



Volume 172

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### **Forthcoming "In Focus" event**



The FSB stages bi-monthly opportunities to meet with other members and committee representatives over a 3-course meal, listen to first-rate speakers on issues of vital importance to small businesses and voice your views and opinions on matters of common interest. We have events up and coming in both South and East Yorkshire

The South Yorkshire event will take place on Monday 12 April when ratings consultant Adrian Smith will fill us in on the latest information to reduce your rates bill, whilst Jeremy Milnes of Success Doncaster will give us the lowdown on the latest services to support Doncaster businesses. This will take place at 6.30 for 7.00pm at the Best Western Elton Hotel, Main Street, Bramley, Rotherham, S66 2SF on Monday 12 April. To book for the South Yorkshire event, send the names of those attending, together with a cheque (made payable to the Federation of Small Businesses) to the value of £10.00 per head to: Branch Treasurer, Federation of Small Businesses, c/o Sheffield Marine, Dannemora Drive, Greenland Road Industrial Estate, Sheffield, S9 5DF.

Meanwhile in East Yorkshire the next event will take place at 6.30 for 7.00pm on Thursday 29 April 2010 at the Hallmark Hotel, Ferriby High Road, North Ferriby, HU14 3LG. Lindsay Henson of Tuner Warran & Henson Specialist Tax Consultants gives us her top tax tips, whilst ratings consultant Adrian Smith will fill us in on the latest information to reduce your rates bill.

To book for the East Yorkshire event, send the names of those attending, together with a cheque (made payable to the Federation of Small Businesses) to the value of £10.00 per head to the Branch Secretary, Federation of Small Businesses, c/o N H D Associates, 100 Pasture Road, Goole, DN14 6HE

For further details on either of these events visit: <http://www.fsb.org.uk/Focus>

### **Meet the Buyer Humber**

The FSB is pleased to be working once again with Business Link Yorkshire to bring you an opportunity to find out how the public sector buys in the local area. This is your chance to come and meet buyers from across the Humber and other local public sector organisations to find out how to obtain business advice and network with other organisations. The event will take place from 8.30am to 2.00pm on Thursday 22 April at the Willerby Manor Hotel, Well Lane, Hull, HU10 6ER. This is an informal drop-in event so feel free to attend any time during the day. A wide range of Council departments and buyers will be present from North East Lincolnshire Council, North Lincolnshire Council,

Hull City Council and East Riding Council. Delegates will be able to get advice from procurement professionals on how best to approach selling to the public sector. There will be over 20 stands including a wide variety of other public sector buyers such as the NHS, Hull University and MOD.

It is expected that large numbers will attend, so book early to avoid disappointment. Further details are at:

[www.fsb.org.uk/070/assets/meet%20the%20buyer%20humber%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.fsb.org.uk/070/assets/meet%20the%20buyer%20humber%20(2).pdf)

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### **BarnsleyWorks 2010**



Barnsley's annual business to business expo is back, and it's free to attend. Over 60 exhibitors will be showcasing their products and services to hundreds of delegates and former BBC Apprentice runner up and training coach Ruth Badger presents "Doing Business the 'Badger' Way". An enlightening seminar programme includes the themes of Digital Marketing, Financial Management, Employment Law and Public Sector Procurement all delivered by specialists in their field, whilst special speed dating sessions allow you to meet and potentially do business with up to 40 other companies.

More details at: <http://email.loud-mouth-marketing.com/T/ViewEmail/r/7D32F9A571A19FA3/6C5CB181E4A5BC2F6A4D01E12DB8921D>

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### **Sheffield Uni looks to support small businesses with Graduate interns**



Sheffield University is currently seeking organisations who might benefit from employing a graduate for a 12 week period. Following the success of its Graduate Internship Scheme in 2009, the University has received further funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England to provide up to 60 graduate internships to small businesses. For just £300 per week (including a £100 subsidy paid by the University), organisations will be able to recruit a recent graduate to

undertake a project over a 12 week period – the timing of the project can be tailored to suit individual needs, but graduates must be in post by the end of September.

For information contact Gill Rogers on 0114 222 0900 or email [gradintern@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:gradintern@sheffield.ac.uk).

Full details of the Scheme and application details can be found at: <http://www.shf.ac.uk/careers/employers/vacancies/gradintern.html>  
[gradintern@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:gradintern@sheffield.ac.uk)

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### **Hull City Council the 'Most Improved' council**



Hull City Council has won the Most Improved Council award at the prestigious Local Government Chronicle Awards in London. This excellent news for the city of Hull reflects the improvements that have been made during the past year in areas such as reducing crime, raising educational attainment at GCSE level and improving adult social care services. Hull's local strategic partnership, OneHull, was also successful at the awards, winning the Public/Private Partnership award, while the

council's efforts to sustain and grow Hull's economy during the recession were recognised by its shortlisting for the Place of the Year award.

For more details visit:

[http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?\\_pageid=221,625858&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?_pageid=221,625858&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)

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### **"Ashtray on a motorbike" Budget hides a £47million tax bombshell for region's taxpayers**

Sheffield accountants Mike Bramall & Co. Limited have launched a free "2010 Tax Minimisation Review" service to help local taxpayers and businesses get to grips with the multiple tax bombshells hidden in the Budget. Launching the new service Mike Bramall commented: "The real message behind this Budget is as simple as it is stark: public finances are in such an almighty mess that the tax increases we have seen so far are, in reality, about as useful as an ashtray on a motorbike. And the brutal truth is that, regardless of who wins the election, further multiple tax bombshells are inevitable.

"The problem, of course, is that the huge shortfall between government spending and taxes looks set to grow even bigger as the true cost of the recession really starts to be felt. As a result, the government expects to borrow an extra £567 billion over the next five years alone. And all of that extra borrowing, on top of the staggering amounts the country has already borrowed, will need to be repaid out of much bigger tax bills for all of us in the future.

"We estimate that Yorkshire and the Humber region tax payers will end up paying 47 million pounds more in tax to pay for the extra borrowing announced in the Budget - so there will be some real losers. But fortunately the law does also allow the really well advised to make some very big tax savings. And that's why we've launched our free 2010 Tax Minimisation Review service - to help the losers minimise the damage, and ensure that no-one pays a single penny more than their fair share of tax."

Readers who do not want to pay a single penny more tax than they need to can do so by calling Mike Bramall on 0114 2630830 or emailing [info@mikebramall.co.uk](mailto:info@mikebramall.co.uk)

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### **Sheffield company offers energy-saving computer "scrappage scheme"**



*Peter Hopton of VeryPC*

VeryPC, one of the UK's leading manufacturers of energy efficient desktop computers, is one of the first companies to replace PCs with the *Big Business Refit*, an equipment scrappage scheme run by the Carbon Trust. The scheme offers UK small and medium-sized businesses between £3,000 and £500,000 in government-funded interest-free loans to help replace older, inefficient equipment. VeryPC is replacing old PCs with *Energy Saving Recommended Broadleaf™* PCs. The Carbon Trust energy efficiency loan scheme allows customers to borrow against their calculated energy savings with no interest for up to four years, as long as certain carbon targets are met. The trust will consider projects to replace hardware which will save at least 1.5 tonnes of CO2 emissions per £1,000 borrowed. The loans are designed to pay for themselves over one to four years through direct energy savings, so once the loans are repaid; savings go straight onto the

bottom line.

Get full details of the scheme at: <http://www.very-pc.co.uk/?page=news&article=9>

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### **Yorkshire & Humber is UK's renewable energy centre**



Three recent major wins for the region put Yorkshire & Humber at the forefront of the UK for wind power, nuclear energy and solutions for managing carbon emissions. Yorkshire Forward is the only one of England's 9 regional development agencies to have committed to a target of lowering greenhouse-gas emissions by 25% by 2016. And since the world now finds itself in an energy crisis, with the 130 biggest oil fields now in decline and oil at around \$80 a barrel, work is going on in the region to stimulate the market

for energy solutions.

Read more at: [http://www.yorkshire-forward.com/news-events/inform/Our-region-is-the-UKs-renewable-energy-centre?utm\\_source=180210email&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=emailcampaign](http://www.yorkshire-forward.com/news-events/inform/Our-region-is-the-UKs-renewable-energy-centre?utm_source=180210email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=emailcampaign)

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### **Investment readiness workshops**



Yorkshire Connect's investment readiness workshops are aimed at businesses with high growth potential which are seeking investment funding. The workshops are designed to help businesses to identify

what is an investor looking for and how the business can give itself the best chance of raising finance. The series of 6 free-of-charge workshops is delivered by experienced professionals, who have been doing all day what they talk about in the evening at the workshops, which are as follows:

- 13 April - Practical Business Plans & Going Global
- 20 April - Management Teams
- 05 May - Intellectual Property Rights & Wrongs
- 11th May - Effective Negotiation Skills
- 18 May - Presentation Skills
- 08 June - How to do a deal - Money, Valuations & Structures

For further details or to register online visit: [www.connectyorkshire.org/events](http://www.connectyorkshire.org/events)

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### **Yorkshire International Business Convention 2010**



*Michelle Mone*

An audience of 1500 of the region's key business people are expected to gather at this year's Yorkshire International Business Convention on Friday 11th June at the Yorkshire Events Centre, Harrogate. As well as world-class speakers, the full day event will also offer corporate hospitality and networking opportunities. This year's confirmed speakers include Michelle Mone, creator of Ultimo, the UK's leading designer lingerie brand, and the highly respected actor Brian Blessed.

For more information visit: <http://www.yibc.biz/index.html>

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### **Post Office financial services extended**

Following intensive lobbying from the FSB, Business Secretary Lord Mandelson has announced an expansion of financial services to be provided by the Post Office. The

Government has pledged £180 million of funding for the Post Office, in order to help it maintain the Post Office network. The extended range of financial services includes the development and introduction of a business bank account. The Post Office has also agreed a deal with Santander, where business customers can access their Santander accounts at Post Office branches.

To read more on this story go to:

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/Content/detail.aspx?NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=412768&SubjectId=2>

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### **Artists needed for Rotherham project**



Artist Adam Mileusnic is inviting you to help with a large-scale public art project for Rotherham town centre. Workshops will be held at the new arts-hub within Imperial Buildings on Saturday and Tuesday April 3 & 6. The finished project will be a prominent piece of work which will run down the 85m stretch of hoardings on Main Street currently surrounding development works happening on the new civic building at the former Guest & Chrimes site. The artist will be running the workshops in simple 'stop-frame' animations creating moving pictures from scrap metal that will convey the spirit of

Rotherham's Renaissance – this will really bring the ideas for the overall commission to life.

For further information, contact Alison Hall on 01709 254577

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### **Lord Mandelson says out-of-touch CBI backs 'bully banks'**



Lord Mandelson, the business secretary, yesterday launched a scathing attack on Richard Lambert, director-general of the CBI, saying he was "completely out of touch" with small business and preferred to "speak up for bullying banks". The row is the first serious confrontation between Mandelson and the CBI. The business secretary has generally had a good relationship with the employers' body, which has been supportive of his attempts to revitalise UK manufacturing. The spat, however, may signal a significant worsening of relations between Labour and business in the run-up to the election. Lambert's post-budget comments triggered the argument. He said plans to set up a "Credit Adjudicator" – a body that will intervene if companies are unhappy with banks turning down their loan applications – were "unworkable".

Read the full story at:

[http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry\\_sectors/banking\\_and\\_finance/article7078797.ece](http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/banking_and_finance/article7078797.ece)

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### **Quarter of businesses fear insolvency in double dip recession**

More than a quarter of small firms believe they will go under if the economy suffers a double dip recession, according to research by insolvency trade body R3. The research found that firms in the hotel and catering sector were the least optimistic, with nearly half saying that a double dip recession will lead to their business becoming insolvent. An

R3 spokesperson said: "Many struggling businesses drew heavily on their reserves in order to survive and their resources have now begun to run out."

To read more on this story go to:

<https://www.r3.org.uk/newsandpress/default.asp?page=1&i=523&id=382#PressStory>

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### **Business support package take-up lower than expected**

Take-up of the Government's £20 billion business support package launched at the height of the recession has been lower than expected, the UK's spending watchdog said today. The National Audit Office said the six schemes announced by the Department for Innovation, Business and Skills in autumn 2008 had provided just over £3 billion in subsidies, loans and guarantees as of the end of 2009. The DBIS measures included the car scrappage scheme, as well as working capital guarantees and enterprise finance schemes to ensure that viable small businesses could gain access to loans. The department estimates that 6,200 firms have received direct support as a result of the package although it does not know how many have indirectly benefited. The take-up of the schemes was lower because of the department's conservative approach to limiting the taxpayer's exposure - as well as announcing "ambitious levels of support which proved unrealistic", the NAO said.

For more on this story go to: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/business-support-package-takeup-lower-than-expected-1927874.html>

To read the full NAO report go to:

[http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0910/support\\_to\\_business.aspx](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0910/support_to_business.aspx)

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### **Government proposes forcing businesses to recycle**

The Government has outlined proposals to force businesses to recycle items, such as food, cardboard and glass. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs published the proposal as part of plans to try and cut the amount of waste that is sent to landfill. Defra has launched a consultation on how the UK can meet European Union landfill targets. Environment Secretary Hilary Benn said that the obligation to sort waste should "fall primarily on the waste collection authority and on businesses".

To read more on this story go to: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2010/100318c.htm>

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### **Equality bill passed in House of Lords**

The equality bill has passed its third reading in the House of Lords, the final stage at which it can be amended before it becomes law. The bill, which unites the various strands of diversity legislation, outlaws age discrimination and requires businesses to report on the gender pay gap, will now face final consideration by the House of Commons prior to receiving royal assent. It is expected to become law before the general election. Amendments made by the Lords included a power to outlaw discrimination on the basis of caste and a ban on asking for health and disability information prior to making a job offer.

For more on this story go to:

<http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/articles/2010/03/equality-bill-passed-in-house-of-lords.htm>

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### **Big banks object to FSA ban on self-certified mortgages**

Major high street banks are fighting the regulator's plans to ban "liars' loans", better known as self-certified mortgages, on the grounds that it would hurt the self employed.

The Financial Services Authority revealed plans to ban the practice last year as part of an effort to tighten up lending standards and "help protect consumers from themselves". The regulator wants banks to ensure that borrowers do not overreach themselves when taking out a mortgage. Banning self-certification and making income verification mandatory was one of the FSA's flagship proposals, but "large lenders and large intermediary networks in particular disagreed", it emerged in industry feedback to the mortgage market review.

To read more on this story go to:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/banksandfinance/7507094/Big-banks-object-to-FSA-ban-on-self-certified-mortgages.html>

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### **Chancellor confirms 50p broadband tax**

Chancellor Alistair Darling confirmed in the Budget last week that a broadband tax will come into force later in the year. From 1 October 2010, a monthly 50p tax will be levied on landlines in order to fund 'superfast' broadband services. The Government estimates that charging landline owners £6 per year could raise around £175 million annually to fund faster broadband services.

To read more on this story go to:

<http://www.silicon.com/technology/networks/2010/03/24/6-superfast-broadband-for-all-tax-will-arrive-this-october-39745631/>

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### **UK slumps down broadband league table**

The UK broadband industry added just 963,000 new broadband lines in 2009, less than half the 2008 figure, as the country continued to slump down the European league table of broadband connections. However, although this was down on the 1.6 million lines added in 2008, a strong surge in the fourth quarter saw 308,000 broadband lines added, a higher number than for the same period the previous year. The figures from Point Topic, commissioned by the Broadband Forum and announced at the IPTV World Forum, mean that total internet access has now reached 65.3 per cent of UK households. Broadband accounts for 62.1 per cent of the total.

For more on this story go to: <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/16/20100325/ttc-uk-slumps-down-broadband-league-table-6315470.html>

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### **Government announces new measures to speed up planning decisions**

The government's planning minister has announced new measures designed to speed up decision-making, and encourage councils to use a new power to raise funds from developers to support local development, and promote apprenticeship opportunities in their area. This is in addition to the £4.5 million granted for Planning Aid, an independent advice service for local people and community organisations otherwise unable to afford help to work with the planning system to shape development in their area. The new guidance will also help councils in setting up a Community Infrastructure Levy in their area when regulations come into force on 6 April. This will enable councils to raise funds from developers of new building projects to help add infrastructure to support new development - which could include new schools, hospitals, roads and transport schemes as well as libraries parks and leisure centres.

For more on this story go to: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1520643>

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### **Household goods boost retail sales**

Retail sales in Britain saw a surge during February, which was driven by an increase in demand for household goods, according to the latest figures from the ONS. The volume of sales grew by 2.1% between January and February 2010, which represented the largest increase since May 2008. Household goods saw the biggest month on month increase, with sales up by 11.2% between January and February 2010.

The ONS statistics report can be found at:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/rs0310.pdf>

### **FSB ADVICE SURGERY**

The Federation of Small Businesses has joined forces with Costco Wholesale to provide a weekly Business Advice Surgery to answer any questions members – or businesses in general – may have about the FSB or more general business issues.

***The surgery will take place in the store cafe at Costco Wholesale, Parkway Drive, Sheffield, S9 4WU each Monday morning from 10.15–11.15am (register at the enquiry desk).***

*If you cannot attend at this time, ring 0114 261 7132 for an alternative appointment.*

***The FSB advice surgery may provide the perfect answer to that pressing problem that has been causing you sleepless nights!***

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