

Sea Spray sets new standard in hotels

PICTURES:KATE HOWELL

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THE competition among Brighton and Hove's boutique hotels just got hotter.

The Sea Spray in New Steine, Brighton, has just launched eight themed rooms including a luxury penthouse suite which comes with its own whirlpool bath.

The 17-room hotel is expected to provide fierce competition for rivals like Drakes, Lansdowne Place, Hotel Du Vin, Pelirocco and Blanch House.

Tania Colella and Karen Durbridge have run the hotel since 1998.

In January this year the business partners bought the hotel next door and have spent £200,000 refurbishing the rooms to a much higher standard.

Each has a different theme such as Boudoir, Moroccan, Indulgence, Warhol, Elvis, Oriental, Dali, Venetian and Italian Luxury.

The top three rooms were knocked through to create a New York-style penthouse suite to cater for people who want to celebrate a special occasion.

Karen and Tania were among the first in Brighton to embrace the concept of boutique hotels. Until then the market was split between B&Bs and large hotels.

Karen said: "When we started eight years ago it was just us and Pelirocco,

but they were doing it to a higher standard. Now we are competing with the best.

"Brighton grows year on year and I don't think the boutique market has reached saturation point at all. In fact we are turning people away.

"It's great that hotels are changing hands, new blood is coming in and shaking things up, and improving the overall reputation of the city as a place to visit."

Rooms vary in price from £95 to £200 a night.



ORIENTAL: Model Emily Quinlan, above, admires one of the themed rooms in the newly refurbished Sea Spray, which is intensifying the competition among Brighton's boutique hotels



Firms must be much greener

BUSINESSES have been urged to cut back on energy consumption and waste after new research indicated they are not eco-friendly enough.

A study by the British Standards Institution (BSI) suggests most firms are worried about the rising cost of power while half are concerned about waste. But fewer than a third of the 100 organisations surveyed had an effective system in place for monitoring their environmental performance.

Mike Low, director of the BSI, said: "We all know time is running out to take action on the environment. It's encouraging to see companies recognise the social and business benefits of going green but we've clearly still got some way to go.

"None of us can afford to wait another ten years when advice and guidance based on years of business experience is available to use now.

"Standards help organisations of any size or sector address the environmental impact of their activities, services, products and people to bring substantive environmental and financial returns."

Weight can cut job success

OVERWEIGHT workers are often regarded by their colleagues as lazy, new research showed.

Employers also take a negative attitude and are unwilling to help staff lose weight.

Many of those questioned by Benenden Healthcare said they knew someone who had been turned down for a job or promotion because of their size.

A survey of 1,000 workers showed that one in four had a negative view of overweight colleagues.

Jakki Stubbington, of Benenden Healthcare, said: "Obesity has become the major health issue for the Government and is now becoming a topic for employers too."

One in five of those questioned said firms should help staff lose weight or keep healthy by offering free fruit, discounted gym membership or encouraging people to cycle to work.

Chance for start-up enterprises at landmark site Prestige centre draws 16 firms

by **JAMES LANCASTER**

THE rebirth of Shoreham gathered pace this week when a flurry of businesses began moving into the town's new high-tech business centre.

Sixteen firms have already taken space in the building which forms part of the landmark Ropetackle development on the banks of the River Adur.

Accountants, a clothing company and a publisher were among the first to move into the Adur Business Centre which has room for at least 50 firms.

The facility is aimed at entrepreneurs and start-up companies who previously struggled to find decent business premises in the riverside town.

Publisher Paul Gibson, who owns The Chauffeur magazine, was one of the first to move into the centre, having relocated his business from Eastbourne

He said: "This is a breath of fresh air for Shoreham. The offices are great value and will allow my business to grow and prosper more than ever."

The centre was joint-funded by regional development agency SEEDA and joint venture company Incubation South East which manages the facility.

Tenants benefit from a bespoke reception



MOVED: Publisher Paul Gibson has relocated The Chauffeur magazine from Eastbourne to Shoreham

service where staff answer telephone calls in their own company names, meet and greet their visitors and handle their mail.

They can also take advantage of flexible licenses so they can rent office or desk space on a monthly basis.

SEEDA chairman James Brathwaite said the centre was "an ideal space for businesses to develop at their own pace" and would help more survive the tricky early years.

He said: "The ability to rent offices or desks on a monthly basis means new businesses can avoid long-term expense and

commitment in the crucial start-up period." The centre is also the home of the Adur Enterprise Gateway, a government-funded business network organisation offering advice to new and growing businesses.

There are also plans to transform the dilapidated Parcellforce and Pond Road sites and the footbridge linking Shoreham with Shoreham Beach.

At the same time the Shoreham Maritime Vision is seeking to develop the port and harbour area, creating thousands of homes, offices and shops.

james.lancaster@theargus.co.uk

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Blue Dolphin Marine & Aviation

e-mail joanna.woods@abacus.uk.com or telephone

01444 254253

www.bluedolphin.uk.com

at1936601