

NEWS RELEASE

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New Business Incubation Centre Opens in Stevenage

This month sees the launch of a new Incubation Centre at the Business and Technology Centre (**btc**) in Stevenage and the only one of its kind for Hertfordshire.

As the longest serving Enterprise Hub for the region the **btc** provides a complete innovation solution for businesses in Stevenage and the surrounding area. It facilitates the growth of start-up companies and offers support to existing businesses, primarily in the knowledge based sectors and in the process creates employment helping the Hertfordshire economy.

The centre already accommodates a range of established firms which enjoy the benefits of competitive rental packages, prime location, free on-site business support, excellent networking opportunities, professional conference and meeting facilities and free parking.

The new Incubation Centre is designed to help entrepreneurs and create successful businesses. The new facility will be run by Wenta Innovation, a division of the Wenta group who are responsible for managing the **btc**. The onsite advisory team will work with start-ups to ensure that they are ready to sell their product, raise money or become investor ready and importantly connect them with other individuals and businesses to network. As part of this process clients will have access to the Incubation Centre facilities free of charge for 3 months*. This will include a personal hot desk, access to telephony and broadband, mailbox and telephone message service and ongoing mentoring from a dedicated advisor.

Commenting on the launch of this new service, Greg Thomas Innovation Advisor for Wenta said, "This is great news for start-ups in the local area and what better place to offer this service than at the **btc**. We are also extremely proud to be launching the very first Incubation Centre in Hertfordshire".

The Incubation Centre is designed to compliment the **btc's** existing facilities and provides an ideal environment for aspiring entrepreneurs, new and developing companies. Once established, growing businesses are able to expand and move on to use the individual office suites within the centre.

To find out more please contact the **btc Incubation Centre on 01438 791002 or visit www.btcstevenage.co.uk.**

Notes for Editor

- The **btc** is owned by Stevenage Borough Council and managed by Wenta Innovation, a division of Wenta one of the leading Enterprise Agencies in the East of England.
- The **btc** is being relaunched later this month following a multi million pound development to transform the centre into the primary Innovation and Technology Centre in Hertfordshire, aimed at supporting knowledge based businesses and promoting innovation within the local community. This exciting new development is the Council's vision to create quality business space and support in the heart of the town's business community and it is part of a £7M investment funded jointly by the Council and EEDA, the Regional Development Agency and the Government Growth Area Fund.
- The **btc** is the longest serving Enterprise Hub within the region promoting networking, the sharing of knowledge and cross trading. Working to develop innovation and inspire enterprise, the **btc** also works with local schools, colleges, regional agencies, other enterprise hubs and universities to offer educational visits, work experience, mentoring and training.
- Wenta is a not for profit organisation independently funded through the ownership and management of its two business centres in Watford and Potters Bar and management of the **btc** in Stevenage. These business centres comprise workshops and offices with a combined space of over 100,000 square feet, let on monthly licence terms to small businesses. Wenta also attract funding from a number of public sector organisations including Business Link East, Job Centre Plus, local authorities in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and EEDA.
- In addition to incubation and managed workspace Wenta's service offering includes business advice, guidance, training, graduate and undergraduate work placements and a comprehensive enterprise awareness programme to schools, colleges, and universities.