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**W E B S I T E N E W S**

**Westcott business joins the space race**

Business is taking off for thriving heating and engineering company [Optec Group](https://www.optecgroup.co.uk/) after it joined a special networking platform.

Optec is now signed up to the Space Cluster group which holds monthly meetings for firms based at [Westcott Venture Park](http://www.westcottvp.com).

While many of firms are focused on rocket engineering and space technology, Optec has found the group offers plenty of opportunities for its business which offers a range of services including air conditioning, heating and electrical work specialising in renewable and energy-efficient products.

Managing Director Rob Armitage said: “We were introduced to the Westcott Space Cluster meetings by the Buckinghamshire Business First local skills group.

“I realised how much cross over there was between our industries as these businesses require the support we provide. We were also keen to be part of the new space research, manufacturing and testing hub which is planned at Westcott and attending these meetings has created opportunities for us.”

Rob also discovered plenty of common ground between his company and the space-related businesses.

“The biggest challenge our business faces is finding staff. There is a huge black hole in the engineering sector, and like the rocket specialists, we are all struggling to find talented people interested in engineering.

“However, it is now great to be part of a community discussing these types of challenges and everyone is very supportive. We like to have conversations with people such as the rocket scientists. Not only have I learnt some really interesting stuff, but you identify areas where businesses are struggling and I’ve found ways we can help.”

Formed in 2015, the Optec was originally called Homepower providing electrical installations for Westcott-based garden room specialist [Green Retreats](http://www.greenretreats.co.uk).

Having spun out and rebranded, the company has extended its services significantly with a team of highly qualified engineers and electricians who undergo constant performance checks and compliance training.

Optec is also keen to ensure its customers reduce their environmental impact and has created a specialised research and development facility with specialists focused on identifying and implementing new and innovative energy efficient products and systems.

The latest technology is combined with the team’s expertise in data analysis and management to ensure building systems are functional, safe and comfortable while minimising energy consumption and costs.

The business has also launched a new, innovative, retro-fit air purification product known as Tadiran Airow 3 which they are offering businesses to help them reduce workplace transmission of harmful pathogens like Covid-19.

This inexpensive solution is designed to be easily installed into any existing air conditioning system and drastically reduces the presence of harmful airborne pathogens, while also reducing the frequency of business disruption caused by sick-leave and its direct associated costs.

Optec works with many Westcott companies and now employs 30 engineers and office staff based at Unit 9, Century Court. As well as overseeing installation and fit-out, Rob is also keen to offer businesses help, support and advice.

He added: “Having these conversations, you find areas where businesses are struggling. For example, we helped UPVC window and door manufacturing company [Clear Edge](https://www.clearedge.co.uk/) find a more efficient way of working when we fitted out their premises at Hangar 4.”

Other businesses Optec have helped include international customs agent [UKP Worldwide](https://www.ukpworldwide.com/)

and automotive fixings and fasteners company [Ziebe](https://www.ziebe.co.uk/), both based at Century Court.

Optec is one of a number of businesses which have joined the Westcott Space Cluster including engineering businesses, accountants and legal firms which provide technology sector specific advice.

Matt Peachey, Head of Enterprise Zone Development at Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership, said: “There is real momentum behind the Space Cluster group with new entrants from other sectors providing fantastic support for the space-related businesses.

“Optec is a great example of this and anyone offering services or a supplier network to the Space Cluster group is more than welcome to join the meetings.”

**ENDS**