

TIME FOR SOME SERIOUS NETWORKING



Networking at speed on 22nd January last!

“To everything there is a season, And a time for every purpose under heaven...”

as the Bible (and the Byrds) put it so succinctly. To paraphrase, the time for networking is now. In tight economic times, businesses need to look for low cost ways of generating new leads to keep up sales. With this in mind, Newbridge Chamber got straight into its 2009 schedule with a successful Speed Networking event on 22nd January last.

In a joint chamber initiative, The Keadeen Hotel saw a packed house of Newbridge and Naas members meet to focus on spreading the word of their business and learning about other local suppliers. All else being equal, it simply makes more sense to stay local. The night was a wonderful success with business cards being swapped and appointments arranged for more comprehensive chats to follow.

Newbridge Credit Union (NCU) kindly sponsored the event and Director Paul Maher reminded participants on the night that they are keen to support business as well as personal accounts. “The door is always open” he said. Tim Dooley, Newbridge Chamber President, welcomed everyone, thanked Newbridge Credit Union for their continuing support and encouraged everyone present to ‘keep business local’ in order to ensure that Co. Kildare’s economy stays turning, for everyone’s benefit.



Sponsorship presentation - Des Diver, NCU, Tim Dooley & Paul Maher, NCU

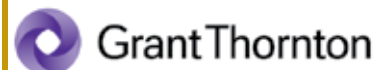


Katie Toma & Breda Reid



David Cullinane & Carol Ann Potter

From 6 to 9 that evening, the room hopped with the buzz of chat and adrenaline, as MC / time keeper Joe Fennell kept order with instructions and a whistle! All in all, fifty people went home exhausted but exhilarated – and many queries have come into the office since seeking another such evening.



President’s Lunch 24th April 2009



This year, the President’s Guest Speaker is none other than Kildare native **Charlie McCreevy, European Commissioner**. As European Commissioner for the Internal Market and Services, he is responsible for the European Union’s policy on the functioning of the internal market of 480 million people across 27 Member States. An efficient internal market is essential for a prosperous economic future, for Irish jobs and Irish living standards, as trade is one of the main drivers of economic growth. Hear what he has to say about our economy going forward and the implications for business. Put your questions to him afterwards!

Date: Friday 24th April 2009

Time: 12.30 p.m.

Venue: The Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge

Cost: €60 per person or table of ten €550

Why not use this as an opportunity to entertain clients or network with other Newbridge Chamber members?

Forthcoming dates for your diary:

24th April 2009 – President’s Lunch with Guest Speaker European Commissioner Charlie McCreevy, Hotel Keadeen, Newbridge kindly sponsored by Grant Thornton

20th May 2009 – Pre-Election Local Information Evening, Hotel Keadeen

9th June 2009 – Free Marketing & Financial Strategy Seminar, kindly provided by Chamber member O’Kelly Sutton. “Learn how companies from Ireland and abroad are winning in tough times.”

A full Activities & Events Calendar 2009 can be downloaded from www.newbridgechamber.ie/event_s.htm

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CHAMBER COMMENT

Newbridge Chamber President speaks out

It's an honour to be President of Newbridge Chamber and one I take very seriously. Our committee and staff are working flat out to create opportunities for members in these tough times; e.g. networking events and 'Member meets Member' evenings. As a self-employed business man I know the value of such get-togethers. I also cannot over emphasise the importance of using our affinity network. It works to bring in business.

Next month we are hosting an open meeting for all Newbridge businesses, individuals and representative community groups, to come and meet the local election candidates. I urge you to come along to The Keadeen Hotel on the evening of Wednesday 20th May and put your questions on local issues which affect you, to those who would serve as local councillors, if given your vote. As rate payers we need to make our voices heard. Decisions made by our councillors hugely impact on the business and community life of Newbridge. I believe strongly that what's good for the community is good for business. All aspects of Newbridge life need to pull together to keep our area thriving. We at the chamber want to play a pro-active role in achieving this objective.

"Ní neart go cur le chéile". We have no strength except when we work together. As we go through the second quarter of 2009 - one of the most challenging years in the past forty years of Newbridge Chamber - you have my commitment and that of the chamber to give you relevant and practical support via seminars, introductions etc. If you have an idea which you think would work well for you and your chamber colleagues, please call the office on 045 438296 and let's explore its potential. Get involved. Get active. It's in your interest.



Tim Dooley
President
Newbridge Chamber

Annual General Meeting

Newbridge Chamber's AGM was held on 11th March last at the Keadeen Hotel. As well as going through the finances and activities of the Chamber for 2008, President Tim Dooley gave a resumé of an action-packed 2008 for members in all spheres of business and a commitment to live up to its motto of being 'In Business for Business' in 2009. He concluded by reminding everyone of the power of sourcing business locally. "Shop local" is not just for Christmas" he quipped. "We must lead by example - both business to business and individuals - to keep the money moving in our local economy. Supporting one another is vital".

He also reminded everyone that new members are always welcome at the Chamber, with



The Top Table at AGM - Brid Nolan, Minutes Secretary reads the 2008 Minutes, flanked by Eoin McDonnell Vice President, Tim Dooley, President, Peter Byrne, CEO / Company Secretary and Larry Sheridan, Auditor.

membership fees from as little as €168 per year, entitling companies to a wide range of benefits. He suggested existing members spread the word to other friends in business in the locality, as it is a very good investment in tight economic times.



Tim Dooley, President of Newbridge Chamber presenting Annie Griffith, Director of The Samaritans for Newbridge & Kildare with a cheque for €1,906.

Good Samaritan

After the AGM, Tim Dooley presented The Samaritans with a cheque for €1,906. This represented fund raising at various events by members during 2008 for its Chosen Charity of The Year. Tim proudly handed over the cheque on behalf of you, the members, to Annie Griffith, Director of The Samaritans, Newbridge & Kildare.

Annie thanked all those involved saying "In recent months The Samaritans have received a 10 per cent increase in the number of calls relating to financial difficulties". The Samaritans have been supporting those in distress since 1953 and are now a household name with an unparalleled reputation for providing confidential 24/7 emotional support. "We believe we have unique and valuable strengths which represent vital assets in the field of suicide reduction" Annie explained.

Newbridge Chamber 'adopts' The Culture Factory for 2009

Each year Newbridge Chamber adopts an organisation - usually a charity - to highlight their existence, their 'raison d'être' and, where possible, to help raise some funds through the business sector. This year, it has extended this remit beyond charity, and has chosen 'The Culture Factory'. Representatives Barry Healy, Ciara Connelly and Terry Moore were invited to the February 2009 committee meeting of Newbridge Chamber to explain exactly what their organisation is all about and why the endorsement of the local Chamber is so important.

They outlined that this is a voluntary group of young people who are attempting to establish a creative and social centre, not only for themselves, but for future generations of young people of Newbridge. Their aim is to fund the purchase of the old cinema building on Henry Street and establish this as a dedicated alcohol free space for young people in the Newbridge area. In the building they wish to provide facilities for live music, rehearsals, dance, film, pool, artistic teaching zones, meetings and a café.



Ciara Connelly, Luka Bloom, Barry Healy & Joe Butler at a recent Luka Bloom gig for The Culture Factory.

The space will promote a creative collaboration between artists & young people and a 'Culture Factory' for many young people who are excluded from what is traditionally regarded as the 'arts sector'. It would be open to all young persons regardless of race, religion, or gender.

Tim Dooley, President of Newbridge Chamber explained "During 2009 Newbridge Chamber hopes to help the Culture Factory promote their ambitions, take steps to realise their dreams and generate public awareness of the dire lack of facilities for young people in our town".

Meet Newbridge Chamber Committee for 2009

The following Committee members were elected at the AGM on 11th March 2009:

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Peter Byrne (C.E.O.)	Newbridge Chamber	Chamber of Commerce
Tim Dooley (President)	Dooley Insurance & Mortgage Brokers	Financial Services
Eoin McDonnell (Vice-President)	Oaktree Coaching	Life & Business Coaching
Noel Delaney (Treasurer)	Grant Thornton	Accounting Services
Evan Arkwright	The Curragh Racecourse	Racecourse Management
Colette McGrath	The Office Centre	Office Stationery & Furniture
Fiona McLoughlin	Privateseller.ie	Online service selling homes privately
Michael Mullally	Management Consultant	Management Consultancy
Brid Nolan	Falcondale Properties Ltd.	Property Management
Linda O' Neill	Creative Performance Ltd.	Motivation & Training
David Wright	Horse Racing Ireland	Horse Racing Authority
Lisa Fogarty	Whitewater Shopping Centre	Shopping Centre Management
Paula Egan	Comprehensive Business Services	Accounting and Payroll Services
Eilish Sparrow	Bank of Ireland	Banking

If you wish to contact any of the above committee members, please call the Chamber Office at **438296** or email office@newbridgechamber.ie.

Are you using ALL your membership benefits?

One of the benefits of Newbridge Chamber membership is access to its Affinity Network, whereby you can avail of **exclusive discounted offers**. To recap, take a look at www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm

This includes 10% discount from **Central Health & Safety Services Ltd.** on their services and training, 10% off all prices at **Hickey's Pharmacy** plus other exclusive specialist free services, 15% discount on **Kildare Nationalist** advertising, a free coaching session from **Oaktree Coaching**, 10% discount on various options with **Privateseller.ie**; specially created packages from **Redbox Design**, Loyalty card from **Shades & Shapes Hair Design** (10% off prices plus regular extra treats), and generously reduced membership prices from **The Curragh Racecourse**.....

Similarly, if you're not listed here, why aren't you? Get in touch with Breda at the Chamber



office on **045 438296** or email breda@newbridgechamber.ie with your special offer for members. Get your name and your best deals out there to fellow members!

Meet New Members

We extend a welcome to recent new members and look forward to seeing you at future Chamber events:

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Ms. Antoinette Coleman-Kelly	Coaching & Counselling	Private Coaching & Counselling
Ms. Lorraine Costello	Lorraine Costello Travel Counsellor	Travel Agency
Mr. Barry Fitzgibbon	Fitzgibbon McGinley Architects Ltd.	Architects
Mr. John Tierney	TGC Gift Co. Ltd.	Corporate Gifts & Golf Prizes
Ms. Bernadette Walsh	Jack Gym Ltd./Ladies Workout Express	Gym
Mr. Alan Sweetman	Teen Challenge International	Lifeskills training & counselling for young people
Mr. Noel Caffrey	The 2Company	Business consulting, coaching and training
Mr. Brendan O'Reilly	The Biz Clinic	Business Advice Service

Close up on Committee



In this issue we meet **Eoin McDonnell** of **Oaktree Coaching**. Based in McElwain Terrace, Eoin started his personal & business coaching firm in 2005. He has been a member of Newbridge Chamber for the past three years, in 2008 taking a Committee position. He was appointed Vice President at last month's AGM.

With qualifications including a BA in European Business Studies and German, a Masters in Business Administration and a Professional Career Coach, he brings a great mix of academic and practical experience to his work with clients.

Oaktree specialises in Business Coaching and Consulting, Personal Career Coaching and Schools/Community in Youth Development Coaching. On the business side, he is currently helping organisations plan for 2009 to help them perform and achieve their goals in a focused programme called "Prepare to Perform in 2009".

In his personal life, Eoin is involved with the charity TOUCH, the Co. Kildare based charity for orphaned and vulnerable children overseas. The ethos of TOUCH is that all children have a right to food, shelter, medication and education. All funds raised from the general public go directly to source projects on the ground in Asia, Europe and Africa.

Geographically he has been around the block himself! Born in Carlow and raised in Galway, Eoin has been educated in Tipperary, Coleraine, Berlin, and Limerick and went on to work in Dublin, finally settling here in Newbridge five years ago. His earliest memories of Newbridge are coming to play rugby against the College and stopping for the odd social beverage on the way home! They must have been good as he chose to hang his hat here as an adult and Newbridge is all the richer for that.

You can contact Eoin on 045 438914 or 087 416 0160 / email info@oaktree.ie or check out www.oaktree.ie

“Managing Your Business in a Downturn”

Grant Thornton’s Newbridge office played host to an excellent presentation of their top speakers in The Osprey Hotel on 17th February last. Despite having to be rescheduled from its initial date due to the severe snow in early February, the breakfast event went ahead to a packed house of Newbridge and Naas Chamber members.

The main message was **“Business owners need to instil the right discipline in their business if they are to survive the current economic turmoil”**. The speakers outlined tips to improve a business’s response to the changed economic environment including guidance on how to turn conditions to advantage. Practical advice was given on dealing with banks, the Revenue and employees, the revision of strategic plans and critically a structure for focusing on cost control. Speakers pointed out that management teams often forget to do the basics when the focus is on growth, but that emphasis needs to change in the current challenging conditions.

Noel Delaney, Head of Grant Thornton Newbridge, described how the lack of credit has begun to squeeze entrepreneurial businesses. “Negative



Tim Dooley, Noel Delaney, Allan Shine



Tracey & Aileen Maher



Michael Malone & Alan Nolan



Sasha Kerins speaking at the event

growth, weakened demand and reduced lending by the banks is compounding an already difficult situation. While some regions and sectors are proving more resilient than others, it is sensible to

analyse your own business environment and to take decisive remedial action. Entrepreneurial businesses that are well structured and well managed will see opportunity in uncertainty.”

Breakfast Brief

The Silver Restaurant was the early morning venue last month for a Breakfast Business Brief at the kind invitation of Newbridge Silverware’s William Doyle. The company’s Chairman, Paul Keane, Managing Partner at Reddy, Charlton, McKnight came along to give some legal information on protecting one’s reputation in a lively presentation. **“Compliance with the following Ten Commandments should go a long way to protect directors from an attack on their personal assets and the sullyng of their reputations,”** Paul told the packed restaurant. He suggested the first five commandments apply to any company and the last five are directed at a company in distress:



The audience listening intently for tips last month at The Silver Restaurant



As always, we encourage Chamber members to source goods, services or professional advice initially from fellow Chamber members where possible, and after that, from within Newbridge or Co. Kildare in general.

- 1. Proper board meetings and minutes**
Insist on frequent board meetings where the management and business of the company is carefully and attentively discussed. The minutes of the meeting should reflect that care and attention and specific resolutions for remedial action. If you are a director and you’re not happy with a decision that has been taken, you should ensure that your position is recorded.
- 2. Proper distribution of responsibility**
Ensure that there is a sensible distribution of roles within the company.
- 3. Keep proper accounts**
Ensure that the books and accounts are kept up to date. If not, steps to rectify the situation should be taken, with outside help if necessary.
- 4. Statutory books of the company**
Ensure that the statutory books required under company law are maintained and that returns to the CRO are made on time.
- 5. Budget and management accounts**
Ensure that the directors receive up-dated budgets and appropriate management accounts regularly.
- 6. Review viability**
Ensure that the directors review the viability of the company and that a plan is adopted to deal with the situation.
- 7. Remedial measures**
Ensure that the company takes appropriate external, professional advice on a rescue plan and on whether or not the company should cease trading.
- 8. Communicate with your creditors**
Ensure that major creditors are communicated with regularly and obtain their support for the continuation of the company.
- 9. Insolvency**
Make sure that the directors consider the options of examinership, receivership or liquidation.
- 10. If nobody listens, go**
If your views are repeatedly rejected and the company continues to decline, resign as a director and send a letter to the company secretary setting out your reasons for doing so.