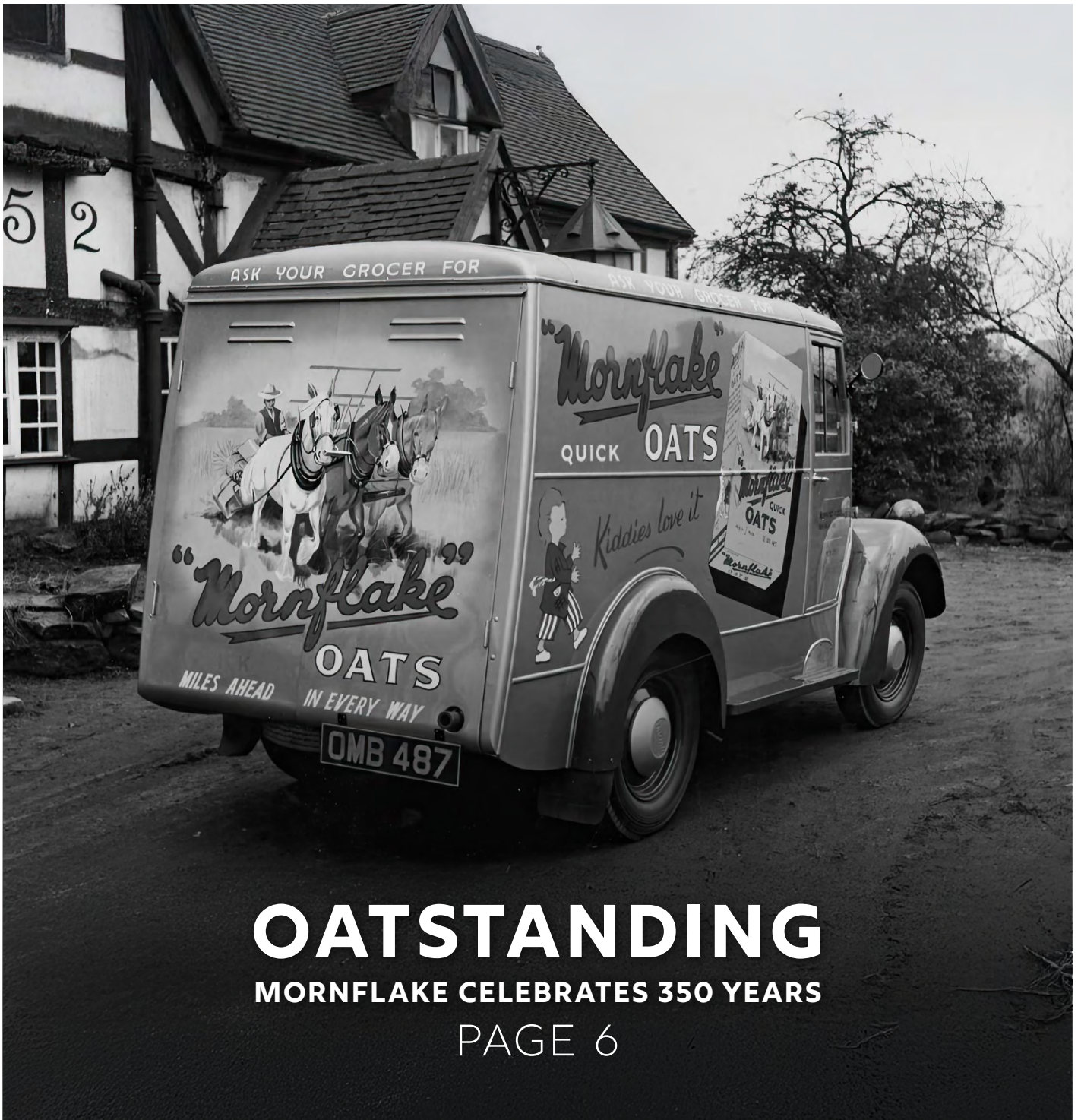


CHAMBER BUSINESS

News and views from the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry | Q3 2024



OATSTANDING

MORNFLAKE CELEBRATES 350 YEARS

PAGE 6



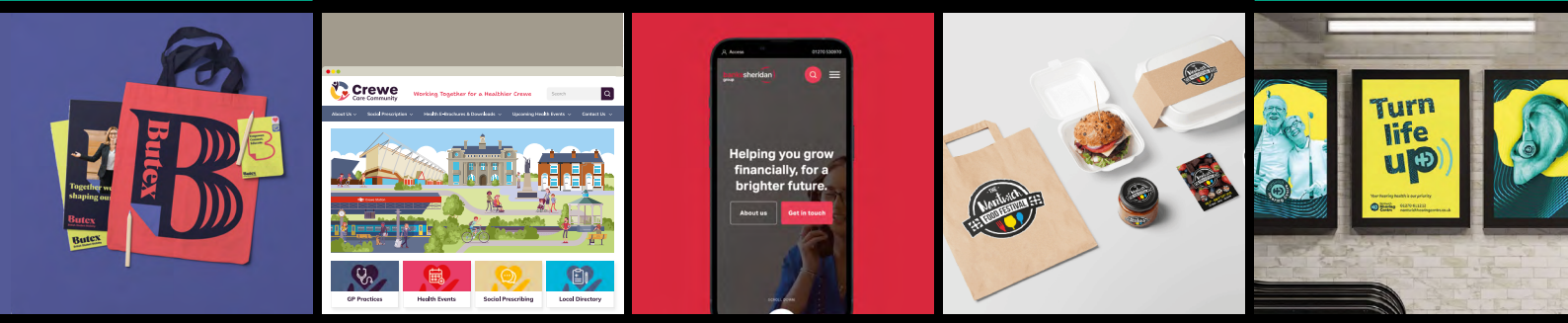
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Awards and features



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UPCOMING EVENTS



CHESHIRE EAST SPEED NETWORKING
NANTWICH TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB
22.01.25



PRESENTING DATA EFFECTIVELY
ROOKERY HALL
27.01.25



FINAL FRIDAY AT THE NEST
THE NEST, NANTWICH
31.01.25

The next issue of South Cheshire Chamber Business Magazine is due out on March 31st 2025.

Deadline for copy is March 17th 2025.

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

CONTENTS

New Members	5
In The Spotlight	6 - 7
Chamber News	8 - 9
Message From President & Chair	10 - 11
Community News	12 - 14
Start-up	15
Chamber Patrons	16 - 19
Chamber Premium Members	20 - 21
Charity News	22 - 23
Chamber Member News	24 - 30
Expert Eye	32 - 22
Chamber Member News	28 - 30
Words from Westminster	34

WHICH SOUTH CHESHIRE CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

ESSENTIAL

Online membership

Essential features:

- + Connect with the largest business community in South Cheshire
- + Promote your business through the Chamber channels
- + Access to a business support package valued at £1,400+ a year
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- + List your business on our online business directory

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All prices inclusive of VAT, minimum sign up term 12 months and information subject to change.

Check www.sccci.co.uk for updates.



WELCOME

to the Chamber's magazine 'South Cheshire Business'

In this edition, we bring you the latest insights and updates shaping our local business community. The Chancellor's recent Budget announcement has left many members disheartened, particularly due to the rising costs of employing staff, which pose significant challenges to sustaining growth and investment.

Rest assured, the South Cheshire Chamber has relayed these concerns directly to the Government through the British Chambers of Commerce. While we continue to advocate for policies that support our businesses, we also take pride in the resilience and determination of our community.

Speaking of resilience, we celebrate an incredible milestone in this issue: Mornflake, one of our valued patrons, will mark their 350th anniversary next year (p.6). As the fourth-oldest family-owned company in the UK, they are a true British icon and global success story. We are immensely proud to have Mornflake in our Chamber network and wish them continued prosperity.

Advocacy remains a priority for the Chamber. We have been working closely with our Member of Parliament, Connor Naismith (p.34), and pressing Cheshire East Council to secure a credible alternative to the cancelled HS2 project by former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. It is vital that any new north-south rail line connects through Crewe to support the economic, social, and transport needs of the UK. Losing HS2 beyond Birmingham was a significant blow to our area, but together we must champion Crewe's strategic role in the nation's future infrastructure.

The Chamber continues to evolve to meet the needs of our businesses. Visit our website at (www.sccci.co.uk) to explore the support, networking, and guidance available to you.

We hope you find this magazine both informative and inspiring. If your company has news to share or would like to explore advertising opportunities, please contact Jon at the Chamber.

Wishing you and your business every success in the months ahead.

Paul Colman Chief Executive @SCCCI_CEO

SOUTH CHESHIRE CHAMBER PATRONS



WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN A 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.



PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS

You gain access to a wealth of [promotional opportunities](#). List your business on our online [members directory](#). Share your successes with our social media audience. Why not showcase your expertise with an article in our magazine or newsletter? If you're hosting an event, promote it on our online members area or even sponsor one of our [Chamber events](#).



NETWORKING IN CHESHIRE

We host a variety of events – both online and offline – throughout the year. Ranging from Final Fridays for an informal networking breakfast to our [Annual Awards](#) dinner where we celebrate the hard work and achievements of our community.



BUSINESS SUPPORT

No matter the size or age of your business, everyone needs support at times. Chamber membership offers you [support](#) which, for smaller businesses, may not be available in house. You can access 24/7 advice lines covering HR, Legal, Health & Safety and Tax. As well as an online library of 700 documents and templates such as employee handbooks and interview forms.



INTERNATIONAL TRADE

If you're looking to [trade internationally](#), we help local businesses go global. Our experts can guide you through the documentation and latest regulations. Members can receive up to 50% off export documents!

MEET THE CHAMBER TEAM

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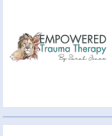
Project Manager - Local Skills Improvement
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Julie Shawcross

Engagement Co-ordinator –
 Local Skills Improvement Plan
julie.shawcross@sccci.co.uk

Meet the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry

NEW MEMBERS

 <p>Amaka's International Food Services Ltd amaka.i@amakas.co.uk amakas.co.uk 03300 569910</p>	 <p>DB Schenker nick.kelly@dbschenker.com dbschenker.com 07917 790912</p>	 <p>Nantwich Hearing Centre Ltd talktous@nantwichhearingcentre.co.uk nantwichhearingcentre.co.uk 01270 611212</p>
 <p>Business Growth Global hello@businessgrowth.global businessgrowth.global 07870 271256</p>	 <p>Diamond Trucks UK Ltd eileen.cuthbert@diamondtrucks.uk diamondtrucks.co.uk 07842 429333</p>	 <p>PrintHub sales@printhebuseservices.com printhebuseservices.com 07492 680999</p>
 <p>Butterfly People Development bev.butterflypd@gmail.com butterflypeopledevelopment.co.uk 07970 332179</p>	 <p>Empowered Trauma Therapy support@empoweredtraumatherapy.com empoweredtraumatherapy.com 07739 807601</p>	 <p>Progress HR Ltd info@progresshr.co.uk progresshr.co.uk 07870 904730</p>
 <p>CED Technology info@cedtechnology.co.uk cedtechnology.co.uk 01606 241045</p>	 <p>FF CHESHIREWEST LTD Cheshiredirectors@funfestholidayclub.co.uk fun-fest.co.uk 07713 046737</p>	 <p>The Female Business Coach Ltd hello@thefemalebusinesscoach.com thefemalebusinesscoach.com 07848 179550</p>
 <p>Cheshire Booth Company LTD info@cheshireboothcompany.co.uk cheshireboothcompany.co.uk 07452 885889</p>	 <p>Flourish Hypnotherapy Cheshire flourishhypnotherapycheshire@gmail.com flourishhypnotherapycheshire.co.uk 07709 923691</p>	 <p>WAY Trustees Ltd waytrustees.co.uk 07779 334523</p>
 <p>Cheshire Community Foundation mel@cheshirecommunityfoundation.org.uk cheshirecommunityfoundation.org.uk 07830 208005</p>	 <p>Hoxton Wealth (UK) teresa.dunning@hoxtonwealth.com hoxtonwealth.co.uk 07967 954291</p>	 <p>Webb House Furnishers Ltd sales@webbhousefurnishers.co.uk webbhousefurnishers.co.uk 01270 629296</p>
 <p>Cheshire Engineering Ltd lee@cheshireengineering.co.uk 07850 331335</p>	 <p>Jamieson Alexander Limited info@jamiesonalexander.co.uk jamiesonalexander.co.uk 03302 000017</p>	
 <p>Culture Care melanie@culture-care.co.uk culture-care.mystrikingly.com 07498 291945</p>	 <p>Khuba Clinic info@khubahealth.com khubaclinic.com 01207 421212</p>	

MEMBER FEEDBACK



AA has been a very satisfied member of South Cheshire Chamber for over a year now. We have been involved with other Chambers, but find South Cheshire to provide the most well organised in terms of facilitating employer networking and support e.g via its Final Friday and Speed Networking events. Staff are friendly, approachable and helpful - a great help to AA in its primary objective of reaching out to the suffering alcoholic.

Chris Hunt, Employment Liaison Officer, Alcoholics Anonymous

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

For further details and dates of forthcoming Chamber events visit my.sccci.co.uk/events.html

» 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 Vision

Inspiring and supporting our vibrant business community.

Our Mission Statement

We support the ambition of our members and help create greater prosperity for South Cheshire.

For more information on how the Chamber can help your business please contact Manager Jon Barnes on jon.barnes@sccci.co.uk

» We will always strive to help our businesses shape the economy for the better, and you can feedback to us on the issues affecting your business. We report both directly to local government and regional bodies and to central government through the British Chambers of Commerce network, so please get in touch with the team or email us at info@sccci.co.uk



In the Spotlight with...

SINCE 1675 **MORNFLAKE** 350 YEARS



Mornflake long-standing sponsors of its Crewe Alex FC neighbours on Gresty Road



A nostalgic flashback to the Mornflake annual sports day

Mornflake, millers of Mighty Oats, marks a very special milestone next year – its 350th anniversary. Here we look back at the history of the family milling business that remains dedicated to helping Britain and indeed the world wake up to a quality breakfast each and every morning.

CELEBRATING 350 YEARS



The incredible story of Mornflake spans centuries of the Lea family starting with William Lea who began milling oats at Swettenham Mill, South Cheshire in 1675 – nine years after the Great Fire of London.

It is the oldest business in Crewe, milling oats before steam locomotion and railways was even heard of in the town, and proudly celebrates its local roots with its Crewe headquarters on the packaging of breakfast products shipped worldwide.



OATSTANDING

Since exporting its first products to the Seychelles in 1958, Mornflake has grown a devoted following in over 80 different countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Nigeria and the Caribbean. Award-winning products and a passion for excellence spanning 15 generations of the Lea family has made waking up to a Mornflake breakfast something of a global phenomenon.

Things have moved on a lot since William Lea used water to turn the mill stones back in 1675. But that attention to detail, blended with today's modern technology, makes Mornflake an enduring Great British success story. The 'Proof is in the Porridge' is not just a marketing slogan at Mornflake – it's an art form.

Wide product range

Today that popularity has spread to social media with a massive following sharing breakfasts and recipes made with Mornflake oats across a wide product range including oatmeal, oat bran, organic oats, and jumbo oats – all combining 240 different milling processes and a whole lot of know-how.

While an ambassador for Crewe of international renown, Mornflake remains British to its core. It's the 4th oldest family-owned company in the country and a fierce supporter of British agriculture, supporting the livelihoods of over 200 farmers contracted to grow oats up and down the country.

British icon

The name Mornflake crops up often in British history, notably during the war years. In Britain's hours of need and peril during the Second World War Phillip Lea was called back from the RAF as a reserved occupation. A new factory was built on Gresty Road to ramp up production and feed a nation at war. Packed with nutrition Mornflake oats were a number one dietary staple for pilots, sailors and soldiers and millions at home.

In more recent times during the Covid pandemic, Mornflake stepped up to the mark again, supporting the DEFRA parcel scheme with millions of packs of porridge sent to NHS workers, food banks and vulnerable people.

Its swift response was recognised by the GREAT Britain Inspirations campaign led by the Department of International Trade to celebrate the 'extraordinary' actions of UK businesses – just one of many accolades for service to the community to sit alongside a multitude of awards for industry excellence.

This service continues to be demonstrated in many ways, from a strong commitment to the welfare of 300 plus employees, to generous backing of many community groups, charities and events locally. Mornflake is a main sponsor of the Nantwich Show and Nantwich Food Festival and has been the shirt sponsor for Crewe Alexandra FC since 2004.

Celebrating local roots

Mighty by name and Mighty by nature, Mornflake has overcome trends in eating habits, competition from American-owned brands and cost of living challenges. The company flies the flag for Crewe and Great Britain at any opportunity and makes the humble oat central to its marketing. Indeed Mornflake was on a mission to encourage eating oats as part of a healthy diet long before the phrase 'healthy lifestyle' was first coined.

What's next

Currently plans are being drawn up to mark the 350th anniversary. While heritage is important to Mornflake so is innovation and these plans could include some exciting new products appearing on supermarket shelves alongside its best-selling porridge, muesli and granola lines.

See page 17 Mornflake supports St Luke's Hospice.





Triumphant: The winners of 2024

Chamber hails its 'cream of the crop' at glittering awards ceremony

Enterprise excellence across a wide variety of sectors was celebrated in style at the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce 27th annual Business Awards.

Staged at Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa, the glittering ceremony shone the spotlight on star newcomers to the business community as well as the major employers and growing firms which contribute to the economic growth of the area.

It was also a night to recognise exceptional customer service and pay tribute to those organisations that give back to the community.

Awards were handed out in 10 categories with two landmark hotels, renowned for their history and splendour, scooping top honours. Rookery Hall Hotel & Spa was Business of the Year (25 plus employees) while Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa won Excellence in Customer Service.

Vehicle leasing firm KR Fleet Solutions, Crewe won Business of the Year (under 25 employees), Cheshire Business Coaching Start Up Business of the Year and Stroke Survivors Speech and Language Support Group, which helps rebuild lives with social and mental wellbeing activities, Contribution to the Community.

Everybody Health & Leisure coach Martha Green, whose role has included working with children with disabilities, won Apprentice of the Year and Crewe Business Park-based Health Shield Friendly Society which offers health cash plans and wellbeing solutions, was honoured as Employer of the Year.

Daniel Matthias Architecture in Sandbach took the Excellence in Collaboration award after making a positive impact on the built environment of South Cheshire and beyond since 2011 while SG World in Crewe, now 55 years old, was named International Trader of the Year after developing a customer base

of more than 20,000 for products including visitor passes and permits to work.

Ambassador of the Year, recognising businesses and organisations that put South Cheshire on the map for excellence, went to a museum for the first time. Nantwich Museum, founded in 1980 in a Victorian library, was honoured for its role as a busy visitor attraction and venue for many fascinating exhibitions.

All winners stepped on to the podium to the cheers of a sell-out audience in the hotel's event centre.

Chamber Chief Executive Paul Colman congratulated them saying: "The awards are an opportunity to celebrate inspirational leadership, exceptional vision and brilliant customer service across a wide variety of sectors. Indeed, South Cheshire is truly blessed with an abundance of business talent and it has been our pleasure to showcase all that the area has to offer over a phenomenal 27 years."

The Chamber's new Chair, Robert Parton, owner of Aqueduct Marina near Nantwich, added: "The Marina has been the proud recipient of several Chamber awards over the years and I know the joy it brings to the whole team. Tonight was another opportunity to celebrate the area's cream of the crop, brilliant businesses and people working hard to back the area."

Speaking of the budget, he added: "We have a resilient business community that has withstood recession and bounced back post pandemic. The budget changes and proposed employment legislation will present new challenges but the Chamber remains a strong voice, lobbying on behalf of area's employers and their workforces, at national level."

The awards attracted a range of high-profile sponsors including Assurant, Bentley Motors, Cheshire Connect, Cheshire College South & West, Construction Linx, Crewe Hall

Hotel & Spa, Hibberts LLP, KPI Recruiting, Nantwich Town Football Club, Reaseheath College and University Centre, Rhino Safety and WR Partners.

The compere was 'Front Guy Gary' Gary Johnson and other support came from Code AV, Concorde Trophies, JG Creative, Pure PR Solutions and Studio One Photography.

» **For more pictures from the Business Awards 2024 and information on becoming part of the Chamber go to sccci.co.uk**

The Winners of 2024

- Ambassador of the Year: Nantwich Museum
- Apprentice of the Year: Martha Green, Everybody Health & Leisure
- Business of the Year (25 plus employees): Rookery Hall Hotel & Spa
- Business of the Year (under 25 employees): KR Fleet Solutions, Crewe
- Contribution to the Community: Stroke Survivors Speech and Language Support Group
- Employer of the Year: Health Shield Friendly Society
- Excellence in Collaboration: Daniel Matthias Architecture
- Excellence in Customer Service: Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa
- International Trader of the Year: SG World
- Start-up Business of the Year: Cheshire Business Coaching

YOUNG MEMBERS NETWORK

DEVELOP YOUR YOUNG STAFF
WITH NEW SKILLS TO FUEL GROWTH

Young Members Network (YMN)



Young Members Network

The Young Members Network is back and bigger than ever! Building upon the success of last year's cohort, there are now even more events and new opportunities to grow alongside other young professionals in a welcoming, supportive environment.

Young Members Network is comprised of 2 parts:

1. **Young Members Network membership** and the
2. **Personal Growth Programme (PGP)**

Young Members Network membership

Access to exclusive events and offers

Young Members Network members get access to exclusive networking and informational events, where they can build connections with other local young business professionals. These valuable connections can open doors to new customers, suppliers, and partnerships that benefit both their personal growth and your business.

Young Members Network membership is available at £150 + VAT per person. There is no limit to how many people can join from the same organisation.

Personal Growth Programme

Unlock your staff's full potential

Through a series of expert-led workshops, your staff members will acquire important business skills that empower them to succeed and bring new value to your organisation. Before the workshops, we will host an icebreaker session to introduce participants with their peers, building a strong cohort of young professionals. After completing the workshops, all cohorts are invited to a social event, creating further networking and collaboration opportunities.

These workshops cover topics such as:

- Mastering the 'Art of Networking'
- Lead with Impact, Collaborate with Success
- Confidence in the Workplace
- Presenting Data with Impact
- Supercharge Your Sales Skills

Places are available in the Personal Growth Programme for £500 + VAT per person. Get a FREE year of Young Members Network membership when you enrol someone in the PGP. There is no limit to the number of people who can be enrolled in the programme from one company.

Take your staff and business to the next level

When they succeed, your business thrives

Register your young staff for the Young Members Network and Personal Growth Programme. It's a great way to enhance your company's reputation and demonstrate leadership in staff development.

» Find out more at <https://sccci.co.uk/young-members-network/> or scan the QR code



Testimonials



Attending the Young Members Network boosted my confidence and gave me the **perfect opportunity to connect with others** who were just starting or growing in their careers.

The workshops provided **new skills and insights** that you wouldn't typically get from university or early job experiences. I felt comfortable and supported throughout the sessions, and I'd highly recommend it to anyone looking to build their confidence.

Emily Ellis

Reaseheath College



The Young Members Network is a great idea and I took something from every session. Being given the tools and then going into a networking environment and utilising them **helped me grow in confidence.**

I think any young person within business in the South Cheshire area would benefit from this course. Not only did it help my networking greatly but **the skills are also transferrable** to normal day to day interactions with people in the office.

Josh Brookes

R K Henshall



I was in the first cohort for the Personal Growth Programme. I attended multiple workshops, each focusing on a different area of personal growth. Throughout these workshops I learnt **valuable skills** which I now use in my everyday working environment.

As a bonus, I also made some **valuable contacts** who I still see today at other regular networking events. I would encourage anyone who is at the start of their career to enrol!

Rowena Buckley

Hibberts LLP



Robert Parton

Chamber welcomes marina owner Robert as new Chair

Nantwich businessman who has steered the growth of one of South Cheshire's best-loved attractions has taken over as Chair of the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. Robert Parton, owner of the award-winning Aqueduct Marina at Church Minshull, will help lead Chamber strategy as it works to support the local business community and create an environment for businesses to succeed.

The former dairy farmer has sat on the Chamber Executive Board for two years alongside members drawn from local businesses including Legat Owen, Banks Sheridan, Hibberts, Construction Linx and Weston Centre Business Hub.

"Board members combine a wealth of experience and skills and play a key role in ensuring that the interests of the South Cheshire business community are at the heart of everything we do, he said. "Over my career I have enjoyed managing business changes, developing strategies and building teams to achieve the development of a new business. I am delighted to take on the role of Chamber Chair working to support our vibrant South Cheshire business community."

The father-of-three started his working life on the family dairy farm on leaving Reaseheath College in 1990. In 2004 the dairy herd was sold and plans were made to open a new inland marina on the former farm site. This involved lengthy negotiations to overcome planning and funding hurdles to finally open in 2009.

The marina, on the Middlewich branch of the Shropshire Union canal, now employs more than 30 people and operates moorings, a cafe, chandlery, boat sales, caravan site, canal boat storage and busy boat repair yard.

The 5 Gold Anchor, Clean Marina accredited narrowboat facility, has also carried off Chamber of Commerce awards for customer service and regularly hosts its business networking events.

Mr Parton, current President of British Marine, also sits on The Yacht Harbour Association Council. He has been a school governor, parish councillor and member of Cheshire East grant funding body.

"The Chamber is relevant to businesses of all sizes and allows me to meet people face-to-face to build strong business relationships locally. I hope the knowledge I have gained over my business journey will help others succeed."

- Robert Parton, Chamber Chair.

Chief Executive Paul Colman said: "Robert is a long-standing member of the Chamber and a valued member of the Chamber Executive Board. He's an enthusiast for business growth and innovation and brings considerable business acumen, drive and determination to the role of Chair. He will be a great ambassador for the area."

Message from our Chair



Robert has received many kind messages of support and congratulations on his new role as Chamber Chair – and he says he will do his very best to give the role the attention it deserves.

His first meeting came just a couple of days after being elected, when five Chamber members along with CEO Paul Colman, met the very top table of Cheshire East.

"Your Chamber is pushing hard to get a clear vision for Crewe and to emphasise the importance the business community has in any vision. It is our business owners and staff who live locally and are invested and embedded in the local economy. To Cheshire East's credit, they are engaged despite the current financial limitations. We have a follow up meeting very shortly."

"I'm a strong advocate for the Chamber and the power of business networks. The Chamber is, in my view, the

best locally based trade body for networking, lobbying locally and nationally and increasingly for the business training needs."

Robert joined with the whole of the Chamber in paying tribute to Diane Wright who steps down from the role of Chair. "Diane was a big help to me when I first joined the Chamber Board two years ago and was always a sage voice in the room. A hard act to follow and a great inspiration."

Message from our President



As usual, it is a busy time of the year for me as President with a few events taking place that require me to wear the "gong" or Jewel to give it its proper name, which I always wear with great pride.

Although some may feel it a bit "antiquated" it is an important symbol to show that the Chamber is a significant and well-established organisation in the area and puts us on a par with other public and private sector bodies, when attending important functions and ceremonies.

For background, when the South Cheshire Chamber was established in 1993 the existing Crewe & District Chamber of Trade and the Nantwich Chamber of Trade were subsumed into the new organisation and at that time the "gong" which belonged to the Crewe & District Chamber of Trade was handed over at a special ceremony in the Mayors Parlour in Crewe.

There is no date on the face of the gong but I have been told that the hallmark on the back suggests it originated in the 1920's.

The events that I mentioned are the Annual Business Awards held at Crewe Hall which was again a highly successful occasion, the Annual Remembrance Day Services in both Crewe and Nantwich and the Chamber's Annual General Meeting.



Looking to the future, members of the Chamber's Business Council have recently met with leading Councillors and senior officials of Cheshire East Council to raise the urgent need for the development of a Vision and Master Plan for the future development of Crewe and in particular Crewe Town Centre which the Business Council sees as the top priority.

Over the coming months, the Business Council will be working closely with Cheshire East and the Crewe Town Board to develop ideas for moving this forward.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Chairman Robert Parton into his new role and to thank our out-going Chair Diane Wright for the excellent work that she has done over the past several years.

Finally I would like to wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

John Dunning
President

Chamber bids fond farewell to Diane



The Chamber has bid farewell to Diane Wright who has stepped down as Chair of the Executive Board.

"It has been an absolute privilege to work closely with Paul Colman along with the other Board directors and the team at the Chamber," she said.

"The Chamber continues to deliver a fantastic service to South Cheshire being much more than a networking group. It fights on behalf of all businesses in this region, with a powerful voice at the local decision-making table and nationally through the British Chambers of Commerce. I will miss this, and also will miss all those amazing people with whom

I have come into contact over the years, who make the area a better place to live and work."

Diane, who held the post as Chair for more than five years, has moved to pastures new, joining the Board of Trustees at Motherwell Cheshire women and girls charity based in Crewe. Chamber CEO Paul Colman paid tribute saying: "It has been a privilege to work with Diane. Her leadership, challenge and guidance has seen the Chamber adapt to the needs of the local business community, while lobbying local and national government to create an environment for businesses to succeed. The foundations have been laid and the Chamber has the opportunity and grow from strength to strength."

New grant scheme aims to help businesses set up shop in Crewe



Funded by
UK Government



Help to set up shop in Crewe



Whether you've an idea for a new enterprise, have an existing business you'd like to expand or an organisation that wants more of a presence on the High Street, a new grant scheme could really open up an opportunity for you in Crewe.

The 'Repurposing Our High Streets' scheme is currently offering capital grants of up to £30,000 (subject to eligibility) for businesses or organisations that take out a lease on one of the town's vacant premises – which could pave the way to realising your dream or expanding into the area. And as Crewe is undergoing a great deal of regeneration at present, it's an opportunity not to be missed.

Helping Oden to open: One couple that have already benefitted from the grant are husband and wife Opeyemi and Duduyemi Opaleye, who are opening the Oden Lounge in Crewe later this year. Their dream of creating a bar/restaurant that would act as a place to relax after work and appeal to the many and varied communities around Crewe was realised with the help from the scheme.

"It's going to be an inclusive lounge where British people can enjoy a roast dinner, but we can also appeal to people from Zimbabwe, Jamaica and other communities. The grant has given us the confidence to venture into this with ease, and the reassurance we're on the right track", says Duduyemi. "We want Crewe to

be somewhere like Manchester, where you can work, have fun and relax – we're giving Crewe another face entirely. With this grant, people can actually achieve their dreams, so I would recommend it."

Brilliant for BoBoBo: Another business expanding into the town centre soon is BoBoBo bubble tea and waffles. Director Katie Davis – who already has a similar business in Stafford – explained what the grant has meant to her.

"Our demographic for bubble tea is from teenage to early 30s, so we've got university campuses, high schools and colleges in the area. A central location and the regeneration project in Crewe was something we wanted to be part of from the very beginning. The grant has been incredible, allowing us to accelerate our growth and accelerate the opportunities we've got for our business to expand."

The people behind the scheme

The Repurposing Our High Streets grant scheme is an initiative developed by Cheshire East Council, supported by Crewe Town Board, and is funded by the Government's Town Fund programme.

Two people closely involved with its administration are Paul Colman and James Rowley, Chief Executive of South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Business Grant Team Leader respectively. "Crewe is strategically well-placed to attract jobs and investment, with new schemes and projects like the vibrant Market Hall, UTC and Lifestyle Centre.", says Paul. James added: "Businesses should think about Crewe as a destination for their business – it's a fantastic community and has a lot of regeneration and development works taking place at the minute."

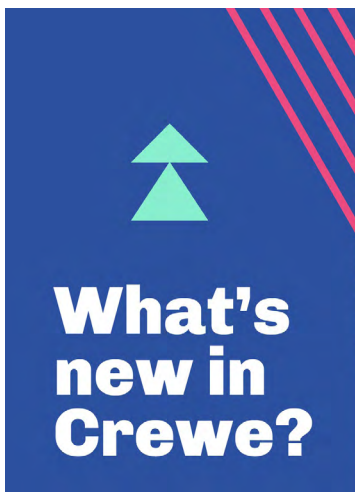
How the grant works

The grant – which can be up to £30,000 – could contribute towards the costs of improving a vacant town centre commercial property for occupation including fit-out, as well as buying other capital equipment. The amount of grant depends on the type of property and the length of lease taken, and is available to sole traders, existing businesses, community enterprises and charities, plus some organisations that take on new leases of previously vacant commercial premises, including premises on upper floors as well as the ground floor.

The scheme isn't just about a cash boost for new or existing businesses though. It also offers business support to help you start or scale up your business, and if you're a property owner it can help you with visual 'shop window' improvements in vacant premises, in the form of vinyl's or similar displays.

» Where to find out more

There are a number of vacant units available in Crewe town centre, of all shapes, sizes and types – so whatever your business, and whatever your aim, there's bound to be a perfect opportunity waiting for you. To find out more about the scheme and how it could help open doors for you, visit openincrewe.co.uk – where you'll also find details of the support that's included and a list of available premises.



Funded by
UK Government

CREWE Cheshire East
Council

'RE-Making Crewe' community mural unveiled

The first public art commission as part of the UKSPF funded Crewe Arts Development Programme has been completed.

The huge artwork (named 'RE-Making Crewe') has been co-designed by young people within the community, who have worked with professional artist Cherie Grist at a series of workshops to create the eye-catching design.

The project focuses on building pride of place and representing the young people of Crewe within the town centre and it was crucial that their views and opinions were clearly represented in the finished work.

As part of the engagement process, more than 70 young people from local organisations took part in five interactive workshops (facilitated by the artist) to come up with their own ideas for the design of the mural, whilst discussing their experiences and aspirations for their town centre. The workshops centred round a design template and practice that Cherie Grist calls "peace patterns" - a process that makes an interesting geometric pattern by following a few steps and once drawn can be coloured, collaged or painted.

Youth groups that gave creative input to the design were YMCA, Cheshire College South and West, Visyon Creative Connections programme at the Lyceum Theatre, Inspire Young Women's Group from Motherwell, The Youth Justice Team and Cheshire Buddies.

After the workshops took place, the individual artworks contributed to the overall striking mural. The transfer of the design to the end of the former Chronicle building on High Street (facing the site of the forthcoming Youth Zone) took place over a couple of weeks and was hampered by some challenging weather conditions.

The artwork is now complete and clearly visible to road users and pedestrians alike and has already inspired many positive comments from members of the community. All of the patterned designs produced during the project will feature as part of a mindful "Making Crewe" Colouring Book which will launch with the full art trail in February 2025.



Time is the most precious gift!

Moving into 2025 you may have New Year's resolutions, ambitions, plans and aspirations for your future business. If your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Good Business Citizenship plans are on the agenda, please consider the opportunities to help share skills for the local grass roots charities.

At Cheshire Connect, we work closely with many not for profit and community groups to help identify skill requests which could help them to maintain and develop a robust and sustainable foundation. In the face of austerity and commission funding cuts, the role of the charitable organisations is vital to help support those most vulnerable in our community.

There are many ways business owners, corporations and academic institutions can help with practical support, fund raising, philanthropy and skill sharing.

At Cheshire Connect we focus on facilitating skill donor matches. The skill requests we receive from the local charitable organisations are wide and varied. Many skill donors reap the benefit of flexing their skills in a different environment to their usual workplace and in the process identifying many transferrable skills they hadn't

previously realised they possessed. Skill donors often find the experience of sharing skills gives them a better understanding of the local community issues and broadens not just their work experience but enriches their personal development.

Typical examples of current skill requests:

- Examples of current local charity skill requests: Strategic planning; marketing; PR and social media; commercial and sustainability mentorship; effective people management (HR); financial planning/financial forecasting; IT/data management/accounting; programme and project management; bid writing; procurement (asset/building expertise/planning applications); legal - contracts; technical illustration; health & safety; trustee roles.

» **Want to know more: Contact Cheshire Connect Business Connector for the South and East Cheshire area: Dianne Parrish 07946 639394 email: dianneparrish@cheshireconnect.org www.cheshireconnect.org**



Congratulations to the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, Contribution to the Community Award Winner 2024 - sponsored by Bentley Motors and supported by Cheshire Connect:

Winners: The Stroke Survivors Speech and Language Support Groups

Photo: (l to r) Arthur Harding, Liz Bedson (centre) from Stroke Survivors Speech and Language Support Groups; with Allison Christou from Bentley Motors.

Motherwell Cheshire reports record demand for services in 2024



Motherwell Cheshire supported more than 5000 people in 2024, a record high for the Crewe-based charity, its annual meeting heard.

Women and girls of all ages have turned to the charity for support with poor mental health, anxiety, depression, managing menopause, mothering challenges or grief following baby loss.

Soaring numbers of parents have sought help from its Hub on Beech Drive offering recycled school uniforms, winter coats, baby clothes and prams free of charge.

An impact report for 2024 records the charity gave back £475,693 of social value to the Cheshire community and helped plug the gap for many women unable to find NHS or peer support elsewhere.

The HerStory conference, attended and addressed by civic dignitaries, employers, health professionals, teachers and schoolgirls, heard how Motherwell Cheshire is now making change in the workplace also.

Its new social enterprise project LearningWell, led by qualified trainers, aims to create an environment where employees feel valued and empowered. And there's been an excellent take up so far with 12 local companies signing up to deepen their knowledge of women's health issues and help staff combat stress, build resilience and develop a positive work-life balance.

Charity founder Kate Blakemore, a trained counsellor, said:

“Our services have grown in line with local demand. What began as free counselling for women who have suffered baby loss has grown into a large organisation touching so many lives, and now that includes men and women at work.”

“Launched just this summer, LearningWell has become a vital resource. Good employers have embraced the need to promote an environment which is nurturing, harmonious and supportive. We are looking to build on this by creating a Wellbeing in the Workplace course for line managers.”

The conference also updated on other areas of the charity's work:

- FlourishHer women's health drop-ins, menopause cafes and counselling services. A total of 724 counselling sessions have been provided this year. Believe in Her has helped mums and 89 children in the court system.
- InspireHer has provided 107 counselling sessions for young women, aged 13-25, and created friendships through wellbeing activities. Meanwhile the charity continues to promote women in sport, through its Cheshire Girls Can campaign.
- Promoting Period Dignity across Cheshire continues to be an important focus. Free sanitary products have been handed out to thousands of women and girls in Cheshire East and Chester West areas.
- The Hub continues to face increasing demand. Last count, more than 4000 clothing and baby items were given to parents making Motherwell Cheshire a news story on Granada TV and BBC One Show in the summer. Crewe schoolgirls are now involved with the charity's Safe Spaces campaign and New Wave Feminism project
- In Winsford, the charity has launched Edna's Laundrette, a popular free washing and drying facility that also helps to combat isolation.

Soon to celebrate its tenth anniversary, Motherwell Cheshire includes a community of 65 volunteers and would welcome support from any individual or business.

Kate added: “Motherwell Cheshire has touched the lives of over 5000 women and girls and parents over the past year. More than ever before, and that's just on paper. Countless more have benefited from our holistic therapies and social activities.”

“Every £1 spent with us results in £21 delivered and/or saved. That's huge value to the community. We would love to hear from any

business, organisation or individual who can support us in some way.”

Businesses can sponsor any area of the charity's work or get onboard with events such as International Women's Day at the college next spring or a fundraising ball in May. Sponsorship packages include social media, website presence and PR.

» For more on the various ways Motherwell Cheshire supports women and girls in the area go to motherwellcheshire.co.uk

For details on LearningWell subscriptions which culture consultancy and workshops go to thelearning-well.com, call 01606 557666 or email kate@thelearning-well.com



Top: The Motherwell Cheshire team

Middle: Motherwell Cheshire founder Kate Blakemore welcomes guests to the HerStory conference and annual meeting

Bottom: Crewe Town mayor Dawn Clark and Cheshire East Mayor Marilyn Houston join charity trustees



By Gareth Williams, CEO Construction Linx

Construction Linx is a construction company based in Crewe that specialises in delivering high-quality building solutions. Since 2004, we've worked with a wide range of clients, from schools to commercial businesses, providing the expertise they need for their construction projects. Construction Linx started in the most humble of places—my bedroom, which I jokingly called "Linx Towers." Over the years, we've grown steadily, moving through a few office spaces before settling in our current location at Crewe Hall Enterprise Park. As we mark our 20th anniversary in 2024, it's a chance to reflect on the journey, the lessons learned, and the successes we've achieved.

Why I Started My Business: I founded Construction Linx to combine my passion for building with a strong focus on customer service. The construction industry often has a reputation for being unreliable or difficult to deal with, and I wanted to challenge that by creating a company built on trust, quality, and long-term relationships. I wanted to make a difference and show that construction is more than just bricks and mortar—it's about trust, collaboration, and delivering on promises. My aim was to set a new standard, where clients could rely on us for consistent quality and professionalism.

Challenges and Pitfalls: In the early days, one of the toughest challenges was finding regular work. The industry is highly competitive, and getting those first few clients to take a chance on a new company was no easy task. Cash flow was tight at times, and managing resources carefully was critical to keeping the business afloat.

Another learning curve was delegation. Like many entrepreneurs, I wanted to oversee every aspect of the business, but that quickly

became unsustainable. Learning to trust my team with key responsibilities made all the difference in our growth.

We've also had to face the usual hurdles that come with large construction projects—unexpected delays, rising material costs, and evolving customer expectations. These experiences taught us the value of transparency and communication with our clients, which is why customer service is now one of our key priorities.

Support Along the Way: Throughout the journey, I've been fortunate to receive support from various sources. Being part of organisations such as the Federation of Master Builders and working closely with the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce have been invaluable. These networks provided not only growth opportunities but also crucial advice and mentorship that helped me navigate the common challenges of running a business.

Winning awards like Small Business of the Year and Excellence in Customer Service gave us a massive boost in credibility and affirmed that we were heading in the right direction.

Building strong connections with other local businesses and peers in the industry has also been essential. There's a lot to be said for learning from others' experiences and knowing you're not alone in facing challenges.

Gareth's Top Tips

1. **Be Patient.** Success takes time, especially when building trust with clients. In construction, projects can be long-term and complex, so patience is essential.
2. **Focus on Quality.** Your work is your reputation. Delivering high-quality results is non-negotiable if you want clients to return and recommend you to others.
3. **Master Cash Flow.** Cash flow is king. Delays and unforeseen costs are part and parcel of construction, so it's vital to manage finances carefully to ensure you're prepared for the unexpected.
4. **Build a Strong Team.** You can't do it all. Surround yourself with people who share your vision and values. A reliable team is one of the most valuable assets in growing your business.
5. **Network.** Get involved in local business groups, attend events, and make connections. Networking opens doors and helps your business grow by building relationships that can lead to opportunities.

Running a business is undoubtedly challenging, but it's also incredibly rewarding. At Construction Linx, we've seen that success comes from staying true to our values, being adaptable, and never stopping learning. The construction industry continues to evolve, and those who move with the times will find their way to success.

» For more information on Construction Linx go to constructionlinx.co.uk or call 01270 848700



Gareth with Chamber Manager Jon Barnes

Fourth-generation Continental GT production begins on founder's birthday



Bentley Motors is proud to announce that the first fourth-generation Continental GT has completed production, in time for the 136th birthday of Walter Owen Bentley.

With the same specification as the car that featured in the unofficial 'Underwater Speed Record' and launch film, the first new Continental GT is finished in Tourmaline Green, with a Gravity Grey and Mandarin interior. The car will begin its life as a UK Press Fleet car, before joining Bentley's Heritage Collection where it will be retained forever. The car will be followed off the

production line by the first customer cars, each one specified in one of the 46 billion configurations possible through Bentley's standard options list.

Andreas Lehe, Bentley's Member of the Board for Manufacturing, comments: "The fourth-generation Continental GT is a true masterpiece. The vivid launch colour of Tourmaline Green is a modern interpretation of the notable Bentley Green, designed and painted by our in-house craftspeople. The vehicle completed a staggering 92 assembly stations throughout the Production process and we've also pushed the boundaries of our interior vehicle design, with three-

dimensional leather textures, modern quilting, and dark chrome finishes. Our artisans in Crewe have truly outdone themselves, ensuring every detail exudes luxury."

The Continental GT Speed redefines the ultimate blend of supercar performance, handcrafted luxury and everyday usability. The new model displays a comprehensive exterior and interior redesign, with clean modern detailing, recently established by the new DNA showcased by the coachbuilt Bentley Bacalar and Batur.

Outstanding performance is brought by an all-new Ultra Performance Hybrid powertrain with 782 PS and 1,000 Nm, from a 4.0-litre V8 working in tandem with a 190 PS electric motor. 0-60 mph in 3.1 seconds is the result, with the benefit of 50 miles (81 km) of usable electric-only range (on the EU drive cycle) and a total range of 534 miles (859 km) – creating an everyday supercar.

This particular car will be destined at a later point to join Bentley's Heritage Collection. Now consisting of 45 cars from the oldest Bentley in the world (the 1919 3-Litre EXP2) through to the latest generation Continental GT (from 2024), with some of the most extraordinary Bentleys ever made representing every decade of the company's 105-year history.

Assurant joins Tesco Mobile roadshow



ASSURANT®

Assurant was pleased to join the recent Tesco Mobile Store Managers roadshow was an event brimming with energy, innovation, and brought together key stakeholders, store managers, and industry representatives to explore new solutions that enhance customer satisfaction and streamline operations.

Assurant's standout presentation was centered round its Trade In offering. This initiative, recently rolled out across the entire Tesco Mobile store network, has been designed to provide consumers with a straightforward and efficient way to trade in their old devices for cash. Providing customers with a simple and immediate way to benefit from the circular economy.

The roadshow provided an ideal platform to demonstrate the Trade In solution's numerous benefits. Store managers were given comprehensive insights into how this service works, ensuring they are well-equipped to assist customers effectively. The process is user-friendly: customers bring in their old devices, receive an evaluation, and get cash on the spot. This not only helps in decluttering unused gadgets but also injects instant liquidity into customers' pockets,

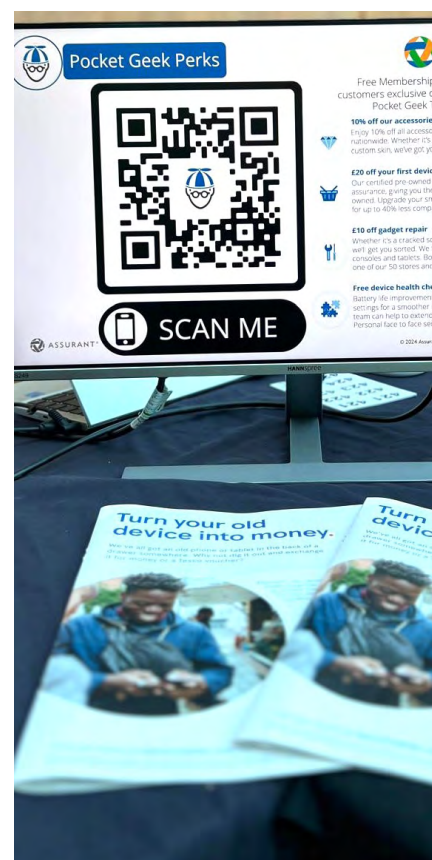
which can be particularly beneficial in today's fast-paced economy.

In addition to the Trade In service, the roadshow also featured representatives from Pocket Geek Tech Repair, who offered a complimentary mobile phone skin application service. This service proved to be immensely popular among the attendees, drawing long queues throughout the day. The mobile phone skins not only provide an aesthetic upgrade to devices but also add an extra layer of protection, a combination that resonates well with tech-savvy consumers.

Pocket Geek Tech Repair focus on value-added services underscored a commitment to providing comprehensive care for mobile devices, from trade in to aftercare. The free skin application service was a tangible demonstration of customer appreciation, ensuring that store managers experienced firsthand the added value they can pass on to their customers.

By encouraging the recycling of old devices, Assurant and Tesco Mobile are helping customers while also contributing to a greener planet.

» For more information go to www.assurant.co.uk



Cheshire College students celebrate outstanding results

Cheshire College – South & West celebrated alongside its students as its A Level, BTEC and T Level results smashed previous records and exceeded expectations for Results Day.

More than 1,000 students received their results as a mark of their hard work, dedication and perseverance over the past two years. Over 330 A Level students celebrated their individual achievements, alongside an impressive pass rate across the College. A Level students study a broad range of curriculum with more than 30 A Level subjects, including 13 subject areas celebrating 100% pass rates.

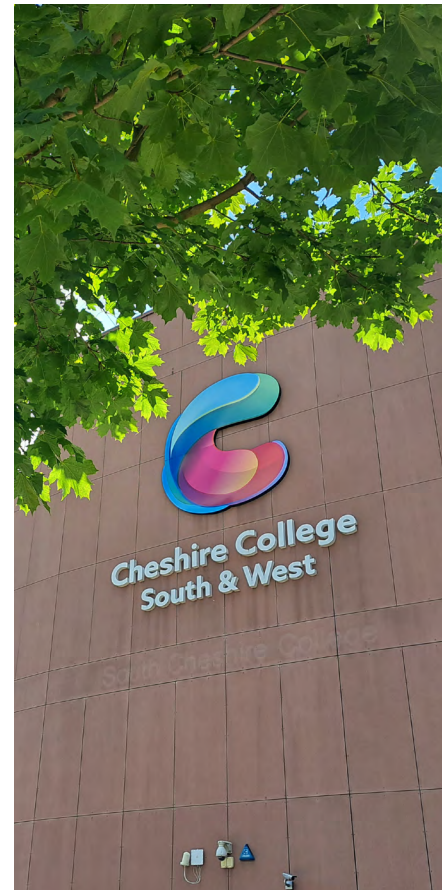
This year's cohort of A Level students will be progressing to some of the most prestigious academic institutions in the UK, including the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and other Russell Group universities; studying subjects as wide-ranging as Modern & Medieval Languages, Law, and Engineering.

Around 720 BTEC and T Level students also celebrated impressive levels of success, with students receiving results across a broad range of sector subject areas including Engineering, Science, Health and Digital. BTEC students secured an impressive 97.2% pass rate, with at least 47% achieving the top Distinction grades in their qualification.

Principal and CEO Jasbir Dhesei OBE said:

“We are incredibly proud of the achievements of our students and results day is a fantastic day to celebrate with them. This is the day when all their hard work pays off and new opportunities begin, whether that be at university, employment or an apprenticeship. This year's results demonstrate the commitment of both our students and staff to excellence in their education and skills, and not only reflects their academic success but also their readiness for their next step.”

» **Cheshire College is now accepting applications for 2024/25. Applicants can explore courses and apply at www.ccs.ac.uk.**



Football shirt boosts funds for St Luke's Hospice



Mornflake has donated its sponsorship space on Crewe Alexandra Football Club's new blue and white third shirt to help raise money for St Luke's Hospice.

The breakfast company, the Alex's principal partner and long standing shirt sponsor, made the generous gesture to mark 350 years of its family oat milling business and show support at a time when many charities are struggling.

The shirt is being sold online and in the Alex club shop to boost funds for the hospice which provides palliative care to local people and supports them in ways which go beyond the scope and funding of the NHS.

Andy Bailey, Corporate Partnerships Manager for St Luke's Hospice, said: "We are honoured to be featured on Crewe Alex's new third shirt and are so grateful to our long-term supporters Mornflake for this fantastic opportunity. It's proudly on display



in our reception area and is proving to be a fabulous talking point for patients, visitors, staff and volunteers. The whole venture is being widely applauded here at the hospice and we hope that feeling of joy and pride continues to transcend to the team on the pitch."

Mornflake's alliance with Crewe Alexandra began with their first shirt sponsorship deal in 2005. Today, they are the longest-serving shirt sponsors in the country and this steadfast partnership also extends to the naming of the club's stadium.

Managing director James Lea said: "We take great pride in our long partnership with Crewe Alexandra FC and seeing our name out on the pitch. Like us, the club has a long history in Crewe and is part of a local heritage we look to support. We hope the new third shirt will generate much-needed funds for the hospice which supports local people through challenging times and plays such an important role in our community."

Based at Winsford, the hospice relies on donations to continue looking after people in the most heartbreaking of circumstances. Mornflake is a regular supporter of fundraisers including its Christmas elf run in Cheshire schools.

Alex Chairman Charles Grant said:

“This is a wonderful gesture by Mornflake and it is an honour and a privilege for our players' shirts to bear the St Luke's name this season.

The hospice is so important to the people of South and Mid Cheshire. I would like to thank John Lea and everybody at Mornflake for the opportunity to help support a cause so close to our hearts."

» **Crewe Alexandra's new third shirt is available in adult and junior sizes with £5 from each sale going directly to St Luke's. Go to www.thealexandrastore.co.uk**

Above left: Crewe Alexandra FC players Chris Long, James Connolly and Ryan Cooney sporting the club's new strip which is helping to raise money for St Luke's Hospice

Above right: Iain Lavelle and Charlotte Gribbin of Mornflake join the unveiling of the third shirt at the hospice

The Cheshire East Business Support Initiative

Start, Sustain and Succeed.

Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and businesses through the Cheshire East Chambers Network – all three Cheshire East Chambers of Commerce working together.

The listed workshops below are to be delivered by South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce:

Wednesday 22nd January

Nantwich Town Football Club
- How to Network

Monday 27th January

Rookery Hall Hotel & Spa
- Presenting Data Effectively

Tuesday 25th February

YMCA Cheshire
- Sales Psychology – DISC Profiling



This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.



For more information and bookings for the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce Workshops, please email dominic.hibbert@sccci.co.uk

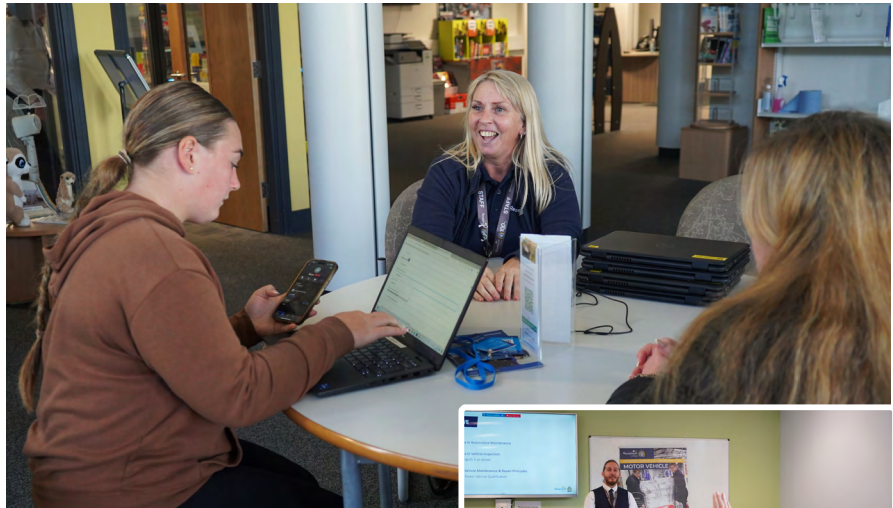
Discover your future at Reaseheath Course Open Events

With the application cycle for 2025/26 now in full swing, Reaseheath College and University Centre Reaseheath are opening their beautiful countryside campus to prospective students for a series of Course Open Events.

These events provide an ideal opportunity to explore the wide variety of land-based courses offered at the Nantwich-based institutions — ranging from Foundation Level to degree programmes. You'll also get a feel for student life by taking part in guided tours of the campus and attending informative talks.

During the Course Open Events, you'll be able to visit key areas of the campus, including specialist facilities such as the agricultural centres, the equine arena, onsite accommodation, and Reaseheath Zoo – a favourite highlight for many visitors. You'll also learn how industry-leading courses combine classroom theory with practical, real-world experience, ensuring students are well-prepared for successful careers in the land-based sector.

Course Open Events are the perfect way to gain insights into the subjects that interest you, meet the friendly tutors and lecturers, and ask any questions you might have about studying and living at Reaseheath. You'll leave with a clear sense of what it's like to



be part of Reaseheath's vibrant learning community.

With several Course Open Events scheduled through the end of 2024 and into 2025, now is the time to explore what Reaseheath has to offer. Whether you're just beginning to investigate your options or are ready to apply, it's the perfect way to start your journey in the land-based sector.



» **For more details and to register for upcoming events, visit www.reaseheath.ac.uk or www.ucraseheath.ac.uk**

Reaseheath College and University Centre Reaseheath are opening their Nantwich campus to prospective students for a range of Course Open Events in 2024/25

SG World and SGW Payroll Take Part in Operation Buttercup



Our wonderful receptionist, Julie Butters, is the heart of our Reception. Loved by all our employees, it was no surprise that when Gill Meadows from SGW Payroll approached us about participating in Operation Buttercup, we had an overwhelming number of volunteers.

Gill shared that in 2022, Julie entrusted £12,000 to a landscape gardening company to transform her garden. This money, inherited from her father's estate, was meant to create a peaceful haven for Julie and her husband Alan. However, after the gardeners demolished an old garage and removed the garden fence, the pandemic struck, and they never returned, leaving the garden in disarray and unsecured.

Julie's dream of a serene garden was shattered, and she was left with a mess and no way to secure her property. The situation was made even more challenging by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which halted many services and left Julie in a difficult position. Despite these setbacks, Julie remained hopeful that one day her garden would be restored.

This year brought further hardship for Julie with the heartbreaking loss of her husband, Alan. Unaware of Julie's struggles, we were

moved when Gill informed us of her situation. Julie's resilience and positive spirit, despite the adversities she faced, inspired us all.

Gill spearheaded Operation Buttercup, rallying volunteers from across the business to donate their time or money to restore Julie's garden. She also approached the Arnold Haase Charitable Trust (AHCT), who were delighted to contribute and support the initiative as direct involvement is part of their stated mission. The overall response was incredible, with employees from both SG World and SGW Payroll eager to help. Over one weekend, while Julie was away, everyone came together to clear, dig, and make the garden a safe and welcoming place once more.

Teams worked tirelessly, removing debris, planting flowers, and installing new fencing to ensure the garden was secure. The transformation was remarkable, turning a neglected space into a beautiful, tranquil garden that Julie could enjoy. It was truly inspiring to see colleagues from both businesses unite to create a safe space for Julie.

The project not only improved Julie's garden but also strengthened the sense of community within our company. It reminded us all of the power of coming together to support one another in times of need. The

joy on Julie's face when she returned to see her new garden was priceless and made all the hard work worthwhile.

As the saying goes, "We make a life by what we give." While we can't help everyone, everyone can help someone. No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. This experience has shown us that even in challenging times, our people can come together to make a positive difference.

» **For the full product range see www.sgworld.com**



Construction Linx celebrates 20 years of growth and success



Construction Linx, a prominent construction and facilities management company based in Crewe, recently marked its 20th anniversary, expressing immense gratitude to its loyal customers and partners for their unwavering support over the past two decades.

Founded and managed by Gareth Williams and Debbie Owen, the business has grown to employ 15 staff and is now firmly established at Unit 8, Crewe Hall Enterprise Park. From its humble beginnings, the company has developed into a trusted provider of a wide range of services, including building, electrical, landscaping, plumbing, roofing, industrial cleaning, and environmental solutions across Crewe, the Midlands, and the North West.

Reflecting on the company's journey, a spokesperson for Construction Linx shared: "2024 marks an incredible milestone for us. We're celebrating 20 years of innovation, growth, and dedication to delivering excellence in the construction industry. Our story is one of hard work, expansion, and an ongoing commitment to quality, with every step shaped by the trust of our clients and the passion of our team."

Over the years, Construction Linx has not only weathered economic challenges such as the 2009 recession and the COVID-19 pandemic but emerged stronger on both occasions. The company's client portfolio includes high-profile organisations such as the NHS, Cheshire Police, Reaseheath

College, Boughey Distribution, and several schools and academies.

Their achievements have been recognised through numerous industry accolades, including Young Business Person of the Year (2005), Small Business of the Year (2015), and Excellence in Customer Service (2019), all awarded by the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce.

The company's success is further underpinned by its memberships and accreditations, including the Federation of Master Builders, CHAS, SafeContractor, and ConstructionLine, which demonstrate its ongoing commitment to safety, quality, and high standards across all projects.

Managing Director Debbie Owen emphasised the critical role of their team in driving the business forward: "The real key to our success has been our people. The passion and professionalism of our team have been the foundation of everything we've achieved. We're proud to celebrate this milestone with them and look forward to continuing to grow together in the future."

From operating out of Gareth Williams' bedroom—fondly dubbed "Linx Towers"—to their current base at Crewe Hall Enterprise Park, each move has been a testament to the company's growth and ambition. Today, Construction Linx continues to push forward, always striving for excellence in every project they undertake.

As the company looks to the future, Construction Linx remains focused on expanding its capabilities and reach while maintaining the high standards that have earned it a solid reputation in the industry. "The relationships we've built, the awards we've won, and the projects we've completed are all part of what makes us a trusted name. We're excited about what lies ahead and deeply grateful for the support we've received on this journey."



» For more information or to enquire, call Construction Linx on 01270 848700 or email enquiries@constructionlinx.co.uk.



We're here to help businesses with all of your commercial property needs and requirements. Specialising in commercial Real Estate with a strong focus on Cheshire.

An intelligent experienced team focused on reaching the best property outcomes for our clients.

Our services include:

- Commercial agency across all property sectors
- Professional work (rent reviews and lease renewals) and dispute resolution
- Property Investment
- Development
- Building surveying and project management
- Asset and property management
- Valuation



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Nantwich Court, Hospital Street, Nantwich, CW5 5RH

Understanding Tax Filing deadlines

By WR Partners

Tax filing is essential for businesses to avoid penalties and maintain good standing with HMRC and Companies House. Here's an overview of the penalties associated with late filing of corporation tax returns and accounts:

- **Company accounts** must be filed within 9 months of the year-end.
- **Corporation tax return** must be filed within 12 months of the year-end.
- **Corporation tax** must be paid within 9 months and 1 day of the year-end.

Businesses are also required to file a Confirmation Statement annually. This applies to all companies, including dormant and non-trading ones, and ensures that the information held by Companies House is up to date.

Even if the company has not changed during the review period, a confirmation statement must be filed. This needs to be done at least once every 12 months, with the review period beginning either on the date of incorporation or the date the last confirmation statement was filed. The filing must occur within 14 days of the review period's end.

Corporation Tax Filing Deadlines

Corporation tax is levied on the profits of limited companies. Timely filing of your corporation tax return is crucial to avoid penalties. Here's a breakdown of the penalties for late filing:

- **1 Day Late:** £100 penalty.
- **3 Months Late:** An additional £100 penalty.
- **6 Months Late:** HMRC will estimate your corporation tax bill and impose a 10% penalty on the unpaid tax.
- **12 Months Late:** An additional 10% penalty on any remaining unpaid tax.

These penalties can accumulate rapidly, increasing your overall tax burden. Timely filing of your corporation tax return is essential to avoid these extra costs.

Late Filing Penalty Fees for Accounts

In addition to corporation tax, businesses must also file their accounts with Companies House. Penalties for late accounts filing vary based on how late the submission is and the type of company:

For Private Companies or LLPs:

- **Less than 1 Month Late:** £150
- **More Than 1 Month but less than 3 Months Late:** £375
- **More Than 3 Months but less than 6 Months Late:** £750
- **More Than 6 Months Late:** £1,500

For Public Companies:

- **Less than 1 Month Late:** £750
- **More Than 1 Month but less than 3 Months Late:** £1,500
- **More Than 3 Months but less than 6 Months Late:** £3,000
- **More Than 6 Months Late:** £7,500

If accounts are filed late for two consecutive financial years, the penalty is doubled, making it even more crucial to consistently meet deadlines.

Summary

Stay Organised: Keep track of all tax and accounts filing deadlines to ensure timely submissions.

Set Reminders: Use digital calendars and reminders to alert you well before the due dates.

Consult Professionals: Engage with tax consultants and accountants to help manage and file your returns accurately and on time.

Understand the Consequences: Be aware of the penalties for late filing to motivate timely submissions and avoid unnecessary financial strain.

Maintaining a disciplined approach to tax filing not only helps you avoid penalties but also ensures smooth business operations without legal issues. For more information on tax filing deadlines and assistance, refer to HMRC's guidelines or consult a professional advisor.



We don't believe in a one size fits all approach.

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WR Partners offer accounting, auditing and business services including: employer services, tax advisory and consultancy.

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Bathgate supports The Hive at inaugural volunteering day



Chamber members Bathgate Business Finance has continued its support as Founder Patrons for The Hive Youth Zone in Birkenhead, with its team rolling up their sleeves and getting stuck into refreshing the facility ready for the start of the new school year.

Eight members of the Bathgate team attended The Hive's first ever volunteering day alongside other patrons and supporters, to clean, tidy, repaint and refresh the facility ready for an exciting season of activities and support sessions.

The Bathgate team was tasked with tackling the high-footfall stairwell that leads to The Hive's impressive rooftop kick pitch, a challenge that was accepted with gusto. Hallways, the kitchen, art room, salon communal areas and others were also cleaned and painted to within an inch of their lives by volunteers including Bathgate sector peers DSG Accountants, Handelsbanken, Bridging Finance Solutions and Langtons.

During the day the volunteers were also treated to a delicious lunch prepared by The Hive team and a tour of the building. During the tour the Bathgate team learned more about what The Hive offers to young people in the community and how its annual donation helps support its work.

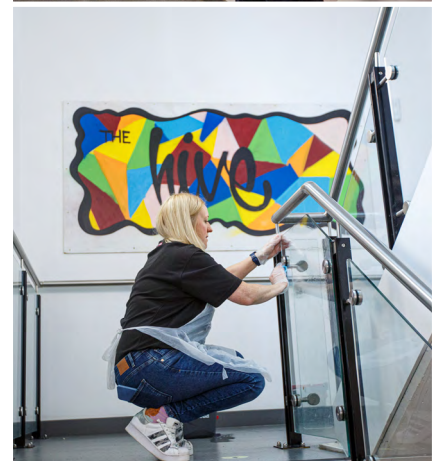
Bathgate has supported The Hive for the past four years with an unrestricted annual donation that the organisation uses to address its greatest needs. Gordon Andrews, MD at Bathgate Business Finance said: "As founder patrons and members of the Hive 100 business club, we have long supported the fantastic work that The Hive does for young people in Wirral and were excited to be invited on site to provide some extra elbow grease to get it sparkling on its first ever group volunteering day.

"We were blown away by the exceptional support that the team at The Hive offers for young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds or with additional needs. Considering the fact that the building is now seven years old and the daily wear-and-tear that comes with frequent use, we were also impressed by how well kept all the facilities were. It really shows how much the young people value and look after this excellent facility."

The Hive's CEO, Jayne Wilson, said: "We really can't thank Bathgate Business Finance enough for all their hard work and for giving up their time to help. This is a huge building and so to have all this incredible support to give it a deep clean and a fresh coat of paint is invaluable to us. The Bathgate team were unfazed and just got stuck in!"

The Bathgate Charitable Trust is the charitable arm of Bathgate Group, the parent company of Bathgate Business Finance. Established in 1979 by Rod and Ann Walker, it supports charities through financial donations and volunteering not only locally but also across the UK and internationally.

» **For more information about Bathgate Business Finance visit bathgatebf.co.uk or call 0151 625 7323.**



Supporting Nantwich Foodbank: A Call to Action



As the manager of Nantwich Foodbank and a member of the Chamber of Commerce, I want to highlight the critical role local businesses play in tackling food insecurity. While we're grateful for the support received, the constant need in Nantwich and surrounding areas requires continued action, especially as we head into the winter months, writes Damien Gear.

Understanding Our Work: Nantwich Foodbank provides emergency food supplies for individuals and families in crisis, offering parcels with seven days' worth of balanced meals. We work with local agencies—schools, healthcare providers, and social services—to identify those in need and provide longer-term support where possible. Our reach extends beyond Nantwich, serving villages like Wybunbury, Acton, and Wrenbury.

The Need for Action: Economic pressures continue to push more people toward food banks. To meet this demand, we rely on community support, especially from the local business sector.

How Businesses Can Help: Host a Collection Point: Set up a collection point at your business for food donations, helping ensure a consistent supply.

Organise Fundraisers: Engage employees and customers with charity raffles, bake sales, or other events to raise funds.

Corporate Donations: Financial contributions help us purchase essential items when food stocks are low.

Volunteer as a Team: Volunteering is a powerful way to give back and bond as a team.

A Unified Response: Hunger affects many in our community, and it will take a unified community effort to address. By stepping up, businesses can help ensure no one in Nantwich faces hunger alone. Contact Nantwich Foodbank to learn how your business can get involved. Together, we can make a lasting impact.

» www.nantwich.foodbank.org.uk



Reverse ADVENT CALENDAR

In partnership with Nantwich Food Festival & "Stop and Go" collection will be held at Brine Lees Car Park between 10am-5pm on Saturday 20th November 2024 (last)

1 Three Potatoes	2 Tin of red salmon	3 Gift for a man	4 Selection box	5 Christmas pudding	6 Box of chocolates
7 Chocolate coins	8 Tin of fruit	9 Long life fruit juice	10 Large tin of jam	11 Christmas Cake	12 Jar of jam or marmalade
13 Christmas biscuits	14 Gift for a woman	15 Tube of sweets	16 Tin of oatmeal	17 Washing up liquid	18 Gift for a teen
19 Gift for a child	20 Jar of coffee	21 Savoury crackers/ nuts	22 Deodorant	23 Table crackers	24 Tin of vegetables

nantwich.foodbank.org.uk
Please consider supporting food banks this year by collecting items at all the listed times on the table during the event.
Thank you for your support!

Rotary Club hard at work in the community



The Rotary Club of Crewe and Nantwich Weaver is part of a network of 35000 clubs in over 200 countries made up of 1.2m people and is in a unique position of being rooted in our community but with a global outlook ready to tackle challenges at home and abroad. We take action across seven Areas of Focus: peace building and conflict prevention, disease prevention and treatment, water sanitation and hygiene, maternal and child health, basic education

and literacy, community economic development and protecting the environment.

Rotarians take pride in their local communities and use their time, talents and enthusiasm to benefit people at home and we do this by working with local charities and community groups providing grants for young adults to develop their skills and carers of older people with dementia to give them a break. We support disadvantaged people needing some Christmas cheer and we have provided resources to support organisations from Prostate Research UK to the Stroke Association and from Springfields School to Supported Community Business.

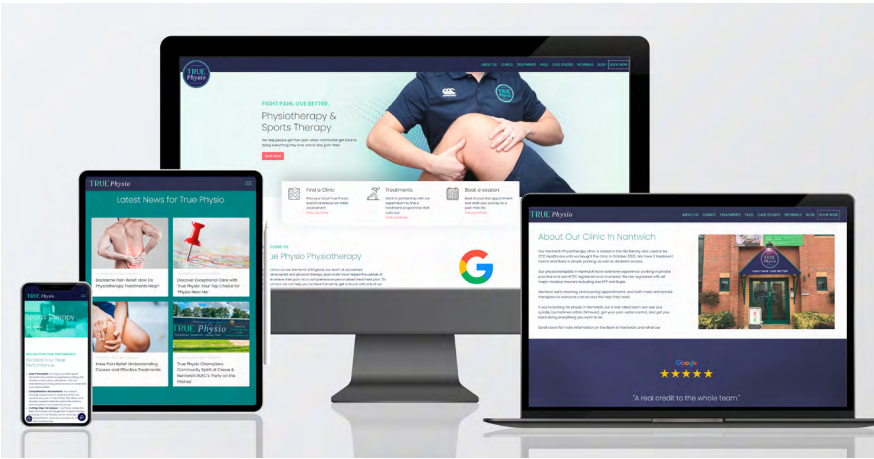
We are also committed to international service, responding to disasters and implementing innovative projects that encourage economic and community development. At a time when people may have had to flee from conflict or environmental; disaster we galvanise across our global network to provide immediate support. Since 1985 our key humanitarian priority has been to rid the world of polio and today the number of cases is down by 99.9% with Rotary having donated \$2bn protecting 2.5bn children. Unfortunately the return of polio to Gaza has necessitated an urgent response which this Rotary Club has responded to.

Rotary continues to evolve and adapt as society and business has changed and recently the Club has welcomed its first Corporate Member following a Final Friday meeting in July.

» **If you are interested in working with like-minded people please see the club's website or Facebook page or contact syates3880@aol.com**



New investment in patient experience from True Physio



Customer service and digital accessibility are more important than ever. True Physio, a leading physiotherapy practice with clinics across Cheshire including Crewe and Nantwich, has made a significant investment in a new, innovative website designed to elevate the patient experience. This digital transformation ensures high-quality care is delivered both in-person and online, offering a user-friendly platform for their growing clientele.

For over 30 years, True Physio has been an integral part of the community, helping people

of all ages recover from injuries, manage chronic pain, and improve their physical health. Recognised for their professional expertise and compassionate care, the team has always prioritised patient well-being, but they now aim to enhance this digitally. The new website, brings a host of features designed to streamline communication, simplify appointment booking, and provide valuable health resources to clients at the click of a button.

"Our goal is to ensure that the exceptional care patients receive in our clinics is matched by their online experience," said Hayley Bonnick, Head of Marketing at True Physio. "By investing in digital transformation, we're making sure patients can easily access

top-tier treatment and support both online and offline, ensuring a seamless, consistent experience every step of the way."

The cornerstone of the new website is its user-centric design. Recognising that many patients today prefer the convenience of online tools, the site has been built with ease of navigation and accessibility at its core. Whether a patient is looking to book an appointment, research treatment options, or simply learn more about physiotherapy services, they will be able to do so quickly and efficiently.

As a local business, True Physio takes pride in being part of the broader community. Their new website reflects this, offering a rich library of educational content, aimed at empowering patients to better understand their conditions and the available treatment options. It also shares testimonials, where patients can see first-hand what True Physio's clients say about them. "We are proud to be part of this community, and we wanted our website to reflect that. We've always believed that healthcare is about more than just treating symptoms; it's about fostering well-being within the community," said Keith Johnstone, Clinical Director.

» **To learn more about True Physio or to book, visit truephysio.co.uk For partnership opportunities contact marketing@truephysio.co.uk**

Restoring the North and East Elevations of St Mary's Nantwich



Major works are underway to restore Nantwich's famous landmark. Here we hear from Paul Ramsay, chairman Nantwich Parish Church Preservation Appeal Trust

People locally and visitors will have seen the scaffolding on the north-west of St Mary's Church, Nantwich which was put up at the end of July 2024.

St Mary's has been in the centre of the town for over 600 years and is one of the finest medieval churches in England. Since 1980 there has been progressive restoration of the south and west elevations and the octagonal tower. We have embarked on Phase One for which fortunately we already have funds built up over the years with grants and bequests.

We are now seeking funds for Phase Two to complete the north and east elevations and to provide window guards. This will complete the major work for this era. We are working with Conservation Architects and skilled Stonemason Contractors. By so doing, we are confident that we shall be able to pass on the structure restored so that it can be here as a beacon for our children and their children and many generations to come. St Mary's reaches out to the wider community for worship and quiet reflection. It attracts over 30,000 visitors a year and so helps the economy of Nantwich and area. St Mary's

has strong links with all the town by holding concerts, being part of Holly Holy Day marking the Battle of Nantwich in 1644, being part of Remembrance commemorations, hosting the Christmas Tree Festival with St Luke's Hospice and being an integral part of the Food Festival.

To be able to complete this project, St Mary's has the Nantwich Parish Church Preservation Appeal Trust (NPCPAT) set up in 1978 to generate funds. We now have the task to do just this. Phase Two is estimated to cost £400,000. We are applying to several national bodies for funds and have launched an Appeal locally. We have become a charity member of South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry to be able to be in contact with you, the many businesses in South Cheshire to seek contributions to our funds.

We are planning for Phase Two to begin mid-March 2025 to follow-on the completion of Phase One. We shall be very grateful for any donations from members of the SCCCI that will enable us to complete this restoration project as planned. We shall keep updating you on our progress.

» **For more on the appeal and upcoming events at the church go to stmarysnantwich.org.uk**



Dave Christie –
Cheshire Business Coaching

Running a small or medium-sized business often feels like a sprint, with each day's challenges demanding constant attention. Deadlines, cash flow, team management, and market shifts can create a whirlwind of activity. Yet, amidst this race, a counterintuitive strategy can make all the difference: taking two steps back. While it may seem unwise to slow down when everything's moving fast, stepping back offers a chance to see the bigger picture, consider new approaches, and reset our perspectives.

Let's explore some questions I frequently hear from business owners, and how taking a step back might help foster clarity, reduce stress, and unlock growth.

1. "How can I manage my time better when everything seems urgent?"

When you're in the thick of it, every task can feel like a top priority. By taking a step back, you create space to evaluate what truly needs your immediate attention. A helpful exercise is to identify your business's core objectives for the quarter or year. When you hold these objectives in mind, it becomes easier to prioritise tasks aligned with these goals and defer or delegate those that don't.

Ask yourself: If I had only two hours each day to dedicate to my business, what would I focus on? This question brings clarity, often revealing which activities are truly productive versus those that feel productive but don't impact growth. Effective time management is about quality, not quantity, and stepping back helps you focus on what matters most.

2. "How do I keep my team motivated, especially during tough times?"

Motivating a team during uncertainty can feel like an uphill battle. Taking two steps back here means reconnecting with your team's purpose and the larger vision that brought you together. People are often motivated by feeling they belong and contribute to something meaningful. It's worth pausing to reflect on what you stand for as a business and sharing that purpose with your team.

Encourage open conversations about what drives each team member, what they enjoy in their roles, and how they see themselves

contributing to the company's success. Sometimes, giving your team the space to voice their concerns and aspirations is enough to rekindle their commitment. Motivation isn't constant—it ebbs and flows. By stepping back to listen and reflect, you can build a resilient and engaged team.

3. "I feel like I'm always reacting to problems. How can I be more proactive?"

The daily demands of running a business often pull us into reactive mode. The challenge is finding time to anticipate rather than respond. Stepping back allows you to spot patterns in these daily challenges and identify recurring issues that might indicate a need for change.

Consider a weekly "reflection hour" to ask yourself: What problems keep resurfacing, and what's their root cause? This practice helps you recognise underlying issues that need attention. Becoming proactive isn't about eliminating problems (an impossible goal in any business) but about addressing root causes, so you spend less time reacting and more time creating.

4. "How do I innovate when I barely have time to manage day-to-day operations?"

Innovation can feel out of reach when you're focused on daily operations. However, stepping back from day-to-day tasks can give you the mental space needed for creativity. Creativity rarely thrives under pressure, so setting aside even an hour each week for brainstorming can lead to new ideas that improve or streamline operations.

Innovation doesn't have to mean radical changes. Think of one area of your business where you'd like to see improvement. Then challenge yourself to consider how you might approach it differently. By focusing on one area at a time, you may discover incremental improvements that add up to substantial change. Often, it's about finding a fresh angle to tackle an old challenge.

5. "How do I balance growth with maintaining quality?"

Growth is exciting but brings its own pressures, particularly around quality control. Many business owners find themselves balancing expansion with the need to maintain standards. Taking two steps back in this context means shifting focus from quantity to quality, from expansion to depth.

Ask yourself: What is non-negotiable about my business? This could be customer experience, product quality, or service level. By clarifying your non-negotiables, you can grow with intentionality rather than simply scaling for the sake of it. Sometimes, you may find ways to deepen your current offerings before expanding. Growth, when aligned with your values, becomes more sustainable and rewarding.

Embracing a New Perspective

Taking two steps back isn't about abandoning or slowing down your business ambitions. Instead, it's about giving yourself—and your business—the space to breathe, reflect, and realign. This approach fosters resilience, creativity, and a sense of purpose, not only within yourself but throughout your team and operations.

Consider incorporating these reflections into your routine, perhaps through journaling or by setting aside a weekly "big-picture hour." A bit of distance from the daily rush can bring clarity to where you're going, why you're going there, and how best to get there.

Remember, you're not alone in facing these challenges. Every business owner shares these questions, and with patience and a shift in perspective, new answers and opportunities emerge. By stepping back, you create the space to move forward—stronger, clearer, and more intentional than before.

» cheshirebusinesscoaching.com



Marina wins national award



The marina is home to the Audlem Lass Boat Service – a volunteer run water taxi which provides boat rides from the marina to the bottom of the Audlem flight of locks and back and also the Overwater Wheelyboat, which is again volunteer run and provides boats trips for wheelchair users and those with mobility issues. In 2020 this service was awarded the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service.

“Overwater owes its success to the brilliant team we have in place – they share our determination to make everyone welcome and provide the very best customer service – they’re a great team to work with and one of our proudest achievements is how much the tourism spend impacts so positively on Audlem and the surrounding areas” – Co-owner Janet Maughan

Overwater Marina, near Audlem was recently crowned TYHA Inland Marina of the Year 2024 at the prestigious Southampton International Boat Show. Marking a decade of celebrating marina excellence, the awards, sponsored by Haven Knox-Johnson and voted for by berth holders themselves, honour the dedication and passion of marinas and their teams across the UK and worldwide.

The marina and holiday park boasts 230 narrowboat moorings, a boat workshop and slipway, a place to re-fuel and pump out the boats and Café open to the public seven days a week. The marina is owned and run as a family business and over the years has added a touring caravan site, private holiday lodges and their newest offering – luxury railway themed glamping wagons with wood fired hot tubs – a nod to the history of the now dismantled Great Western Railway line, which once ran through the farm, taking perishable produce from Cheshire as far afield as London.

» For more information go to www.overwatermarina.co.uk

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to-date security solutions but also ensures they have a dedicated team monitoring, identifying, and addressing threats as they emerge—something a smaller company might not manage effectively on its own.

At CED Technology, we understand the challenges faced by small and medium-sized businesses and offer a range of services designed to enhance and protect your IT environment. Our cyber security solutions are comprehensive and tailored to meet your specific needs, ensuring you receive maximum protection without the high price tag. Our affordable plans allow businesses to access top-tier support and security, helping to safeguard your data, operations, and reputation.

Outsourcing IT services has become an increasingly popular and cost-effective solution for small to medium-sized businesses aiming to remain competitive without the significant expense of hiring a full-time, in-house IT team. Rather than investing in salaries, training, and the continuous costs associated with an internal team, outsourcing offers flexibility, expertise, and a tailored approach that scales as your business grows. From managing networks to providing reliable computer support and cyber security, outsourcing grants businesses the peace of mind that their IT infrastructure is in safe hands.

One of the most critical aspects of modern IT services is cyber security. Cyber threats are escalating, and businesses of all sizes are at risk, particularly smaller companies that may not have the resources to defend themselves adequately. In the UK alone, cybercrime costs businesses over £3 billion each year, and small to medium-sized businesses often bear the brunt. With limited budgets and time, many companies struggle to implement the robust, ever-evolving security measures required to protect their data, making them prime targets for cybercriminals. Outsourcing IT services not only provides businesses access to advanced and up-



» **For more information on how CED Technology can support your business, visit www.cedtechnology.co.uk or contact info@cedtechnology.co.uk.**

Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa unveils stunning refurbishment including champagne bar



The investment also includes a complete overhaul of the guest bedrooms in the modern wing, enhancing both comfort and aesthetics. Guests will now enjoy a refreshed look and feel with the addition of new deluxe rooms featuring double sofa beds, ideal for families, group stays and friends' pamper evenings.

In the mansion building, extensive updates have been made to the state banqueting rooms, including new carpeting, redecoration of The Old Hall, and meticulous restoration of the beautiful Long Gallery overlooking the back of the hotel. These spaces are perfect for weddings, conferences, meetings and special events. The banqueting bar now features designer-led carpeting that complements the historic oak stairs, and the lounge, renowned for its traditional afternoon tea, boasts brand-new furniture, significantly enhancing the space.

David Rowley, General Manager of Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa, commented: "With the extensive refurbishment now complete, we are excited to present the enhanced offerings at Crewe Hall. The Moët & Chandon Champagne bar, along with upgraded bedrooms and revitalised event spaces, represents our commitment to providing top-tier hospitality. These improvements position us strongly in the market and offer our guests an exceptional experience."

» **Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa is proudly part of The QHotels Collection.**

Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa has invested over £1m in a recent refurbishment, significantly enhancing several of its facilities.

The project, which began in autumn 2023 and is now complete, aims to elevate the guest experience and solidify Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa's reputation as a premier resort for corporate and leisure guests.

Situated in Cheshire and renowned for its historic grandeur, Crewe Hall Hotel & Spa seamlessly blends 17th-century opulence with a contemporary experience. With its striking exterior, stained glass windows and historic feature rooms, the resort includes an original Grade I listed mansion alongside a modern wing housing a restaurant and bar, event spaces, and a health club with spa.

The most impressive element of the refurbishment is the introduction of "The Sheridan Bar," a stunning new Moët & Chandon Champagne and cocktail bar.

Adorned with a new reception, waiter station, and back bar featuring marble and brass accents designed by Fusion by Design, The Sheridan is set to become a sought-after destination for couples and groups in the area, and hotel guests visiting from all over the UK.

Named after playwright and politician Richard Brinsley Sheridan, a friend of the first Lord Crewe and his wife Frances, the bar celebrates this historical connection while offering a chic, modern ambience.

Hibberts LLP celebrates 225 years of legal excellence and tradition



Hibberts LLP, a cornerstone of Cheshire and Shropshire's legal community, celebrated its 225th anniversary in style at a birthday party at Iscoyd Park in Whitchurch. With roots tracing back to the late 18th century Hibberts' longstanding presence reflects a rich history of legal service evolution and community engagement.

The journey of Hibberts began in 1799 when a Mr. Finchett was recorded in the London Gazette as a solicitor. In 1820 his son James Finchett-Maddock went on to be the clerk of Chester and in 1871 the firm (then called Maddock, Moss Sharp & Martin) moved into Nantwich. Through a succession of solicitors and a series of mergers and moves in 2007 the current Hibberts LLP emerged

– continuing the rich tradition of providing personal and practical legal advice to its clients within the local community through its offices in Nantwich, Crewe, Tarporley and Whitchurch.

HR Manager Rachael Hodgkins explains: "We could think of no better place to hold our event than Iscoyd Park which was decked in Hibberts branding for the occasion. This magnificent venue has been in the Godsall family since 1843 – almost as long as Hibberts has been trading. The hospitality was wonderful as we enjoyed a sun-filled drinks reception, hog roast, live music and dancing at this beautiful country house."

Stewart Bailey, Managing Partner at Hibberts added: "I am so proud to be part of Hibberts at the time when we celebrate 225 years of serving our community with dedication

and integrity. During our celebrations we have reflected on our past, recognising and applauding the invaluable contributions that employees past and present have made which have allowed the firm to thrive for over 200 years. What an achievement.

"The Hibberts journey has been one of continuous growth and adaptation. We remain committed to upholding the principle of focusing on evolving customer needs that has defined us for over two centuries - innovating and expanding our service offering whilst maintaining a blend of traditional values, personal service and modern expertise. Here's to the next 225 years of success."

» **Hibberts can be contacted on**

- **Crewe 01270 215117**
- **Nantwich 01270 624225**
- **Tarporley 01829 733338**
- **Whitchurch 01948 662231**



Pioneering clinic opens in Nantwich



September 2024 saw the launch of a new enterprise based in Nantwich. Partners Dr Wilding Smith and Gail Cornell opened Khuba Clinic, specialising in brain and gut health and offering hyperbaric oxygen therapy, lymphatic drainage, infrared therapy, gut and brain testing and a full range of face and body sculpting services.

Dr Wilding-Smith is a brain health professional who trained with Daniel Amen of Amen Clinics in California and is a level 6 nutrition advisor. She explains:

"We conducted extensive research in the health and beauty industry before choosing the products we wanted to offer clients, but hyperbaric oxygen therapy was always on the agenda."

The first hyperbaric chamber was created in 1662 by British clergyman Thomas Henshaw and today, with modern advancement and studies, hyperbaric oxygen is established as a non-evasive beneficial treatment. Oxygen is a wonderful thing and studies have shown exceptional results in healing neurological conditions such as head trauma and dementia, ASD in children and adults, the after-effects of chemotherapy, insomnia, wound healing, skin collagen production and improved sports performance.

They say: "Our mission is to support your body's natural ability to heal itself. Our therapies are curated to initiate your healing and optimise your health from within. This holistic approach is based on the idea that the body has an innate ability to heal and



regenerate given the right resources. Khuba Clinic examines health from a physical, emotional and mental perspective treating a wide variety of illnesses and offering preventative therapies to increase vitality and wellbeing. Khuba looks at the root cause of your challenges and offers bespoke programs and nutrition advice.

"Our long-term goals are to create employment opportunities for young people in the area and to educate people to take control of their health and prevent illness, in turn, relieving some of the pressure on our beloved National Health Service."

» **Contact Khuba Clinic, Nantwich on 01270 421212**

Film production company Squeaky Pedal celebrates milestone

SQUEAKY PEDAL



2024 has been a terrific year for Crewe-based heritage film, documentary and TV production company Squeaky Pedal. The business has recently celebrated five years since it was founded by co-owners Jason Davidson and Pete Roch. The film-makers began working together purely for the joy of telling stories, but in 2019 they received their first ever professional commission from Cheshire East Council to produce a film exploring the creative potential of Crewe. Since this landmark job the duo have never looked back.

"We'll always be indebted to Cheshire East Council for trusting us with our first ever project" explained Jason.

"We're incredibly proud to be based in Crewe, and flying the flag for creative industries in the town."

Their creative connection to the town will see some of the company's films shown on the big screen in LY2 as part of the Crewe Arts Development Programme and Arts Trail: Making Crewe, due to begin in January 2025.

TV series success: 2024 also saw the broadcast on 5Select of Sunken Warships:

Secrets From The Deep. This was a significant milestone for the company, as the series was devised, researched, written and produced by the company alongside their production partner Content Kings. The eight part series explores the stories of some of the 20th century's most remarkable and infamous warships that now litter the seabed.

Alongside being broadcast in the UK, the series has also been sold across the world and has been well received by audiences. "We're keen to utilise local locations wherever possible in whatever project we work on" added Jason. "We conducted all of our expert interviews at Hack Green Secret Nuclear Bunker just outside Nantwich. The bunker is an incredibly immersive backdrop, providing the perfect setting for the series and the team at Hack Green couldn't have been more helpful."

Alongside their TV work Squeaky Pedal have also worked across the length and breadth of the country on projects as diverse as covering the Heritage Open Days festival for the National Trust to producing a film marking the 80th anniversary of Operation Market Garden for the Airborne Assault Museum.

» For more information go to www.squeakypedal.co.uk or follow on social media, search @squeakypedal.



Building a Purpose-Driven Business: A Path to Profit and Positive Impact

Building a purpose-driven business means aligning your values and passions with your strategy, creating a sustainable model that generates both profit and positive impact. Today, businesses that focus on purpose are thriving as customers and employees alike are drawn to brands with meaning. If you're a solopreneur or small business owner seeking to build a business with longevity and heart, here are my top tips to help you create a purpose-driven business that not only survives but thrives



Define Your Core Purpose

Every purpose-driven business begins with a clear sense of "why." Your purpose forms the foundation for all decisions and how you engage with customers.

- Identify your core values. Think about the non-negotiable principles in your life and business, such as sustainability, creativity, or diversity.
- Understand the problem you're solving. Purpose-driven businesses often tackle real-world issues. Define the need you're addressing and the change you want to create.
- Visualise your impact. Think about the positive mark your business will leave, such as reducing waste or empowering underrepresented communities.

Align Purpose with Profit

Many think there's a trade-off between making money and doing good, but purpose and profit can harmonise. Aligning your business with your mission often attracts loyal customers who share your values.

- Check your pricing. Make sure your pricing reflects the value of your product or service, as well as the positive impact your business creates.
- Track impact metrics. Monitor the ways your business makes a difference, such as hours donated or communities positively affected.
- Let your purpose guide growth. As your business scales, use your mission to ensure growth is ethical and sustainable.

Build a Community Around Your Purpose

Building a community around your purpose is one of the most effective ways to grow a purpose-driven business. When your business resonates with people who share your values, it will thrive.

- Engage authentically on social media. Use platforms like Instagram and LinkedIn to have meaningful conversations with your audience.
- Create a movement. Encourage your audience to support your cause by raising awareness or participating in related volunteer opportunities.
- Foster online spaces. Consider starting a Facebook or LinkedIn group centred around your purpose, where people can connect and share ideas.

Tell Your Story Through Branding

Purpose-driven businesses don't just sell products or services—they tell the story of why they exist. Storytelling is a powerful way to communicate your values and build a loyal customer base.

- Be transparent. Share your processes and the inner workings of your business. Customers value openness.
- Share your human story. Tell your personal journey, including the challenges you've faced and milestones reached. Authenticity resonates.
- Align your visuals with your values. Ensure that your branding—from your logo to your website design—reflects your core purpose.

Focus on Sustainable Growth

Sustainability isn't just a buzzword—it's about growing your business steadily and ethically, ensuring long-term success.

- Assess environmental responsibility. If your business involves physical products, evaluate your supply chain for sustainability, such as using eco-friendly packaging.
- Prioritise slow, steady growth. Focus on relationships and refining processes, rather than rushing expansion.
- Consider certifications. Explore certifications like B Corp, Planet Mark, or ISO 14001 to demonstrate your commitment to sustainability and ethics.

Stay Adaptable Without Losing Sight of Your Purpose

As your business grows, adapting to market changes is essential, but staying true to your purpose will keep you grounded.

- Seek feedback regularly. Engage with customers to understand what's working and where you can improve.
- Embrace innovations that fit your mission. New trends are great, but make sure they align with your core values.
- Review regularly. Schedule quarterly reviews to assess how well you're balancing profit and purpose.

Purpose IS Your Business's Superpower

Challenges are part of any business journey, but with a clear purpose, obstacles become opportunities for growth. In tough times, let your mission guide you and ask: does this align with the purpose of my business? Your mission will keep you focused. Surround yourself with like-minded entrepreneurs for support and consider coaching when challenges feel overwhelming—it can provide clarity and confidence. Purpose is your business's superpower, helping you create lasting impact while maintaining a holistic work/life balance. Keep it at the heart of your decisions, and you'll not only thrive but inspire others. If you need guidance to align your goals with your mission, I'm here to help. Let's build a business that's both fulfilling and sustainable.

» Tamsin Hill, The Female Business Coach, helps solopreneurs and neurodivergent entrepreneurs build purpose-driven, sustainable businesses that thrive without sacrificing work/life balance. If you're ready to align your goals with your mission, visit thefemalebusinesscoach.com to connect with Tamsin for coaching and business support that empowers you. Visit: thefemalebusinesscoach.com



Government unveils reforms to employment rights

Following the Labour Party's victory in this year's general election, it was announced that they planned to make a number of changes to employment law and workplace practices which aim to create fairer work conditions and enhance employment rights across the UK.

Progress HR owner Claire Bond was delighted to be invited to Westminster to take part in the employer and HR consultation process around the proposed changes.

Equality (Race and Disability) Bill:



- **Pay Equity Audits:** Mandatory for employers to identify and rectify pay disparities between different racial groups.
- **Inclusive Policies:** Employers must develop and implement policies promoting diversity and equality in the workplace.

Apprenticeship Levy Reforms:



- **Maximising Benefits:** Adjusting apprenticeship programmes to align with new regulations.
- **Workforce Development:** Developing comprehensive training programmes to support long-term employee growth.

Menopause Action Plan:



- **Wellbeing of Women:** Employers with more than 250 employees will be required to produce menopause action plans.

Employment Rights Bill

- **Protection from Unfair Dismissal:** Available from day one, with special rules for probationary periods.
- **Sick Pay:** Available from day one, removing the lower earnings limit and waiting period for Statutory Sick Pay.
- **Flexible Working:** Default for all workers from day one, requiring employers to accommodate this as far as is reasonable.
- **Parental Leave:** Available from day one.
- **Protection for New Mothers:** Unlawful to dismiss a woman for six months after she returns from maternity leave.
- **Fire and Rehire Practices:** Ended, with a new statutory code replacing the current law.
- **Fair Work Agency:** Established to enforce workplace rights.
- **Fair Pay Agreement:** Introduced in the adult social care sector.
- **Minimum Service Levels:** Repealed in relation to industrial action.
- **Union Access:** Right for workers to access a union within workplaces and simplified statutory recognition for trade unions.





CARING FOR YOUR PEOPLE: ELEVATING EMPLOYEE WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE

In today's dynamic business landscape, prioritising employee wellbeing is crucial for creating a thriving and successful organisation. As companies strive to adapt and grow, creating a supportive work environment has become a cornerstone of effective leadership and human resources management.

With a rise in living costs and increasing pressures on the NHS, it's more important than ever for employers to support their employees mental and physical wellbeing. Our research found that:

72% of employees have found it difficult to book a doctor's appointment.

41% have cancelled routine appointments, such as dental or optical due to the rising cost of living.

9 in 10 employees are more likely to remain with a company that offers benefits, irrespective of salary.

By investing in the wellbeing of your employees, you can help mitigate the impacts of these challenges, creating a more supportive and productive workplace.

Strategies for success

Creating a supportive environment begins by understanding and addressing the unique needs of your workforce. Employees are the heart of every successful organisation, driving innovation, productivity, and culture. By promoting open dialogue and providing a culture of empathy and trust, employers can engage teams effectively.

Integrating wellbeing initiatives into your organisation will help to boost resilience and productivity. By providing comprehensive health and wellness programs, along with regular check-ins and feedback, you will be able to recognise and compassionately address any signs of employee distress, ensuring everyone feels heard, valued and create a workplace where your employees thrive.

The Benefits of Investing in Wellbeing

Investing in employee wellbeing is not just a compassionate choice, it's a strategic advantage. Companies that prioritise health and wellness see increased retention, improved performance, and a stronger workplace community. These tangible benefits highlight the value of a robust wellbeing strategy for any forward-thinking organisation.

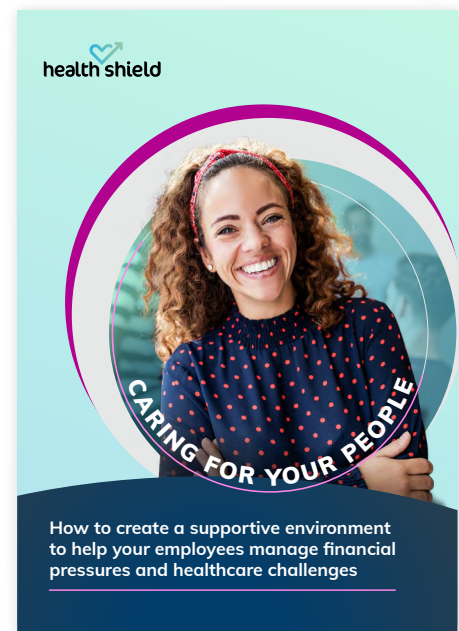
A Resource for Leaders: Health Shield's Guide to Caring for Your People

To support these efforts, Health Shield has created a comprehensive eBook designed to empower business leaders and HR professionals.

This resource offers valuable insights and strategies for creating a nurturing workplace culture that prioritises employee health and happiness.

It serves as a guide for implementing the discussed strategies effectively, ensuring that organisations can build a supportive environment that lays the foundation for sustained growth and innovation.

Download your FREE guide



In this eBook you can discover:

- The challenges employees are facing due to the cost-of-living crisis
- How you can recognise the signs of poor mental health
- How the rising pressures on the NHS are impacting your employees
- Ways to nurture resilience and positive mental health
- The benefits of investing in wellbeing
- Health benefits to support your employees

Unlock the potential of your workplace by exploring Health Shield's eBook, where you'll find the tools and insights needed to create a thriving and supportive environment—download your guide to [caring for your people](#) today.



To download your free guide, scan the QR code.



WHY IS WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE SO IMPORTANT? FLOURISH HYPNOTHERAPY CHESHIRE EXPLAINS WHY.

“At least 1 in 6 workers experience mental health problems like anxiety and depression. Our research shows that work is the biggest cause of stress in our lives, more than many problems” (Source: mind.org.uk)

Unfortunately in the past, there has been a stigma around employees admitting that they were struggling with issues affecting their mental health in the corporate world. Burnout, exhaustion, stress and anxiety have even been worn as badges for some, with employees feeling that this was the norm within their workplace and they perhaps felt they weren't doing their job properly if they didn't feel like this. Thankfully, opinions are changing, the veil has been lifted and progressive, responsible employers are realising that they need to support their workforce. The stigma that previously surrounded mental health, particularly in the workplace, is gradually disappearing, and people are now more able to be honest about how they are really feeling.

According to a 2023 report by the World Health Organisation (WHO), companies that implement effective health and wellbeing programmes can see a productivity increase of up to 20%. This is because healthy employees are less likely to take sick leave and more likely to perform at their best, leading to higher overall output and a better quality of work. (Source: Institute of Government and Public Policy 14.06.24)

Promoting well-being at work can help foster a positive working environment by minimising stress levels and staff absence, improving employee satisfaction and engagement, and increasing productivity in the workplace. Supporting your employees by looking after their wellness in the workplace sends a

strong signal to your workforce that you are a caring employer who takes their employees need seriously. It's win win!

So how can I as a hypnotherapist help your business? Hypnotherapy is a powerful tool to aid mental health and in turn can improve our physical health too. As such, many of the techniques I use with individual clients can also be used for group sessions during well-being days in the workplace. Mindfulness exercises, breathing techniques and deep relaxation can all be taught in the workplace to help reduce stress and improve all round health. I'm proud to say I work with companies to offer corporate well-being days in their workplace. These have proved extremely popular, and I have worked with a range of companies, from multi-national companies, to educational establishments, to smaller companies. It's great to know that forward thinking companies are now prioritising mental health in the workplace and understand the need to look after their workforce in this way.

“Great session, very much required in highly intensive fast-moving positions that do take their toll on mental health and well-being. It was great to have space for my mind for a short amount of time before diving back into the issues of the day.”

(Participant in a workplace session)


Employees, although sometimes initially sceptical, have found the sessions invaluable in reducing stress and anxiety. I've had great feedback from these sessions and it's very rewarding to know I'm helping people to manage their stress levels and anxiety. Participants will learn to recognise the signs and symptoms of stress and will be given practical techniques to help manage this. I also offer copies of recordings which participants can take away with them for personal use to help manage anxiety, improve sleep and calm a racing mind.


I also offer the employees of companies that work with me a discounted rate for 1:1 sessions of hypnotherapy. Hypnotherapy

can treat a wide range of conditions, including phobias, addictions, anxiety, pain relief, depression, menopausal symptoms, insomnia, confidence, imposter syndrome and much more. Sessions can be conducted in person in my calm, cosy space in Haslington or remotely, it works just as well. Many people are struggling with that feeling of trying to balance everything, career, family, social life, relationships. My passion is to work with you to move you forward, to achieve your goals and bring back that feeling of balance enabling you to flourish once more and be present in your life. I specialise in dealing with anxiety, feelings of overwhelm, burnout and stress. This may also have led to using props such as alcohol or other quick fixes to try to overcome these feelings. I can work with you to turn this around very quickly in comparison to many other therapy methods, most clients often requiring between four to six sessions to make effective, lasting change.

» Please get in touch if you would like any further information about my services and to find out how I can help you.

flourishhypnotherapycheshire.co.uk

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 [flourishhypnotherapy111](https://www.instagram.com/flourishhypnotherapy111)



#ConnectCrewe for a Stronger, More Vibrant Economy

Connor Naismith MP Crewe & Nantwich



The decision to cancel HS2 north of Birmingham was an anti-growth decision. It was devastating for Crewe and Nantwich in particular, but also for the wider region as it leaves the West Coast Mainline at risk of collapse.

Through my #ConnectCrewe campaign, I am calling on the new government to deliver a credible alternative to HS2 north of Birmingham, with Crewe at its heart, delivering enhanced connectivity our area needs to drive long term economic growth. At the heart of this campaign is the vision of Crewe as a dynamic economic hub, strategically linking the North West to other critical regions through transformative rail infrastructure, notably the Midlands-North West Rail Link (MNWRL) as proposed by Andy Burnham and Richard Parker. The economic impact of this infrastructure investment would open new doors for our local business community while fuelling growth that extends beyond our town to benefit the entire country and aligns with the government's ambition to deliver economic growth across the country and create a more balanced, resilient economic outlook across the UK.

Since launching the #ConnectCrewe campaign, we have made significant strides in bringing Crewe into focus. As an active member of the High Speed Rail Group, I have been working alongside other key stakeholders to highlight Crewe's vital role in the national rail network and its strategic potential as a connectivity hub. I recently wrote to the Chancellor and Transport Secretary to make the case for Crewe's involvement in future rail infrastructure, underscoring the substantial economic

and logistical advantages of connecting through Crewe to the rest of the UK. By bringing together a broad coalition of voices in support, we are ensuring that Crewe's infrastructure needs are firmly on the national agenda and aligned with broader government priorities for infrastructure development and regional growth.

For businesses across Crewe and Nantwich, a Midlands-North West Rail link that uses Crewe as its centrepiece promises increased access to markets, talent, and resources. By improving our rail links, we pave the way for greater inward investment, positioning Crewe as a major gateway for companies looking to establish or expand their presence in the North West.

"Rail connectivity will make Crewe a more attractive location for new investments, creating a ripple effect that will benefit local businesses and residents alike. Improved infrastructure will attract high-skilled talent from neighbouring areas, providing local businesses with access to a broader and more diverse workforce. As young professionals and skilled workers are drawn to Crewe for its accessibility and the opportunities it offers, our local businesses will find it easier to recruit the expertise they need to innovate and grow, which will, in turn, reinforce the region's reputation as an economic powerhouse and a hub for new industries."

- MP Connor Naismith



» As we work to advance the #ConnectCrewe campaign, I ask you to lend your support. By advocating for this crucial infrastructure, businesses can help demonstrate the overwhelming demand for improved connectivity and its potential to drive economic growth locally, regionally, and nationally. If you wish to support the campaign, please get in touch at connor.naismith.mp@parliament.uk

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- Site offers 124,000 sqft² of warehousing, currently serving Siemens, with scope for a shared User Facility
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- Offices & Welfare facilities are over 9,000 sqft² over 3 floors, with 2,200 sqft² of office space available on the top floor
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- Warehouse has 16 dock doors (4 are high bay) & 3 are level access doors
- It is a secure site with gated & door control 24 hours, full CCTV monitoring remotely with keyholder security access.
- There is also 98 Car Parking Spaces inc 6 EV Charging stations & 5 disabled parking with access

Jordan Neild

Business Development Manager | Contract Logistics UK & I

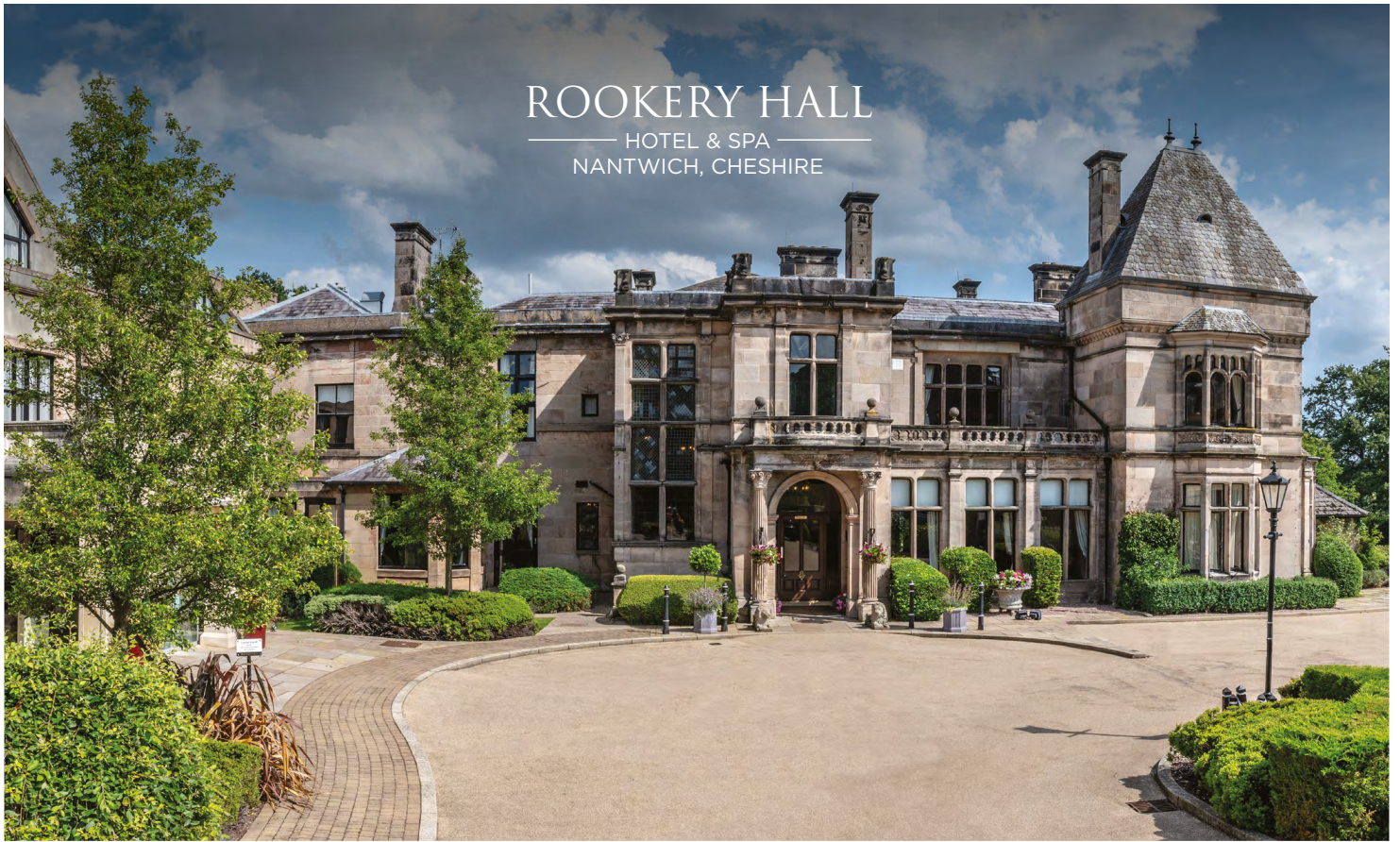
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