



January 2009 diary

Lee Moor's New Year resolution

The month of procrastination is over as we leave January and enter February. The business seeing the biggest impact of this is certainly Pete at the [New Life Gym](#); other businesses such as the Farm Bakery may see the other end of that same health 'telescope'. January is a time for new beginnings and of course also a period of counting the pennies after a hard-to-pay-for Christmas. The Black Olive Sandwich company has also been picking up the changes that office-workers in Alnwick have been making to their lunchtime buying patterns. My advice to my tenants and other readers is that in business you have to be empathetic about how your customer views the world. Indeed in this time where Government and citizens are searching for a 'new normality', those of us who get there first are in the ascendant.

Fuelling the future



The farm business at Lee Moor has been procuring wood for the heating system on site for nearly a decade and now has taken the step into the business of wider supply. A new trading arm called Northumbrian Woodfuels will be set up to supply woodchip, pellets and logs to replace the use of fossil fuel in the locality. More and more farmers and landowners are seeing the opportunity and we have been working with Nick Ridley from Park End near Wark. The first contract offsite is with Defra at their new flagship building in Alnwick – next to Hardy's fishing tackle and opposite Sainsbury's. Woodchip will be produced from timber grown at Lee Moor, making for a short and virtually carbon neutral fuel supply chain.

Broadband

Lee Moor Business Park needs 'proper' broadband. We suffer from being more than 5 miles from the Longhoughton exchange, so in the early days Lee Moor and public funding came together to fit a satellite system which was then wired throughout the Lee Moor Business Park site. The NHS then came along as a tenant and fitted their own line-of-sight microwave link, which was turned off when they left. In the meantime BT fitted most tenants with an ADSL line and we are rolling along with those systems. I have been involved with many projects through the [north east portal](#) and as such we hope Northnet or a national roll out of 2mb service by 2012 will help Lee Moor stay as a best practice example of the utilisation of the [digital economy](#).

Credit Crunched

As I am involved in regional shadow monetary committees and the various crisis meetings at [ONenortheast](#), it seems that 'business as usual' is some way off for a number of companies in the north east and beyond - but the picture is very mixed, and some companies are being counter cyclical. It is a time to have places where we

go to get trusted information. I have done my best to tell the authorities to provide single websites to show where help for business is available.

The heat is on

Toasty Heating has been based at Lee Moor for 3 and a half years and a new company is soon to set up at Lee Moor to be a one-stop-shop for wood-fired central heating... it is called **Sustainable Heating Solutions** and will be the main sponsor of [Ignition09](#) next month at The Sage. More of that next month, but biomass heating is going to be the big gainer of the current climate-change reality in rural areas, and a cold winter has also made people consider what would have happened if the global recession had not brought oil prices back below \$50/barrel.



Bong... Toasty to Baltic

The 22nd of February is a very special night as it is the opening night of [Fresh Element](#)'s new restaurant on the sixth floor of the [Baltic](#) Contemporary Art gallery. As such it is amusing to have the two words for very hot and very cold in my life... it has indeed been veritably "Baltic" this week but thanks to my heating system the offices have been beautifully "Toasty"!

Ian

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