assistance, the list below is not exhaustive but highlights the key sectors which ARE ELIGIBLE for assistance under OHSBAS:

- Renewables (or other energy related activities)
- Tourism
- Creative & culture based industries
- Food & Drink
- Information Technology
- Life & Health Sciences

OHSBAS is a 3-year programme, funded by the EU that will focus primarily on developing commercial competitiveness by supporting new business start-ups and safeguarding and promoting employment through enabling existing businesses to grow. Grant assistance for a range of activities is available to new enterprises, existing 'micro' companies with new proposals, or community-led enterprises. In addition to small grants and interest-free loans to support micro-business - larger loans of up to £50,000 will be available to eligible applicants with plans for growth.

Social enterprises may also be eligible for business development assistance. Eligibility for assistance will be based on the organisation's commitment and capacity to generate income, leading to enhanced long-term financial sustainability.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar – Financial Support to Local Businesses

As well as the OHSBAS scheme detailed above the Comhairle's Business Gateway Service also offers other funding support to local businesses depending on their requirements and eligibility. A full listing of all loan and grant awards made is available on the Comhairle website:

<http://intranet/internet/eds/business/businessesassisted2010.asp>

Events & Business Gateway

For more information on some of the individual business we have assisted please look out for our new full-page feature

which will be regularly appearing in Events newspaper. This section of the paper will carry information on forthcoming workshops, funding opportunities as well as case-studies of some of the clients we have worked with in the past.

Outer Hebrides Business Directory – Contact Details

The Outer Hebrides Business Directory is a free online resource listing businesses based or operating in the islands.

As well as helping to promote businesses to customers the listing is also used by Business Gateway to provide information on events and opportunities which may be useful – if your contact details are incorrect or if you would prefer we contacted you directly with updates or information please get in touch with us and let us know which email address / telephone number we should be using.

01851 707307 businessgateway@cne-siar.gov.uk

If you have any feedback or suggestions for us to make this service more relevant please e-mail your comments to businessgateway@cne-siar.gov.uk.

Remember that we guarantee never to sell or give your e-mail address to anyone else.

Merry Christmas & A Very Happy New Year

Bye for now,

The Business Gateway team