

Good news for Hackney businesses

Wise Owls, the not-for-profit Hackney-based company dedicated to tackling ageism and encouraging local enterprise has recently won a contract worth over £500,000 from the Government Office for London* and Hackney Strategic Partnership to run an ambitious business-boosting service 'Enterprising East End'.

The cash injection is helping fund a free / subsidised support service to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across Hackney and the East End.

As part of the service Wise Owls has launched www.enterprisingeastend.co.uk - an interactive website which lists the current workshops, events and consultancy support available through the service.

The service is primarily focused on meeting the needs of local enterprises and employers including those which make up some of Hackney's 2000 strong voluntary and community enterprise organisations across the borough.

The programme kick-started in November last year and is aimed at helping east London firms become more competitive, sustainable ... and profitable! As part of the contract Wise Owls is providing SMEs from across Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham with the latest expert guidance from leading business-related organisations. Representatives from ACAS, the Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise, the Fire Brigade, the Health and Safety Executive, and Hackney Council's Environmental Health and Trading Standards service are running workshops and business seminars, with question and answer sessions.

Experts from relevant sectors of business provide consultancy advice and practical support to businesses on various issues including: Company formation and legal contracts; Accounts, cash flow, tax returns, PAYE and corporate financial information; Promotion and marketing; Finance raising; Website development; Up-to-date equal opportunities legislation, understanding the benefits of diversity in the workplace and personnel recruitment; How to apply fire prevention and health and safety guidelines to your business; 'Greening' business opportunities, free environmental audits and promoting green energy; Developing a local or social enterprise.

Enterprising East End's support comes in the form of free one-to-one expert advice and consultancy plus specialist training for employers and employees which can be provided at your place of work. Research has shown that boroughs like Hackney have some of the highest concentration of SMEs in the UK ... but also, unfortunately, some of the highest failure rates. The Enterprising East End project echoes the sentiment from its own independent research which has highlighted that Hackney enterprises are desperate for sound business advice.

Chris Walsh, Wise Owls Director, said: "We are delighted that we have been awarded the funding to be able to offer this programme to local enterprises. Since starting the project we have helped over 100 enterprises access the information, support and consultancy they need to prosper and grow in the new competitive, customer, quality and environmentally-driven business climate".

- Contact us and we will book you a place on the seminars we are running and /or a one-to-one session with one of our professional partners. Many employers find it difficult to know where to access relevant information and cannot afford to pay full commercial rates for these services. 'Enterprising Hackney' aims to make it simple and cheap for them to get the support they need.
- To book or to find out further information on this programme please contact: Wise Owls on 020 7923 7771, fax 020 7923 9230, e-mail marketing@wiseowls.co.uk or go to our www.enterprisingeastend.com site.

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