

THREE REASONS FOR BEING CREATIVE IN EVERYTHING WE DO

Bob Kerslake (pictured), Chief Executive of Sheffield City Council and Partnership board member, gives three reasons why we need to be creative in everything we do.



How ambitious should we be for Sheffield and South Yorkshire? For those who have lived in and grown to love the city this may seem like an odd thing to ask. And yet the conclusion we reach on this question over the next few months will crucially affect what Sheffield is capable of achieving for itself and as a driver for the sub-region.

There is no doubt that the city is on the up. From its low point in the late 80s, Sheffield's economy has undergone a recovery that in recent years has turned into a full scale revival. New jobs are being created at 4,500 a year, with new businesses like the high-tech printing company Polestar choosing to locate in the city. The city centre is undergoing a transformation. Unemployment, which for over two decades stubbornly stayed at three percent above the national average, is now barely half a percent over.

Given this success it would be reasonable to ask why we shouldn't settle for what we have already achieved. In my view though, Sheffield can and should be looking to push itself further. There are three main reasons for saying this.

Firstly, the areas economy has not been transformed into the modern knowledge based economy that is vital to its long term prosperity. It is still over reliant on low skill, low value jobs that can and will go to other lower wage countries. Our future still lies in making things, but we will only be competitive in the long run if we are innovative and enterprising in doing this.

Secondly, Sheffield has the potential to be a real economic driver for the whole of South Yorkshire. The old enmities between Sheffield and its neighbours in Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster are breaking down. There is a growing recognition that Sheffield can and should be providing job opportunities beyond its boundaries in the way that other successful cities do.

Thirdly, the City has enormous opportunities in its Universities, cultural and sporting facilities and in the areas outside the city centre like the Lower Don Valley that are not currently being fully realised. Whilst there have been some important initiatives, such as the Advanced Manufacturing Park in Waverley, there is so much more that can be done.

It is in response to this challenge to build on our success and move the city forward that the Creative Sheffield initiative has been announced this week. The proposal involves the creation of a city wide

Economic Board to lead the city's economic regeneration and a new agency that will be charged with taking forward the work.

We have called it 'Creative Sheffield' because we believe that the city-regions economic success will come in being creative in whatever we do - whether this is producing new products, designing new buildings or developing our theatres, museums and galleries.

The proposals don't just involve adding a new body into what some would see as an already crowded field. It will be very different from what has gone before, drawing as much on expertise from outside the city as within it. The existing bodies will be looked at to see where they can sensibly be rationalised. Nor will it mean changing the priority to tackle the most deprived neighbourhoods. In South Yorkshire, the tasks of creating greater prosperity and greater inclusion go hand in hand.

A recent study showed that England's major cities have made enormous strides forward in recent years but have a real challenge to match the best in Europe. The Creative Sheffield initiative will mark our city out as having the foresight, capacity and commitment to meet this challenge.





Design Futures Group achieves second Yorkshire Forward accreditation

Sheffield Hallam University has achieved a second accreditation from Yorkshire Forward's Centres for Industrial Collaboration (CIC) programme, with the launch of the Design Futures CIC.

Together with the Materials Analysis & Research Services Centre, the University is now home to two out of only eleven approved CICs in the region, underlining its ability and commitment to offering value-added, industry-focused research and consultancy services.

The Design Futures Group aims to help businesses produce innovative products and packaging by exploiting the

outstanding design and research talent at Sheffield Hallam. It brings together the advanced product development centre (apdc), The Packaging Partnership and the Art and Design Research Centre. Centre Director, Professor James Roddis, said: "There are huge amounts of market research to show that the rapidly growing companies are the ones who engage with design at the heart of their businesses."

"At Design Futures we can offer coherent support packages across the spectrum from applied research right through to commercial consultancy projects, for the design and development of products and packaging. Sheffield Hallam University is one of the UK's leading research centres in

art and design and I am delighted that we have achieved this recognition from Yorkshire Forward on the CIC programme."

For further information contact **Andy Toward, Commercial Manager, Design Futures Group, Unit 5 Science Park, Howard Street, Sheffield S1 1WB. Tel: 0114 225 4277 e-mail: andy.toward@designfuturesgroup.com**



Design Futures
Centre of Industrial
Collaboration

BODYCOTE INTERNATIONAL

begins trials on innovative coating technology



The Surface Engineering Group within the Materials Analysis and Research Services Centre for Industrial Collaboration (MARS CIC) at Sheffield Hallam University have been successful in licensing their innovative coating technology to Bodycote International Plc.

The process involves deposition and implantation of niobium onto a non-ferrous substrate, and subsequent anodising of this to produce colouring. It demonstrates superb physical characteristics, biocompatibility and a vast palette of colours from the entire visible spectrum, something that had not been achieved elsewhere.



Trial production batches are currently being made by the large Bodycote PVD plant in Baja California, Mexico on behalf of a major US

sunglasses manufacturer. The coating has great potential and is also being tested for application on architectural aluminium, cutlery and even fake gemstones.

Further information is available from **Robert Evans, Business Development Manager, Sheffield Hallam University. Telephone: 0114 225 4293**

Enterprise South Yorkshire Summer School helps to realise dreams of self-employment

The third annual Sheffield Hallam University Summer School, designed to encourage and explore opportunities for starting up in business in South Yorkshire, took place between 14th and 18th June and was hailed a great success by those who attended.

This year's event was funded by Objective 1 and Business Link South Yorkshire and saw students and graduates from several universities taking part.

The event ran over five intensive days with activities such as workshops, talks from real life entrepreneurs, 1-to-1 discussions and business games taking place. A range of business experts from Sheffield Hallam University, together with business advisors and practitioners from the region, were on hand to offer advice and support to participants and all benefited from the others' experience of what starting up in business was really like.

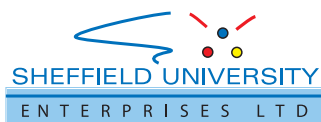
Simon Brown, Head of Enterprise & Technology at Sheffield Hallam University said of the participants: "12-hour days filled with challenging activities took their toll and by Friday we were all exhausted. But - this didn't dampen any of the delegates' enthusiasm! They were all clearly highly motivated, competitive and determined entrepreneurs. They demonstrated all of the skills necessary to realise their dreams."

Further information is available from **Sheila Quairney, Enterprise Centre, Sheffield Hallam University. Telephone 0114 225 5000 or email: s.quairney@shu.ac.uk**





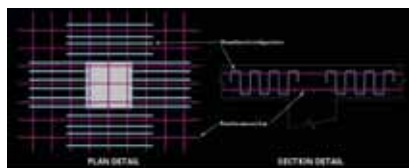
THE UNIVERSITY
OF SHEFFIELD



Conteque Announces New Licence Deal

Conteque Limited is a company that has been set-up to exploit several patented technologies developed at the Centre for Cement and Concrete in the area of novel reinforcement systems for structural concrete.

Shearband™ is one such reinforcement system and was developed by Professors Peter Waldron and Kypros Pilakoutas, to address the construction industry's need for an efficient reinforcement system for concrete flat slab floors. Such floors provide an elegant form of construction, which simplifies and speeds up site operations, allowing easy and flexible partition spacing and reduces the overall height of a building. Unfortunately, such floors do, from a structural view have problems, particularly at points of support such as columns.



The Shearband™ solution is a punching shear reinforcement system for flat concrete slabs and consists of a continuous punched steel strip that is pre-bent in the manufacturer's plant into a shaped profile to fit over the top of flexural reinforcement bars in concrete slabs. This system offers a simple and efficient placement of reinforcement, it acts over the entire concrete core and is adaptable, allowing quick additions of extra reinforcement where required.

With the assistance of Sheffield University Enterprises Limited, Conteque Limited

recently completed negotiations for the exploitation of its "Shearband™" product into North America. The agreement provides Canadian firm Abcot Inc. with a licence to manufacture and sell Shearband™ throughout Canada and the United States of America.

Conteque's Chairman Richard Birtles commented: "We are delighted that negotiations have been successfully completed and look forward to working with Abcot to exploit Shearband™ in this very important market." However, not content with the American market, Conteque are now commencing discussions with a major European-based multi-national for the manufacture and sale of Shearband™ throughout Europe and the Far East"

Launch of FaraPack Polymers Advancing Packaging Through Tomorrow's Technology



FaraPack Polymers, a new joint-venture, between the Faraday Packaging Partnership and the Polymer Centre, at the University of Sheffield has been launched. FaraPack Polymers is a laboratory-based resource within the Sheffield Polymer Centre combining packaging expertise and technological 'know-how' to solve technical problems and develop innovative materials.

The core service is based on rapid turn around, short-term development work involving:

- materials development and applications;
- bespoke synthesis of new polymeric materials;
- problem solving;
- creative thinking;
- innovation;
- analysis and testing facilities

The aim of FaraPack Polymers is to enhance packaging in the food and drink, personal care, household, healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors.

Dr Walter Lewis, managing director, Faraday Packaging Partnership, says: "We are delighted to be able to strengthen our relationship with the Sheffield Polymer Centre through launching FaraPack Polymers. Enhancing consumer packaged goods through polymer science provides a number of exciting opportunities to packaging converters and brand owners."

Dr Malcolm Butler, Manager, Sheffield Polymer Centre, explains: "As we now have a dedicated resource to deliver to the packaging industry timely access to the extensive R&D expertise and facilities at the Polymer Centre for short-term projects and feasibility studies, this should open the door for a whole range of technology exchanges between the University and industry that weren't previously possible."



Mr David Brown (on the left) of Abcot Inc with Mr. Richard Birtles and the new Licence Agreement

Two projects have already been completed:

- the synthesis a novel polymeric material for use as a security feature by a printing company



Synthesis of a light reflecting block copolymer in progress

- exploring new methods of combining polymers with other materials to produce new needle resistant containers with Adrianic Ltd

For further details please contact Dr Malcolm Butler on:
tel: 0114 2229553, fax: 0114 2229389,
e-mail: m.a.butler@sheffield.ac.uk
or visit our website at
www.polymercentre.org.uk/farapak/index.php

The above companies have been spun-out by Sheffield University Enterprise Ltd (SUEL) which is the University of Sheffield's wholly owned Technology Transfer Company dealing with intellectual property and commercial exploitation.

For further information about SUEL either contact David Catton, Managing Director on 0114 222 1008 or visit the website www.suel.co.uk and contact one of the Business Exploitation Managers.

Incubating the Future

Few people had heard the term 'Business Incubation' until recently, but there can be no doubt that its value to the prosperity of our region has rarely been greater.

Statistics show that nearly 80 per cent of all new start-up businesses fail within the first three years, but of those who have the benefit of advice from incubators, 80 per cent survive for more than 3 years.

More often than not, start-up businesses are unable to afford the resources required, which is why most incubators and incubation programmes are supported with public funds. Sheffield Technology Parks' incubation programme is supported by funding from Objective 1 and Business Link South Yorkshire's High Growth Start-Up Programme.

But what is business incubation really all about? It is increasingly being appreciated as a holistic approach to

creating new successful and sustainable businesses – in general, a process that covers the early lifecycle of the business from pre-start up stage through to second round financing.

One of the successes to come from Sheffield Technology Parks' incubation programme is Cometa Games. Cometa Games has designed a range of arcade games to be played on mobile phones.

Having an idea or the technical knowledge is not enough to start a business. The modern entrepreneur needs to be able to plan and implement a strategy, organise and manage finances, and sell to a target market.

An incubator, such as Sheffield Technology Parks, will assist budding entrepreneurs to overcome these obstacles and equip them for survival and growth in a global economy.



Sheffield First For Learning & Work Update

Dee Desgranges, Acting Director of Sheffield First for Learning and Work updates on progress made by the partnership since the merger of the Learning and Work bodies.

The merging of the two Sheffield First families of Learning and Work emphasises the inextricable link between the two agendas.

In the 14 –19 phase the Learning for Life initiative is changing the face of the curriculum offered in Sheffield by developing pathways through vocational education to higher education and employment in the South Yorkshire growth areas.

Adult Learner's week in May saw the launch of the partnership's Adult and Community Strategy which will adopt a partnership approach to best utilise available resources.

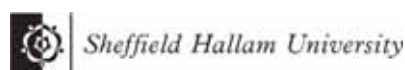
Reed in Partnership has been commissioned by the Employment Advisory Board to create the Employment and Skills Strategy. The memberships of the Employer's Sounding Board and the Workforce Development Board have recently been confirmed.

To obtain a copy of the Adult and Community Strategy or for more information on any of these activities please contact:

**Dee Desgranges 0114 273 4469
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Enterprise Centre