

Prestigious contract for city accountants

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THE internationally renowned Celtic Manor Resort has appointed Newport chartered accountants, UHY Hacker Young, to manage the audit and corporation tax.

The appointment follows an extensive tender process, which saw UHY Hacker Young awarded the contract ahead of some of the UK's largest accountancy firms.

Prior to UHY Hacker Young's appointment, the Newport resort had operated as a branch of its Canadian parent company, Wesley Clover International Corporation.

The Celtic Manor Resort Limited was incorporated during 2013, making UHY Hacker Young the first auditors of the flagship UK business.

UHY Hacker Young have assumed audit responsibility of the resort's accounts for the period ended March 31, 2014, and will now operate as its retained auditors.

John Griffiths, audit partner at UHY Hacker Young, said: "We are honoured to have been selected as The Celtic Manor Resort's audit and corporate tax partner. Our appointment not only represents the trust the resort is placing in us, it is a demonstration of how multi-million pound organisations recognise the expertise synonymous with the UHY brand."

"We hope that working with internationally recognised brands



Mark Colcomb of the Celtic Manor, with John Griffiths, Carl Stockden, Steve Theaker.

such as the Celtic Manor will not only serve to affirm our own standing within the industry, but will better aid our practise in its support of the Newport and Gwent community and its businesses."

A former Ryder Cup host, The Celtic Manor Resort is widely acknowledged as one of the UK's premium international business conference venues and will this September host

The Nato Summit, which will be the UK's first Nato summit since 1990.

Mark Colcomb, vice president, finance and support at the Celtic Manor Resort, said: "I was impressed with both the technical knowledge and professionalism of the UHY Hacker Young team throughout the tender process. I look forward to working closely with them over the coming

years which are likely to be exciting ones for the Celtic Manor."

Having joined the UHY network in 2009, UHY Hacker Young's Newport, Abergavenny and Bristol practises are part of an international network of independent accountancy firms spanning 211 offices across 72 countries. This includes 23 offices in the UK.

Commercially speaking

By David Jones, surveyor, Hutchings & Thomas, Chartered Surveyors



THERE are likely to be a great deal of fresh new faces in Newport from this week as a result of one of the biggest votes of confidence in the city.

The new Admiral building opened for business yesterday.

The shining new modern office block opposite the city's railway station is now abuzz with some 450 workers.

The staff may be rattling around for a while as the office block is designed to cater for double their number.

Nevertheless, 450 new bodies in the city centre is a sight to be welcomed. The staff have until now been based at Langstone Business Park on the edge of town and few, if any, ventured regularly into Newport. Now the city is their oyster.

With their new workplace right in the heart of the city they will naturally be venturing into Newport adding a fresh vibe and vitality to the place. How can we ensure that we benefit from this, dare I say, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?

Already Admiral is said to have been approached by scores of entrepreneurial local businesses offering discounts and deals to the staff in the city.

As if to underline the confidence business feel about the opening of the new offices Admiral Group CEO Henry Engelhardt, who came to Newport to open the office yesterday, said: "I'm sure our staff will be taking advantage of the local amenities and will be very happy working here."

And with the completion of the first phase comes the second part of the redevelopment of the Cambrian Centre which will offer a range of retail opportunities which in itself will add further to the vibrancy of the centre.

Another event which is fast approaching 'completion' is the Nato Summit to be held at Celtic Manor Resort. Although not in the centre of the city, there is no doubt that there will be knock-on effects from the gathering.

And, if we play our cards right, a lasting impression could mean that Newport is well remembered and that future visits are planned to see the sights in a less fevered atmosphere and perhaps make an investment or two.

To that end it must be noted that Newport's 'bargain basement' freehold commercial property appears to be on the radar of investors. It may be because of events such as the Nato Summit and Admiral's huge pat on the back, putting the city in the spotlight, but it's worth noting that there are some very impressive chunks of property currently on sale for what appears to be very little money and, you know what, they are selling.

It may seem odd to us but there are many people who don't know an awful lot about Newport. And, it's fair to say that investors not so far away are calling us to learn more about our city and what it offers in the short to medium term. And they are very pleased to hear what is going on and also what they can achieve for a very affordable investment.

The general property picture is improving and we have solid evidence of an increase in enquiries which are translating into deals.

However, with this confidence there is a downside as soon there will be an issue with a lack of quality stock being available.

With all the above in mind are we ready for all this interest offers and able to capitalise fully on the benefits that will follow?

Up the 'Port

Gastro-pub is to open

NEWPORT businessman Neil Underwood has ventured into the hospitality industry by opening Y Maerun, in the former Port o Call pub in Marshfield.

Mr Underwood, of Underwood Insurance, joined forces with his wife, Jackie, and Leighton and Nicky Hopkins, who have previously run the Tredegar Arms in Bassaleg, to launch the venture.

Mr Underwood said: "Leighton and Nicky have run several pubs successfully for brewers over the last 15 years and we were convinced we would make a good team if we could find the right pub in the right location."

"Y Maerun, which opened in May, will be very much food-orientated – a gastro pub. However, we also have conference and event facilities in a separate room."

Refurbishment of the building cost about £75,000 including extensions to the garden and a children's play area and took about 11 weeks to complete.

Murder mystery a scream

MEMBERS and guests of the City of Newport Business Club were treated to an evening of murder, suspense and intrigue at the last business event of the club's 2013/14 season.

The murder mystery event was delivered by seven members of Dai Laughing Productions of Abergavenny, who put the 'story line' and characters together.

The scene was set – the AGM of Oldport Business Forum was unexpectedly cancelled due to the untimely death of its chairperson Cynthia Payne, who had been allegedly poisoned. Each character relayed clues and facts about their fellow suspects to the audience and to Sergeant Davina Knowall.

Guests grouped into 'teams' and were invited to ask the suspects questions in order to establish who 'done it' with the knowledge that only the true murderer could lie.

The buzz in the room was exciting and eventually two teams had deduced the correct name of the murderer. Bottles of wine were presented to the winning teams.

Janine Dance, City of Newport Business Club chairman, said: "What a fun and entertaining event to conclude our 2013/14 season of business



The murder mystery event held by City of Newport Business Club was a hit

meetings. The Dai Laughing team provided us with a great evening of entertainment with their acting and humorous character roles. Members and guests certainly got into the spirit of the event."

Dai Laughing Productions was created in 2010 and write and perform murder mystery events to raise money for charities and good causes. The proceeds from this event were donated to The Olive Branch who provide support service to homeless people in Newport Gwent.