

Business MK

JULY 2007 VOL.9 NO.7

Published for the business community of Milton Keynes and North Buckinghamshire

Lifestyle

July 2007 19

Welcome to a dining experience

THE NEWLY refurbished Plough at Wavendon opened its doors last month and has ambitious plans to be the best restaurant in the Milton Keynes locale.

Jon Todd, the director of Hasmead landscape & design in Salford, is a partner at The Plough. The impressive conversion project from local pub to what Jon plans will become a five-star award winning restaurant has been his pride and passion for the last eight months. The cost has run to more than £350,000.

"I could always see tremendous potential here for an eating place of excellence," Jon says. "We've created a restaurant which is elegant yet welcoming, warm yet contemporary. Our guests will not just be sitting down for a meal - they will enjoy a 'dining experience' from start to finish."

The building dates back more than 500 years. It was once the Hogsty Inn, reflecting when that part of Wavendon was known as Hogsty End, and has also been the village bakehouse for a time.

The Plough also aims to be self-sufficient,

LifeStyle visits Milton Keynes' newest restaurant - The Plough at Wavendon

with bespoke vegetables, herbs, poultry and meat produced locally, organically and specifically for their guests.

Its head chef is Grant Hawthorne, from Cape Town but a resident of Buckinghamshire for the past seven years, he brings with him a wealth of experience and the vibrant flavours of the southern hemisphere. "Cape Town actually has a Mediterranean climate, so in essence the restaurant will have European influences too," he says.

Previously, Grant has worked with French celebrity chef Jean-Christophe Novelli and has catered for the 2003 World Cup-winning England Rugby Union squad. He has also cooked for Nelson Mandela at the launch of the Make Poverty History campaign at the South Africa High Commission in London.

Grant has earned an enviable reputation as



◆ Aiming high: The Plough at Wavendon. Below: Head chef Grant Hawthorne.

a seafood specialist but it was his Chocolate Studded Cape Malva Pudding which came second in the UK Best Dishes of 2006.

Honour

"It's similar to a light sticky toffee pudding served in caramel baskets and garnished with blackberries," he explains. "Of course it will feature on the menu here."

Over the next two years, Grant will be working towards his Master Chef accreditation. This award is granted every four years and, out of the 200 or so applicants, only about half a dozen succeed.

"It is the highest honour that a chef can

achieve," Grant says.

The Plough's guests will also be pleased to learn that Grant is not one to hide away in the kitchens. "When you go to the pub, you see the barman, so when you go to a restaurant, why is the chef squirreled away behind four walls?" he laughs.

"I want to get out there, meet my customers, provide them with exactly what they want and help them have a truly memorable and special evening."

