



April 2009 diary

On the cover of a magazine...

For twenty years I have enjoyed helping business to grow, so it was with a slight blush that I ended up – along with fellow director of Fresh Element Andy Ross – on the cover of the North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC) magazine *Contact*. The story was about the power and benefits of a non executive on a Board, as I have been on the board of [Fresh Element](#).

New tenants

Russell is a chartered management accountant and Justin holds national expertise in hair straighteners. More will follow next month as they and others arrive, indeed some of them may even be worth singing about... anyway, enough clues. We are also saying goodbye to Tilhill who have been on site some 8 years and were very helpful in planning the poplar and willow planting of 2002. I hope they will still be popping in from time to time. David Conway and Richard Peberdy have been great to have around the site and from this year their co-worker from their old Alnwick office (and also later at Lee Moor Business Park), Roger Smith, will be joining us as our woodland consultant.

Cruising for business contacts

The NECC have for some time held free-to-members events and the one this month was hosted on a [stationary river cruise boat](#) opposite my favourite restaurant, [Six](#), at the Baltic - it was great to tell people that Fresh Element was now utilising its skills to produce great food and drink in what can only be one of the most iconic buildings in the north east

The early bird ... on May 3rd



An event which has to be on most people's list of things to do in Northumberland... get up and listen to the dawn chorus with an expert who can explain what you are hearing. Tourism and wildlife are coming together here, near the historic Northumbrian town of Alnwick, to celebrate International Dawn Chorus Day 2009.



Lee Moor Farm is the venue for a [Dawn Chorus Walk](#) and Northumbrian Breakfast led by Martin Kitching of [Northern Experience Wildlife Tours](#). Martin said: "With hedges, ponds, woodland, reedbed and grass margins, Lee Moor supports those scarce and declining farmland birds such as Yellowhammer, Tree Sparrow and Grey Partridge that are a part of our natural heritage. After visiting the farm I knew instantly that this would make an excellent venue for a Dawn Chorus walk, and a Northumbrian Breakfast at the Black Olive Café is the perfect way to round off the early start."



Ian - the third generation of the Brown family to farm at Rennington - said: "I have the opportunity of birdsong in the morning and dark starlit nights perhaps 100 days a year and for

me to share this with tourists and local residents, along with Martin's depth of knowledge of wildlife identification, is an exciting proposition. I can imagine those on the tour will be talking about this day out for years to come."

Dave and Tina Hogg set up The Black Olive Café at Lee Moor in 2008 and are specialising in home-made quality. Dave commented: "We have just launched a local food hamper service and this event adds to our links with tourists, and native Northumbrians, who want to experience the landscape and wildlife close up. Lee Moor is a haven for wildlife and Tina and I are in before 6am most days to make up our fresh specialist sandwiches and we have been amazed at the sheer diversity of birds and animals we see each day as we come into work."

Seeing the wood for the trees

We had a visit to Lee Moor from Kasia Zielewska about being registered on the [BEn network](#). BEn is designed to strengthen the bio-energy sector, and the north east has been chosen as one of 4 regions around Europe to pilot the scheme. With our commitment to biomass willow and the formation of [Sustainable Heating Solutions](#), we are keen to get on board. I am always keen that Lee Moor is linked in to these broader initiatives within Europe. We shall report again on this as the three-year project moves forward.

Bong... raptors on 24/7 duty at Lee Moor

Regular visitors to Lee Moor will notice that a goshawk guards the entrance to the farm and sits over the farm road in a tree on the way in during the day. About 50m away at night is the favourite fence post of our barn owl. It is amazing to think of them changing shifts. Raptors like humans have their varying work patterns!! I hope they have long and productive careers... and avoid RTAs – road traffic accidents.

Ian