

Facebook site for SMEs starts

The East London Small Business Centre has launched its own Facebook group as part of its commitment to Enterprise Week.

A separate group has also been unveiled by ELSBC's Barking & Dagenham Small Business Centre division.

Enterprise Week is an annual event in the UK which aims to inspire young entrepreneurs to have ideas and make them happen.

ELSBC hopes the group will eventually become a self-sufficient online community where budding business people can network and support one another.

CEO Tim Heath said: "We believe that Facebook is not just a networking site for individuals but also a very effective networking tool for organisations and businesses.

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● THE FACEBOOK phenomenon allows businesses to share knowledge, products and services on the world-wide web.

Last week the East London Small Business Centre's Barking and Dagenham branch launched a group on the social networking site.

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Small firms' Facebook network

A NEW group has been set up by a small business centre on popular social networking website Facebook.

The East London Small Business Centre created the virtual meeting place for its Barking and Dagenham division in Longbridge Road, Barking, as part of Enterprise Week – an annual event to inspire young people to realise their dreams in the world of commerce and industry.

Organisers hope to encourage awareness of the increasing number of self-employment opportunities available to young people.

Chief executive officer Tim Heath said: "We believe that Facebook is not just a networking site for individuals to keep in touch with friends, but also a very effective networking tool for organisations and businesses to create awareness of their products and services while connecting with the wider community."

Deputy chief executive officer Pauline Barnett added:

"We want to invite people to join the group and feel able to get answers to questions, share experiences with like-minded people and to understand that they are not on their own.

"We believe that Facebook is an ideal tool to contact us, share knowledge and boost inter-trading among our clients."

Facebook was launched in February 2004 for students at Harvard University. It later expanded to cover US and international academic institutions before opening registration to anyone with a valid email address in September 2006.

Members can also join networks, which range from schools and places of work to groups campaigning to save the rainforests and celebrity fan clubs.

Last year the East London Small Business Centre trained more than 700 people and helped 400 new businesses get off the ground.