

More brain power is a big boost

Ever wished you had a few more brains to help take your business forward?

Tuesday, September 15, sees the launch of the Brains-Trust, a mastermind group which will give you big company management solutions for your business.

Brains-Trust will provide you with your own board of directors (a maximum of 12 people) that meets once a month for four hours to share ideas, gain valuable advice and solve problems in a structured, yet creative way.

Imagine having some of the best business brains around you and working for you!

The launch event will be held at Ravenwood Hall Hotel, Rougham, Bury St Edmunds, from 9am to 1pm. Joining Brains-Trust will cost £100 per month with a review after three months.

For further information and to avoid disappointment, please reserve your place as soon as possible by contacting alex.parr@brains-trust.co.uk.

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FACEBOOK FANS

If you like Facebook, check out WEETU's Facebook page — and become one of our fans!

WEETU

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT ENTERPRISE AND TRAINING UNIT

The Chronicle

Our money could help you

A six-figure pot of cash is awaiting Norfolk women keen to launch businesses — all thanks to WEETU.

Jeanette Flemons holds the key to a loan fund totalling £120,000 and wants to hear from women across the county who need funding to kick-start fresh ventures or develop existing businesses.

Jeanette, enterprise support officer at WEETU, makes loans of anything between £250 and £2500 through the Full Circle programme. In the past 11 years, the fund has helped 115 women with loans worth more than £100,000.

"There are many women in Norfolk who want to go into business and self-employment but find it difficult to borrow through high street lenders and other traditional routes because they have a poor credit history, for example, or they are not home-owners. We want more women to be aware of WEETU's Full Circle loan fund, which really can



JEANETTE FLEMONS: 'The Full Circle loan fund really can prove invaluable and make all the difference when it comes to getting a business off the ground.'

prove invaluable and make all the difference when it comes to getting a business off the ground," she says. "We're not talking about big businesses. These are more micro-businesses: people who require funding for things like computers, stock, raw materials, transport, cooking or craft equipment, or for attending training courses."

Women can apply for loans if they join one of WEETU's Enterprise Circles, groups of four to six women who

provide peer support and mutual encouragement.

When someone applies for a WEETU loan, they are not credit scored but the application has to be approved by other circle members before being referred to a loans panel. Money is loaned over a term of up to two years, charged at five per cent above the base rate. The rate is fixed and based on the reducing balance.

For more information on Full Circle, call the WEETU office.

Enjoy a taste of real Norfolk flavour

The award-winning social enterprise Produced In Norfolk, which started life five years ago with help from WEETU, has announced its latest campaign to link the skills of local people and the Norfolk countryside to what we eat.

Produced In Norfolk – Taste the View, offers free opportunities to try over 20 samples of local produce: from milkshakes to a nip of real ale and paté to local apple juice, in venues across the county. In addition there are farm safaris, invitations to see ice-cream being

made and livestock to visit and feed.

Director Jane Miller says: "Produced In Norfolk works to protect rural skills and jobs from being lost and this campaign is all about creating pride in what skilled local people make and celebrating our heritage."

The campaign runs from September 19 to October 4 during British Food Fortnight as part of the Norfolk Food Festival. Full details at www.producedinnorfolk.com.

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Step this way to a new job

Do you have great customer relationship management skills? Are you a natural networker who enjoys planning and managing events, meeting and greeting people?

Are you a gifted co-ordinator with excellent project management skills? Can you demonstrate the benefits of membership, and elicit customers' needs, over the phone? Do know how to manage and secure sponsorship, liaise with partners, and proactively contribute to sales and development plans?

If so, this could be the opportunity you've been waiting for. Enterprising Women is a vibrant and dynamic community of women entrepreneurs, providing comprehensive business support and specialist information to help women start-up and grow their businesses. This community is thriving and needs an energetic person to help manage its growing membership, sponsorship and development plans to continue its success across the UK.

Enterprising Women is looking for a development manager who will help increase and support its membership, manage a wide range of events and freelance event co-ordinators, identify and target future sponsors and be a proactive member of the development team.

The job has a salary in the region of 24-26k. Please send a CV to hannah@ytko.com.

Cute camper is Imogen's clever idea for business

Clever Camper is the name of a clever new business which has been set up by Imogen Bishop.

Clever Camper, based in Norwich, offers short breaks in a beautiful, fully equipped teardrop trailer. Imogen says a teardrop trailer is cooler than a caravan, cheaper than a campervan and a lot more fun than just a tent.

The firm provides the specially customised trailer in an all-inclusive, affordable package. Bedding and equipment is supplied, along with a simple tent and awning to provide flexible outdoor space for individuals, couples or families.

Available all year round for



CLEVER CAMPER: Imogen Bishop in a cosy teardrop trailer.

holidays, breaks and event accommodation, prices start at just £125.

"Everything is designed to make your holiday more of a joy and less of a chore. The trailer is insulated and rain-proof – ideal for extending the camping season or taking the risk out of the British summer," says Imogen, who has received business advice from WEETU and has been on two WEETU courses.

"I would like to thank WEETU for helping me start my new business by offering fellow members a 20 per cent discount on all bookings made by the end of September."

Contact imogen@clevercamper.co.uk or visit the website www.clevercamper.co.uk.

Memories from 21 Years of WEETU

1994 — Susan Eltringham

Susan Eltringham was a single parent with three children when she completed WEETU's 10-week course, called Choosing the Way, in December 1993.

Interviewed by the Eastern Daily Press in April 1994, Susan said: "I enjoyed it thoroughly. I have never held a full-time job of any description but the WEETU course opened up doors and showed me what I could do. I haven't stopped since. I am recommending the course to everyone I see. We were a very mixed bunch of people on the course but we all had one thing in common: we hadn't been in paid employment for a long time"

Susan continued to take an adult education



course on Information Technology and an Open University course – and hoped to obtain a BA at the end.

Her ultimate aim was to be financially independent.

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Keeping fit and healthy will be the focus of a Fitness Festival in Norwich on September 13. WEETU supporter Jay Beckett, who runs GreenBean Fitness, is involved in organising the event at Recreation Road Sports Centre, in conjunction with Recreation Road, Avenue Junior and Parkside schools. It runs from 10am to 3pm. Events will include a 5K run/walk at 11am, junior fun runs, games, sports and lots of family activities. Food and refreshments will be provided by The Green Grocers. Money raised will go towards school sport and the British Heart Foundation. Entry forms can be downloaded via www.greenbeanfitness.co.uk or www.recreationroadsportscentre.org.uk. Contact Jay on 07824 396222 or Tim on 01603 458382.

Cleaning venture will be a fresh start for Bridget

You may think that losing a leg would want to make you take it easy – but that's far from the case for busy Bridget Holden. Instead she's launching a new franchise of the eco-friendly cleaning service, Living Clean.

Due to a serious accident at work while a teacher, Bridget then lost her leg through an infection. Following complications, she was offered pioneering surgery called osseointegration and, after four years of intensive rehabilitation, countless hospital visits and numerous nerve pain medication, Bridget is now raring to take on a fresh challenge.

Bridget, 52, has launched a new Living Clean franchise offering an eco-friendly cleaning service to customers in North Norfolk.

Having been in the Territorial Army for 14 years, she's dealt with fear head-on: driving tanks and free-falling from an aeroplane from 20,000ft.

A Norfolk woman through and through, she



NEW VENTURE: Bridget Holden and brother Neil.

lives and works on a beautiful farm at Hindolveston. She originally got the business bug when she helped a brother manage his business – and from that she learned that she loved organising, planning and dealing with clients and staff.

Bridget knew that she wanted to run her own business and when she got the all-clear from the hospital she set out to seek the perfect opportunity with her brother Neil, an established local farmer.

Bridget and Neil have always had a close relationship. He is 10 years her junior and they spent much of their early years together, making the perfect partnership.

Julie Bishop, founder of Living Clean, one of WEETU's many success stories, says: "I believe Bridget is the right person for the North Norfolk franchise, I've never come across someone as determined and as dynamic as her."

Bridget says: "Living Clean is a fantastic opportunity for me. I can use all my existing skills and experiences, meeting clients, managing staff and developing the service across North Norfolk."

Living Clean is becoming one of the UK's leading eco-friendly cleaning brands, with two prestigious Green Apple awards and its own range of fresh and fruity, green cleaning products.

To find out about Living Clean franchises, call Julie Bishop on 01603 219966. To book a clean with Bridget, call 01263 715659 or e-mail northernorfolk@livingclean.co.uk.

We want your success stories

WEETU wants The Chronicle to capture your success stories – so that WEETU women create the headlines and help to spread the word about our services and achievements in Norwich and the wider Norfolk community.

Please keep us up-to-date with how your lives have changed thanks to the WEETU experience and let The Chronicle know your news and views. We also want to hear what content you'd like to see in The Chronicle every month: the things that interest you and will

help you in your daily working life. All contributors should send their news and views to our special Chronicle e-mail address: thechronicle@weetu.org. The next deadline is September 25.

Founded in 1987, WEETU helps women to take control of their economic lives through advice, training and support to develop employment and enterprise opportunities. It is based at 2 Redwell Street, Norwich. Call 01603 230625 or visit www.weetu.org.

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Just say 'no' to beat the scammers

It's been a busy summer for scammers, according to Trading Standards experts – and the advice is to be on your guard, never give out financial details to "unknowns" and don't be afraid to say no.

Norfolk County Council Trading Standards has issued warnings to businesses about being contacted from organisations wanting to sell advertising space. These approaches normally take the course of an unsolicited phone call to the business and an attempt is made to sell advertising space in a publication, often with some apparent worthy cause theme and with a questionable level of distribution.

It is sometimes the case that the call is taken by an employee who is told the business owner has already agreed to this. A demand for payment then follows, sometime even if there has been no agreement to advertise and only further details were requested.

Trading Standards is also warning people not to reply to scam e-mails that imply that they are offering a tax rebate if they fill in an online form that would disclose their personal information.

HM Revenue and Customs would not inform anyone of a tax rebate by e-mail or invite them to complete an online form to receive a tax rebate.

They also advise not to visit the website contained within the e-mail or disclose any personal or payment information.

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Jennifer can bring harmony to your life

Does your work make you happy? Jennifer Woods (pictured) feels it should do and that many people don't enjoy it as much as they could.

She has set up a new holistic business service with the aim of bringing organisation to the chaos, support and direction to projects while developing the peace and harmony to allow the fun to flow back into your work life.

Jennifer is more than just an administrator, project manager or PA – as a qualified counsellor and experienced business woman, she also helps you tame your work life through analysing your business challenges.

"My services are aimed at small businesses who need ad hoc or short-term help on an hourly rate. No job too small, as they say. Last year I received coaching sessions from Bev Hooper through WEETU. She helped me gain the focus and confidence to become self-employed," she says.

"I plan to do some of WEETU's courses soon as the help is invaluable to someone like me who has never been self-employed before."

Give Jennifer a call on 07786 076260 to discuss how your business life needs taming or visit www.wildsoul.co.uk.

Workshops and courses all with women in mind

Personal development

LaunchPad

An exclusive personal development programme for women. Attending this programme will help you to examine your life and time at home and at work and discover ways of feeling more in control, begin to understand yourself and to take action for change. Five sessions of five hours held once every two weeks. The goal-setting workshop for LaunchPad is a prerequisite to attending this course.

Pennies, Pounds & Plastic

For women aged 25 or under, this is a three-hour workshop covering issues surrounding spending, borrowing, debt, credit and savings and aims to help you gain control of your finances. Each client will receive a free calculator and spending diary.

Prelude

If you are thinking of returning to study or training and want to make sure you get the most out of it, this could be the course for you. Covering time management, listening and note-taking skills and concluding with a look at learning styles to help you get the most out of any course you may be considering.

SkillStation

An 'Introduction to the Modern Office', this course comprises one three-hour session a week for four weeks. You'll learn how to deal with office politics and processes, and familiarise yourself with a typical workstation, IT applications and how to get organised.

Make Money Work

A new financial capability and employment project, the training is open to all women who are unemployed or economically inactive. The training will cover the following areas:

- Borrowing and credit
- Budgeting
- Golden rules of dealing with debt
- Prioritising debts and bills
- Bank accounts
- Financial jargon
- Making the most of money
- Financial implications of returning to work.

Following these sessions you will have the opportunity to go on to a workshop covering action planning and support to find employment.

Enterprise training

Is Enterprise for Me?

If you have an idea for a business we can help you make it a reality. Is Enterprise for Me? enables you to produce a feasibility study of your business idea and make sure you've done all the things needed to make it a success. Six sessions of three hours, this award-winning course offers an OCN Level 2 accreditation.

Enterprise training course details continue on Page Five

Grab your diary and make a date

September 12 – Is Enterprise for Me?
September 15 – Assertiveness
September 16 – Marketing Skills
September 17 – Application Forms
September 21 – Goal-setting for LaunchPad
September 22 – Customer Service
September 22 – I Want My Own Website
September 23 – Pennies, Pounds & Plastic
September 24 – Centre Meeting
September 24 – Hidden Skills
September 29 – CV Workshop

September 30 – Sales Skills
October 6 – Interview Skills
October 7 – Practical Book-keeping
October 9 – Confidence Building
October 9 – Selling Online
October 14 – Business Planning
October 16 – Hidden Skills
October 21 – Money Management
October 21 – Enterprise Circle Day
October 23 – CV Workshop
October 29 – Pennies, Pounds & Plastic

Giving you Skills for Business

(Continued from Page Four)

These WEETU workshops are aimed at new and existing self-employed women. Funded and part-funded places are available.

Each Skills for Business workshop is delivered by one of WEETU's expert female trainers, each of whom has personal experience in the subject area.

The content is aimed at women who have identified the feasibility of their business idea and want to move on to the next stage or who are in the early stages of setting up their own business and need some support. You can choose from:

Sales Skills

One five-hour workshop to help you understand the concepts of selling, how the sales process works, plan your sales strategy and achieve your business targets.

Marketing Skills

Learn to understand marketing principles and use them to develop a marketing strategy for your own business. One session of five hours.

Cashflow & Final Accounts

Develop an understanding of business accounts and learn how to produce them for your own business. Understand the principles of managing cashflow so you can apply these in your own business. One five-hour session.

Costing & Pricing

Understand the different types of costs and the impact they can have on running your business. Learn what factors affect the prices you can charge and how you can develop a pricing strategy to ensure your business is profitable.

Business Planning & Contingency

Learn what goes into a business plan and identify what yours should include. Consider the importance of contingency planning and how it can help in avoiding problems. You will benefit most from this session if you have already attended the others, as you will have most of the information you need to start completing your business plan straight away.

Practical Book-keeping in Small Businesses

Understand different options for structuring your company. Recognise which financial systems are right for you. Know how to organise your information and keep the right records. Understand how to complete a self-assessment tax return. Know what expenses are claimable. Understand the basic principles of VAT and managing a payroll. One three-hour workshop.

I Want My Own Website

A three-hour workshop to help you understand what makes a good website. Know why a bad website is worse than no website! Understand the importance of appropriate layout, design and create your own website pages using free materials and understand the principles of editing and how keep your site up-to-date.

Selling Online

If you want to sell your product or service online, this session will help you identify resources to drive customers to your website. You will also understand the pros and cons for selling online and consider the different payment methods available by attending this three-hour workshop.

If you're interested in attending any of our courses or workshops (or if you know someone who might be), please call WEETU on 01603 230625 or e-mail admin@weetu.org.

Firms struggle to find bank finance

Norfolk's businesses are continuing to experience difficulties accessing bank finance, according to research carried out by economic development partnership Shaping Norfolk's Future.

Despite assurances from the UK's main banks about the availability of finance,

businesses claim banks have increased the cost of funds and tightened lending criteria.

More than a third of businesses surveyed by a team of researchers from the UEA Business School said renewing existing credit lines or getting fresh finance was harder now than six months ago.

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Don't forget you may be eligible for a Business Link voucher: we can apply for one on your behalf. Vouchers entitle you to one hour of advice and information from one of our experienced trainers on a topic of your choice. A recent beneficiary of the scheme said the meeting was "very useful, much appreciated. I hadn't comprehended what a fantastic resource you are! Thank you very much for your help". If you need some help with your business, why not call us today to see if you could benefit?

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This kind of networking is fast and great fun

Speed networking is a great way to get new business - and a lot of fun too.

Women in Rural Enterprise (WiRE) is holding a speed networking session on Tuesday, September 29, from 7.30pm to 9pm at Ravenwood Hall Hotel, Rougham, Bury St Edmunds.

Do you find you don't like traditional networking? Feel you don't meet the relevant people? Find it difficult to 'work the room'? If so, this event is for you.

Speed networking is an easier, quicker way to promote your products and services, launch new ideas and meet new business contacts.

The session costs £2.50 (£10 will be charged for non-attendees). To book, e-mail alexpar@lineone.net.

Join our free online listings

Lots of you have taken advantage of our free online Business Directory and we now have more than 100 women-owned businesses advertising on the WEETU website. If you'd like to take advantage of this marketing opportunity contact the office. Don't forget to check the directory to see if you could take advantage of any services offered and support local businesswomen.

THE Learning SHOP

Next time you're in Norwich, why not visit The Learning Shop in The Forum? They can provide free advice and guidance about all types and levels of education and training in Norfolk. For more information, visit the website www.learningshopnorwich.org.uk.