



**Press Release/ 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010**

**Falmouth's Business Improvement District initiates business support programme**

The first in a planned series of business support initiatives, spearheaded by Falmouth Business Improvement District (BID), took place on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May at the Greenbank Hotel. 'To Discount or Not to Discount', a course aimed at retailers, was organised in partnership with Cornwall Retail Skills and was free for Falmouth BID businesses.

The five-year Falmouth BID initiative has a number of priority areas, as laid out in its manifesto, including giving support for Falmouth businesses, destination marketing, physical improvements to the townscape and event led activity.

**Richard Wilcox, BID Manager for Falmouth** said;

"Supporting Falmouth businesses is a key priority area as laid down in the BID manifesto and I'm delighted that we've kick-starting a programme of events to achieve that goal. It's great also to be working in partnership with Cornwall Retail Skills, as the expertise and knowledge that they bring to the table will be of huge benefit to Falmouth's businesses." He continued:

"Falmouth BID will be doing its utmost to help and assist local businesses where it can, during these tough economic times and to that end, we have another initiative booked in for June, a free one to one tax advice session, the details of which I'll be sending out soon."

**Jo Lake, Cornwall Retail Skills** added:

"The workshop was designed to explore ways in which small traders can offer discounts to customers without damaging their bottom line. It also looked at ways of segmenting customer groups, increasing footfall and the effective use of incentive schemes and loyalty programmes. Cornwall Retail Skills are pleased to be supporting the Falmouth BID and I hope that as many traders as possible will support forthcoming business workshops we have planned."

**Jane Thomas, owner of Just like This** clothing shop, attended the workshop and said:

"I found it to be very enjoyable and worthwhile. I particularly liked the way in which the session was structured to get everyone interacting with one another. I'd certainly recommend attending the next one, I know I'll definitely be there!"

**Andrew Robertson, owner of Harbour View Cafe** who also attended added:

"A fantastic opportunity to get first rate business advice absolutely free. I thought I knew a lot already but the session proved to be very informative, interesting and really engaging. I would not hesitate to take advantage of this opportunity again!"

## **Ends**

**Richard Wilcox, Falmouth BID Manager can be contacted on 01326 313553 or via richardwilcox@falmouth.co.uk**

## **About Falmouth BID**

The Falmouth Business Improvement District (BID) is a not-for-profit company that is charged with delivering a number of unique projects that aim to improve the trading environment of Falmouth.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a flexible funding mechanism that improves and manages a clearly defined commercial area. It is based on the principle of an additional levy on all defined ratepayers, following a majority vote. Following a successful vote, the levy becomes mandatory for all defined ratepayers.

54% of businesses in the Falmouth BID area took part in the ballot in March 2009 – 218 of the 407 that were eligible to vote. Of these, 153 voted in favour of the scheme, representing a 70% majority.

All local businesses now pay an annual levy of 1% of their rateable value, which gives a figure of £100k per year for five years to fund activity designed to increase footfall in the town, with a particular focus on marketing activity.

The volunteer Directors of the Falmouth BID Board are:

**Nigel Carpenter, Proprietor of the St Michael's Hotel & Spa** (Chair)

**James Hodgson, a partner of Hodgsons Accountants** (Company Secretary/Sponsorship & Fundraising)

**Jonathan Griffin, Director of National Maritime Museum Cornwall** (Website & E-marketing)

**Richard Thomas, Director of the Richard Thomas Partnership** (Physical Improvements)

**Jilly Easterby, Head of Public Affairs, University College Falmouth** (PR & Stakeholder Communication)

**Andy Robertson, Proprietor of the Harbour View Café** (Volunteers)

**Clive Jones, proprietor of the Rosemullion Hotel**

**Keith Hambly-Staite, Chair of The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society**

For more information about the Falmouth BID, visit [www.falmouth.co.uk](http://www.falmouth.co.uk)