

SOUTH CHESHIRE

**SOUTH CHESHIRE
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**

**British
Chambers of
Commerce
Accredited**

CHAMBER BUSINESS

News and views from the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry | **Q3 2022**

TOP NAMES BACK CHAMBER 25TH ANNUAL BUSINESS AWARDS



PAGE 13



The Queen visiting Leighton Hospital in 1972 and meeting townspeople on a walkabout
Images: Courtesy of the Crewe Chronicle

Chamber pays tribute to the Queen, Patron of the British Chambers of Commerce

South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce has joined the chorus of organisations nationwide expressing deep sorrow at the loss of the Queen while commending her support of business down the decades.

The Chamber, based at the Apollo Buckingham Health Sciences campus in Crewe, is a leading member of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) and all members of staff based locally have signed an international Book of Condolence which will be sent to Buckingham Palace in coming weeks.

Her Majesty was a keen supporter of enterprise as Patron of the British Chambers of Commerce for more than 70 years. She became Patron of the BCC on the 23 June 1952, a few months after her ascension to the British throne on 6 February 1952.

South Cheshire Chamber President John Dunning said: "The Queen was a great supporter of business throughout her reign. As a mark of respect, the BCC has set up a Condolence Book for the Royal Family from the BCC and the Chamber Network across the world.

"She has been a frequent visitor to Cheshire down the decades and the Queen's Award for Enterprise has remained a much-coveted benchmark for UK businesses in the categories of innovation, international trade and sustainable development.

"All members of the South Cheshire Chamber have signed the Condolence Book to pay tribute to the Queen and add messages of compassion to members of the Royal Family at this time. We send our heartfelt condolences to the Royal Family on their profound loss."

The Chamber, a non-political

organisation, works to support businesses across South Cheshire representing their interests at district and town council level as well as nationally as a top member of the British Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber speaks up for business on local boards including Cheshire & Warrington LEP, Cheshire East Council and Crewe Town Council as well as nationally through the BCC and Bank of England Panel.

Founded as Crewe and Nantwich Business Link in 1995, it has one of the highest penetration rates in the country. Membership represents businesses with more than 20,000 local employees.

Mr Dunning added: "The Chamber has three core pillars – representation, providing information and facilitating support for businesses. We aim to inspire and encourage enterprise.

"Like our dear departed Queen we celebrate achievement and encourage people from all walks of life to be 'the best they can be.'

"The fact that the Queen was BCC Patron for over 70 years, a role perhaps not so publically known, was another symbol of her dedication and commitment to public service."

The South Cheshire Chamber will celebrate achievement across the local business community at its annual awards ceremony taking place at Reaseheath College on November 18.

Enterprising and inspirational businesses and individuals have been celebrated by the Chamber for 25 years. Judges are currently sifting through this year's entries.

For more information go to sccci.co.uk/business-awards/2022-awards



Chamber of Commerce hails 'great supporter of business'

BY JAN ROBERTS

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Floral tributes in Green Park, London
Images: Jan Roberts, Pure PR Nantwich



UPCOMING EVENTS



Meet & Eat
White Lion, Weston
27/10/2022



Final Friday
Wishing Well
28/10/2022



Christmas Networking
Lunch & AGM
09/12/2022

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Next issue due out on December 9th 2022. Editorial and advertising deadline November 11th 2022.

For advertising Sales and Articles, please contact Jon Barnes: 01270 445409 or jon.barnes@sccci.co.uk

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Chamber's magazine
'South Cheshire Business'.

South Cheshire Chamber was greatly saddened to learn of the passing of the Queen. Her Majesty was a keen supporter of enterprise as Patron of the British Chambers of Commerce for more than 70 years. She became Patron of the BCC on the 23 June 1952, a few months after her ascension to the British throne on 6 February 1952. She will be a tremendous loss to our country.

With many businesses still reeling from the effects of the COVID pandemic the impact of the energy crisis is taking its toll. Both consumers and businesses are having to deal with increased energy prices, and this is effecting the economy tremendously. The Chamber network has been lobbying the government hard on the measures we would like to see in place to help our business community. In the Chancellor's mini budget, the reversal to increase National Insurance Contributions (NIC) is a big win for Chambers of Commerce. Companies will also welcome the Annual Investment Allowance up to £1m made permanent, which should give them confidence to invest.

Despite these difficult economic conditions, our business community is extremely resilient and continue to innovate and adapt to change. Next month the Chamber will be holding its prestigious South Cheshire

Chamber business awards, to celebrate and give recognition to those businesses who have not only demonstrated excellence, but have been resilient, spirited and shown kindness to others. The awards take place on the 18th November 2022 at Reaseheath College.

The National news is tough reading at the moment, but throughout this magazine you will see small to large businesses excelling and making a difference in our community. Businesses achieving fantastic milestones, individuals continuing to develop their skills and companies helping and supporting the local community.

The Chamber will continue to push the needs of business to local and national government and being part of the Chamber community gives you access to the latest information, promotion of your products and services; and access to experts who can provide advice and the latest best practice. So, look out for events including speed networking and newly launched leadership Insights - Cybercrime.

I hope you find this magazine informative and if your company has news to share or you'd like to take advantage of the advertising opportunities, please do not hesitate to contact Jon at the Chamber.

May I take this opportunity to wish your business every success in the forthcoming months.

MEET THE CHAMBER TEAM

Paul Colman

Chief Executive

Jon Barnes

Chamber Manager

Jake Kennerley

Digital Marketing Manager

Madeleine Abbey

PA to Chief Executive

Angela Wilkinson

Membership Co-ordinator

Dominic Hibbert

Events & Marketing Co-ordinator

Jane Booth

Export Document Administrator

Richard Weilding

Business Advisor

Anne Xiourouppa

Accounts

Dianne Parrish

Business Connector Cheshire Connect

Sara Pomfret

DIT International Trade Adviser

Paul Colman Chief Executive @SCCCI_CEO

Meet the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry NEW MEMBERS



Auriga Fleet Ltd

Electra House, Electra Way
Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GL
andrea.clegg@auriga-fleet.co.uk
roadtrafficdefencelawyers.co.uk
01270 509496



Crewe Engineering & Design UTC

West Street, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 2PZ
j.parkinson-hill@creweutc.org.uk
utccrewe.co.uk
01270 218150



Granite Transformations

Bridgemere Nursery & Garden World
Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 7QB
simonr@granitetransformations.co.uk
granitetransformations.co.uk/
bridgemere
01270 897254



Autoserve

2 St. Kenelm Court, Halesowen
West Midlands, B62 8HD
awhitby@autoserve.co.uk
autoserve.co.uk
07809 126 596



DISC Electrical

Unit 10 Wistaston Road Business
Centre, Wistaston Road, Crewe,
Cheshire, CW2 7RP
danny@discelectrical.co.uk
discelectrical.co.uk
01270 666633



InspiresMe Consulting Ltd

60 Station Road, Alsager, Cheshire,
ST7 2PD
helen@inspiresmeconsulting.com
inspiresmeconsulting.com
07977 978 587



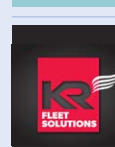
Begbies Traynor Group PLC

Unit 11, Lymedale Business Centre
Hooters Hall Road, Newcastle Under
Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 9QF
staffordshire@btguk.com
begbies-traynorgroup.com/offices/
[staffordshire-insolvency-practitioners](http://staffordshire-insolvency-practitioners.com)
01782 569510



Dorfold Hall Events

Dorfold Hall, Nantwich, Cheshire
CW5 8LD
info@dorfold.com
dorfold.com
01270 625245



KR Fleet Solutions Ltd

27 Charlote Crescent,
Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 6UH
kevin@krfleetsolutions.co.uk
krfleetsolutions.co.uk
0203 441 4649

WHY JOIN THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

A chamber of commerce is a collection of local businesses who have come together to further their own interests and those of their community.



BECOME PART OF A BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Network with other local businesses to create connections and opportunities.



ENHANCE YOUR BUSINESS PROFILE

Promote your business on our website, social media, Members Portal and magazine.



ACCESS TO BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Access to an online library of 700+ documents and templates as well as advice lines.

WE WELCOME ALL OUR NEW MEMBERS

The South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce is an amazing place to connect to your local business community, but don't just take our word for it:



“SCCCI provide a great opportunity to engage with other businesses of all sizes and stages of their development in the local area, which in itself creates a vibrant commercially focussed community.”

Park View Business Centre

If you would like to share a testimonial, please send it through to jon.barnes@sccci.co.uk



MI Team Training

48 Comfrey Avenue, Sandbach
Cheshire, CW11 4BY
info@miteamtraining.co.uk
miteamtraining.co.uk
07752 002 426



PBX Petrochemical Ltd

20 Whitley Close, Middlewich
Cheshire, CW10 0NQ
paul@pbxpetrochemical.com
pbxpetrochemical.com
01606 833381



Trinity Create

Boulton House, Southmere Court
Crewe Business Park, Crewe
Cheshire, CW1 6GU
hello@trinity-create.com
trinity-create.com
0203 962 4212



Optimum Pay Group

Boulton House, Southmere Court,
Crewe Business Park, Crewe
Cheshire, CW1 6GU
payroll@optimumpaygroup.com
optimumpay.co.uk
0203 962 4212



Take on Goliath

3 Crewe Road, Sandbach
Cheshire, CW11 4NE
Dave@takeongoliath.com
takeongoliath.com
07432 515 624



Zen Occupational Health

20 Crewe Road, Sandbach
Cheshire, CW11 4NE
karen@zenohltd.co.uk
zenoccupationalhealth.com
07766 331 418



Palcan Ltd

12 Dart Close, Alsager, Cheshire
ST7 2HY
rami@palcan.co.uk
palcanhomes.co.uk
01270 335054



The White Lion - Hankelow

Audlem Road, Hankelow,
Crewe, Cheshire, CW3 0JA
hello@thewhitelionhankelow.co.uk
thewhitelionhankelow.co.uk
01270 432606



BUSINESS CASE APPROVAL FOR NEXT TWO TOWNS FUND PROJECTS FOR CREWE

Business cases for a further two major projects in Crewe have been approved by government – a milestone the Town Board says ‘shows confidence in our vision for Crewe’. Business cases for a further two major projects in Crewe have been approved by government – a milestone the Town Board says ‘shows confidence in our vision for Crewe’.

Crewe Town Board is overseeing work to receive up to £22.9m in funding from the government’s Towns Fund and plans for a package of 10 projects that will support Crewe’s ongoing regeneration.

Having signed off the business cases for the Flag Lane Baths Community Hub and Crewe Youth Zone projects in June, the

government has now also signed off the ‘pocket parks’ and ‘history centre public realm’ projects.



Doug Kinsman, chair of Crewe Town Board, said:

“For us to now have a total of four projects at this stage is extremely exciting and shows confidence in our vision for Crewe.

“It is of course also a huge leap forward in seeing these projects becoming

a reality and local communities being able to enjoy the benefits.”

The Pockets Park project is being led in partnership by Cheshire East Council, ANSA Environmental Services – the council’s wholly-owned environmental services company – and Crewe Town Council.

It aims to see eight pocket parks in Crewe – Queen Street, Derby Docks, McLaren Street, School Crescent, Samuel Street, Lime Tree Avenue, Valley Park and Westminster Street – become more attractive and better equipped spaces for people to spend time, play and enjoy physical activity.



Local communities will be asked to share their views as plans for each of the pocket parks develop, with engagement expected to start next month for the first four parks.

As part of the overall project, local charity The Wishing Well, which provides a variety of services to improve the health and wellbeing of local people, is proposing to deliver a multi-use games area (MUGA) near to Jubilee Gardens in Hightown.

Charles Maines, CEO of The Wishing Well, said: "Our plans for Jubilee Gardens are to provide a safe space for people of all ages to engage in sport, play and physical activity which in turn improves health and wellbeing, increases community cohesion and tackles issues such as social isolation, anti-social behaviour and crime."

The history centre public realm project is part of a larger shared archives project for Cheshire between Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council.

The archives project - called 'Cheshire's archives: a story shared' - is supported by the National Lottery Heritage

Fund and aims to rehouse the collections in two bespoke new history centres.

The centres, one of which is planned for the site of Crewe's former library, will provide access to the archives for all - for information, learning and enjoyment.

The Towns Fund project, led by Cheshire East Council, will create new public space around the history centre in Crewe, with high-quality paving and planting areas, activity space, new seating and bike racks and public art.

There are also plans to deliver a joint project between Cheshire College - South and West and world leading ice cream van manufacturers Whitby Morrison.

It would see the refurbishment of an ice cream van, which would then be run by students as a standalone enterprise. The ice cream van would be in use across the town, while having a regular spot in the public space around the history centre.

Helen Nellist, deputy principal of Cheshire College - South & West, said: "The partnership between us and Whitby Morrison brings a fantastic opportunity to extend the work experience and training

opportunities available for students from Cheshire College and within the wider community.

"We look forward to the further opportunities it creates for students interested in business innovation and enterprise."

The Towns Fund plans are in addition to a separate project being funded through the government's Future High Streets Fund and delivered by Cheshire East Council, which includes the clearance of the former Crewe Library site to make way for the history centre, and the creation of further public space, a new car park and new entrances to the Magistrates' Court.

Business cases for the remaining six Towns Fund projects will all be submitted to government by the end of summer for its agreement and sign off.

It is only once a final funding offer has been made by government - and once other processes, approvals and grant conditions have been met, including planning permission in some cases - that physical works on the projects can begin.

To find out more, visit: weareallcrewe.co.uk

Crewe Town Council celebrates town's heritage with new initiative



Unveiling of the Red Plaque at Crewe Heritage Centre (L-R): Gordon Heddon (Crewe Heritage Centre Chairman), Cllr Nan Walton (Crewe Town Mayor) and Stuart Wilkinson (Chairperson of the Transport Trust). Photo credit: Peter Robinson.

Exciting heritage developments are taking place at Crewe Town Council as it aims to put the town's history firmly at the forefront of the local community.

In June, Crewe Town Council announced that it is funding a Heritage Plaque Scheme for Crewe, which will celebrate important people, places and events from Crewe's past.

There will be three types of plaque:

Blue Plaques

To qualify for a plaque, recipients must:

- have died at least 20 years ago
- have a significant link to Crewe's past
- be associated with a building that still stands and would have been recognisable to the recipient.

Grey Plaques

Grey Plaques are similar to Blue Plaques but are used when a building no longer exists or has been altered so that the recipient would no longer recognise it.

Red Plaques

Red Plaques are part of the Red Wheel Scheme which was created by the National Transport Trust to recognise and commemorate the most significant sites of historical importance to transport heritage in the UK. There are over 120 plaques in the UK.

The first red plaque was unveiled at Crewe Heritage Centre on Monday 4th July 2022 by Crewe Town Mayor, Cllr Nan Walton. The plaque celebrates the Crewe Works Narrow Gauge Railway and the date coincided with the 185th anniversary of the first train passing through Crewe in 1837. The railway was a small tramway system which ran inside the engineering works between 1862 and 1932, moving materials between the different parts of the site. The section connecting Spider Bridge to the Station was built in 1878.

The first blue plaque was unveiled at Mirion House, 57 Earle Street on Saturday 9th July to celebrate the first Mayor of Crewe – Dr James Atkinson. The son of a blacksmith from Hazel Grove, Dr Atkinson was born in 1837, trained as a doctor and came to Crewe in 1863 as the assistant

to the LNWR's resident surgeon, Edwin Edwards. After Edwards' death in 1865, Atkinson took his place as head surgeon. Dr Atkinson was actually a controversial choice as the first Mayor. He had been against the town becoming incorporated as it meant less power for the Railway Company he worked for. Despite this, he was appointed as an Alderman in 1877 and won the race to become the first Mayor by just one vote.

Atkinson had a big impact on Crewe. As the Railway Company Surgeon he was well known in the town. During his life, he was a magistrate, President of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club and member of the Council of the Mechanics' Institution. He supported the erection of the memorial in Queen's Park to the South African War and paid for additions to Christ Church including the font and one of the bells.

The next blue plaque will commemorate Ada Nield Chew and conversations are currently taking place to secure a suitable location for the plaque.

The Town Council is working with heritage partners to create a week of activity celebrating Crewe's past. Heritage Open Days is England's largest festival of history and culture, bringing together organisations, events and volunteers across the country to celebrate their local heritage, community and history.

The Heritage Open Days programme will be released via the Crewe Town Council website and through the Council's social media channels nearer the time.

Crewe Town Council also plans to launch a Heritage Forum in the autumn, which aims to bring together a range of people to shape Crewe's future heritage objectives.

For further information, please contact the Crewe Town Council Heritage Officer: heritage@crewetowncouncil.gov.uk.



Top picks for Crewe Lyceum this Autumn

Crewe Lyceum Theatre enters Autumn 2022 with a line-up that proudly showcases the best of the West End, headline comedians, fantastic fringe performances and family favourites all the way to Christmas, including David Walliams' *Demon Dentist*, 'dragatha Christie' murder mystery *Death Drop*, and Cheshire's favourite family pantomime *Aladdin*, starring Louie Spence.

Something for the whole family to get their teeth into, is the all-new David Walliams adaptation of the *Demon Dentist*. Brought directly from the producers of *Gangsta Granny* and *Awful Auntie*, the show runs from Wednesday 30 – Sunday 4 December.

After its killer run last year, *Death Drop* returns with a new show and new tour for the only Northwest date on its 'slay ride' around the UK. Drag yourself to *Death Drop 2: Back in the Habit* from Monday 5 – Saturday 10 December.

TV personality Louie Spence is part of a magical line up this Christmas for Cheshire's best family pantomime *Aladdin*, which also features Coronation Street star Jamie Kenna, Channel 5's *Milkshake!* presenter Kiera-Nicole and beloved panto dame Malcolm Lord, who returns for his fifth year. This year's show is better than ever and opens from Friday 16 December until Sunday 8 January 2023.

As well as these fantastic festive favourites, the theatre welcomes a whole host of entertainment in November, including the brand-new tour of *Sherlock Holmes and The Valley of Fear*, the heart-warming and uplifting comedy *Mum's The Word*, top tributes *Luther* and *Buddy Holly* and the *Cricketers*, end of the night anthems *Don't Stop Believin'* and the return of the ever-popular late-night *Ghost Tours*. Not forgetting first rate comedy with *Al Murray*, *Harry Hill*, *Hal Cruttenden* and *Sara Pascoe*.

Dramatic retellings of literary classics and monthly Comedy in the Attic club nights have also been added to the extensive season of shows, thanks to the long-awaited relaunch of the Lyceum Studio. Based on the bone-chilling works of Bram Stoker and perfect for Halloween, see *Dracula's Guest* in October; enjoy a delightful half term treat for children and families with *The Wind in the Willows*; or get into the Christmas spirit with *A Christmas Carol* (As told by Jacob Marley Deceased).

Theatre Director Rhys Hopkin said:

"I'm thrilled to be able offer such a packed and diverse programme at the Lyceum in my first full season since joining as Theatre Director. It's a programme of events we know Crewe loves, and I look forward to welcoming audiences old and new into the theatre. I'm also very pleased to be relaunching our studio programme with drama, comedy and a children's programme. There is a real appetite to be up close and personal with intimate performance, and we are thrilled to provide those opportunities to audiences in Cheshire."

Group bookings and corporate packages are available on most shows for Chamber members. Book online at crewelyceum.co.uk



Theatre Director Rhys Hopkin

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Publicity Image



A message from our President



It was good to see the return of two major local events this summer which have been sadly missing from our calendar for the past couple of years and it was even better to have been able to represent the Chamber at both. There were some early warning signs, but the scale and pace at which these have unravelled has taken everyone by surprise and significant state intervention will once again have to be part of the solution.

Both events give a major boost to the local economy and draw in people from around the country so their continuation is extremely important.

Firstly, the Nantwich Show which was staged at Reaseheath College for the first time, made a great comeback particularly given the circumstances surrounding the move together with the loss of the Cheese Show. The organisers did a fantastic job and the new style show was a great success with the large crowds given plenty of things to see and enjoy.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to attend the Chairman's lunch and to share the experience with other organisations and local dignitaries

Congratulations must go to the Show Committee and in particular its Chairman Michael-John Parkin and his wife Liz who were as usual, the driving force behind the scenes, and of course to Reaseheath College who can always be relied on to stage successful large events and have ensured that the Nantwich Show is here to stay

Secondly, the Nantwich Food Festival came back with a bang, being bigger and better than ever before. Once again the Festival Committee led by Christine Farrell can take great credit for the way in which they managed not only to maintain the momentum from previous years but to build on and improve the organisation and presentation of the event.

Once again I was pleased to be able to represent the Chamber at the Official Opening and to have the opportunity to meet and talk to some of the event's organisers and sponsors.

On the same theme, it was also a delight to be invited to see the movie Grease at Bolesworth which again was a wonderfully organised event.

Bolesworth have recently become members of the Chamber and have a fantastic programme of events on offer over the coming months.

If my experience is anything to go by I would thoroughly recommend that everyone should give it a try.

Talking about events, it is of course coming up to the Chamber's Annual Business Awards which is our flagship event and always something to look forward to with great anticipation and I am sure that this year will not disappoint.

Getting back to more mundane matters, our Chair, Dianne Wright has referred elsewhere to the difficulties that business will be facing over the coming months and you can be assured that the Chamber is there to help in any way that it can.

John Dunning

Chamber President



Nantwich Show welcomed crowds to Reaseheath College
Image: Jonathan White



A message from our Chair

It has been said that there are never any major news stories during the summer months. This year seems to be very different. Certainly, there are no key decisions being made at government level whilst parliament is in recess, and whilst we await the results of the ongoing leadership contest, but other than that, there have been plenty of economic concerns facing us all this summer.

At the top of everyone's agenda is the energy crisis and we see businesses and households already struggling to pay bills, and concerned about further rises in the autumn. Consumer Price Inflation is now over 10% and interest rates are continuing to increase at a rapid rate. Research conducted by the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) shows a reduction from 63% in Q1 to 54% in Q2 amongst those firms expecting to grow in the next twelve months. In January, BCC found that 23% of businesses surveyed were looking to scale down or even consider closure in response to rising costs. This is truly a worrying time. Consequently, the BCC have today put forward proposals to the Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer and both Conservative leadership candidates for support for businesses.

These include the strengthening of regulation of the energy sector for businesses, support for businesses through grant funding and a reduction in VAT on energy bills, the temporary reversal of NICs and additional support to fill staff vacancies and reduce wage pressures. Your response to the economic quarterly survey provides the BCC with the information required to lobby government on these issues, so thank you for your contributions – it makes a difference, and we eagerly await the Government's response to these proposals.

For us at a local level, as the autumn brings a worsening economic position and the conclusion of the leadership battle, we are equally concerned about the impact on the levelling up agenda, and how regional inequalities will be addressed. But there are some positive things that are fixed in the pipeline that should give us confidence in the progress that is being made locally. Funding of £22.9m has been secured through Crewe Town Board for a range of exciting projects, the first tranche of which includes Flag Lane Baths Community Hub and Crewe Youth Zone. Other projects cover public realm developments such as 'Pocket Parks' and also a key project which aims to repurpose the High Street. In addition to these developments the work on the Royal Arcade continues with a new bus

station and a multi-storey car park, and a little further in the future we see the plan to develop Ly2 - a new multi-purpose flexible events space complementing the Market Hall and the Lyceum Theatre. Of course, HS2 will bring additional work into the area, and we eagerly await the outcome of the GBR HQ bid which too will give a boost to the region.

So whilst there are many uncertainties facing all of us regarding the current economic crisis, there is huge progress across many developments that will support us locally. The Director General of the BCC stated that 'Good business is good for our communities', but we also know that good communities are good for our business, and the progress made in developing the local community and surrounding area can only be a huge positive for businesses in South Cheshire.

For more information on the ongoing project work please visit <https://weareallcrewe.co.uk/our-vision/proposed-projects/>

Dr. Diane Wright

South Cheshire Chamber Chair

Excitement is mounting as the Chamber prepares to unveil its business stars of 2022



There's just a few short weeks before the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce stages its annual Business Awards ceremony.

This year will be a very special one as it's the 25th anniversary of the awards and we are looking forward to welcoming more than 200 people to the big night at Reaseheath College on Friday, November 18.

Entries have flown in since the Awards were announced back in July and with big name sponsors and finalists drawn from a diverse range of local businesses and organisations, we expect a night of high-drama as names are announced.

The Oscars-style ceremony will see triumphant winners step into the spotlight in nine different categories. We are very grateful for the generous support of our sponsors who make this night a highlight on the social calendar.

Judges, drawn from sponsor organisations, have started the process of interviewing entrants and selecting winners – and they have a difficult task in hand as all the entries are high-calibre.

The award categories and their sponsors are:

- *Ambassador of the Year - Cheshire East Council
- *Apprentice of the Year - Reaseheath College
- *Business of the Year (25 plus Employees) - Cheshire College South & West
- *Business of the Year (under 25 employees) – Hibberts Solicitors
- *Contribution to the Community - Bentley supported by Cheshire Connect
- *Employer of the Year - Assurant
- *Excellence in Collaboration - Construction Linx
- *Excellence in Customer Service - KPI Recruiting Ltd
- *Start-up Business of the Year - Rhino Safety supported by South Cheshire Development Agency Ltd

Enterprising and inspirational businesses and individuals have been celebrated by the Chamber for a quarter of the century – and that's something very special we believe.

Winners have gone on to flourish, grow their businesses and get behind the Chamber of Commerce as sponsors on the night. All true success stories in their own right.

November 18 has all the hallmarks of a special night where friendly rivalry will bring cheers from people delighted to celebrate the achievement of others.

For those pipped at the post, there will be Highly Commended certificates – much prized by those who receive them.

Comperes from The Cat local radio station will keep the evening flowing with lively banter and look out for yourself in pictures by photographer Paul Harrison of Studio One in Nantwich. Coverage of the night will be by former Chronicle news-editor Jan Roberts of Pure PR in Nantwich.

The Awards are also a showcase for the talents of hospitality students at Reaseheath College and a chance to catch up with the Chamber team.

Social media will play a big part. Share your selfies with the hashtag #SCCBA22





Business Awards sponsors join Chamber President John Dunning for a media photo-call at Reaseheath College

Finalists announced in Chamber Business Awards

Finalists have been named in the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Business Awards 2022 as excitement mounts ahead of the big night at Reaseheath College.

The prestigious ceremony, in its 25th year, always creates a buzz across South Cheshire as businesses of all sizes wait to hear who will be crowned this year's champions.

Now judging is underway as the Chamber prepares to unveil its business stars on Friday, November 18.

This year has seen an encouraging increase in the number of start-up businesses entering the awards highlighting what a hot-bed of entrepreneurial talent South Cheshire remains despite the economic crisis.

In the running for awards are many new Chamber members and several previous winners such as Wistaston-based Motherwell Cheshire, specialist work-related learning provider Safe Opportunities of Crewe, care provider Right at Home South Cheshire and the Aqueduct Marina, Nantwich.

Finalists are featured in a souvenir brochure and those pipped at the post will receive Highly Commended certificates and a logo to use on their marketing material.

Chamber Chief Executive Paul Colman said:

“Every year the calibre of entries is extremely high and this year has been no exception. We have a fantastic range of finalists all hoping to be called to the winner's podium. Win or lose, they can all be proud of the contribution they make. We are looking forward to another memorable night at Reaseheath College.”

The flagship event has attracted generous sponsorship from high profile South Cheshire companies and organisations.

The finalists are:

- **Ambassador of the Year:** Aqueduct Marina and Crewe Market Hall.
- **Apprentice of the Year:** Joshua Hallam (Amplio Group), Connor Smith (Cheshire College South & West), Mia Jennings (Everybody Health & Leisure), Matilda Turner (Mental Health Charter), Kathryn Bennett (Mid Cheshire Hospitals) and Adam Simcock, (WR Partners).
- **Business of the Year (25 plus employees):** Aqueduct Marina, KBA The Financial Planning Company and Right at Home South Cheshire.
- **Business of the Year (under 25 employees):** Amplio Group, Atherton & Associates Wealth Management Ltd, Qualkem Ltd and The Nantwich Clinic Ltd.
- **Contribution to the Community:** Mid Cheshire Hospitals Charity, Everybody Health & Leisure, The Wishing Well and Motherwell Cheshire CIO.
- **Employer of the Year:** Atherton & Associates Wealth Management Ltd, Everybody Health & Leisure and Right at Home South Cheshire.
- **Excellence in Collaboration:** Jo Jo's Day Nursery, Safe Opportunities and The Wishing Well.
- **Excellence in Customer Service:** Everything Dinosaur, Green Future Box Ltd, Optimum Pay Group, Right at Home South Cheshire and Rookery Hall Hotel & Spa.
- **Start Up Business of the Year:** Griggs Boutique Bathrooms, KR Fleet Solutions Ltd, Platinum Construction, Sales Geek Cheshire East Ltd and Trinity Create Ltd.

Award sponsors are: Assurant, Bentley Motors, Cheshire College South & West, Cheshire Connect, Cheshire East Council, Construction Linx, Hibberts, KPI Recruiting Ltd, Reaseheath College Rhino Safety and South Cheshire Development Agency Ltd.

Trinity Create is sponsoring the Main Drinks Reception and Optimum Pay Group, the VIP Drinks Reception.

For more on the Business Awards go to sccci.co.uk/business-awards/2022-awards



Chamber Chief Executive Paul Colman and Events & Marketing Coordinator Dominic Hibbert mark the milestone



**SOUTH CHESHIRE CHAMBER
BUSINESS AWARDS 2022**

TICKETS AVAILABLE

**FRIDAY 18TH NOVEMBER
REASEHEATH COLLEGE**

#SCCBA2022

In the
Spotlight
with...

Hibberts Solicitors

Hibberts LLP is a long-established firm of solicitors, with origins that date back to 1799. Its highly-experienced team provide legal expertise in company, commercial law, employment law, property conveyancing, tenancy, dispute resolution, private client, agricultural, probate and estate matters. Hibberts has offices in Crewe, Nantwich, Tarporley and Whitchurch and has a strong commitment to personal service.

Here we meet Camille Renaudon, Partner and Head of Employment and John Gibbons, Solicitor, Head of Agriculture.

Camille Renaudon



1. Camille, you head up the Employment Law Department at Hibberts, advising employers and employees across the UK and abroad. What are today's challenges and what do you like about your role?

Employment law is a constantly changing and developing area of law, it literally never stays still and that's one reason I enjoy it so much. I particularly enjoy my role as Head of Employment here at Hibberts because of the variety of the work that I deal with and the pace of change in this area of law. I can pick up the phone or open my emails and I literally never know what I am going to get! That does of course bring its own challenges as I won't pretend it is easy keeping up to date with all of the constant developments in legislation and case law. Probably my favourite part of my role is the extent of the client contact that I have; dealing with people, developing relationships and really making a difference to an individual or a business.

2. You are a busy mum with a six year-old daughter and another baby on the way! How do you strike a work life balance?

Good question! With difficulty sometimes I admit, especially as I work full-time. As well as my day job of being an employment lawyer I am also a Partner of the Firm so things can prove pretty busy. I think for me one huge advantage of the last few years has been more people and businesses embracing hybrid working, be that people working non-traditional hours and patterns or being able to work from

home more easily and often. I now tend to do two or three days in the office and the rest of the week from home which is a huge help to me. I try to be as organised as I can and am a big fan of to-do lists and diary entries. I am also very fortunate to have an incredibly supportive husband, Adrian, helpful family and also a fantastic secretary Danielle who keeps me well organised. A healthy work-life balance is very important to me and something I am keen to make sure all our staff at Hibberts subscribe to.

3. You describe yourself as 'not a typical lawyer' what do you mean by that?

Although I did do a law degree, I didn't go straight on to do the LPC (Legal Practice Course) after university but instead spent four years working in Youth Justice. I wanted some life experience before deciding where my long-term future lay. I think that time really opened my eyes as to the levels of deprivation and poverty locally but it also convinced me that I wanted to spend my working life working with people and developing long-term relationships to facilitate positive change, in some area of law. I then decided to go back to my legal training in my mid-20's and was fortunate enough to train and qualify at Hibberts. I also pride myself on being plain speaking - I want my clients to be able to understand my advice and so I try not to baffle them with technical language or complicated advice.

4. You have been through a very tough time over the past two years. We are delighted to hear of your recovery. What got you through?

Again I have to credit that largely to my husband Adrian who was an absolute rock of support for me throughout the up's and down's of the last few years, as was my daughter Harriet who inspired me to take each day as it comes and also see the joy in the little things. My fellow Partners and colleagues at Hibberts were absolutely fantastic as well and made a difficult time so much easier by allowing me to work when I felt well enough but not put me under pressure to do any more than that. Finally I was very fortunate to be treated by the amazing GTN team over at Weston Park hospital in Sheffield who provided such incredible support throughout my treatment, I am very grateful to them.

5. In late 2021 you were appointed to the South Cheshire Chamber Board. Give us one tip for businesses to get the most out of their Chamber membership.

Get involved! The Chamber offers a huge variety of events and benefits and if I could give one tip it would be to give things a try and see what works for you and your business. The team are always on hand to discuss events and your membership so speak to them if in doubt and then get booked on.

6. Finally you describe yourself as 'Stokie' and proud! You are also part French, tell us more.

Whilst my working life has always been in and around Cheshire, I was brought up and, apart from my time at University, have always lived just over the border in and around Newcastle and Stoke, hence I consider myself a Stokie and proud of it! One thing I find Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe & Nantwich have in common is that people can be so quick to criticise or be negative about the local area. Let's focus on the positives I say but of course recognise how they can be improved and work towards a common goal. And yes I am part-French. Although if I ever got an international call-up it would have to be for England!

7. The Chamber has many business members drawn the rural sector. How do you enjoy being a member of the Chamber?

Personally I certainly enjoy being a member of the Chamber and feel it has much to offer the local business community. I far prefer the more informal type networking events that the Chamber offers and I try to go to the Final Friday events whenever my calendar allows. At Hibberts we also enjoy enormously the business awards event each November and I have found it very rewarding but also fascinating being part of the judging panel for the award that we sponsor. As a Firm we encourage our staff to become involved in Chamber events and will always try to pass on Chamber emails and updates as invariably they involve the local area which is after all where our staff both live and work.



Hibberts are a sponsor of the Chamber Business Awards – Camille is seen here with the firm's Managing Partner Stewart Bailey and Simon Weston at last year's ceremony



Hibberts have offices on Barker Street in Nantwich and on Nantwich Road in Crewe



John Gibbons



1. John, you specialise in agricultural law, residential and commercial property. You advise farmers, landowners and rural businesses across Cheshire and beyond. What are the current challenges facing the sector?

The sector has since the UK joined the EU benefitted from subsidies which are now being phased out. The Conservatives pledged in their 2019 election manifesto to maintain the annual budget of £2.4bn promising to redirect direct subsidies into new environmental land management schemes (Elms). The emphasis on the payments being available on the basis of "farming for the environment" will be a huge challenge for farmers used to the old regime.

Farming businesses need to decide their direction and any change is difficult particularly with new government objectives and new rules to comply with.

2. You are a team member of the Quality Conveyancing Scheme and bear a badge of excellence as a Fellow of the Agricultural Law Association. What could be done to help rural businesses?

Communication and collaboration. We all need assistance with interpretation of changes in law and in compliance. If farms can work together with the common purpose of sharing best practise and knowledge all the better. As solicitors and advisors, we are there to work with farmers, their land advisers and accountants to

achieve their objectives and our aims is always to provide the best advice, so our clients have an informed choice.

3. HS2 has been hailed a great thing for South Cheshire, supported by the Chamber and major employers locally. Are you excited for high-speed rail, what is your view?

I understand a major part of HS2 is to move freight which will alleviate pressure from the roads. It is a balance of livelihoods and nature being lost forever.

4. Hibberts has advised Cheshire farmers for hundreds of years. Can you give us an example from the past and does that law still apply today?

The Partnership Act of 1890 still provides the foundation of partnership law. Most family farms are run as a general partnership. The 1890 Act therefore, remains extremely important and we continue to examine the Act in detail in modern partnerships.

5. You attend annual specialist conferences and professional development courses to stay up-to-date with legal developments. Give us a snapshot of what's changed lately and how this impacts South Cheshire?

South Cheshire is not isolated from the national issues we hear on the news. For example, farm workforce shortages post Brexit.

As solicitors we are constantly updating our best practise in the drafting of documents to reflect decided case law. This could range from cases for example relating to tax, restrictive covenants, trespass and nuisance and planning. The changes are constant and I would not recommend anyone considering entering into the profession if you do not enjoy reading!

6. Away from work you enjoy spending time with your family, running, reading and watching movies. What's your favourite film, actor and why?

I watched Shawshank Redemption the other night and it is one of those films that if

it's on I cannot pass it by. There are so many films that I enjoy from the classics of Clint Eastwood to Star Wars. I re-watched Cool Hand Luke recently, an old Paul Newman movie, it was great. Spending time with family is very important and I enjoy walking in the countryside, in particular, in woodland.

www.hibberts.com
01270 624225

Offices across Cheshire and Shropshire; Nantwich, Crewe, Tarporley, Whitchurch



John is a keen traveller – seen here in New York meeting Abraham Lincoln!





Department for
International Trade

GROW YOUR INTERNATIONAL SALES



Learn everything you need to know about how to sell your products or services to the world.

Join the UK Export Academy.

great.gov.uk/exportacademy 🔍



The UK Export Academy from the Department for International Trade (DIT) gives businesses the know-how to sell to customers around the world by learning from experts in international trade.

Designed to accommodate different levels of exporting experience, whether your business is interested in starting to sell internationally or looking to grow your international sales further, the academy will help you to overcome common challenges that businesses can face.

Who is the UK Export Academy for?

The UK Export Academy is open to any business in the UK who has a product or service that can be sold internationally. It is for businesses who know that they want to reach international customers and contracts in the future, as well as those who might already be selling beyond the UK and want to expand into new markets. Register now

Events

The UK Export Academy has many events running throughout the year that are tailored to your businesses needs. See the full programme here [Events](#)



For more information please contact her on sara.pomfret@tradenw.org or 07922 581333.

See www.great.gov.uk for more details.

WHAT'S THE UK EXPORT ACADEMY?

The UK Export Academy is a free training programme for UK businesses looking to grow their international sales. Brought to you by expert speakers, these export workshops are delivered through a hybrid of online and face-to-face learning.

Join hundreds of businesses like yours as we explore the benefits and challenges of trading outside of the UK.

Discover your export potential, increase your confidence, and upskill your knowledge of overseas sales. Prepare your future export plan, network with like-minded businesses, and take your next steps to international growth.

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN THE UK EXPORT ACADEMY?

Whether you're a first time exporter, or looking to develop your knowledge further, the UK Export Academy has hours of content available for all SMEs across the UK. With hundreds of workshops available across the year, you can customise your programme with events that suit you.

The UK Export Academy is delivered in three stages depending on your skill level.

Foundation

This is a step by step guide to becoming an exporter. The foundation modules will build your knowledge and confidence if you're relatively new to selling internationally or interested in learning about how to start. You will leave the foundation course with an export action plan tailored to your business.

Masterclasses

Once you have a good understanding of the basics, these masterclasses will broaden your knowledge in areas such as sales skills, website internationalisation, eCommerce, managing overseas partners, and more. This is where you'll learn about sector-specific challenges, and gain insight into the different markets overseas.

Opportunities

It's time to put your knowledge into practice. Discover how you can use DIT's sector teams and overseas networks to access in-market opportunities, including the benefits of new free trade agreements. Find out how you can join like-minded businesses on trade missions and attend international exhibitions all over the world.

HOW TO JOIN THE UK EXPORT ACADEMY?

Register for your [free UK Export Academy account](#) and create your personalised agenda. We'll continue to add exciting export events, so check back to keep growing your programme.



Department for
International Trade

"REALLY GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO GET SPECIFIC, FREE, IMPARTIAL ADVICE."

P Muller
The Last Shoemaker, York

Best Diversity and Inclusion Strategy award for Assurant



ASSURANT®



award for Best Diversity and Inclusion Strategy at the Firm Awards in London. The annual FIRM Awards celebrate the very best of in-house recruitment excellence, innovation and best practice.

We are very proud of this achievement as we continue to progress towards our 2025 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion targets and focus on removing barriers and enabling career development for underrepresented groups. We continue to enhance our understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy and increase employee participation to help build in inclusive work environment.

"Thank you for this award, which is a testament to how we're living our values and commitments, which we call The Assurant Way."

Christian Formby, president, Assurant Europe

To learn more about Assurant's community and social responsibility commitments go to socialresponsibility.assurant.com.

At Assurant, creating a diverse workforce is one of our core commitments, but more recently our goal has been to encourage colleagues to further embrace diversity.

Not only does diversity help foster a more equitable and inclusive culture, it

allows us to better align with and innovate for our clients, customers, workforce and communities. Our 2022 strategy includes increasing diversity amongst our leadership and management teams, ensuring equity in the workplace and continuing to build an inclusive work environment.

We believe having a clear plan helped us achieve our first industry recognised

Bentley Motors first receive South Pole's 'Net Zero Plastic to Nature' status



amount of plastic parts protection on outbound products from 13 items to six. By removing unnecessary items like vinyl wheel protection and wiper blade covers, we've removed 12 tonnes of plastic from our outbound packaging operations in a year – and we're ensuring that where plastic is still needed to ensure our cars arrive in perfect condition, it is minimal, lightweight and has low CO2 impact.

"Other measures, such as reducing unnecessary packaging for items moved around site, have reduced plastic shrink-wrap waste by 86 per cent. Even the plastic banding we use to secure items on pallets has gone under the microscope, as we've carried out tests on a cardboard replacement to ensure that it is equally as effective. We also recognised that one of the greatest contributors is inbound logistics packaging, so we are working closely with our suppliers to reduce packaging on inbound parts – as well as empowering colleagues to quickly and effectively reuse packaging around site."

The status, which is internationally-recognised, reflects the company's ongoing environmental initiatives and is a key part of Bentley's Beyond100 strategy to achieve end-to-end carbon neutrality by 2030 with the Crewe headquarters climate positive thereafter.

For more on the company go to www.bentleymotors.com

Bentley Motors has become the first company to be awarded South Pole's Net Zero Plastic to Nature accreditation after engaging in a successful waste stewardship appraisal.

The company's drive to assess, reduce and mitigate the global plastic footprint of its logistics packaging, vehicle protection and aftersales packaging was analysed by independent, Switzerland-based experts at the South Pole organisation. The assessment covered everything from operational macro-plastic parts packaging used in logistics and manufacturing, to the disposal of plastic protection downstream at global dealerships.

To secure the status, Bentley has invested in certified units that support two of South Pole's projects focused on developing specialist plastic waste collection and recycling infrastructure projects. These are

with Neela Saga in India and Second Life in Thailand. This action ensures that the full volume of non-processed plastic waste found in the 2021 study has been effectively mitigated.

Peter Bosch, Member of the Board for Manufacturing at Bentley Motors, said: "Our drive towards a plastic-free future is an essential part of our Beyond100 strategy and this pioneering collaboration with South Pole has helped us evaluate the impact of the steps we've been taking to reduce and recycle plastic reduce around our site by examining every aspect of our logistics value chain. From the bubble wrap and foam used to package inbound parts, to the car body covers and shrink wrap processes employed on vehicle protection and aftersales materials, no stone has been left unturned and we've been able to make quick and effective changes.

"For example, we have reduced the

Cheshire College students triumph on A Level results day



Over 200 A Level students attended the College's Crewe Campus to collect their results. The hard work and determination of both the staff and students resulted in the highest number of A* grades achieved in the history of the College, marking yet another year of academic excellence and momentous personal achievements.

Achieving over 180 A*-A grades, the College continues to deliver outstanding results for its students, including 30 that

achieved A*-A in all chosen subjects such as Economics, History and English. These extraordinary results ensure that several students will be continuing their studies at some of the UK's most prestigious universities.

Among those celebrating was Brandon who achieved A*-B grades in Business, English Literature and History, and will be going on to study Politics and Modern History at University of Manchester. Brandon said: "I'm ecstatic. The College has been really welcoming from day one and the teachers have provided me with valuable

feedback throughout my studies."

International student, Louis, will be attending King's College London to study Philosophy, Politics and Economics, after achieving A*-A grades. He said: "I didn't have the opportunity to study Religion or Politics at home in Hong Kong so I started my studies in those areas from scratch at Cheshire College. The teachers have been really supportive, and I couldn't have achieved what I have without them."

Dhesi, Principal and CEO of Cheshire College, commented: "We are delighted with the brilliant results our students have received this year and it couldn't have been possible without the hard work and determination of both the staff and students; many of whom will be continuing their studies at some of the UK's most prestigious universities or heading for a range of Apprenticeship and full-time employment opportunities with industry powerhouses.

"This news tops off a great year that marked the fifth anniversary of Cheshire College – South & West and myself and the team are incredibly excited to continue to build on the positive impact the College has had so far on our students, with regional and national employers, and the wider community."

– To explore the breadth of courses the College offers and learn more about its forthcoming open evenings visit www.ccsw.ac.uk

Springboard project helping unemployed people bounce back into work



The Guinness Partnership has teamed up with the Torus Foundation charity to create a new project aiming to help thousands of people get back into work.

Called Springboard Cheshire, it helps newly unemployed people in Cheshire and Warrington, many of whom may have never been out of work before but whose livelihoods have been destroyed by COVID-19.

The scheme offers the advice, training and the one-to-one support they need to quickly bounce back over an intensive programme lasting 10-13 weeks. It includes

mental health support, as well as help with digital skills, interview training, and financial advice.

Alistair Smyth, Director of External Affairs and Social Investment at The Guinness Partnership, said: "When we saw the benefits this scheme will bring, we didn't hesitate to offer our support.

"The Springboard project is another great example of how we go further than our core housing and care services. Through it we

hope many people across Cheshire and Warrington will be able to find a job or training that will help them put their lives back on track after the disruption caused by the pandemic."

A range of placements are now available in sectors such as construction, education, retail, and health and social care. The Springboard Project is funded by the European Social Fund, with match funding from The Guinness Partnership and other organisations.

– If you know someone who could benefit, or would like to find out more visit the Springboard webpage at torusfoundation.org.uk/springboard, email Springboard@TorusFoundation.org.uk or call 0330 01234 090.

Top Tips for Small Business Growth - Small business insights from Manchester Met



Leading a business is hard at the best of times. The last two years have presented business leaders everywhere with unprecedented challenges. Many challenges still remain such as supply chain problems, labour shortages and rising inflation. But the time is ripe for equipping SME business leaders with the skills and know-how to navigate these challenges.

Helen Tonks (pictured) is CEO of Hydraulics Online. She's also a mentor on the Centre for Enterprise at Manchester Metropolitan Universities, Help to Grow: Management programme, which helps leaders learn new skills, drive growth and productivity and reach more customers.

Here she explores five tools for ensuring long-term business growth.

1. A clear vision for the future: "At Hydraulics Online, our vision is madly bold – it's to be the world's leading independent fluid power provider. We won't get there in our lifetime, but it absolutely guides all that we do."

2. Customer insights and fresh perspectives: "If you're going to survive the next set of challenges, you must know who your customer is. What do they want? And why have they come to you? Are you successfully delivering?"

3. A strategy for sustainable growth: "Businesses should never chase growth or scale for the sake of it... not everybody needs to dominate the world. But we can all strive to be as productive and sustainable as possible."

4. An approach to operational and financial challenges: "For business leaders,

the challenge is to harness the tech opportunity appropriately, to help smooth out bottlenecks and inefficiencies in various operations."

5. Dedicated time to personal development: "What has kept me buoyant, sane, and confident has been my network – other business leaders from a diverse range of sectors and Manchester Met."

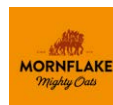
Read the full blog: Growth tips · Manchester Metropolitan University (mmu.ac.uk)

Discover Help to Grow: Management: The scheme is an invaluable opportunity to build business resilience following the impact of COVID-19. Taking place over 12-weeks, it's designed to fit around your commitments and help you consolidate a long-term plan for growth. As well as practical management training, you'll benefit from 10 hours of one-to-one sessions with a mentor who will offer you personalised support to help your business reach its potential. For more go to

Help To Grow · Manchester Metropolitan University (mmu.ac.uk)

Find out more at: mmu.ac.uk/smartcheshire

Mornflake takes centre stage with art in the community



Chamber Patrons Mornflake have given their backing to many organisations this year including those that support the arts.

The family company behind the country's best-loved breakfast products are long-standing sponsors of the Clonter Opera Theatre in Congleton, Nantwich Choral Society and Audlem's Party in the Park.

This summer the Hammond School of Performing Arts was also supported as youngsters took to the stage in a production of Grease showing off all their singing and dancing skills!

A spokeswoman for the School said: "The Hammond is thankful for all of the support we've received from Mornflake this year. One of the most important aspects of our arts education provision is performance opportunities for our students and Mornflake's contributions to our productions of the musical Grease and our Senior Dance show, Sound & Motion, make a world of difference to our young performers and creative teams.

"Budgets are often tight when it comes to producing a show but performance programme sponsorship and the money it brings in helps mitigate costs. We're grateful for Mornflake's willingness to get involved, and not only that, but the team is also beyond helpful, always produce stunning, show-related artwork which matches the theme of what we're performing. It feels

like a true creative partnership, and we look forward to working with them for years to come."

Mornflake, makers of Mighty Oats, has also thrown its weight behind crowd-pulling events that showcase South Cheshire as a tourist destination and support the local economy. Audlem Festival of Transport was a big hit with the company's backing and many visitors were drawn to the Mornflake marquee at the Nantwich Show.

The team were out in force again at Nantwich Food Festival welcoming visitors to Mornflake's Gourmet Food Hall and their stand brimming with healthy cereal plus a new line in savoury oats.

Managing director James Lea said:

"Cheshire is our home where we live and employ local people so we like to help where we can, especially those organisations and art activities that support mental health by bringing people together."

For more on Mornflake, family millers since 1675, go to www.mornflake.com



Reaseheath College launches business focused T Levels



A successful capital funding bid is enabling Reaseheath College to provide a wealth of specialist resources for T Levels for 16 to 19-year-olds. These new qualifications have been developed to meet the needs of businesses, have a technical focus and are an attractive alternative to 'A' Levels.

They offer a mix of classroom learning, practical training and a substantial industry placement with a relevant employer, so students leave with the specialist knowledge for their career and the option to go on to university, take a higher apprenticeship or continue into the workplace.

From September 2022 Reaseheath is offering three T Levels:

- On-Site Construction
- Design, Surveying and Planning
- Business Management and Administration

To support these exciting new qualifications the college has received £1.9 million in government support to provide an Innovation Hub within its Construction Department. The new hub will consist of a purpose built joinery workshop and three new classrooms including a state of the art IT suite. Building is scheduled to be completed in October. An additional £290,000 is being spent on specialist equipment including 3D imaging.

T Level Business Management students will benefit from an £80,000 refurbishment of dedicated classrooms which will provide an additional collaborative working space and top of the range IT equipment.

Reaseheath will be offering a wider range of T Levels for 2023 and is looking to expand its network of supporting businesses.

Learn more at www.reaseheath.ac.uk/t-levels

Four day week hailed a success



I'd have no reservations in recommending they give it a try. Regular consultation and a flexible approach are the keys to a successful outcome. The implementation has actually been fairly painless and where we did hit a snag there was always a solution because people really want it to work.

We are currently in the process of conducting a staff engagement survey and it's already very clear that the four day week makes a massive contribution to overall staff morale. It's also key in attracting future talent to the business. Obviously, people like the idea of a longer weekend but it's also highly indicative of a forward-thinking employer who takes the work/life balance seriously and is willing to embrace new ideas.

Last question – what do you do on your Fridays Emma? It was quite strange at first. I actually felt I was playing truant for the first couple of weeks. I guess like a lot of people, the extra day gives me a chance to get on top of all of the routine domestic chores and admin so I have the rest of the weekend for the fun stuff. It's made a huge impact – you're not constantly playing catch-up but have the time and space to relax and recharge. I love it and would find it very difficult working any other way.

For more information on SG World visit www.sgworld.com

In June 2022, it was widely reported that more than 3,300 workers at 70 UK companies, ranging from a local chippy to large financial firms, would start working a four-day week in the world's biggest trial of the new working pattern. SG World were well ahead of the game when back in November 2021, Mark Haase, SG World CEO, announced the introduction of a four day week pilot scheme. We spoke to Emma Stevens, SG World HR Manager, to find out how the project was going.

So Emma – where are we now? From the outset Mark has been very clear that as a company we were ready to embrace the idea of a four day week but it had to work for all the stakeholders - our employees, customers and partners. I'm happy to report we now have 65% of SG World

staff on a four day week and our feedback mechanisms are showing no negative impact on overall productivity but huge gains in staff morale and motivation. We're currently working on bringing the Finance Team on board and will continue to expand the scheme.

What have been the challenges?

Well, we knew we were going to be learning as we went along, so we've been very consultative throughout the process, working with the different departments to find the best approach. For example, introducing the customer facing departments to a four day week needed a lot of thought because great customer service remains a top priority for SG World. Consequently, with our Technical Helpdesk team we tweaked the blanket "Friday off" model to a rota system and this is working very well.

What would you say to a business thinking about adopting a four day week?

Recruitment difficulties show no signs of easing – our advice to business owners in a challenging employment market

Author - Dan Marshall, CEO, The Absolute Solutions Group. Recruitment specialists.



As a leading recruiter in Cheshire and the wider North-West, working across many sectors and placing a myriad of different roles into our Clients, we like to think we are well placed to offer our views and advice on how employers' can stay one step ahead in a hugely competitive employment market.

Despite the worst of Covid being behind us and Brexit now 31 months past - which both combined to create the perfect storm with a huge shortage of labour in all sectors - it is still, by and large, a Candidate's market.

Yes, there is falling unemployment (the lowest rate for 48 years at the time of writing) and rising wages (admittedly, offset by rising inflation), which does start to swing the pendulum back in the direction of the employer, but it is a change of behaviour by Candidates in the employment market that has made recruiting the right quality staff a challenge.

This change of behaviour can be summarised broadly into two factors:

- 1) The recruitment process itself
- 2) Changing attitude of work-seekers

Taking these two points in turn, firstly we're experiencing frequent issues where employers are behaving as they did when labour was more freely available. For example, the timescales for interview feedback are still quite laid back and the start-to-finish recruitment process is taking just as long as it did.

Remote recruitment and quick decisions utilising modern technology came to the fore during the height of Covid, as did a generally faster-paced world with internet shopping, next day deliveries etc. People just don't wait anymore, and any delay is a perceived sign of a lack of interest.

Employers have to understand that Candidates are being presented with multiple opportunities at the same time – they have their pick of employers to choose from – so employers need to ensure that their processes are swift and efficient, otherwise, by the time they have made their mind up to offer a candidate a role, they will find that candidate has already been snapped up. Decisiveness and acting quickly is the only way to get the people you like and want.

That's why employers should choose the right Recruiter in the first place. If they can trust that their Recruiter is going to source the best candidates in the first instance, that's the first hurdle overcome; they can shorten the recruitment and onboarding process, increasing their chances of securing the best Candidates before they are snatched away by other employers.

Secondly, I'm seeing a lot of joining bonuses being offered at the moment – for example, “£1,000 bonus payable after three months!” or “£500 welcome bonus!”. My feeling is that, whilst these are undoubtedly

generous offers, as a standalone recruitment tactic it's not necessarily going to attract new interest from Candidates. It's almost becoming the norm, so is losing impact.

What Candidates are increasingly interested in now is the job quality and the work-life balance aspects; good working environments, good managers, flexible shifts, part-time hours offered (as well as full-time), long-term motivation, home-working and the like. It's the whole package they're after, not just short-term incentives.

We were hugely impressed this week when one of our long-standing Clients introduced a cost-of-living loyalty bonus' of £100 per week for all staff, including agency workers who have been with them for 12 weeks or more. They also do free breakfasts! These sorts of things show that the employer really cares about what their staff are going through right now with the energy and cost of living crises, and it all goes a long way towards employee attraction and retention.

That's where our efforts need to be at the moment if we, as employers, are to succeed in attracting the right Candidates for our companies.

If you'd like more expert advice, help with your recruitment or would like the Absolute Solutions Group to find you the best people to help you on your journey, call us on 01270 445599 or email ceo@absol-group.com

— Please call Dan Marshall (CEO) on 01270 445599 or email dan@absol-group.com for more information and a company brochure.



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Crewe UTC is one of the first sixth form colleges in the UK selected by the government to deliver a new world class technical qualification called T Levels

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T Levels are an alternative to A levels, apprenticeships and other 16 to 19 courses.

Equivalent to 3 A levels, a T Level focuses on vocational skills and can help students into skilled employment, higher study or apprenticeships.

Each T Level includes an in-depth industry placement that lasts at least 45 days. Students get valuable experience in the workplace; whilst employers get early sight of the new talent in their industry.

T Level students spend 80% of the course in the classroom, learning the skills that employers need. The other 20% is a meaningful industry placement, where they

put these skills into action.

A T Level is a nationally-recognised qualification that is worth the same number of UCAS points as 3 A levels.

Our first cohort of T Level students began their programme in September 2022. During the 2-year programme, students will develop the core knowledge and skills that are needed for entry to a range of engineering, manufacturing, process and control occupations.

"We are excited to connect with local businesses in the engineering and design sector to support their talent recruitment programme and wider community engagement. Please do contact our employer engagement team if you would like to learn more about what how we can work together."

Liam McDaid, Executive Principal

For more information please visit:
www.utccrewe.co.uk





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The most dangerous places to work in the UK!



Research conducted by our Health and Safety experts at Rhino Safety has revealed that people who work in Wales are 1.3x more likely to die or suffer an injury at work than the rest of the UK.

Using data collected by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the team compared figures including the number of fatal and non-fatal injuries by region to determine the average rate of death and injury in the workplace based on population size.

It found like workers in Wales are more likely to die or be injured in work than any other part of the UK. The East Midlands is 2nd, while the West Midlands is 3rd.

To understand why workers in these areas are more at risk, it's important to look at the primary industries that can be found in each region. According to the HSE, Wales is home to a large proportion of high-risk industries such as the agricultural and forestry sector. Other significant high-risk industries include aerospace, construction, electronics, food, fishing, manufacturing, oil and gas, renewable energy and textiles.

The research also found that men are 23x more likely to die in the workplace than women. Men account for 94.99%, while women account for 5.01%. Although the number of women who work high-risk occupations has increased in the last



20-years, men statistically hold the majority in high-risk jobs such as construction or engineering. As a result, the statistic suggests that men are, on average, more at risk of suffering a fatal workplace injury in the workplace.

The most common cause of workplace fatalities is falling from height (25%) followed closely by being struck by a moving vehicle (20%) and struck by a moving object (14%).

HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE HEALTH AND SAFETY IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

There are a number of ways you can reduce the risk of accidents and injuries in the workplace. The right processes and

policies can make sure staff are aware of any hazards and what they need to do about them. Risk assessments, up-to-date training, and easy-to-understand resources are just a part of making an environment safer, but there's always work to be done to improve safety further.

Get in touch with the team at Rhino Safety today and find out how our experts can help with Health and Safety in your workplace.

–
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Now is the time to join the Crewe and Nantwich Pledge



The Pledge connects local employers, schools, colleges, and youth groups to reduce the skills gap and ensure that young people are aware of all the employment and training opportunities available to them in their area, ultimately creating a more sustainable local economy.

The Cheshire and Warrington Pledge originally launched as The Crewe Pledge and was hosted within the Chamber. Now delivered by the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and Youth Federation, The Pledge expanded to cover nine localities across the Cheshire and Warrington region including the Crewe and Nantwich Pledge which is flourishing with over 100 local members.

The Pledge work with all mainstream schools and colleges within the region and almost 20% of those are from Crewe and Nantwich. This academic year, the Pledge are launching a Core Offer which enables employers of all sizes and sectors to engage with local young people through supported activities and events. There is a variety of opportunities for employers to get involved from supporting a Careers Fair to hosting work experience and The Pledge will support you to engage with the opportunities that best meet your business priorities. It's no secret that currently recruitment is an issue for many businesses and with a shortage of work ready young people entering the job market, The Pledge aim to work with employers of all sizes and sectors to change this.

If you would like to find out more about The Pledge and how you can make a difference by collaborating with like-minded employers and educators, please contact the Crewe and Nantwich Pledge Facilitator Katie Heirene (katie.heirene@youthfed.org).

Winning formula to help make a difference and gain recognition



Cheshire Connect matches the skills and expertise of local businesses and professionals, kindly offered for free, with the requirements of the voluntary and community sector... not merely a box ticking exercise, but to have a direct impact on real people within the local community.

Skill donor volunteers have an opportunity to expand their range of skills while they use their business expertise to support a local grass roots charity, which in turn helps your business to attract talent, encourage staff retention, engagement and productivity.

It's a win win – the charity gain expertise, your organisation makes a meaningful contribution to the community,

you and your employees gain values-driven experience generating that special 'feel good factor' for all!

Plus providing your skill donor support experiences could attract more customers. People are more likely to buy from a business with shared values and can demonstrate that they are living by those values and making a tangible difference to their local community.

Get in touch with the local Crewe and South Cheshire East Business Connector - Dianne Parrish on 07946 639394 or email: dianneparrish@cheshireconnect.org

Or to find out more about Cheshire Connect, please visit our website www.cheshireconnect.org

Your valuable skill donor support could help your organisation gain recognition at a future South Cheshire Chamber 'Contribution to the Community Award'.

Now is a good time to implement the many ways you could make a valuable contribution to your local community.

If you can demonstrate you have gone beyond the norm to support your local community, whether through financial donations, fundraising, skills share or developing more sustainable products or processes, you will be eligible to gain recognition and enter next year's awards 2023!

Weston Centre boosts investment into more spaces for start-ups



range of self-storage, office and workshop units available to rent at the facilities on Weston Road.

Managing Director Katie Vost said:

"By putting more investment into spaces for ecommerce, we've been able to welcome many new companies to the centre. There was a huge growth in new online start-ups during the lockdowns and many of those firms began from the 'kitchen table.' Now they need a professional, easy to rent space in which to grow and can access that here with the added bonus of having support services and a great business community around them."

For more information please contact www.westoncentre.co.uk



It's been another exciting few months at the Weston Centre in Crewe where the team have been busy building more workspaces and trade units for local entrepreneurs.

Work has been undertaken to create a series of units specifically designed for e-commerce users, where operators can receive large shipments of goods, process orders and then package up parcels for delivery worldwide.

The new trade units range from 300 sq ft to 1500 sq ft and complement the existing



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A creative staff retention strategy can help companies keep staff



By Amanda Heywood, KPI Recruiting's HR Director



The recruitment market in South Cheshire continues to be a battleground for businesses who are looking for new staff. Vacancy postings rose to a record high in March-May 2022 and remain at very high levels with over 1.3m positions available in the UK.

Benefits packages can help retain staff: Employers in South Cheshire have an important role to help their staff through the cost-of-living crisis. Pay rises can close the gap with inflation and aid recruitment and retention efforts, but with Consumer Prices Index now over 10% for the 12 months to July, most businesses will struggle to keep wage increases at the same pace as inflation.

HR Director Amanda Heywood (pictured) believes companies can help their employee retention by focusing on benefits packages as well as pay. "Research suggests that boosting employees' benefits packages can have an increased affect pay as it can help staff feel materially better off, said Amanda. "Certain fringe benefits can help offset household costs particularly housing, travel, meals and childcare."

Motivation through regular reviews:

"Regular reviews and appraisals are vital to let people know how they are performing,"

Amanda told us.

"People who are appreciated and communicated with regularly stay in jobs much longer. Scheduled appraisals and

reviews are good because it means they don't get missed, but ad-hoc praise or feedback if someone has excelled, can also work wonders. People love to know they are appreciated."

Market the company as well as the job: Amanda, who has over 15 years' HR and Recruitment experience, adds: "Advertising the job must include all the company benefits as well as the salary if you're going to attract the best talent. It's also important to give candidates a clear idea of what the job entails and what key skills are required. Making the position sound positive is a great idea, but you also need to be truthful and realistic about the duties and working environment involved: making something sound too grand is only going to lead to disappointment from candidates at either interview stage or even when they start employment."

For help with a recruitment campaign, whether it's for one employee or hundreds, contact KPI which has branches throughout Cheshire, Staffordshire and beyond supplying staff for the Care, Commercial, Driving, Hospitality, Industrial, Executive and Rail sectors.

Go to www.kpir.co.uk

Electricals retailer AO shares top tips for reducing energy costs



From holding on to instruction manuals to customising your washing cycles, online electricals retailer AO has turned to its team of engineers for tips on how we can shave precious pounds off our monthly bills and reduce the running costs of our appliances. Jason Smith, National Operations Manager at AO Logistics in Crewe, offers some simple tips on how we can all lower energy consumption in our homes.

He said: "Try to limit the number of times you open the doors to your fridge and freezer. Every time the fridge door is opened, cold air escapes and warm air enters which means the appliance must work harder to reduce the temperature. You may notice that the doors are hard to open again after closing. Cooling the air costs money so the less you open the door, the less you spend.

"Another simple step that many people often overlook is paying attention to the instructions. Your manufacturer's instructions are full of tips on how to reduce energy usage and make the most of your specific appliance – for example, don't stick to the pre-set programmes. Every appliance will have multiple settings, programmes and cycles that can be tailored to your own personal circumstances – reducing the

amount of water, electricity and energy being used."

When it comes to instruction manuals, research from AO found that over half (54%) of Brits admit to throwing them away and almost half (43%) of people regretted not properly reading the instruction manual before using their appliance. Unsurprisingly, 28% of the 2,000 people surveyed regretted binning the manual.

Jason said: "People often use more electricity than they need to because they don't understand how their appliance works.



Instruction manuals are a free and easy way to reduce costs and don't worry if you have thrown it away – you can access manuals from most manufacturers online."

He added: "Sometimes we find ourselves in a situation where we have no choice but to purchase a new appliance. While this can be an unexpected and often stressful expense, I'd recommend choosing an energy efficient model wherever possible. While it may not be the cheapest product up front, these appliances use less energy to run so they pay for themselves over time, and you can make a substantial savings in the long term."

To help customers find the most efficient models, AO has introduced energy saving tool Youreko on its website, which highlights exactly how much money can be saved when choosing a more efficient appliance.

Launched on AO.com this month, the tool can compare the running costs and real financial savings over the lifetime of multiple appliances and recommend alternative models that could be more cost effective in the long run.

For more advice on how to reduce costs when it comes to your appliances visit ao.com/energy-efficiency

Mental health training in the workplace



The Coronavirus pandemic and the associated lockdowns have had an impact on the Mental Health of employees across all sectors of business. Working from home suits some workers but for others this enforced absence from the workplace causes isolation, lack of engagement & can lead to depression, stress or anxiety.

As businesses returned to the workplace the cost of living crisis reached unprecedented levels, it is highly likely that prices will continue to rise. This has added further challenges to employees with such items as fuel, gas & electricity rising well above any increase in salary.

It has never been more crucial for business owners to engage in Mental Health awareness within the workplace.

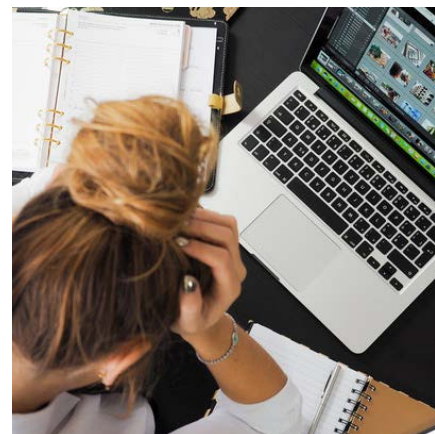
The benefits for the employee are clear – a point of contact to raise any issues they are experiencing or a Mental Health First Aider who is trained to identify potential issues and initiate the supportive conversation.

There are also clear benefits for the employer – reduction in staff absence, increased morale & productivity and retaining/recruiting talent within the workforce. In 2018 in Great Britain, there were 595,000 cases of work-related stress, depression or anxiety leading to 15.4 million working days lost.

Mental Health training can break down stigma therefore demonstrating how important Mental Health problems are and removing the barriers that currently exist. Training in this area increases awareness and develops an open workplace culture

We all have a responsibility to engage in Mental Health awareness, your businesses brand reputation can be enhanced by demonstrating such engagement and the HSE already expect you to be including Mental Health in the workplace.

MI Team Training also recognise the impact of the pandemic & rising costs on businesses and to reflect that we are delighted to have recently introduced a new offer for SCCC members wishing to book Mental Health First Aid training with us. Details can be found within the Offers section of the members area or feel free to contact us to discuss your requirements at info@miteamtraining.co.uk



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Women's safety charity appeals for Street Angels to join its growing band of supporters



Left to right: Superintendent Claire Jesson, WPS founder Amaka Lawton, Cheshire East mayor David Marren and martial arts experts Darren Harper and Andy Taylor

A charity on a mission to make society safer for women is stepping up its campaign as the nights draw in and the party season approaches.

The Alpha Omega Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Foundation has announced plans to launch South Cheshire Street Angels and is appealing for volunteers to act as Good Samaritans to vulnerable people at night.

Other measures including marshals to prevent trouble flaring at taxi ranks and #WhereAreMyFriends, a social media campaign urging women not to get separated and walk home alone, will be rolled out over the autumn and winter months.

WPS, founded earlier this year, is also staging more female self-defence classes. Led by martial arts experts, the free five week course begins at Beechwood Primary School on November 2.

The initiatives were announced at another packed WPS public meeting at the Apollo Buckingham Health Sciences campus in Crewe where top police officers, charity leaders, self defence experts and representatives from the local night-time economy joined forces to share knowledge and best practice.

WPS founder Amaka Lawton said: "In a few short months we have made excellent progress, engaging with the police, local authority and various charities. All have been keen to increase safety for women and get these practical ideas off the ground.

"Our research has included a night with the Street Angels in Macclesfield to see how they work. We want to get a similar scheme up and running in Crewe and Nantwich and are actively recruiting volunteers."

The meeting heard from a former Nantwich Street Pastor who regularly took her turn handing out flip flops, water, blankets and other necessities to young people worse for wear after a night out.

The church-led scheme was halted by the pandemic but volunteers found it very

rewarding and she backed calls for Street Angels to come forward.

Also attending was Police Commander Superintendent Claire Jesson who announced funding for new Safety Buses which will offer safe passage home and a haven to vulnerable people. The specially-branded buses, driven by officers, will be on the road next month.

Health and social care charity, Change Grow Live, gave an alarming presentation on the rise in drink spiking and needling incidents nationally.

A representative from Nakatcha in Nantwich told how spike-proof plastic bottle stops and glass covers were made available to customers to stop incidents occurring on the premises.

Amaka, a Crewe mum, added: "These are issues which present a danger to women all year round but more so as women go for nights out in the weeks leading up to Christmas.

"We have been working really hard to get practical support off the ground. Our meetings with police, local authorities and charities have been positive and productive.

"As a result our marshals will soon be in action ensuring women do not get caught up in any trouble at local taxi ranks, including the busy one in Nantwich.

"Our #WhereAreYourFriends campaign has been welcomed by local pubs, clubs and colleges. It stresses one basic survival rule – the need to stay among people and not walk home alone."

She pointed to the tragic death of London law student Zara Aleena who was killed on her way home from a night out in the summer – just 10 minutes from her home.

WPS volunteers are busy organising #WhereAreYourFriends posters, social media posts and DJ shout outs.

Charity co-founder, Ken Lawton, owner of security company Alpha Omega on Crewe Business Park, will be providing the taxi marshals.



Cheshire East Mayor David Marren and Superintendent Claire Jesson outside the meeting venue – the Wellness Centre at the Apollo Buckingham Health Sciences campus



WPS founder Amaka Lawton and the High Sheriff of Cheshire

He said: "We are taking these steps to increase safety for women but a key aim for 2023 is to get to the root of the problem and work with schools and parents on instilling acceptable behaviour from a young age."

Also attending the meeting were Cheshire East Mayor David Marren, Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner John Dwyer and the High Sheriff of Cheshire Jeannie France-Hayhurst.

They commended the charity on its work to create a society where women can live in peace and harmony – and wholeheartedly supported its key message: It's Our Right to Be Safe.

For more on Alpha Omega Women, Peace and Security Foundation go to www.alphaomegawpsfoundation.com or visit its stand at Crewe Market Hall on the first Wednesday of the month.

To get involved as a WPS volunteer or Street Angel call 0300 365 9223 or email info@alphaomegawpsfoundation.com

Guinness Housing supports launch of Motherwell Cheshire Football Locker Scheme



Motherwell Cheshire has kicked off a special Footlocker Scheme providing children with football boots and shin pads.

Run in partnership with Nantwich Football Club and supported by Guinness Housing, the project offers a 'no questions asked' service to support local families and is appealing for donations of items to be dropped off at the Motherwell Cheshire Community Hub.

Kate Blakemore CEO founded Motherwell CIC back in 2015 as a project to support the mental health of local mums. "Our vision is that women and girls are able to meet the challenges in their lives and access support, education and advocacy whenever they need it, in order to fulfil their potential, she said. "Our mission is to encourage, inspire and empower all women and girls to improve their mental health and challenge the associated stigma."

Kate and the team are tremendously grateful to Guinness Housing whose support has included gifting property in Beech Drive, Wistaston which now holds Motherwell's Community Share Hub, Counselling Rooms, Training Room and Operational office.

Kate added: "This wonderful support has fulfilled Motherwell's dream of being at the heart of the community allowing all of our services to have a huge positive impact on the community and surrounding areas."

In 2017 Motherwell received charity status and its first funding for the Believe Project from the Steve Morgan Foundation. This supports mums and mums to be whose child/children are on a child protection plan. The Project continues to grow and there's now a Believe Ambassador Training Programme and support from The National Lottery for the next three years.

In 2018 the charity introduced the Inspire Project supporting the mental health of girls aged 14-18. In 2020 it launched the Community Share Hub offering support to families in financial difficulty. The hub provides access to preloved school uniform, school bags, winter coats, baby items and even fancy dress.

Last year it began FlourishHER working with employers to support the mental health and wellbeing of their workforces.

The charity's services also include Cherry Blossom Infant Loss & Birth Trauma Support, 1:1 Counselling, wellbeing programmes and mentoring as well as peer support groups for women at all stages of life including menopause cafes.

If any businesses would like to support the Community Hub in any way please contact Nadine, Hub Co-Ordinator nadine@motherwellcheshirecio.com



How do you support Women in the Workplace?



Have you seen the Government's Women and Girl's Strategy that was published in August 2022. The strategy places emphasis on Women in the Workplace focussing on line manager training, better understanding of Women's Health including menstruation, menopause and Gynaecological issues, so that women feel understood, able to talk about their issues in work, without fear and judgement.

It also outlines burnout that can take place for women as many are unpaid carers, balancing work and personal life. The strategy explains that positive conversations in the workplace around mental health are important to create the right culture for positive wellbeing.

We can help

Our FlourisHER Women's Wellbeing Hub offers talks, workshops and can help plan and deliver awareness days.

With Infant Loss Awareness Week and World Mental Health Day in October we can also help to support with talks, and workshops on a wide range of topics all aimed at "starting the conversation".

We can either offer one of our workshops or you have the opportunity to join our FlourisHER community with membership from as little as £250.

We offer a full range of support delivered by experienced facilitators who are specialists with passion, lived experience and relevant qualifications.

Please contact us today to see how we can support you, your organisation and your employees.

Email: Kate@motherwellcheshirecio.com

Watch this space for more information about our Women in the Workplace Pledge!

Motherwell Cheshire's "Believe Project" celebrates positive outcomes



The Believe Project is the flagship project for Motherwell Cheshire which was established in 2017 with the aim of supporting mums at risk of child removal.

The project offers bespoke one to one support for mums involved with social care with support workers offering practical support in meetings and emotional support by working on individual action plans that support the mental health and wellbeing of the mums.

This unique project is trauma informed, supporting the mums every step of the way, in fact 90% of the mums who have been supported have received abuse in their life with the majority suffering childhood abuse.

For the last 2 years the charity has been working with Chester University who have

been completing an academic evaluation on the project. This evaluation is now complete, and the evaluation will be presented by Dr Lisa Oakley and Dr Mandy Urquhart at Motherwell Cheshire's AGM in October. Early signs are showing the evaluation to be extremely positive, and Motherwell Cheshire can't wait to share the full report.

In August the project was thrilled to receive funding for 3 years to expand the project into more areas in Cheshire which comes at a time when post Covid referrals into the project have increased by 25% with more mums needing the projects bespoke support. The National Lottery Fund have also funded posts for 2 support workers and a dedicated counsellor into the project. This essential funding will help support the ever-increasing demand.

Motherwell Cheshire recently commissioned a social impact report for the charity and it highlighted that for 2021-2022 for the Believe project showed a fiscal saving of £1,678, 354 to our local community.

It also demonstrated that:

- • 21 Children were prevented from going into care
- • 45 Children deescalated from Child Protection Plan
- • 5 Children were returned home from care

As a result of this impact Motherwell Cheshire's objective is to establish more individuals trained to deliver the Believe programme all over the country and have therefore introduced their Believe Ambassador Programme. The programme is a 2-day training package that trains individuals to become a Believe Ambassador and provides access to the resources that the project uses to deliver the service.

For future training dates please visit www.believe-motherwell.co.uk

Christmas party time at Bolesworth



Bolesworth is opening its doors to groups looking to hire space for a unique Christmas party experience this December.

An exclusive area within the Bolesworth Alpine Lodge will have capacity for 100 party-goers. The minimum number of tickets for one booking will be 20, and a maximum number of bookings for any one date will be limited to three. The festive space will be designed in such a way that each party will have its own private seating section together with privileged bar access. The area will be secure and entry restricted to each group for the duration of the booking, which is from 3pm to 9pm.

The Christmas parties will run alongside Christmas at Bolesworth and will include general admission to the brand new lights trail, Christmas Village and fairground within the party ticket price. Parking will be included in a reserved area close to the VIP facility.

Open on selected days in the early part of December, then daily from the 14th to the 23rd of December, the Christmas parties ticket price of £84.95 for adults, £54.95 for children aged 4-12, also includes early access of one hour, before general doors open, to the Bolesworth Alpine Lodge, Christmas Village and fairground.

A complimentary festive drink upon arrival will get the party going and, for the

younger members of the group, there will be a special Santa's Story Time session with a gift for each child.

For companies looking to entertain staff or clients, bespoke packages can be created to include food and fairground vouchers, drinks packages, and late opening with DJ or live entertainment.

Further information on the 2022 Bolesworth Christmas party season will be available from the 1st of September at www.bolesworth.com. All bookings will be taken via the Bolesworth Events office by calling 01829 307676 or by email to natalie.collins@bolesworth.com



Expert Eye with...

EXPERT EYE



Neon Freight

Ian Mallon, Neon Freight Ltd

01477 668 003 ian.mallon@neonfreight.co.uk www.neonfreight.co.uk

The “Ever Given” has got a lot to answer for. (and Brexit of course..) For years, we freight forwarders quietly sat in the background and didn’t make the papers. Now due to a wayward vessel in the Suez canal and huge queues into Dover, these days, saying you are a freight forwarder is no longer met with a puzzled look. I was honestly quite shocked to read the term “customs broker” on the front page of The Times last year. Logistics appears to be cool now. Who knew?!

It’s clear that there is a lot of confusion with world trade and logistics at the moment. We as freight forwarders try to find clarity in the murky waters ahead of us.

I believe it all starts with the scope of the shipment. (import or export) So many shipments do we see where there isn’t a clear set of requirements and the trade isn’t really discussed properly in advance. If you are able to confirm the following items then you are on the road to a much smoother shipment for sure.

– If you want to reach out to see how we assist and navigate these “interesting times” please get in touch.

Numbers - Weight and dims, pieces, cartons, pallets etc. What exactly are you shipping?. The measurements must be correct. Guesswork might mean that the shipment won’t fit into the container or through the aircraft cargo doors. Or if the pallet is very small and awkward, then you might get charged for “wasted space” above it. Then the paperwork (commercial invoice and packing list has to match the numbers)

Mode – Air, sea or road? Full container (FCL) or part load (LCL) Sometimes it’s better to start small and increase the size of shipment in time.

Incoterms – So important to agree in advance. Lots of confusion in recent years between DAP (delivered at place) and DDP (delivered duty paid) Especially across the EU. (Many carriers have refused to handle DDP into EU) Do your clients have their own customs broker forwarder in place?

Payment terms – important to discuss and agree your payment terms with your client in advance. Will you require original bill of lading (to hold onto whilst awaiting payment) or “express release”?

Destination – Please do check with your clients for accurate delivery address. Is it accessible? Do they require a forklift truck? Do they close at 2 pm on a Friday ? (Checking out all these parts goes a huge way to make the job easier to handle)

Leadtimes – Double check again where the goods are going to and how long it will take to get there. (Discuss with your client to manage expectations) Making an effort to avoid holidays like Christmas to avoid costly storage charges. Particularly with large countries like the USA!

Customs – Are there any local restrictions on the goods? For instance, “FDA” if sending medical goods to the States or does your client in China have appropriate import license. Don’t be afraid to ask direct questions of your potential clients. It will show that you are taking time to check out any potential pit falls. Do you have the HS commodity codes / EORI numbers / are the goods sensitive “controlled” (military for example) or do they fall under agricultural headings? Is there a free trade agreement with the country you are dealing with?

Hazardous- Anything with hazardous parts (eg. lithium batteries) must be declared and you may need to employ the services of a dangerous goods safety advisor. (DGSA) Other paperwork is then required like MSDS (material safety data sheets) and DGN (Dangerous goods note)

Packing – Shipping anything with wood (pallets / cases etc) need to be HEAT TREATED showing clearly the stamp. Australia has some strict rules about packing requirements!



TO JOIN TODAY GO TO WWW.SCCCI.CO.UK

South Cheshire Chamber Events Programme



How to Maximise your Membership

Held bi-monthly

Whether you are considering joining the Chamber, have been a member for some time, or have employees who may not be fully aware of all the benefits of Chamber membership, this event will enable you to fully utilise your membership. This event is open to members and non-members.



Speed Networking

Held bi-monthly

Speed Networking events are a regular and efficient fixture for meeting other Chamber members. This structured event enables you to meet all delegates attending in addition to offering guidance and tips on making the most of your networking. This event is open to members only. *Ideal for new members who are new to networking.



International Trade Forums

Returning in 2023

With a range of expert speakers, this event provides an excellent source of information, knowledge and contacts for any business that is currently, or plans to, trade internationally. This event is open to members and non-members



Final Friday

Held on the last Friday of the month

Hosted by a different Chamber member each month, this event offers great networking and regularly attracts over 40 different businesses. The Final Friday is designed to allow you to meet other Chamber members and make new contacts at the start of the working day. The host will provide a short presentation on their business and tours of their premises. This event is open to members.



Local and Economic updates

Held quarterly January, April, July, October

This event features an update and comparison of the local, regional and national responses to the latest British Chambers of Commerce Quarterly Economic Survey. In addition, the event will feature a second speaker who will provide an update on local project activity e.g. HS2, Crewe Town Centre. This event is free to members. Non-members may attend subject to capacity and will be charged an attendance fee.



Chamber Meet & Eat

Planned for return!

Less structured than other Chamber networking events, this event is designed for members who find lunchtime networking more suited to their needs. Events are held at local venues and include a welcome drink, 2-course lunch and tea/ coffee. This event is open to members.

For further details and dates of forthcoming Chamber events visit www.sccci.co.uk/portal/event/

For more information and event listings or if you wish to promote your own event please visit the Chamber Member Portal: www.sccci.co.uk

Our Mission Statement

“To be an asset that is integral to the success of the local business community and influential in promoting the future prosperity of the area”.

Networking / Representation / Crewe Signposting / Events / Nantwich / Knowledge Hub / Export Training / Sales / International Trade Awards / Facilitation / Support Mentoring / Voice of Business / South Cheshire Seminars / Start-Up Advice / Local Economy / Interactive Portal / Promotion / Information

For more information on how the Chamber can help your business please contact **Angela Wilkinson** on angela.wilkinson@sccci.co.uk



We welcome your feedback and ideas for Chamber events. Please email dominic.hibbert@sccci.co.uk

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

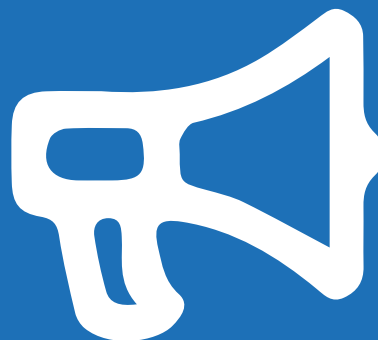
Atherton & Associates are the first member to be recognised for their contribution to growing the South Cheshire Chamber community. They have been rewarded with a £50 gift card for Crewe Lyceum Theatre.



“I have been a member of South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce for almost 10 years. Over the years, I have gained an awful lot in terms of value and support from the staff at the Chamber, as I regularly attend their meetings and events. We recently hosted a Final Friday event, and this was a fantastic way to talk in more detail about our business and how we help our clients, which was a huge success. I am a long-term advocate of the South Cheshire Chamber and wouldn't hesitate in recommending them to any local business, large or small. You will make great contacts in the local area and receive ongoing support in promoting your business. The reciprocal support that you get from being part of the South Cheshire Chamber is well worth the membership and I would urge others considering joining, to visit an event and see for yourself.”

Laurent Tudor

Atherton & Associates Wealth Management Ltd



REFER A MEMBER & YOU CAN RECEIVE A £50 REWARD

REFER A MEMBER

We are excited to launch the Refer A Member initiative! Our Chamber community represents a rich variety of businesses, sectors and expertise. Growing this community increases the potential connections and opportunities available to our members. It also adds further weight behind our representation of South Cheshire businesses and allows us to lobby more effectively on your behalf.

HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL?

To refer a new member, simply fill out the form on our website (www.sccci.co.uk/refer-a-member) and we will do the rest. The form can also be found in the Members Area.

REWARDS

Following the launch of this initiative, if the business you recommend becomes a member, you can choose from a fantastic selection of rewards (valued at approximately £50). These rewards are provided by members of the South Cheshire Chamber community.

Current rewards are available with thanks to:

- Atherton & Associates
- InspiresMe Consulting
- Bee At One Therapy
- Leasepoint Vehicle Management
- Bids Partner
- Sales Geek
- Crewe Lyceum Theatre
- SC Office

If your organisation would like to contribute to the rewards package, more info can be found at www.sccci.co.uk/refer-a-member



DRAG YOURSELF TO CREWE THIS DECEMBER



**CHERYL HOLE RIVER MEDWAY VICTORIA SCONE
AND LOUIS CYFER**

DEATHDROP

BACK IN THE HABIT

5 - 10 DECEMBER 2022

**CREWE
LYCEUM THEATRE**

**BOX OFFICE: 0343 310 0050
WWW.CREWELYCEUM.CO.UK**

DEATHDROPPLAY.COM