

Aston Martin Rapide **PRODUCTION MOVES TO WARWICKSHIRE! ■**



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Aston Martin Rapide

PRODUCTION MOVES TO WARWICKSHIRE

Aston Martin confirms that production of the four-door sports car, the Rapide, will move to the company's Gaydon headquarters in Warwickshire, UK in the second half of 2012.

In 2008, due to constraints at Gaydon and after conclusion of a six-month feasibility study, Aston Martin appointed Magna Steyr as a partner to produce the car at its facilities in Austria. A dedicated facility – AMRP – at Magna Steyr's facilities was then established with pre-production of the Rapide starting in Q4 2009 before the car reached full production in 2010. Since then Aston Martin and Magna Steyr have enjoyed a very positive working relationship with production of the Rapide reaching benchmark quality standards and the car proving a strong success with customers and critics alike.

Aston Martin Chief Executive, Dr Ulrich Bez said: "In 2008 we had facility restrictions at Gaydon which indicated that production of Rapide at Gaydon would likely compromise production of our other cars. We were not prepared to do this.

"Now, three years on things are very different – Gaydon is more established, more flexible and more efficient. While our overall volume has not changed significantly, we now produce a far richer model mix – eight model lines (plus five variants) compared to three model lines (plus two variants) in 2008 – so Rapide production is now possible.

"I would like to place on record our gratitude to Magna Steyr and their team of dedicated employees who have become part of the Aston Martin family in the last few years and met all our requirements and expectations."

Work on readying Aston Martin's Gaydon headquarters for Rapide will begin immediately with a view to production commencing in the second half of 2012.

Ricardo wins further Bugatti DCT production contract

Bugatti has placed a further contract for the production of the advanced, award-winning Dual Clutch Transmission (DCT) system of its iconic Veyron supercar. The new order represents a further two years of production for the DCT unit – which was designed in collaboration with Ricardo – and will be manufactured at the Ricardo facility at Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

The seven-speed DCT of the Veyron is the result of a highly successful and long-standing design, development and manufacturing collaboration between Ricardo and Bugatti, a joint endeavour that encompasses both the transmission hardware and its electronic control unit and software. This state-of-the-art transmission is an important contributor to the high quality driving experience offered by all versions of the Bugatti Veyron. In addition to providing support on the design and development of the DCT, Ricardo has been responsible for the manufacture and supply of these class-leading transmissions for all versions of the Veyron since the launch of this exceptional supercar product.

“Ricardo is really pleased to see a further extension of the partnership with Bugatti on the dual clutch transmission of the Veyron, a supercar that represents the ultimate in high quality automotive design, engineering and manufacture,” said Ricardo director of high performance transmission products Mark Barge. “We look forward to two further very successful years in the story of this truly great automobile with its advanced Ricardo transmission.”



NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR MAS

The Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) has a new website:
www.mymas.org

MAS is designed to help manufacturers streamline processes, reduce waste, become more energy efficient and generally improve and grow the business. MAS has been a huge success since its launch in 2002. Working with thousands of companies it now plays a vital role in helping UK manufacturers to share knowledge, improve productivity and achieve success in an increasing competitive global economy.

Find out more about their services and how they can help you by visiting the website at www.mymas.org

JAGUAR LAND ROVER LAUNCHES LARGEST EVER APPRENTICE RECRUITMENT

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the UK's leading automotive employer, launches its search for the largest ever intake of Apprentices to join its 2012 training programme. The Apprentice programme, which this year is searching for both Advanced and Higher Apprentices, launched Monday February 6th – coinciding with National Apprenticeship week.

Following the appointment of 114 Advanced Apprentices in 2011, JLR is this year looking for a record 133 Apprentices to join its growing business. This will consist of 109 Advanced Apprenticeships and, for the first time, 24 Higher Apprentices who will work towards the acquisition of a series of NVQs and a degree in a comprehensive training programme open to A-level qualified candidates.

Commenting on the 2012 Apprentice programme, Des Thurlby, Human Resources Director, JLR, said: "Our Apprentice intake has more than doubled in the last 4 years and I am delighted that this year we are committing to take on a record number of apprentices. Apprenticeships provide a valuable and credible career path for the brightest and best and JLR is committed to providing the highest quality practical and academic training to develop the future generation of engineering talent needed to drive our business forward, indeed many of our senior leaders began their careers as apprentices."

Advanced and Higher Apprentices will be recruited at all of JLR's Midlands and Merseyside based engineering and manufacturing sites including the new Advanced Engine facility where Advanced Apprentices will be supporting the development of a new generation of low-emission engines. These are the first positions to be advertised in support of JLR's activity at the i54 based plant - further recruitment opportunities will be announced in due course.

The JLR careers website opened for applications on 6th February 2012 and will close on 9th April 2012. Anyone interested in applying should visit: www.jaguarlandrovercareers.com

Envisage Group buys CPP Manufacturing

The Envisage Group has recently bought interests and assets of CPP Manufacturing, thereby retaining more than 100 jobs for the area.

Envisage is a group of six companies in the global transport engineering sector which provides design, manufacturing and recruitment and offers a one-stop world class service to its client base. The group currently has two plants in Coventry and Warwickshire, and employs around 280 staff.



Brian Campbell (L), executive chairman of the Envisage Group and Brendan O'Toole of Envisage CPP



NEC UNVEILING FOR Drayson Electric Powered Race Car BUILT WITH HELP FROM WMG

Drayson Racing Technologies and Lola unveiled an electric prototype racing car the “Lola-Drayson B12/69EV” at the MIA Low Carbon Racing Conference at the NEC, Birmingham in January 2012. As well as being unveiled in the Midlands, the car drew on specialist materials research by WMG researchers at the University of Warwick.

The major partnership between Lola and Drayson to build an electric powered LMP (Le Mans Prototype) car was announced in July 2011. With over 850 horsepower the Lola Drayson all-electric sports car aims to be the fastest electric powered race car to lap a circuit.

The design team have been working with WMG at the University of Warwick to understand how to source and use once-used (but beyond its normal shelf life) carbon fibre that is still very much useable.

WMG Associate Professor Dr Kerry Kirwan said “I’m delighted that once again, work from WMG’s sustainable materials group is finding itself

fit for purpose in a highly demanding engineering application. This draws on our own research in environmentally friendly race car technologies and will further enhance this car’s already significant green credentials. Not only will its power source be green but, from an environmental aspect, its reuse of carbon fibre will save a massive amount of landfill for un-used and once-used carbon fibre.”

WMG researcher Dr James Meredith said “I was delighted to be invited to apply my research on recycled carbon and natural fibre composites to a high performance environmentally friendly race car, the Lola-Drayson B12/69 EV. Our knowledge of these materials has progressed significantly over the last few years, and through appearing on this car, we hope to see sustainable materials applied throughout motorsport as it races towards a green future.”

Lola/Drayson will be testing the prototype in the coming months in readiness for Le Mans.



RUGBY MEDICAL COMPANY CELEBRATES CONTRACT WIN

RUGBY medical technologies company Mediwatch has won an NHS supply contract worth £250,000 a year.

The agreement to supply urodynamic disposables will start on April 1 and run until March 2014.

The group has also issued a trading update in advance of the announcement of its final results which reports it has maintained its turnover and increased profits and cash flows from operations during the year to 31 October 2011.

However, profit before tax is expected to be £322,000, materially lower than market expectations.

The group says unfavourable global economic conditions, together with increased competition in the urodynamic market and delays in commercialising PSAwatch, hampered its ability to increase turnover.

Its PSAwatch product is now at an early stage of commercialisation with clinical trials in France to gain reimbursement approval, direct marketing starting in Germany, Hong Kong, Mexico and China, growing sales in the UK private sector and the potential for further co-operation and trials with two international pharmaceutical companies.

The firm says it has been encouraged by significant sales growth in developing markets including the Far East and Russia during the period, which provides a platform for future growth.

NEW FACES for the NEW YEAR at local accountants firm

Nuneaton-based Chartered Accountants Stewart, Fletcher & Barrett (SFB) have started 2012 with a team of new faces, taking the total number of employees at the firm to over 50.

Visitors to SFB will now be greeted by Admin Assistant Emma Lloyd. Emma is based on reception at the company's Manor Court Road offices. Rhian Palanganda and Luke Jenkins have joined the firm as Trainee Accountants adding to the team of bright young talent at SFB.

Senior Partner, Paul Carvell, said "SFB prides itself on helping young people to develop their skills. Although Luke & Rhian have only been with us a short time, they are already showing great potential for a career in accountancy".

Cheryl Mann and Jo Tudge have been employed within specialist areas of the company. Jo has joined SFB as the new Outsourcing Manager and will lead the book-keeping function, covering management accounts, credit control and payroll. Jo will provide a vital service for businesses who don't have the capacity to deal with these areas in-house. Cheryl has been appointed as Marketing Manager and is responsible for SFB's marketing strategy and will provide tailored marketing solutions for clients.



Left to right - Rhian Palanganda, Cheryl Mann, Luke Jenkins, Emma Lloyd & Jo Tudge

For further information, please contact Stewart, Fletcher & Barrett on 02476 384171



BROMWICH
h
ARDY

CHARTERED SURVEYORS
COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ADVISORS

APPOINTED
joint agents on Insight Park, Southam

Bromwich Hardy have recently been appointed to act as joint agents at Insight Park, Southam, a new business park at Welsh Road, which will provide high quality industrial/commercial units, as well as live/work properties.

Insight Park is being developed by Tompkins Construction, who own the site and have now obtained planning permission for the new facility. Strong interest has already been shown in the development and the agents are pleased to report that 40% of the commercial accommodation is under offer.

Andy Tompkins, Managing Director of Tompkins Construction comments "Having bought the site several years ago we have been working with the local Planning Authority to obtain planning permission for Insight Park

and are pleased that we can now offer both commercial accommodation and live/work properties. We have always been convinced that the location will appeal to local and regional businesses and are delighted with the early interest that has been shown".

Tom Bromwich of Bromwich Hardy comments "We have been working with Tompkins Construction for a number of years in providing advice on Insight Park and are delighted that this scheme is now being brought forward and having secured early interest construction work will commence in early 2012 to deliver phase one of the commercial units. Insight Park provides an ideal opportunity for local and regional businesses to base themselves in a quality environment with easy access to the national motorway network".

For further information on freehold or leasehold opportunities at Insight Park for both commercial/industrial units and live/work properties please contact either Tom Bromwich or Iain Critchlow on 02476 308900

MARATHON ENTRY

For local property agent



Directors of locally based property companies, Bromwich Hardy, EHB Residential and Heritage Property have joined forces to raise funds for The Get A-Head Charitable Trust.

Get-A-Head is an independent charity dealing with head and neck disease, particularly cancer, based at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Brothers Tom & Edward Bromwich, and Richard Hill combined forces at the charity's Annual Ball last November to raise £3000 with a winning bid on the charity's auction for an entry in this year's London Marathon for Iain Critchlow, a surveyor at Bromwich Hardy, to run in.

Running enthusiast, Iain said, "I wasn't going to miss out on the chance to run The London Marathon. I've always wanted to run it, so I am ecstatic to have the opportunity thanks to the guys. Knowing that I will be running for such an amazing charity will give me all the inspiration I need to get over the finishing line. We hope, with everyone's support to raise a lot of money."

Further information about the Get A-Head charity and Iain's marathon opportunity visit
<http://www.bromwichhardy.co.uk/gahmarathon.asp>

DANISH FIRM **CONFIGIT** SETS UP IN WARWICK

Fifteen jobs have been created after a company opened a UK office in Warwick in rapid quick time thanks to help from the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Configit was set-up in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2000 to develop software which assists in selling and configuring manufacturing products and is particularly popular in the motoring industry when drivers are choosing which extras they want their new vehicle to feature.

Henrik Reif Andersen, chief executive and co-founder of Configit, contacted the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP for advice on the best location in Warwickshire to launch their UK base.

In only three months, viewings were arranged, a lease agreed at Tournament Court in Warwick and specialist IT developers interviewed and recruited for the 15 new developer positions as the LEP and Warwickshire Investment Partnership joined forces to meet the company's deadline.

Henrik said the process had been extremely quick and smooth and the office and location were ideal for their needs.

"We found out about the LEP on the web and after speaking to them, we were provided assistance in finding convenient premises and in screening potential employees before the interview stage," he said.

"Being new to the area, we didn't really know where to begin in our search for offices but we knew we wanted to be close to Jaguar Land Rover's sites in Gaydon and Whitley since they are one of our new customers and Warwick is in the middle so it is ideal.

"We have been travelling from Copenhagen for a year and we like the town of Warwick enormously and it is easy for commuting.

"Business is going well and it is a growing industry. When you are buying a new car, there are so many different options for you to choose and this software allows customers to choose the right options."

Cllr Alan Cockburn, Warwickshire County Council's Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Communities and CW LEP board member, said: "The county council is proud to support a new international business in locating to Warwick.

"Warwickshire is the ideal geographical location for businesses because of its excellent transport links and traditional close ties with the manufacturing industry.

"The Warwickshire Investment Partnership team works closely with the CW LEP to secure investment for the area, and this is a great example of what can be achieved in such a short space of time."



100
— in —
100

success CW LEP

The Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is celebrating achieving its 100 in 100 challenge during National Apprenticeship Week 2012.

The LEP campaign – run in partnership with the National Apprenticeship Service – was launched on November 1st to encourage 100 companies and organisations in the region to take on 100 apprentices in 100 days in a bid to reduce unemployment and improve skills.

Ninety eight employers had been signed up on Friday (February 3rd) at the end of the latest LEP local event at the Ricoh Arena.

The magical number was reached on Monday (February 6) when CWT and North Warwickshire and Hinckley College added a further 12 employers to beat the 100 total and take the tally to 110 with two days to spare.

Denys Shortt, chairman of the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, said the wide range of companies involved highlighted the benefits of apprentices from SMEs to multi-national companies.

He said: “It has been a fantastic team effort from all the partners involved from LEP; the

National Apprenticeship Service, the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses as well as the crucial input of businesses in Coventry and Warwickshire.

“We are one of the smallest LEPs in the country but we set ourselves a tough target of encouraging 100 companies to take on 100 apprentices in 100 days and to reach the target in such style is heart-warming.

“The LEP will continue to identify and help companies who will benefit from apprentices while at the same time helping people gain new skills which will be of benefit to the economy in the future.

“Improving the skills shortage was one of the main initiatives that the LEP was set up to achieve and our direct action means we have taken one small step towards achieving that.

“This has also been a great example of the private and public sector working together to remove barriers to growth.

Support for employers wishing to recruit new apprenticeships or train existing staff continues to be available from the National Apprenticeship Service on www.apprenticeships.gov.uk or by calling 08000 150 160

CW LEP LOCAL EVENT

More than 100 businesses were able to quiz MPs and business leaders at an event which marked 12 months of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The latest LEP Local event at the Ricoh Arena was attended by Coventry’s three MPs – Bob Ainsworth, Geoffrey Robinson and Jim Cunningham - and representatives of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and the National LEP Network.

LEP board member and Ricoh Arena Chief Executive Daniel Gidney, who heads up the LEP groups on skills and tourism, said the session was designed to bring businesses up to speed on the progress of the initiative and to allow them to put their views forward to the MPs.

He said: “A tremendous amount of work has gone on in the last 12 months, but businesses need to know what that effort is achieving. They want to know about results. “We believe after the first year, those results are beginning to show in key areas such as planning, inward investment and employment”.

The LEPs are a major plank of government economic policy. They are business-led private and public partnerships designed to remove the barriers to growth and to boost the economy.

The LEP is chaired by Denys Shortt, founder and CEO of DCS Europe, while Martin Yardley of Coventry City Council is the MD. It has held LEP Local events in Rugby, Stratford, Warwick and North Warwickshire.

For more information about the CW LEP visit www.cwlep.com

GROWING PLACES

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership is to receive an allocation of £8.67m from the Government for the Growing Places scheme to stimulate economic growth.

The aim of the scheme is to generate economic activity in the short term by addressing immediate infrastructure priorities and promote the delivery of jobs and housing.

The grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government will allow the LEP to distribute money to businesses and establish a sustainable funding pot which will allow funds to be reinvested to unlock further development or and attract private investment.

Denys Shortt, Chair of the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership said: "We very much welcome the formal announcement of our funding allocation for the Growing Places Fund.

"It totals £8.67m – which is slightly more than we expected and means we can invest even more in the local economy.

"The Coventry and Warwickshire Growing Places Fund give us the opportunity to invest in and kick-start developments that will generate jobs and growth.

Cllr Alan Cockburn, Warwickshire County Council's Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Communities and CW LEP board member, said: "This is an important Government announcement which will help stimulate economic growth in the sub-region.

"We have already started work on developing the processes which will deliver the Coventry and Warwickshire Growing Places Fund. The funding pot will be managed by the LEP and it will aim to recycle funding by making repayable investments in projects, and reinvesting when money is returned to the fund."

The allocations have been calculated based on LEP areas' populations and the population's 'employed earnings'.



Are you looking for skilled employees?

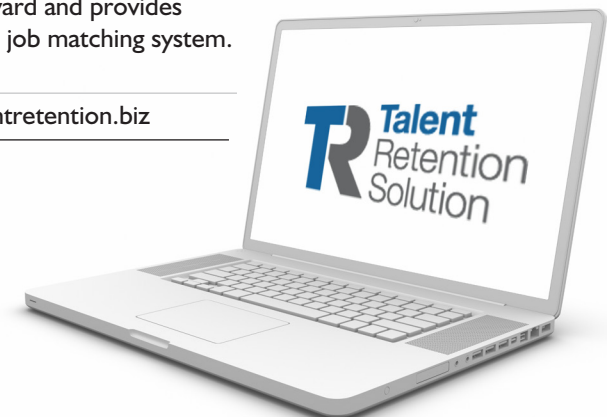
Register NOW!

Talent Retention Solution (TRS) puts skilled individuals looking for work and companies searching for new employees in direct contact with each other. The TRS is a UK-wide scheme which aims to retain skills in the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Sectors, including Aerospace, Automotive, Civil Engineering, Defence, Energy, Marine, Manufacturing, Nuclear, Power Generation and Renewable industries.

TRS is an industry-led initiative. It provides specific, easy to use recruitment services to companies who have active vacancies or who are perhaps just wishing to keep an eye on the available talent by using the search and alert service.

All sector companies are being encouraged to register with this new programme and it is particularly important for companies who are recruiting and individuals at risk of redundancy. Registration is easy and straightforward and provides access to the 'CWeb' job matching system.

visit <http://www.talentretention.biz>



BUILDING NURSED BACK TO HEALTH

A building which will house an organisation dedicated to helping the NHS improve its efficiency has been nursed back to full health in a £980,000 facelift. The NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement (NHS Institute) has taken over a 20,000 sq ft building at the University of Warwick Science Park. As part of the deal, the Science Park has employed fit-out specialists Overbury to completely refit and refurbish the two-storey building, which was previously occupied by Sun Microsystems. The contract is now underway and will be ready for occupation early in the New Year.

David Grindrod, of the University of Warwick Science Park, said: "This is the second major building on the park we have had reoccupied in the last few months and I think in this market it says a great deal about what we have to offer. The NHS Institute was a tenant of the university on the campus but when its lease was up, the university needed to use the building for its own purposes. The NHS Institute could easily have chosen to go elsewhere but have decided to stay and will have more people here than before. We put the work out to tender and Overbury won the contract. It is always pleasing when locally-based firms can win work we offer out to tender and Overbury has a very good reputation. Work is moving apace and it will be great in the New Year to see it fully occupied and buzzing with activity."

Overbury is not the only local firm being used on the project. Savills is acting as project managers and Wright Hassall has undertaken the legal work on behalf of the science park.

Danny Parmar of Overbury said it was the first time the company had worked on the science park. He said: "This really is a total refit. We have taken the building right back to basebuild and then totally refitted it including a new air conditioning system, rewiring of all electrics and partitioning to various spaces to create meeting rooms and offices for the NHS Institute. We have had about 38 Overbury staff and site personnel daily through the project which will take about 12 weeks in total. We have worked at the university before but not on the Science Park and we have built a very good relationship with David and his team. It is great in this market to be working on a building where there are tenants ready to come and fully occupy. It will be a fantastic facility when the work is finished."



Front: left, Danny Parmar, Overbury; David Grindrod, University of Warwick Science Park. Rear: left, Paul Higman, Savills; Barry Sankey, Wright Hassall



SUCCESS FOR ALUMET AT EEF FUTURE MANUFACTURING AWARDS

At the EEF National Awards at Plaisterer's Hall, London on 26th January Almet collected the runners up trophy for Climate Change Opportunity. The Southam business represented the whole of the Midlands after winning the regional award in November.

The EEF awards recognise excellence in enterprise, innovation, environmental performance and skills development among UK manufacturers - All principles that form Almet's business plan.

Richard Halstead, EEF Midlands Regional Director, said: "Manufacturing is crucial to our region's economic recovery. Companies like Almet are leading the way by seizing strategic market opportunities to help build a low carbon economy. Congratulations to them on this well deserved success."

The judging panel, led by Cranfield University, praised Almet's achievements, stating: "This business is an exemplar for the manufacturing industry as it embraces the climate change opportunity. This company provided solid information pertaining to a carbon reducing product and, by using emerging technology, is remaining at the forefront of its industry."

The award recognised Almet's efforts in the renewable technologies market through their successful EOS Energy brand of solar photovoltaics.

For more information visit www.alumet.co.uk



FIRSTPRO AWARDS 2012

The winner in the FirstPro - Coventry and Warwickshire Professional of the Year 2012 competition will be announced at a gala dinner on Thursday 26 April this year. Our special guest this year is the creator of Top Gear Live, founder of Brand Events and local lad Chris Hughes. The evening is set to be one of the biggest events in the Coventry and Warwickshire business calendar.

There are five award categories and four candidates have been short-listed in each section. Daniel Gidney, CEO, The Ricoh Arena and Ian Harrabin, Complex Development Projects will join Coventry and Warwickshire First Chair, Phil Ewing, Harrison Beale & Owen for the difficult task of interviewing all those on the short-list. The five category winners will be revealed on the night and the highlight of the evening will be the announcement of the overall winner of the title FirstPro Professional of the Year 2012.

The black-tie ceremony promises to be a very exciting evening which will provide an excellent opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the local professional sector. The event is not just important for the finalists but for all professionals in the area, raising the profile of this vitally important sector of the economy.

Book your table of 10 at the premiere event for £500 + VAT. Individual tickets £55 + VAT bookings and payment required by 12 April 2012. Visit www.coventryfirst.co.uk

LOVELY RETA, MIDLANDS MADE

At the Midlands Business Awards recently, RETA collected the highly commended trophy for Business Club of the Year.

Formed in 2010, RETA (Renewable Energy Technology Alliance) is an alliance of local businesses whose vision is to develop the low carbon economy and help customers to become more sustainable.

The Midlands Business Awards recognised RETA's pro-active approach to sustainability. The business club was commended for their outstanding efforts in youth support through their educational programme and supporting local businesses in the renewable energy sector to create over 180 new jobs.

Darren Gardner, RETA's chairman commented: "We are absolutely delighted to receive this prestigious business accolade. It's a great reward for our team who have worked tremendously hard throughout the past year to support our customers in becoming more sustainable whilst connecting them to local suppliers."

Guests of RETA at the awards included Martin Yardley (Managing Director of Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership) and the Chief Executive of Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce Louise Bennett. Bennett praised RETA's achievements, stating: "Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce have worked closely with RETA and other clubs such as FORCE in order to support business growth. It is testimony to Coventry & Warwickshire to have so many finalists and award winners in this years Midlands Business Awards and 2012 should be a positive year for local low carbon economy"



The RETA team at the Midlands Business Awards with Dean Walton Director of The Alumet Group.

RETA's success at the Midlands Business Awards follows Darren Gardner's (Chair of RETA) presentation to over 150 members of parliament in the Houses of Parliament where he called on the government to provide clarity and action over issues such as the Feed in Tariff and Green Deal.

For more information visit www.reta.uk.com

SIX DEGREES secures £25m funding

Six Degrees Group, which has its data centre based in Studley, has signed a long-term £25m credit agreement with Clydesdale Bank. The deal will provide additional funding to support “organic and acquisitive growth”, said the company.

Six Degrees specialises in managed data services, and opened up its Studley location – one of four in the UK – in October last year. The office was opened by entrepreneur Alastair Mills, who bought Warwickshire company UKSolutions.

Mills purchased several other companies in London and Crawley and grew Six Degrees from their roots.

Ronnie Smith, chief finance officer of Six Degrees Group, said: “I am pleased that Clydesdale Bank has demonstrated its ongoing support to Six Degrees Group. This is testament to how successful the group has been in executing its strategic plan and we’re now at a run-rate of £30m revenue and £9m trading EBITDA. “This represents comfortable double digit organic growth and we’ve delivered well over £1m

in cross-sales in less than six months, proving that our model is working superbly well. In a challenging economic environment we’re seeing increasing demand for our range of hosting and cloud services.” The Clydesdale Bank team was led by Mark Hull, director, corporate and structured finance.

“Alastair and his team have a proven track record of success and have continually demonstrated an ability to exceed performance targets,” he said. “We look forward to working closely with them as they roll out the ambitious plans they have for the coming year.”

The company currently employs about 100 people, with an initial 30 employees recruited to head up the Studley operation.

EXPANSION PLANS CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The expansion plans of two enterprising firms from Bidford’s Smallbrook Business Centre have created opportunities for new companies to get on to the ladder.

Signage and graphics experts Sticky Media have recently relocated around the corner from the Smallbrook Business Centre on Waterloo Industrial Estate, and they will shortly be joined in relocating by commercial embroidery specialists Slant Riggs.

Alan Taylor of Slant Riggs attributes much of their recent success of the firm to the power of the internet and stresses the importance of a company website as a marketing tool. The company’s new web address helped them to secure lucrative contracts with companies such as Sainsbury’s and BAE. Slant Riggs also count Microsoft, John Smith’s and Dell among their more prestigious clients.

Mr Taylor said: “Being a tenant at Smallbrook Business Centre for some years has given us the opportunity to steadily grow our business and with Warwickshire County Council as our landlord, it has given us peace of mind regarding our premises. One of the key benefits is the six year

lease, which has a three month break clause without financial penalties, together with the security of tenancy offered by local authority property management.”

Cllr Alan Cockburn, Warwickshire County Council’s Portfolio Holder responsible for economic development, said: “We are keen to offer a helping hand to small business. For businesses to grow in these very difficult economic times is testament to both the continuing entrepreneur spirit and the support and range of business premises offered by the county council.”

Smallbrook Business Centre has 14 industrial units ranging in size from 44sq metres to 92sq metres. Businesses interested in viewing the available units or requesting further information should contact Margaret Burnham on 01788 551500.

BRINGING SUPERFAST BROADBAND *to our rural areas*

Warwickshire County Council is leading on the project to improve the broadband across the sub-region and we need your help. Clearly the money available from public funds will not be sufficient to solve the problem for the whole sub-region, and so telecoms providers who tender for the work will be expected to make their own investment of at least twice the amount that is available from public funds. They will not be doing this out of the goodness of their heart, and so are likely to prioritise those areas that are able to show the greatest demand.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Complete our survey

If you have not already done so please complete the broadband survey that is located at <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/> - there is one survey for domestic use and one for business use, so if you run a business or work from home please do both – and encourage your neighbours to do it as well because the more people that respond from a given area the higher priority it will be.

Become a Champion

Could you help to bring faster broadband services to your local area? We are looking for Community Champions to help us to get our message out to rural communities. The role will include:

- Putting posters up on local noticeboards
- Delivering flyers to households
- Providing hard copies of the surveys to those who are unable to access them on-line
- Delivering presentations to local groups about the project (but only if you feel comfortable with this!)

All material will be provided through the project website and in hard copy (it is currently being prepared and as soon as we know that the money is all in place we will start the print runs)

To express an interest in becoming a Champion, please email your name, address (with postcode) and telephone number to broadband@warwickshire.gov.uk

Your assistance could make all the difference to your village getting superfast broadband!



Dear Readers

This will be the final issue of Word On Warwickshire in its current format. In the future we will be producing a sub regional newsletter called Invest in Coventry & Warwickshire.

If you have any colleagues that would like to be included on the circulation list email wips@warwickshire.gov.uk with the subject 'newsletter circulation list'.

WATCH OUT FOR!

A NEW website for Invest in Coventry and Warwickshire will be coming soon!

COMING SOON!

New CW LEP website portal which will replace the existing CW LEP website. Visit www.cwlep.com for more information.

GOODBYE!

After 7 and a half years in the inward investment team, Katy Hunter will be leaving to go and work in the IT Business Liaison Team at Warwickshire County Council. Katy's last day in the team is the 16th March 2012.

All property related updates should be emailed to Roger Dick at wips@warwickshire.gov.uk and he will be happy to assist you. Sackie Somal and Gus Bhandal are on hand to help support your business with its growth or relocation requirements.



Commercial & Social Enterprises, start-up businesses and sole traders, Need a loan but been refused by the Banks? CWRT are still lending.

With the continuing recession and the difficulties that many businesses find in raising loan capital at present, help is still available to enterprises needing loan capital to start, grow or develop - if your bank cannot help you then why not contact Coventry & Warwickshire Reinvestment Trust and see how a CWRT loan could help.

Contact www.cwrt.uk.com or call 0845 6066216

Events

Motorsport Industry Association events
<http://www.the-mia.com/Events-Diary>

Stratford Business Show at Ragley Hall
14th March, Stratford Upon Avon
<http://www.stratford-business-forum.co.uk>

Coventry & Warwickshire First 'Young Professionals Social' - at Teamworks Karting
30th March, Coventry
[Contact gusbhandal@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:gusbhandal@warwickshire.gov.uk)

MACH Manufacturing Exhibition
16th-20th April, NEC
<http://www.machexhibition.com>

First Pro Awards
26th April, Ricoh Arena
www.coventryfirst.co.uk

Business Start Up Show (& The Great British Business Show)
17th-18th May, Excel
<http://www.bstartup.com>

Olympic Games Football at The City of Coventry Stadium
25th July, Coventry
<http://www.london2012.com/city-of-coventry-stadium>

Contact us

For further information, or if you would like to feature in our next newsletter, please contact Gus Bhandal on 01926 412140 or email wips@warwickshire.gov.uk

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