

# chamber news

## Networking with the neighbours



In 2012 are you and your business:

- Looking for new contacts to develop business ideas and opportunities?
- Wanting to raise your company profile?
- Needing to identify new, competitive suppliers?

Did you answer yes to any (or all!) of the above questions? Then don't miss Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce's networking events this year, especially an exciting joint event being held in March.

For many years Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce has been running popular county networking events designed to bring together businesses and organisations of all sizes and sectors to enable them to meet, exchange views and identify potential new business opportunities.

Well, on March 7th Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce will be casting its networking net a bit wider when it teams up with Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce to host a joint 'Networking With The Neighbours' event to be held in the impressive new conference

and business facilities at Twycross Zoo near Market Bosworth.

The Business Networking Lunch: Leicestershire Meets Coventry & Warwickshire is open to chamber members only and costs just £24 to attend – price includes VAT plus a two course meal – offering a great value for money way to raise the profile of your business.

Events such as these are specifically designed to encourage inter-trading amongst members, helping to keep business and money in the local economy. If you are keen to promote your organisation in Leicestershire and Coventry & Warwickshire then come along and tell your fellow diners about your products or services in this organised but relaxed environment.

**To book for this event please contact Kam Atker at Leicestershire Chamber on 0116 204 6614, email [atker.k@chamberofcommerce.co.uk](mailto:atker.k@chamberofcommerce.co.uk) or visit [www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk](http://www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk) and select 'events'**

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Samworth Brothers



## February

- Better business for all
- Embracing the digital age
- Nuffield Health announces investment by five major banks
- Our business is making your business a success

## Prize Draw Winner

For three months FREE membership to the Leisure Club at Leicester Marriott is:

Leicestershire Cares Membership Number LE100448  
Our thanks go to Leicester Marriott for supporting this initiative.

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To claim your prize please contact:  
Sharon Jeffrey,  
Commercial Manager on:  
0116 204 6618  
or email:  
[jeffrey.s@chamberofcommerce.co.uk](mailto:jeffrey.s@chamberofcommerce.co.uk)

# chamber news

## In my opinion

I have been asked to write this article for Chamber News in the very first week of January 2012 – after an extremely tough 2011 for many businesses based in Leicestershire. Economists are predicting an even more difficult next 12 months – some saying there will be little or no growth in GDP, some expecting a double-dip recession. Current thinking is that the UK economy recorded a marginal decline in economic activity in the 4th Quarter of 2011, so another decline during January-March 2012 would mean the UK will again be in a technical recession. By the time you read this article we will know the 4th Quarter outcome - fingers crossed it is better than predicted!

There is some good news. The rate of inflation, which has remained way above the Monetary Policy Committee's target of 2% for far too long, could fall sharply during 2012 – some economists are predicting it could be close to the MPC target before the end of this year. This will help every business and every household in Leicestershire. And interest rates

look likely to remain very low, with Bank Base Rate staying at 0.5% throughout 2012.

Many businesses in Leicestershire performed well in 2011 – there were lots of encouraging stories in the Leicester Mercury, with companies recording increased sales, higher profits, more jobs

created and more exports. I am hopeful that our local newspaper will report even more good news over the next 12 months.

We must all hope that the leaders of the European countries, particularly the stronger economies of Germany and France, can solve the problems of the Euro. Throughout 2011 they have made several half-hearted attempts to find a solution. Will we see one or more members of the Euro forced out before the end of 2012? I suspect we might! Thank goodness the UK remains outside the Euro.

The Chamber of Commerce's export documentation team has worked very hard over the last 18 months, reflecting the increase in exporting by many Leicestershire businesses – some for the first time. Our broadly based economy, with a much higher proportion of manufacturing companies than



By John Day, Chairman of Leicestershire Chamber Of Commerce

the UK average, is helping Leicester and Leicestershire to 'buck the trend' of depressing news.

I do hope that your company is looking forward to 2012 with optimism. The Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce is here to help and support all of its members.

## ROOM4 Hire in Leicester City Centre

A new venue for training, meetings or seminars has been launched in the heart of Leicester at 60 Charles Street.

Room4 has all the features needed to run successful meetings, seminars and training courses.

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- Secure City Centre Location
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**Special Introductory Price: £25 (plus VAT) delegate day rate** (minimum 10 candidates) Plus a fantastic 10% discount for Chamber of Commerce Members. This package includes; tea and coffee, a buffet lunch and full use of audio visual capabilities.

To book Room4 please call 0116 253 6161 or email [info@room4hire.com](mailto:info@room4hire.com)

### Raising the Bar in 2012 Essential training for your employers at Room4

1 February & 13 March <b>Work at Height &amp; Safe Use of Harness</b> £55 + VAT/£45 + VAT/Both £85 + VAT	15 March <b>Noise Awareness &amp; COSHH Awareness</b> £45 + VAT/£45 + VAT/Both £75 + VAT
2 February & 22 March <b>Safe Use of Hand Held Abrasive Wheels</b> £60 + VAT	21 March <b>Recruiting and Interviewing Techniques &amp; Managing Sickness and Absence</b> £50 + VAT/£50 + VAT/ Both £90 + VAT
8 February <b>Introduction to Project Management</b> £230 + VAT	29 March <b>Managing Disciplinary and Grievance</b> £70 + VAT
15,22,29 February, 7 March & 12,19,26 March, 2 April <b>IOSH Managing Safely</b> £385 + VAT	3, 4 April <b>Train the Trainer Manual Handling</b> £325 + VAT
21 February <b>Behavioural Performance Management</b> £230 + VAT	16, 17 April <b>Train the Trainer Display Screen Equipment</b> £325 + VAT
6 March <b>Lean Project Management Workshop</b> £250 + VAT	24, 25 and 26 April <b>Continuous Improvement Awareness Training</b> £500 + VAT
14 March <b>Introduction to Risk Assessment &amp; Manual Handling</b> £60 + VAT/£45 + VAT/ Both £90 + VAT	

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W: [www.bptraining.co.uk](http://www.bptraining.co.uk)

Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/leicschamber](http://www.twitter.com/leicschamber)

## Better business for all

The Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) is leading Better Business For All, an initiative designed to address 'the national priority of reducing the burdens on business to aid economic recovery.'

Better Business For All is a local partnership between business and regulatory services in Leicester and Leicestershire, created with the aim of helping to develop 'an effective and efficient local regulatory system to support business growth through removing real and perceived regulatory barriers.'

The Better Business For All programme covers four areas:

- Advice & Support
- Culture & Competency
- Communication & Coordination
- Better Partnerships

To make things easier for companies to get involved Better Business For All users are now able to submit their queries on line. Once queries are submitted they come through to the Business Support team who will then own the query and pass it on as appropriate.

Find out more at: [www.llep.org.uk/betterbusinessforall](http://www.llep.org.uk/betterbusinessforall)



## Our success is making your business a success

BP Management and Marketing Services has been established for over five years, however Barrie Pierpoint, the managing partner, has spent over 25 years turning businesses from static or loss-making organisations into profitable entities.

Barrie is currently involved with a plethora of enterprises, guiding them to profit. He is chairman of one business and a non-executive director of another company. He works very closely with CEOs, MDs and their management teams to develop their business strategies.

A good example of Barrie's success was from 1990 to 2000 where he took Leicester City Football Club from an ailing £2 million loss-making business to

£24 million turnover into profit within 8 years, and also oversaw the stock market floatation which raised £12 million for the business as their group plc chief executive.

"Our success is making your business a success – that is our mantra," said Barrie. "I know from my personal experience that some company managing directors try to do everything themselves, but without the proper expertise in many areas of their business they struggle. We can help you."

**See their website for a free consultation without obligation**

[www.bpmanagementandmarketing.co.uk](http://www.bpmanagementandmarketing.co.uk)  
**or telephone Barrie on 0781 6470621.**

## Does your business need free HR support?

As part of your Chamber membership, Leicestershire Chamber, in conjunction with Qdos Consulting, bring you access to an easy to use free Chamber HR website.

This invaluable service is essential for keeping you up to date with the latest business legislation and giving you practical assistance to help with employment law and human resource issues – all free of charge!

Chamber HR includes:

- A compliant Contract of Employment
- A compliant Employee Handbook

- Access to over 250 downloadable policies, procedures, documents, letters, templates and fact sheets.
- Unlimited access to a 24 hour, seven day human resource advice line.

Find out more by contacting the Leicestershire Chamber on 0116 247 1800 or email: [Leics@chamberofcommerce.co.uk](mailto:Leics@chamberofcommerce.co.uk)



In these difficult economic trading times does your business need help, direction or want specific expertise at Director and Boardroom level ?

Call Barrie Pierpoint, Managing Partner on 0781 647 0621 or email [bp\\_mms@btinternet.com](mailto:bp_mms@btinternet.com). [www.bpmanagementandmarketing.co.uk](http://www.bpmanagementandmarketing.co.uk)

**bp**

management and marketing services  
"delivering lasting business solutions"

# chamber news

## Unwanted presents or sale purchases? Donate to charity

If you've got unwanted items following the festive season then you could have a clear out and donate them to Chamber Member charity Age UK.

"After the festive season people may be contemplating how they will get rid of unwanted presents or dispose of household furniture etc. in order to accommodate new purchases made in the sales. Age UK is the answer!" says Peter Ralphs of Age UK.

The current economic situation is affecting stocks of clothes, books and furniture in Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland's 22 shops upon which the charity so heavily relies, particularly now with so much uncertainty surrounding central funding for many of their services to vulnerable local older people.

Tony Donovan, the charity's Executive Director, said: "It's a big problem. On the one hand more people are saving money

in these difficult times by buying the high quality goods which we sell, whilst on the other, traditional donors are apparently more inclined to 'make do and mend' rather than donate saleable items to our charity's shops. If the situation continues, this will directly affect the level of services which we are able to provide in the future."

Items can be delivered to any of the charity's shops – for convenient locations, ring 0116 299 2233 or visit [www.ageconcernleics.com](http://www.ageconcernleics.com) - whilst large items such as furniture can be collected by calling 0116 278 1208.

If supporters prefer to give a cash donation (say £3), simply text the message "AUKL11 £3" to 70070.

## Nuffield Health announces investment by five major banks

Nuffield Health has revealed that it has successfully refinanced to the sum of £270 million with five banks.

The agreement supports its continuing strategy for growth in the hospitals, consumer and corporate fitness and wellbeing markets.

The banks are: Barclays Corporate, The Royal Bank of Scotland, Santander, The Co-operative Bank and AIB.

Chief Financial Officer, KP Doyle, said: "As the UK's leading healthcare social enterprise our core aim is to champion consumer health, helping people make informed decisions about their wellbeing. By providing this strong refinancing package our investors have welcomed the opportunity to help us deliver our strategy to champion health as it should be.

"Despite the economic backdrop, turnover is set to increase

by £17 million in 2011; this demonstrates our integrated approach to fitness, prevention and cure across our hospitals, consumer and corporate sites is delivering strong results." In 2007 Nuffield Health acquired Cannons Health & Fitness bringing a unique approach to fitness and wellbeing to members across 51 sites. In 2011 their 140,000 members voted it the Members Choice Health Club Operation of the Year.

At the end of 2010 Bladerunner corporate fitness was acquired increasing the number of corporate gym sites to nearly 200, with a further 100,000 members.



KP Doyle, Chief Financial Officer

## Get registered, get active, get involved

The Active Together Workplace Challenge is aimed at organisations in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland and promotes a more active lifestyle with offers of innovative methods to stay active. It's comprised of three programmes; The Activity

Log, Competition Programme and Business Games.

The Workplace Challenge is free to join and once registered there are many tools, resources and support available to help you achieve your activity goals

and compete for prizes along the way.

Register your interest today and find out more at [www.workplacechallenge.org.uk](http://www.workplacechallenge.org.uk)

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to see what we can do for your workforce.

 Nuffield Health



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# New members

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## VSM LIMITED

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# Statistics

## FACTS AND FIGURES - ECONOMIC INDICATORS

COSTS AND PRICES	Release Date	Index	Annual % Change
Inflation (RPI)	December 2011	238.5	5.2
Inflation (RPIX)	December 2011	237.9	5.3
CPI	December 2011	121.2	4.8

PRODUCER PRICES	Release Date	Index	Annual % Change
Output (Man. Products)	December 2011	125.9	5.4
Input (Materials & fuel)	December 2011	170.2	13.4
Bank Base Lending Rate	December 2011	0.5	unchanged

Labour Market			
UNEMPLOYMENT	Release Date	Rate (%)	Number
UK – Claimant Count	December 2011	4.9	1,558,756
UK LFS (ILO Basis)	Oct-Nov	7.9	2,638,000
East Midlands – Claimant Count	December 2011	4.8	104,746
East Midlands LFS (ILO Basis)	Oct-Nov'11	7.9	182,000

Many of these figures can now be found by visiting : [www.statistics.gov.uk/instantfigures.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/instantfigures.asp)

## LEICESTERSHIRE CCC'S GREAT VALUE MEMBERSHIP

Packages now available

A full adult membership includes all LV=CC, CB40 and FLt20 games at Grace Road in 2012 and is available from **£170**.

Charlie Fox members, aged 16 and under, can enjoy the same package for **just £10!!**

Call 0871 282 1879 Today or buy online [www.leicestershireccc.co.uk](http://www.leicestershireccc.co.uk)



## Chamber's Integra committee welcomes new members

Integra, Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce's association of women in business, has welcomed two new local business women to its committee.

Helen Chambers from Chamber member Milestones and Eileen Richards from Chamber member Clear Recruitment will both now play a role in helping Integra to continue to achieve and develop its objectives.

Helen Chambers, FInstLM MILT AIFL, Managing Director, Milestones, said: "I am delighted to be involved in Integra, and I am looking forward greatly to interacting with the amazing business women of Leicestershire! I believe we can start connecting with more of

the women who are employed within Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce members and actively raise their profile and support career development. When I started my business I looked around for a long time for a group that would meet my networking needs and found Integra to be welcoming and informal, but also focused on development, and thus offering added value."

Sharon Jeffrey, Commercial Manager at Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce and an Integra committee member

herself, said: "We're delighted to welcome Helen and Eileen to the committee and are sure they will bring much to the work of Integra.

"With regular monthly meetings, inspirational speakers and business focused advice features, Integra's success is built on its network of business women and entrepreneurs from a wide range of backgrounds and sectors, sharing and exchanging information and ideas."

Integra, officially launched in November 1995, sets out to raise the profile and successes of women in the Leicestershire business community and

provide networking, training and development opportunities.

Working in partnership with Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce, Integra seeks to support existing and future business women, developing their personal and career potential through the exchange of information, ideas and opportunity, thus supporting growth in the local economy.

**For more information about Integra, contact Sharon Jeffrey, Commercial Manager on 0116 204 6618 or visit [www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk](http://www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk).**

## Embracing the digital age

Leicestershire based Agora Marketing Communications has launched a new digital marketing tool. This interactive, low cost concept has been developed over the last year and has recently been launched in the East Midlands with an excellent response.

Steve Thomason, Managing Director of Agora, explained: "Clients were asking us how they could avoid the problem of sending out pdf attachments

on emails without them being seen as spam. They were also looking to use video more in marketing material with reduced downloading time, and exploring new ways to make promotional communication more interactive.

"The Agora digital concept answers all those questions and more with over 50 different features. Simply create your graphic document and save as a pdf, or we can do it for you. We import the pdf into our software

and add the features you require. All documents are then uploaded to our powerful server and accessed by a hyperlink which can be placed in emails, social network pages, or your own website."

This new concept provides many benefits such as:

- Reduced print costs
- Communication by video
- Attractive interactive pages
- Reduced on-line downloading time

- Can be viewed on tablets as well as desktop and laptop computers
- Suitable for sales leaflets, flyers, brochures, newsletters, magazines, catalogues, training manuals and reports

**For a free demonstration and to see other examples please email [steve@agoramc.co.uk](mailto:steve@agoramc.co.uk) or call 0116 230 4967. [www.agorae.co.uk](http://www.agorae.co.uk)**

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# Network France update

By Andrew Taylor

By now the readers of this newsletter will be aware of our attempts to engage the business community in France to promote inward investment to Leicester and provide a network of like-minded companies and individuals who would be able to facilitate such investment and to provide help to exporters and indeed importers dealing with France.

We have achieved limited success. The launch of Eurostar from St Pancras saw our Chamber of Commerce led party from Leicester comprising leaders of the City and County, East Midlands representatives, local business leaders and Chamber executives set off to Paris for a reception by the Chambers in Paris and a very excited welcome. They liked our initiative – which had not been attempted by any other group from the UK.

Network France was on the map. Our further activities have included commercial contacts with Strasbourg and Epinal; arranging for interns to work in Leicestershire based businesses; plans for a French festival.

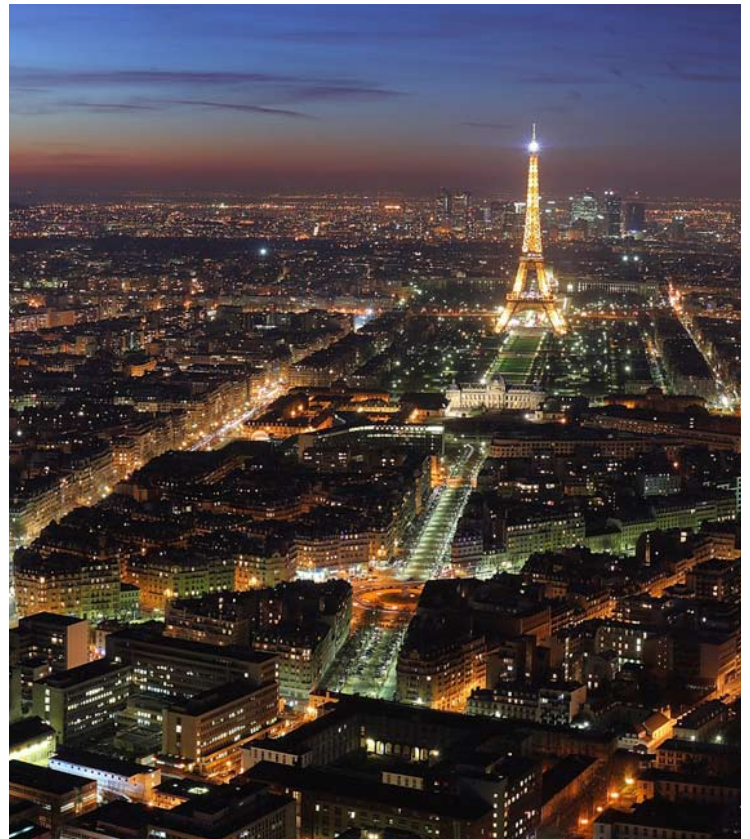
But that was then and now is now! Oh dear we have upset Mr Sarkozy, haven't we? But let's look at that. Are we so worried about upsetting the most arrogant man in Europe? Do we really want to be controlled by Germany or France? I don't think so. But how does this impact on Network France? Well, thinking laterally, probably not much. We can be of great assistance to France. Our exports are cheap to Europe and unlikely to be much dearer in the near future (according to the forecasts), the major French banks have an important presence in the City of London, the most important financial

centre in Europe, we provide the most important tourist numbers for France, the French are one of our most important tourist nations, we are providing one of the most important markets for (generally run-down!) property sales with attendant support for French service industry and retailers! The French art market is fuelled by UK buyers, and M Sarkozy – maybe we are not in love with you BUT we are in love with France, despite our remonstrations to the contrary!

So, messieurs et mesdames, vive la France. We shall continue to press ahead with our project. What will 2012 bring to the Chamber initiative? Renewed and stronger communications with Strasbourg and Epinal, the installation of our website to allow registration of interest country-wide of our French contacts, more French events and hopefully the festival, our new social networking sites – Facebook, linkedin, Twitter - in addition to interns from France in the summer and perhaps our students from Leicester to France for the same reason (working on this).

So watch this space and I wish you all "Bonne Annee" for 2012!

**PS. Anyone interested in contributing ideas and a bit of time to the project please call or email Andrew Taylor, 0116 257 5480, [andrew.taylor@kemptaylor.com](mailto:andrew.taylor@kemptaylor.com)**



## Bulgaria update

The Bulgaria Trade Mission, lead by the Chamber's Hon Deputy President John Townsend, is currently on its way to Sofia, meeting the new ambassador and investigating opportunities for mutual benefit with the Bulgarians.

There will be an update on the work of the trade mission along with details of business opportunities developed during the visit to Bulgaria in the next edition of Chamber News.



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# chamber events 2012

## Integra Networking Luncheon

Date: 6 February  
Venue: Mercure Leicester City Hotel, Leicester  
Time: 12:15 – 2pm  
Cost: Chamber Member: £18 inc. VAT  
Non-Chamber Member: £23 inc. VAT

Integra is keen to encourage women in business to meet and network to develop new potential business and therefore would like to invite you to a wonderful networking opportunity to interact with other women in business whilst enjoying tea, coffee and lunch. There will be a 20 minute informational session at each event on business related topics.

## Export Documentation Course

Date: 8 February  
Venue: Chamber offices, Mill Lane, Leicester  
Time: 9:30am - 4.30pm  
Cost: Chamber Members £245 inc. VAT /  
Non-Members £290 inc. VAT

This course will provide you with the necessary basics of export documentation including the role of the export administration, documentary content and its significance, Incoterms 2000, the commodity code number (Tariff number) and proving origin.

It will also provide a guide to the export quotation and invoice, the packing list, certification of origin, preference documents - EUR1s, invoice declarations and ATRs, packing documentation requirements, export licensing and pre-inspection certificates.

## Export Letter of Credit Course

Date: 9 February  
Venue: Chamber offices, Mill Lane, Leicester  
Time: 9.30am - 4.30pm  
Cost: Chamber Members £245 inc. VAT /  
Non-Members £290 inc. VAT

This course will explain the following: definition of an L/C, benefits & disadvantages of L/Cs, L/C procedure, exporter's pro-forma L/C requests, buyers L/C application forms, L/Cs and the sales contract, types of L/C and levels of security. It will also cover documentary requirements & considerations.

### Looking for new contacts? Wanting to raise your business profile? Be sure to attend these great Chamber events.

For more information on these Chamber events please call Kam Atker on Tel: 0116 204 6614, email: atker.k@chamberofcommerce.co.uk or alternatively you can visit the Chamber website at: [www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk](http://www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk) and select What's On/events

## Employment Law Seminar

Date: 28 February  
Venue: Belmont Hotel, Leicester  
Time: 7.30am - 9.30am  
Cost: £26.50 Chamber Members /  
£36.50 Standard  
Includes Full English Breakfast

Join us for this highly informative seminar, one in a series of seminars by Julian Middleton MA LLM, Managing Partner in Commercial Litigation at Freeth Cartwright Solicitors. Keep up to date with current legislation and keep your business in the know. This seminar will cover managing sickness absence and discrimination as well as the usual case study round up.

## Integra Networking Luncheon

Date: 5 March  
Venue: Mercure Leicester City Hotel, Leicester  
Time: 12:15 – 2pm  
Cost: Chamber Member: £18 inc. VAT  
Non-Chamber Member: £23 inc. VAT

Integra is keen to encourage women in business to meet and network to develop new potential business and therefore would like to invite you to a wonderful networking opportunity to interact with other women in business whilst enjoying tea, coffee and lunch. There will be a 20 minute informational session at each event on business related topics.

## Business Networking Lunch: Leicestershire Meets Coventry & Warwickshire

Date: 7 March  
Venue: Twycross Zoo, Burton Road (A444), Atherstone  
Time: 12 noon - 2.30pm  
Cost: Chamber members only, £24 inc. VAT  
Price includes a two course meal

Leicestershire Chamber is keen to encourage members to network, linking businesses of all sizes and sectors together to enable them to meet, exchange views and identify potential new business.

This joint event is being hosted by Leicestershire and Coventry & Warwickshire Chambers of Commerce and will be held in the

impressive new business facilities at Twycross Zoo. This Business Networking Lunch will give businesses from both counties an excellent opportunity to network and exchange company literature with fellow attendees over a 2 course lunchtime meal.

These events are specifically designed to encourage inter-trading amongst members. If you are keen to promote your organisation in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire then come along and tell your fellow diners about your products or services in this organised but relaxed environment.

## Social Media & The Law

Date: 13 March  
Time: 8am – 10am  
Venue: Howes Percival LLP, Bede Island Business Park, Leicester  
Cost: £20 Chamber Members / £24 Standard.  
Includes breakfast

This seminar, in conjunction with Howes Percival LLP, will focus on data protection in the context of data that is stored and used online with a potential emphasis on data used by social media applications.

Via a brief overview of the UK, European and US regulatory framework, we will explore the best practice when it comes to using social media and online applications including Google. In particular we shall consider and examine the following:

- Who owns your data once it is online?
- Online-cross border data protection issues
- Data Protection regulatory changes in 2012 to be aware of
- How social media sites track your internet use
- Do's and don'ts when using social media to promote your business

## Breakfast Speed Networking Event

Date: 3 April  
Venue: Mercure Leicester City Hotel, Leicester  
Time: 8am - 9.30am  
Cost: £24. This event is for Chamber Members only.

Looking for new contacts? Want to raise your business profile? Then come and network over breakfast with fellow Chamber members at this popular event which aims to bring together the business community to enjoy networking opportunities with a full English breakfast in the comfortable surroundings of the recently renamed Mercure Leicester City Hotel.



Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce, 1 Mill Lane, Leicester LE2 7HU. t: 0116 247 1800 f: 0116 247 0430  
e-mail: [leics@chamberofcommerce.co.uk](mailto:leics@chamberofcommerce.co.uk) w: [www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk](http://www.chamberofcommerce.co.uk)

Disclaimer: We very gratefully acknowledge the support of the companies whose advertisements or promotional literature appear in this publication. As a reciprocal gesture we have pleasure in drawing the attention of our readers to their announcements. It is necessary however for it to be made clear that, whilst every care has been taken in compiling this publication, the Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce cannot accept responsibility for the products or services advertised.



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