

A new way of giving for Surrey's businesses

BUSINESSES IN Surrey now have an easy way to manage their corporate social responsibility thanks to a new fund launched by Surrey Chambers of Commerce in partnership with the Community Foundation for Surrey.

The Surrey Chambers of Commerce Community Fund, launched at the Chambers' Annual Lunch at Loseley Park, will enable companies to support local charitable causes by making a simple annual donation to the new collective Fund. By pooling corporate giving in this way, the Fund will not only have a bigger impact throughout the county, but also support businesses by taking away the administrative burden.

The Fund will be managed by the Community Foundation for Surrey, experts in local giving. The Foundation's report *Hidden Surrey* by Dr Helen Bowcock shows the surprising depth of social disadvantage in Surrey. Based on extensive research and consultation with voluntary and community groups, it highlights the need for more support for local communities.

Grants from the pooled Fund will be awarded to local projects with a focus on those that support people to retrain or gain employment, build capacity and skill within the community and improve facilities and services for young people to help enhance their skills, confidence and business awareness.

Two charities supporting young people



Surrey Chambers Chief Executive Louise Punter, pictured with supporters of the Surrey Chambers of Commerce Community Fund scheme, tries out a quad bike for size at the launch at Loseley Park

to learn new skills were the first recipients of a grant award from the Fund. GASP Motor Project in Gomshall trains disadvantaged youngsters in motor mechanics and received funding to help purchase a new quad bike which was on show at the launch.

Skillway in Godalming works with teenagers identified by their schools as

being vulnerable due to lack of success in academic work. They learn practical skills to help with future job prospects and gain self-esteem and confidence.

Surrey Chambers Chief Executive Louise Punter says: "This is a fantastic way for businesses in Surrey to manage corporate social responsibility efficiently with minimal effort.

"We all know how busy local businesses are; by taking away the administration and assessment of individual charitable requests businesses can get on with what they do best and be assured that they are also making an effective contribution to their local community. By working together the business community can make a stronger impact on our local communities and help improve the business environment at the same time.

"We'd like to thank our founding business partners on this Fund – George Weil and Sons Ltd, AJ Bennewiths, Memset, Watson Associates and ramsac.

Their contributions have enabled us to award our first grants and we are looking forward to welcoming more companies on board to support many more worthwhile projects."

To make a donation to the 'Surrey Chambers of Commerce Community Fund' call the Community Foundation for Surrey on 01483 409230 or visit the websites.

WWW. communityfoundationsurrey.org.uk

WWW. surrey-chambers.co.uk

Budget 'a courageous plan to rebalance economy'

THE GOVERNMENT'S decisive moves to cut the deficit should have positive effects on business and investor confidence, according to David Frost, Director Gen-

eral of the British Chambers of Commerce.

"The Chancellor's message that Britain is 'open for business' will be welcomed by companies the

length and breadth of the country – and across the globe," he said.

Mark Busby, head of Taxation at Davis Burton Sellek, said that apart from

those who were victims of curtailed Government contracts resulting from departmental budget cuts, it seemed to be a pretty friendly budget for SMEs.