

The Countywide Economic Partnership

Mitsubishi Motors – Electricity, The Power For Change



What do you think when you hear the words “Mitsubishi Motors”?

Many will think of big go-anywhere 4x4s. Others will think of rally-bred performance heroes, such as the Lancer Evolution X, and yet others will think of the stylish L200 pick-up, which acts as a tough workhorse during the week, and then a versatile and image conscious family vehicle at the weekends.

All-Electric innovation

What most people won't imagine, however, is that Mitsubishi Motors has been leading the way in many aspects of environmental innovation across all aspects of its design, production and vehicle products for decades.

These innovations are most visible in the all-electric i-MiEV (Mitsubishi innovative Electric Vehicle), which started production in Japan in July 2009, and immediately sold out - including all of its 2010 production allocation.

In the UK, the Cirencester-based Head Office of Mitsubishi Motors has been the nerve centre for Mitsubishi's operations in the UK since 1974 and remains one of the biggest employers in the area. This too is where you can see the i-MiEV quietly and smoothly nipping around the streets, and where the UK's first ever quick charger has been installed.

Zero - Emissions

The i-MiEV is a remarkable car with a top speed of 81 mph, a range of 100 miles, room for 4 good-sized adults and luggage to boot! Gone are the days of electric vehicles conjuring up images of milk floats, dodgems and Sinclair C5s! The dawn of the zero-emissions city car is certainly with us, and with no compromise on specification and driving pleasure either. It can be charged from flat to full at a standard UK three-pin plug in just 6 hours, or via a Quick Charger in just 20 minutes (to 80% charge). And how much does that cost? Just 96 pence at domestic rates, which equates to 12,000 miles driving

for a mere £115 – less than two tanks of fuel in many normal cars.

Mitsubishi hasn't stopped with electric vehicles, which inevitably will be quite expensive to begin with (just like flat screen TVs were when they were first introduced to the public). It has, however, got a whole range of CO2 reducing technologies already coming onto its petrol and diesel vehicles, including 'Auto Stop and Go' technology, which automatically stops the engine when it's not needed and then restarts it when required.

“We're a proud employer in Gloucestershire, and it's great to know that our County is at the centre of a motoring revolution – possibly the biggest change in the automotive industry since it began over 100 years ago with the internal combustion engine.”

Mitsubishi's UK Managing Director, Lance Bradley



Gold for Creed Foodservice



L-R: Francis Ball, Chairman FWD, Richard Honey, Director of Sales, Moslon Coors, Neil Corfield Gold Medal Winner Creed Foodservice and Philip Jenkins, MD Sugro UK

Staverton-based Creed Foodservice has received the highest industry accolade, winning the Federation of Wholesale Distributors (FWD) Gold Medal for Independent Depot Manager 2009.

Neil Corfield, Manager of Creed's Ilkeston depot picked up the award at the FWD Awards evening. The Award recognises Neil's role in establishing this new hub depot for Creed.

Managing Director Chris Creed said: "One year on from opening our new depot, we

are delivering £14m+ of sales, with a team of 45 employees with service levels which are the envy of our competitors. This is down to Neil and his dedication and leadership. We are very proud of Neil and his team."

Creed Foodservice established its new Midlands hub as part of a strategic expansion plan designed to open up markets in the midlands and northern England, making the business a significant national player. This has contributed significantly to an anticipated turnover of £35m in 2009.

Thought for Food

A 10-strong group from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) was in Gloucestershire in October to see the county's Food Vision initiative working in practice. Managed by Gloucestershire First, the county's strategic economic partnership, Food Vision is a wide-ranging concept created to improve food quality and the provision of food-related services.

Better school dinners, combating obesity and improving food hygiene are some of the topics on its agenda, which also includes encouraging the purchase of local food and providing more nutritious food in schools and hospitals.

The visit was organised by Food Policy Manager Adrian Jevans and the Defra party visited the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester, where Simon King hosted a tour of a kitchen newly-opened to train school and care home cooks.

It then travelled to Gloucestershire Royal Hospital where Mike Byrne outlined the hospital's buying policy and their wish to buy healthy locally-produced food.

"Our aim is to make Gloucestershire known nationally for the quality of its food," said Mr Jevans. "This includes working with producers and buyers to ensure our food is safe and affordable and specific campaigns such as scores-on-the-doors, created to improve hygiene standards in restaurants."

"We are pleased our work has caught the eye of Defra and look forward to showing the delegates what we've achieved in the last few years," added Mr Jevans.

Tasting the West



representatives from nine countries including Japan, Denmark, South Africa, India, USA, Italy and Mexico. The Gloucestershire tour began with a visit to Campden BRI, the food and drink research facility in Chipping Campden, followed by a visit to Bottlegreen Drinks in South Woodchester, near Stroud.

A group of trade experts from all over the world visited Gloucestershire to see at first hand what the County has to offer in the food and drink sector. The tour included international representatives from UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) which helps promote UK business abroad as well as encouraging foreign companies to invest in this country.

Organised by the South West RDA and Gloucestershire First, the visit included

Then the group went to Unilever Ice Cream in Barnwood near Gloucester and finally the Three Choirs Vineyard in Newent.

Denise Blackmore, food and drink adviser at the South West RDA, said: "This was the largest UKTI overseas tour we have ever organised for the food and drink sector in Gloucestershire. The programme is a fantastic showcase of companies in the County and demonstrates the diversity of

the sector here, ranging from local food specialists to major multinationals.

"The tour demonstrated that Gloucestershire has the right infrastructure, business support network and relevant skills for food and drinks companies based overseas looking to move or expand into the UK."

Thomas Shaw, Managing Director at Three Choirs Vineyard, said: "People might not automatically associate Gloucestershire with wine-making so it's exciting to have the opportunity to showcase the quality of the produce here and create stronger ties with international markets."

Mobex expands in Gloucestershire



Leading mobile exhibition specialist Mobex Ltd has more than 30 years' experience in the hire, manufacture, design and management of exhibition trailers. Recent business growth has led the company to develop new offices at its Berkeley headquarters to accommodate the growing number of staff.

The company has supplied exhibition units to almost 1000 clients in 2009, including the Department of Health, a range of NHS bodies, Business Link and many local authorities and public organisations, as well as a wide range of businesses.

New office in Scotland

Further growth will be supported by opening a new office in Scotland. The move, made in direct response to requests from clients, will enable Gloucestershire-based Mobex to look after the needs of the increasing number of organisations requiring support to exhibit at events in northern Britain. Mobex clients are looking to the firm to

supply stands for a range of shows in 2010, including Scotplant, ScotGras, the Royal Highland Show and the Black Isle Show.

The new Scottish base will enable clients to save on the costs and time involved in transporting trailers from the south. They will also benefit from the services of local Mobex staff - Scottish clients and those exhibiting north of the border will be looked after by Stevie Cameron and Paula Steele.

A selection of units has been relocated from the firm's Gloucestershire base to Scotland to enable the company to service clients in the north promptly and efficiently.

“In a difficult business climate we have been growing steadily by focusing on offering our clients value for money”

Managing Director Allan Plant



“Our presence in Scotland will ensure we can deliver the same prompt and efficient service to clients running or attending events in the north as we do in the rest of Britain.”



Cotswolds & Forest of Dean Tourism

Cotswolds.com steps into the On-line world Cotswolds & Forest of Dean Tourism has recently been working on introducing online booking for accommodation onto www.cotswolds.com. This facility is now up and running, meaning that visitors to the site can search and book their accommodation, as well as looking at local attractions and events. The target is for Cotswolds.com to be a one stop shop for visitors to the site and this latest enhancement moves 'Tourism' a step closer to that goal.

The bookings are taken from a number of online booking partners, including Eviivo, Late Rooms and Active Hotels. Around one third of accommodation members are currently providing their availability for Cotswolds.com and it is planned that a member offer, with online booking provider Eviivo, will encourage more to sign up to the service.

Once established, the online booking will enhance the ratings of Cotswolds.com on search engines, and promote the website as the official guide to the Cotswolds.

Businesses get Trained

Cotswolds & Forest of Dean Tourism has recently run a training and skills development programme which has been promoted to tourism businesses throughout the County. Members of Cotswolds & Forest of Dean Tourism have benefited from a discount on the courses.

The programme ranged from 'Welcome Host' training looking at customer care to E-marketing looking at social networking sites such as 'Twitter' and 'Facebook'. The response to the workshops and seminars has been overwhelming. Thanks to funding from Tourism Skills Network, Cotswolds & Forest of Dean Tourism has been able to subsidise the courses and the delegate take up has been

really encouraging.

The feedback that has been received from businesses attending the courses has been really positive and Cotswolds & Forest of Dean Tourism will continue to look at training opportunities for tourism businesses.

To stay in touch with training opportunities and other membership benefits visit the membership section in www.cotswolds.com



Investing in the Future



Andy Buchan of Cotswold Efficient Energy Centre (CEEC) in Cherington feels so strongly about the environment that he is offering free talks to school children in the Gloucestershire District.

His 40 minute talk on how we can reduce our carbon footprint and preserve the earth's resources has now been heard by hundreds of school children in the County.

Reduced Carbon Footprint

CEEC have recently opened a new showroom which has working examples of many efficient energy systems to meet the demand for environmentally friendly technologies. Motivated by investing in the future of the earth and its resources, CEEC offer solar thermal hot water systems, photovoltaic roof panels, heat pumps, rain harvesting systems, light tubes, heat recovery systems and wood pellet boilers.

With many years in the plumbing industry, Andy has gained much valuable experience and is now a driving force in promoting low and zero carbon technologies.

Andy was recently asked what his hopes were for Copenhagen and his response was: "Some weeks it seems the best that can be hoped for from Copenhagen will be that each country should be responsible for dealing with its own CO2 emissions – with developing countries putting in place a means of dealing with limiting their growth of CO2 emissions and financial help being given to aid poorer countries to reach this goal."

Informed Children

Andy hopes that by planting seeds with the children through his education talks that their choices as adults will be much better informed – and will mean that in the future there would be no need to convince adults that CO2 emissions should be reduced at gatherings such as the recent one in Copenhagen!



Further information can be found on www.cotswoldefficientenergy.com or by telephoning 01285 841466.

A Virtual Education

Cleeve School has a history of using innovative ICT solutions to create a modern and engaging learning environment for 21st Century learners. Located in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, the school has 220 staff serving 1,600 students. It is a Technology College and High Performing Specialist School with an enviable reputation for doing things differently.

The school had 600 computers and 15 physical servers running 24 hours a day. These servers run the Management Information and Finance databases, the school intranet and other essential software.

Having received funding for a major new building project, in 2007 the school set about designing an innovative main building with state of the art technology.

Virtual Servers

Tom Henson, ICT Systems Manager for the school, working with the senior leadership team and the ICT department, agreed the best approach was a virtual server strategy. Virtualising is a technology which consolidates data computers into virtual electronic servers running on a reduced number of powerful computers.

Although an accepted practice in industry,

schools did not use the technology at the time. The school wanted to take a business rather than educational approach to the new ICT.

Benefits

Because of the substantial cost benefits, Cleeve School decided virtual servers were the only choice.

Henson explains, "Although the early costs were comparatively high, the benefits and savings are massive." By consolidating and virtualising the original 15 servers to three, the school now saves £15,000 a year in power and air-conditioning. Henson estimates a further saving of £10,000 a year from less management time, new applications and uptime benefits: "We have only begun to realise just how much we have saved. Last year we rolled out another set of applications and saved £6,000 on hardware alone."

Finding the right supplier

After a tender process, the school was pleased to select a local supplier Commercial IT Services, a division of the business services group – Commercial Limited, based in Leckhampton, Cheltenham.

Henson explains: "Commercial IT Services showed their solution would meet all the school's needs, and have the redundancy

and capacity to work for at least five years."

They were thorough scoping and building the project plan, confident they would meet our needs and the installation went smoothly". Henson goes on to say, "Commercial have some of the best technical people I have come across. It was a trouble-free project."

Lessons learned

Cleeve School now has over 750 desktop and laptop computers and benefit from resilient servers ensuring the school can run if a breakdown occurs. Henson explains, "Commercial IT Services built in redundancy so there is no single point of failure." For example, a memory fault on one of the servers tested the system's resilience. Henson explains, "We were able to transfer virtual servers from one physical computer to another, reset the memory and transfer the virtual servers back. We did this seamlessly with no interruption for users. The experience gave us great confidence in Commercial's solution."

"Unlike many IT companies, who often give promises, Commercial lived up to our expectations and the servers work as planned."



Rail: Demand - Development



As demand for rail services continues to grow in Gloucestershire and across the South West, Network Rail has been consulting on its strategy for the next 10 years.

The Great Western Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) looks at how services and infrastructure can be improved to meet that surge in demand.

The South West RDA (Regional Development Agency) and South West Councils have submitted a joint response on behalf of the region.

Network Rail predicts an increase in demand of 3.2% per year. But it is thought that population growth, local traffic conditions and the rise in fuel costs mean this figure is far too low. It also doesn't

take into account the huge, and welcome, switch to rail that's been taking place across Gloucestershire and the South West over the last 10 years. Over 25 million rail journeys were undertaken by South West residents during 2003/04; an increase of 60% since 1996/97.

Improvements

Network Rail is being encouraged to work with more realistic projections of 5-6% as increasing capacity is key. Further investment in the network is vital, meaning longer trains, more services and improved infrastructure.

In Gloucestershire, improvements are proposed at Cheltenham and Gloucester stations as part of the National Station Improvement Programme. Analysis has also been carried out over the past three months to increase the line speed between Gloucester and the Severn Tunnel Junction.

Plans include developing a strategic link between Gloucester and Swindon – two of the key growth areas. South West Councils and the RDA have also welcomed proposals to create a diversion route for passenger and freight trains, to be used when the Severn Tunnel is closed or approaching capacity, particularly when the works planned for the Great Western Mainline begin.

Sustainability

While these are important measures, more could be done to meet the demands of a growing population. In Cheltenham and Gloucester, the population may grow by up to 30% in the next 17 years. It is fundamental that any development to accommodate this growth is planned and developed in a more sustainable way to encourage rail use.

The North Cotswold line is already being re-doubled to increase capacity while the region has successfully lobbied for a similar scheme between Swindon and Kemble on the Swindon to Gloucester line. This has been allocated £45m by the region and should result in an improved service between Cheltenham, Gloucester and London and less disruption to services during times of maintenance. The RUS also specifically recognised the need for longer trains between Gloucester, Bristol and Westbury/Weymouth to cope with peak hour crowding, especially in view of increases in employment at Filton Abbey Wood.

The region's rail network is set to change over the next decade and any measures are welcome which will make passengers more likely to travel by train.

College Move Pays Off

"The study confirms that education provision within a wider regeneration strategy can have a very positive impact."

Gloucestershire College Vice Principal Jeremy Williamson



Gloucestershire College's move to Gloucester docks two years ago has contributed about £15m to the local economy, according to an independent economic impact assessment report.

The boost to the economy came as a result of more jobs at the college, more students studying there and the college spending more money following its expansion. The campus on Llanthony Wharf, which opened in 2007, is built on a former railway siding next to some of the most deprived areas in the County.

The college now boasts high quality, modern facilities which were highlighted

in their 2008 Ofsted inspection report and are attracting more students than ever. Applications are currently 17 per cent higher than they were in the same period last year.

The college played a key role in the Gloucester Quays regeneration, highlighted by Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company (GHURC) and the South West RDA as one of the "magnificent seven" key sites within the City. The college's opening led to an immediate increase in footfall in the docks area.

Ian Knight, Area Director at SWRDA, said: "The opening of Gloucestershire College's modern, high quality dockside campus has given the local economy a significant and

much needed boost. As a pioneer on the docks development, the College has acted as a catalyst for further investment and activity. It's also meant hundreds more people passing through the area every day, bringing a new and youthful vibrancy.

"This is just one of number of success stories relating to the regeneration of Gloucester – a city of economic significance for the whole region. Last November we announced a £7m investment to improve public areas and streets linking the Quays to the city centre, enabling the city centre to capitalise on the new economic potential of the £400m Gloucester Quays retail outlet."

Landmark Office Building To Let with Incentives on Flexible Lease Terms



When Fortis Insurance – one of the 20 largest European financial institutions - relocated from Gloucester city centre it left behind a headquarters building and fitted out call centre which is now available to let on flexible lease terms.

Prospect Point is a modern office building providing 38,424 sq ft (3,569 m²) of comfort cooled office accommodation across four floors of mostly open plan space with some perimeter cellular offices.



Prospect Point provides 38,424 sq ft. of quality office space TO LET a short walk from Gloucester city centre.

On floor 3 is a nicely fitted out staff restaurant and kitchen facility in a style to be expected of a corporate call centre facility. An adjoining building of 7,948 sq ft (738 sq m) is also available and could provide useful archive storage.

The landmark building on the B4063 main arterial road into Gloucester will always score points with the employees of occupying companies due to its convenient location close to public transport a few minutes away and access to city centre shopping and other facilities about half a mile distant.

From an operational view point Prospect Point has its own self contained stand by power supply and CCTV security and from a financial view point the ingoing tenant will benefit from incentives and flexible lease terms.

Prospect Point, 69 London Road, Gloucester GL1 3NS (B4063)



Prospect Point boasts a fitted out staff deli bar restaurant

**For more information contact:
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Gloucestershire First acknowledges with thanks, the generous sponsorship of this newsletter by Pall Mall Estates

Businesses unite to tackle the recession head-on



Twenty-four Gloucestershire businesses have been brought together by a new independent network based in Cheltenham.

Members of the Gloucestershire Independent Network (GIN) have united - sharing industry contacts, information and knowledge to ensure each business sees out the current difficult economic climate.

In the few months since it was established, GIN has seen its membership rapidly increase, and is on track to have 30 members. The success has resulted in GIN requiring larger premises and last year it relocated to Hatherley Manor Hotel, Cheltenham, where it meets every Thursday at 6:45am.

Unlike other networks, GIN is a non-profit making independent organisation which is community-focused. The group's association with Gloucestershire charities is a vital part of its success, and so far

the members have raised in excess of £1,000 for its chosen charity - Cheltenham-based Winston's Wish.

Founder member Charlie Smith, said:

“We’re absolutely delighted with the success of GIN. We’ve got an eclectic mix of members ranging from printers, to will writers to design studios and many more. Every member appreciates that the more they give the more they receive – which is exactly what GIN is all about.

“We’re also delighted to be associated with Winston’s Wish – the charity does a phenomenal job for bereaved children and we’re glad to support it whenever we can.”

Further information on any of the articles can be obtained from John Courts at Gloucestershire First. Telephone: 01242 864119, email: john.courts@glosfirst.co.uk or by writing to Chargrove Business Centre. www.glosfirst.co.uk

If you do not wish to continue receiving this newsletter please advise accordingly.