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Welcome Sue

Sue Wilkinson joined the Devon Region on 1st March as Development Manager.

Sue was previously the Regional Organiser for Surrey and West Sussex so she has sound knowledge of the FSB. The regional committee and Devon office staff are very happy to be working with her.

You can contact Sue on 01803 855085 or [email](#)

Help from the Tax Office

The Exeter based Business Education and Support Team of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs offers a selection of free workshops for those who are newly self-employed, new employers or new to VAT. These are held at Longbrook House in Exeter and last for about 2½ hours. [For more details](#)

They will also deliver presentations, free of charge, on various Tax and VAT matters which members might find useful, interesting or even enjoyable. These can be

tailored to your needs, both in respect of subject matter and timing. 30 minutes, an hour or even just ten or fifteen minutes. So if your branch is looking for a speaker at an event this could be an option.

Some of the presentations available are:-

Special schemes to simplify VAT (30 minutes)

VAT awareness summary (30 minutes)

VAT on Exports and International Trade (30 minutes)

New to business (30 minutes)

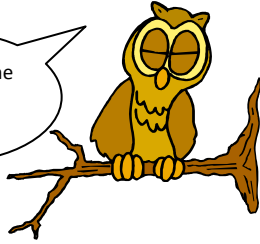
What's new for employers (60 minutes but can be shortened if necessary to 45 minutes)

Telephone Anne Murray 01392 280407 or [email](#) or let us know at the office.

Follow the FSB on Facebook

You can follow the activities of the FSB by joining our official fanpage on Facebook. [Become a fan](#) to view regularly updated events, photo galleries, lobbying information and interactive content.

News from the
Branches



NORTH DEVON SHOW

North Devon Branch will be at the Show on 3rd August this year.

Why not take the opportunity to have a stand within the FSB pitch?

A great opportunity to promote your business at a reasonable rate - £60 for a 1.5 metre space
Access to electricity extra

To reserve your place call the regional office on

01803 322499 or [email](#)

East Devon Branch Free Showcase Evening

At Nu-Heat UK Ltd, Heathpark House,
Devonshire Road, Heathpark
Industrial Estate, Honiton EX14 1SD

Thursday 19th May at 7 pm

Light refreshments will be served

An ideal opportunity to network and find out how other businesses operate

[Please book here](#)

Torrige Branch

Breakfast Networking Meetings

The Durrant House Hotel.

Northam, Bideford

7 am - £4 per person

The last Wednesday of every month

To book

Tel: 01237 477457

or [email](#)

Why not join

Mid Devon branch on the last Friday of the month for their

FINAL FRIDAY breakfast

FREE coffee and croissants

7.45 am until approximately 9am.

Venue varies so please [email](#) for details

Torbay Branch Free Showcase Evening

at Fruition Design, Unit 7 Beacon Quay, Torquay TQ1 2BG

Wednesday 13th April at 7 pm

A great opportunity to network with other businesses

numbers are limited so [please book your place](#)

Credit Reports - advice from a member

"I would urge all members to check their own credit report regularly.

I had not done so for a while and was most surprised to find a reference to "a possible CCJ".

This was against someone else trading by the same name as myself.

I phoned the Credit Reference Agency who refused to speak to me and then emailed them with my complaint and asked them to remove this reference.

They refused point blank, suggesting that I was changing address to avoid the CCJ catching up with me. I therefore contacted a Solicitor and threatened to go to the Financial Press and, after wasting a whole morning on the matter, got the reference removed from my report .

Creditsafe of Cardiff has now checked and are satisfied that the CCJ is nothing to do with me. Why could they not be forced to do this in the first place before publishing potentially damaging information on the internet?"

Book your stand for the region's leading food festival

Exeter Festival of South West Food & Drink
2011

29th April – 1st May 2011 coinciding with
the Royal Wedding

South West producers and catering outlets
can now book
their place at the region's leading food
festival in 2011.

With more than 15,000 visitors flocking to
Exeter for the
festival in 2010, the Exeter Festival of
South West Food
& Drink offers South West food businesses
a fantastic
opportunity to reach thousands of
potential customers.

[To book](#)



Wanted ! to help growing businesses succeed

Experienced business people as volunteer business mentors

Business Buddies is a new business mentoring service for North Devon and Torridge. The service is currently recruiting and training people as mentors who have experience in either developing their own successful business or who have worked in senior management or held board level positions within corporate organisations.

The role involves providing ongoing 1 : 1 support for entrepreneurs in the area who have successfully demonstrated their capacity and that of their businesses to develop and grow and make a meaningful contribution to the economy of North Devon and Torridge.

Volunteers joining our team will receive training for the role, ongoing opportunities to attend workshops on topical business issues and opportunities to network with other team members.

Mentors who have worked with mentoring services around the South West have found considerable satisfaction from their input to the local business communities and often new colleagues in the team of mentors.

If you would like to learn more about this unusual opportunity to pass on the benefits of your experience in business to others and help develop the strength of the local economy go to www.businessbuddiesnd.co.uk or Telephone 01237 809167

Graduate Advantage Internships

.....An extra pair of hands

.....A new perspective and a keen mind to make your ideas work.

.....An opportunity to test drive a potential new employee



What is a South Devon College Graduate Advantage internship?

If there's an aspect of your business which you've wanted the chance to develop but never had the time or the skills available, a Graduate Advantage internship may be your solution.

We can match your requirements with a keen and motivated recent graduate who can work in your organisation, supported by the College, for as long as you want – anything from 8 weeks upwards.

How will a graduate intern benefit my business?

The intern can work on something you've wanted to do but never had the time. This could be:

- Researching a new market or reviewing a marketing strategy
- Developing a new website or improving an old one
- Researching ways in which your company can become more energy efficient and reduce waste
- Researching the implications of new or impending legislation
- A specific technical project
- Looking at cutting edge process development
- Establishing or streamlining a training programme

Alternatively, you may be thinking of taking on a new employee. An internship can give you the chance to '**Try before you buy**' – in effect, a long job interview. As South Devon College employs the intern, there's no need to add to your payroll at the start - you just pay the graduate's salary, employer's National Insurance and pension, currently £260 for the minimum, to the college. The more you pay, the greater the choice of graduate.

Graduates interns can have a **major impact** on a business. They have drive, motivation, fresh ideas and an up to date knowledge in their subject. Above all, they want the chance to make a difference. National internship schemes show that, on average, an intern adds £25,000 to the profitability of a business – this could be **your** business

With a South Devon internship, you also have **access to highly qualified experts** to support the intern and your business, from the initial scoping of the work plan to the final review.

How do I get a Graduate Advantage intern?

If you think you might be interested in having an intern, contact the South Devon College Innovation team **Derek Gribble/Jill Sheen on 01803 540600** to discuss your requirements. The College will handle all the recruitment processes, including short listing; you will have the final choice of graduate intern.

The intern will be based at your premises so you will need to supply a computer, a desk and a phone, and treat them as one of your employees.

Are you missing out on the National Insurance Holiday?

It is thought that thousands of start up businesses are missing out on the National Insurance holiday. The scheme, granting National Insurance relief to new businesses, has seen a disappointing uptake since it was launched last September.

It applies to new firms starting up **outside** London, the South East and East of England, and grants NI relief of up to £5,000 for each employee a new business takes on in its first year, up to a maximum of ten.

Despite the Treasury's prediction that up to 400,000 start ups would be able to take advantage of the holiday, just 1,500 have done so to date. Research by The Telegraph has suggested that many businesses are unaware of the scheme.

Read about the scheme in the Treasury's original [news release](#)

South Devon College

Offering an inspiring venue for your events;

- State of the art meeting rooms
- A magnificent theatre to seat 160
- Exhibition space
- Specialised facilities including IT rooms, automotive diagnostic lab, sports hall and music and drama rooms, sensory rooms
- Horizons fine dining restaurant
- Inspirations hair and beauty facilities
-

And their new University Centre;

- State of the art meeting rooms and IT rooms all with natural daylight, touch screen training options and audio support
- Oscars our rooftop café experience which is also adaptable for drinks receptions and exhibition, networking space “the room with a view”
- Plasma screens to promote your company

Luxurious receptions

Car parking available

Disabled access

There is also the Management Centre at Heathfield with meeting and IT facilities

For further information please contact Janice Morris on 01803 540395 or [email](#)

City College Plymouth is looking for local businesses to be clients for this year's Design and Layout project for college students. You would need to give just three hours of your time in May and in return would receive a new logo or identity for an initiative or project that you may have in mind.

You would be working with at least two student designers who will be in direct competition for your business. Each will design a logo for your business and then incorporate it into two products of your choice. These can be almost anything that requires designing but some examples are: letterhead, compliment slip, business card, product leaflet or brochures, T shirts

This offer of free assistance is designed to help local businesses whilst also offering students industry experience.

If this would be of interest or you require further details, please contact the **Employer Gateway on 01752 305026.**



Devon Environmental Business Initiative visits planned for the coming months

9 th June	Cricklepit Mill, Exeter – Visit and launch of the 2011 DEBI Awards
30 th June	Churston Farm Shop, Nr Brixham – Category Winners of the 2009/10 Awards
21 st July	Cycle Ride & Visit to Yarde Orchard – Category Winners of the 2010 DEBI Awards
18 th August	Burts Chips, Roborough – Corporate Supporters of DEBI
22 nd Sept	Crealy Great Adventure Park, Exeter – Corporate Supporters of DEBI
13 th October	Exe Estuary Boat Trip, Topsham – Sponsored by BCR Associates & Pebblebed Wines

To book your place either [email](#) or telephone 0845 257 3324

Or to become more involved click [here](#)



Dairy farm hygiene inspections consultation

The Food Standards Agency has begun a consultation on proposals to reduce the frequency of hygiene inspections on dairy farms in England and Wales. The proposals could result in significant annual savings.

New target to tackle UKs most common food bug

The Food Standards Agency, the UK poultry industry, and major retailers have agreed a new target that will measure efforts to reduce the levels of the food bug campylobacter in chickens.

Agency announces review of official controls delivery

The Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency Tim Smith has announced a review of how food safety regulations are enforced in the UK. Further information is contained in the agenda and papers for the FSA open Board meeting on 25 January.

Report links undercooked liver to campylobacter food poisoning

The Health Protection Agency has today published a report of outbreaks of campylobacter food poisoning linked to chicken liver products. The Food Standards Agency is therefore reminding caterers to make sure chicken liver is cooked thoroughly.

Survey of mycotoxins in cereal-based foods

The Agency has published the results of a survey investigating the levels of certain naturally-occurring chemicals called mycotoxins in a range of cereals and cereal based foods.

National Food Hygiene Scheme launched

The FSA has launched a national food hygiene rating scheme that will help you choose where to eat out or shop for food by giving you information about the hygiene standards in restaurants, pubs, cafes, takeaways, hotels, supermarkets, and other places you eat out and buy food.

How to spot food allergies in children

The Food Standards Agency has welcomed new guidelines on the diagnosis and assessment of food allergy in children and young people. The guidelines have been published by the NICE.

Update on meat hygiene official controls cost data

The FSA has published additional information on the costs of delivering meat hygiene official controls in meat plants in Great Britain and shows how charges are calculated.

Follow food safety throughout the food chain

Worried about where your food comes from and whether it's safe to eat? Well, if you take a big 'Bite' of the Agency's quarterly magazine we hope you'll find some reassurance about how much is being done to safeguard your food from the time it enters the UK until it is on your dinner plates.

Guidance to prevent E.coli contamination

The FSA has recently issued guidance to clarify the steps that food businesses need to take to control the risk of contamination from the food bug E.coli O157.

For information on any of these issues contact Nick Mann, Deputy Regional Coordinator – South West and West Midlands [email](#)

Workways

Mental Health Awareness

Raising awareness of mental health conditions in the workplace is one of the key issues to maintaining a healthy workforce and a successful business - and is shown to be particularly beneficial in helping line managers to support staff. Workways offers a range of mental health awareness workshops and courses for managers, frontline staff and others. For more information [visit](#)

Workways is also offering a session on 'Bullying and Harrassment in the Workplace' at the next meeting of the Devon Local Employer Network.

The meeting will take place on **Tuesday 10 May from 10-11.30am**. Although the venue is yet to be confirmed it will be in, or close to, Exeter - if you are able to offer a venue or would like to attend please contact **Richard Frost or Lynn Aggett on 01392 677050**.

Cloud computing

The FSB is keen to speak to members who are using cloud computing – a technology which helps firms to streamline and save money on IT/software costs. [Email](#) us with your experiences.

New British standard to protect inventors

A new British Standard, setting out for the first time good practice and principals of ethical behaviour for organisations providing services to inventors, has just been published by the British Standards Institute

[Find out more.](#)

News from Devon & Cornwall Police Authority

Find out more about the work of the police in your area [here](#)

Better Broadband for Devon [Find out more](#)

The Skills Summit for food & drink businesses will be held at Hestercombe Gardens (near Taunton) on 18th May .

Speakers from industry and training organisations will give insights into the benefits to business of training. There will also be an update on the huge changes to our national skills system which will directly affect the amount of subsidised training businesses can access and what employees will be entitled to.

A host of training providers there to offer advice and guidance on what training is available and how to access it.

[To find out more and register](#)

Awards for Member

FSB Torbay Committee Member, Richard Haddock, is celebrating being the first ever business to receive two consecutive DEBI (Devon Environmental Business Initiative) awards for different businesses.

Having scooped the Food, Farming and Fishing category awards in 2009 for the Churston Farm Shop, Richard and his wife Caroline followed up the success by capturing the same award for their embryonic soil recycling and recovery business. The new operation is leading the way nationally – it is the first in the country to be granted a permit to recycle soil back into agricultural land.



Richard and Caroline Haddock

The soil recycling business was established in 2009, initially to help reduce the amount of builders' rubble and top soil going to landfill sites. The operation sorts the stones from the rubble and cleans the soil, which is then mixed with cooked crab and lobster shells to act as drainage before being spread to rejuvenate the agricultural land. The process is environmentally friendly in three main areas - saving over 100,000 tonnes of builders' rubble going into landfill sites, helping the local fishing community to significantly reduce their shellfish wastage and finally producing a better quality of agricultural soil to grow fruit and vegetables.

A further unexpected benefit is a massive reduction of the amount of chemical pesticides sprays needed on the crops due to the chitin – a natural product from the crab shells that stops potato stab and prevents leaf moulds affecting the crops. Said Caroline: "We couldn't understand why we did not have to use as much spray on the recycled agricultural soil last year and contacted Exeter University to see if they could shed some light on the situation. Interestingly, they said that the slow release chitin acts as a natural pest control by providing food for the bacteria that eat chitin, increasing the population of the bacteria so they can successfully attack nematode eggs."

Richard and Caroline have always had ambitious plans with their business, constantly evolving new ideas into successful operations. "We are really proud of having a productive farm in this beautiful greenbelt area" said Richard. "We operate arable and crop rotations, offer the Churston Farm Shop packed with local fresh produce, and now are celebrating the amazing success of Caroline's Kitchen – our new café, art gallery and children's play area, which we opened just before Christmas.

We have always been keen to promote and help both local businesses and the community. We have a farm trailer to enable us to take schoolchildren on a farm ride and we are offering raised beds for local schools to cultivate and develop. Another exciting development will be creating a 'Pick Your Own Strawberries' operation, restoring acres of land to their former use.

We now employ 40 full and part time staff. With the garden centre and other plans we are developing, we will grow to over 50 employees in the next year - a real local success story in these challenging economic times. Being recognised by an organisation like DEBI is a fantastic accolade and I would encourage local businesses to get involved in the DEBI awards this year to celebrate their business success and share best practice.

Featured Member Benefit

FSB CreditPal in association with Graydon

FSB CreditPal enables small businesses to supply the up-to-date financial information necessary to ensure they access essential credit and finance on the best terms.

More and more suppliers, trade insurers and financial institutions require up-to-date financial information from small businesses before they'll provide key credit lines or financial products.

FSB CreditPal is available to members as a right of membership that allows small businesses to supply the summarised management accounts necessary to receive an up-to-date credit recommendation from leading credit referencing agency Graydon.

Why FSB CreditPal is necessary

At present, suppliers, trade insurers and financial institutions use credit reports that can be based on out of date financial information to assess small businesses. The credit recommendations in these reports may have been calculated from statutory annual accounts, which can be as much as 22 months out of date. That means many small businesses are being unfairly assessed on the basis of out-of-date information.

This problem will only get worse as the economy recovers more and more businesses are saddled with statutory accounts filings and credit recommendations that reflect their performance at the height of the recession. This could threaten both their recovery and their long-term survival.

In order to assess much needed credit and finance on the best terms, businesses need to start supplying up-to-date management accounts.

How FSB CreditPal can help members

FSB CreditPal provides a simple and secure way for FSB members to get a credit recommendation for their business that is based on its latest trading position. FSB CreditPal enables businesses to submit summarised management accounts in order to produce an up-to-date recommendation for their business.

- A free up-to-date credit recommendation for your business that reflects its latest trading position.
- A simple and secure way of supplying up-to-date management accounts to produce that recommendation.
- An easy way for your suppliers, trade insurers and financial institutions to get an updated assessment of your business from a respected source - Graydon.
- A 15% discount on the CreditPal Plus business tool upgrade, which owners, managers and directors can use to investigate their accounts and manage their business better.

Members log in Via our website www.fsb.org.uk/benefits/creditpal for further information on how to take up your free FSB CreditPal service or find out more about the CreditPal Plus offer to FSB members.



Federation of Small Businesses
The UK's Leading Business Organisation

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