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Welcome to South London Business!

Successful Second Annual Dinner



We held our Second Annual Dinner on 21st April with Simon Hughes MP as guest speaker. The event, sponsored by IKEA, Mazars and Business Link for London, was attended by over 100 guests. Liberal Democrat Mayoral Candidate, Simon Hughes MP, made an impassioned speech on the future of London, pledging to improve South London's transport infrastructure, encourage a more entrepreneurial economy, improve skills levels, and recognise the fine balance between the needs of local residents and the business community. Hughes said "I am delighted to be here this evening and I congratulate South London Business on their successes over the past twelve

months. South London is of pivotal importance to London's economy and organisations like South London Business have an extremely important role to play".

During his opening remarks, Sir Bob Scott said "In the past twelve months we have strengthened our team and expanded our services. We have helped more companies in South London than we ever have before, and we have helped to safeguard more jobs than we ever have before. We also continue to work hard representing the interests of the South London business community. Tonight is not just a celebration of our success over the past twelve months but also our pledge to continue to represent South London's business community in the future". Photos of the event can be viewed via the '**Recent Events**' page of our website.

Planning for 2005 has already begun. If you would like to be involved with our Third Annual Dinner, please contact our Policy & Communications Manager, Ross Feeney.

South London's Retail Flourishing

Information compiled from our Commercial Property Database confirms that South London's retail sector is continuing to flourish. During the first quarter of 2004 the number of retail property searches recorded by the online database increased by over 41% over the fourth quarter of 2003. Our Property Adviser, Nick Heathorn, said "with five key metropolitan shopping centres in Croydon, Sutton, Kingston, Bromley and Wimbledon, it is not surprising that interest in the retail sector is high. However, the size of this increase in interest is extremely encouraging for our retail economy". Property Agent Richard Collumbell of Christopher St. James Plc, who use the commercial database to promote their available properties, confirmed "interest in retail premises in South London remains extremely high".

In the first quarter of 2004, over 73,000 property searches were recorded by the database, 28% of which were for retail premises. 23% of searches were for industrial premises, most notably in Wandsworth and Merton, whilst 17% of searches were recorded each for office and restaurant units.

South London Business Limited

We are delighted to confirm the merger of SLEDA and the South London Chamber of Commerce & Industry – forming South London Business Limited. The merger comes eighteen months after South London Business was formed as a marketing joint venture between the two organisations. Chairman of South London Business Limited (former SLEDA Chairman), Sir Bob Scott, said "I am delighted that this merger has taken place. The success of our joint venture demonstrated the benefits of the formation of South London Business Limited, and I look forward to our future joint success". David Main continues as chief executive.

Business Retention Issues

As part of Business Retention work to support the growth and future prosperity of businesses in South London we continually visit businesses across all sectors of our economy. These visits allow us to better understand the businesses in our area and identify key issues, which include:

- Labour & Skills – competition for skilled staff, and skills shortages amongst school-leavers.
- Premises and Land – pressure on employment land, and a shortage of suitable premises for relocation, particularly where office buildings are nearing the end of their life.
- Transport and Congestion – poor orbital routes and difficulties administering Congestion Charge payments for fleet vehicles.

If you would like our Business Retention team to visit you, please contact our Business Retention Manager, Simon Turnage, on 020 8256 1288 or simon.turnage@southlondonbusiness.co.uk

Your Business and the Internet!

In partnership with Business Focus, we are delighted to invite you to Biggin Hill Airport on Thursday 17th June to meet **Martina King, Managing Director of Yahoo.co.uk**. Martina is a 'South Londoner', having grown up in Bromley, and we are delighted that she has kindly agreed to come and share with us the success that both she and Yahoo have enjoyed at the pinnacle of internet technologies.

Biggin Hill Airport is not only one of the most famous airports in the world, immortalised in the history books and on movie screens for its role in World War Two, but it is also the UK's most successful private charter airport and home to Formula One! Our event will be held in the unique surroundings of the private-charter arrivals lounge – although we are assured you won't need your passport!

Biggin Hill is a unique venue, and Martina King will be a most interesting speaker. Both South London Business and Business Focus would be delighted for you to join us from 6.30pm to meet Martina and enjoy a Pimms and canapé reception overlooking Biggin Hill. There is no charge for this event. For your convenience we have attached an RSVP form for you to complete and fax back. Further details will be sent to you nearer the event.

Innovate South London Update

Innovate South London now offers affordable, fully supported desk space and office space for innovative start-ups and existing companies in two prestigious South London locations: Airport House, Purley Way, Croydon, and Anerley Business Centre (former Anerley Town Hall).

Physical co-location, clustering and networking, together with onsite business support can have a very positive effect on the growth and development of innovative companies and ISL's support centres have been created to maximise the opportunities for ambitious businesses looking for a creative environment in which to grow.

If you are interested, or know of a business that may benefit from supported office or desk space please contact Lavinia Popa at Innovate South London 0870 412 4200 or info@innovatesouthlondon.co.uk

Team Update

We are pleased to welcome **Alex Smith** to the South London Business team. Alex has joined us as Tourism Development Manager, on secondment from the London Development Agency. Alex is one of five sub-regional secondees working to implement the LDA's Tourism Strategy. Alex can be contacted on 020 8256 1291 or alexsmith@lda.gov.uk

It is bon voyage to our Research & Communications Assistant **Catarina Duerden** this month. Catarina joined South London Business last August as part of the 'Year in Industry' scheme. Catarina will be spending the summer travelling around the Far East before enrolling at Southampton University. We wish Catarina all the very best for her travels and future studies.

We also congratulate our Inward Investment Manager, **Becky Price**, who celebrates her 30th birthday this month.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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