

**VALE 4
BUSINESS**

shaping the Vale's
economic future

Vale4Business is a collaborative partnership that brings together the region's key business and civic leaders. It will provide the strategic leadership, vision and knowledge needed to support long term economic growth by removing barriers to expansion, securing inward investment, improving infrastructure and promoting the Vale as an attractive place to live and work.

Introduction

Vale4Business is a Vale-wide partnership that provides local businesses with a strategic business voice. Led by business for business – it provides members with the opportunity to influence and work with the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Vale4Business members share their insights and experiences to highlight key issues affecting the district's business community. Through close dialogue across market sectors, a plan of action is put in place that removes barriers to future growth and realises the full potential of the region.

Join Vale4Business today and play a key part in the Vale's future business success.

The Board

Vale4Business is driven by a board made up of representatives of key sectors within the local economy.



Councillor Matthew Barber

Leader

Vale of White Horse District Council and District Councillor for the Hanneys ward (Chair of Vale4Business board)

Cllr Barber has been a member of Vale of White Horse District Council since 2003 and Leader of the Council since 2011. He is responsible for Economic Development, Property & Finance. He is a Board Member of Science Vale Oxford and Vale4Business and a Director of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Cllr Barber is married with two daughters. He lives in the village of West Hanney, and has lived in Oxfordshire most of his life. He has also been a member of Faringdon Town Council. Before becoming Leader of the Council, he was Leader of the Opposition since 2009 and chaired the Vale's Scrutiny Committee



Sarah Allen-Stevens

Managing Director

Wicklesham Commercial Properties

Sarah Allen-Stevens started Wicklesham Commercial Properties Ltd 16 years ago. The company owns and manages a business centre on the outskirts of Faringdon, Oxfordshire hosting a number of small and medium sized enterprises in converted, traditional barns.

Sarah's background was in the mobile phone industry where she worked as a consultant to mobile phone operators from emerging economies in developing their networks and as a lobbyist to the European Commission.

Sarah's heart lies within the development of the rural economy and the growth of SME's. She currently a member of Oxfordshire Business Parks Managers Forum and treasurer and committee member of Faringdon and District Chamber of Commerce.



Martin Dare-Edwards

Director

Dr Martin Advisory Ltd

Dr Martin Dare-Edwards is currently developing business relationships between the UK and China building on his successful experience in establishing a business and R&D operation for Infineum in Shanghai.

Martin was previously UK Country Manager for Infineum's southern Oxfordshire based operations and Chairman of the Oxfordshire LEP during its successful start-up phase.

He is also one the UKTI's global network of Business Catalyst Ambassadors and Chair for the South Central & South West Local Advisory Commission for the Government's Business Growth support scheme, GrowthAccelerator.



Jacqui Canton

Assistant Principal

Abingdon and Witney College

Jacqui Canton is Assistant Principal at Abingdon and Witney College and part of the senior management who were assessed as "outstanding" by Ofsted in January 2014. Jacqui joined the College in 2011 after working at a number of different colleges, primarily focusing on developing and improving apprenticeship provision. Jacqui has helped the College to grow its apprenticeship provision by 500% over the last three years. In 2013/14, college apprenticeship success rates were the highest in England. Having previously worked in the engineering sector running national apprenticeship and graduate development programmes, Jacqui has particular interest in developing bespoke apprenticeship programmes for employers.

The board is supported by officers from Vale of White Horse District Council:



Iain Nicholson

PRBI

Iain is a town centres specialist who has worked on a number of projects and initiatives in towns and city suburbs. One of his current roles is as one of two town team coordinators on the GB High Street Award-winning town centre vitality project in Wantage, which has seen him focus on the challenges around bringing empty shops back into use. Iain draws on his background as a leading PR & Communications for business specialist in Oxfordshire, and his expertise in public relations, business communications strategy, using social media, and skills training. Iain is a former BBC radio journalist.



Jo Willett

**Marketing and Innovation Centre
Development Director -
Oxford Innovation Ltd**

Jo joined Oxford Innovation in 2000 as an Incubator Manager and was responsible for opening Culham Innovation Centre in 2001.

Jo is now a Divisional Board member for the Business and Innovation Centre Division of Oxford Innovation, which manages 21 Centres throughout the UK, supporting over 750 companies. In this role she is responsible for all aspects of marketing, business development and business support provision. Jo is passionate about the role that Innovation Centres can play in developing strong economies and innovation ecosystems.



Christopher Solly

**Managing Director
Checkmore Limited**

Chris Solly formed a joint venture with Graham Denton of Denton and Gibson Limited and together they acquired the site of what was to become Shrivensham 100 Business Park in 1986 from the Ministry of Defense.

Enlisting the help and support of The Vale of White Horse DC and Watchfield Parish Council a scheme was conceived and developed over the last 30 years providing a managed business park environment for small and medium size enterprises.

The park now comprises some 100 Units and is home to over 60 businesses. They continue to build and offer properties on the park for rent or sale and are actively involved in the daily management of the park.



Suzanne Malcolm

Economic Development Manager

Suzanne is Economic Development Manager for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils. She manages a wide-ranging shared team across the two councils leading major projects that have a significant corporate and political involvement. She is responsible for economic development, tourism, strategic property, regeneration, town centre management, and Oxfordshire LEADER programme.

Suzanne has extensive experience in economic development having worked in economic development related roles in local authorities across the UK for the last 20 years.

Encouraging Inward Investment

The Vale of White Horse has a number of attributes that make it an ideal place for businesses to invest and grow.

The area is a major hub in the UK's knowledge economy, boasting a number of state of the art research facilities that house some of the country's fastest growing businesses in the advanced engineering, life sciences, energy and IT industries. These well supported innovation clusters are generating wealth and opportunity for the local area and beyond. The Vale also benefits from a wide choice of business sites and an impressive range of meeting and conference facilities.

The district also enjoys an ideal central location, excellent rail and air links, beautiful countryside and a strong heritage. Such attributes are a real asset when it comes to attracting and retaining the best talent.

Supporting Business Growth

With ongoing global economic change, a strong strategic focus on ways to improve the Vale's business competitiveness has never been more important.

Upgrading transport links, building more housing, installing super fast broadband, simplifying local planning laws and cutting red tape – these are just a few of the issues that Vale4Business tackles head on in conjunction with the Vale Council.

The Vale of White Horse also has a highly skilled workforce and buoyant jobs market. 43.7 per cent of the resident population in the Vale are degree educated (NVQ level 4 and above) compared to a national average of 36 per cent. The area is also has one of the fastest growing populations in the country, with numbers forecast to increase by 15 per cent to 2025.

The remit of Vale4Business will include securing inward investment and promoting the Vale as a world leading location for business.

Dialogue

Vale4Business plays a key role in fostering a collaborative culture amongst the district's business enterprises, as the region's pre-eminent network for B2B dialogue.

Vale4Business affords participants a magnified voice in strategic decision-making at a local government level, whilst also providing a support network for local businesses to come together and share ideas and best practice.

Disparate views on what needs to be done to increase growth and investment have for the first time been streamlined into one powerful message that reaches key audiences/decision makers far beyond the local area.

Vale4Business is not just a lobbying organisation – the primary focus is on delivering tangible and measurable outcomes that benefit members. By monitoring indicators such as business growth rate, employment rates and gross value added, Vale4Business is better placed to highlight the most important issues facing local business. A quantitative approach will also allow members to judge the success of Vale4Business in delivering its objectives.

Vale4Business – Join us!

SHAPING THE VALE'S ECONOMIC FUTURE...

Vale4Business is a collaborative partnership that brings together the region's key business and civic leaders. It provides the strategic leadership, vision and knowledge needed to support long term economic growth by removing barriers to expansion, securing inward investment, improving infrastructure and promoting the Vale as an attractive place to live and work.

As a member of the Vale4Business forum you will be able to influence and link with the key drivers of the Vale's economic future.

What do I get for my membership?

- Monthly e-newsletter with the latest strategic business news
- Access to member's area of www.Vale4Business.com
- A programme of Vale4Business events with opportunity to network with other members

Annual membership costs just £50 for any business.

Contact

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