

# Open for Business

WEST SUSSEX | CROYDON | BRIGHTON &amp; HOVE | LEWES | GATWICK DIAMOND

## LATEST NEWS...

Coast to Capital welcomed the news that its bid to Central Government for funding from the fourth round of the Regional Growth Fund has been approved. Estimated to be worth £12 million, including match funding, the bid will directly create jobs, particularly in those areas where employment has been largely dependent on the public sector. The new programme will provide grant finance directly to high growth, innovative businesses.

Businesses awarded funding will be supported by the Growth Accelerator service and specialists from the Universities of Brighton, Chichester and Sussex and the Sussex Innovation Centre. Those developing environmental technology products will also be able to tap into support from the University of Brighton's Green Growth Platform.



John Peel, Chairman of the Coast to Capital LEP, is keen to acknowledge the work done behind the scenes in preparing the bids. In addition to the organisations mentioned above, Brighton and Hove City Council, West Sussex County Council, Wired Sussex, Brighton and Hove Economic Partnership, Marine South East and Oxford Innovation have all been involved. "It was a team effort and that is a large part of what Coast to Capital is about – bringing people and organisations together to generate growth", he says.

The Argus newspaper has also thrown its weight behind the campaign as it will make a real difference to the community and provide more jobs for local people.

## Skills Strategy Update

Coast to Capital, with the close involvement of businesses and local partners, is developing a Skills Strategy for the area. The strategy will be focused on meeting the business skills need and generating sustainable employment. The development work will combine research and intelligence with input from businesses and other skills stakeholders to produce a final strategy in December 2013.

The work is being led by Coast to Capital's Strategic Adviser on Skills (Astrid Flowers) and overseen by a Task & Finish Group, chaired by Professor Clive Behagg, Coast to Capital Board Member and Vice Chancellor of the University of Chichester.

The strategy will highlight skills issues which inhibit sustainable economic growth and make appropriate recommendations. It will be used to:

- inform negotiations with government to secure support for activities
- provide a point of reference for organisations offering education or training for business
- assist strategic partners in developing plans for their local areas
- complement the strategic growth plan and inform the European Structural Investment Plan

To join the debate online, please follow us on twitter @Coast2Capital #C2Cskills

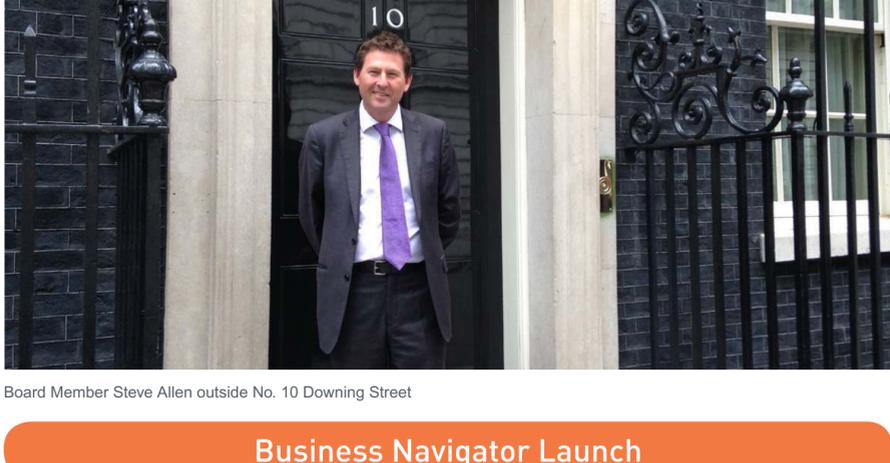


## LEPs Hosted at No. 10

The 39 LEP Chairs were invited to attend a reception at No. 10 Downing Street recently. As John Peel was unable to attend, Coast to Capital Board Member Steve Allen stepped in. He met with the Prime Minister and other leading figures from the coalition government including Vince Cable, Eric Pickles and Greg Clark to discuss the next steps for LEPs following last month's spending review.

The event offered an opportunity to hear from senior ministers as they pledged their continued support to locally driven growth across the country. The Prime Minister expressed his view that LEPs are best placed to understand local issues and encouraged them to create ambitious plans for their areas. He also stressed the importance of engaging with key stakeholders throughout the development of the local strategic plans.

Coast to Capital is currently preparing a Strategic Economic Plan which will be subject to wide consultation during the Autumn.



Board Member Steve Allen outside No. 10 Downing Street

## Business Navigator Launch

This month sees the launch of Coast to Capital's new business support portal, which signposts sources of advice for SMEs. It includes an online directory of business support organisations and a calendar of business events in the Coast to Capital area. The site does not provide any direct advice but is a signposting service that links to existing websites and other local and national business support initiatives.

Whilst Coast to Capital does not take on the direct delivery of business support services, the Board believes it is important to help business people in the region quickly identify the most relevant support.

It is hoped that the portal will help companies at all stages of their development, from before they start trading to when they are well established. It will help businesses who are looking for assistance to achieve their growth potential both in the UK and internationally by providing signposting to a wide range of services and information.

The site was jointly commissioned by Coast to Capital and West Sussex County Council, although it provides information right across the LEP area. Visit [www.c2cbusiness.org.uk](http://www.c2cbusiness.org.uk) for details.



## Business Navigator

## Partnership in Action

In recent weeks, John and Ron have been out on the road meeting with employers from across the region via a series of business focused round table events. The aim has been to build relationships with employers and to listen to their thoughts on issues that affect growth in the economy. For guests, they provided an opportunity to discuss and influence business and economic policy for the region.

More than sixty business leaders participated in the discussions, which were held in conjunction with local partners in Croydon, Crawley, Brighton and Chichester. A wide variety of businesses were represented and included AIG, AmicusHorizon, BT, Canon UK, Roffey Park Institute, Rolls-Royce, Southern Railway, Southern Water and several financial organisations.



The series of consultation events included a lunch for trade and business associations, enabling Coast to Capital to listen to the views of the various membership organisations.

Ron Crank, Chief Executive: "Engagement with the business community is vital if we are to succeed in achieving our objectives. We would also like to thank our local area partnerships for their support with these events which covered a wide range of topics including housing, work placement and apprenticeship initiatives, SME business support, investment finance, transport and broadband infrastructure."

## New Growth Development Manager Appointed

Coast to Capital has appointed Malcolm Brabon as Growth Development Manager. Malcolm will be working to deliver strategies to increase business enterprise and international trade across the Coast to Capital area.



Prior to joining Coast to Capital, Malcolm led his own consultancy, specialising in connecting UK and overseas business service providers with potential clients. He was also Partnership Manager for Business Link London, based in Croydon.

Speaking on his appointment, Malcolm said: "I am delighted to be joining Coast to Capital LEP at this exciting phase of its development. I look forward to working closely with partners across the public and private sectors."

## SPOTLIGHT ON...



### Tim Wates Vice Chairman

Tim Wates has been Vice Chairman of Coast to Capital LEP since its inception and as a board member he chairs the LEP Infrastructure Committee. Tim is a Director of Wates Group, Chairman of Wates Developments and chairs of the Wates Family, which is the Wates Group shareholders' forum. Wates is a wholly family-owned Construction and Development Group, founded in 1897. The business has an annual turnover of around £1 billion via five business units and has construction expertise in a variety of sectors including: education, prisons, commercial buildings, affordable housing, retail and office fit-outs.

The business also has a substantial exposure to housebuilding and commercial property. Values and respect for the communities it works in are central to Wates Group's business philosophy, and the company was voted Business in the Community Company of the year in 2011 and in the same year was awarded a Queen's Award for Enterprise – Sustainable Development.

Tim is a non-executive Director of a restaurant group and a chain of estate agencies, and is a Trustee Director of the Clink Charity. He is a Trustee of several of the Wates philanthropic foundations, and is a School Governor. Tim holds an MBA from Judge Business School, University of Cambridge.

Tim lives in Surrey and is married with four children. His interests include spending time with his family, travel, wine and food, cycling and a weekly game of five-a-side football.

## Looking good in Epsom & Ewell

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has formally launched its Shop Front Improvement Scheme, one of a range of initiatives being introduced this year to assist the retail sector within the Borough. The Council has created the scheme to assist shop owners, tenants and landlords to improve the external appearance of their premises. Modest grants are match funded by the applicants themselves.

Neil Dallen, Chairman of the Strategy & Resources Committee commented: "The appearance and quality of shop fronts is vital for attracting customers into and around our retail hubs. As well as brightening up these areas, the aim of the scheme is to provide a more pleasant environment for both the local population and visitors. The Council hopes that the scheme will contribute to stimulating business and consumer confidence, thereby encouraging further inward investment."



The Shop Front Improvement Scheme is for front renovation and decoration, new signage and the preservation of historical features. Applications are welcome, details of which can be found on the Council's website: [www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/CIF](http://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/CIF)

## Watch this space...



### Autumn Forum

On 19 September, members of the Coast to Capital Forum will gather to debate the issues around the area's strategic economic plan. The Forum, held every six months, has a key role to play in ensuring the work and priorities of the local area partnerships are supported by Coast to Capital and provides an opportunity for two-way dialogue and influence between all parties across the public and private sectors, including voluntary groups. This event will be focused on the development of the Strategic Economic Plan.

## CONTACT US



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