

Alliances for enterprise at the Haddington Show

There is nothing like hard times to encourage enterprise!

Rural enterprise is the theme for this year's new main sponsors, Chalmers & Co, who are being joined in their marquee by Visit East Lothian and the Scottish Rural Property & Business Association (SRPBA). All three organisations have vested interests in supporting the Show and nurturing enterprise in the countryside.

Council's Deputy Leader and economic development spokesman Stuart MacKinnon said: "Rural enterprise is a vital component of the local economy and has faced many challenges in recent years. The Haddington Show provides an invaluable showcase for the range of products and skills available across the county and will hopefully open up new markets for local businesses.

"It is in the county's long-term interests to encourage the development of local firms which offer outstanding products and services. Tourism is a case in point where we offer an excellent product with a broad range of attractions, including world class golf, water sports, the National Museum of Flight and the Scottish Seabird centre to name but a few."

Chalmers & Co offers three important rural property services from one office and all three, Architecture, Estate Agency, and Estate Management and Consultancy, contribute to the firm's vision of "Shaping the countryside". There is a breadth and depth in the experience of each team as well as longstanding links to local markets and contractors so that any professional property advice matches individual client's requests.

Visit East Lothian is committed to raising the county's profile to attract more tourists and visitors to help promote the great products on offer. With nearly one fifth of our workforce involved in tourism, many of their products are likely to be at the Show under their own steam as well. East Lothian has a reputation for quality which deserves wider recognition even within the county, from delicious locally-produced food and drink to great visitor attractions, accommodation and retail businesses.

The SRPBA has for years been striving for a vibrant rural economy across Scotland. Its policy staff have won respect within Government at Holyrood, Westminster and Brussels and are championing the cause for progressive agriculture and forestry, and for rural businesses generally, seeking to cut red tape and mindless bureaucracy.

The three organisations are not naïve to the challenges; many of their members and clients are running rural businesses and enterprises themselves. They recognise the need for eternal vigilance: the focussed delivery of professional services, whether as letting agents, architects or property consultants, managing a visitor attraction or engaging with Scottish and European ministers.

Francis Ogilvy, owner of Chalmers & Co, adds: "There is a clear need to add strings to business bows. If you say you can't afford to, the retort could be to ask if you can afford not to! To co-operate together now seems therefore to be both worthwhile and relevant."

You are encouraged to come to the Show and enjoy all the spectacles on offer, or get out the spectacles to say hello to friends or to spot some good ideas. You are invited to stop by the sponsors' tent and, at least, say hello!