

Appendix 6

The Argus **Business**

Tuesday, May 24, 2011

ing Commercial Property

curious arrival hits the festival

HENDRICK'S Horseless Carriage of Curiosities rolled into Brighton Fringe at the weekend. Organised by Hendrick's Gin, the carriage is open each day between 10am and 5pm until May 30. The project will receive a free gin

session in Jubilee Square. The carriage is a converted dining car where the company which has a distillery in Heston will host a dining

session. The carriage will be serving a range of gin and tonic drinks. The event runs from 10am to 5pm and tickets cost £5 per person.

The carriage is available through Gin in Brighton. The event is hosted by writer and actor James Cunniff. Tickets are £5 and limited to 10 people.

The event is sponsoring the writing South (NWS) Best New Play Award. The award is now known as "The New Writing South Best New Play Award supported by Hendrick's".

PICTURE: JULIA CLAXTON



GIN AND BEAR IT: Crowds flock to the Hendrick's Horseless Carriage of Curiosities in Jubilee Square

Fears over relaxing of planning laws

BUSINESS leaders have expressed fears over controversial new plans to relax planning laws.

The Brighton and Hove Chamber of Commerce says the Government's proposals to loosen the rules governing changes in the use of buildings from commercial to residential will see small shopkeepers and businesses ousted to make way for more profitable housing schemes.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has put the proposal out for consultation. Brighton and Hove City Council has approached the Brighton and

Hove Chamber of Commerce to get the views of businesses in the city.

A Chamber spokesman said its members are anxious about the lack of smaller space for offices and workshops, particularly near the city centre, and the increasing threat to retail space throughout the city.

He said: "On the face of it, people may see the deregulation as a good thing, particularly if they're concerned about some of the city's large, abandoned and increasingly derelict

commercial buildings.

"Our fear is that deregulation in 'change of use' rules will create a whole new trend for ousting small businesses and independent shops.

"The current regulations protect our small business infrastructure and allow council planners to judge what's best for the whole community, rather than what's most profitable for an individual landowner or developer.

"At the moment, property owners and developers can frequently turn a quick profit by changing a building or plot of land from commercial to residential use and then throwing up

a rapid-build block of flats, and it's only the present planning regulations that prevent such activity from going on wholesale across the city."

Mark Froud, chief executive at Sussex Enterprise, said the proposals would have unintended consequences for businesses.

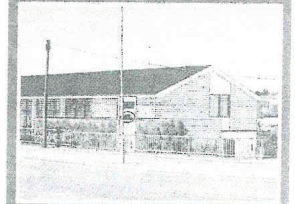
He said: "The local authority needs to think very carefully about this relaxation because it could cost jobs.

"The unintended consequence of this move will see small businesses forced out at the end of a tenancy. Is that what this Government wants? I don't think so."

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by JOHN KEENAN
Business Editor

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Do you have news of a successful start up or a new appointment?

Has your business won an award?

If so, the Argus Business Editor wants to hear from you.

Email news of your Sussex business life to john.keenan@theargus.co.uk or call John on 01273 544545



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Firms' apprenticeship promise

SCORES of firms have pledged to support an apprenticeship drive.

Up to 80 businesses attended the launch of the National Apprenticeship Service's '100 in 100' campaign at Eastbourne Town Hall in Grove Road.

The campaign is challenging companies in the area to generate 100 apprenticeship places within 100 days and get young people into jobs.

The launch was kicked off by Stephen Lloyd MP.

Gavin Smith, employer services director for the National

Apprenticeship Service, explained the benefits of apprenticeships for both businesses and apprentices.

If you are a business and want to take up the challenge of taking on an apprentice visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600.



SUPPORT: Stephen Lloyd MP with apprenticeship providers and apprentices

Charity event for autism

A BUSINESSWOMAN is raising funds for an autism charity.

Mebrak Ghebreveldi is holding a charity dinner to raise money for children and families from Eritrea.

The special event will take place at Buddha Belly in Fisher Street, Lewes, on June 23.

Ms Ghebreveldi runs Vandu Language Services in St Nicholas Lane, Lewes, an interpreting company that represents clients who do not speak English as a first language.

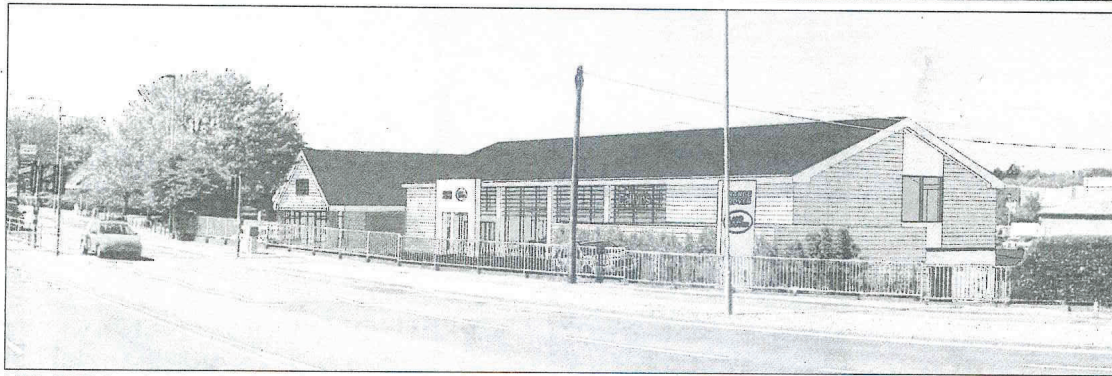
For more information about the evening call Ms Ghebreveldi on 01273 473986.

Three Peaks Challenge

A GROUP of telecommunication workers have completed a gruelling challenge.

Walkers Claire and Mel Baker, Julie Tindall, Steve Leonard and Amie Cook, from Hailsham-based Chalvington Communications completed The Three Peaks Challenge within the 36-hour time limit to raise funds for the Meningitis Trust.

So far the Chalvington for Charity Three Peaks Fund has raised about £3,500 with the event as a whole expected to exceed £30,000 for the Trust. Pledges of sponsorship are still being received with a deadline of June 12. If you would like to offer your support please visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/ChalvingtonComms>.



LAND AHOY: An artist's impression of the new Caffyns Land Rover dealership in Lewes

Vision unveiled for new Land Rover facilities

THIS is the first image of a new car showroom.

Nine new members of staff will be employed at the Caffyns Land Rover dealership in Lewes.

The new flagship property in Brooks Road will link to the firm's existing building to create a larger vehicle display area.

The firm says it will give customers a greater choice of Land Rover vehicles for sale and improved parking.

There will also be a new service

reception, offices, and vehicle preparation and MoT facilities.

Simon Caffyn, chief executive of Caffyns Plc, said: "Our new facilities in Lewes will reflect perfectly the modern, 21st century brand Land Rover has become.

"Part of our plans in Lewes have already seen the creation of a leading Land Rover service centre so that our commitment to Land Rover customers can continue after purchase.

"We are incredibly proud of our long presence in Lewes and are

thrilled to bring this new facility to the town.

"We also see the expansion of our Lewes dealership as another success in our aim to build on our premium volume businesses in bigger, better dealerships."

The plans are the second phase of a major project which began last autumn with the completion of a new Land Rover service centre, also in Brooks Road.

The work is due to be completed by early 2012.

Fears over relaxing of planning laws

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Trevor Freeman, chairman of the Brighton and Hove branch of the Federation of Small Businesses, urged the Government to listen to the concerns of business leaders.

He said: "Market forces will always favour residential development over commercial, so the business community looks to Government and the local authority to apply planning regulation sensibly to maintain balance between the availability of affordable homes and the supply of inexpensive, attractive commercial and retail premises."

But Soozie Campbell, Brighton city centre manager, said relaxing planning rules could be good for areas where the current commercial mix isn't working.

She said: "For example, more than 20% of commercial properties in Preston Street are currently vacant. If change of use means the

street becomes fully occupied it will be good news for all concerned as the properties will be spruced up and the street will come back to life."

Deputy council leader Amy Kennedy said the council wants to achieve a balance of homes and business premises in a planned way.

She said: "We would be concerned if the numbers of business premises could be reduced in an ad-hoc way, leaving us with a shortage of various types."

Businesses can read the full DCLG proposals at www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/relaxationchangeconsultation, where they can submit their views directly to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

How do you think the plans would affect shops and business? Tell us what you think at theargus.co.uk/business

Sweet shop set to close

A SHOPKEEPER has blamed soaring costs and a drop in customers for her decision to close.

The Suck it and Sea sweet-shop will finally close its doors on Saturday.

Melissa Drayson, owner of the shop in Trafalgar Street, Brighton, said she will continue to run sweet stalls at events.

She said: "As has been the case with many shops, this past year has not been kind to us. Costs have increased dramatically and we are seeing fewer customers.

"Christmas sales were hit hard by the snow and at Easter by the heatwave.

"The good news is that we are not giving up entirely. People may see us during the summer running our sweet stall at a summer event or two. We are also planning to build on the success of our Sweet Round, bringing sweets to busy local office workers."

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