



News Release

22 March 2004

## **NEW REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOUTH EAST ENGLAND IN BRUSSELS**

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and South East England Regional Assembly have appointed Anke Seidler as the new Regional Representative for South East England.

Anke's role will be to represent the South East's interests in Brussels by gathering intelligence, lobbying and networking. She has taken up her new post after spending four years working in Brussels for the European Commission (EC); one year in Directorate-General Energy and Transport and three years in Directorate-General Enterprise. It was here that she was specifically responsible for the UK Network of European Information Centres.

With over 10 years experience of working within European affairs Anke replaces Barry Wheatley who returns to Oxford Brookes University following a three year secondment. Her time will be divided between Guildford and South East England House in Brussels.

Fluent in German, French and English, Anke has a BA in Political Science from Stirling University and read European Politics at Essex University. She also has an MA in Political Science from Braunschweig University, Germany.

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Anke said of her new role: "I am looking forward to the challenge of being able to put my knowledge of EC policy to good use and to transport the experience I have into an actual region in the UK. The South East is a very ambitious area and has a very European feel – it is the gateway to Europe and its entrepreneurial and innovative policies link in well with the experience I have gained in previous roles. It is important that as the representative for this region I make sure our voice continues to be heard so that the South East remains in the driving seat of Europe."

Paul Bevan, Chief Executive of South East England Regional Assembly, said "I'm delighted that we have been able to appoint Anke. One of our key goals must be to find alliances with other prosperous regions to influence European policy and priorities, and Anke has the skills and contacts to help us achieve this."

SEEDA's Chief Executive, Pam Alexander, added: "SEEDA is pleased to welcome Anke. She comes with just the right background to represent the South East as an enterprising and innovative region and will help drive forward sustainable development at home, in Brussels and across Europe."

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### **Editor's Notes**

SEEDA, local authorities, the South East England Regional Assembly and other regional partners operate through a small team located in Brussels. The team is located in South East England House. SEEDA's Brussels office monitors developments in the European Union, hosts fact-finding delegations, and generates intelligence on future policies and funding programmes that may affect the South East. SEEDA has jointly led, with Small Business Services (SBS) South East, the development of a regional response to the European Union's Green Paper on entrepreneurship.

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**SEEDA** is the Government funded agency responsible for the economic and social development of the South East of England - the driving force of the UK's economy. Our aim is to create a prosperous, dynamic and inspirational region by helping businesses compete more effectively, training a highly skilled workforce, supporting and enabling our communities while safeguarding our natural resources and cherishing our rich cultural heritage.

**The South East England Regional Assembly** is the “voluntary regional chamber” for the South East. It was established in January 1999 to give a representative voice to the South East region which covers Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East and West Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, and Surrey.

The Regional Assembly is made up of 111 members including elected councillors nominated by the region's local authorities and 37 representatives from other sectors of the community (including business, trades unions, education, housing, health, sports, culture, tourism, faith groups, environmental, community and voluntary organisations).

The Assembly has three areas of core business:

1. It is the representative voice of the South East, engaging and representing its member organisations and, through them, the wider public.
2. The Assembly has a specific role under the Regional Development Agencies' Act 1998 to ensure the accountability of the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) to the region.
3. The Assembly has been the Regional Planning Body for the South East since April 2001. It has responsibility for proposing strategic planning and transport policies to Government.