



willowlane

THE PLACE FOR BUSINESS

Welcome to the new look newsletter, featuring our new logo and branding.

Any day now, the newly designed, feature-rich website will go live.

Under the business directory, the site offers businesses a free web page and personalised map. The web page can include your relevant contact details, your logo and promotional information on your business with a link to your own website. This is another marketing opportunity for your business that can compliment your existing activities.

Your personalised map can help suppliers, collection services and visitors readily locate your business on the estate with the route to follow to arrive at Willow Lane from the various surrounding road approaches.

Email graham@willowlane.org.uk or call 020 8274 3323 for the profile template and we can include you in the Business Directory.

There is an "Offers" section on the site for businesses to promote offers such as special discounts to other businesses and their employees on the estate.

You will be able to keep up to date with Willow Lane and associated activities

in the News and Events section on the website. The social media tools of Twitter and Facebook will be activated in due course.

Merton Council has funded the website as part of their Inward Investment Strategy that has identified the Willow Lane estate as a location to attract more businesses and accompanying jobs into the borough.

From a business perspective, this is attractive as from a security consideration we do not wish to have empty units on the estate. Vacant properties can attract vandalism or be used as a platform for break-ins or burglary of adjacent properties. In addition the more businesses on the estate the more likely are the opportunities for inter business trading.

As a result there will be a facility to promote units available for rent or sale on the estate. This will benefit land owners and indeed present owners of property who may wish to sell the premises or vacate and rent the units out.

The site will evolve once it goes live and there are already thoughts for businesses to promote job vacancies on the website.

news

November 2013

What's in it for the Willow BID Businesses?

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Searchable by business name or business sector

FREE WEB PAGE

For every business in the Willow BID area including logo, contact details and a website link

PERSONALISED MAPS

For every business for your visitors to download

OFFERS

Promote your special offers on the website to other businesses on the estate

Would you like to improve the health of your employers, customers and the community?

So far, a spectacular 135 businesses and organisations across Sutton and Merton have signed up to the Sutton and Merton Responsibility Deal.

They are making pledges to encourage healthier lifestyle changes.

Over the course of our lives, many of us will spend over 100,000 hours at work! Therefore, the workplace is a fantastic opportunity to encourage people to

be more active and have a healthier lifestyle. This will help to improve the health and wellbeing of your employees and reduce absence rates, and make staff feel more valued as well as boosting morale.

There is a wide range of partners – Asda Mitcham, B & Q Sutton, Grenfell Housing, KNK Building Services, Merton Bus Garage and many more. Please visit the website at

www.suttonmertonrd.co.uk to see what other businesses are doing and the wide range of opportunities and activities available to you.

Do you want to get involved? If so, please contact Jenny Shaw on Jenny.Shaw@smuc.ac.uk or call 07540 677351.





Strong backing for BID renewal process now underway

The present Willow BID five year period comes to an end on 30 June 2014. In order to maintain the BID, a fresh proposal has to be drawn up and supported by a majority vote of the businesses, similar to the electoral process in 2009.

The core of businesses who regularly meet, backed by other businesses, wish to ensure that the interests of the businesses are served and that the BID will continue to fill the gap in services and activities that are not delivered by the Council, Police or any other body.

The prime but not only driver to continue with the BID is the popular CCTV. Currently, new cameras, maintenance of the cameras and the investigation of incidents reported by businesses and the police, are funded from the BID levy. If the BID levy funding did not continue the estate would lose these prime services to combat crime.

In its first term, the BID has increased the number of CCTV cameras to sixteen, including two automatic number plate recognition cameras, and has also installed enhanced monitoring equipment. A good working relationship has

developed with the Met's Safer Neighbourhood Team. Both these measures combined have helped reduce major crime on the estate and has greatly reduced, if not eradicated, the amount of fly tipping in specific areas.

Another achievement has included successful lobbying of the Council to have the bridge reopened, and this is currently underway. The bridge has been closed for many years and there was growing scepticism that it would ever open again. This is no mean achievement, given the cuts on expenditure being forced on Councils.

Other successes have included the introduction of the Wayfinding Scheme (see facing page), and a new directional signage indicating the entrance to the estate on the approach from Hackbridge. Communication has also been improved with the introduction of a Newsletter and a website and now a recently redesigned website with a new logo and branding.

All this has been underpinned by successfully attracting additional funding of over £50,000 that has boosted the investment by 20% that

Willow BID has been able to make over these past five years.

Over 50% of the businesses have given positive feedback and there is an overwhelming desire to renew the BID. As in 2009, security is the prime collective concern, and a quote has already been acquired for an additional 12 cameras with a view to extending the coverage of current blind spots including the sub estates.

A number of businesses have expressed concern about road safety on the estate due to the speed of some of the vehicles and adverse parking practices. This may be another lobbying role to explore with the Council to determine options as to how this may be improved.

Other suggestions include introducing a bus service to the estate and procuring access to cost savings on mandatory training such as first aid courses.

If you wish to contribute ideas and suggestions or comment on the above, please email Graham Willins at graham@willowlane.org.uk or call 020 8274 3323.

Willow Lane improvement works have begun

Following the recent highway improvement works to Willow Lane, the Council are carrying out strengthening of Willow Lane Bridge.

Once completed, the remaining fencing works, carriageway and footway surfacing will be undertaken and the road reopened to vehicles with a 3 tonne capacity. Completion is estimated early December.



Contact Us

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Good news for suppliers, couriers and visitors to Willow Lane

The Wayfinding Scheme aims to facilitate the navigation of the estate for distribution and deliveries, collection services, visitors and potential new staff. The benefits to businesses and the estate itself are numerous including reducing frustration and time lost in delivering and collecting.

Research clearly established that finding your way around Willow Lane, or to a specific business location, similar to other trading estates that have developed in an adhoc manner, is challenging to say the least. The great majority of us will have experienced being asked where a particular business is and how to get there.

How will we achieve making it easier for all vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians to find their way around the estate?

The unique feature of the Wayfinding Scheme is to divide the estate into five different colour zones as indicated in the map – red (a), blue (b), green (c), orange (d) and purple (e). Each colour code will also be represented by a lower case letter from “a” to “e” as an alternative to colour recognition for those that have difficulty in distinguishing colour. The colour of each zone will be depicted by the appropriate



coloured banner hanging from 37 lamp posts around the estate.

It should be noted the main roads on the estate, such as Wates Way, Willow Lane and Wandle Way, do not belong to a particular colour zone. For instance, on Wates Way as you enter the estate there is the red (a) zone on the right and the blue (b) zone on the left.

The advantage of this approach, as successfully used by some large hospitals and supermarkets, is to break down the estate into bite size chunks for those that are unaccustomed to it.

New signage will be introduced replacing the current maps. This will consist of one large monolith, at the present entrance, four smaller monoliths and eight finger posts.

The monoliths will have the colour zone map (and zone that monolith is in), which also indicates the location of the sub estates including Connaught, Willow Centre, Willow Business Park, Eagle, Abbey and Capital.

The finger posts will include directions to specific places, such as sub estates and transport links, with an accompanying walking time indicated.

We have managed to obtain fifty per cent match funding from Transport for London and further funding from

Merton Council, which leaves Willow BID only contributing a third of the cost. In return to TfL, we will provide them with an evaluation which will involve obtaining feedback from the businesses. TfL is considering this as a potential pilot and the possibility of rolling this out to other trading estates in London.

This investment is viewed as promoting an improved economic functioning of the estate with precious time lost being reduced, improved business relationships and less traffic congestion on the estate.

The scheme will come into effect towards the end of the year and thoughts are already being developed as to how the navigation of the estate can be yet further improved.

Merton Chamber launches new support service for business

An exciting new service for business, **Merton Business Support Service**, was launched on October 24th at Wimbledon Studios.

The suite of services focusses on support for those looking to start-up in business and those already in business who are looking to achieve significant growth.

Services include business planning, financial planning, marketing, business modelling, investment and coaching.

The Merton Business Support Service, delivered by Merton Chamber of Commerce and a network of some of London's leading private sector business advisory

and support firms, provides high quality, practical advice and support.

Partners include WSM, Clear Insurance, GTP Consultants, Sighpath, Penman Associates, Morrisons Solicitors with financial support from London Borough of Merton.

Two new business loan funds were also announced by London Borough of Merton. The Merton Business Loan Fund (MBLF) will provide between £10,000 and £22,000 to eligible small businesses with growth potential and viable business plans. A Micro Finance Loan Fund (MFLF) will offer small loans of between £500 and £10,000 to support



entrepreneurs wanting to start up a small business. Some established businesses ready to expand could also benefit from this initiative to help grow or weather the current economic climate.

If you would like more information contact Ray Kinsella
ray@mertonchamber.co.uk or call
020 8619 0700



Congratulations to two estate businesses at the Merton Best Business Awards

Congratulations to Aztec Event Services and The Vine Project for finishing runners up at the recent Merton Best Business Awards at the All England Lawn Tennis Club.

Aztec Event services were runners up in the Extra Mile category for their support for the local community and The Vine Project were runners up in the Mitcham Business of the Year category and finalist in the Creative Sector category.



If you would like to find out about sponsoring an award for next year, or registering your business in one of the many award categories, visit mertonbestbusinessawards.co.uk

What's On at Merton Chamber

Winning & Keeping Customers

20th November - 4pm-7pm
Increase the number of customers you win and keep them!

SEO Workshop

5th December - 2 Part Event
Find out how search engines work and how they can help your business.

Emergency First Aid at Work

6th December - 9.30am-4pm
Ideal for smaller workplaces that present few health and safety risks.

Christmas Lunch

12th December - 12.30pm onwards
Party and network with the Chamber and guests at San Lorenzo, Wimbledon.