



THERAPIES: Kirti Mistry at her shop off Creek Road in Greenwich

Business made E-as-y

NEW support to help businesses trade and network online will be launched this week.

The royal borough's E-Business support programme will be officially launched tomorrow (October 8), by South East Enterprise at their Woolwich offices.

Cllr Denise Hyland, leader of the royal borough, will give the main address to a mixture of businesses who have been helped already and those interested in learning more.

The programme provides a free bespoke service to trading businesses so they can take advantage of a range of e-business tools which can help them to increase productivity and enhance their business.

The support includes help with websites, software design, search engines, social media, email, e-accounting, intranets and extranets.

The three-year programme has been funded by the royal borough and is being run by South East Enterprise. The aim is to reach as many of the 7,000 businesses in the borough during the programme.

"E-Business is more than just selling on-line, it can help make almost every aspect of a business more effective," said South East Enterprise managing director Tony Goldstein.

"The help we offer could be with their website and content management system.

BUSINESS advisers are set to launch a new programme of support to help local entrepreneurs use the internet and other digital media to generate more trade. It's the latest in a range of initiatives backed by the royal borough and designed to help business start up, progress and prosper.

If it is an old one we can give website training.

"We could help business owners use voice over internet protocol - speaking by phone over the internet, which can be cheaper for making calls - or e-accounting, or accessing their work desktop from home.

"People might be working but people with small businesses might have family commitments and they need to work more effectively from home."

They can also advise on using social media effectively to gain more business.

Tony explained that one company which had already used the E-Business service had already drawn in enough new trade to take on more staff.

Kirti Mistry went to SEE when her business started suffering from nearby building work which was discouraging customers from coming in.

She set up Eizun Wellbeing, just off Creek Road in Greenwich offering holistic and beauty therapies as well as conventional massage. She also sells natural products, both food and holistic treatments. They include a detox box, with five different

ingredients such as organic aloe vera and coconut oil, together with a plan to follow. The support she received helped her revamp her website making it interactive, which helped to boost sales and save time. This included online payments and bookings, automating the whole process and cutting time spent on the phone.

● For further information on the E-Business support available contact SEE on 020 8305 2666 or visit www.seenterprise.co.uk

Desk space for hire

SOUTH East Enterprise is now also offering some co-working or 'hot-desking' space. For £10 a half day or £15 for a full day those interested have access to Wi-Fi, a kitchen and a breakout space to hold meetings, for example with clients, as well as the chance to share ideas with fellow users.

● Call 020 8305 2666, email info@seenterprise.co.uk or visit www.seenterprise.co.uk

'E-Business is more than just selling on-line, it can help make almost every aspect of a business more effective'

SEE support is just the business

ASPIRING entrepreneurs can get support from enterprise experts at South East Enterprise no matter how long they've been trading.

The agency runs a range of business support courses funded by the royal borough with expertise available on launching and running a business, getting the maximum benefit from e-business, online trading and marketing. Monthly start up workshops are held at the Old Library in Woolwich thanks to funding from the royal borough.

Fatoumata Touray set up Be-London, a fashion label that merges African and western wear, using prints and bold colours. She wrote a business plan, and built two-year financial forecasts, based on the results at a stall she set up in Woolwich Market

to test customers' reaction to her dresses, skirts, shoes and bags. She said: "The quality of help I received from SEE was second to none, and I am really excited about the future of my label."

Fatoumata is now looking for premises to open a shop, but is still running her stall in Woolwich while the search goes on. Michelle Smith attended a business start up workshop run by SEE in Woolwich. She then launched In-Let Management, offering services to landlords, letting agents and housing associations including creating

inventories and making inspections and condition checks. She said: "I found SEE through the council's website, and received a wealth of resources and expert advice available through their business advisers and the E-Business Programme."

"I have learned so much more about business, and specifically marketing, than I would ever have been able to on my own. I believe without a doubt that this has helped to position me much further ahead than I would have been without SEE's critical input, advice and specialist knowledge."

'I have learned so much about business, and specifically marketing'



COLOURFUL: Fatoumata Touray with her fashions on her stall in Woolwich

The future's bright at The Orangery

THE historic Orangery in Eltham, which was totally restored and converted into offices, has become a runaway success in its first year.

Seven business suites were built in the old building with new-build ones alongside. And all but one have since been rented out, bringing new jobs and business to the area.

It means a remarkable turnaround for The Orangery, which was built in 1723 and once stood in the grounds of Eltham House.

After years of neglect, it fell into ruin and was listed on the architectural 'at risk' register by English Heritage. Built in 2007 the Orangery Lane building was taken over by Greenwich



LOVELY BUILDING: A view of the Orangery

Enterprise Board which worked with the council to restore and develop it.

Businesses that have moved in are delighted with the building and the facilities it offers. Dermot Rooney, a director with family-run civil engineering firm MJ Rooney, said: "I love it here. We moved from much smaller premises in New Eltham a year ago, and we wanted to stay local. We've got a big, open plan room for our office work. It's handy having the local services in Eltham High Street, such as a printers, and there are good transport links to other areas where we work, such as Kensington and Chelsea, as well as Blackheath and Greenwich."

"We've since taken on six office staff at The Orangery and an additional 40 on our building sites. We want to continue to grow our business, which is specialised work constructing building extensions below ground level."

His business neighbours include education resourcing agency ITPER, which supplies teachers, support staff, caretakers and admin people to schools and further education colleges, for example for maternity cover or



EXPANDING: Brothers Dermot and Cormac Rooney, with their new piece of high-tech kit that monitors movement in buildings during construction



HAPPY STAFF: Deborah Hunt, compliance manager at ITPER

for long-term contracts. Their customers are around 50 schools throughout London.

Deborah Hunt, ITPER's compliance manager, said: "We've been going 15 years, and been at The Orangery since April this year. We moved here from old offices in Greenwich that were cold, dated and too big. It's wonderful here, and the staff are so much happier. It's a lovely building, very bright and with air conditioning."

"We are like a little community here. Having Eltham High Street nearby really makes it, with restaurants, supermarkets, cafes, parks and the Eltham Centre just around the corner."

"It's a good place to work and with the good transport links it's easy to commute to. We've got parking spaces as well, which we were able to buy from the council."

Maximising business opportunities at The Orangery is all part of the council's Eltham Masterplan, designed to develop the town centre, improve its facilities and economy, and create new jobs. ● Businesses interested in setting up in The Orangery should contact Jane Holman at the Greenwich Enterprise Board by email at jh@geb.co.uk or call 020 8305 2222.