

County PR firm is home to success

Local PR specialists Whitefoot-Forward PR, a division of Chamber patron Whitefoot-Forward Ltd, are celebrating the addition of two new regional clients with a house-moving theme to their portfolio – just weeks before the company itself moves to new offices. Hereford-based GB Liners, a national household removals company, operates more than 90 vehicles from ten depot locations throughout the UK and will use public relations to increase awareness of its services with both business and household customers. The PR team's second new client is Worcester-based Scout Solutions who specialise in creating IT solutions for the property sector. Having recently launched www.HomeSwapper.co.uk, an online solution for social housing tenants looking to mutually exchange their homes, Scout

Solutions have appointed Whitefoot-Forward to help increase website traffic through the regional media, as well as generating interest amongst social housing landlords. Whitefoot-Forward PR already works for leading name clients in sectors such as home and garden, women's interest, charity and automotive. The arrival of these two, home-focused new clients coincides with the firm's own plans to move from Hartlebury to Droitwich this summer, providing a base for future expansion. Director Michelle Whitefoot said: "GB Liners and Scout Solutions are two very interesting new contracts for us. Their needs may appear similar but they will require quite individual media strategies to get their messages across. We are already working hard to deliver successful PR campaigns for both clients."



Whitefoot-Forward PR adds clients with a house-moving theme to its portfolio: PR account director Michelle Whitefoot (front right) with key account managers Amanda Chatterton, Lee Southen and Jenny McCulloch (anti-clockwise).

For further information contact Michelle Whitefoot on 01299 250588, or email michelle@whitefoot-forward.co.uk

Harrison Clark launches a new online tracking system



Louise Jones, conveyancer at Harrison Clark LLP sat next to the new Online Tracking Conveyancing System.

As part of the department's expansion plans, the Residential Property Team at leading Worcestershire-based law firm Harrison Clark LLP has recently launched an Online Tracking System for their clients. "Everybody knows that moving house can be a stressful time for people and the aim of the Residential Property Team at Harrison Clark is to make that move as stress free as possible." said Louise Jones, Conveyancer at Harrison Clark LLP. "With the introduction of an Online Tracking System, each client will be able to track the progress of their case from their computers, so there will be no more evenings sat wondering and worrying about how things are progressing. Just a few clicks of a button and you will be able to obtain the most up-to-date information on your transaction. "The government is actively encouraging e-conveyancing and the aim of online tracking is just the start of Harrison Clark's move towards the paperless conveyancing transaction and our aim is to make the process easier and stress free. "Online tracking will allow each client to access their own screen file, via the Harrison Clark website. The file will be updated three times a day to allow the client to track progress of their case at any time of the day or night." For more details on this and all other conveyancing services offered by Harrison Clark LLP, please contact Mrs. Louise Jones on 01905 744808, email ljones@harrison-clark.co.uk or Mrs. Faye Green on 01905 744889, email fgreen@harrison-clark.co.uk.

Shaftesbury Housing join Sanctuary

Take on Technology Cantono

Each issue, Chamber patron Cantono takes a look at a key technical issue of interest to readers.

VPN a robust, secure and cheap solution for remote access

In counties like Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire, small-business owners and employees often have to cover a wide area, and need access to their computer systems remotely. However, remote access immediately raises a wide and growing range of security threats. VPN, which stands for 'virtual private network,' can help, providing authorised users with a secure gateway through a firewall and into your network. Once the domain of big business, VPNs have come down in price and are now eminently affordable for SMEs. If you have home-workers, remote offices or employees who travel and need to connect to your company network, a VPN can protect your sensitive data.

Integratech forges closer links with the Chamber as the new era dawns

Integratech have worked closely with the Chamber of Commerce over the last 12 months to provide IT support, advice and planning. Now as the Chamber moves into a new era the two companies are further strengthening their relationship. From April Integratech will be providing the Chamber with a number of exciting new systems and services. Integratech will be replacing the Chamber's legacy phone system with the latest Avaya

VPNs offer robustness and security, and are cheaper than dedicated phone lines. So, does your business need a VPN? Factors to consider: Sensitive data - Most companies have customer information, financial records and company-confidential material in their internal networks that merit protection from attack from mobile connections

Home workers, travelling employees or other remote workers – the more you have, the more vulnerable you are. Apart from offering secure network access to those travelling or working off-site, VPNs extend the corporate network to those workers, making them feel fully "part of the team". Number of employees - A VPN may not be cost-effective for a company with fewer than five employees, unless they travel or work remotely. Companies with 10 or more employees are most likely to reap the full benefits.

If you would like to know more about VPNs and their relevance to SMEs, or overall management of your network connections and firewalls, please feel free to contact Cantono at info@cantono.com, or by calling 20 7490 2727

Sanctuary Housing Group has strengthened its position as one of the UK's leading social enterprises after Shaftesbury Housing joined the organisation. Sanctuary, whose head office is in Worcester, will support Shaftesbury in bringing about long-term improvements for its residents. The aims of the merger are to improve and safeguard delivery of services, ensure Shaftesbury reaches at least 'two star' audit commission standard within the first two years, and turn Shaftesbury into an efficient housing organisation providing cost-effective services that its residents value. This announcement comes soon after Charter Community Housing decided to join Sanctuary.

Earlier this year tenants in Rochford voted to set up a new housing association as part of Sanctuary which will see 1,700 homes transfer during the summer. Following the completion of these plans Sanctuary Housing Group will manage in excess of 68,000 properties across the UK with a value of £2.2 billion. It currently employs nearly 4,500 people, with over 200 working in Worcester. The separate activities of Shaftesbury and Sanctuary in the South West have combined to create a single, stronger operation known as Sanctuary Shaftesbury. Sanctuary is planning to combine its activities and those of Shaftesbury in parts of the South

New distribution agreement for Malvern Instruments



Malvern Instruments and Farfield Scientific Ltd have concluded an agreement that gives Malvern Instruments exclusive distribution rights in the United States, South and Central America for Farfield's unique range of analytical instruments. These systems provide insight into the structure and behaviour of biomolecules and nano-scale materials. The agreement became effective on 1 March 2007.

Farfield Scientific Ltd is based in Crewe and has offices in Pittsburgh, USA. The company is an innovator and global supplier of new analytical instruments that address the emerging needs for molecular scale measurement in the areas of surface science and nanotechnology. These are some of the most demanding measurement challenges facing research over the next decade. Malvern's Business Development Director, Duncan Roberts, said: "Sales of our established Zetasizer Nano range of particle and molecular characterization systems continue to grow and we are seeing their increasing application for the characterization of proteins, biological and other nano-scale materials. The distribution agreement with Farfield Scientific will enable Malvern Instruments to offer its customers in the United States, South and Central America an additional capability that will help provide new insights into a range of surface science applications."

Farfield
illuminating the molecular world...



Integratech

INTEGRITY IN A WORLD OF TECHNOLOGY
the Chamber's IT system can be rebuilt within a couple of hours of a catastrophic failure, allowing business to continue either at Severn House or another location. Integratech are also proud to be providing the IT and telecoms platform for Concordia Business Services Ltd, the company formed by former Chamber CEO Christine Jones. By investing in a solid ICT base from the word go, the company can concentrate on what it does best and not be held back by technology.

East, London and East of England. The merger also involves Banbury Homes and Kingsmead Homes which will become two separate subsidiaries of Sanctuary. Shaftesbury's care and supported housing division, Ashley Homes, was acquired by Sanctuary last April. Sanctuary Housing Group Chief Executive David Bennett said: "This move will allow Shaftesbury to capitalise on a wealth of new resources and expertise and will lead to improvement." Ian McDermott, Chief Executive of the newly formed Sanctuary Shaftesbury said: "This partnership will draw on unique strengths of both organisations to respond effectively to the needs of our tenants. This is a new beginning for the organisation."