



Economic Practice

West London Business Chamber of Commerce

West London Business
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About West London Business

West London is one of the most successful sub-regional economies in Europe - West London Business wants it to stay that way.

With over 300 members ranging from world-wide brands such as GlaxoSmithKline, BSkyB and BAA to forward thinking West London based companies like Hines Air Property and Meica Group, they have developed the premier forum for networking in West London

Although a thriving and successful area for business, West London, like all successful economies, still has barriers to growth and threats to competitiveness such as skills shortages and an underdeveloped transport infrastructure.

WLB harnesses the individual views of West London's business community so that together, and with one voice, they can tackle the issues that are impacting on the growth and success of West London's businesses.

But representing businesses on strategic business issues is only one strand of their service.

Bringing new jobs into West London and keeping them here is also a central plank of their commitment to raising the economic competitiveness of the area. WLB is the main point of contact in West London for international companies considering re-location and for growing SMEs to find new premises.

About West London

A dynamic area for business

West London : A diverse area where blue chip corporate giants work with fast-paced, knowledge-driven enterprises, and internationally renowned centres of commerce sit comfortably alongside a mix of urban and suburban residential communities.

Positioned between the historic economic powerhouse of central London and the “new wave” high growth businesses of the Thames Valley region, a West London location offers unique advantages for a range of businesses.

Road Access

West London is served by a network of major roads and motorways that make it one of the most accessible business centres in the UK. The M4, M40, M25 and M3 all

feed into West London, providing easy access to Wales, the Midlands, the Home Counties and the rest of London.

The A4, A40, A406, A30 and A5 provide West London with a strong arterial road system, providing easy access to London and the major motorway routes.

Rail

West London benefits from excellent rail links for both long distance trips and daily commuting from the surrounding areas.

The main lines from London to the South West, Wales, the Midlands and North West pass through West London, giving excellent links to some of the UK's most important cities and business centres.

Air

Heathrow is the world's busiest international airport with 64 million international passengers per year.

Over 90 airlines serve 160 destinations, operating an average of 1,250 flights a day. Links to Europe and the United States are particularly strong with 33 flights to Paris and 23 flights to New York every day.

Terminal 5, currently under construction, is expected to handle over 30 million passengers a year.

Tube

The area is served by seven out of the twelve London Underground lines, connecting with buses and local rail to link all residential and business districts.

The Central Line begins in West Ruislip and offers a travelling time of only 1 hour 30 minutes to Epping on the eastern side of Greater London, a journey of 54 miles and 36 stations.

The Piccadilly Line serves Heathrow Airport and during peak hours runs 76 trains on the line.

There are 81 tube stations in West London serving an area from Harrow to Hammersmith and Ealing to Earls Court.

People

30% of the West London workforce are qualified to degree level or equivalent.

In the West London sub-region, more 16-year-olds continue in full-time education than the London and national average.

Businesses seeking staff can take advantage of the large catchment area across London and the South East.

There is a population of 20 million people within a 150 mile (240km) radius of West London.

Economy

West London has 51,000 VAT registered businesses. Since the mid 1990s, West London has enjoyed a growth rate of 3.9% per annum, making a major contribution to London's economy. West London is a home for entrepreneurial success. Of the 780,000 people employed in West London, two-thirds work in small and medium sized businesses.

New business success rates are higher than the London average, highlighting the verve of the start-up culture in the area. West London has 17% of all London's jobs. The high-growth sectors of business services, media, research & development, and high value-added manufacturing are strongly represented in West London. The growing media cluster in West London accounts for 29,000 jobs.

In Good Company

West London is home to some of the biggest blue chip organisations in the world, many of which have their headquarters here.

GlaxoSmithKline - Diageo - Cisco - British Airways - IBM - BBC - United Biscuits - BSkyB - Kodak - Bechtel - Carphone Warehouse

Premises

West London is made up of six diverse boroughs based on long established towns and more recent suburbs. This gives it more variety of business locations and premises than most areas of equivalent size.

West London has four of the UK's premier business parks at Chiswick Park, Stockley Park, Bedfont Lakes and FirstCentral, making it one of Europe's most important office locations. It also has space for a thriving base of small-scale entrepreneurs. Office rental rates are competitive, and vary from £140 to £370 per square metre.

Park Royal is London's largest industrial area, and Heathrow and its surroundings are a major distribution hub. Industrial and warehouse lease costs range from £40 to £100 per square metre.

West London has a flourishing and entrepreneurial business community and a host of corporate blue chips, innovative universities and a culturally diverse and highly skilled workforce.

Add to this the excellent transport links, schools, universities and leisure facilities, and West London is hard to compete with as a place to live and work.

Lifestyle

West London has always been attractive to those who need to be close to the centre of London, but also seek a relaxed suburban place to live.

A mixture of green open spaces, sites of historical interest and river walks sit comfortably alongside vibrant town centres that boast some of the most exciting entertainment venues and fashionable restaurants in London.

Why West London ?

West London has one of the most dynamic economies in the world.

With 87 000 businesses including a host of world brands and a strong and thriving small and medium sized business community, West London is the ideal place to set up a UK or European focused Sales and Marketing arm.

A global player

West London:

- Contributes £27 Billion to the national economy
- Is bigger than the UK's second City Birmingham, with a population of 1.4 million people
- Has a high proportion of people educated degree standard and above
- Is home to Heathrow Airport, the busiest international airport in the world
- Attracts global brands such as Cisco, British Airways, GSK and the BBC
- Is 30 Minutes from Central London

Access to the world:

If it's speed of travel and access to worldwide business centres that matter to your business West London is the perfect starting point for your business journey.

Heathrow airport in West London has over 90 airlines serving 160 destinations, operating an average of 1,250 flights a day. Links to Europe and the US are particularly strong with 33 flights to Paris and 23 flights to New York every day providing unparalleled access to the major commerce centres of the world.

The Channel Tunnel rail link from Waterloo Station in London is 30 minutes from the centre of West London and only a 2.5 hour journey to Paris.

Heathrow Express whisks you from Heathrow Airport to Paddington Station, Central London in 15 mins.

Access to the UK:

If your needs are closer to home, West London has strong road and rail connections to the major business and population centres of the UK.

The major UK motorways the M4, M1, M3 and M40 all pass through West London taking you to the major towns and cities of the UK such as Cardiff, Birmingham, City of London, Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool.

The main train lines from London to the South West, Wales, the Midlands and the North West stop in West London.

Access to markets:

West London sits in an enviable position as a major part of the London economy but enjoys the added benefit of strong business links into continental Europe and the prosperous South East of the UK.

20 million people are within a 90 minute drive of West London and a market of 450 million people in the EU a 2 hour flight away, providing a vast consumer and business market within easy reach.

The South East of England is the EU's third largest regional economy and London has population of 8 million.

Access to flexible premises:

Whether it's a flexible lease or serviced office space West London provides premises of central London quality and flexibility without the central London prices.

Stockley Park is one of London's premier business parks, 15 minutes from Heathrow, and with a selection of flexible selection of office space.

The Discovery Channel is the latest tenant at Chiswick Park, find out more about this stunning new development at www.enjoy-work.com

Hammersmith & Fulham sits on the edge of central London and is home to some of the most famous brands in the world – Coca Cola, Disney and Chivas Regal. But it also boasts an excellent selection of high quality office space for small and medium sized businesses with flexible terms and prices.

Access to people:

West London is home to some of the most creative and entrepreneurial businesses in the UK. The borough of Hammersmith & Fulham is the home to the second largest concentration of creative businesses in London. Not only that West London has a unique mix of urban and suburban lifestyle options.

Finding qualified and motivated sales and marketing staff in West London is never a problem - one fifth of all Chartered Institute of Marketing graduates are based in London.

London is a region where over 300 languages are spoken providing access to multi-lingual staff and almost 30% of the West London workforce is qualified to degree level or above – higher than the UK national average of 23%.

West London – Catering for the Capital

West London is one of the most dynamic economies in the world.

With 87 000 businesses including a host of world brands and a strong and thriving small and medium sized business community, West London is the ideal place to set up a UK based food business.

A global player

On the doorstep of central London and with excellent transport links to the UK and Europe, West London is the first choice home of the food and drink business in the UK.

The first phase of growth in this sector was fuelled by businesses locating in West London as a convenient area to feed the booming restaurants, hotels and shops of a growing London.

The rise of Heathrow kick-started the second boom in this industry as air travel became more readily available and airline catering companies moved into the area to service the rise in passengers.

More recently the growing ethnic food cluster that has developed around Southall with world famous brand Noon Products at its core, has cemented West London's reputation as the home of food and drink in the UK.

Light bites:

- West London is home to the biggest biscuit factory in Europe, producing 75,000 tones a year
- 1 million sandwiches a month are prepared by Hazlewood foods in Park Royal
- Noon products produces 150,000 ready meals a day and has an annual turnover of £90 million a year.

People:

- West London has a population of 1.4 million
- Over 787,000 people employed in the sub-region
- 15,000 employed in the food and drink sector
- Large available pool of talent at all levels
- In West London more 16 year olds continue of full time education than the London and national average
- The number of people employed in the food and drink sector has increased by 30% since 1995
- Strong training opportunities exists for the food and drink sectors through West London's 5 Further Education Colleges and 2 universities
- Thames Valley University is a world leader in food technology research

Markets:

- 214 food and drink establishments in West London
- 6000 restaurants in London
- 5700 food and drink outlets in London
- Eating out in London contributes £8 billion per annum to the local economy
- 20 million people are within a 90 minute drive of West London
- 126 million people live within one day by road freight of London

Food and drink sector:

- Ten per cent of all jobs in London are linked to the food and drink sector
- Food and drink has been the best performing manufacturing sector in London over the past 5 years
- The second largest manufacturing sector in London is food and drink

Park Royal

There are now 140 businesses involved in the food industry on the Park Royal Industrial Estate employing 6000 people.

Guinness, Heinz and United Biscuits have been the cornerstones of the Park Royal Industrial Estate. Over the years they have been joined by other food sector businesses that have identified Park Royal's transport links and mix of property stock as ideally suited to helping their business grow and succeed.

Prices begin at £9.50 per sq ft and can range from food warehouse and distribution premises to food manufacturing and preparation.

Heathrow Airport

With 78 million passengers per year Heathrow airport drives the growth of airline catering companies in West London. And with an extra 30 million passengers a year set to come on stream with the completion of Terminal 5 in 2008 it set to grow.

Ethnic food cluster

Noon Products is the anchor ethnic food business in West London and has led the way for the area to become a centre for ethnic food excellence. Food products from Indian meals and specialist sweets are created by master food technicians in an area that is known locally as 'Little India'.

High quality premises exist in the area for businesses of all sizes and prices begin at £9.00 per sq ft

Transport

West London is served by a network of major roads and motorways that make it one of the most accessible centres for business in the UK. The M4, M40, M25 and M3 all feed into West London providing easy access to Wales, the Midlands, the South East and the rest of London.

The A4, A40, A406, A30 and A5 provide West London with a strong inner arterial road system.

The main rail lines from London to the South West, Wales, the Midlands and North West pass through West London. The Eurostar is 30 minutes from the centre of West London.

Heathrow is the world's busiest international airport with 64 million passengers a year. Over 90 airlines serve 160 destinations operating an average of 1,250 flights a day.

Links to Europe and the US are strong with 33 flights to Paris and 23 flights to New York each day.

The area is served by seven out of twelve London Underground tube lines.

The Piccadilly line serves Heathrow Airport and during peak times runs 76 trains on the line.

Wired in West London

West London is one of the most dynamic economies in the world.

With 87 000 businesses, including a host of world brands and a strong and thriving small and medium sized business community, West London is the ideal place to set up a UK IT or knowledge based high technology business.

IT overview

Ten of the world's leading IT software companies are based in West London drawing into the area a large cluster of small and medium sized businesses from this sector.

Many of the UK's most advanced and prestigious business parks in Europe are situated in West London and are ideally suited for the IT sector.

Wired people

Wide catchment area of IT professionals, supported by excellent transport links into the region.

London as a whole has a very large IT labour pool of over 324,000 people.

Wired transport and connectivity

The M4, M1, M3 and M40 all cut through West London taking you direct to the major towns and cities of the UK.

The main lines from London to the South West, Wales, the Midlands and the North West run through West London.

The world's busiest international airport, Heathrow, is situated in West London with an average of 1,250 flights a day to over 90 destinations.

West London is a major fibre route for the UK and a number of corporate and carrier neutral data centres are based in the area.

Wired premises

Whether it's corporate headquarters, flexible lease or serviced office space West London provides central London quality premises at outer London prices. Stockley Park is one of London's premier business parks, 15 minutes from Heathrow, and with a selection of flexible office solutions.

Chiswick Park has just gained the Discovery Channel as its latest tenant. Find out more about this stunning new development at www.enjoy-work.com

Hammersmith & Fulham sits on the edge of central London and is home to some of the most famous IT brands in the world such as Sony Ericsson and AOL. But it also boasts an excellent selection of office space for small and medium sized businesses.

West London is not only a stimulating place to work, it's also a wonderful place to live.

The cultural and ethnic diversity of West London has created a large community of people from different backgrounds and faiths. Over 25% of west London's population was born outside the EU creating a stimulating and inventive range of communities - a superb backdrop for any business.

A fantastic mix of urban and suburban housing options exist in West London, ideal for a range of budgets and needs. From the mansion houses in Chiswick, Harrow and Ealing to the loft developments of Hammersmith, finding a suitable home is never a problem. If that's not enough then West London is within reasonable commuting time from England's Home Counties of Hampshire, Surrey and Berkshire.

Parks, galleries, theatres, exhibitions, cinemas, restaurants, museums – the list is endless. All of the reasons that make London a great place to live apply for West London. A short tube ride will take you right into the heart of London so that you can enjoy the cultural treasures of one of the true world cities.

We understand that it's not just business support that's important to you. Sometimes it's the personal things that make a difference. We can help settle you and your staff into West London, suggest a perfect place to live, point you towards the best houses and schools, and plug you into your own community network. We make you feel at home the moment you arrive.

West London Business staff

Chief Executive

Frank Wingate

Frank joined West London Business in the August of 2004 after a 4 year stint as head of media relations, Government affairs and stakeholder communications for Edexcel, the high profile educational qualifications body.

After taking a degree in Modern History from Oxford, Frank moved on to Public Relations and was by his early thirties running a division of Hong Kong's largest PR agency. There he was an active member of the British Chamber of Commerce helping to create its SME Committee. For someone who lives in Kingston-upon-Thames and loves London as a city and a lifestyle, the WLB post is a dream job.

Operations Manager

Jo Evans

As Operations Manager Jo is responsible for developing the systems and procedures of West London Business, sourcing new funding streams and developing links with partner organisations.

Events Manager

Manvier Jagpal

Manvier is responsible for the co-ordinating and managing of over 40 events for West London Business members and their guests each year. These events are designed to cover and target a broad range of businesses, large and small.

The events programme covers a wide range of formats from the formal Annual Dinners to seminars and social events. All the events are designed to provide members with opportunities to network and to gain valuable information, in an enjoyable atmosphere. Our varied events programme is one of the major benefits of becoming a member of WLB.

Marketing Manager

Paul Parkinson

As the Marketing Manager for WLB Paul is responsible for all aspects of the marketing mix including press releases, marketing material, web-site development and product development.

Business Development Manager

Simon Caffrey

Simon is responsible for building the membership and working with existing members to help them get the best out of their membership of WLB.

Sales Administrator

Nina MacPherson

Nina joined the organisation in June 2002 and is one of the first points of contact for our members. Nina controls the administration of the membership service and is also responsible for keeping the database up-to-date.

Economic Development Manager

Russel Harris

Russel heads up the team responsible for providing property relocation and investment support, as well as advice on a range of business services to help retain companies in West London.

Database Administrator

Sharon Kidd

As the premises team Database Administrator, Sharon enters premises information onto the database, is responsible for monthly mailings to property agents and also undertakes general administrative work for WLB. Sharon joined WLB in September 2001.

West London Business and Services

Finances

WLB annual budget is about 300.000 pounds, the money are drawn from three major sources:

- Members, WLB has around 300 members. They pay a membership fee for which they have access to a wide range of WLB services and events. The fee varies according to the companies turn over and number of employees. It starts from 325 pounds for companies with less than 10 employees and turn over under a million pounds to over 4000 pounds for corporate.
- Events, WLB holds over 50 events annually, some events are free for members and with fee for non-members and some events are with fee for everyone, the members get only a discount.
- State and local administration, WLB receives funding from different sources to run a series of activities as Property Search and planning work for London Development Agency.

Services

For members, in return for the membership fee the members have access to over 50 events annually free or at discounted rates, at this events they can network, win more business and lobby themselves. Also they can receive professional consulting regarding healthcare, legal, property or general management for free or at discounted rates from other members.

For local administration WLB runs a free property search service. The six boroughs that make West London want to attract new business and keep the companies in West London, therefore they pay WLB to offer free property advice for companies searching for new or bigger premises. As a result of WLB advices over 50 new businesses are attracted annually creating hundred of new jobs.

For government agencies WLB does research for projects like London 2012 Olympics, Transportation, Housing and Economical. Once developed, WLB also helps in implementing these plans.

Conclusion

West London Business it is a Chamber of Commerce that really makes efforts to serve West London Businesses interests and the results don't fail to show. It is amazing how a small organization with 16 employees can have such a big impact. Of course these results are the coronation of lots of hard work and a professional approach.

From my experience there I found out that between all the boroughs in London, the six that make West London communicate best, this communication was initiated by WLB and every one acknowledge that with out WLB efforts such good collaboration between the boroughs, people and governmental agencies would never happened.

The three months I spent with West London Business had been a beautiful and rewarding experience. I only can help to be able to pass on some of this experience.

Mihai Andrei