

# Press release



## Business Champions help clubs find winning formula

A Leicestershire triathlon club has received a boost from East Midlands Business Champions in its quest to be the best.

Representatives from Charnwood Triathlon Club attended a unique event on 4<sup>th</sup> September which matched local entrepreneurs with regional sports clubs in a bid to help them achieve their full potential.

The club, which was formed in 2006 and won British Triathlon Federation 'Club of the Year 2007', caters for all ages and abilities. They secured the help of Business Champions to assist them with their ambitious plans to put the club on the map. Laura-Jane Marris who is Director of BXL Limited, a Brand Management Company, will advise them how to package the club and the region to grow membership and participation in one of the UK's fastest growing sports.

Jon Riall, Head Coach of the Charnwood Triathlon Club was there on the evening, he said "we're really excited about having attended such a great event, the workshop discussion has sparked some new ideas that we can now put in to practice - things we hadn't even thought about, so we're really pleased to have taken part". The club had two offers of support on the night from Business Champions who sat on their table. Laura-Jane Marris has extensive experience in Marketing and PR and Stuart Hartley, Programme Manager at De Montfort University Innovation Centre, has offered to help them with their business plan.

Business Champions is a programme created and funded by the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) which recruits high-calibre proactive business figures to support a range of projects where a commercial perspective is needed.

Around 100 Business Champions gathered at the Walkers Stadium, Leicester for the Business Champions annual event, to offer their services to the sports sector in the East Midlands. The event demonstrated how examples of excellence in sport can be used as a business ideal.

The clubs, which covered a variety of sports from swimming to basketball, hosted a series of round-table surgeries to secure a business mentor who can offer expertise and discuss ways they can help them with a particular business need. Some are seeking advice on how to raise their profiles or increase membership, while others are looking for help with financial management or developing revenue streams.

The scene was set by Alastair Eperon, Chairman of the Business Champions programme and Peter Wheeler, Chief Executive of Leicester Tigers. Peter talked about the ways in which the region's premiership rugby club excels in the worlds of business and sport.

Alastair Eperon said "I'm delighted with the effectiveness of this event. Over 90 Business Champions attended and gave their advice to some of our leading regional sports clubs on everything from marketing to financial management, and many have already committed to a longer-term advisory role. This really was Business Champions in action at their best. Even better, we are on track to deliver over £1m-worth of voluntary business leaders' time this year to support economic growth and development in the East Midlands"

The event closed with an overview of potential benefits for the East Midlands from the London Olympics in 2012 by Jeff Moore, Chief Executive of *emda*.

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**Photo Credits:**

*Photo L-R: Peter Wheeler, Chief Executive, Leicester Tigers, Melissa Moss, Chair, Charwood Triathlon Club and Alastair Eperon, Chairman of East Midlands Business Champions*

[Notes to Editors:](#)

The Business Champions programme is a unique pool of independent business volunteers, committed to shaping the region by sharing their knowledge and inspiring others.

The programme - created and funded by the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) - recruits high-calibre, proactive business figures to support a whole range of projects and programmes where a commercial perspective is needed.

Working with a variety of organisations, Business Champions form a unique link between the private and public sector. A strong network of senior business leaders, the Business Champions programme has become an integral part of the push to energise the region - influencing strategy, steering organisations forward, sharing ideas, connecting people and developing skills.

For information visit [www.businesschampions.org.uk](http://www.businesschampions.org.uk) or contact a member of the Business Champions team on 0115 988 8362