

Wotton Chamber of Trade

Meeting – 13th March 2009

**With Guest Speakers Andrew & Liane Cope
from Evergreen Computing and the Wotton Community Website**

- ❖ Alex Wilkinson welcomed all to the March Breakfast Meeting, in particular the guest speakers, Andrew & Liane Cope from Evergreen Computing who came along to speak about their business and the Community Website. Alex welcomed new Chamber members who attended the meeting: Carole from Wotton Coffee Shop; Pete Nickols from pn architecture & Matt Tewkesbury from DHF Contracting. He also welcomed prospective new members Tracy Francksen & Linda Banister from Red Door Coaching & Training Ltd.

- ❖ Renishaw plc

Alex, on behalf of the Chamber, extended sympathies to all local employees of Renishaw following the recent announcement of impending redundancies, saying that the Chamber empathised with the company and its decision, which is endemic in the current global economic situation. Chris Pockett, representing Renishaw made a statement of the following key points:

 - A headline figure of 500 worldwide redundancies was issued a few days prior to the meeting, but the company are hoping to be able to reduce this number. Bearing in mind the legal need for the company to declare information affecting its price on the Stock Market, some members of staff may have been alerted prior to formal notification from Renishaw.
 - The statement issued on 12th March includes the following quote from Chris Pockett: *"Our first priority is and always has been to ensure that we first communicate with our staff on major issues. Having satisfied ourselves that we have managed to communicate the finer details of the proposed redundancy programme with all of our UK staff, including those taking vacations or absent due to illness, we are now prepared to publicly issue more details about this programme."*
 - The statutory document S188, a formal requirement, was issued to the Government and all staff and workers representative groups on 12th March.
 - Renishaw state that there is room within the statutory process to alter the number of proposed redundancies, which will not be enhanced voluntary redundancies but statutory packages.
 - CP reiterated the unfortunate nature of the situation after 35 years of growth and adding wealth to the local community. He added that there are 280 employees who live in the GL12/GL16 postcode areas.
 - Wendy Walker from Wotton Travel added a further statement that although they are owned by Renishaw plc, they are an independent company who are doing well and still very profitable.
 - Media interest has been intense and that even though they did not succeed in getting negative responses from those interviewed, the very nature of the media process has stirred the matter up.
 - More details and the media statements can be found on the community website, www.wotton-under-edge.org

- ❖ We Love Wotton
 - Janet Walshe gave some history about how the event has evolved, via a poem, a sketch and a Valentine Event!
 - With help from Draw Creative in designing the logo and decorations, it has become an event designed to coincide with the annual 10 day Arts Festival and will be held on Saturday 25th April.
 - The plan is to decorate the streets for a month, having the main celebrations on 25th April.
 - One aim is to attract more visitors to the town.
 - Publicity for the event has just commenced
 - Many events will be held in and around the town, and initial local enthusiasm has been amazing.
 - Shops will be encouraged to display the logo which can be obtained via email.
 - The day will be filmed and photographed and participants and visitors will be interviewed. Following the event, a video/audio disc will be compiled culminating in an exhibition in the autumn.
 - £1,000 is needed to finance the event and so far donations have been received from the District Council, the Cinema & Ian Pullen.

❖ Future Meetings & Events Diary

Please put these dates in your diaries

- 6th April - Supper Club - The Swan Hotel, Guest Speaker TBC
- 25th April - 'We Love Wotton' - Celebration event
- 11th May - Supper Club - The Swan Hotel, Guest Speaker TBC
- 22nd May - Breakfast Meeting - Venue & Guest Speaker TBC
- 1st June - Supper Club - The Swan Hotel, Guest Speaker TBC
- 6th July - Supper Club - The Swan Hotel

Guest Speaker John Cordwell on the History of Wotton Pubs

❖ A.O.B

- SOSO - Paul Smith reported on the petition against the proposed closure of the Sorting Office, which had been presented by Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP to Parliament a few days previously. He thanked June Cordwell for her enormous efforts in producing the document to accompany the petition of 1,800 - 1,900 signatures. He reported that a meeting was being sought with Rob Jensen, final decision maker on the proposed closure, date TBC.
- **STOP PRESS! New developments since the meeting - please see attached notice.**
- Parking - There will be a parking survey at some point in the near future, more details to follow when known.
- Christmas Under The Edge - following a poll of members' opinions, the most popular date for the event this year was Saturday 5th December. The Dinner Dance will be held on the following Saturday, 12th December. **Please put these dates in your diaries.**
- Good Trader Agreement - *aims to give traders and local communities the tools to stand firm in their fight against anti-social behaviour, and to encourage local traders to work together to make their shopping area a clean, safe and attractive place for local people to visit.* The Chamber committee voted to roll this out and to send information to members.
- Shop Local Bags - these have been distributed and are being sold for £1, with many local businesses choosing to give the money raised to charity.
- Town Hall Teas will be beginning again in April
- The Cinema will be welcoming their 50,000th customer and presenting them with a gift.