



West Devon Business Information Point
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AGRI-BIP NEWSLETTER

Business Information Point Have Moved

We are now located at the new Okehampton Business Centre on the outskirts of town. The new 'green energy' centre has been built as part of a flagship £6 million business park in Okehampton. Around 10 hectares of land has been opened up for development on this prime position, just off the main A30.

The development has been funded by the South West of England Regional Development Agency (RDA) and the Objective Two European Regional Development Fund, who together provided £5.25 million, the balance has come from West Devon Borough Council who have been responsible for managing the project.

Okehampton Business Centre is the first building on the site which is managed by the council and has been built to include the very latest advances in eco-friendly technology. The business centre offers 16 starter units for new and growing small businesses, which are available to rent on flexible terms; along with conference facilities available for hire.

Business Information Point has been the first to move in and will be responsible for supplying reception and booking services for the conference facilities.

Okehampton Business Centre – Green Features

Building materials have been chosen for low environmental impact
 Windows have been designed to increase natural lighting and conserve energy



Solar panels will provide a significant percentage of the buildings energy needs
 A Wind Turbine which can provide 6KW of power
 A boiler fuelled by wood pellets and a renewable energy source to provide heating
 Offices have natural ventilation
 Rainwater is collected and reused in the toilet facilities
 The building also has energy efficient fittings
 The carbon emissions from the units are expected to be about 80% less than if conventional energy sources were used, saving around 50 tonnes of carbon emissions a year.

What does this mean for Business Information Point?

We are still offering the same no nonsense business advice and support as before
 You can still call in and see us at any time
 You can still contact us on Free Phone 0800 592872, by email team@bipwestdevon.biz or visit our website www.bipwestdevon.biz. Our new postal address is shown above.

Details of the centre's official opening will be coming soon . . .

Computer Workshops

Using computers in your farm business? Our IT courses are the ideal place to improve your PC knowledge and are suitable if you want to run your business smoothly, or just want to feel confident using a PC at work or home. You don't even need to know anything about computers. Perhaps now is the time to improve your skills? Whether you are managing records, creating flyers and posters, using the Internet and email there is something for everyone.

Listed in the events section are the workshop topics, dates and venues available at present. If you do not see the topic you are interested in or a venue near you please call us on **free phone 0800 592872** and make your request.

Foundation Level Spreadsheets

Why use cash analysis books when a spreadsheet can do the same and much much more. You will use a fast-track learning method to create a new spreadsheet, enter text and numbers and save the data you input. You'll learn how to use formulas to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers, how to analyse the information in your spreadsheet and how to print off different pieces of information from your spreadsheet. **Tuesday 5th August – The Westward Inn, Leigh Mill, Ivybridge – 10am – 1pm**

How to get your website listed in the Top Ten of Google

Increase income using your website and get it listed in the top ten search results, and effectively increase the sales of your products and services. Discover how to use Google Adwords, online E-commerce solutions, and increase visitor numbers to your website. This jargon free workshop explains the tips and techniques to successful Internet marketing.

Tuesday 29th July – Tavy Business Centre – 10am – 1pm

There is a nominal charge of £10 per candidate to attend the computer workshops

Let's Talk Starting in Business

We are running free, practical workshops, in conjunction with Barclays Bank, throughout the autumn to help people to learn what is involved in starting and running a successful business.

The courses will cover the nuts and bolts of starting your business from market research and marketing, through to setting up simple accounts and all the legalities in between. Course dates are as follows: -

Tuesday 29th July – East Devon Business Centre, Sidmouth

Tuesday 30th September – Okehampton Business Centre, Okehampton

Tuesday 28th October – East Devon Business Centre, Sidmouth

Tuesday 25th November – Tavy Business Centre, Tavistock

Workshops will run from 9.30am until 1.30pm

So, if you, a relative or a friend are thinking of starting your own business and would like to come to one of these free workshops please call us to book your place.

For further information and to book your place on any of our workshops please call us on free phone 0800 592872

ELS Update

Following a frantic period of activity assisting landowners and farmers to apply to Entry Level Stewardship, prior to the cut-off date of the 15th of June 2008, we have just heard that **the cut-off date has been extended to the 15th of August.**

This is definitely your last chance to apply under the current scheme rules. Our experience with over 70 applications has shown that entry to the scheme has been easily achieved with little or no change required to the farming system, this may not be the case in the future under the revised guidance.

RDPE Update

Progress is continuing with this programme with funding slowly becoming available. Project ideas are welcomed by the South West gateway, Catherine Harris (0845 600 9966) would welcome a call and will ask you to complete a project expression of interest form. If you need help with this or a business plan to support a full application for funding please give us a call on **free phone 0800 592872.**

Can you farm without fertiliser?

Every gathering of farmers that I've come into contact with recently has had only one topic of conversation - the price of fertiliser!

If you haven't enquired lately you will be in for a bit of a shock, with typical prices of:

● 0N : 20P : 30K	£590
● 0N : 24P : 24K	£595
● 21N : 8P : 11K	£423
● 34.5 N	£333

All prices are per tonne and correct at the end of June.

At these prices fertiliser costs for growing winter wheat will be more than £125 per acre, fertiliser costs for growing for grass silage will also be high at £60 to £80 per acre.

What should farmers do? Continue farming unchanged and hope that prices for milk cereals and red meat rise accordingly or change systems?

There are some things that all farmers can do to ensure efficient use of fertilisers, including:

- keep pH levels at 6+ for grass and 6.5+ for cereals,
- make the maximum use of the nutrients that are available from applications of FYM and slurry
- target fertiliser usage on the better performing fields (young leys etc)
- sowing of legumes e.g. white and red clover, beans etc can also help reduce the nitrogen fertiliser requirements.

However these will only help in a small way and the costs of growing crops now present a significant financial risk. Failure of a crop or reduced yields will hurt.

We are starting to receive calls from farmers who want to examine their whole farming system to ensure they remain profitable in the face of the huge increases in fertiliser and energy costs. At the moment we can help with these requests under project activity so if you'd like to take advantage please call.

New Grants for Biomass Producers

Farmers, foresters and biomass producers can apply for up to £200,000 each under a new round of grants.

The Bio-energy Infrastructure Scheme will support the biomass industry in England, helping those that supply biomass fuel for use in heat and electricity generation.

Phil Woolas of Defra said “We have to rethink our energy mix. We know biomass has the potential to considerably reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and cut our carbon emissions. UK producers are setting the standard and have shown production can be sustainable and our investment will support their commitment to this emerging industry.

The fund will inject cash at the point of production. By investing in the biomass industry we are helping farmers, foresters and other producers to diversify and become part of the environmental industry sector which is currently worth more than £25bn and growing.”

All projects must be based in England and must supply the biomass to end-users in Great Britain. Grants are available for up to a maximum of £200,000 per producer group or business.

To receive an application form, contact the Bio-energy Infrastructure Scheme Helpline by telephone: 01355 593800, or email: help@beis.org.uk.

The deadline for applications is August 5th 2008 for businesses and September 5th 2008 for producer groups. If you need help with your application please do not hesitate to contact us on **free phone 0800 592872**

The English Woodland Grant Scheme

The English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) is now open for applications. There are new forms and guidance.

The Forestry Commission recommends sending for a new pack to ensure you have the latest copies of the scheme rules and forms, as there are some notable changes such as the need for a Single Business Identifier (SBI), and that land is registered with the Rural Land Registry.

All of the EWGS Operations Notes have also been updated and will be available in the EWGS document library (www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-6kxfq5) or from your local FC office from the 2nd June.

Southwest forest are able to assist with all woodland grant related matters, offering free independent advice on woodland management and creation for land in the designated southwest forest area. Check on their website

www.southwestforest.org.uk to establish if your land is within this area, and then telephone 01409 221896, and speak to Mick Bracken for specialist advice and support.

Newsletter Distribution

If you would like to receive your Agri-BIP newsletter by email or fax, send your details through to us at: -

E-mail: team@bipwestdevon.biz **Fax:** 01837 659314

Address:

West Devon Business Information Point, FREEPOST RRXU-ZBSL-GGZS, Okehampton, EX20 1YZ

DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been taken to ensure the information contained in these notes is correct, however, West Devon Business Information Point will not be liable for any loss arising from the use of these notes or any omissions or errors contained within. Agri-BIP is funded by Devon Renaissance / SWRDA, Tamar Valley AONB Sustainable Development Fund, West Devon Borough Council, East Devon District Council, Red Meat Industry Forum, local businesses and WDBIP to provide ELS support / Business development support to land based businesses