



Business news

In brief

Apprenticeship places available

AN apprenticeship provider in Guildford is seeking applicants.

3aaa, which has recently opened an academy in Guildford, is reporting a record number of apprenticeship vacancies.

The company works with hundreds of organisations looking for young people to start in IT, accountancy, digital marketing or financial services.

There are more than 35 jobs with local employers available in Guildford, the majority of which are fast-growing small and medium sized companies.

3aaa is actively working with schools and colleges, plus other referral partners to make sure young people are fully informed about the advantages of undertaking an apprenticeship.

To enquire about 3aaa's Guildford academy, call Sarah Harris or Mike Arnold on 01483 453108.

Beard's new appointment

REGIONAL construction company Beard has appointed Tony Taylor as special works manager, based at its Guildford office.

Mr Taylor will have overall responsibility for the management of construction projects between £300,000 and £2.5 million across the Guildford area, ensuring they are completed safely, to the agreed quality standards, on time and within budget.

He joins Beard from the national construction and infrastructure group Morgan Sindall, where he was contracts manager on a variety of new build and refurbishment projects in the education, health care, commercial and leisure sectors.

PM hails growth

Building bridges with the military

Business world prepares to forge yet closer links

By Jennifer Morris

WITH an influx of military personnel expected in the coming year, the Armed Forces are keen to build even closer links between soldiers and the business community.

The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that 1,200 personnel – comprising two units – will be moving into Aldershot, while Keogh Barracks, in Ash Vale, will see 26 new arrivals in the summer.

The base at Pirbright saw the arrival of around 600 personnel in November, when the Welsh Guards moved in.

Business leaders met at a networking event in Woking on Wednesday to hear from the military about how the two communities can work together to provide mutually beneficial support.

At the end of the event, guests could fill out a form expressing an interest in signing the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant – a scheme established in 2013 in which businesses learn about the role they can play in helping the borough's serving men and women, reserve personnel, veterans, and their families.

The covenant contains two main statements – that no member of the forces should face disadvantage in the pro-



Grahame Larter (left) and other covenant signatories pictured with Army personnel at the breakfast briefing at Arcom IT at Export House in Causway Way, Woking.

vision of public and commercial services compared with any other citizen, and that in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate, especially for injured or

bereaved personnel and their families.

BAE Systems signed a corporate covenant in 2013, which Woking Borough Council, in collaboration

with Support for Britain's Reservists and Employers (SABRE), will be encouraging businesses to commit to at the end of March.

Colonel Charlie Lambert, Garrison Commander at Aldershot, co-hosted the breakfast briefing at Export House, with Shahid Azeem, CEO of Arcom IT.

The colonel spoke of the importance of creating employment opportunities for military veterans and the need for flexible working conditions for spouses, partners and members of the reserve forces.

There was also a call on businesses to support local

cadet programmes.

Providing a business perspective was Brigadier Paul Evans, UK defence transformation director at BAE Systems, who highlighted some of the recruitment benefits a closer working relationship with the Armed Forces has brought to business, for example, in engineering expertise.

Councillor John Kingsbury, leader of Woking Borough Council, which signed a community covenant in 2012 and facilitated the business breakfast, said: "The Armed Forces community can contribute real value to business, both as employees who bring a wealth of skills and experience, and as customers."

"Organisations can also benefit significantly from membership of the corporate covenant scheme as it offers an opportunity to build a reputation as a forces-friendly business at a time when public support for the Armed Forces is high."

"We recognise the benefits the armed forces can provide in terms of economic development, due to the wealth of talent and skills that leavers and reservists possess."

Businesses can find out more or register support at armedforces@woking.gov.uk or call 01483 743774.



Lara Bishop, left, and colleague Caroline Stewart with Dragon's Den star Theo Paphitis.

Baby bouquet gift for grandfather Theo

A SHALFORD businesswoman who used Twitter to capture the attention of entrepreneur Theo Paphitis, caught his eye for a second time when she presented him with a bouquet of baby clothes for his new grandchild.

Lara Bishop's company Corporate Baby – a luxury gift supplier based in Tillingbourne Road – won the attention of Surrey businessman Mr Paphitis, former star of the TV show *Dragons' Den*, on Twitter last August.

Every Sunday between 5pm and 7.30pm Mr Paphitis invites businesses to enter Small Business Sunday by sending him a tweet that de-

scribes their business. He reviews the thousands of tweets and chooses his favourite six, which he then retweets to his 450,000 followers.

To celebrate the success of some of the best small businesses, the weekly winners of Small Business Sunday were invited to an awards ceremony at the ICC in Birmingham.

Mr Paphitis talked about the importance of networking and how vital it is for small businesses to be passionate about what they do.

He also spoke enthusiastically about the power of social media and how business owners only get back

what they put in. Mrs Bishop said: "My colleague Caroline Stewart and I had such an amazing time."

"It was a pleasure to receive my certificate from Mr Paphitis but it was an even greater moment to personally present him with a gift from Corporate Baby for the new addition to his family."

"He was intrigued and fascinated by our Hungry Caterpillar themed bouquet and I hope it brings much pleasure to his family."

Since becoming a winner of Small Business Sunday, Corporate Baby has seen its online presence grow, with more than 20,000 followers on Facebook and Twitter.

Engaging the community in a BID to keep us Blooming

GUILDFORD'S Business Improvement District (BID)

Winter Warmers

AVAILABLE FOR ONLY £350+VAT

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