

## Parents Evening For Nursery

Tiggy Winkles Pegasus held their first ever Parents Evening on 21st November and it went extremely well.

Approximately 18 parents attended to hear how their children were getting on in the "Tweenie Room" with their development and how they were progressing with their Birth to Three. Pre-School parents were also told how their children were progressing with their Foundation Stage planning and their recognition of numbers and shapes.

Parents were delighted to discover the amount that their children actually learnt in Pre-School and how Tiggy's prepare them well for school.

For more information on Tiggy Winkles and its current special offers, call Gemma on 0121 776 8880.



## Castle Vale Business Group Engaging with the Community

Following yet another successful Castle Vale Business Group breakfast meeting back in November 2007, its focus on education has proved an achievement for one student in particular.

The meeting, held at Castle Vale School & Performing Arts College provided youngsters and business people with the opportunity to network and discuss how school leavers can be better prepared for the world of work. Workshops were held between representatives from businesses such as Cadbury Trebor Bassett and Education Business Link and students from the school.

Year 10 student Sloan Egan who attended the meeting managed to follow advice and tips from the workshops and bagged himself an excellent work experience placement with guest speaker Bullring.

"This is a great example of how attendees can take the opportunities offered by the CVBG and 'make things happen'." Garry Flatres, Work experience and enterprise co-ordinator for the school.

To enquire further about joining, please call John Lewis on 0121 747 2200.



John Lewis presenting the certificates to youngsters attending the Business Group Meeting

## Merlin Training Success

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December the first group of youngsters completed the new practical trades course at Merlin Training. Based in Sutton Coldfield at the Royal Works we have just completed the first of the innovative training courses for 16-19 yr olds.

Running fully hands on training in Electrics, Painting & Decorating and Plumbing in bite size two week tasters, this course takes youngsters from the Tyburn and Stockland Green wards through the basics of each trade followed by ongoing support into further training, apprenticeships and even employment.

The next course is due to start on the 7<sup>th</sup> January, for details call Lynnette Douglas on 07957 911 196

"It has been a very exciting time with the courses evolving alongside the students.

We are also keen to support them after the courses end." Lynnette Douglas – Client Manager

"My confidence has grown. I didn't like meeting new people before, I'd definitely recommend it" Kirsty Ratchford, Student

With the current shortage of skilled trades people and inadequate training available, Merlin Training was developed to provide a stepping-stone towards a new career, providing a strong introduction with follow on support from Merlin Employment and Training advisors.

Merlin Training plans to increase its range of practical trade based courses in the new year. For more details keep an eye on their website at [www.merlinventure.co.uk](http://www.merlinventure.co.uk) or call Lynnette Douglas on 07957 911 196.



Students and staff at Merlin Training

### JOB OF THE MONTH

An Account Manager is required to work for an established Telecommunications company in Coventry. As part of a team, you'll be responsible for sourcing and securing new business, managing business accounts, cross selling and working towards team points targets based on products sold. You must have previous customer service experience and have an excellent telephone manner. Working Monday to Friday 9.00am-5.30pm with a basic salary up to £17,000 with OTE of up to £30,000.

Call Lynnette on 0121 747 2200

### Contact Information

If you would like any more information about Merlin Venture and any of the services we have to offer please contact us via:

Email:  
[jennie@merlinventure.co.uk](mailto:jennie@merlinventure.co.uk)

Tel:  
0121 776 8880

Fax:  
0121 776 6141

Website:  
[www.merlinventure.co.uk](http://www.merlinventure.co.uk)



# MERLIN NEWS

## The Merlin Venture Ltd. Newsletter

February  
2008  
Issue 12

Welcome to the first edition of Merlin News in 2008. We hope you enjoy our newsletter, bringing you all of the latest news and information on Merlin Venture and our businesses.

### Merlin Celebrates Matrix Award

Merlin Venture is proud to announce that they have achieved "Matrix" accreditation standard, recognising the hard work and success that they have achieved through delivering their range of Information, Advice and Guidance programmes. This quality standard covers Merlin Recruitment, Training, Employment and Enterprise.

"It's been a fantastic year for Merlin's services—each month we have exceeded our targets and now the quality of our service has been recognised by achieving the Matrix accreditation. Having the hard work our staff perform on a daily basis recognised by the professional awarding body is a wonderful Christmas present for all of us at Merlin." Robert Brown – Chief Executive

Merlin currently provide employment services through Merlin Recruitment and Merlin JETS, self employment and small business support through Merlin Enterprise, and training for 16-19 year olds in practical trades through Merlin Training. These services are available to unemployed people living in the Tyburn and Stockland Green wards in Birmingham.



The Employment, Training and Enterprise Team

We are funded by Birmingham City Council and the European Social Fund.

For more information on The Merlin Venture Ltd and any of the services that we can provide call Jennie on 0121 776 8880.

### Merlin Support for New Community Group



Following the closure of Birmingham Community Empowerment Network (b:cen) due to the lack of grant funding, the community network known as the Erdington Communities and Neighborhoods (CAN) has been thrown

a lifeline.

The network will now evolve into an independent organisation for the Erdington constituency and will be supported in the interim by Merlin Venture.

The new community interest group will continue to be facilitated by Laura Needham who previously worked for b:cen and will be representing the interests of Erdington residents surrounding unemployment and reaching out to the wider community.

If you are an Erdington resident, unemployed and looking for work call Laura on 07795448460 or attend the first meeting of the group which will be taking place on the 22nd January 2008 at the Christ the King R/C Church Community Room, 124 Warren Farm Road, Kingstanding, B44 0QN from 4-6pm.

### Merlin Stars



Steve Horden

Steve Horden is this month's star employee. Having joined us on an intermediate labour market placement as a community engagement officer, one of Steve's first tasks was to promote our new training facility, which he did exceptionally well. However, when our plumbing tutor suddenly left, Steve stepped in and didn't just cover the position while we recruited a new tutor, he has now made the position his own and transformed the way we teach youngsters the basics of plumbing.

"Well done Steve, and thank you on behalf of both Merlin and our students". Robert Brown, Chief Executive

Congratulations to the CCTV team who have won this month's Team Award. Nominated by both the Office Manager and the Control Room Manager, the team have been working extremely hard throughout the Christmas and new year period. Merlin Security are dedicated to providing a professional service that has hugely contributed to the safety and security of Castle Vale.

"The Security Team are constantly recognised for their excellent work by staff at Merlin as well as the Police, Fire Service, local businesses and residents. You may be out of sight but your loyalty and hard work ensure you don't go unnoticed." Robert Brown, Chief Executive.

If you would like to nominate a member of the Merlin workforce who have provided you with excellent service call Ian Gilbert on 0121 776 8880 or email [ian@merlinventure.co.uk](mailto:ian@merlinventure.co.uk).

## See inside for Community Business

News, updates and special offers from local businesses in Castle Vale and the surrounding areas. If you would like to enquire about a FREE article in the next edition of Community Business, please call Gemma Donnelly on 0121 776 8880.





# Community Business

## The latest news about local businesses



We will be bringing you community business news once every 3 months with the latest news, offers and updates from local businesses, new start ups and some tips from our very own business guru! The Castle Vale Business Group, facilitated by Merlin Venture, provides an invaluable source of local information for many of the businesses vital to the economy of the local area.

### Doreen's Domestics

Following sudden redundancy from a 'job for life', local resident Doreen Barker gave thought to generating an income for the future. Fortunately an immediate remedy was not necessary so it was possible to take time to research and plan her opportunities and options.

Doreen initially used Merlin JETS job search service but was unable to identify any quality employment so she was referred to Merlin Enterprise; a small team assisting people considering self-employment.

After a series of regular one-to-one sessions, Doreen researched the market, compiled a business plan and formulated a policy for promotion and is now operating her mobile quality cleaning and gardening services, Doreen's Domestics.

Doreen's Domestics offer the services around the immediate area including Castle Vale and is able to undertake both regular and one-off jobs.

If you are in need of assistance with domestic chores please contact Doreen direct for a quote on 07833 190222.

"It is essential for the healthy economic future of the region for businesses to work together to ensure that opportunities are not missed so we can continue to maintain a sustainable local industry."  
**Robert Brown Chief Executive of The Merlin Venture Ltd**

Have you seen our spicy new bus? CVBG member Raj's Spices based on Castle Vale High Street has put a brand new advert on the back of Merlin's 696 Community Bus advertising his Indian take-away and special offers available. Keep an eye out for it!

### Diary of a local business

Diary entries by Beth Lewis

New mum Beth Lewis had an idea to become self-employed and was referred to Merlin by one of our community partner organisations. Beth has already attended numerous sessions with Enterprise Adviser John Stanley to investigate all aspects of running her own business. Spray Tans at Home by Body-Candy has now been launched around the Castle Vale area.

**September 2007**  
Being on maternity leave with my new baby and losing money from work made me realise that I wanted to start my own business that I could do in my spare time. I need to go back to my full time job in March though when the maternity leave finishes to start earning 'proper' money again!

**October 2007**  
I went to see John at Merlin Enterprise about setting up my own business. I went through all the options. Being fully qualified and extremely interested in the beauty industry, I decided spray tanning was the business for me! It seemed perfect, I could do it mobile and could fit the hours around bringing up the little one!

**November 2007**  
With the help of Merlin Enterprise I had some leaflets designed and printed and distributed them around the local area. I'm really excited for the launch, it was only a small outlay for the equipment really, hopefully I'll be bringing in the money soon!

**Business Name**  
Spray Tans @ Home by Body-Candy  
**Established Since**  
October 07



**December 2007**  
Wow, Christmas has been pretty good! I'm not making the millions yet but the spray tanning parties have been going down well! People have been booking up for Christmas and New Year, I really enjoy doing them too, we have such a laugh!  
I've also had my launch party this month. I got really scared a few hours before it was due to start though! The rain was really heavy and a few people called to say they couldn't come. I had a picture in my head of me being sat round the cake I had made all by myself! Luckily it went really well though despite my doubts!

Prices are £15 for half a body and £23 for a full body! Discounts include a free spray tan when you get 4 or more of your friends together.  
Call Beth today and quote Merlin on 07976 563436 to book a spray tan session.

### Goalden Party Ideas!

New Castle Vale Business Group member Goalden events are crowd favourites wherever they go!

Based in Erdington, they can provide you with table football for events from play schemes and kids parties to corporate events and outdoor summer play schemes.

In their 5th year of business, Goalden events 'thrive on their reputation for reliability, punctuality and innovation.'

With over 300 bookings behind them, the word is spreading as people are looking for something a little different for parties and events.

Call Richard Smith on 0121 350 2519 to find out what they can do for you and your budget or visit [www.goaldenevents.co.uk](http://www.goaldenevents.co.uk)



Large inflatable tents are available under which they can host table football tournaments and competitions.

### Lord Coe Presents To Local Businesses

Members of the Castle Vale Business Group were invited to a breakfast audience with Lord Sebastian Coe, held at and organised by the Ramada Hotel and Resort Birmingham on Monday December 10th.

With a great turn out on the day members were rewarded for the early start by Lord Coe providing a refreshing perspective on how hosting the 2012 Olympics will benefit not only London but also the Midlands and the rest of the country.

"It was great to hear how the Olympics will be providing for ongoing regeneration rather than concentrating on short term show boating. With the success of the regeneration in Castle Vale it is exciting to see how local regions will reap the benefits"  
John Lewis – Castle Vale Business Group.

Lord Coe also made a point of cutting through much of the hype and hearsay that is so regularly presented about the 2012 Olympics.

The Castle Vale Business Group has been working with local businesses for the past 15 years and is proud to see such a high calibre of speaker visit the region and have such events open to our members.



Membership of the Castle Vale Business Group is **FREE** and open to ANY business with local links; big or small.  
CVBG facilitate high profile events to help local businesses make their mark on the region.

Business Start Ups Networking Join CVBG Today Sole Trader Offers  
Free CVBG Membership Invaluable Information Breakfast Meetings Local Links  
If you are involved in a local business, whether you are a sole trader or national concern, we would like to invite you to join the CVBG to network and meet other local businesses.  
Why not pop along to a breakfast meeting? All meetings start at 8.00am (with breakfast provided by 7.30am) and will finish by 9.30am although everyone is welcome to stay and network. Venues and speakers are still to be confirmed and you should call for more details.  
March 19th 08 Marketing May 21st 08 Security  
0121 747 2200  
Business Start Ups Networking Local Businesses Sole Trader Offers

If you have any comments on this newsletter, or would like to enquire about a FREE article in the next edition of Community Business, please don't hesitate to contact Gemma Donnelly on 0121 776 8880.