



# South Somerset District Council

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## SSDC4Business Newsletter

Keep up to date with all the latest information about local business matters and economic development projects in the South Somerset area.

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### Upcoming Events

*18th April 2016*  
*Yeovil Golf Club*

**Getting to Grips with eCommerce**  
Expert advice for exporting or export-ready businesses.

[Learn More](#)



*19th May 2016*  
*Yeovil Golf Club*

**Speed Networking for Businesses**  
Build your business contacts at this breakfast event

*20th April 2016*  
*Miles at the Riverside, Taunton*

**Pop-up Business Café**  
Free expert advice on business start up ideas or an honest look at your existing business

[Learn More](#)



*15th March 2016*  
*Muddifords Court, Willand*

**'Making it Local' Launch Event**  
Information on funding from one of the **five Local Action Groups** in Somerset.



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## News and Events

### Changes to Business Rates for South Somerset businesses



On Wednesday 16 March, 2016, George Osborne delivered his eighth Budget as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The overall headlines include the introduction of a sugar tax on soft drinks from 2017, extra funding for schools to have longer days and a downward revision of growth forecasts for the UK, but what did Budget 2016 bring for business rates?

From April 2017 the existing 100% Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) will be made permanent meaning that businesses with a Rateable Value (RV) below £6,000 will pay nothing. Additionally this £6,000 threshold will be raised to £12,000, bringing more businesses into the 100% relief band. For businesses with a RV of up to £15,000, there will be tapered relief. Additionally the threshold at which firms pay higher rates rises from a RV of £18,000 to £51,000.

The Chancellor estimates this means some 600,000 small businesses will pay no business rates at all from April 2017, with a further 250,000 businesses benefiting from a rates cut.

Businesses should check the RV of their premises to see how these changes affect them. The RV can be found at the top of the recently received "Non-

Domestic Rate Bill" sent out to businesses by the Council. The RV can also be found online at [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk) together with other information on business rates.

Other changes announced means that by 2020 business rates will increase in line with Consumer Prices Index (CPI) as opposed to Retail Price Index (RPI). RPI often tracks well above inflation. Additionally the five year rates revaluation cycle will be cut to three years to better reflect changes in property prices.

If you are unsure of any aspect of business rates, or how these changes affect your business then please call us [01935 462462](tel:01935462462).

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## **Business Support Services at South Somerset District Council**



Some businesses may not be aware that South Somerset District Council are able to provide businesses with a wide range of free support services. This includes:

1. Advice on business rates
2. Help with writing a business plan
3. Guidance on funding and grants
4. Help with finding commercial property
5. Procurement guidance
6. Environmental health
7. Planning application guidance; and
8. Advice on business growth

Our dedicated Business Support Officer and Economic Development Team are available Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm. Telephone [01935 462462](tel:01935462462) or email [econdev@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:econdev@southsomerset.gov.uk)



On Friday 8th April 2016, the Yeovil Chamber of Commerce and the Yeovil Innovation Centre co-hosted an event showcasing world-leading innovative companies based in South Somerset. While being famous for its lush countryside, South Somerset is also an innovation hub. Although the economy has traditionally relied upon advanced manufacturing and the aerospace sectors (e.g. AgustaWestland), the District is now home to a growing digital sector. The event showcased three leading digital companies.

Mr David Woan, President, Yeovil Chamber of Commerce, opened the showcase with an inspiring speech which provided a wonderful account of Yeovil's history of innovation - Petter Farm Machinery was among the first steel manufactured equipment made, Pittards are world renowned for their glove making, AgustaWestland are internationally renowned for their helicopters and, more recently, the Aerial Atom is produced just outside Yeovil in Haselbury Plucknett.

Mr Ray Harding, Managing Director, IVC Technologies Ltd gave an inspiring presentation which provided great insight into how IVC Technologies uses state of the art digital technologies to create the very best in spectacular, high impact unified communications systems. The ability to deliver bespoke multimedia systems throughout the world is truly remarkable.

Mr Chris Jones, Business Development Director, Invirt Reality gave an exciting presentation which provided great insight into the world of virtual and augmented reality. The audience was clearly impressed with the technology and gained much enjoyment from experiencing it for themselves.

Mr Ed Nicholson, Director, Intelligent Enterprise Products (IEP) provided great

insight into their innovative approach to enabling companies to understand and then use cloud technology.

The Showcase was well attended by local, national and international guests including Mr Jonathan Smith from the China-Britain Business Council.

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## **Case Study: Gilbie Roberts Accountants, Church Terrace, Yeovil**

*Craig Howes FCA CTA*



I joined Paul Gilbie as his first partner at Gilbie Roberts on 12 October 2015. The firm currently has five members of staff, all based in our offices in Church Terrace.

Paul and I both share a passion for helping owners of small businesses achieve their ambitions whilst steering them through the choppy waters of accounts and tax. We provide a very personal service and work carefully with our clients to deliver our services in a way that is tailored to their budget.

One of my roles has been to generate growth for the firm. How have we done this? We opened our doors to local businesses for three evenings in December and hosted over 60 people. We are members of the Yeovil Chamber of Commerce and the FSB. I attend two local networking groups - L2B and GAIN. In the period to from 12 October to 13 April we have been fortunate to gain 28 new clients.

New client Stephane West, of Marketing company Go Demand Limited, comments on the firm as follows:

'Craig only recently started acting for Go Demand. I wanted to appoint an accountant who was local to the business and who could respond quickly to the company's requirements, in particular providing me with up to date and accurate management information and budgeting.

I have been very impressed with the firm's speed of response, the quality of the management information and their very high level of client care.

Craig has also been very helpful in advising on finance and has a wide network of local connections, which is of great value to many businesses'.

If you haven't come across us before, why not give me or Paul a call on [01935 426811](tel:01935426811) or come and see us at the office in the heart of Yeovil.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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### **Apprentice of the Month: Josh from Harlequin Carnival Club**

Carnival Clubs are a great way to learn new skills, try different trades and begin an exciting career path. Based in Donyatt, the Harlequin Carnival Club is a multi-award winning Club which gives enthusiastic and dedicated people the opportunity to develop social and technical skills in a supportive environment. Conversations and networks at the Club have and can lead to work experience, an apprenticeship, and a rewarding career.



Club members age from seven to seventy five. The younger members look up to the older members, many of whom started in the same position as an apprentice and have now gone on to have successful careers. For example Josh from Ilminster, joined the Harlequin Carnival Club when he was 14 years old. He developed an interest in electrics so Steve Dawe (Chairman) organised work experience for him. From that moment, he knew that he wanted to be an electrician and undertook an apprenticeship. Now he is an electrical apprentice studying a Level 3 NVQ Diploma in installing electro-technical systems and equipment with P&R Hurt in Yeovil. He was highly commended in the Screwfix Trade Apprentice of 2015 competition, being recognised for his outstanding professionalism, talent and trade knowledge.

Anyone interested in becoming a part of the Harlequin Carnival Club should contact Steve Dawe on email: [harlequincarnivalclub@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:harlequincarnivalclub@hotmail.co.uk)

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## SSDC4Business Twitter

Keep up to date with the latest business news and the activities of the Economic Development team here at South Somerset District Council.

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