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BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR

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TODAY'S BUSINESS LEADERS



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# Welcome

## Looking ahead to 2022

### Mega Trends and Big Conversations

There is no doubt it has been a turbulent and unprecedented 20 months, full of change and upheaval, but we now look forward to 2022 and embrace a new year, filled with new opportunities, ideas and challenges.

At Circle2Success we have turned our attention to the mega trends and what will be those important conversations for 2022, for example climate change, diversity, inclusion, leadership, digitalisation and how they will affect business and individuals.

Mega trends have always been there and indeed the climate change challenge has been around for many years, but only now are we starting to take it seriously and with the positive engagement at COP26 we can only hope that in 2022 we can make real progress.

We have leant over the last 20 months that pandemics are a global issue and here to stay. Agile thinking will be high on the agenda of skills required in the future, to be adaptable, flexible and manage change quickly will enable businesses to pivot and manoeuvre effectively. Pandemics have shown us how quickly things can change, we need to ensure we have the ability to recover quickly and build resilience into our organisations and people.

Social impact and inclusion in response to inequality and diversity will also be a big conversation in 2022. We need to think about diversity in everything we do, embedding social outcomes in our businesses. Individuals will be



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looking to see what part we play in all of this and if the values of our business, match theirs. With the skills shortage in the UK not letting up anytime soon, the culture and values of a business will be more important than ever. Purpose led businesses are those with social outcomes at the heart of the business, articulating their purpose well, why they exist and why people should join them, they will have the advantage when attracting the new talent they require to grow and retaining their existing talent.

In this magazine we start the conversation on many of these important topics, we

launch our C2S Connections campaign to reconnect students and the business community and we will be tackling many of these challenges at our events throughout 2022, with C2S Leadership month in March dedicated to finding solutions, building back better, and having invaluable conversations to support our business leaders in this ever-changing world. We do hope you will join us and be part of the conversation.

*Suzanne & Angela*

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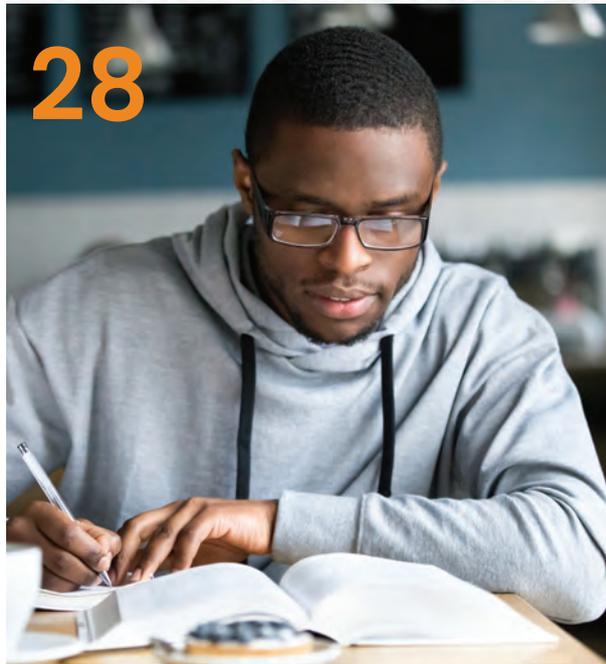
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# Change is Inevitable but Success Is Optional

C2S speaks to leading change expert **Campbell Macpherson, CEO of Change & Strategy International**, about his five key truths to implementing sustainable change

## Leadership Today is all About Leading Change

If we are not leading change, we are not leading anything. We are merely managing the status quo; and as we now know all too well after these last tumultuous couple of years - the status quo doesn't last for very long.

But leading change is tough. 88% of change initiatives, new business strategies, mergers and acquisitions fail to deliver, according to a 2016 survey by Bain & Co.

And today we live in a world of constant change – a situation, ironically, that is about the only thing that won't change any time soon. A strange mix of high real unemployment yet soaring job vacancies, high Government debt, rising inflation with interest rates set to follow, the untangling of global supply chains, a still-pending full-fat Brexit, a warming planet and a worldwide virus that will be with us for many years to come will throw any number of curve balls at us and our businesses. And these are merely a few of the changes we know about!

## Every Business is a People Business

The pandemic has hammered home the importance of mental health – for ourselves, for our people and for our businesses. So many leaders experienced a 'light bulb moment' during the first COVID-19 lockdown when they felt genuine anxiety, many for the very first time, and realised just how debilitating it can be. We all need help to combat anxiety and a variety of other reactions we experience when hit by unexpected events. We need help to enhance our ability to embrace change and thrive in a world of uncertainty.

Extraordinary leaders equip their people with the skills they need to do just this – to believe in themselves, build their resilience and cope with whatever is thrown in their path. They give them the power to change. Then they empower them to deliver.

In the 25 years I have spent enabling leaders to lead change and build cultures that embrace change, I have discovered five key truths about the subject. At first glance, they may seem to be 'Blinding Glimpses of the Obvious'. They're not.



Campbell Macpherson, CEO,  
Change & Strategy International

## Five Key Truths

### 1 Change is Inevitable

Once we truly accept that change does not have a start date or an end date, that it is constant, then we can begin to accept it – perhaps begrudgingly at first. Accepting change is the first step to embracing it. This is as true for organisations as it is for individuals.

### 2 All Change is Personal

Even the largest of organisational changes is actually the culmination of a myriad of small personal changes.



“ Extraordinary leaders equip their people with the skills they need to do just this – to believe in themselves, build their resilience and cope with whatever is thrown in their path. They give them the power to change. Then they empower them to deliver. ”

Success demands that leaders understand the implications of the change on every single one of their people. We need to get personal.

### 3 We all Erect our own Personal Barriers to Change

We all possess our own default change barriers and they will be different depending upon the change in question. Some barriers last for only a few seconds. Others can last a lifetime.

### 4 All Change is Emotional

Each one of these barriers is emotional – and completely normal. Once we appreciate both of these facts, we can start to work on how to overcome the barriers. Another pertinent fact is that emotion is four times more powerful than logic when it comes to change. So not only must we appreciate the emotions our people are experiencing, we also need to appeal to their emotions if we wish them to change.

### 5 We Only Change if We Want to

No-one changes simply because they are told to. We only change if, and when, we want to. Therefore, the role of a leader is to help our people to want to change.

That last sentence appears harmless. It isn't. It is rather profound. "Helping your people to want to change" is the

essence of leadership in today's rapidly changing world.

### Success Starts with Self Reflection

Extraordinary leadership can be found when emotional intelligence and the ability to deliver combine. Emotionally intelligent leaders deliver results that are sustainable. Leaders with poor emotional intelligence may deliver in the short term, but they will inevitably leave carnage in their wake, destroying shareholder value along the way.

### A Strong Strategic Core to Underpin the Change

Does your business possess a strong 'strategic core'? Are you clear about why your business exists – and for whom? What makes it special? What does it wish to be famous for? What are you seeking to achieve, and just as importantly, why? A strong strategic

core will enable you to be flexible as to 'how' the strategy is delivered – and both engage and align your people in the process. For without this, sustainable success is impossible.

### Successful Change is all About Your People

Change is not about systems or processes or balance sheets or business models. It is about people. And if your people aren't ready, willing and able to change – nothing will happen. Successful change is about engaging with your people to understand the implications and nuances of the new strategy and ensure shared ownership of its delivery. It is about listening. It is about helping them to want to change. It is about becoming the organisation where successful change is not optional.

Ask yourself this simple question: Do my people have the power to change? 



Campbell is a business adviser, keynote speaker, Executive Fellow of Henley Business School and author of three books: *You: Part Two – Thriving in the Second Half of your Life* (Hachette 2021), *The Power to Change* (Kogan Page 2020) and *The Change Catalyst* (Wiley 2017), the 2018 Business Book of the Year.

[www.changeandstrategy.com/about-the-author](http://www.changeandstrategy.com/about-the-author)



# Stewart Golf Leads the Way on International Trade and Opportunity

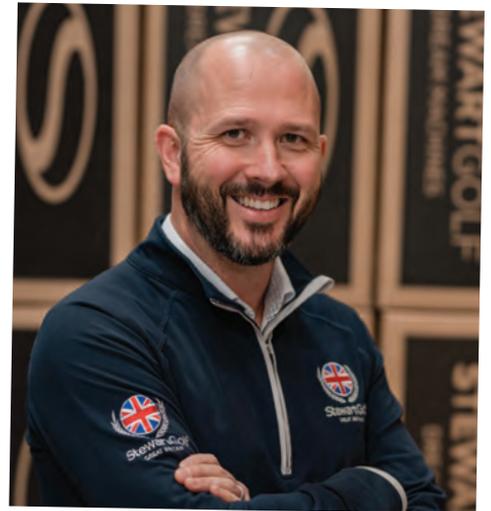
Mark Stewart, CEO, shares with C2S their story and journey over the last 18 months

In March 2020, Stewart Golf were ready for a growth year. 2019 had been a record £2.6million turnover year and things were looking good for the Gloucestershire manufacturer of premium golf trolleys. We all know what happened next, and like many businesses, Stewart Golf held crisis meetings and readied themselves for what looked at that stage might be zero sales for many months. The company took a loan from their bank to ensure that overheads could be covered for a few months. Marketing and

sales administration staff were set up to work remotely, two Directors stayed at the factory to ship orders that did come in, but the factory closed, and all other staff were furloughed.

What actually happened was remarkable. Within three weeks all staff were recalled because demand was actually increasing!

It's fair to say that if there was ever a sport designed for the COVID-19 era, it's golf. With courses spanning hundreds of acres of parkland and players rarely within two meters of one another, golf has been one of the few beneficiaries of the pandemic.



Mark Stewart, CEO, Stewart Golf

“None of this happens without a team of people who care about the business.”



Stewart Golf had made a couple of strategic decisions in the years preceding COVID-19 that felt right to the directors of the business but look like amazing decisions through the lens of the pandemic. Firstly, it made

a decision to focus on B2C sales which removed the reliance on retail stores that were forced to close even when courses were open. This meant terminating the contracts of five sales reps and closing the accounts of large specialist golf retailers and even Amazon. Secondly, it had set up in the United States in 2016, which is the largest golf market on the planet. Stewart Golf had been selling in the USA for more than a decade but felt a greater focus on marketing could yield some great results. Stewart Golf LLC was set up in 2015 to work alongside their existing distributor, targeting consumers rather than golf clubs or large retailers.



“ We have a strong positive culture at Stewart Golf and that’s ultimately what allows growth like this to happen. ”



Back to March 2020. The shelves at Stewart Golf’s Gloucester HQ were full of finished trolleys ready for a busy golf season. An Easter promotion went ahead and was more successful than was hoped (causing the two Directors who were packing orders to curse their phones every time the ‘kerching!’ sound rang out for a new order). However, the big change was what was happening on the other side of the pond.

The USA is a big place and it’s dangerous to make generalisations, but many American golfers get around the golf course in two-person buggies rather than walk. Whereas in the UK courses might have half a dozen of these available for rental, it’s not uncommon to see hundreds of buggies at US courses. During the pandemic, social-distancing regulations dictated that sharing a buggy was no longer permitted.

No course had enough buggies for every player, so golfers started to walk. And when golfers started to walk, they wanted a golf trolley to carry their golf bag. And if you’re a golf trolley company, you’re in demand! A Wall Street Journal headline even read: “We’re Out of Toilet Paper, Hand Sanitizer – and Golf Pushcarts?”

April and May 2020 saw more revenue come through the US website than the whole of 2019. It’s fair to say that Stewart Golf was not prepared for this kind of demand so scrambled to try to keep up. Stewart Golf exports to more than 40 countries and demand the world over was soaring. A decision was quickly made to ‘go for it’ and make hay while the sun was shining, as nobody knew how long it would shine for at that stage. Schedules were thrown out of the window and the Production Manager joked he’d had to install a ‘sh\*\*loads’ button on the MRP system to make ordering easier. The production team grew to help keep up with the new demand, but the order book quickly grew and with it lead times went out to 12 weeks. By the end of 2020 the company had doubled sales to £5.1million.

A question that was asked regularly was: “What happens when we get back to normal?” The board at Stewart Golf made the decision to invest the proceeds of this growth straight back into the business with the aim of building a team capable of creating and fulfilling demand at a much higher rate. As we approach the end of 2021 sales will increase again to north of £6.5million in a year beset by supply chain

issues, but the theoretical capacity of the 10,000sqft Quedgeley HQ is now almost double that.

CEO Mark Stewart is acutely aware of the role luck played in the company’s growth during the pandemic. “It’s clear the environment changed and that caused demand to increase dramatically. However, we were bold in growing the team and investing in our facility to deliver the results we achieved. Our challenge now is to use this momentum as a platform to grow the business further and hit our ambitious targets for the next few years.”

“Nobody could have forecast the kind of growth that we have experienced in the last 18 months. With all of the supply chain issues the world is experiencing, it’s been a bumpy road to say the least. It’s a cliché but none of this happens without a team of people who care about the business and everyone within it. We have a strong positive culture at Stewart Golf and that’s ultimately what allows growth like this to happen.” 




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“ The current talent environment has the power of employment in professionals’ possession, and the best companies recognise it. ”



# What Great Leaders Get Right About the Talent War

By John Eades

You can't lead without people. Unfortunately, many bad leaders forget this simple truth. Instead of investing in and developing solid relationships with those they get the opportunity to lead, they complain, blame, and act as if people are disposable.

While no great organisation would advocate with this as a sustainable approach, it wasn't the worst talent strategy for decades. Countless professionals were looking for employment, and those employed were scared about keeping their job. This put the power squarely in the hands of organisations.

However, the current environment has shifted dramatically, and the power of employment is now in the hands of talented professionals, and the best companies recognise it.

Research suggests that between 55% - 70% of professionals are actively looking



John Eades, CEO, LearnLoft

John Eades is an author, speaker, executive coach, and CEO of LearnLoft, a leadership development company that helps managers and executives lead their best. He was named one of LinkedIn's Top Voices in Management & Leadership, where his weekly leadership newsletter has over 230k subscribers. He is the author of, *Building the Best: 8 Proven Leadership Principles to Elevate Others to Success*, and he is also the host of the *Follow My Lead Podcast*, which has been downloaded over 700k times. His work has been highlighted on Inc.com, CNBC Money, and was a guest speaker at C2S Leadership Week in 2021.

to change jobs. Most professionals who have left or are thinking about going aren't walking away for a small pay raise. They are walking towards leaders and companies who care about them and add value to their lives beyond a paycheck.

Great companies change the lives of their team members, not just their bank account.

While no company or leader is perfect, there is a long list of companies going above and beyond to positively change the lives of their team members. Chick-fil-A, Movement Mortgage, Lippert Components, and Cora Health come to mind, to name a few. Creating a culture that changes

the lives of their team members sounds obvious; putting it into action is a much different challenge.

## Retention Rules

On average, employee turnover costs organisations between 1x-2x a year's salary once they have been in the organisation for over three years. A Google study found that the average employee that turns over within one year costs about \$50,000. The cost of turnover is expensive, and retention is essential.

Most leaders and organisations grasp this, but instead of implementing formal retention efforts, they go with the "Next



“ Research suggests that between 55% - 70% of professionals are actively looking to change jobs. Most professionals who have left or are thinking about going aren't walking away for a small pay raise. They are walking towards leaders and companies who care about them and add value to their lives beyond a paycheck. ”

**LEAD AND INSPIRE PEOPLE. DON'T TRY TO  
MANAGE AND MANIPULATE PEOPLE.  
INVENTORIES CAN BE MANAGED BUT  
PEOPLE MUST BE LED.**



Ross Perot

employee up mentality.” This is a powerful mantra that many of the best sports teams live by when a player gets hurt or can't play for another reason. Not only is it a good one, but it's true. Every single person is replaceable, and no one is trying to change that.

However, in a talent market like our current one, retaining high performers and great team players deserves a dedicated strategy corporately and implemented by each manager.

The key to retention is for front-line managers to behave like leaders.

### All Turnover Isn't Bad

One of the most significant mistakes leaders make is that they have to retain a team member that hurts their culture because the talent pool is limited. This couldn't be further from the truth. Team members who aren't willing to sacrifice their interests for the team might seem to help in the short term, but they hurt in the long run.

There is never a good time for a leader to retain selfish team members.

Now contrary to popular belief, people do change. Especially when it comes to grasping the consequences of one's actions. If a team member is struggling to meet or exceed the standard required to be a part of a team, make them aware. Then coach and give them a chance to make adjustments before deciding to move on.

### Be Proactive Around Talent

A recent Korn Ferry study found by 2030, there will be a global human talent shortage of more than 85 million people, resulting in \$8.5 trillion in unrealized annual revenues. This means the talent shortfall is here to stay, and the employment market will continue to be hyper-aggressive. What's required to thrive in a hyper-aggressive talent market is proactivity in seeking and developing people.

Lawrence Bossidy said it well, “nothing we do is more important than hiring and developing people. At the end of the day, you bet on people, not on strategies.”

Not only is Bossidy right, but it's also never been more critical than it is today. A relentless approach to seeking talent and an equally persistent effort to develop people inside the organisation are required to succeed today.

A relentless approach to seeking talent and an equally persistent effort to develop people inside the organisation are required to succeed today.

The “how-to” strategies to improve retention, good turnover, and successful recruiting are endless. If you want to know if your organisation is doing a good job, look for these as proof:

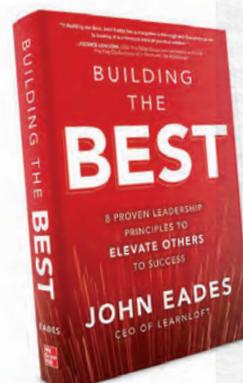
### Ideas and Suggestions

- Leadership development programs
- Best in class technology tools
- Core values highlighted in the hiring and promotion process
- Culture of coaching and mentoring

I hope that instead of blaming, complaining, and acting as if people are disposable, you will do your part to make a difference in people right where you are. Use the opportunities in front of you to “bloom where you are planted” because that's exactly what the best leaders do. 📌

**John is also the author of  
Building the Best: 8 Proven  
Leadership Principles to  
Elevate Others to Success.**

You can follow him on  
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# Moving On Up

## Circle2Success Interviews George Tatham-Losh, Managing Director of Move Property Sales and Lettings

**M**ove Property Sales and Lettings is the fastest growing residential property businesses in the region. George has created a phenomenal business in just eight short years. From starting a property lettings business in his mum's kitchen to now employing over forty people across their two offices in Cheltenham and Gloucester, and is now recognised as the No1 property sales and lettings agency in Gloucestershire.

### How Did It All Begin?

My journey started at a very young age; I grew up around a family of business owners dedicated to their companies. I had a business throughout my childhood, and if I wasn't at school, I was working - from mowing lawns, cleaning cars, collecting antiques, and running a rather profitable noodle and sweets business from school.

Halfway through sixth form, I realised that school was not for me, my dyslexia made traditional life at school of exams and studying difficult, so I wanted to find a different way. I enjoyed rugby, business, art and socialising, so I decided it was time for me to get stuck in and see what

I could make of myself. From the age of 12, I knew I wanted to be in property, but I wasn't sure precisely what sector.

My first struggle of many was when I left school in 2007, there I was looking to get into property with no qualifications. Nevertheless, I was determined, and after three rejections, a local firm decided to take a risk and employ me as a trainee lettings negotiator. Always first in and last out six days a week, I was trying to fast track my career. To aid this, I enrolled with ARLA (Property Mark) to prove that I knew my trade at the grand old age of 19.

Soon after, I decided that employment was not for me, my head was full of ideas, and I just wanted to run with them. After selling my much-loved VW Golf, I had £1000 to my name and invested in the parts to make a computer myself to save some money. After this, I built my website, brand and Lets Rent was born! To keep costs down, I set the business up in my bedroom. I attended every networking event I could and worked solid 15-hour days, 7 days a week, so failure was not an option for me. Finally, I landed my



George Tatham-Losh, Managing Director of Move Property Sales and Lettings

first client, a firm of IFA's who had four properties they had purchased in a SIP; this gave me a tiny income but some security to push the business more.

### Growing The Business

Moving forward a year, I took up new premises, my poor mum was kicked out of her dining room, and I set up the new office. I employed one of my best mates from school to join the Lets Rent crew as it was known at the time. We ended up with three of us from the same school working together, we all worked very hard, and the business grew.



18 months and although some markets have slowed a little, there is plenty of opportunity for investment and great returns in 2022. We have reinvested back in the company to continue our growth plans, expand headcount, new areas and further growing the premium side of the business for properties valued at over £1million, we have developed a unique premium service at this level, which is booming.

### Lesson Learnt Along the Way

Believe in yourself, don't give up, if you keep trying eventually you will win. These lessons along the way have given me great resilience and a can-do attitude. We are limited by our own thoughts and views, if we have a can't do attitude that is where we end up, if we have a can-do attitude then we get there in the end, even if it takes a while! I have grown in confidence and learnt so much over the years, I think wrapping around yourself successful people who can support you and mentor you is imperative, if you want to fast track your business why wouldn't you learn from the people who have been there and done it. I have learnt we can't know everything so don't expect that of yourself but seek help and have a support network around you for that advice and knowledge you need along the way, there is no shame in asking for help, we should never stop learning!

### What Are Your Top Tips For Good Leadership?

Honesty, empathy, and integrity, these are the values I live by, for our clients and for the team. I truly believe you reap what you sow in life and if you have honesty and integrity and always do your best, you will eventually succeed. You need a little luck as well, but I believe these are essential characteristics of a good leader. I have built this business on reputation and respect and that is because these values are real and at the core of our culture. Try to Inspire everyone around you and lead from the front. Good communication is also key and in my top five attributes. 

Six years on the lettings business was booming and many clients were asking us to sell and find properties for them as well, so expanding into the world of sales was a natural progression, for this a company called Lets Rent would not work for obvious reasons. We agreed upon a new strong, bold brand, Move Sales & Lettings was formed.

Eight years on, we are no longer a small start up company, we now have two offices, employing 40 people across the business, specialising in investment portfolios and have a developer wing. We are known as the No1 property sales and lettings agency in the county and consistently top of the table for lets and sales per month in the area.

### The Team

Like all businesses my people are critical to our success. I have a fantastic team who have the same ethos and values, something that is very important to me.

Do not ask someone to do something you would do yourself, under promise and over deliver. I am still the first in and last out every day, the business is my passion, I love what I do and love working with the team I have.

### Why Launch the Move Charity Campaign?

It's important to us to give back to the community we work in, so the fairest way to support all charities was to let people decide for themselves who they want to donate to. So, we have just launched the Move Charity campaign and every successful sale from a referral using the code MOVECHARITY will receive a £250 donation to their chosen charity on completion, the team came up with the idea and I fully support it!

### The Future

It's a well-known fact that the property market has seen a boom over the last

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# The Business Helping to Keep Agriculture and Construction Moving

Circle2Success speaks to **Ian Beswick**, Managing Director of **AP Air Europe**

**W**hen most of the country froze at 5pm on March 23rd last year to take on board the magnitude of Boris Johnson's speech and its implications, Ian Beswick, Managing Director of Gloucestershire based AP Air Europe started work straight away on how the business would need to adapt.

Ian Beswick explained:

"As Europe's leading supplier of air conditioning spares, parts and servicing machines, we provide a vital service to both the agricultural and construction markets. Without our service many farms would have crucial vehicles out of action, greatly impairing their ability to keep the country fed. Once I had quickly come to that realisation, we started to plan on how we might adapt how we work, who would need to come into our Head Office and how our supply and distribution chain might be affected."

AP Air Europe tucked away on a business park off the A38, principally provide parts for agricultural and construction vehicles, but also stock parts for forestry vehicles, road sweepers and many others. They

offer next day shipment in the UK from a range of over 50,000 products, they also have their own 3,000 square foot warehouse in France and distributors in Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. In 2020 they shipped to over 50 countries. The firm mainly deals with engineers and installers, but they also supply the end user.

## How it all began

The business was set up in February 2010 and is run by Ian Beswick, Managing Director, his son Mike Beswick, Sales Manager and son-in-law Gary Watling, Marketing and Operations Manager. Ian explained where the inspiration for setting up the business came from. "I have spent much of my career working in one aspect or another of the agricultural market. This gave me a great insight into the market and of course lots of connections. Whilst there were lots of businesses supplying a wide range of products, parts and spares to the agricultural market, I felt there was a gap for a specialist concentrating on air conditioning parts for vehicles in

“ As Europe's leading supplier of air conditioning spares, parts and servicing machines, we provide a vital service to both the agricultural and construction markets. ”

the sector. Backed by specialist knowledge, fast turnaround and competitive prices I felt I had the makings of a successful business."

Fast forward to 2020 and staff, suppliers and some key customers gathered at the Stonehouse Court Hotel weeks before the lockdown, to mark the firm's 10th anniversary at what affectionately become known as the "party to end all parties". In ten years, the business had grown to employ just under 30 people and turned over nearly £5 million in the last full year.

## UP AND COMING EVENTS

**We run monthly Leader Boardrooms and Thought Leadership events to support business leaders**

Register your interest or get in touch:

[circle2success.com/events/](https://circle2success.com/events/)

Tel: 03300 536186

Email: [events@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:events@circle2success.co.uk)

“ We are at an exciting point in the development of the business – watch this space ”

### How did the business fare during lockdown?

After an initial period of adjustment, it was a case of remarkably close to business as usual. The business' practice of advance buying products proved to be very fortuitous, however, it was the AP Air staff that Ian identified as being the major factor in trading through Covid lockdowns. "Our staff were brilliant in the way they adapted, from the team in the warehouse adopting new Covid-friendly working practices, to our staff working from home and our sales team maintaining contact with customers remotely."

The firm's achievements during lockdown also resulted in it being shortlisted for awards this year in both the GlosLive and the SoGlos Business Awards.

### What is working at AP Air Europe like?

"We very much have a philosophy of working hard whilst enjoying ourselves. As well as events like our anniversary party, we also have regular on-site BBQs and surprise ice creams to help keep morale high during our peak summer months.

"We give every employee responsibility for their own job, providing them with the

skills, resources and support they need. As the business has grown we have put in place vital support structures, like HR, that a growing business of our size needs and we are always looking for opportunities for our employees to progress" added Ian.

The firm is also investing in Apprenticeships, having two already in place and scope for one or two more in the assembly and warehouse area.

### What does the future hold AP Air Europe?

Ian is very confident about the future prospects of the business. "The future looks very buoyant for the business. We have an excellent track record of growth that shows no signs of slowing. We plan to increase market share in our core market in the UK and grow our presence in the construction sector. This year we have launched our own City & Guilds Training Centre for air conditioning servicing and we see this as a good fit with our other services."

Despite the fact that the business already stocks over 50,000 products AP Air Europe is always looking to enhance its range. Amongst the most recent additions to the firm's portfolio are from FillIFlex a company that develops high

performance cab pressurizers for heavy duty vehicles that are used in specialist areas such as recycling/mining. To complement the existing compressor range, AP Air have also added INA belts and belt tensioners.

"The biggest growth potential though lies in overseas markets. Our new mainland Europe base in France has massive potential and is a great platform from which to develop the business we already do in France, Germany, Italy and the Nordic countries to name just a few." To support growth in general but also in Europe, AP Air have already signed up to exhibit at no less than six major shows next year including two abroad – Agritechnica and Bauma – which are two of Europe's leading shows for the industry.

"We are at an exciting point in the development of the business – watch this space" concluded Ian. 



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# The Increasing Importance of Non-Executive Directors Post-Covid

In this article C2S members **Moon Executive Search** look at the process and value of bringing a Non-Executive Director (NED) into your business

A survey conducted by EY: The NED Barometer (August 2020), revealed that as businesses face greater complexity, the NED role is becoming more demanding. This is only likely to intensify as boards respond to the full impact of COVID-19, with NEDs using their wealth of experience to help executive teams navigate unprecedented challenges. As businesses begin to understand what the future may entail, they must reshape to address societal shifts and plan for economic recovery.

**To plan for resurgence, NEDs will need to help their boards focus on:**

- ☉ Aligning purpose with customer needs
- ☉ Accelerating growth out of recovery to leverage competitive advantage
- ☉ Adjusting their business, their operating model and their eco-system to deliver the strategy and secure resilience and agility
- ☉ Evolving their financial framework to articulate and measure the delivery of long-term value

## 1 The Importance of NEDs

At Moon, we see that the addition of an independent voice in any business is critical. It allows a different perspective for boardroom discussions and providing valuable insights into the business and the surrounding landscape.

**Ask yourself a series of questions:**

- ☉ **What is your business model?**  
Listed, SME, family-owned, private equity etc? This will impact on the search criteria sought
- ☉ **Why are you hiring? What is the context and aims of the role?**  
This will determine what experience the NED needs to bring in to achieve your goals.
- ☉ **Fiduciary responsibility –**  
Does the candidate understand the legal obligations as well as their responsibilities and time commitment?
- ☉ **How will you value the NED once in situ?** What impact could the NED offer you in terms of press opportunity, supply chain impact, etc?



Vanessa Moon, Founding Director, Moon

## 2 What Are the Qualities of an Effective NED?

You should seek very specific attributes in your NED shortlists such as a considered, honest, approachable style, and a proven ability to interact at every level of the business. A good NED will challenge the board appropriately, bringing an independent perspective to decision making, whilst both holding to account and supporting the executive team.



Simon Quinn, Director of Search, Moon

“ We have increasingly seen a new wave of clients seeking NEDs with a changing skillset. There is a desire to bring different skills such as brand management, contract and bid exposure, as well as innovation and creativity. ”

We are seeing an increased demand for different types of NEDs in the post-pandemic world.

**Clients fall into two categories:**

- 1) Those looking for transformation and embracing a very different future, by disruption, innovation and growth
- 2) Those searching for assured leaders who provide stability in times of fluctuation

Some NED hires are based upon elevating the organisation’s profile. For example, the appointment of Levi Roots as Chair of St Pauls Carnival. Levi brings a relevant, established network and household name to a board. Other NED hires are based on adding top-line strategic help to the executive team. Recently City of Bristol College appointed Simon Face to their board. Simon comments:

“This was the first independent Non-Executive Director that the City of Bristol College had recruited for their subsidiary training business, Partners in Bristol (PiB). Following the search and selection process I was fortunate to be appointed and already feel there is a strong and relevant connection to the West of England business network and college values because of the pre-work what was done.”

Some appointments are also based on clients recognising the importance of robust corporate Governance practices, with strict fiduciary adherence with audit and risk at the heart of the search. Businesses may seek to strengthen or diversify their board skills in readiness for specific corporate activity such as an IPO. However, we see that many NEDs are chosen to address an imbalance of knowledge or diversity on the current board.

**3 When and How Many to Hire?**

The majority of NED appointments are made on a three-year term, with the option to re-appoint for a further three years.

Our experience suggests a NED should be hired after a thorough skills audit of the board and a NED should carefully consider what unique skills, they can bring in context to the existing board before they agree to join the organisation.

The number of NEDs on a board will vary according to whether we are discussing a regulated business with set guidance or, a privately owned business which can have a more flexible board composition. Our guidance would be that each NED appointed should bring skills or experience that is not already on the board.

Simon Quinn, Director of Search at Moon, comments:

“We have increasingly seen a new wave of clients seeking NEDs with a changing skillset. There is a desire to bring different skills such as brand management, contract and bid exposure, as well as innovation and creativity. Problem solving is now the most sought-after commodity, even though Governance naturally remains high on the agenda.”

Vanessa Moon, Founding Director at Moon said: “We have seen a demand for NEDs increase in recent years, many of our clients value that they bring an independent perspective to decision making, and can support and mentor the CEO and Senior Management.”

It is an exciting time to ask a NED to join your business, as they can add an unbiased pragmatic viewpoint. Know what you want and why, as the NED you appoint now can help you deliver for the future. 🎯

**MOON** EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Vanessa Moon:  
vanessamoon@moonexecsearch.com

Simon Quinn:  
simonquinn@moonexecsearch.com

www.moonexecsearch.com

# How do you identify the right Management Consultant for your business?



"Michael's advice was absolutely invaluable to us in our family business. We were so pleased we asked him to help, it was money well spent."

Sophie, Owner, Retail.  
Turnover £1.1 Million

"Michael is known for his leadership in team building and strategic positioning"

Rich Powers, Divisional CEO  
Cookson plc Turnover £2.8 Billion

"Michael presented a compelling report that advised the board against 2 new market entries, saving the business a significant six figure sum of money".

John, Finance Director, Laboratories.  
Turnover £5 Million

"Michael has been an excellent business mentor for my business, my confidence and enthusiasm has increased, and my sales are on track to grow by 25%."

Linda, Owner, Lingerie.  
Turnover £150,000

There are 3 key things you need to consider – experience, expertise, and reputation as in what others have to say about them. Because ultimately, the proof of the pudding when it comes to the value any individual can bring to an organisation lies in the way in which the key people in that organisation view that individual's contribution. Here are a few unembellished views of some of the people who have first-hand experience of working with me.

One other thing you should consider in identifying the right Management Consultant for your business, is chemistry. Can you work with this person – to find out contact me for a get to know you conversation, either on the phone, in person or if you'd prefer over a virtual coffee on zoom.

[michael@thevalueinnovator.co.uk](mailto:michael@thevalueinnovator.co.uk)

07817 305 122

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## The Results are in for the C2S Business Leaders Survey 2021 Q4

The results of the 2021 Q4 survey are highlighted below and we explore some of the key themes, priorities and plans for business as we move into 2022

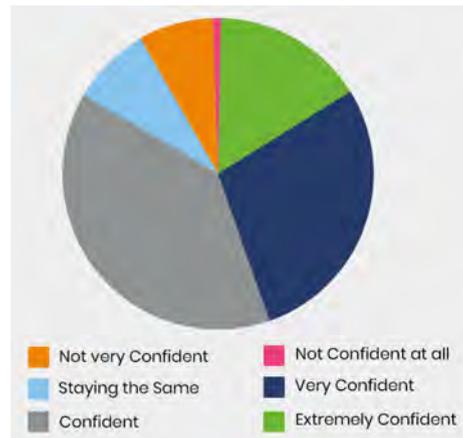
A key lesson of the pandemic has been to expect the unexpected and be prepared to move quickly and in multiple directions at once. Leaders that embrace options for workers, enhanced organisational efficiency and accelerated transformation plans have greater resilience in dealing with change.

Resilience, opportunity and risk have always been components of a good business strategy, but the pandemic has given them new meaning. The C2S survey provides a regular snapshot of some of the challenges facing senior decision makers and how they are responding and coping. We surveyed business leaders from organisations across a range of different sectors and sizes asking 10 key questions about their challenges and priorities. In sharing the results, we want to stimulate a conversation about where businesses go from here and if 2020 and 2021 were years of unplanned transformation, 2022 is where it gets intentional. We want to share ideas and best practice to maximise opportunities.

### Q1. How confident are you feeling about your business growth in 2022?

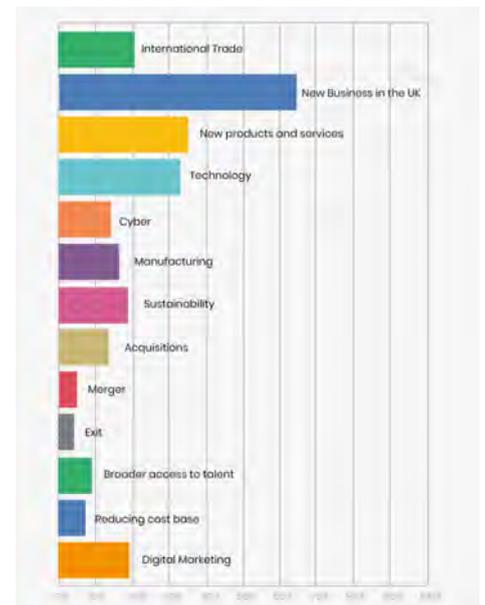
We see respondents are optimistic about the future growth of their organisations with 83% saying they are confident/very confident or extremely confident of growth in 2022 up from 75% in our Q2

survey. Only 8% of businesses expect to stay the same size and only 8% are not confident at all of growth. This confidence is what is needed to stimulate investment and release pent up demand for services, a good start going into 2022.



### Q2. Looking to the future, what do you see as your biggest opportunities in 2022?

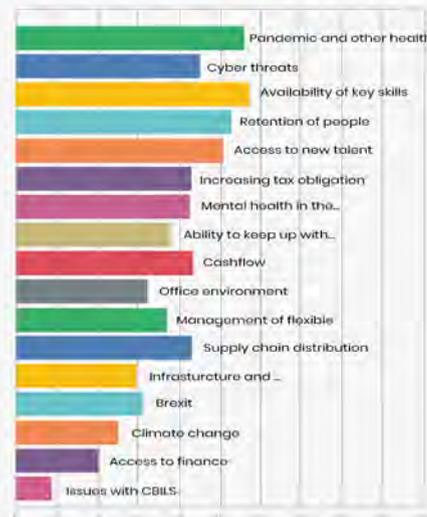
As you can see business leaders expect new business opportunities to primarily come from within the UK with nearly 70% sighting this as their biggest opportunity. There is then a drop to 35% and 32% seeing opportunities with new products and services and new technology. 20% of respondents had international trade in the mix for expansion.



### Q3. What are your top concerns over the next six months?

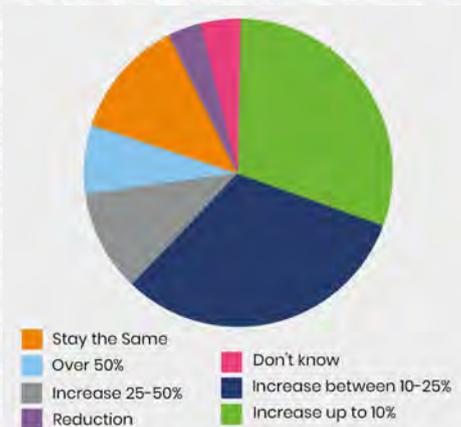
The top five concerns for business leaders over the next six months are:

1. Availability of skills
2. Pandemics and other health issues
3. Retention of people
4. Access to talent
5. Cyber threats



#### Q4. What impact do you expect to see on your turnover in 2022?

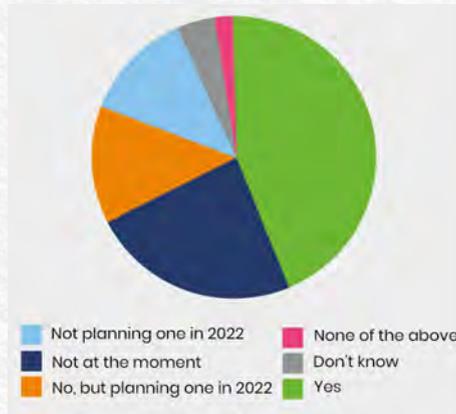
It is good to see such a positive response and mirrors Q1 on growth opportunities. Over 60% expect to see an increase of anything up to 25% growth, with nearly 20% of respondents expecting to see growth over 25% with 7% of those expecting to grow over 50%. Only 17% expect turnover to stay the same or drop.



#### Q5 Does your business have an ESG Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance Policy?

ESG and sustainability is more than nice to have, it's vital. Investors, partners, customers, and employees could potentially turn their backs on businesses that won't commit to building a sustainable future.

We expect to see more and more organisations waking up to the reality that talk alone will not get them where they need to be and it's good to see that 44% of respondents to this survey have an ESG policy with a further 14% planning to do something this year. 2022 needs decisive steps when it comes to ESG. We must turn talk, into walk.



#### Q6. Will you be recruiting in the next six months?

Over 70% of participants said that they would be recruiting over the next six months.

With higher expectations for business revenues and profits for the rest of the year, most business leaders' hiring plans are on the rise. This is reflected in our Leader Boardroom conversations and the answers to Q3 in this survey on key challenges, where availability of key skills and access to new talent was high on the agenda.

However, with the challenging labour market business leaders may need to rethink their typical hiring and retention methods in order to keep pace with anticipated growth. Organisations are going to have to think and act differently on how they attract and retain talent as expecting the same type of talent they have relied on in the past to deliver new and different business models is unrealistic.



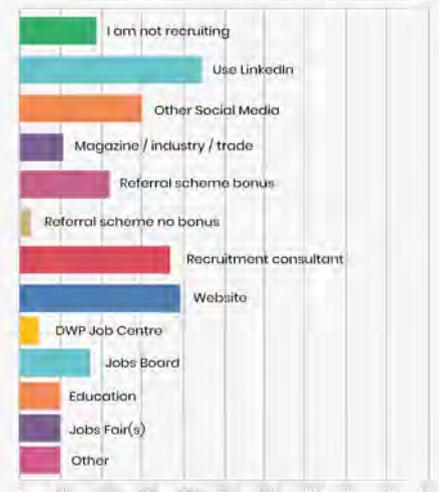
#### Q7. What skills will you be looking for?

Here are the top five skills businesses are currently looking for:

1. Admin/Clerical 35%
2. Apprentices 30%
3. Sales 30%
4. Senior Management 39%
5. Customer Service 27%

To remain competitive, businesses need to be able to attract, retain and progress diverse talent. This talent owing to their

different life experiences think and act differently, offering new and exciting future growth potential and opportunities.

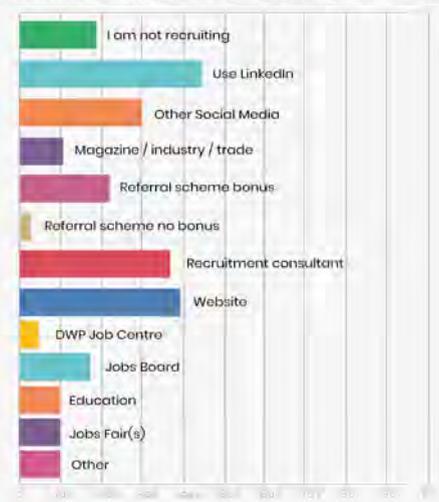


#### Q8. How are you currently recruiting?

The top four most popular ways of recruiting are:

1. LinkedIn 53%
2. Recruitment Consultants 45%
3. Website 45%
4. Other Social Media Platforms 35%

We expect to see a continuation of digital recruitment processes that were adopted during the pandemic. According to a Sage report, 24% of businesses have started using AI for their talent acquisition needs, with 56% of managers planning to adopt automated technology in the next twelve months for recruitment. With remote work as a mainstay option, employers are now casting their net for remote workers much wider. To sift through this larger talent pool, recruiters must adopt hiring technologies such as automation and AI.

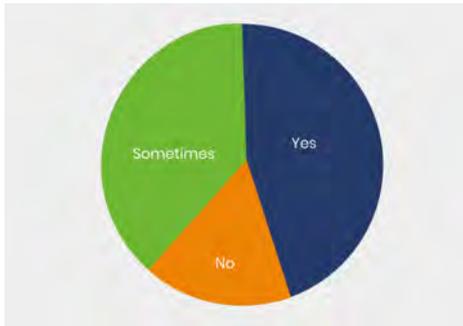


## Q9. Are you currently able to fill your vacancies?

Currently 43% of respondents said they were able to fill vacancies with 37% saying that sometimes they can fill the vacancies.

Job vacancies soared to a record high of almost 1.2million in September 2021, according to official figures, as employers hunted for staff to meet shortages brought on by Brexit and the pandemic.

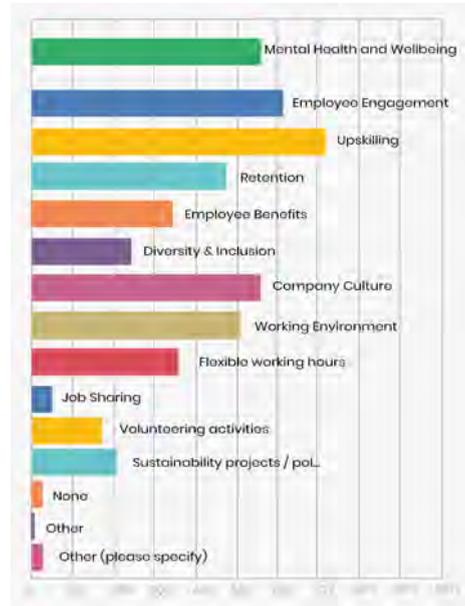
The Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures also showed a 207,000 increase in the number of people on payrolls to a record 29.2million – 120,000 above pre-pandemic levels. The fight for talent is on and will only increase in 2022. Employers are going to have to look at different ways of recruiting different groups of people and skillsets if they are to attract the best talent into their organisations.



## Q10. What are you focusing on in the next 12 months to support your people?

The top five areas that organisations were focusing on for the next 12 months are:

1. Training/development and upskilling – 71%
2. Employee Engagement – 60%
3. Company Culture – 56%
4. Mental Health and Wellbeing – 54%
5. Flexible Working Environment – 50%



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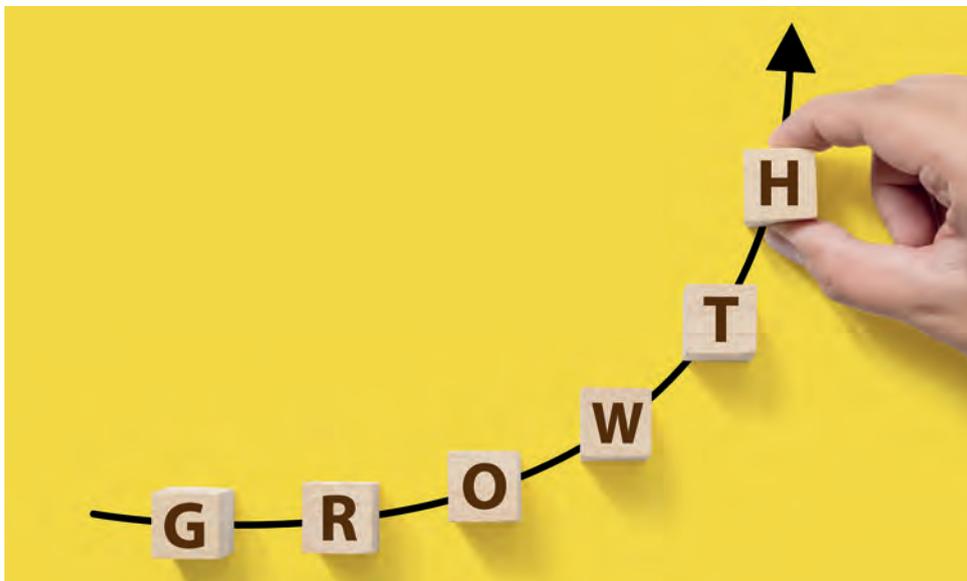
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Through the pandemic executives have become more trusting of what technology can do, and they are pushing ahead with digital transformation. New opportunities will include investment in technologies such as AI, IoT, blockchain and cloud. The benefits long cited have become more broadly embraced by business leaders. To be successful, organisations need to be sure their people are as capable, resilient and adaptable as their technologies are, and we see the focus on people and culture. Addressing skill gaps is high on the agenda of business leaders.

Thank you to everyone that took part and for sharing with us your thoughts, challenges and opportunities. These findings will be shared with MPs and Local Government representatives to help them better understand the challenges for businesses. We will survey business leaders in six months' time to assess progress and changing priorities.

If you would like to take part in our next survey or be part of C2S Question Time to discuss and debate these questions, please do get in touch [info@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:info@circle2success.co.uk)

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# Your Life Journey

By Nick Latimer, Crowe UK

The last 18 months have been like no other, with businesses and employees trying to keep pace with change and uncertainty. It may be a moment to pause, take time out from the commercial side of business, and focus on you.

When you look at the future, what do you see yourself doing and has this period solidified any views you have? Maybe you want a big change, a shift of emphasis or maybe you are happy with your lifestyle and want to do more for charity or give something to your community?

Whether you intend to move your life on in a big or small way, visualising the future is not usually enough. You need a plan to help you reach your goal, without allowing the cost and potential complexity of what you want to form a barrier to progress.

Whether you are starting out, aspirational, focused on your children, confused, exhausted, settled, happy, retiring, wanting change, new parents/grandparents, looking at ways to help others – there are ways to plan ahead which can be made

“ The last 18 months have been like no other, with businesses and employees trying to keep pace with change and uncertainty. ”

easier by prudent, cost-effective decision-making and a clear vision of what you want to achieve.

## So how do you decide what is going to work for you?

Crowe's Private Wealth team is here to help you make cost-efficient decisions and fund your forward plan in a way that fits in with your life plan and seeks to maximise value. We have recently released two free web-based tools which are designed to make it easier for you to forward plan. We can help you at each step of your journey. The first tool is Your Life Builder Crowe – Your Life Builder ([crowelifebuilder.co.uk](http://crowelifebuilder.co.uk)).

The Your Life Builder tool looks at different major life events and choices you may make in your lifetime, be it deciding to start a family; supporting your children, becoming a business angel, moving overseas or building a business. You can then drag and drop these events/choices into a journey planner, which provides advice on efficient ways to achieve your goals. As well as sound advice, we will help make sure you aren't tripped by any of the hurdles along the way.

For those a little further down the track, the second tool is included on our dedicated Inheritance Tax hub Inheritance tax hub | Crowe UK which gives free access to an Inheritance Tax calculator. Using this tool, you can calculate your own estimated liability based on your financial position, which is a great starting point to determine whether or not you want to do anything to reduce your exposures. Although tax is always changing, and at this time more than ever, with tax increases on their way, it is important to have a plan in place that deals with what we know now. This can



Nick Latimer, Corporate Finance Partner, Crowe

make it easier to change direction quickly if and when things change.

It is easier to seek professional advice when you have a clearer idea of the future. We are putting the tools in your hands to help you construct a plan. Once you have a plan, talk to one of our Private Wealth team to ensure you fund your plans in the most tax and cost-efficient way at the time you decide to implement them.

Different options to fund life steps depend on current tax regulations and options. We keep on top of all the rules and regulations and never recommend tax schemes or planning that is likely to backfire. We are dedicated to the private wealth sector, and ensure you are aware of the likelihood of any changes that might affect you. ■

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# Attracting investment for IPO

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## Andy Kay, Partner at Crowe, Corporate Finance, explores attracting investment for an IPO

Many companies look for external investment by means of an Initial Public Offering (IPO). Along with colleagues in the Corporate Finance team at Crowe, I advise companies through the entire process.

The key issue is invariably how to present your company and how to make it attractive to investors. Principal elements are the numbers, business model and the business' competitive edge – but never underestimate how important your people are in the mix, particularly those in key roles.

Potential investors are looking at future returns. They are unlikely to invest based on historical achievements, although they will look at your financial track record. They invest based on what you are going to do next and how well placed you are to do it.

Investors do not usually want a hands-on role. They are looking to you to have the right people in place. Their primary concern is with the skills and experience of key people and Management teams. Good business people can be successful in many fields. A trustworthy, proven team is worth its weight in gold to you.

The key roles, at least those of CEO and CFO, need to be filled by good-quality, competent people and the principal business teams in production, sales, distribution and marketing need to be strong. Gaps can be filled but key people need to be in role with demonstrable experience.

In addition, you need a profitable business model in which key elements continue to work effectively as the business grows. Ideally the model should have the capacity

to generate above average returns either immediately on receiving that vital investment injection, or reasonably quickly afterwards. The investor wants to see a return.

How well-diversified is your portfolio of assets? By assets here I mean the key elements of products, customers, supply chain and people.

Three excellent high-value customers will not give as much confidence to the investor as a much higher number of regular customers. If you lose one customer, it should not be catastrophic for the business. This will form part of the risk assessment.

You need to demonstrate that you do not depend on one person, one customer or one product to make your business a success. A healthy well-adjusted business will look far more attractive.

Competitive market position is the final part of the jigsaw. Businesses with a technical advantage that enables them to start ahead and fight off competition, will always be more appealing than an 'and me' business that may prosper for a while and then decline.

How do you ensure everything is in place and whether you are presenting the most attractive face of your business? We recommend a corporate finance review, which will include finances and tax. It usually makes a huge difference, highlighting risks and tax efficiencies that enable you to save money and ensure numbers are presented to encourage investment based on the experience of the corporate finance professional. 



Andy Kay, Corporate Finance Partner, Crowe

“ You need to demonstrate that you do not depend on one person, one customer or one product to make your business a success. ”

To find out more, or for a preliminary discussion without obligation, please contact me via email [andy.kay@crowe.co.uk](mailto:andy.kay@crowe.co.uk)



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# If ESG Isn't On Your Board's Agenda, It Should Be

The global pandemic has made many customers acutely aware of how employees are treated and how businesses affect their environment, and top talent cares about employers' ESG reputation

**M**any businesses have had to pivot and find new ways of working during the pandemic and as the economy begins to revive, there's a strong motivation for creating a better, more sustainable and more inclusive future.

How can you become an ethical, sustainable business that communicates your values and success to stakeholders and investors? We spoke to leading accountancy and advisory firm BDO about why they believe that ESG is an important part of every business strategy.

## What is ESG?

ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) has become more than just a buzzword in recent years. Businesses across all sectors of the economy have embraced an increased focus on sustainability, environmental and ethical concerns. The drivers for change are evident and there is now a clear requirement for businesses and their investors to demonstrate a commitment to ESG criteria.

A wide variety of criteria and behaviours can fall under the ESG heading and in some areas, there is overlap. The below is not a definitive list, but can help companies identify the areas that need to be considered and the challenges being faced:

### Environmental

- Climate change
- Environmental risks
- Energy use and alternative energy
- Pollution, waste and recycling
- Natural resource conservation and sustainability

### Social

- Workplace safety
- Human rights
- Workforce diversity and inclusion
- Working conditions
- Wellbeing
- Impact on community
- Charity donations and volunteer work
- Suppliers

### Governance

- Accurate and transparent accounting
- Anti-corruption
- Executive pay
- Board diversity, structure and independence
- Shareholder voting rights
- Ethics
- Political donations
- Tax policy



Matthew Sewell

## ESG: Why is it Important?

Setting an ESG strategy and goals helps make a company's ethical and sustainability actions accountable, quantifiable and easier to compare and benchmark with competitors. It also makes it clear to shareholders, customers, employees and other stakeholders that an organisation is socially and environmentally sound, which is becoming increasingly more important.



Our recent survey of UK mid-market businesses showed that ESG was seen as the highest priority for 38% of respondents, higher than any other issue including COVID-19. What is more, 25 per cent were pledging to go carbon neutral or net zero. Almost a third (31%) also thought that there was a high risk of losing business if they failed to meet acceptable ESG standards over the next five years. This indicates just how important ESG issues have become for businesses and the risks posed from not taking action.

## Tax as an Essential Part of your ESG Agenda

Businesses are increasingly adopting and articulating clear tax principles, aligned to their broader ESG agenda. This is a critical element in providing a 'social licence' to operate which is ever more important to shareholders, investors and wider communities.

Tax is a key ESG metric. External stakeholders are interested in a business's corporate income tax behaviours and evidence of the level of tax responsibility it adopts in terms of aggressive tax strategies as well as the level of economic contribution the business makes to society.

In response, many businesses are signing up to increasing transparency standards including the OECD/G20 Principles of Corporate Governance, the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) standard for comprehensive tax disclosure and the International Business Council (IBC) of the World Economic Forum – Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics.

It is also important for finance and tax leads to have informed conversations with stakeholders about taxation and wider economic contribution. This is vital in the M&A space where an investor's ESG program will include evaluation of the investor's and investee entities' tax framework. We also see this as part of the Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI).

Increasingly, businesses are expected to be transparent about how they approach tax matters and tax payments. Greater transparency means providing relevant and meaningful insights on tax strategy and tax contributions across all jurisdictions. Our three key takeaways from a tax perspective are below:

Increasingly, businesses are expected to be transparent about how they approach tax matters and tax payments. Greater transparency means providing relevant and meaningful insights on tax strategy and tax contributions across all



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jurisdictions. Our three key takeaways from a tax perspective are below:

### 1 Talk the Talk: Tax Policy, Principles and Risk Appetite

Disclosure of a tax policy, principles and tax risk appetite outlining the company's approach to taxation. This should demonstrate how the approach to tax is aligned with the business' ESG vision and its sustainability objectives.

### 2 Walk the Walk: Governance and Risk Management

A Governance and risk management framework provides comfort and assurance that there are the mechanisms in place to ensure awareness and adherence to tax principles. This should include clear procedures in relation to compliance and tax risk management.

### 3 Show People What You're Doing: Transparency

Shareholders, investors, regulators and increasingly the wider community expect transparency on tax-related risks, total tax contribution and country-by-country activities.

## Summary

Showing that you care about the planet and people just as much as you care about profit is no easy task. Businesses

need to be able to demonstrate to clients and prospects the progress they have made, and that future commitments are in line with the ESG agenda. Many businesses are already getting to grips with ESG but those who are lagging are likely to face greater reputational and commercial risks in the future. Make sure your business isn't left behind your competitors. Develop your ESG strategy and spread the word.

**BDO UK provides tax, audit and assurance, advisory and business outsourcing services to companies across all sectors of the economy. Operating from 18 locations and employing 6,000 people. BDO LLP is a key member of the BDO global network of public accounting, tax and advisory firms providing business advisory services in 167 countries, with 91,000 people working worldwide.**



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# Grabbing the M&A Opportunities

After a difficult and unusual year for deals in 2020, signs are pointing towards a general overall recovery with significant boosts in specific sectors

**D**ata from Experian, gathered from deals completed in the South West in the first half of 2021, shows a promising picture in the region with 354 deals completed in the first six months of the year, an increase of 53% on 2020. Valuations are also up 293% on the same period giving a clear indication of a return in confidence in the marketplace.

## Driving the Deals

The tech sector has inevitably continued to boom with the surge of working remotely and the hybrid-working models that are now commonplace. Disruptive technology such as the increasing use of AI and advances in automation has seen interest amongst investors looking to capitalise on the technology and invest in forward-looking companies. There is also evidence of companies looking for sector specific acquisitions and, whilst sectors such as property may have had a bumpier ride, logistics and online retail have seen a boom.

Environmental Social Governance (ESG) is becoming an increasingly important factor when reviewing potential opportunities for growth. ESG is used by investors to establish how socially responsible a business is in terms of relationships with employees, supply chain and customers as well as the role it plays in the wider community. These criteria can also be used to identify risk in terms of companies which may not have

appropriate approaches to sustainability or governance.

The environmental aspect of ESG is also becoming an increasingly important factor for M&A activity as more companies publish their intentions and associated timescales for achieving 'net zero' and look to acquire or merge with companies in line with their own objectives and aspirations.

## Challenges to Acquisition

Inevitably there are challenges to the acquisition process. Many sectors are experiencing difficulties with their supply chain, in part due to Brexit and the additional red tape surrounding goods entering the country. Swathes of businesses are also increasingly affected by issues with the distribution network in the UK. Most recently, the petrol crisis, although fuelled by speculation rather than supply, has affected businesses and individuals with retailers also predicting potential issues relating to the movement of goods in the run up to the critical Christmas period.

Other challenges can arise in terms of legislation. The introduction of the National Security and Investment Act has placed additional requirements on sales and acquisitions in 17 key sectors. As a result, these transactions may be subject to review by the Secretary of State to ensure that there are no national security



Adam Kean, BPE Solicitors

concerns. Purchasing certain proportions of shares of entities in these sectors will lead to a mandatory review which will mean that the deal cannot complete until clearance has been obtained.

## Action Plan

For companies looking to grow inorganically, via merger or by acquiring another business, preparation is the key to success. What are your objectives for growth? Are you looking to expand your market share, add on a complementary business or one which provides a new product or service offering to build on your existing business model?



“ Adam and the team at BPE have continued to provide us with commercially astute advice and I am grateful for their genuine desire to help us build our business. Our recent acquisitions have helped us to widen our sector capabilities, extend our national offering and to continue to grow the business in line with our strategy. ”

Phil Barton, CEO

## UP AND COMING EVENTS

### We hold monthly online Finance Focus Groups for all

Dates available on our website, please register your interest here:

[www.circle2success.com/finance-focus/](http://www.circle2success.com/finance-focus/)

Tel: 03300 536186

Email: [info@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:info@circle2success.co.uk)

A successful acquisition is not without risk but can be beneficial for the business and a relatively quick way to grow. Additional financing may also be needed to secure the deal so preparation is key to ensure that the deal goes smoothly.

### Prepare

- Carry out thorough due diligence for legal, financial and commercial aspects of the deal to dig deeper into the performance of the target company. How are they performing financially, what existing liabilities and obligations do they have and are there any other risks you should be aware of such as key changes in personnel which may have an impact on the business or supply chain vulnerabilities?
- Are you 'deal ready' as a business? Do you have a team in place who can help to support the transaction? Are you financially prepared?

### Focus

- Don't let a potential acquisition distract you from other key issues and needs within your existing business.

Typical ESG factors include:		
Environmental	Social	Governance
Water use and management	Data protection	Bribery and corruption
Energy use	Employee engagement	Composition of the brand
Pollution	Diversity	Political contributions
Climate change and emissions	Community relations	Whistleblowing

### Support

- In an acquisition, your network of professional advisors will play a key role, supporting you as you prepare, negotiate and complete the deal. They can also help you with finding a target company and securing any finance you might need.

### Alignment

- Does your target company align with your current and future aspirations, particularly in terms of ESG? It may be that an acquisition could actually improve your overall position in terms of carbon footprint or culture.

### Negotiate

- Take advice and be prepared to negotiate to ensure that you pay the right price for your target company. It may also be possible to structure an acquisition differently too, for example, by making some of the purchase price payable on performance over a set period of time.

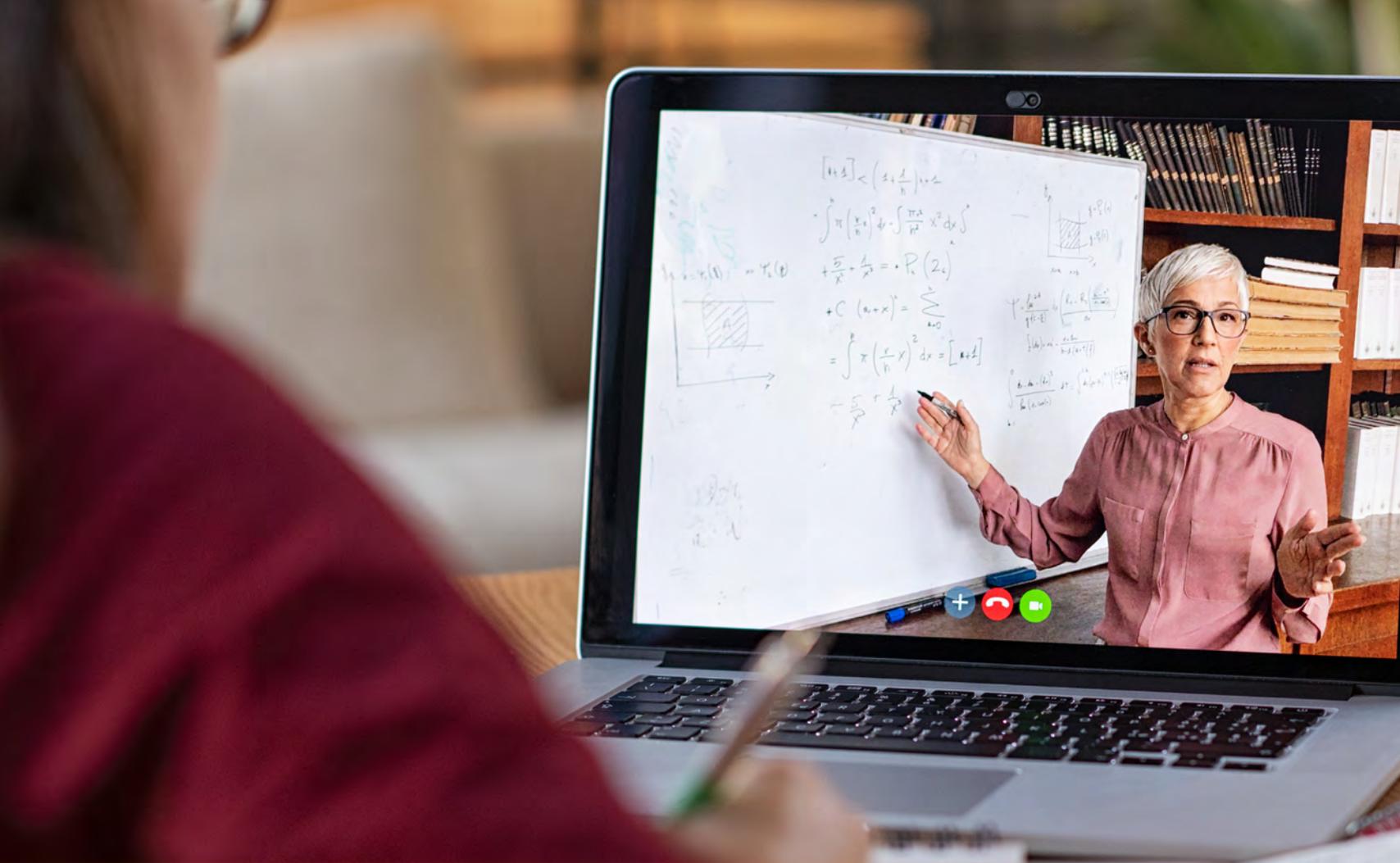
### Review and Realign

- Combining more than one business, either by merger or acquisition, comes with its own particular issues – from different systems and operations to potentially conflicting cultures. Your people are one of your most important assets and retaining key management or those with specific skillsets should be a priority.



Visit our website [www.bpe.co.uk](http://www.bpe.co.uk) or call us on 01242 300996





# Providing a Solution to Reconnect Business & Education

**D**uring the last 20 months we have had many conversations around the impact of lockdown on the education of our young people and as we emerge from those difficult days, we are now starting to see the true impact on business and education.

Businesses have not been able to connect with the next generation of talent in quite the same way, young people have been disconnected from the workplace, graduates' career confidence is low and the future of the workplace is changing rapidly, making it essential that the business community adapt quickly to better connect.

## The Problem

Young people and educational establishments have not had access to work experience, job fairs and careers events and our young people have not been exposed to the working environment through internships, part-time work or work experience. This has had an impact

on their ability to develop their social and employability skills and this has impacted on the confidence and wellbeing of our young people. Businesses are not able to fill their vacancies and apprenticeships and they fear they may have lost opportunities and engagement, which could impact on their growth plans of the future. A genuine Lose: Lose scenario for everyone.

With the constant threat of COVID-19 outbreaks and cases rising around the country, what can we do to reconnect and re-engage young people and businesses to inspire them for the future?

## The Facts

In a recent study of over 15,000 graduates by Bright Network (January 2021): What Do Graduates What, they found that confidence levels of students hit an all-time low at the start of the pandemic in March 2020 of 33%, and has not yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels (57% in January 2018). The biggest barrier to pursuing a career in



January 2020 was competition from other students, whilst in January 2021 23% said it was economic factors up from 6% in January 2020. 46% of students interviewed said that they were very worried about COVID-19 impacting their graduate prospects, and a staggering 77% felt that they had struggled to connect with employers due to COVID-19 restrictions. 36% had internships/work experience applications withdrawn and 21% had had graduate applications withdrawn. 📌

## C2S Connections

### A Solution

In 2022, Circle2Success will be focusing on what really matters to young people at schools, colleges and universities when it comes to connecting with employers in the 'new normal'. Circle2Success have launched C2S Connections, a campaign to bring students and businesses back together, reconnect young people and the business community, whilst overcoming the current challenges of transmission and limiting the contact where high COVID-19 rates exist, and reduce the impact of an outbreak in the workplace, all current real-life challenges for many months to come.

We are working with a number of organisations and schools, Further Education and Higher Education across the region to pilot an online digital speed networking event. These events will allow students to meet organisations online, in a safe environment to explore opportunities across the region - nationally and in some cases internationally. They will get to know the people that work in these organisations, break down barriers and build confidence to enable our young people to better understand the opportunities available to them and build relationships for the future, exploring work placements, apprenticeships, T Level placements, job opportunities and more.

Concerns have been raised over training and skills development opportunities for young people as we wait for the COVID-19 pandemic to abate. Government figures



revealed the number of people starting apprenticeships has dropped by 19% since the same time last year (May 2021) and we hear from our members that they are struggling to fill their apprenticeship places, so we need to do something. The C2S Connections campaign seems the ideal solution to bring students and businesses together in a safe environment. Providing a platform that allows these two sides to get together and get to know each other has got to be a good thing. Whilst the pandemic is still a threat it will be difficult to hold large career events and for some impossible for fear of transmission, so this is the ideal way to break down those barriers.

Circle2Success will be using their new online platform to provide the opportunity for students to digitally move around the room and meet different businesses and business people, providing an immersive, real-time experience where they can ask questions and explore new ideas and opportunities.

**Please get in touch if you would like to find out more or get involved with the C2S Connections 2022 campaign bringing students and business together:**  
[info@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:info@circle2success.co.uk)



77% of students surveyed felt that they had struggled to connect with employers due to COVID-19 restrictions.

*Thank you for your support*





# Attracting Graduate Talent

**Martin Perfect**, the **University of Gloucestershire's** new Director of Student Employability and **Dr Polly Pick** Director of Business Engagement and Partnerships share some top tips on how to attract and retain talent

According to a recent report by the Office of National Statistics, vacancies in the UK are at a record high, with £1.1million open jobs reported in the three months to August 2021.

Staff shortages across the distribution and hospitality sectors have been well-reported but employers in the region point to a wider problem that is not limited to just one or two industries. According to research by the British Chambers of Commerce South West, two thirds of employers in the region are experiencing difficulties finding the right staff. Moreover, half of services-based firms are struggling to fill professional and managerial roles.

So, the challenge for employers is clear to see but what can they do about it? Martin Perfect and Polly Pick from the University of Gloucestershire share their views on how working with the higher education sector can help employers to unlock a number of solutions.

Martin argues that there are some simple and cost-free steps that employers can take to instantly make vacancies more attractive to graduates.

"Between 70-80% of graduate jobs are non-subject specific, so I would recommend employers consider, where possible, students from all degree disciplines. No matter what subject they have studied, all our graduates leave university with advanced skills around

critical analysis, career management, communication and leadership. These skills are relevant for all professions, so by approaching the market with a more open mind, employers are rewarded with a much richer range of candidates.

"I also recommend that employers don't overly focus on degree classification. Very often attitude is more important, so by not being overly prescriptive you can open up opportunities to students and graduates with a desire to learn and get stuck in.

"Some feedback we often hear from learners is that it is off-putting when recruiters are less than transparent about pay. As obvious as it sounds, a job advert needs to state clearly the salary that you are willing to pay rather than use subjective clichés such as 'competitive'. If you can be flexible with regard to pay, then put down a clear range. Ultimately, jobs with clear salaries get better quality candidates and more applications.

"Today's job candidates can be more selective because they have more information and are paying attention to the details. The onus is now on companies to communicate a compelling message and value and is no longer on candidates to prove their skills. Communicate the organisation's purpose and demonstrate how employees are achieving that purpose. Leverage these examples in how the company tells its story.

"While social media is no longer new, there are still many companies that haven't embraced it. Employers should have a presence on the popular social media sites and develop a social recruiting strategy.

"Finally, employers don't have to wait until our students graduate to start working with them. Students can work part-time during their course and full-time during the holidays, so internships are definitely worth considering. Moreover, many of our programmes include placements of up to 12 months. All these options provide employers with a great opportunity to meet potential recruits, as well as develop a better understanding of the skills they need for growth."



**Martin Perfect**, University of Gloucestershire's Director of Student Employability



## Dr Polly Pick is the University's Director of Business Engagement and Partnerships

For her, retaining good staff is as important as attracting new ones.

Moreover, she sees apprenticeships as a key tool that employers can use to upskill their workforce according to their business needs.

"Offering well-designed employee development programmes isn't just a great tool for attracting new recruits, it is also paramount if you wish to keep the staff you already have. A survey by IBM found that employees who do not feel they are developing in a company are 12 times more likely to leave it. Conversely, research has found that investing in the education and training of employees contributes to a 40% increase in productivity.

"I think that many businesses worry that offering employee development programmes will be expensive, time consuming and difficult to implement. However, the good news is that recent developments in terms of apprenticeships mean that none of these things need to



Dr Polly Pick, Director of Business Engagement and Partnerships

be the case. Apprenticeships are now available at degree and master's degree levels. Moreover, they can also be used by employers to upskill existing staff, as well as train up new joiners. As a result, we are seeing more and more organisations turn to apprenticeships in order to realise their growth ambitions.

"Since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in 2017, employers with a pay bill of more than £3million have been able to use this to fund apprenticeship programmes – both within

their organisation and across their supply chain. Moreover, smaller employers can also access unspent levy funds, meaning they only have to pay 5% of training costs if they decide to offer apprenticeships.

"The wide choice of apprenticeships available often comes as a surprise to employers – for example, our portfolio ranges from cyber security to social work. What's more, we are always happy to talk to organisations about developing new apprenticeships if there is a clear market need.

"What I would say to any employer worried about skills gaps within their organisation is to come and talk us. There really are lots of options available to suit all sorts of levels of budget and need."



For further information about working with the University of Gloucestershire, contact [business@glos.ac.uk](mailto:business@glos.ac.uk)



# Spirax Sarco Talks Apprenticeships and Opportunities

Find Your Future at Spirax Sarco

## Why Spirax Sarco?

Let's start here. Put simply, a career with Spirax Sarco Engineering will allow you to play your part in helping our customers become more sustainable. But not just that, each employee matters and will contribute to help achieve our goals and Spirax Sarco's customer's goals. We offer a range of schemes to help kick start your career at a truly global organisation with a bespoke offer of engineered solutions.

At Spirax Sarco Ltd we employ over 1,000 people in Cheltenham across a range of engineering and supply chain disciplines. We require highly-skilled people to enable our business to develop, grow and to service our varied customer base. We also look to many avenues to maintain and develop these skills, but one of the best ways of doing this is through our structured apprenticeship scheme.

Spirax Sarco has recruited, trained, and employed apprentices for decades in Cheltenham and continues to do so. Several former apprentices have gone on to some very important roles

within the business (including Manager Director), highlighting the importance and value that Spirax Sarco place on these types of training programmes.

An Advanced Apprenticeship is a great way to stay in education, gain valuable work experience and learn new skills, whilst getting paid at the same time.

## What Apprenticeships are Available?

We currently offer two apprenticeship pathways, both at a Level 3 Qualification:

### 1 Advanced Craft

Aimed at gaining practical experience of producing parts and products, using a variety of methods and equipment

### 2 Advanced Technician

Includes theoretical and practical tasks covering all aspects of our business and then focused on a specific engineering role.



## So, What Does the Apprenticeship Involve?

Each pathway involves a combination of study with our learning provider and on-site experience undertaking various work placements, which will become more challenging but hopefully rewarding as your knowledge and competency increase.

## What Happens on Completion of the Apprenticeship?

If you successfully complete your apprenticeship, you will likely be offered a position with Spirax Sarco. Support for further education may also be considered, which is an option already taken up by many of our current apprentices.



## Case Study

### By Craft Apprentice, Amy Warburton

#### What are the Minimum Entry Requirements?

- 5 GCSEs at 4-9 or above, to include Maths, English and Science
- Hobbies/interests outside of school which show a genuine interest in engineering
- A recent job or relevant work experience would be beneficial

#### And, Finally, What are the Benefits?

- Competitive salary
- Bonus scheme
- 27 days holiday
- Pension scheme (up to 10% employer contribution)
- Health insurance
- Life assurance
- Subsidised restaurants
- Training and development

I have always had an interest in how things work and how they are made. At home, I spend my time maintaining my 36 year old classic mini. I chose to join Spirax Sarco because of the company's great reputation and because the apprenticeship scheme suited my interests and gave me the chance to get a better insight into engineering.

After I completed my A-levels I chose to do an apprenticeship as it allows you to develop practical skills as well as learn the fundamental theory. I also believe that apprenticeships offer you vital experience within the workplace that you would not get from going to university. Spirax Sarco has a well accredited apprentice scheme that gives all apprentices the opportunity to progress within the company.

My average day at work varies from placement to placement. All apprentices move on a rota around different departments within the company, from purchasing to the machine shops and assembly. Therefore apprentices

are able to develop their knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the business which helps us in our future roles. Placement supervisors will often give us projects to complete in the department which challenges us to think of new ideas and solutions, we also shadow our supervisors so we are able to learn how processes work.

I would like to progress my knowledge and understanding by completing HNC and HND. Post- apprenticeship I would like to work in our PED department. I really enjoyed my placement there as I was involved in various projects and given tasks that allowed me to work independently which greatly benefitted my learning.



Does this sound like something you could see yourself doing? Why not give it a go? Find out more today!

[www.spiraxlife.com/early-careers](http://www.spiraxlife.com/early-careers)

“ We’re so excited to be right at the front of technical education reform. Our team have worked with Government and employers on T-Levels from the beginning, and they look great. ”



# The T-Levels Revolution

In 2020, Cirencester College was one of only 45 schools and colleges launching T-Levels – the new gold standard in technical education

Already delivering T-Levels in digital, childcare, construction and health, the college will add management, engineering, accounting and finance in 2022. More will follow.

T-Levels are designed to meet our economy’s future technical needs and provide access to well-paid careers.

T-Levels are different because they are designed by employers with cutting-edge content. Students benefit from specialist classroom teaching alongside hands-on learning via 45 days of industry placements. Large placements mean that students

become useful to employers, who also get to preview available talent. Students gain sector skills, and practice and learn how to conduct themselves in a business. Assessment is radically different too. Instead of endless coursework or exams, assessment involves real-life scenarios and employer set projects which draw on all students’ knowledge, skills and experience. This means that learning can be based around real sector case studies and interaction with employers.

Jim Grant, Principal of Cirencester College said: “We’re so excited to be right at the front of technical education reform. Our team have worked with Government and employers on T-Levels from the beginning, and they look great.”

“Employers should imagine a world where new employees are confident, fully up-to-speed and competent to start work straight away. The new T-Levels are specially designed to create a pro-active workforce that can compete at an international level from day one.”

T-Levels can also be used to get into university if a student decides on that route.

Daniel Vesma, Practice Manager for Yiangou Architects Ltd in Cirencester, who took Construction T-Level student Joel on for his placement, explained: “The T-Level programme, and working with Joel, is helping us to play our part in developing future talent within architecture, whilst having an enthusiastic extra pair of hands in the office. If you go in with the understanding that this isn’t normal work experience, then your investment in time can be rewarding for everyone.”

Issy, an education and childcare T-Level student said: “The T-Level is honestly the best decision that I have made. It really has surpassed all my expectations. The qualification is a fantastic opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills for those looking to pursue a career in teaching, childcare and education. I cannot recommend it enough.”

The college has just been awarded capital funding for a new T-Level centre which will open in the Autumn of 2022. Both buildings will have great learning environments and the latest technology that will benefit our future workforce. 📍





## Time For a New Conversation About Careers

**Emma Taylor, Warden and CEO of The Dean Close Foundation,** consider whether it's time that businesses heard the students voice

**M**uch progress has been made in schools in recent years to ensure young people understand more about what their future job and career opportunities might involve. But might now be the time to make this more of a two-way process, with future employers listening to young people about their hopes and aspirations as well as sharing information?

Dean Close School is fortunate to have many professional and business links, enabling its pupils to meet and hear directly from business owners, professionals, and entrepreneurs about what each potential future choice of job might entail. Circle2Success has frequently supported careers events at the school, often open to those in the wider Cheltenham schools' network. Now would be a great time to take this a step further, developing a deeper conversation between employers and potential employees about what each one needs and expects from the relationship.

It is obvious, but true, that schools and education have changed a great deal since business leaders were themselves pupils. In particular, the concept of 'student voice' has had a major impact on the experience young people have had at school, with all young people offered an opportunity to express their views and to have an impact on what happens in their schools. By the time our pupils leave school, they are used to being asked for their views and to being able to influence their world, and they will naturally expect this to be a part of their working lives once in employment.

I have heard employers describe this generation of young people as 'entitled' – finding it surprising that, so early in their careers, they are keen to offer new ideas and frustrated if they are not asked for their views. However,



**Emma Taylor, Warden and CEO.**  
The Dean Close Foundation

the willingness to express new ideas and challenge the status quo is something schools are teaching them to do, and why would any ambitious employer not be keen to encourage ideas and initiatives?

So for those employers seeking to attract and retain the best and most talented new employees, a greater understanding of how the expectations and experiences of young people are changing can only help. It can inform the recruitment, induction and development processes that will ensure young people joining their firms are motivated to learn, grow and develop in their roles. We should not assume that what we ourselves experienced when 'starting out' is a good template for how to attract, train and motivate those emerging from school, universities and apprenticeships now, ready to embark on careers that will, for the most part, be very unlike those careers we ourselves have experienced.

We are excited about being part of a new kind of conversation about careers, one which must surely be to the benefit both of young people and their future employers whoever and wherever they are. 



[www.deanclose.org.uk](http://www.deanclose.org.uk)

If you are an employer who wants to be involved with the T-Level revolution and are keen to help shape your future workforce, get in touch.

Emma Guthrie

Employer Engagement and Work Experience Coordinator

[emma.guthrie@cirencester.ac.uk](mailto:emma.guthrie@cirencester.ac.uk)



[www.cirencester.ac.uk](http://www.cirencester.ac.uk)



# Creating the Next Generation of Talent

## Hartpury University and Hartpury College

The events of the past two years have taught us that we must prepare our students and their education pathways for the future, taking into account not just the changes that appear most probable but also the ones that we are not expecting. Businesses are realising these same lessons too, and the workforce must remain agile and productive whilst navigating change.

Here at Hartpury, our approach has always been built around a positive learning environment that empowers students to not only graduate with the highest level of academic attainment, but to also move into the workplace with a range of transferable life skills. Rather than looking solely at what an employer can do for our students, whether through work placements or future employment opportunities, we also look at what contribution our students can make to those businesses - this is crucial to the success of the partnership. Our industry-led impact-focused approach has helped many graduates seamlessly move into the workplace and make a real difference. Our close working relationship with businesses

allows us to focus on their needs and skill requirements, aligning and adjusting our curriculum as needed.

Resilience, flexibility and agility are no longer desirable skills, they are essential. Each and every academic programme at Hartpury is written with these skills in mind and our teaching staff remain committed to shaping well-rounded graduates with a positive can-do attitude

Change is inevitable, but these transferable life skills ensure our graduates and the businesses in which they work, are best placed to navigate and capitalise on whatever the future may bring.



Russell Marchant, Vice-Chancellor, Principal and CEO

## Hartpury University and Hartpury College Supporting Businesses Since 1948

Hartpury University and Hartpury College are among the UK's leading specialist education providers in agriculture, animal, equine, sport and veterinary nursing. Industry driven and impact led, Hartpury partners with over 2000 businesses. It has a global footprint, and is improving the lives of people, animals and the planet across the UK and internationally.

Located in Gloucestershire, on the edge of the Forest of Dean, the stunning 360-hectare campus is home to around 4,500 university and college-level students

studying degrees, A-Levels and diplomas, as well as undertaking cutting-edge industry research. Over the past 20 years, they have spent more than £50million on state-of-the-art campus facilities, including:

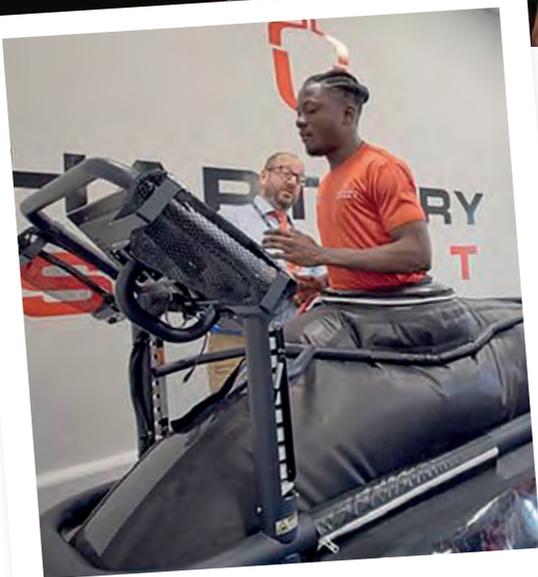
- 🌿 The world's largest equine educational facility with a water treadmill simulator, which hosts three international equine events each year.
- 🌿 Cutting-edge sports facilities complete with a power gym, pitches and a stadium.

“ Resilience, flexibility and agility are no longer desirable skills, they are essential ”



## Three things you didn't know about Hartpury

- 1 An extensive animal collection and therapy centre, leading the way in human animal interaction.
- 2 Hartpury's Human-Animal Interaction degree is the first of its kind in the UK. Animals play a central role in our lives and we have a huge impact on their wellbeing, as they do on ours.
- 3 Hartpury hosts 200+ industry events on campus each year.



The campus offers a range of services to support businesses including industry-led research expertise, world-class facilities, strategic partnerships, relevant business networks, sales opportunities, meeting rooms, conference facilities and an unrivalled recruitment pool of graduate talent.

Stuart Emmerson, Director of Business Development at Hartpury has been instrumental in raising the profile of opportunities to collaborate with the college and university. Stuart said: "Hartpury is well and truly open for business. There are a multitude of ways businesses can benefit from working with Hartpury whether it is industry-led research collaborations, work placements

and graduate talent, conference facilities, sponsorship and sales opportunities or simply coming along to enjoy our outstanding sporting events."

We are focused on performance, people and passion. Whether nurturing individual talent, creating formidable teams or growing your business through research, we have the expertise to help. Our campus is like no other, with world-class facilities and some of the best minds in the business. 

## Hartpury College

OFSTED Outstanding in all areas (2018), including residential provision (2019)

Highest achieving land-based college in the UK (all FE Qualifications, all levels, all ages – DfE, 2017-18)

## Hartpury University

Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

98% graduate employability (DLHE, 2018) ages – DfE, 2017-18)



**HARTPURY**  
UNIVERSITY  
AND COLLEGE

Inspired? Interested? Get in touch today to find out more about how you can engage with us. Visit [hartpury.ac.uk/](http://hartpury.ac.uk/) commercial or contact [partnerships@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:partnerships@hartpury.ac.uk)

-  An extensive animal collection and therapy centre, leading the way in human animal interaction.
-  A commercial farm and dairy unit supplying major retailers.
-  Fully equipped science laboratories with the equipment
-  An Agri Tech Centre for the latest agricultural technology.

# BRINGING THE TECH INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION TOGETHER

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[Gloscol.ac.uk/tech-talent](https://gloscol.ac.uk/tech-talent)

Our specialist IT and cyber courses give people the tech skills that businesses need for today and tomorrow. They are taught from our state-of-the-art £3m training centre known as ADA: The Advanced Digital Academy; the hotspot for developing tech talent in the heart of Cheltenham's cyber community.

  
gloucestershire college

## Preparing Our Young People For Life After School

**Matthew Burke, Principal at St Edward's School,** looks at the importance of helping students fly the nest after education

**G**etting careers education right in schools is a challenge. Not only do we need to equip our students with the skills to be successful in their careers but we also need to ensure they are flexible, agile and are able to adapt to take on futuristic roles.

One of the ways that we have sought to best prepare our students at St Edward's is to implement an all-encompassing careers programme. In establishing this we have enhanced links with our alumni as well as existing and former parents who support us by providing a mentoring and guidance resource for our current students. We have also forged links with local businesses and institutions and are already reaping the rewards with value being added to both sides.

Last year, St Edward's embarked on a relationship with the High Performance Learning educational philosophy and at the end of this academic year we should achieve the World Class Award status which will place us in a small group of schools worldwide with this achievement. This approach has enabled us to improve the academic outcomes at all levels and has also enabled us to embed attitudes and values into the educational experience. This places our students in a stronger

position when it comes to university and job applications. It is our responsibility to help our students secure the best academic outcomes and to also help place them in a position where they can make a success of their lives in whichever course they choose to take.

It has certainly been tough to secure real-life work experience in the recent months, but this has provided an opportunity for us to explore virtual work experience. We would very much welcome the chance to work with local businesses who felt this was something they could offer our students. We also offer a series of careers talks which helps our students understand the skills, competencies, qualifications and commitments required for particular careers. We would like to encourage all local businesses to get in touch should they wish to be involved in our careers programme, we would very much appreciate the support.

Gone are the days when a teacher takes on the role of careers lead in schools, we now have careers professionals who are best placed to provide objective guidance. This requires the construction of a careers development framework which no longer adopts the 'matching' model approach but responds to local and national demands



Matthew Burke, Principal, St Edward's School

and looks at the relationship between the career and the environment, society and community. This is a complicated and lengthy process which can not be achieved by being insular and so if any of the C2S community would be interested in speaking about ways in which we can work together to support our students and help mould them into future employees, I would love to hear from you. Encounters with employers is the most effective tool in motivating and inspiring young people to find out more about the opportunities available to them. <#>



[www.stedwards.co.uk](http://www.stedwards.co.uk)



# YOUR NEXT CHALLENGE AWAITS

## Step Forward

At L3Harris, we inspire excellence. Across all domains, our customers perform on the world's most challenging frontlines, and we are proud to employ innovators and problem solvers dedicated to delivering mission-critical solutions our customers depend on. Our commitment to speed, innovation and flawless execution are matched only by our dedication to providing every employee with an inclusive environment and rewarding career opportunities.

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- > Software Engineers
- > Machine Learning Engineers
- > Business Support
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Check out our latest vacancies at [L3Harris.com/careers](https://www.l3harris.com/careers)

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- Software Engineering
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- Data Scientist
- FPGA Engineers

To view all vacancies and to find out more visit: [www.l3harris.com/en-gb/united-kingdom](http://www.l3harris.com/en-gb/united-kingdom)



**2 X Vacancies:**

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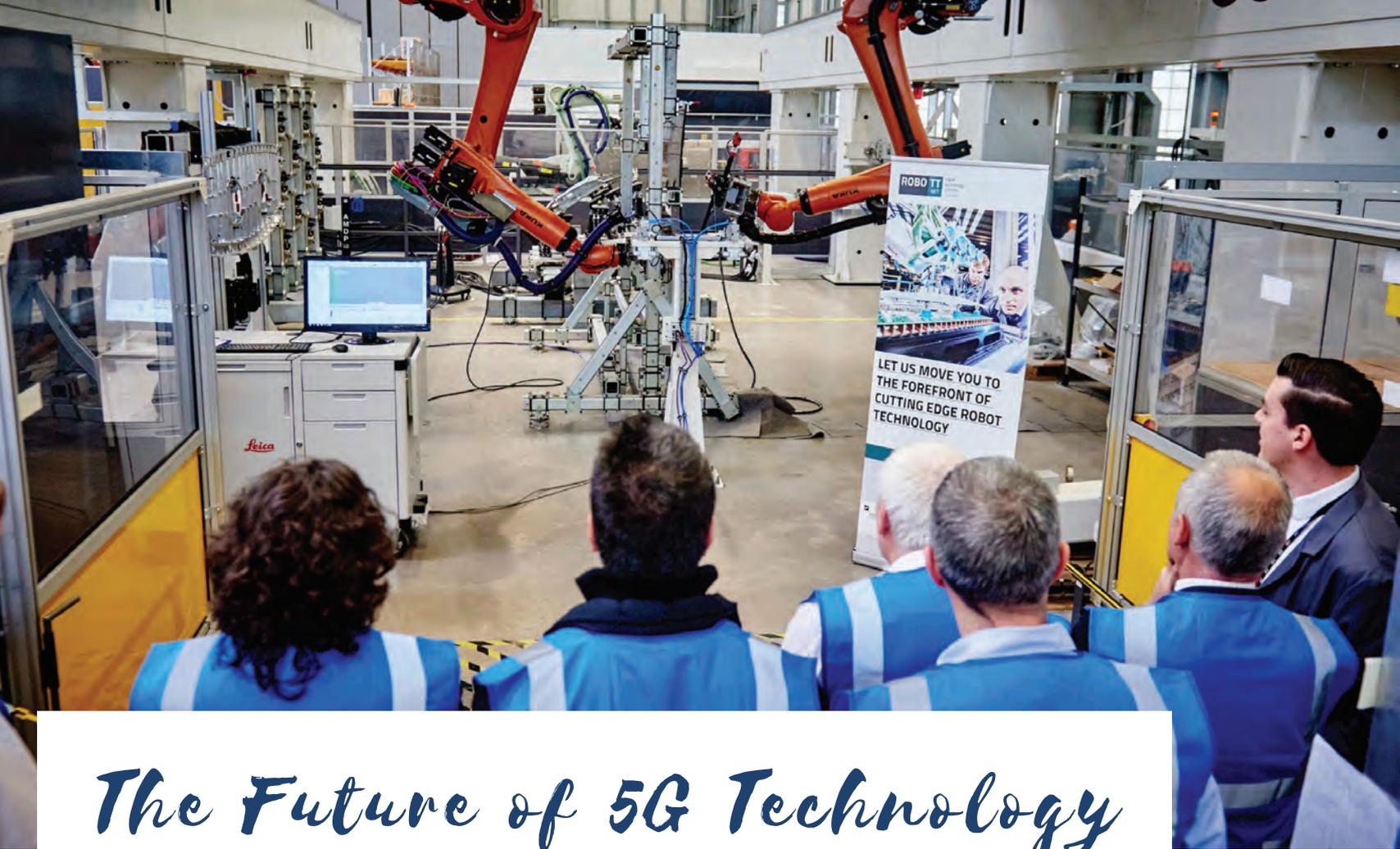
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# The Future of 5G Technology in Manufacturing

A recent study by Nokia and ABI Research found that 74% of manufacturing leaders are considering upgrading their communications networks by 2022. It's clear that 5G – with its low latency, designed-in security and high bandwidth – has a leading role to play, and projects are already underway to explore how this ground-breaking technology can benefit the manufacturing industry

We have crossed the threshold to the next industrial revolution, with factories embracing connected devices, automation and AI – opening the door to a new world of possibilities. The factories of the future need to work more quickly and efficiently, relying on their networks to drive productivity while generating cost savings. In partnership with West Midlands 5G (WM5G), the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC) is launching its 5G capability along with technology partners nexGworx and BT.

A first of its kind Nokia 5G Stand Alone private network has been installed at the



Alejandra Matamoros, Technology Manager, MTC

MTC's manufacturing research facility at Ansty Park, Coventry. The 5G connected facility will allow manufacturers of all sizes to explore benefits from multi-edge computing and wireless connectivity in digital manufacturing and robotics. A live 5G-connected robotics demonstrator will give companies an insight into how 5G can boost their productivity through connected digital innovation.

Alejandra Matamoros, Technology Manager at the MTC said: "Demonstrating the potential of 5G connectivity in our workshop facilities will advance the MTC's offering in digital manufacturing and automation to deliver additional levels of flexibility and intelligence in production and operational systems for UK manufacturers. We see the future of advanced wireless connectivity as an enabler to help recover and advance production capacity, efficiency and resilience."

She added: "We are establishing a long-term state of the art showcase facility to demonstrate best practice and the capabilities of 5G in production, logistics and infrastructure. Using an automated inspection application that features mobile robotics as our first use case, we are aiming to provide early insights into the technical and operational benefits of 5G. Our aim is to make them available to manufacturers within the upcoming months."

Many businesses may consider what benefits this new generation of



## Case Study

**A**E Aerospace, a leading manufacturing business in the West Midlands is the first UK SME to deploy a 5G private network working together with WM5G, Worcestershire 5G (W5G) and technology partner BT.

AE Aerospace operates a high precision engineering facility and has an ambitious growth strategy. They are undertaking three 5G-enabled use cases that have the potential to transform manufacturing productivity.

They believe that the 5G-enabled trials will both improve productivity and provide existing customers with a higher quality of service, alongside creating new business models and new revenue opportunities.

It will fast forward AE Aerospace's 'Glass Factory' concept, allowing the manufacturer to increase operational efficiency through the effective use of machine time, speeding up operations and providing their customers with more delivery certainty.

Peter Bruch, Managing Director at AE Aerospace says "The development of 5G Technology accelerates our Glass Factory, Servitized programme by improving our productivity and flexibility, reducing costs and lead time for our customers.

"Post pandemic and Brexit, this support enables the UK Manufacturing sector to compete on the world stage."

The UK's first private SME 5G network at AE Aerospace, powered by BT, will allow for the successful roll out of an automated system that streamlines the day-to-day operations.

Through 5G, the system will be able to support live scheduling, analysis of

technology can offer when compared to traditional connectivity. Wi-Fi and 5G offer complementary functionalities and to the end-user can appear to achieve similar results. Although a lower initial cost to deploy, Wi-Fi is an open network with lower bandwidth capabilities. It will continue to be the predominant technology for homes and offices but may not scale to factory applications due to limited management, performance, and reliability factors.

5G's capabilities mean that it can easily capture much larger volumes of data,



machine capacity, required tools, quality checks, live planning and report production.

This provides the ability to maximise machine time and provide customers with more accurate assurance that parts have been designed to specification with increased speed and efficiency. This will eliminate the need to re-work or replace damaged components impaired in transit.

The system will also highlights any areas of lateness or fault to help the manufacturer identify production pinch points and improve customer experience by providing more delivery certainty.

Through the deployment of a 5G private network, AE Aerospace will set a precedent to bring the SME aerospace sector forward to deliver products to standard more quickly and efficiently.

**WM5G current use cases, how-to guide and contact: [www.wm5g.org.uk/projects/manufacturing](http://www.wm5g.org.uk/projects/manufacturing); [Riccardo.Weber@wm5g.org.uk](mailto:Riccardo.Weber@wm5g.org.uk)**



share large files, and allow a much larger number of Internet of Things (IoT) devices on the same network to communicate with each other and produce results much faster than a Wi-Fi network. With Wi-Fi, users are normally asked to connect to one 'box' and are handed over when moving to another area which can interrupt connectivity. 5G network solutions can offer a seamless handover between radio access points.

Improving efficiency is important, often a top priority, for manufacturers to reduce waste and increase capacity. To

## UP AND COMING EVENTS

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-  16th February 2022  
In-Person Best Practice visit to the MTC in Coventry
-  May 2022  
Automation & Robotics
-  September 2022  
Machine Censoring/Informatics

If you are interested in any of the events, please join and register here or contact us:

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drive this efficiency, manufacturers are increasing their reliance on connectivity to provide cost savings, enhance sustainability and increase outputs. It is the new communication networks that will provide flexible, reliable device connectivity and drive this efficiency, which is why 5G is proving to be so pivotal for manufacturers.

The first live trial at the MTC will see two robots simultaneously and autonomously operating to deliver an automated inspection task – adding value through increasing quality and efficiency of a factory operation.

The longer-term plan is to develop a series of 5G use cases bringing 5G connectivity, skills, and applications to the MTC research and innovation programmes, supporting its SME Technology Transformation programmes and offering a test bed environment for their wider customer and partner base. In particular, the MTC's SME Digital REACH programme offers SMEs guidance and support to increase productivity through the introduction and adoption of digital manufacturing technology.



**Riccardo Weber**, Manufacturing Innovation Lead, WM5G

Riccardo Weber, Manufacturing Innovation Lead at WM5G, said: "Alongside delivery of the UK's first region-wide 5G test bed, we have developed significant specific understanding of the applications and benefits of 5G technology to manufacturers' operations.

"Through our partnerships with AE Aerospace and the MTC, we have been able to put in place use cases that have demonstrated how interconnection of machinery and devices across the factory floor can assist in boosting productivity, and how 5G-enabled devices can consistently ensure the very highest level of product specification.

The trials mark an important step in 5G innovation, supporting the aim to help British manufacturing accelerate productivity and efficiency, demonstrating how 5G can support



“ The use cases have highlighted the transformative power that 5G can have on manufacturing, providing their customers with better quality and assurance. This is just one sector and we believe strongly that the technology will enable the delivery of significantly greater gains. ”

manufacturing operations in the UK and beyond.

Businesses of any size can access the private network at the MTC to test and deploy 5G solutions in a state-of-art test bed environment. Manufacturers interested in testing their 5G solutions at the MTC can find out more information by visiting [www.the-mtc.org](http://www.the-mtc.org)

The MTC's SME Digital REACH programme offers SMEs guidance and support to increase productivity through the introduction and adoption of digital manufacturing technology.

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**South West Regional contact:**  
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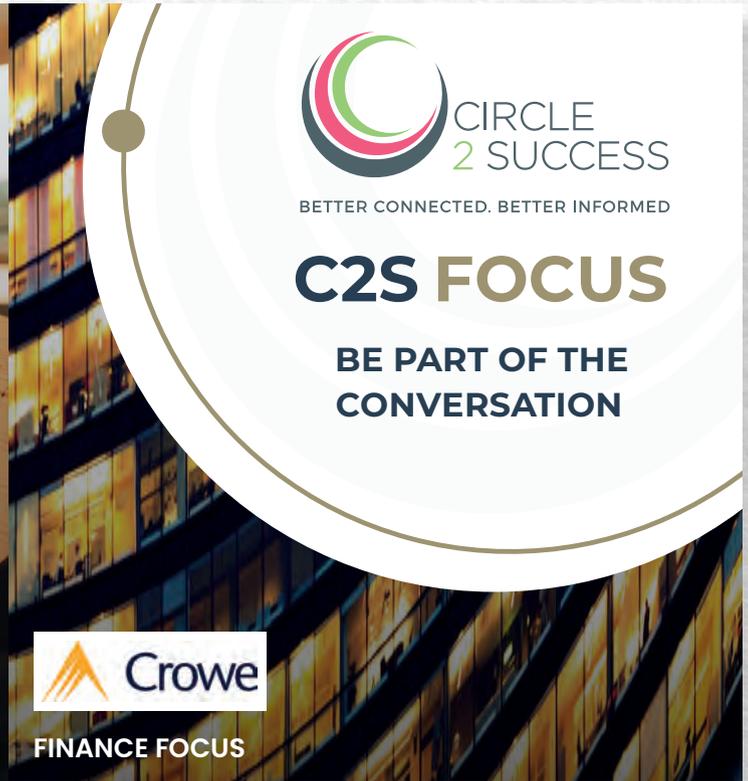
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# Prima Dental Posts Fast Recovery

**G**loucester-based Prima Dental Group over the past 20 years has grown to become the largest dental drill manufacturer in the world and one of Gloucestershire's largest exporters with distributors in 93 countries and over 90% of their sales destined for export. This has been recognised by two Queens' Awards over the past seven years.

Their growth is based on continued capital investment in advanced CNC equipment and automation backed by a commitment to continuous improvement which has delivered what is recognised as a best-in-class product.

## Market Bounce Back

With the effective closure of dental practices in many parts of the world, Prima were very badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic which required many difficult and challenging decisions. As a critical supplier to the NHS, and other health services around the world, Prima continued to operate with a skeleton staff without stopping manufacture whilst investing in a Covid-secure workplace gearing non-production staff to work from home. The co-operation and morale of the whole team over this period was remarkable.

When the marketplace recovered starting in Asia and then the USA, it came back very fast. With preparations for recovery and improvements on process made during the latter part of 2020, Prima were able to react faster than the competition, moving quickly into the next phase of their growth agenda and are now delivering sales 20% above pre-Covid levels.

The next phase of Prima's growth strategy will see the launch of new and expanded product ranges and entry into new medical markets based on their core manufacturing technology and Prima's

“ £25m investment into the local community in the last six years.

A pandemic recovery like no other.

Growth agenda that continues to outperform others. ”





## UP AND COMING EVENTS

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broad network of partners, customers, academics and peer leaders and partners around the world.

### Investment

Prima continue to expand their manufacturing operation and now occupy 60,000sqft on the Waterwells Estate in Quedgeley. Over the past six years, Prima have invested over £25million into the Gloucester manufacturing unit with another £1million spent in the latter part of this year and early next as part of the latest planned growth strategy.

Alongside the capital spend, Prima have heavily invested in ensuring their workforce are ready for the growth now and in the future. Recruiting and training over 60 new members of staff in the first half of 2021 alone, it has been an exciting time to join the company. Key to the recruitment process is a high profile, high performance culture programme to deliver a multi-skilled workforce with defined career progression.

### Innovation

Prima's investment in research and innovation continues to grow year on year with a number of projects



**Alun Jones, Group Managing Director, Prima Dental**



**Richard Muller, Chairman, Prima Dental**

now starting to come to fruition with many more opportunities under review and investigation.

### New Leadership

In June this year Alun Jones, former Finance Director, became Prima Dental's new Group Managing Director. With eight years' experience with Prima, Alun has helped to deliver Prima's successful partnerships in Brazil, China, Hong Kong and India. With Alun's new role, Richard Muller – the prior MD – has moved to a new position as Chairman, leading the development of strategy across the group businesses.

### The Future

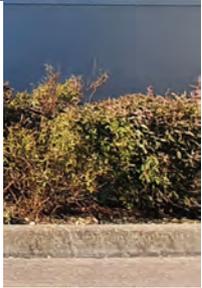
2022 is set to be a record year for Prima Dental and with a new three-year plan in process, we aim to diversify geographically and in new product categories, specifically medical instrumentation.



For further information or if you would like to be part of this dynamic organisation, please contact Christine Rushforth – [christiner@primadental.com](mailto:christiner@primadental.com)  
[www.primadental.com](http://www.primadental.com)



# L3Harris Technologies Celebrates a Century of Serving the UK



Over the last century, L3Harris has remained a fixture of technology leadership in the UK.

In February, the defence and security innovator received its Centenary Certificate from the UK's Registrar Companies House office, which recognises and honours companies with 100 years of incorporation. Receiving the Centenary Certificate represents L3Harris' commitment to the region and is a testament to its dedication to delivering capabilities that protect the armed forces.

From King George V to Queen Elizabeth II, and serving prime ministers from David Lloyd George to Boris Johnson, L3Harris' presence in the UK has experienced many transformative years. The company began in 1921 with production solely focused on printed matter. Today's capabilities span space, air, land, sea and cyber domains, with a focus on multi-domain integration.

"L3Harris in the UK and across the globe has an unrivalled track record in gathering, aggregating, analysing and securely disseminating data from a multitude of

sources," said Graeme Mackay, L3Harris Corporate Vice President and Country Executive. "Helping support the UK's local communities and armed forces for the last century is a significant milestone. We'll continue to work with our 1,500 highly talented employees to further our partnerships and innovation in space, in the air, at sea and on land."

## Tactical Communications and Modernisation

Since 2001, L3Harris has supported the UK Ministry of Defence's Bowman Tactical Radio Program as the worldwide leader in tactical communications. With 50,000 Bowman tactical radios currently fielded, the company has overseen one of the most important tactical communications projects in the country's history, and continually invests in significant research and development to enhance its tactical communications solutions.

"Many European nations are looking at refreshing their tactical communications systems in service from the 'digitization era', so right now there are a number of large modernisation programs underway," said Keith Norton, L3Harris Vice President, Communications Systems Europe. "For example in Germany, Norway and the Netherlands – we are looking at how we can support them."



## Electronic Warfare and Cyber Security

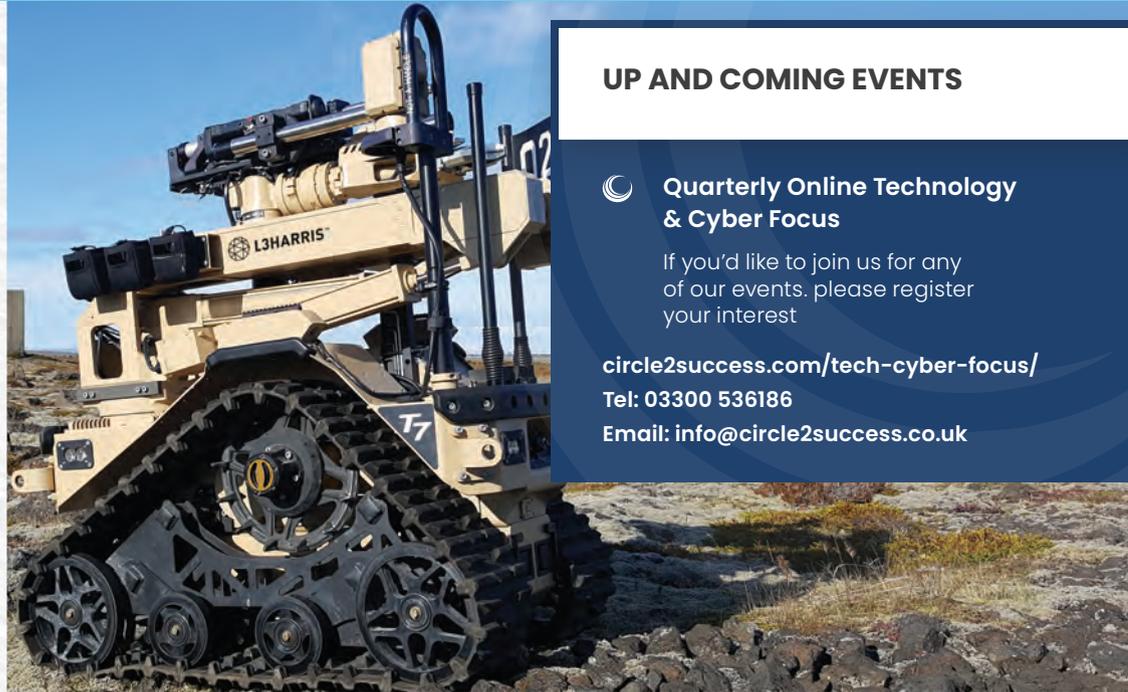
Critical to these modernisation programs are the company's Electronic Warfare and cyber security technologies. As threats continue to rapidly evolve and diversify across domains, L3Harris ensures forces are fully equipped to stay ahead of adversaries with open, integrated cyber and electromagnetic activity (CEMA) architectures and life-saving force protection. A rich heritage in government grade cyber security sees L3Harris ideally placed to secure the country's most sensitive data, networks and assets.

In fact, L3Harris has been supporting the UK Government in developing cutting-edge cyber solutions for more than two decades. Thanks to its close relationships with government agencies, the company has a constant eye on new and emerging threats across a broad spectrum of cyber activities,





“ Helping support the UK’s local communities and armed forces for the last century is a significant milestone. We’ll continue to work with our 1,500 highly talented employees to further our partnerships and innovation in space, in the air, at sea and on land. ”



## UP AND COMING EVENTS

### Quarterly Online Technology & Cyber Focus

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helping conduct key market analysis to better evaluate the threat and empower customers to counter it.

As the Army and Government look to achieve more from integrated systems that span multiple domains, working together to support the customer mission has never been so important. L3Harris regularly collaborates with countries and government agencies all over the globe to create innovative, agile solutions to address these threats. The company is constantly seeking smarter and more collaborative ways of working, which is now more relevant than ever given the urgent need to adapt to the “new normal” introduced by the pandemic.

### Robotic Systems

L3Harris’ family of ruggedized robotic systems offers uniquely intuitive haptic control, providing unmatched precision and human-like dexterity that enables personnel to tackle a wide range of challenges, from Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) to hazardous materials clean-up.

These life-saving robots, the larger T7™ and medium-sized T4™, go into harm’s way so people don’t have to. 122 T7 robots are currently being deployed by the UK Ministry

of Defence (MOD) to do just that, replacing their fleet in service since 1995.

### Autonomous Systems

An industry expert in autonomous platforms, L3Harris’ maritime solutions currently power the Royal Navy’s autonomous surface vehicle (ASV) technology, with over 100 ASV systems delivered to both defence and commercial customers. L3Harris remains a pioneer of marine digital control systems with four decades of engineering experience.

Autonomy isn’t limited to just maritime unmanned vessels. L3Harris has leveraged its knowledge from sea to air with combat unmanned aerial system drones. Unmanned aircraft, such as the FVR-90, have the capabilities of delivering cargo, data collection, aerial photography and attack capability during missions, reconnaissance and much more. Having developed multi-sensors and electronic warfare countermeasures in facilities in the UK, L3Harris also provides increased situational awareness to protect against adversarial drone threats.

### Aviation

L3Harris has a well-established presence for aviation in the UK. Flight simulation

training is imperative to develop the skills and knowledge required to operate commercial aircraft in all phases of flight and in all weather conditions. The company’s systems and training operations in Europe and the United States provide a safe environment for pilots to hone their skills. Today, L3Harris is framed to support the commercial airline industry’s recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. These flight simulators will have a significant impact in ensuring the industry maintains the highest safety standards as airlines rebuild their operations.

### L3Harris in the UK

With 14 offices in the UK, including Tewkesbury, Fleet, Crawley, Farnborough and Brighton, and more than 1,500 employees, L3Harris has been making a difference in UK defence for 100 years. Learn more about L3Harris in the UK and its 100 years of commitment, excellence and dedication to the crown, government, civilians and national armed forces via [www.l3harris.com/uk](https://www.l3harris.com/uk) 



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# L3HARRIS

Retained  
**100**

Total Exits  
**100**

Comp. Cost  
**6.05M**

Salary  
**\$12M**

Bonus  
**2.1M**

Company Cost  
**32.3K**

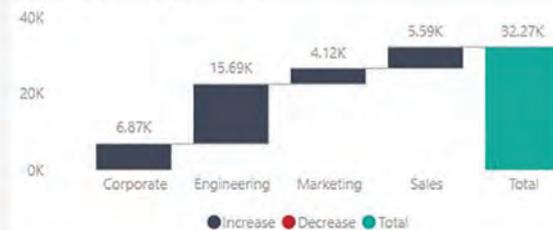
Emp. Cost  
**4.62K**

Overtime  
**4.15K**

### Cost to Company



### Company Cost by Division



### Compensation TY & LY By Type



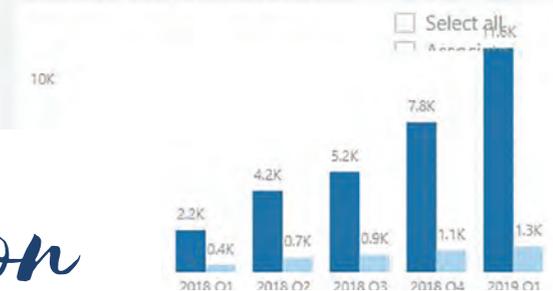
### Company Cost by Department



### Salary by Employee Level



### Company Cost vs Employee Cost



# The Art of Data Visualization

Unlock the power of your data and make intelligent, data-led decisions

Data is now considered the world's most valuable resource – and that's likely the case for most businesses too. From a customer's email address to the odometer readings of a fleet of vehicles, all data has merit and usefulness. But all too often we can be swamped in meaningless data, with no idea what to do with it or how to get the value out of it. How many times have you been buried in spreadsheets, trying to spot trends in seemingly unrelated data?

Luckily, there are now some simple ways in which data can be presented to give you helpful, actionable insights and drive decision making that's led by your data. At First Digital, we're championing data visualisation and firmly believe it's the key to improving your business' efficiency.

## What is Data Visualisation and Why is it important?

Data visualisation is a representation technique used to help people easily understand complex data. Large data sets and metrics are converted into simple graphs, creative charts and innovative visuals. Turning numbers into pictures helps us process the information much faster – after all, humans process visual information quicker than verbal or written information, and studies have found that at least 65% of people are visual learners who understand visual concepts best.

Presenting your business' data in a way that can be universally understood means that people can make more informed and more impactful decisions. If you see a curve dropping in a graph which combines multiple data sets together into one, it can take just seconds to make a decision – rather than spending half an hour flicking between spreadsheets and comparing information.



Nigel Church, Group Managing Director, First Solution

## Two Golden Rules of Reporting

When it comes to creating visualisations and dashboards, we have two golden rules that we always follow, which ensure that they're as effective as possible.

### 1 90 Seconds

You should be able to understand (within reason) any dashboard or report within just 90 seconds if it's meant to be a high-level informational overview. For instance, a Manager overseeing the operations of multiple sites might like to be presented with big green boxes which tell them if all of the targets are being met with just a quick glance – but if a box is amber or red, some remedial action may be needed.

### 2 Know Where To Look

If you're being presented with a summary of information, you shouldn't have to spend ages looking for the detail. That's why, if you want to dive deeper for further context, the dashboard should essentially tell you where to go, or give you an intuitive way of accessing that information. For example, if you want a breakdown of P&L for a particular month on a bar chart, you should be able to simply click on that month's bar to be shown a list.



## C2S.TV talks the benefits of Data Visualisation with First Solution Group Managing Director Nigel Church



C2S.TV Talks about the value and benefits of Data Visualisation with Nigel Church, Group Managing Director, First Solution

## UP AND COMING EVENTS

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### Microsoft Power BI

There are hundreds of data visualisation tools available, but the one we advocate is Microsoft Power BI. It's cloud-based, supports a wide range of data sets (from SharePoint and SQL databases, to Excel spreadsheets and Dynamics) and provides easy-to-use, interactive visuals. Crucially, it also integrates into the wider Microsoft Power Platform, enabling some exciting innovations and letting you turn insights into action.

Has the rate of output at one of your manufacturing sites been running below target for over an hour? The Site Manager will receive a Teams message alerting them.

Do you have a dashboard which monitors how much stock you're holding, and it's reporting that one product has just 20 units left? Automatically create a task for your procurement team to buy more. Using Power BI and the Power Platform, we can really help you discover the Art of the Possible.

### First Digital's Approach to Data Visualisation

We have a simple three step process that we follow when it comes to implementing data visualisation and Power BI into a business. Firstly, we have an exploratory meeting to get to know your organisation, where we find out your business goals, how you currently use technology, and identify some general areas where technology can help you innovate.

The next step is a data visualisation workshop. This can take anywhere from half a day to three days, dependent on the size of your business and the complexity of its operations. Run by a business analyst,

they will work with you to devise a list of reports and dashboards that will provide actionable insights to improve efficiency and aid the growth of your business.

And finally, one of our Power BI specialists will work with you and/or your partners (e.g. a software supplier) to prepare your data for visualisation, then construct your bespoke charts, gauges and dashboards. We'll review the dashboards with you before we finalise the designs and show you how to get the most out of them.

### The Power of Data

If you want to see the potential of Power BI for yourself, we have a series of short on-demand webinars available on our website. Across a series of 15 minute videos, you can learn about the basics of data visualisation as well as see live demonstrations of Sales, Finance, Operations and Marketing dashboards in Power BI.

Watch our 'Power of Data' Webinars – [go.firstdigital.co.uk/C2SNov](http://go.firstdigital.co.uk/C2SNov)

Alternatively, you can take part in our two hour Innovation Workshop, in which we can give you an understanding of where improvements can be made by utilising your existing technology or Microsoft's low-cost, high-impact platforms. 

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## The NCSC's 2021 Annual Review highlights the work undertaken to protect the UK over the past 12 months

Record number of cyber incidents mitigated as NCSC protects vaccine rollout.

- Annual Review from the National Cyber Security Centre, a part of GCHQ, reveals extent of work to protect the UK over the last year
- Wrap-around support offered for 777 cyber incidents, including attacks on coronavirus vaccine research, distribution, and supply chains
- Review also outlines damaging effect of growing ransomware attacks, including against UK councils and Ireland's healthcare system

Read more and download the report here:

[www.circle2success.com/the-ncscs-2021-annual-review-highlights-the-work-undertaken-to-protect-the-uk-over-the-past-12-months/](http://www.circle2success.com/the-ncscs-2021-annual-review-highlights-the-work-undertaken-to-protect-the-uk-over-the-past-12-months/)



# Technology will Provide the Answers of the Future

Linda Smith, Founder and CEO of Worcestershire technology accelerator **BetaDen**, looks ahead to a prosperous 2022

As we continue to grapple with the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, the world will look towards technology to provide answers and solutions in 2022. Agility has always been at the heart of successful technology but there are huge opportunities ahead for those technology companies that can adapt to the changing global landscape.

One of the biggest workplace shifts we've seen over the last two years has been the growth of remote working. Not only is this impacting workers around the world but also the behaviour of investors who are taking an increased interest in deep tech developments that can demonstrate how their technologies enable businesses to reap the benefits of the agile working revolution. For example, there are a host of digital security implications that come with the en masse adoption of hybrid working practices and emerging areas of tech, such as edge computing, are likely to grow in prominence as a result.

We will also continue to see a political focus on green tech in the New Year. The announcement of the 'Breakthrough Agenda' at COP26 highlighted how Government-driven funds and initiatives around the world are likely to focus on driving the acceleration of green technologies, particularly those that can play a role making clean technologies the affordable choice for traditionally Carbon-hungry industries, such as power, road transport, steel, hydrogen and agriculture industries.



Linda Smith, Founder and CEO, BetaDen

Connected technology will also continue to see significant investment, with greater adoption of technologies that enable or make use of 5G connectivity. In the manufacturing sector, for example, a 2017 MAKE UK survey highlighted that only 20% of manufacturing SMEs had started the job of preparing for Industry 4.0 at that time, but by 2020, 80% of respondents reported they would be ready by 2025. That's just three years away and represents a real-step change in terms of timescale of adoption.

It's a shift that has been mirrored at BetaDen over the last 18 months, as we've seen a real move towards businesses developing technology that either supports or enables the use of 5G

## UP AND COMING EVENTS

### Quarterly Online Technology & Cyber Focus

If you'd like to join us for any of our events, please register your interest

[circle2success.com/tech-cyber-focus/](https://circle2success.com/tech-cyber-focus/)

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C2S.TV talks to Linda Smith, CEO and Founder of BetaDen on Innovation, Technology and 5G.

technologies within our own accelerator cohorts. With smart technology networks developing apace to help companies explore the benefits for 5G-enabled IoT, the UK looks well placed to lead the charge into this smart, new age, with benefits set to be reaped across the industrial, transport, healthcare and agriculture sectors, to name just a few. 🇬🇧

Find out here how you can get involved with BetaDen:

[www.circle2success.com/betaden-cohort-5-0-applications-now-open/](https://www.circle2success.com/betaden-cohort-5-0-applications-now-open/)



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We are delighted to bring you the C2S PODCAST, where you can listen to great interviews with business leaders and experts in their field. Download and brighten up your day with some honest conversations from business leaders across the UK about their challenges, experiences, solutions and insights for 2022.



*Something for everyone, we hope you enjoy tuning in!*

INNOVATION



## Capitalizing on your Intellectual Property and R&D

The importance of protecting your intellectual property – and taking advantage of the UK Government’s R&D tax credits – was highlighted at one of our Circle2Success latest webinars. In this article we take a quick look at what was discussed and how businesses can make the most of their IP and innovation spend

**A**lbright IP Managing Director, Robert Games joined forces with Michael Newnham, Director of Quantum R&D Tax Ltd, to address the issues in the latest webinar Making IP and R&D Tax Credits Pay.

According to Michael, businesses particularly outside of the South East, are potentially missing out on thousands of pounds. And with the average pay-out of around £80,000, it’s definitely well worth checking into the credits system to see if your company might qualify.

In the webinar, Michael explained in more detail about this ‘no strings attached’ payment which is not, he stresses, a loan or a grant for which you’re in competition with many others. And you can claim the credits every year – it’s not a one-off payment scheme.

He set out the key elements of the R&D Tax Credit Scheme, and explained how it can transform your business, how to find out if you are eligible and if you are, how to build a claim.

He noted that any UK registered, active, limited company which is developing new products and processes is eligible, and in the webinar, offered more details about the scheme’s history, how it is set up and which activities count for R&D tax credits – as well as those which don’t!



Michael Newnham, Director,  
Quantum R&D Tax Ltd

And as well as giving some guidance on how to calculate your claim, he provided examples of business that have successfully tapped into the system – from a craft cider bottling plant and historic ceiling rose moulding manufacturer, through to a small biscuit maker and even a company which has developed technology to count bats!

Michael encourages everyone to look into R&D tax credits, saying that a lot of companies are currently missing out because they think they are not in the



Robert Games, Managing Director, Albright IP

business of research and development. “You probably are,” he insists. “And if that’s the case, you are missing out on thousands of pounds!”

At the same time, Albright IP’s Robert Games says, you also want to be protecting any intellectual property that might be emerging from that research and development work.

During the webinar, Robert set out the basics of intellectual property, what it covers, and why it’s really important to patent an invention or idea. Putting



## UP AND COMING EVENTS

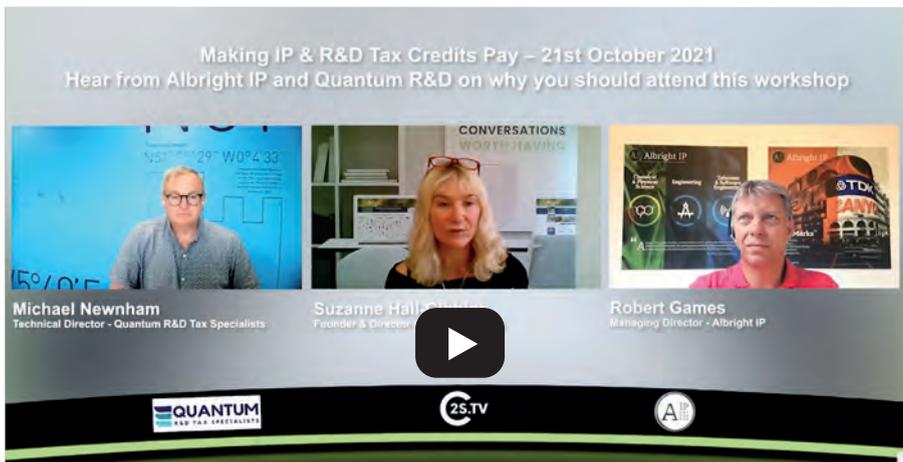
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C2S Events - Making IP & R&D Tax Credits Pay with Albright IP & Quantum R&D Credits

it crudely, he says that successful things are copied – whether it's a new piece of software, a product design or enhancement, or even, as a case in point, an innovative toilet brush! These inventions and ideas need protecting if you don't want your competitors to steal a march on you.

He also explained what might qualify for IP, and why timing is crucial. For example, he says, the invention has to be new, it has to have novelty and an inventive step. And you need to file your patent before you put your product in the public domain in any way, shape or form at all. Also, a patent is excellent evidence of genuine R&D, should HMRC ever query your claim.

Robert adds that the basic idea of a patent is that you disclose your idea to the patent office and if the idea is new and inventive, you are granted a monopoly for a limited period, up to 20 years. The other side of the bargain is that the idea is published 18 months after your application. This means that if the patent is not granted, or you let it lapse through non-payment of renewal fees, that the invention is available for others to use. Secrecy is lost and you are not protected.

However, whilst you have the granted patent you have the sole right to work the invention, for example, to

make it, use it, import it, export it, sell it and keep it. You also have the option to sell it, or licence it to a third party for a fee.

The ability to control an invention, says Robert, can lead to greater business success, because you can supply something unique. You can charge higher prices and hold back the tide of competition. Furthermore, it gives you a bargaining chip, should you want to take someone else's invention which builds on your ideas. This is called cross-licensing and can be very effective. It is an exchange of technology on agreed terms.

As well as the ins and outs of patents, Robert also covers the areas of trademarks, registered designs and copyright, and explains the difference.

He explains that while patents protect technical inventions, registered trademarks protect brand names. It's quite common for people to decide on a name, start using it, begin putting money towards it, start investing in the brand, and then they get prevented from using it at some point in the future because they've failed to register it. It's not enough, says Robert, for you to apply for a company registration – again, a frequent error.

Copyright protects things like marketing materials, product brochures, websites, operating manuals and so on.

All these areas are important and should be addressed if you want to protect your business, your investment, your brand and your future.



To watch the webinar in full go to [circle2success.com/c2s-tv/](http://circle2success.com/c2s-tv/)

For more advice on IP, Trademarks and Copyright please contact: Robert Games, Director, Albright IP [rgames@albrightpatents.co.uk](mailto:rgames@albrightpatents.co.uk)

For more advice on R&D Tax Credits contact: Michael Newnham, Director Quantum R&D Tax [michael.newnham@quantumtax.co.uk](mailto:michael.newnham@quantumtax.co.uk)



[albright-ip.co.uk](http://albright-ip.co.uk)



[quantumtax.co.uk](http://quantumtax.co.uk)

# Leader Insights for 2022

In this edition we asked business leaders what their views and thoughts are for 2022, what trends they are seeing in their industry and what challenges will they face next year

## Raymond Pugh from Neptune Rum and his predictions for 2022

For many 2021 has been the year where business agility and resilience have been tested to the extreme. Across all sectors, especially those that utilise modern supply chains, the year has brought about significant disruption, where the unexpected has become the expected.

As we've just celebrated Halloween I liken this year to taking a ride on a ghost-train. Whereby around every corner the fallout from Covid and Brexit jumps out, be it with a logistics disruption, material shortage, price increase or labour shortage, to name but a few. As we get used to the 'frights' it is clear that businesses are learning to become more agile and resilient and are looking at increasingly innovative solutions, outside of the box (cardboard if you can get it).

Companies that can quickly adapt to change and have a Plan B or C or D with alternative suppliers or plans will weather the storm better. Those that don't will face significant difficulties. In the case of Neptune Rum when the bars and restaurants were unable to open, we swiftly enhanced our own online offering so that we could reach out to our customers in a digital world. We also created new shopping experiences working with new online retailers including Amazon and leading drinks retailers. No matter what your industry, the way you respond to the ever-changing business landscape is essential for building a stronger future.

While agility has been key for our operations, Neptune Rum has been focused on being proactive. 2021 has been an exceptional year as we have pushed forward with redefining our brand, building our UK stockists and driving exports.

Neptune Rum is passionate about quality, nature, and sustainability. Supporting ecological causes that help protect our oceans means so much to us. We are delighted to have pledged our support to



Raymond Pugh, Neptune Rum

two new ocean charities which are Seabin Project and Surfers Against Sewage, completing our 'trident' of charitable causes, with Our Only World.

As a global brand, we have a responsibility to lead from the front, and we are going much further than just a sustainability pledge, we are committed to supporting the restoration of the world's oceans. We are excited about 2022 and our expansion plans, both in terms of our new range of sustainable rums, new stockists, and ocean clean-up projects. 🌊

[www.neptunerum.com](http://www.neptunerum.com)



### About Neptune Rum

Neptune Rum is focused on creating exceptional quality rums from Barbados and the Caribbean – The birthplace of rum.

By combining the finest natural ingredients, centuries-old distillation methods and tropical aging, our rums deliver an exceptional drinking experience. Due to our focus on exceptional quality and natural ingredients, our rums have earned their place amongst the world's greatest rums with over 70 global awards.

We take our name from Neptune, God of the Oceans, and are committed to raising awareness of the natural beauty of our oceans and funding environmental action projects around the world.

Exceptional Quality | Natural Ingredients | Ocean Guardians





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RUM

# ONE FOR THE OCEAN

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Experience the C2S Christmas Cocktail, made with Neptune Rum Barbados Gold, 'The World's Most Awarded Rum of 2018/19', delicious.

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PROUDLY SUPPORTING



## Simon Tothill from Robert Hitchins Ltd talks about his expectations for 2022



Simon Tothill, Property and Development Director, Robert Hitchins Ltd

Investment in commercial property is very much on the agenda as we head towards 2022 experiencing significant investor activity.

There is a large amount of money available but relatively few opportunities. This is driving values up in many cases, whilst yields head ever lower.

The buoyant state of investment is being led to a large extent by marked growth in two particular sectors: manufacturing and distribution, and medical and pharmaceutical. Calls for more research and new medicines as a result of the pandemic are driving those sectors forward.

Historically low yields are being achieved for modern industrial units in well-located positions and this, combined with ever-increasing rents, is fuelling the market. Robert Hitchins' forthcoming developments at Innsworth Business Park in Gloucester, Stroudwater 13 at Stonehouse, and Westgate at Severnside, Bristol are generating significant interest.

The office market remains slightly confused as occupiers consider different working models – whether that's working from home, returning to the office or opt for a

mix of the two. That said, Robert Hitchins is experiencing a growth in occupier enquiries, and we expect this to increase in 2022. The format of the office fit out is changing with greater focus on creating an environment which offers opportunities for collaboration and wellness.

As ever, investor appetite remains good for the right building in the right location with good quality tenants. We are experiencing strong interest from potential occupiers in most of our buildings within the Robert Hitchins portfolio and in particular at the Hatherley Place development in Cheltenham, close to GCHQ. This 32,700ft<sup>2</sup> office building can be delivered quickly given that planning permission is in place and no additional infrastructure works are required.

The retail market continues to evolve as the impact of COVID-19 and the increase in internet shopping influences the sector. The high street will continue its transition towards less traditional shopping with fewer multiples and an increased number of independents (assuming the business rates fiasco can be resolved) and a greater mix of leisure, community and residential uses. The high street will however remain a vital community hub.

Out-of-town retail will maintain its appeal and leisure-related sectors such as retail outlets will also thrive as people seek to combine their leisure time with a shopping experience based on the promise of attractive brands at discounted prices.

Our Cotswolds Designer Outlet and Dobbies Garden Centre at Junction 9 of the M5 motorway continues to generate firm interest from several exciting brands, and the infrastructure to deliver this major development is ongoing.

It all makes for exciting times for Robert Hitchins who continue to invest and deliver buildings to occupiers throughout the South West and South Wales. 🇬🇧



[www.robert-hitchins.co.uk](http://www.robert-hitchins.co.uk)

## Andy Hawker from Laithwaites Wine shares his trends and predictions 2022

This year has followed in the same vein as 2020 with our home delivery at the forefront aligning itself to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns this past year. A fortunate position to be in, where we have had to go above and beyond across the entire business in order to keep the wine flowing for our loyal customers.

Coronavirus has been with us the entire year and like many businesses all our teams except for the warehouse to have been working from home during that time. Mobilising over 200 call centre staff to work from home is a huge achievement, with a five star Trustpilot score and a finalist in the Institute of Customer Service Awards once again.

Our strategy to fill the warehouse to the brim with wine ahead of Brexit proved the right strategy allowing us to manage the new import procedures and paperwork on a much smaller scale. Import declarations for our Northern Ireland customer base has been a concern with the new

processes, however this import element has remained on hold, and we hope the initial planned process of sending parcels containing excise goods to NI will ease.

Recognising our people this past year has never been more important across many ways, including internal awards for Outstanding Customer Service from our call centre and delivering innovation from our warehouse team implementing new automation in our busiest year. We are now certified as a Great Place to Work, and kicked off our first venture into sponsorship of GRFC and a chance to get the Laithwaites name on the famous Cherry and White shirt.

So, what does the next year look like...? It's hard to say and equally hard to predict or budget for while in a pandemic, but we have a larger customer base and a warehouse full of wine that will put us in a good position ahead of the Christmas period. It's not been easy filling the warehouse ahead of Christmas



Andy Hawker, Laithwaites Wine

with the global supply chain a constant challenge. This has only got worse these past couple of months affecting all countries across a wide range of issues including shortage of containers, space on ships, drivers, pallets and even corks! This is unlikely to ease anytime soon and are planning for continued disruption well into the New Year!



# Pete Hoddinott from L3Harris Technologies talks about his insights for the year ahead

Despite the various business challenges that have emerged as a result of the pandemic, L3Harris Technologies has a very promising global pipeline of opportunities ahead. We're extremely grateful for the extraordinary efforts made by our people over the last 18 months, and thank them for their hard work, passion and dedication in helping our business grow in such difficult times.

Moving into 2022, a vital part of continuing this growth is by expanding our skillset and adding to our talented teams. This is easier said than done, as we are in the midst of a national skills shortage for technical specialists required by our industry. That's why we're actively engaging with primary and secondary schools early; to promote the importance of STEM and highlight fantastic career choices as engineering.

“ Ahead of a busy Christmas period it's better to get your wine orders in soon...it's better to order just in case rather than just in time! ”

We need to double our staffing for the call centre and warehouse team ahead of peak Christmas trading, and recruitment has also been the most challenging at a time when job vacancies are far greater than staff availability. We have been paying the Real Living Wage since July and continue to recruit locally as well as supporting the Kickstart Apprenticeship Scheme along with other local initiatives. But like the supply chain challenges above, this will be a hard slog the next few months. ■

**LAITHWAITES**  
www.laithwaites.co.uk

## Examining the Future Threat Landscape

The pace of change in today's threat landscape is only set to increase. It's more essential than ever that Governments invest in agile, future-proof technologies that help them gain and maintain the advantage over the adversary. That's why L3Harris invests a high percentage of our revenue in researching and developing next-generation capabilities; approximately 8-10% per annum.

Many of these capabilities are based on open standards, which play a critical role in achieving this future-ready agility. Similarly, as the digital world expands with the rise of quantum super-computing, Government grade encryption will become ever more vital to the future protection of our nation's most sensitive networks and information.

What's also clear to our business is that customers don't just need to acquire data, but require the ability to turn the data into actionable intelligence. I strongly believe harnessing the benefits of both artificial intelligence and machine learning is imperative to achieving this.

## The Only Constant is Change

Governments are constantly looking to evolve and improve their procurement processes, both through working with industry and their contracting mechanisms. Since January 2021, a stronger emphasis has been placed on social value. L3Harris' vision of integrating social value into every aspect of our business ensures that we are making a meaningful contribution towards supporting this agenda for a more sustainable future.

The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, published in March 2021, also provided emphasis on the importance of collaboration. It's for this reason Team TARIAN was founded - a British team of experts consisting of L3Harris, General Dynamics Mission



Pete Hoddinott, Managing Director, L3Harris Technologies Intelligence and Cyber International EMEA with offices in Tewkesbury and Fleet.

“ Moving into 2022, a vital part of continuing this growth is by expanding our skillset and adding to our talented teams. ”

Systems UK, Roke, and CGI, who are all dedicated to delivering next-generation defence capabilities.

L3Harris works closely with customers to ensure they're not only ready for whatever the future holds, but are already one step ahead. Committed to making the world a safer place, every one of our people plays a critical role in making this possible. ■



www.l3harris.com/uk  
https://bit.ly/3np9HtH

## Dale Parmenter, CEO at DRPG and his predictions for 2022

On 5th March as a fleet of our lorries were on the way to the NEC to set up a 5000-delegate conference, we got a phone call from the client. Due to COVID-19 the event was cancelled, from that moment on, everything changed.

The last 18 months have certainly tested the most experienced leader in any organisation. While I'm at an age to have experienced several recessions, the pandemic has been very different.

As one of the largest creative communication agencies in the UK, a significant part of our business revolves around corporate events and exhibitions. Overnight we lost 60% of our sales. What I have learnt over the years, in times of crisis the Leadership team need to act fast and not worry too much about getting everything right, because you won't.

By 7th March we had a three-phase plan in place, phase one – 'Stop the Ship Sinking', phase two – 'Refit the Ship', phase three – 'Relaunch the Ship'. Someone said to me 'never let a good crisis go to waste' and it's absolutely true. In times of crisis, we become more agile and just get on and do it.

The main focus of my Leadership team was visibility to the wider team, even though the majority of the team were now working from home. So, virtual communication was essential. We had to reassure and be very open and transparent about what was happening. Leaders sometimes shy away from the negatives and can also be afraid of saying it like it is or admitting they got it wrong. Being open, being humble and showing vulnerability is one of the most powerful leadership tools we have.

Phase one of our plan was really about 'protection' and 'opportunity'. We needed to protect the business and the 300+ team members and their families. We took the decision not to lay off any of the team, instead we chose to protect our people resource. Government schemes such as furlough and CBILS were a lifeline. We also saw a huge opportunity to relook at the business from every angle and prepare for the future, this was a once in a lifetime opportunity to accelerate the growth.

We also needed to protect our clients and offer those who ran events and exhibitions an alternative. We had produced virtual events for over 25 years, however, only around four to five a year. We needed to massively expand our production capacity overnight and educate our clients to a new way of working.

Our team were amazing. Within days, we had expanded our broadcast facilities with digital solutions being created 'on the hoof'. In just three weeks, we had transformed the way we did business and the team had scaled up and reskilled. In 18 months, we have produced over 700 virtual events, from 11 studios to over two million delegates.

As a leadership team we then turned our attention to the future and the opportunities. It was also about empowering the team, we couldn't do it all alone. So, we shared the opportunities across the entire team from apprentices to senior managers.

“ Being open, being humble and showing vulnerability is one of the most powerful leadership tools we have. ”

The team looked at new systems, processes and ways of working. Innovations we had planned over a three-year period were accelerated and achieved in months. While our buildings and offices were empty, we managed to completely refurbish many areas, without disturbing the working studios. Including the construction of a brand-new warehouse and completion of a new £1.8m creative, training and team welfare centre.

We had always led our sector with sustainability, this was time to really push forward. We launched our CSR Charter which is linked to the UN's 17 sustainable goals and committed to zero carbon and zero landfill waste by 2021. We installed 750 solar panels generating 195kw, we planted 40 trees on our site and the team achieved 40 community projects. Sustainability has become a real driving force in our organisation.

2020 was also the year of our three-year Investors in People. Following a week-long



Dale Parmenter, CEO at DRPG

audit, we were upgraded to Platinum, one of only a small number of companies across the UK. We also worked hard to remain high in the 100 Best Companies to Work For list, and we succeeded.

By mid-2021, we had employed an additional 85 new team members. We needed more digital, creative and video skills, so we onboarded the 85 new team members virtually and many of them have never been into any of our offices or met other team members face-to-face, which is quite a challenge. Those team members involved in real events were still not working as we waited for live events to return.

The team have been amazing, we stopped the ship sinking, we completed the refit and have now relaunched. The team are closer, we have seen greater collaboration and a real 'one team' spirit throughout the last 18 months. We have learnt a lot about each other and the community we are part of. We are all ready to return to normality and face the future with optimism.

Sales are returning, we have added 30 new clients, we have opened up new markets and invested massively for the future. The last 18 months has accelerated things which would have taken years and it has forced us to focus on what is so important – the 'Triple Bottom Line' of People, Planet and Profit. 📍



www.drpgroup.com



## The Importance of Gigabit Connectivity

By Neil Madle, City Manager of CityFibre

### The Problem

There has never been a more important time than now for homeowners and businesses to ensure they have good connectivity. One thing we know is the working week will never look the same again and as people have more choice on where they live and work, the infrastructure and connectivity needs to match those choices for businesses of the future to thrive and survive.

It's all well and good to offer working from home flexibility but if your connection lets you down and you can't be productive, none of it will work long-term. In 2022 the new hybrid way of working will become more entrenched in our daily lives. Too many people are saddled with poor bandwidth and unreliable connectivity at a time when we're all becoming more reliant on fast and consistent connections in our homes.

### The Solution

Full fibre, generally seen as the best way to deliver such near unlimited bandwidth and greater reliability, enables households to enjoy all the latest entertainment at lightning speed while giving access to smart home technology. CityFibre is currently building full fibre networks across the country, including in many local towns and cities.

By using fibre optic cables for every stage of the connection from the customer's home or business to the internet, users are offered a significantly superior and more reliable broadband service, capable of Gigabit speeds (1,000 Mbps). Currently, fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) is only available to around 20% of premises across the UK, and the Government wants to see this increase to 85% by 2025.

### The Investment

A year after CityFibre began its £40million project to provide Gigabit-capable full fibre to every home and business in Swindon, significant progress has been



Neil Madle, City Manager, CityFibre

“ Connectivity will be a huge part of the UK's growth in 2022 and we are proud to be part of that bigger picture and supporting growth across the South West. ”

made. Large parts of the town are now complete, and residents are busy signing up for Gigabit services with ISPs such as Fibrehop and TalkTalk. By the time the project is finished in 2024, a world-class, open-access full fibre network will have been provided for the whole town. CityFibre is also providing the infrastructure necessary to support the rollout of 5G in the town, supporting future innovation and growth.

It's a similar story in Gloucester, where a £31million whole-city full fibre project started in January. Large parts of Quedgeley, Hardwicke and Podsmead – where the build commenced – are now completed and ISPs will be able to start providing services imminently. CityFibre's £30million Cheltenham project started in the town's Alstone area in April and progress has been rapid, with ISPs due to start selling services on the new network by the end of the year. Most recently, a £25million project to provide full fibre throughout the whole of Bath commenced in the city's Weston area and residents should be able to start taking a service in the new year.

### Short-Term Pain for Significant Long-Term Gain

In each location, CityFibre is working closely with local authorities and local communities to manage disruption. Where possible, lead contractors such as VolkerSmart and Kier Utilities are coordinating works with other utilities to avoid overbuild and residents are being kept informed by mailings ahead of works in their streets. Although such works inevitably cause some disruption and inconvenience for residents, this will be a short-term pain for significant long-term gain. 

If you are interested in connecting to full fibre broadband, you can pre-register their interest at [cityfibre.com/residential](http://cityfibre.com/residential) and will receive information when services are available.

[www.cityfibre.com/about-us/](http://www.cityfibre.com/about-us/)

[www.cityfibre.com/gigabit-cities/cheltenham/](http://www.cityfibre.com/gigabit-cities/cheltenham/)



# The Power of Video for your Business in 2022

How much time have you spent today watching videos? Honestly? It could be a lot. According to statistics the average internet user consumes up to two and half hours per day (up from one and a half in 2018) of digital video material, and we're not just talking about cat videos on Instagram. With, hopefully, the worst of the pandemic behind us it's interesting to note the impact COVID-19 has had on marketing. There has been an exponential growth in companies using video to market themselves with 91%-94% of marketers saying that they feel that video is more important for brands. The data shows how effective it is with over 66% of consumers saying they'd rather watch a short video than other marketing materials, and more than 80% saying they'd been convinced to buy a product or service by watching a brand's video. Aren't our cleaning cupboards bursting with evidence of this type of marketing? And how often have we shared a good video with family or friends, even if it isn't advertising something we need or consume?

Around the festive season there is a growing anticipation of the Christmas video advert that will be produced for the

large supermarket chains, and then the sparked debate over which one was the best? The videos are increasing in lavish story ideas as are the budgets being spent on producing them as companies recognise the exponential importance on revenue of good marketing.

As we look ahead to 2022 and the increasing trend in digital marketing it is vital to ensure that you have something that truly represents your brand voice. It needs to send a clear message to potential business that you can deliver what they're looking for and stands out in a compelling and shareable manner - in a way to ensure increased marketability. With companies dropping print media like hot potatoes each brand is searching for that 'added extra' that makes their company unique and not another click-bait, uninspiring video that is easy to scroll past. Something that is bold, creative, and interesting to all viewers due to its great content and visuals; the whole package. Something that viewers want to share with family and friends.

At M-Studios we are experienced at being in front of cameras as presenters, so we



Rory McAllister, Creative Director at M-Studio

have the skills to bring out the best from others to craft a bespoke, personal video-making process that can portray your brand most effectively as we head into a more digital 2022. We pride ourselves on an honest and trustworthy package to storyboard your unique video; be that a short marketing advert or even a movie trailer-style video to display your company to its best advantage and boost your media presence. We believe we have the confidence to help your company or product. We possess that dare-to-be-different approach to ensure it stands out above your competitors. If that piques your interest, then get in touch and we'll let the cameras roll into 2022 and beyond. Think video. Think M-Studios. 📺



[www.m-studios.co.uk](http://www.m-studios.co.uk)

## Adrian Gillman from Domestic Appliance Distributors, shares their business update for 2022

The demand for consumer goods and automobiles continues to be high and sales are buoyant - although production, shipping costs, raw materials, deliveries and staff shortages, especially in the transport and driving sectors, will continue to have an impact. At the end of October shipping costs went up again and the dollar dropped, which affected the price of consumer products and fuel. Businesses are trying to absorb some of the extra costs themselves but cost increases will inevitably be passed on to the consumer.

With the cost of living going up since 2020, an increase in the minimum wage will help, but the increase in National Insurance contributions may impede this. The Government is likely to step in and subsidise fuel, but the price of appliances won't be able to go down anytime soon.

We have taken a more proactive stance with forecasting to allow for the delays in shipment of products. This is enabling us to hold good stock so we can supply our customer base with the products that they need when they need them.

The shift to e-commerce has accelerated significantly since the pandemic, and a lot of our customers will be continuing to improve their presence online next year. On a positive note, we are celebrating D.A.D's 30th anniversary in 2022, and Montpellier's 10th anniversary. As part of this we are supporting our customers with free training days on e-commerce including SEO, Google Analytics, social media and more throughout the year.

We will continue to innovate and adapt the way we trade with the challenges we face throughout 2022. 📺



Adrian Gillman, Owner, Domestic Appliance Distributors



[www.dad-online.co.uk/](http://www.dad-online.co.uk/)  
[www.montpellier-appliances.com/](http://www.montpellier-appliances.com/)



# What Does 2022 Hold for Digital Marketing?

C2S leader Paul Dyer is the Managing Director of the full-service digital marketing agency QBD. He shares his thoughts on the current digital marketing landscape and what might be in store over the next 12 months.

The wheels of business turn quickly, and the end of 2021 is now clearly in view. After 18 months of lockdowns, working from home, and Government restrictions only lifting fully in the summer, many businesses have had to rethink, restyle and refocus. Finding new ways of communicating and operating has become essential as we adapt to life in the wake of the global coronavirus pandemic.

The importance of vision, planning and strategy in business has never been more imperative. If you know your destination and what you need to do to get you there, you can weather any storm, however strong the headwinds are. So, with 2022 on the horizon, now's the time to start turning your attention to your digital marketing strategy to make sure you're in ship-shape condition to sail through the next 12 months on an even keel.

With the competition in the digital space becoming ever fiercer, customer acquisition and retention has never been more critical. It means you need to be on-point with all elements of your digital marketing, from design and content to your web presence, social media and lead generation. You also need the strategy in place to bring all your activities together and align your messaging to your brand to help you make the most of the opportunities that come your way.

Getting your brand noticed and standing out from the crowd is becoming more complex.

With more than 500 million tweets sent every day, and more than six million businesses using Facebook to reach their target audiences, cutting through the noise is a major challenge.

So, investing the time and money in building a strong brand image and creating valuable content that resonates with your target audience is the key to reaching and attracting more of your ideal customers and achieving more from your digital marketing.

And while paid ads remain as crucial as ever in terms of getting your brand in front of the right audiences, you should



Paul Dyer, Managing Director, QBD

also be looking at raising your brand awareness organically through relevant, valuable content that gets you noticed by the search engines. In both the B2B and B2C arenas, people are becoming more immune to the hard sell. So, becoming a thought-leader and educating your audience on why they need your products or services is the key to keeping them engaged.

With most people used to on-demand and instant access to everything they need, the way you communicate must be quick, convenient and easily digestible

“ In both the B2B and B2C arenas, people are becoming more immune to the hard sell. So, becoming a thought-leader and educating your audience on why they need your products or services is the key to keeping them engaged. ”

enough to interrupt them as they scroll. Your content also must be valuable enough to hold their attention and keep your brand at the front of their minds, so when they are looking to buy, you're the first business they think of.

The bottom line is, 2022 will bring some fundamental changes to the digital marketing arena. Having the right strategy, backed with the expertise to deliver it effectively, will help you navigate the choppy waters that lie between your business and your destination.



[www.qbd.co.uk](http://www.qbd.co.uk)

# Economic Expectations for 2022

C2S talks to Janet Mui, Investment Director at Brewin Dolphin, about her expectations for 2022

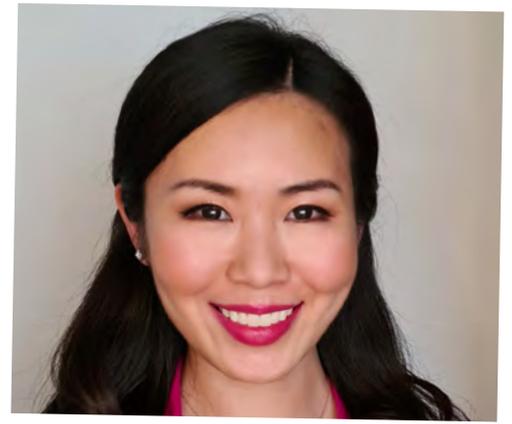
Reopening economies, progress in vaccination rates, extremely supportive policy and strong growth in profits provided a boost to company shares in 2021. Can we expect the party to continue? While growth in major economies is still expected to be above average, momentum is going to slow inevitably. For most companies, consumers and investors, the worries around the rise of inflation has remained higher than policymakers expected. There are winners and losers from higher inflation but it brings with it some concerns. Future profits, for example, might not match those of the past if companies' costs go up but they can't pass on those costs to customers.

Inflation is the biggest near-term risk and there is a high degree of uncertainty on its persistency. From a supply perspective it seems like anything that can go wrong has gone wrong. A shortage of HGV drivers, surge in energy prices, supply bottlenecks and, at the same time, robust demand for goods have acted to drive inflation higher.

Going into 2022 it seems likely that monetary policy will be tightening to some extent. The Bank of England seems to have

decided to be proactive on this topic. Its comments conditioned the market to expect an imminent rate rise, as well as two interest rate increases in the first half of 2022 alone. Although this will leave interest rates far below the current level of inflation, this policy stance is quite aggressive by comparison with other central banks. Some way behind is America's Federal Reserve. It will slowly reduce its asset purchases (quantitative easing) and may increase interest rates by the end of 2022. Seemingly in no hurry to meaningfully tighten monetary policy is the European Central Bank. Perhaps it's scarred by two misplaced rate hikes during the recovery from the last global crisis, which needed to be quickly reversed and more.

While the recovery has further legs in the coming year, a number of headwinds are becoming more apparent to investors. These include slowing growth, tighter fiscal and monetary policy, elevated inflation and higher market valuations. We remain cautiously optimistic on the global macro outlook. However, we acknowledge that after a remarkable year for stocks that saw vaccinations and profit recoveries



Janet Mui, Investment Director, Brewin Dolphin

vanquishing anxiety from investors' minds, there is a new realisation that the path from here may not be so easy. However, the reason central banks have been so reluctant to tighten policy is because unemployment is still too high. The process of bringing it down means getting people into work, allowing them to spend, and driving growth and profits. Anxiety over inflation has to be seen in that context, and in the context of the diminutive returns which can be made keeping money on deposit. 📌



[www.brewin.co.uk/individuals/our-offices/cheltenham](http://www.brewin.co.uk/individuals/our-offices/cheltenham)

# Looking to the future

C2S talks to Judi Bonham at WSP Solicitors

The COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for everyone and the word normal has been used throughout these times, not always constructively. For our staff and clients at WSP Solicitors, normal now means something very different from what it did in early 2020, and as a business we have had to adapt to meet this.

Over the last 20 months everyone in the business has had to learn skillsets outside of their usual roles - given the progress we have made with technology, innovation and new ways of combining working remotely and in person. This has identified new efficiencies within the legal services we provide, and allowed us to improve the services and accessibility to them for our clients.

WSP Solicitors will need to continue to be strategically focused on these continuing developments and the key challenge of ensuring our people are not missing out on

social connection, the feeling of being part of WSP, as well as nurture and maintain a sense of teamwork and inclusion.

There are external recruitment challenges across the sector, which has further highlighted the importance of building and nurturing internal talent in the business, leading to an overhaul of our staff development programmes. It is likely that there will be future demand for developing immersive technologies such as VR and AR experiences, as well as looking closer at Block Chain Technology in terms of contracts and transactions.

Despite the technological advances that the pandemic has accelerated, leadership is essentially human; without judgement, compassion and authenticity a business cannot be successful. Our business is our people and we need to be alive to their needs. Technology can make our processes more efficient, but it cannot make us better colleagues, employees or leaders.



Judi Bonham, Managing Director, WSP Solicitors

This applies to our people too and not just leaders. We all need to continually learn and there is a responsibility for us as a business to support learning across all levels for our staff. 📌



[www.wsp Solicitors.com](http://www.wsp Solicitors.com)



# What Does 2022 Hold for Gloucestershire Airport?

By Karen Taylor, Managing Director of Gloucestershire Airport



Karen Taylor, Managing Director, Gloucestershire Airport

In looking ahead to 2022 I can't help but reflect on the challenges everyone has had to face both personally and professionally over the last two years. As Managing Director of Gloucestershire Airport I know just how acutely these challenges have been felt by the aviation sector.

Since joining in 2018, I've been wedded to bringing a modern commercial vision to Gloucestershire Airport. Together with colleagues and consultants we've actively sought out ideas and options to future proof the airport and ensure a bright sustainable future. The commercial potential for this airport is fantastic, and to not deliver it would be a wasted opportunity. So, while the COVID-19 pandemic threw us something of a curveball, we've remained steadfast in our determination to realise our long-term strategy to drive investment into the airport so we can develop facilities and services for the benefit of the businesses that operate from the airfield and their customers.

That I'm stood looking ahead to an exciting 12 months in Gloucestershire Airport's history is testament to the hard work and commitment of all the airport team, as well as the tenants and businesses operating from here.

Secured funding has enable us to deliver runway improvements and other critical capital improvements, with work starting in December 2021, this will see us going to ground break from early 2022.

The new runway will be a massive boost for Gloucestershire Airport. Existing customers running their businesses from the airport, including charter flights, flight schools and leisure users will immediately benefit from

improved braking distances and lighting. In addition, knowledge that the runways are being refurbished is already attracting the attention of potential new operators to the airport.

Delivery of the new runways really will raise the profile of Gloucestershire Airport and put it firmly on the map internationally as an airport that is serious about growing, and give confidence to regional businesses that we are a viable alternative to the other regional airports.

“ Together with colleagues and consultants we've actively sought out ideas and options to future proof the airport and ensure a bright sustainable future. ”

This refurbishment work is also a catalyst for other exciting works including improved communications equipment and upgraded radar, better fire equipment and upgrading our ICT systems. Alongside this we are working to deliver clean energy projects and green technologies projects to help reduce our carbon footprint where possible.

Even with the aftereffects of the pandemic it remains an exciting time for aviation in terms of the progress being made to improve the environmental performance of aircraft, in particular those smaller aircraft that would use regional airports. Electric planes are being developed and, while we are some way off, this technology being used to deliver all-electric planes for long-haul flights. Travelling between cities in

smaller electric aircraft is likely to become a reality in the near future and this will be a game changer for regional travel by air.

Together with Rolls Royce, ElectroFlight has developed a single-seater all-electric aircraft – the Electric NXT (E-NXT) – a battery-powered plane described as being within 'grasping distance' of breaking world air-speed records.

Delivery of the new industrial and warehouse development at the airport – CGX Connect – is a key element to our future success. CGX Connect is a great innovation for a regional airfield. By making use of land available to create a revenue stream that we can re-invest back into the airport operations, the scheme provides us with the foundation to fulfil our ambition to become a nucleus for regional connectivity, international travel growth and business innovation. After appointing civil engineering company Montel, work is now well underway to deliver improved access to the site and we look forward to being able to announce confirmed tenants later in the year.



[www.gloucestershireairport.co.uk](http://www.gloucestershireairport.co.uk)



## Leading an organisation from surviving to thriving and further growth

By Laurie Bell, CEO of The Cheltenham Trust

**T**he Cheltenham Trust is an independent charity and the lead provider of culture and leisure in Cheltenham. It manages Pittville Pump Room, the new Heritage Deco orangery cafe, The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum, Cheltenham Town Hall, the new Garden Bar orangery, Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales stadium and its new sports bar.

As the guardian of much of the town's heritage, the trust has a major role in sustaining and improving these historic venues and developing them as significant visitor destinations. The adverse impact of the pandemic forced the trust to repurpose its business. It adapted using its premium outdoor spaces launching new outdoor cafes at Pittville Pump Room and the Garden Bar in Imperial Gardens. It was the first time since 1930 that there had been a café at the pump room.

The community response was overwhelmingly positive, attracting more than 521,000 customers in the first 12 months. Both cafes have grown organically from two trestle tables and a temporary marquee, to operating in two

temporary deco-style orangery structures. The visitor numbers continue to grow, along with the demand for the trust to continually evolve to meet expectations.

As the CEO of the trust, I learnt so much while leading the organisation through the pandemic. This learning is being channelled into the growth of the organisation as we move towards a sense of normality. Living and operating through crisis tests the strongest of leaders. Leadership of an organisation that has to continually adapt, refocus, take risks and deliver takes resilience, determination, a strong and robust team, and an insurmountable level of positive energy.

There is absolutely no doubt that having the right team, with the right aptitude and skills is paramount. Crisis management doesn't sit comfortably with a lack of 'can do' approach. It needs that tangible willingness to take on whatever is needed to assist the business to survive and recover. I discovered many rising stars and huge potential, and by tapping into this talent we not only managed to survive but to thrive and grow in a new and unforeseen direction.



Laurie Bell, CEO of The Cheltenham Trust

The unexpected learning for me was the realisation of the value of café culture both for the local community and visitor destinations. Suffice to say café culture is now at the heart of the trust's revised business model.

An example is the Wilson Art Gallery and Museum that will reopen next April hosting a new vibrant and activity-filled community arts café at its heart, along with a new community art and exhibition gallery and artist studios.



**Pittville Pump Room and Heritage Café and Pittville Park**

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As we make the shift from recovery to a new business model, our focus is the provision of culture, community and commercial to achieve the growth we are projecting and to meet customer expectations.

The combination of culture and cafes is powerful and popular – whether that’s children’s theatre and story time events, live musicians, community choirs, creative workshops, dancing, talks, artisan markets or exclusive afternoon teas accompanied by the Steinway piano – it works.

We also recognise the value that cultural and leisure activities have in helping improve personal health and wellbeing, particularly mental health wellbeing, which after the past 18 months is more important than ever. Next year to aid wellness we are encouraging the exploration of new cultural and leisure experiences to inspire and stimulate the imagination and improve overall wellbeing.

The trust will also host its first festival next June – an American Retro Festival – to mark 80 years since the requisition of the pump room by American troops in World War II. Bringing history to life is proven to engage and broaden awareness and interest. This new two-day festival will

“ As CEO I realise that as we move towards life without COVID-19 we must continue to reinvent, adapt and grasp every opportunity to encourage visitors to enjoy the wonderful venues that I have the privilege to manage. ”

help strengthen Cheltenham’s reputation as a festival town and showcase its extraordinary heritage.

As CEO I realise that as we move towards life without COVID-19 we must continue to reinvent, adapt and grasp every opportunity to encourage visitors to enjoy the wonderful venues that I have the privilege to manage.

The trust is on a growth trajectory that is both a huge opportunity and challenge. Leading an organisation from surviving to thriving and further growth needs

vision, strategy and delivery. It can only be achieved with the right team that shares the vision and has the passion and tenacity to see it come to fruition. The trust has proven what can be achieved in the darkest and most challenging of times. The vision for the future builds on this achievement to ensure that as the lead provider of cultural and leisure activities, the trust helps position Cheltenham as a destination of choice.

I am looking forward to more normal times. Since 2018 my leadership has been tested through major incident and crisis. As the lead for all communication following the nerve agent Novichok attack in Salisbury and the recent and ongoing pandemic, I gained unprecedented learning. What I’ve realised is that you can adapt, repurpose, review and grow – both as an individual and an organisation! 🇬🇧



[www.cheltenhamtrust.org.uk](http://www.cheltenhamtrust.org.uk)



# Kevin Gates, Managing Director at Neoperl UK, shares their business update for 2022

don't believe there's ever been a more difficult time to accurately forecast for a business. Over the past 18 months we've all seen massive changes to working conditions, difficulties with staff recruitment, Brexit uncertainty with new processes for export, raw material supply issues and in our case an unprecedented demand for our products. The latter is very positive, it appears that there's an increasing recognition about how precious water is and its scarcity, and that our water-saving products can make a difference.

I predict that 'sustainability' will be higher up everyone's agenda in 2022. The focus keeps switching. With CO2 carbon emissions now back in the media after a few years of single-use plastic and as water saving forms part of the UK's emissions, it's something that most home and business owners can relate to and do something about.

Saving water is a simple concept, unlike bio-fuels in the early 2000s that were going to save the planet until we discovered rain forests were being felled for palm oil plantations. No such complexities exist with water, we simply need to use less, waste less and we can all make a difference. Neoperl products are designed to be retrofitted to help save water so I think that the demand we have seen in 2021 will continue to grow during 2022. Over the years we have largely supplied the OEM market with our products - so today



“ It may only be a matter of time before restriction on the usage of water are imposed on all of us, so we all need to take action to make a difference both at home and work. ”



Kevin Gates, Managing Director, Neoperl UK

most boilers, electric showers, dishwasher and washing machines benefit from the functionality of a flow regulator. Today, our focus as a business is to spread the word about how the small precision-made devices that we produce here in Malvern can be retrofitted to everyday taps and showers too.

It may only be a matter of time before restriction on the usage of water are imposed on all of us, so we all need to take action to make a difference both at home and work. In the home for example, Waterwise research shows that the bathroom is responsible for 34% of the water used. New taps and showers today are optimised for use with any water pressure, but the key is to assess their flow when they are fitted and adjust it accordingly. It's really that simple. We've all experienced taps and showers that run too fast and splash water out of an enclosure or basin, yet the flow on all these

appliances can now be reduced by fitting a flow regulator or pressure compensating aerator (PCA). And they take just minutes to fit and can reduce the water flow immediately. With COP 26 at the forefront of everyone's mind, we are all starting to think about the positive changes we can make, installing water saving devices in your home and at work is a quick win to saving water and supporting sustainability and the environment. That's our focus as a business for 2022 to continue to build awareness and plan for growth. 🌱



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## The Importance of planning for 2022

By Hayley Parker, Director and Founder of OPS-BOX Group

### Planning is so Important if you want to be Successful

Whether that's planning for a wedding, planning to buy a property or planning for your business, spending time working through the detail – getting your ideas down, being clear on the pros and cons, understanding the market and your customers' needs, as well as the financials – are all really important.

With the turbulence and uncertainty we've seen over the last two years, the importance of planning has been highlighted more so than ever before, which is why it should definitely be featuring high on a business' agenda, particularly as we move into a new year.

At OPS-BOX we often see businesses that have the opportunity to grow, albeit with some challenges that need focus, but the difference between them achieving the growth they want and failing, comes down to two simple things – time and the approach to execute the plan.

Implementing the plan is where the hard work really starts.

### So, When is Planning Pointless?

It can be pointless if all you do is develop a plan and then let it sit on a shelf or leave it saved in a file. This might sound obvious, but we are still surprised by the number of businesses we work with that do this – spend time and money developing a business plan which leaves them feeling pleased and relieved that they have ticked the business plan box for another year. Now we can get on with the day job!

Just doing the planning is pointless unless you have clear next steps – prioritisation, actions, owners, timescales and the time and resources available to actually deliver the plan.

### The Winning Factor

For me, the winning factor is having absolute alignment across the business, shared goals and objectives with absolute consistency in the way performance



Hayley Parker, Director and Founder, OPS-BOX

is measured and rewarded. So, how do you achieve this? It's all about collaboration. Getting your employees onside – involving them with the development through to delivery of the plan and being consistent in how you measure and recognise their efforts. 

**At OPS-BOX, we support businesses to develop and execute business plans. If you would like some help to realise your goals for 2022, get in touch today.**



[www.ops-boxgroup.com](http://www.ops-boxgroup.com)

## Themes, trends and growth for 2022

C2S talks to Tim Watkins, Managing Partner at Randall & Payne

**A**fter all that has happened since March 2020 it would be good to think that 2022 will bring a more settled time. I expect it will be better but I am sure there are going to be bumps on the road.

I can't see an early end to the employment situation in certain sectors. I know our profession has found recruitment difficult of late but that pales when compared to lorry drivers for example. Many clients tell us of difficulties and this shortage of skilled people can only hold the recovery and growth back.

Here at Randall & Payne we have adapted to a mix of working from home and the office and are moving towards a settled pattern. People enjoy the mix and certainly those that travel some distance are not missing the traffic problems. With recruitment becoming more and more competitive, work-life balance is going to remain very important. I am aware though that while being at home works for some, people do miss interaction with colleagues. This will be a challenge going forward and we are looking to do more

social events and making time at work as enjoyable as possible.

There will no doubt be a continuing drive towards greening the economy and this is something we all need to be part of and we will be looking to do our bit. Sustainability is on our agenda and has been for a while but I am sure there is more we can do. I expect it will move up the to-do list for many of our clients too, although plenty are already trying to follow a more planet friendly path. My concern is that cost will hold back many with tax rises not helping.

The inflation monster is flexing its muscles and starting to stir. We have seen big increases in some raw materials and products with fuel being the current stand-out problem. I think inflation is going to be a theme for 2022 and will be a problem for the Bank of England as they wrestle with trying to bring this under control whilst keeping growth going. Interest rates has been the traditional method for controlling inflation and we could see a rise in rates next year. I also expect the authorities might hope that a small increase will come



Tim Watkins, Managing Partner, Randall & Payne

as enough of a shock to slow things down. My concern is it will need more.

There are plenty of challenges ahead, plenty to plan for and helping with planning for the future is where we see most growth at the moment. Technology has made producing 'what if' scenarios so much easier and having been through such a difficult period clients are keen to think ahead and try to be prepared. 



[www.randall-payne.co.uk](http://www.randall-payne.co.uk)

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**B**PE is a full-service law firm with its head office in Cheltenham. We provide a range of legal advice for businesses at any stage of their lifecycle from start-ups to national PLCs. We also provide private client advice to individuals in relation to wealth, property and family matters. With 28 partners and over 120 staff in total, we retain the personal partner-led approach when supporting our clients who are often headquartered all over the country. We provide wide-ranging legal expertise and flexibility, all backed by technology and smarter ways of working to meet your exact needs. We really understand the wider commercial challenges you face and offer you expert, practical advice that can be applied directly to your business or personal challenges. At BPE we never sit on the fence: we always give you firm advice and direction so you have the confidence to act.

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**W**e are an independent, results focused consultancy and have extensive experience in planning through our teams experiences in both local authority and consultancy. Our planning team are RTPI qualified (the accrediting body for the planning profession) and care passionately about getting results for our clients. In the past twelve years we have worked on more than 600 projects that have ranged from bespoke grand design houses, farms and schools to industrial regeneration schemes, airports and large scale strategic housing. Providing the best, commercially sound and practical advice to anyone who asks us is at the heart of what we do. Our approach is always guided by our three principles of Integrity, Innovation and Intelligence.

**Integrity** – With our detailed planning experience, we honestly assess the chances of project success. Your project really

matters to us and we strive for the very best outcomes.

**Innovation** – With a constantly evolving planning framework and complex procedures to navigate, we innovate to maximise Return on Investment (ROI), be this on a piece of land, a building or a development. ROI is not a single measurement, we value it not only as financial gains, but also sustainability, regeneration, improved social access to homes, employment opportunities and social infrastructure and preservation of heritage or environment.

**Intelligence** – The Planning system, legislation, policies and guidance at national and local level are ever changing. Expanding on our years of experience, we always keep up to date on the changes and recognise that they can be quite complex, so we unravel those complexities and provide



Integrity, Innovation and Intelligence

## 'Building Our Future Built World'

you with a bespoke plan for your project. Change also represents an opportunity and we look to see how changes to the planning system can be applied to the benefit of our clients. Our sole aim is to support you and deliver a successful outcome. We concentrate purely on planning and work with a community of specialists in related disciplines, which bring synergies to our work and ensure professional rigour. We have a track record of success across England but with particular focus on Gloucestershire, the Cotswolds, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire and Yorkshire.

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**C**rowe is a national audit, tax and advisory firm with a long-established office in Cheltenham. Specialist teams provide pragmatic, commercial advice to businesses of all types and sizes, at all stages of their lifecycle. Accountancy advice, strategic planning, tax and compliance services are provided to corporates, professional practices, charities and independent schools. Crowe also provide tax advisory and compliance services for private individuals, directors, entrepreneurs, trusts and clients with generational inherited wealth.

[www.crowe.co.uk](http://www.crowe.co.uk)



**F**ounded in 1998, Omega Resource Group are an award-winning recruitment company that is part of Staffline Group plc after being acquired in 2018.

We focus on delivering high-value, bespoke recruitment solutions using our in-depth knowledge of the automotive, aerospace, engineering, manufacturing, logistics and professional services markets.

With a large network of recruitment experts, we have the ability to deliver specialised services on any scale and bolstered by Staffline Group we are able to our support clients across multi sites across the UK. With the launch of our

Portugal branch in 2020 we are also able to support across Europe. What makes us so successful? We build progressive long-term client partnerships through dedicated management of permanent, contract and temporary recruitment.

Whether Executive Search, permanent, contract, temporary or Managed Service Programmes, Omega Resource Group has the experience to meet and exceed your expectations, providing real, proven services.

We are client and candidate focused to ensure we deliver the very best service to both parties.

[www.omegaresource.co.uk](http://www.omegaresource.co.uk)



**M**ove Property Sales and Lettings is the No1 estate agency in Gloucestershire, award-winning with offices located in Cheltenham and Gloucester. Now employing nearly 40 people who deliver the very best service for property sales, lettings, development and investment opportunities.

At Move, we pride ourselves on our new and fresh approach to property sales and lettings and are constantly challenging the traditional methods used by other estate agents. Our objective is to improve the way in which our industry has operated for many years with the belief that both buyers and sellers deserve the very best service.

We have a reputation for outstanding customer service, with 650+ reviews from happy customers. We are currently the highest rated agent in Cheltenham and Gloucester, thanks to the consistently

high standard of service we provide to all of our clients. We make selling or letting your property stress and hassle-free with our dynamic and clean cut approach. We look to build long term relationships with all of our clients and continue to grow the company based on our reputation for customer care and satisfaction.

We make sure that buyers, sellers, landlords, tenants and developers all receive the highest standard of service and expertise, ensuring that all parties are kept up to date with all aspects of the process and we are always on hand to advise and support.

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**W**elcome to Abbey Business Interiors. For over thirty years Abbey have been providing workplace and hospitality furnishing and fit-out services to some of the UK's best known organisations. With our wealth of experience comes an understanding of every aspect of commercial interior requirements through design, planning and supply which helps our clients maximise the potential and productivity of their business space. With our own warehousing, delivery fleet and in-house logistics team we support our clients throughout the UK on all projects from inception to completion. For further information about Abbey and our scope of services please visit our website.

[www.abbeybusinessinteriors.co.uk](http://www.abbeybusinessinteriors.co.uk)

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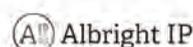
\*Terms & conditions apply- new business only



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[www.move.uk.net](http://www.move.uk.net)

# Circle2Success Leader and Executive Members



INFO@CIRCLE2SUCCESS.CO.UK



03300 536186

BE PART OF THIS LEADING BUSINESS COMMUNITY  
JOIN US AND TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR BUSINESS FOCUS



# Circle2Success Club Members



Circle2Success (C2S) works with SMEs, Entrepreneurs, National and Global organisations based across the South West Region and Worcestershire. A membership organisation, C2S caters for all levels within a business.

We hold regular events addressing all aspects of business topics and challenges including our HR Focus, Cyber Focus, Leaders Forums, Executive Forums, Thought Leadership, Workshops, C2S Socials and our sector specific groups: Manufacturing & Engineering Focus and Construction Focus. We also hold non-member events allowing new businesses to be involved and experience first-hand how we support the business community.

A C2S Leader is a CEO, MD, Director or Senior Partner within an organisation driving the business forward and setting the strategy.

A C2S Executive is a Senior or Middle Manager looking to develop their leadership and management skills and can include your rising stars.

A C2S Club member can be an organisation or an individual from a small or large business looking to network.

If you would like to find out more about how you and your organisation can get involved and benefit from being part of Circle2Success, please get in touch.

PROUD TO BE WORKING WITH  
THIS NETWORK OF GROWTH BUSINESSES





**UP AND COMING EVENTS**

 You can hear more from Nicky Burge, HR Director of Direct Online Services on this subject at the C2S Online HR Focus on 13th January 2022. Book your place here:

[www.circle2success.com/events](http://www.circle2success.com/events)  
Tel: 03300 536186  
Email: [events@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:events@circle2success.co.uk)

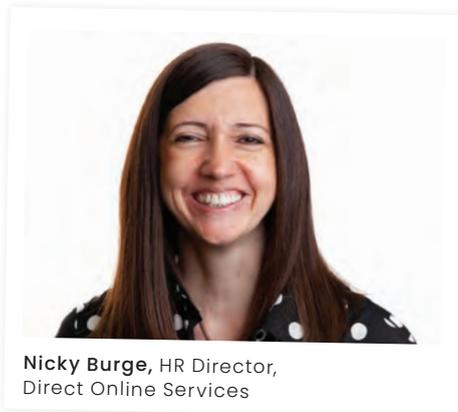
# What Direct Online Services are Doing Differently

By Nicky Burge, HR Director

**H**ere at Direct Online Services, Health and Safety is our number one priority and that starts with looking after our people by creating a safe working environment for all. Covid has presented us all with challenges we never could have imagined, both in our personal and professional lives. I have worked for two businesses during this time and apart from our Operations teams, the majority of staff have been working from home and haven't stepped foot into the office, a pattern experienced across the globe.

Online meetings are great and have allowed us greater flexibility and work-life balance but there is also much to be gained from physical presence and a social connection. It is important to get people together, not only to aid innovation and collaboration but to support our employee's mental health.

When the Government guidance to work from home where possible was lifted I wanted to ensure that every employee felt safe in returning to the office and supported in moving to a hybrid model. That isn't to say we have forced people to return as we appreciate that everyone is an individual and works differently. However, we also acknowledge that having teams together for certain meetings/team events is invaluable.



**Nicky Burge**, HR Director,  
Direct Online Services

Whilst I knew it would be great to have teams back together again after such a long period, I was completely aware that for many of our employees this was a source of anxiety and as an Exec Team we are committed to doing everything we can to support the safety of our people, both from a physical safety point of view and from a mental health perspective.

I therefore wanted to do something simple as I could fully appreciate that each individual will have differing levels of comfort when it comes to being around people. To add to this, it is difficult to continually tell people what level of contact you are happy with, and I don't believe it is right that you should have to justify these feelings.

We therefore introduced the Covid wristbands which act as a visual message. They are either red, yellow or green and show your comfort level when it comes to social distancing as follows:

- Red** – Please keep your distance
- Yellow** – Elbows only
- Green** – Hugs and High Fives

These are completely voluntary and were not in place of any other measures. At the end of the day, we don't know people's individual circumstances and it is not our place to probe. These have been received really well and have helped our employees return to the workplace with added confidence. Jonathan Williams, Brand and Creative Design Manager, says: "As someone who enjoys being in the office, I really value the steps the company has taken to ensure our safety at work and treating everybody fairly. This has been such a simple and discreet way of making returning safer for all."

**Summary**

We will continue with this programme for the foreseeable future as we have made our employees feel safer and that they have a voice in the workplace. The feedback has been extremely positive, and is proving to be a very popular initiative as it demonstrates to our people that their safety and wellbeing is at the heart of what we do. To date, we have had no negative feedback; this has allowed our people to come to work and feel more safe in doing so as the embarrassment and awkwardness of having to explain your preferred greeting and why has been removed! It's been a gamechanger and a positive step to making people feel more normal in these difficult times. 



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services.**

[www.directonlineservices.com](http://www.directonlineservices.com)

# The War on Talent

Looking beyond COVID-19: The forecast for recruitment in 2022 by speciality recruiting consultant **Omega**

**C**ovid, Brexit, changes in tax and industrial automation have shaken up the UK employment market. And while some figures suggest that UK full-time employment is back to pre-pandemic levels, those recruiting are complaining of a labour shortage and a skills mismatch when it comes to hiring new talent.

You only need to look at the shortage of HGV driver to see how serious the problem has become. With a shortage of 100,000 drivers in the UK, and supermarkets paying up to £40 an hour, plus £1,000 joining bonuses, the impact on business, and economic recovery, is troubling.

"Responding to the change in the employment market and adjusting the way you recruit in 2022 will be vital to the success of all business," says Harry Vallender, at Omega.

Omega is part of Staffline UK, one of the biggest recruitment consultants in the UK. With access to national data and the bigger picture across the whole country. We are able to highlight trends, strengths and weaknesses in all sectors to assist clients with their recruitment strategy.

It's these industry insights that help organisations to plan and create a robust recruitment strategy for the next 12 months - developing long-term solutions to the current recruitment crisis.

Although there appears to be more flexibility on where you live and work today, it's still clear to see there are national issues, which aren't going away.



## According to the Office of National Statistics:

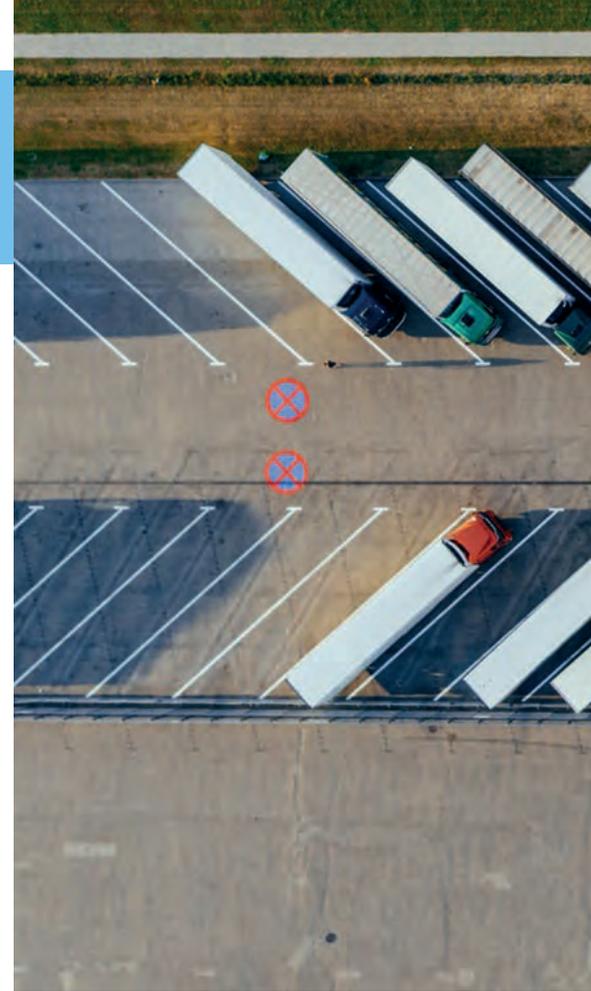
- Over 40% of larger UK businesses are struggling to recruit.
- 66% of SMEs are concerned about how attractive they appear to existing and potential talent when compared with their peers.
- 2% of all business expect to make some redundancies in the next three months.
- Around a fifth of businesses are uncertain of whether redundancies will be made over the next three months.

## Here's the Problem

The past few months have seen employer confidence rise and recruitment activity begin to build. In fact, we've seen a record high in vacancies across most industries. However, a number of factors are causing a sluggish return to normality. Not least, the fact that candidates simply don't want to change jobs right now.

## According to Recent Figures...

- Currently unemployed talent are not urgently seeking work because they either have financial buffers, are receiving benefits or have a partner's income to support them.
- Others have COVID-19 concerns and caring responsibilities
- A third of all survey respondents want to wait until more jobs are available before starting a new position or want to take time off.



## What can you do about it?

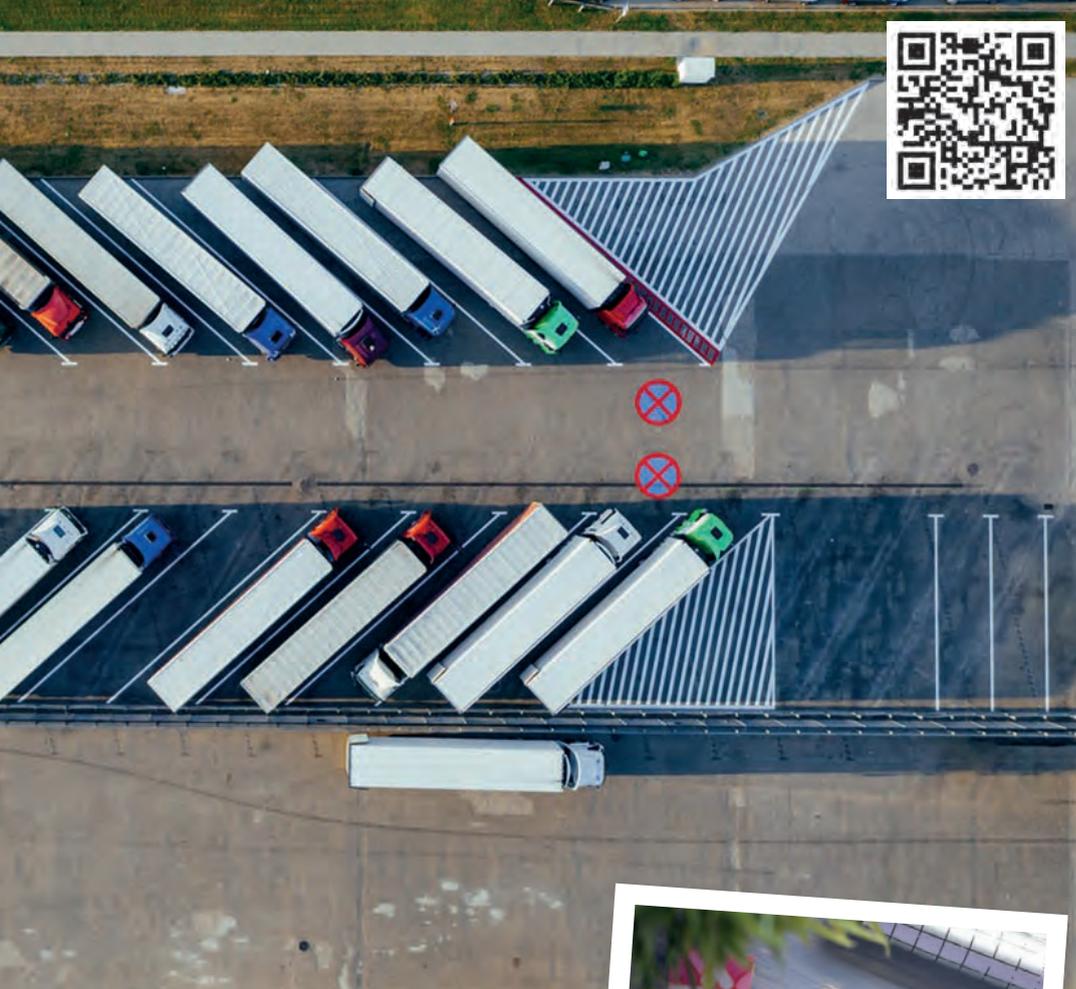
Recruitment procedures must be radically re-imagined to reflect the new way in which we work. And business leaders should make planning for their workforce a priority.

"It's critical that business leaders and recruiters plan for their workforce creatively to ensure they have access to talent."

## Six Ways to Radically Rethink your Talent Search

- 1 Salary is important. However, you should think more broadly when it comes to attracting and retaining staff. Working conditions, facilities, staff engagement, benefits, culture and brand are key to hiring in 2022.
- 2 A third of all survey respondents want to wait until more jobs are available before starting a new position or want to take time off.
- 3 Identify transferable skills. By advertising a role with a rigid set of criteria and only considering tech-heavy CVs, you're closing up the talent pool for yourself. So-called 'soft skills' are valuable - communication, problem solving and adaptability.





## WE ARE HIRING



### Working more effectively than it ever has...

"Throughout my career of nine years to date with Honda UK Manufacturing, I have seen and have been involved with a number of recruitment strategies and processes and can honestly say that Omega's partnership with Honda UK Manufacturing has been 'a breath of fresh air."

"Our recruitment process is now working more effectively than ever before with the help of Omega, and I am looking forward to growing and improving our performance with them further." – Honda

There's no doubt that this year has been tough for employers. And while it's great to see the job market thriving once again, we understand that some businesses are frustrated with the candidate-short market.

So, now is the time to put measures in place to expand the talent pool and snap up the new hires as soon as they are available. 

**Whether Executive Search, permanent, contract, temporary or Managed Service programmes, Omega has the experience to meet and exceed your expectations, providing real, proven services.**

**If you'd like to partner with an award-winning and high value recruiter, please call Omega on 01453 827 333 or email [info@omegaresource.co.uk](mailto:info@omegaresource.co.uk) for advice and support.**

- 4 Identify soft skills at interview stage by asking behavioural questions.

Invest in training. Employers who think radically about their business roles by nurturing talent will ultimately win the war on talent. If you have positions which don't match a candidate's skillset, consider training or upskilling your current workforce.

- 5 Boost inclusion. The impact that a diverse and inclusive workplace has on an organisation's ability to attract and retain talent is considerable. Creating a strategy for this is vital. Done right, you'll have access to a richness of skill, and you'll see productivity and business performance grow.

- 6 Create a robust talent pipeline. This should reflect your business strategy and goals, attract the right people, include passive candidates, include a strong assessment model, development and training and an ongoing evaluation process.



### What Will 2022 Look Like?

It remains to be seen whether Britain's construction, manufacturing and food industries will continue to push wages higher due to the shortage of available workers.

The labour shortage and skills gap is not a short-term issue, and the impact of COVID-19, Brexit and the new age of automation technology will affect us for years to come.

Business leaders should rapidly address the way in which they recruit in order to stand any chance of growth in 2022.



Providing total recruitment solutions to industry

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- Temporary
- Executive Search
- Project-Based
- Managed Service





Rachel Harber Director,  
RE HR Solutions

## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy (EDI): Why is this Important for Talent Attraction and Retention?

By Rachel Harbour, Director of RE HR Solutions

**M**ost organisations have policies in place to review and ensure equality. However, according to a recent article in People Management Magazine, one third of businesses do not have an Inclusion and Diversity (D&I) Strategy.

Why is it important to have a dedicated strategy for D&I? Broadening the diversity of an organisation's workforce can only positively affect employers through increased productivity, heightened creativity/innovation, and broader perspectives and experiences. Research by Harvard found that "cognitively diverse" teams solve problems faster.

There is also a wider appeal to clients and customers, culminating in positive brand representation, attracting, and retaining quality employees.

### Evaluate Your 'Current State'

- Are there any current EDI initiatives? Is there a policy in place? Does your CSR policy cover some elements of equality and diversity?
- Survey your employees to gain information about demographics, culture, experiences, and challenges.

- Gather statistics for the UK and your local population. How do you compare?

### Plan for 'Future State'

#### Recruitment

It's vital to review recruitment processes to eliminate bias. Considerations include:

- Inclusive job specifications and adverts.
- Anonymous CVs removing name, age (potential through employment dates), location and pictures.
- Diverse interview panels.

#### Policy Reviews

Ensure your policies are geared towards inclusive practices that do not negatively impact employees from diverse backgrounds:

- Policies should refer to an aspiration to be an anti-discrimination environment.
- They should promote diversity and inclusion and celebrate differences.
- They should refer to zero-tolerance against discrimination and be transparent around what sanctions

apply (other staff members or third parties).

- Understand whether the actual culture of the organisations reflects the policies

#### Career Progression and Leadership

Senior leadership within an organisation is the primary influence of culture and values, and represents role models for others. A lack of diversity in the leadership team can be a progression barrier to employees from varied backgrounds.

Talent pipelines should be diverse. Examine potential barriers to career progression for those from different cultural backgrounds and how you might overcome them.

#### Talking About Race in the Workplace

Having conversations about race will enable organisations to have a deeper understanding of how employees feel. Is there fear of using the wrong language or saying the wrong thing? Are different cultures and backgrounds celebrated and appreciated?



**UP AND COMING EVENTS**

 We hold monthly online HR Focus events for HR Directors, Manager and HR Professional. Please register via our website

[www.circle2success.com/hr-focus/](http://www.circle2success.com/hr-focus/)  
Tel: 03300 536186  
Email: [events@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:events@circle2success.co.uk)



**Discrimination Reporting**

Employees must be encouraged to report their experiences of discrimination or bias. This will allow an organisation to assess their culture and identify potential improvements. Are employees from diverse backgrounds treated equally to other colleagues? Do they feel that they face obstacles to accessing opportunities that other colleagues do not? Are reported concerns about discrimination/prejudice taken seriously?

**EDI Strategy Generation**

**Objectives**

An organisation's EDI strategy needs to have clear objectives. You could consider making the strategy public or publishing a statement of intent, which can be an effective way of letting employees and customers know that you are committed to an equal, diverse, and inclusive culture.

**Training**

An ongoing programme of anti-discrimination training is essential. It should cover each of the protected characteristics, including how each type of discrimination can manifest. It's an opportunity to reinforce values and equip employees to speak confidently and sensitively, safely challenging unacceptable behaviour. Many organisations include 'bystander intervention training' into their training programme – a valuable method of empowering employees to address and prevent harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Compulsory unconscious bias training can address attitudes that are barriers to a more inclusive workplace. However, this must be employed as a genuine exercise and not 'box-ticking.' Training needs to be ongoing, engaging, and its impact measured.

**Promote**

Credibility will rely heavily on challenging discrimination and unacceptable behaviour, including low-level behaviour and 'banter'. Employees must be confident in raising concerns and know that they will be taken seriously, acted upon promptly, and without fear of reprisals. Relevant policies must be applied consistently, following statutory guidance, where applicable.

**Review**

The impact should be monitored and assessed (e.g., via surveys, diversity data, impact assessments and equality reviews). If a particular element of the strategy has not met its objectives, go back to the drawing board, and consider how else to achieve the goals.

**Positive Action**

**What is Positive Action?**

Positive action describes measures employers can take under the Equality Act 2020 to improve equality for people who

share one or more of the eight protected characteristics. Employers can use positive action for 'encouragement and training' and 'recruitment and promotion'.

An employer can take proportionate action, where they reasonably think, based on credible evidence, that people who share a protected characteristic, experience a disadvantage, have different needs, or show disproportionately low participation in an activity.

In recruitment and promotion, an employer can take positive action to select a candidate from a group that faces a disadvantage or is under-represented in its workforce over a candidate who isn't from that group to achieve diversity in its workforce. The Government Equalities Office has produced a Quick Start Guide to help employers, which includes example scenarios.

When using Positive Action, employers should state this in their recruitment process, establish criteria that enable them to assess a person's overall ability to do the job and keep good decision-making records. In conclusion, organisations that do not have a strategy around understanding and developing their diversity and inclusion are at risk of excluding talent, which could help their business perform at its best. 



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# WELCOME TO CIRCLE2SUCCESS BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

Circle2success (C2S) is a unique business support organisation, providing a gateway to knowledge and connections for today's business leaders.

*We are here to help  
and support you  
and your people!*

## *C2S - What We Do*

*We Provide the Building Blocks for your Business Success*

**Circle2Success** is a business organisation that supports business leaders across the UK to achieve their goals, be better connected and better informed. A premium leader network that operates online and in-person, developed for leaders who want continued learning and development, business support and advice, as well as connect and engage within a proactive and forward-thinking business community.

CONNECT | ENGAGE | INSPIRE | LEARN | SHARE | SUPPORT | COLLABORATE

JOIN TODAY

### *Leadership and Management*

There has never been a more important time to be part of a trusted business community. We provide leadership and management support, advice and continued learning, focus on key business challenges, discuss and debate hot topics and explore new ideas and thinking.

We support business leaders by providing relevant and insightful weekly events, leader boardrooms, training workshops, thought leadership, live leader lounge sessions, inspirational guest speakers and focus groups. We offer the chance to build valuable connections with other business leaders, providing expert advice and business support.

We support the business community through difficult times and business challenges. In response to the current crisis, we have transformed our business to bring you a fully digital business support service offering many benefits, features,

useful online weekly events as well as maintaining our in-person/live events in the South West.

The new challenges business leaders face demand new approaches; surviving a global pandemic, growing sustainably in a climate change emergency, the mass movement of people to remote working and the impact Brexit has had on world trade has made for a very different and challenging world.

Be part of a business support network that provides a safe environment for continued learning, tackles current challenges and provides expert advice and support.

*Online Leaders Forums / Online Thought Leadership /*

## On-going marketing and advertising support for members

We provide ongoing support for your marketing and brand awareness strategies, working alongside your marketing team to support your digital, in-print and online presence. We continuously promote your organisation through our website, news feed, e-newsletter, social media, business magazine, C2S.TV, C2S Podcast and member directory. With over 37,000 connections across the UK and a marketing reach of over 5.1 million across all platforms we are well-placed to support your team.

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- Business Magazine
- Social Media
- Website
- Member Directory
- Member Offers
- Jobs Board for your Vacancies
- C2S.TV
- C2S Podcast

JOIN TODAY

## Online Events

We offer a wide range of online events to supports today's business leaders and their people - a touch point and valuable resource to the latest business news, updates and expert advice. We operate a comprehensive schedule of online digital events to service the business community UK wide and live/in-person events across the South West and Midlands.

- Annual C2S Leadership Week Online Conference
- Thought Leadership
- C2S Business Leader Forums and Boardroom
- C2S Business Leaders Lounge
- C2S Business Leaders Connect
- C2S Talks for Business Leaders
- C2S Executive Development Programme
- Finance Focus
- HR Support and Focus
- Sustainability Focus
- Technology and Cyber Focus
- Marketing and Brand Focus
- Manufacturing & Engineering Focus
- Property and Construction Focus
- Workshops and Masterclasses

VIEW ALL EVENTS

## Live/In-Person Events

We are delighted to announce that our in-person/live events are back in June 2021.

Join us for that long-awaited opportunity to connect and engage with business people in person. All events will be run under Government guidelines. All events are listed on the events calendar on our website.

- Inspiring Women in Business Annual Event
- C2S Live Leader Boardrooms
- Annual C2S Social to The Cheltenham Cricket Festival
- C2S Leader Supper Club

All events are listed on the events calendar on our website.

VIEW ALL EVENTS

## C2S.tv & C2S Podcast - conversation worth having

The Circle2Success TV channel and C2S Podcast bring you insightful interviews with business leaders and experts in their field, tackling current challenges and having topical conversations.

C2S.TV and C2S Podcast talk Leadership, Sustainability, People, COVID-19, Manufacturing, Construction, Communications, Infrastructure, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Inspiring Women in Business and much more...

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## A Successful Year For Circle2Success

4,400+

PEOPLE REGISTERED FOR ONLINE EVENTS IN 2021

£8.4 B

REGIONAL TURNOVER OF MEMBERS IN-EXCESS OF £8.4 BILLION

5.1 MILLION

COMBINED MARKETING REACH OF OVER 5.1 MILLION



Online Focus Groups / Online Networking





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## JANUARY 2022

12th January 2022

C2S Workshop In Person Event  
Growth, People and Process – be ready for 2022

13th January 2022

HR Focus Online Event – with BPE, DOS and  
The Military  
Monthly Update and discussions with  
HR professionals

19th January 2022

C2S Leaders Boardroom In Person Event

20th January 2022

Finance Focus Online Event  
Monthly Catch up with Finance Professionals

21st January 2022

C2S Leaders Boardroom In Person Event  
Worcestershire with Morgan Motors and WLEP

25th January 2022

C2S Leaders Lounge Online Event  
Monthly Catch Up for Business Leaders to  
discuss and debate hot topics

26th January 2022

C2S Digital Networking Online Event  
Monthly catch up for the best online  
networking on our Innovative platform that  
provides a real time networking experience

27th January 2022

Property & Construction Catch up In Person Event  
A By-Monthly casual Catch up for all involved in  
the property and construction sector

28th January 2022

Sustainability Focus – Online Event  
Discuss hot topics around sustainability and  
what you can be doing better in your business

## FEBRUARY 2022

2nd February 2022

Property & Construction Focus Online Event  
Quarterly Discussion and Debate on Hot  
Topics in the Property and Construction  
Sector. Guest Speakers & Discussion Groups

16th February 2022

Manufacturing & Engineering Focus  
In Person Visit to the Manufacturing  
Technology Centre in Coventry

17th February 2022

HR Focus Online Event  
Monthly Update and discussions with HR  
professionals on HR Matters, Issues, Challenges,  
Engagement, Process and Legislation

18th February 2022

C2S Leaders Boardroom In Person Event

22nd February 2022

C2S Leaders Lounge Online Event Monthly  
Catch Up for Business Leaders  
Discuss and debate hot topics, and  
current challenges, be inspired, motivated  
and collaborate

23rd February 2022

C2S Digital Networking Online Event Monthly  
catch up for the best online networking

24th February 2022

Finance Focus Online Event  
Monthly Catch up with Finance Professionals,  
an Update About Financial Aspects of  
a Business

25th February 2022

C2S Cheese Club In Person Event  
The Best In Person Networking over a Delicious  
Lunch, with a Cheese Course at Hotel Du Vin

## APRIL 2022

2nd April 2022

C2S Digital Networking Online Event  
Monthly catch up for the best online networking

12th April 2022

Marketing and Brand Focus  
Quarterly Discussion and Debate on Hot Topics  
in this Sector. Guest Speakers and Discussions

## MARCH 2022

Leadership Month – Week 1

Culture, Diversity & Inclusion  
A week of Conversation and Guest Speakers

7th March 2022

Launch of Leadership Month Online Event

8th March 2022

In Person Event – Celebrating International  
Women's Day at Cheltenham Ladies College  
with Guest Speakers Eve Jardine – Young and  
Nicola Whiting MBE

Leadership Month Week 2 – Leadership in 2022

A week of Conversation and High Level Guest  
Speakers on this Topics

Leadership Month Week 3 – Sustainability  
and Climate Change

A week of Conversation, Discussions and Guest  
Speakers on these Topics

Leadership Month Week 4 –  
Brand & Marketing

A week of Conversation, Discussions and Guest  
Speakers on these Topics

30th March 2022

We will end the month with the C2S Leaders  
Lounge online, allowing everyone to join in the  
conversations of the month, recap, learn, share  
and connect



21st April 2022

Finance Focus Online Event  
Monthly Catch up with Finance Professionals,  
an Update About Financial Aspects of a  
Business

22nd April 2022

C2S Leaders Boardroom In Person Event

27th April 2022

HR Focus Online Event  
Monthly Update and discussions with  
HR professionals

28th April 2022

C2S Leaders Lounge Online  
Monthly Catch Up for Business Leaders to  
discuss and debate hot topics



# Property and Construction Updates from Across the Region

The Circle2Success Property and Construction Focus events cover a range of topics with insights and updates from experts in this sector covering both the residential and commercial markets

## Property Update for Q4 2021

By **George Tatham-Losh**, Managing Director of Move Property Sales and Lettings

In Gloucestershire we have seen a huge demand for both sales and lettings properties, we are still extremely busy across the board. We are starting to see a lack of supply in the million pound plus market on the sales side, with properties selling as soon as they hit the market. On the rental side, we have a massive demand for property from students to family homes; due to this, rents have dramatically increased in both Cheltenham but more so Gloucester. We now seem to find ourselves in a bidding

war with rental applicants due to the velocity of applications per property.

The average house price has risen by over £28,000 since that stamp duty concession was introduced in July 2020. This is 12 times more than the average SDLT saving enjoyed by buyers! The average house price, at £267,587, has now crossed into a higher SDLT threshold too! So rather than helping struggling buyers, the concession has supported massive

and possibly unexpected house price growth. Funny old world!

Over and above any concession, it would certainly seem that sheer confidence, coupled with alternative financing, strong employment, low-interest rates and an economy rebuilding itself, are all playing their part in proving once again that British real estate remains an exceptionally strong investment and a tax-free one for most homeowners. Rents are up too by



George Tatham-Losh, Managing Director of Move Property Sales and Lettings

# FOR SALE



## UP AND COMING EVENTS

-  **27th January 2022**  
Property and Construction  
Catch Up from 5.30pm-7.30pm at  
The Clarence Social, Cheltenham
-  **4th February 2022**  
Property and Construction  
Online Event
-  **24th March 2022**  
Property and Construction Catch  
Up from 5.30pm-7.30pm at  
Clarence Social

Please contact us if you would like to be part of our property and construction focus events.

[circle2success.com/events](http://circle2success.com/events)

Tel: 03300 536186

Email: [events@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:events@circle2success.co.uk)

7.5% over the year (Source: Homelet). Could this be why 44% of landlords are expecting to buy more properties this year? (Source FJP Investments).

So often though, the figures we see are already outdated by the time they are published by the Land Registry or a mortgage lender. Perhaps changes in asking prices might be a better indicator of the future than looking at the sales completion figures of the past. According to Rightmove, the average price of property coming to market hit a record high after rising by 0.3% last month. That's a more modest annualised figure of 3.6%, which is about the same as many forecasters are predicting will be the average annual growth for the next couple of years at least.

So, things are stabilising, possibly due to a 14% increase in new properties entering

the market, although buyer demand per property for sale is still more than double pre-pandemic levels. Of course it's the power buyers who are successful in securing the property they want. These buyers have nothing to sell or are already under offer or exchanged; they have their mortgage agreed in principle and have a good conveyancer ready to go. And if you don't yet fall into this category because you have a property to sell, we can help.

Gloucester is a hot spot for future investment with big plans for investment in Kings Quarter and the promise of the Cyber Park, property prices and rental revenue is on the increase. We are seeing great returns for investors and this market is growing with an interest from people who have never built a portfolio before but are seeing the value of this and it's

easier than you think to get involved! Our support team help new investors get on the ladder and maximise on their investment capital, as well as servicing our very established clients with big portfolios. We see a big growth in this area but make sure you get the best advice from someone who really understands the market.

### Move Charity Campaign Launched

We are proud to launch our Move Charity Campaign. We pledge to donate £250 to your chosen charity on completion of a sale referred by you. We wanted to support the charity sector and this seemed a great way to do it, giving back is a big part of our culture at Move. Quote MOVECHARITY when you refer a sale to us and we'll do the rest! 

## MOVE LAUNCH CHARITY CAMPAIGN

Sell a property with Gloucestershire's No.1 Sales and Lettings Agency and we will donate £250 to a charity of your choice!

To make your claim use code **'MOVECHARITY'** on the completion of your sale

\*Terms & conditions apply- new business only

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Gloucester Office: 01452 597994

[www.move.uk.net](http://www.move.uk.net)



# Planning for the Future

By Nathan McLoughlin, Managing Director of McLoughlin Planning

**S**ecuring planning permission is critical to any development project, simply because you cannot lawfully develop a site without it. Understanding how to secure planning permission, unravelling the complexities of the legalities involved and the process required to do so is a key part of the service provided by McLoughlin Planning.

“ We can advise on all aspects from a planning standpoint to ensure that those decisions are made in the full knowledge of the planning potential and the value that can be maximised. ”

We are currently witnessing significant delays in the planning decision-making process by Local Authority planning teams. Local Planning Authorities are suffering from being under-resourced and over-stretched against the backdrop of dealing with an ever-increasing complex planning process.

We are recommending that if you are considering getting planning permission in the future, start looking into it now. The sooner you start engaging with the planning process, the better prepared you will be and the greater the likelihood that the project will be delivered successfully and on time.

The need for planning permission can arise from several changes in your business. Changes such as realising a long-standing company growth strategy, a change of use (for instance retail to residential) or moving premises and developing land in direct response to the pandemic. They can equally be driven by personal circumstances, such



Nathan McLoughlin, Managing Director of McLoughlin Planning

as realising the potential of land and buildings owned by family or looking to relocate to the countryside.

For commercial owners/occupiers, we are finding that clients are taking a hard look at their premises and processes –



rationalising the utilisation of space and disposing of assets no longer required. We can advise on all aspects from a planning standpoint to ensure that those decisions are made in the full knowledge of the planning potential and the value that can be maximised.

For landlords and investors, the planning process offers a wide range of opportunities for buildings to be re-purposed to alternative uses. This is especially the case with the recent changes to the Use Classes Order which offers new opportunities for redundant business units to be re-purposed.

For landowners, the on-going housing crisis and under-delivery of housing

across the country presents the opportunity for land to be promoted for development or to be the subject of applications for planning permission.

At McLoughlin Planning, we believe that every planning project starts with a conversation with an honest assessment of the chances of success. This conversation is incredibly important, and we put great weight in doing this at the earliest stage possible and at no cost to you. This can save you a lot of pain, time and money, after all what interest would we have on pursuing something which is going to be unsuccessful but beware of those that want to charge you for that initial conversation! 🗨️



We'd be delighted to help and offer advice and support so please feel free to contact me:

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# Making a Difference

Circle2Success talks to **Nicola Bird** and **Natalie Bell** from **K W Bell Group** about how their exciting new project, **AccXel**, will shape the future of construction

**T**he sisters are the third generation of the esteemed Bell family, who founded the £80million construction business, K W Bell Group, based in Gloucestershire. They recently branched out from the family business to create AccXel, the UK's first industry-led construction education facility, which aims to tackle the severe skills shortages plaguing the construction industry. The project is the first of its kind, and has been co-funded by HM Government, GFirst LEP and K W Bell Group.

## What Inspired AccXel

The idea for AccXel was conceived through Nicola's personal experience working as a Director at K W Bell Group. In meeting about succession planning, it became apparent that the skills shortages in the sector were going to severely hinder any growth plans for the Group and could even jeopardise their current position within the market.

"In that meeting I knew I had to do something to secure the future of my family's business," said Nicola. "I recognised early on that current construction courses and apprenticeship schemes were not retaining talent in the sector. I began conducting my own case studies on apprenticeships and attending talks with industry experts to deepen my understanding of the issues facing construction. From this, I was able to identify significant gaps between what was being taught on colleges and what was required on sites. I used my findings to create a bespoke apprenticeship model which we have since used for our own apprentices at Bell Contracting. All the apprentices became fully qualified tradespeople and are still working for us today."

"We knew that if we didn't do something drastic to change the way construction skills were being taught, the shortages would



Natalie Bell and Nicola Bird

only get worse," Natalie stated. "We created our own education facility because we understand what skills and knowledge are needed in construction more than any other schools, colleges or universities."

## The Magnitude of the Skills Shortages in Construction

The skills shortage is not a new issue for the industry. In 2019 the Chartered Institute of Building claimed that over 160,000 new recruits would be needed by 2023 to keep up with the demand



A family affair, The Bell Family



“AccXel’s programmes have been designed to ensure that all our learners receive the best theoretical, practical and up-to-date construction education possible.”

within the sector. Earlier this year, the IPPR estimated that 750,000 construction workers were due to retire within the next 15 years and stated that there are not enough people to replace them. People under the age of 30 only account for 20% of the current workforce.

“It’s not just skilled workers and tradespeople who are aging out of construction,” explained Natalie. “There are people reaching retirement at every level; supervisors, site managers and even directors. At AccXel, we’re not trying to inspire new talent to work in this industry, we’re also paving a clear path for progression to help those already in the industry reach the next stage in their career.”

“AccXel’s Skill STEPS Programme has five clearly defined steps which can take you from being an apprentice, all the way up to being a Site Manager. Whether you’ve been working in the industry for ten days or even ten years, AccXel can help you take the next step.”

### What Makes AccXel’s Programmes Different?

“AccXel’s programmes have been designed to ensure that all our learners receive the best theoretical, practical and up-to-date construction education possible,”

said Nicola. “Right now there is a growing demand for building sustainable and carbon positive housing. A lot of the existing workforce won’t have experience within this area of construction which is why we have incorporated modules on sustainability and environmental considerations into our courses. We want to ensure that our learners are fully prepared for future of construction.”

“There are also growing concerns surrounding mental health in construction too,” added Natalie. “There is not adequate support for workers who are suffering from mental health issues. We have included compulsory modules on mental health across our courses to ensure that everyone can cope with the stresses of the industry. Our learners will also be taught how to recognise signs of stress, anxiety and depression in themselves and others. We want to encourage an open discussion about mental health on sites, so that all workers feel comfortable talking about the issues they’re facing and know where to go to get further help.” Changing the Perception of Construction

The ladies behind AccXel are also looking to challenge the way the construction industry is viewed. “For years construction and trades have been viewed as a career

option for less academic people and we’re actively looking to change this,” says Nicola. “There is a large variety of opportunities within construction that require people from all walks of life. What makes you unique is precisely what will help you succeed in this industry.”

“At the moment, women only account for 14% of the construction workforce and most of these are in secretarial or administration roles,” added Natalie. “We want young girls everywhere to know that construction isn’t a boys’ club. Anyone can work in this industry and thrive in it - we’re living proof of that.”



To find out more about AccXel and how they are making a difference in construction head on over to their website [www.AccXel.co.uk](http://www.AccXel.co.uk)



# Lessons for Leaders from COP Gloucestershire

By Chris Brierley, Communications and Engagement Lead – Active Building Centre

The environmental challenges facing businesses, the country and the world can seem insurmountable. However, there are clear ways in which we can rise to meet them through simple actions which will actually save money, but more importantly the planet!

At the Active Building Centre, we are on a mission to find smart solutions. We aim to set new standards for society and prove that change makes sense for our pockets and the planet. We are a centre of excellence working to accelerate the UK's drive towards net-zero carbon and make our buildings, which are responsible for 40% of our carbon emissions, more sustainable by transforming the way they are powered and heated. As recent research from Savills shows transforming heating will be of particular importance: 20% of UK carbon dioxide emissions are accounted for by residential homes, and the vast majority, 70% of this, comes from heating. The work we're doing is therefore helping us make real progress to vital net zero goals.

We recently brought together business and political leaders from across the South West at the inaugural COP Gloucestershire to discuss these problems, and how we can all help make business more sustainable and reach our vital net-zero goals. It was encouraging to see such huge

interest in reaching net zero goal at our COP event, not just in construction but from across industry.

Here are some of the things which we think business leaders can learn from the conference:

## We're on the right track

So at least we can agree on the need to do something. The challenge is what exactly.

ABC's two bases are in areas where organisations are leading the way in tackling this issue head-on. Whether that be in Swansea, where the University spawned the concept and initial idea behind active buildings, or in Gloucestershire, where we have leading green organisations like Ecotricity amongst others who are making commitments to lower their emissions and take action.

But getting to net zero isn't just about what companies can do themselves. A large part is about what places like the Active Building Centre can do for them. We're experiencing unprecedented interest from housebuilders in our approach to delivering net-zero carbon buildings, focused upon reducing energy demand and making technology work to reduce residual emissions, whilst also changing attitudes and the way we do things.



Chris Brierley, Communications and Engagement Lead

For instance, we worked with Nationwide on their £50million Swindon development, advising on the project's energy systems, and on how developers could ensure that each of the 239 homes will meet the highest energy efficiency rating that new homes in the UK can achieve. Our customers include major construction firms and local councils across the country, all of whom are increasingly



C2S talks to **Chris Brierley**, Communications and Engagement Lead - Active Building Centre

our conference, Sam Stacey, of the Government Research and Innovation body UKRI, said that he is: "Tremendously confident that we can achieve the aims we've set out to achieve."

The changes which businesses have made across the county and the nation more broadly are making a difference. By being more environmentally friendly through food, energy and waste choices, we really are moving in the right direction.

And, as Sam observed: "Not only is it feasible to achieve our targets, but there are also clear business opportunities." Done right, the move to net zero can create profit, not constrain it, so we feel that businesses shouldn't be afraid to take those next steps.

### More to be done

With all this being said, there is still a long, challenging road to 2030 and net zero. There are some things which businesses can do for easy wins for their pockets and the planet:

#### 1 Review existing insulation

One of the most effective technologies we work with at the ABC is also one of the most effective. When appropriate, proper insulation in an office building can prevent huge heat losses, reducing costs. Whilst it seems there's been lots of incentives and initiatives around homeowners doing their bit, we still have some of the least efficient homes in Europe and few businesses have made efforts to tackle this issue.

#### 2 Switch to renewable energy tariffs

Another simple, but effective change which will have a real effect on your business and the planet.

#### 3 Invest in new technologies

While you may think it's too soon to move to heat pumps, we are always working on new systems and technologies which make the buildings companies work in more effective and, crucially, active, to benefit your pocket and the planet. Making these changes will be vital to greening our buildings and businesses.

#### 4 Train the next generation

As great as the work that business leaders are doing is, we need to make sure that this journey continues into the future. By training the workforce and entrepreneurs of the future, particularly in construction, in the new techniques being developed in places like the Active Building Centre and Accxel, we can help make sure that the lessons learnt now last a long time.

While there is a great challenge ahead of us, it's clear that Gloucestershire's businesses are on the right path. Our aim at the Active Building Centre is to demonstrate that it won't be as hard as it might sometimes seem to continue down that road towards saving the planet. 



aware that there needs to be a sea-change in the way in which the UK's buildings are heated and insulated.

So we're seeing first-hand what businesses are already doing to help reach net zero.

However, there is still an enormous amount we, and the construction sector, can do - only 1% of new homes are built to the standards needed for net zero. And Savills estimate that with costs at current levels, it would take 36 years for the investment in upgrading an EPC D home to pay itself back. So it's vital that we work together to find new, cheaper technologies to make homes greener.

### Change is doable

Perhaps the most encouraging thing for business is not only the action taken already, but the fact that our goal is achievable. In his keynote address at

To receive news and updates from  
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“ Each of us has a part to play to meet the world’s sustainability challenges because we only have One Planet. ”



# One Planet: Engineering with Purpose

By Spirax Sarco

With 130 years of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit under its belt, local engineering company Spirax-Sarco Engineering is a specialist in thermal energy management and niche pumping solutions around the world. It comprises three world-leading businesses: Steam Specialties, for the control and management of steam; Electric Thermal Solutions, for advanced electrical process heating and temperature management solutions; and Watson-Marlow, for peristaltic pumping and associated fluid path technologies.

Steam Specialties, better known as subsidiaries Spirax Sarco and Gestra are synonymous with excellence in steam system engineering. Helping end users to improve production efficiency, meet their environmental sustainability targets, improve product quality and enhance the safety of their operations, both businesses provide a broad range of fluid control and electrical process heating products, engineered packages, site services and systems expertise for a diverse range of industrial and institutional customers, including healthcare, pharmaceuticals, energy and food.

As businesses rise to an increasingly complex set of environmental challenges, the need for sustainable solutions is

greater than ever. Spirax-Sarco Engineering has set out a new plan to accelerate its sustainability performance to help tackle global challenges such as the climate emergency and ecological breakdown. Head of Sustainability for Steam Specialties at Spirax-Sarco Engineering, Amanda Williams provides insight into the commitments the business has made as it works to engineer a more efficient, safer and sustainable world.

As a FTSE 100 Company and constituent of the FTSE4Good Index, Spirax-Sarco Engineering is ever mindful of our impact on the planet and work to ensure sustainable growth that benefits our stakeholders in all of the countries in which we operate worldwide. Operating sustainably is not only the right thing to do, it also makes good business sense for us.

## Advancing our customers’ sustainability

We operate in a resource-constrained world, with climate change posing an increasing threat to people and ecosystems across the globe. As a responsible business, we recognise that we have a role to play in tackling environmental degradation and climate change. We can do this in two key ways. Firstly, through providing products and

services that make our customers’ critical industrial processes more efficient and, secondly, through managing our own operations in a sustainable manner.

By working closely with our customers and recognising the important role of steam as a natural technology, we are helping them to engineer a more efficient and sustainable future. Spirax-Sarco Engineering has calculated that our Steam Specialties customers would save an estimated 15.8 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually as a result of products purchased from us in 2020. That is equivalent to taking approximately 7.7 million new cars off the road or planting 719 million mature trees.

## Responsibility in action

Earlier this year, Spirax-Sarco Engineering launched ‘One Planet: Engineering with Purpose’, our roadmap for a more sustainable future, with the aim of achieving leadership in industrial sustainability. We are investing in sustainability through six strategic initiatives, building on a legacy of responsible business operations, working ethically and safely, as well as creating inclusive environments where diversity can thrive. In essence, doing what we do already, but doing it better.



“ Spirax-Sarco Engineering has set out a new plan to accelerate its sustainability performance to help tackle global challenges such as the climate emergency and ecological breakdown. ”

We are focusing our efforts in the following core areas:

### Achieve net zero emissions

All businesses must play their part in addressing the climate emergency. Failure to limit global average temperature increases to 1.5 oC above pre industrial levels would result in significant impacts for societies everywhere. Our aim is to achieve net zero for scopes 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, but we are also working to better understand our scope 3 emissions so that we can target improvements in this area.

### Deliver biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity is in decline. The air we breathe, the food we eat and the water we drink all rely on biodiversity. Businesses have an important role to play in halting this decline by putting in place all necessary controls, being more conscious of the natural resources used and the emissions produced. Spirax-Sarco Engineering is committed to protecting and restoring biodiversity as well as encouraging all sites to undertake a biodiversity initiative by 2025, we are working with a charitable partner

to offset our global operational footprint and deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain.

### Implement environmental improvements in our own operations

By implementing environmental improvements in our operations, such as water reduction programmes, eliminating the use of solvent-based paints, and working towards zero waste to landfill, Spirax-Sarco Engineering will be supporting efforts to stay within planetary boundaries.

### Grow sales of products with quantified sustainability benefits

We aim to achieve sustainable sales growth, which includes understanding the whole life cycle impacts of our products, grow sales of solutions with quantifiable sustainability benefits to customers and eliminate all virgin, non-recyclable or non-biodegradable packaging by 2025.

### Embed sustainability criteria in supply chain management

Improving the sustainability of our end-to-end supply chain is a key

strategic objective for the business. Building on our existing Supplier Sustainability Code, which outlines the expectations we have for suppliers, we are working to further embed sustainability criteria into supply chain management.

### Support the wellbeing of our communities

Wherever we operate we want to make life better for the people in our communities. We do this by making charitable donations, through employee volunteering, by sharing our resources and expertise, and supporting workplace-organised community engagement activities. Each of our 8,200+ employees are entitled to three days paid volunteering leave annually so they can be a force for good in their communities. In June 2021, as part of our One Planet sustainability strategy we announced the establishment of a £5 million Education Fund to support access to inclusive education.

Each of us has a part to play to meet the world's sustainability challenges because we only have One Planet. As we continue our corporate efforts against the threat of climate change, we must work together to protect our planet and people and ensure a greener, more resilient future for us all. To celebrate the launch of our One Planet sustainability strategy we asked our employees to Stand Up For Sustainability. In return for their support we will be planting 7,996 trees across six vital tree planting projects in Brazil, California, India, Kenya, Denmark and Australia through a partnership with One Tree Planted. 



For every employee who pledges their support



Spirax-Sarco Engineering plc







To find out more on Spirax-Sarco Engineering's commitment to sustainability go to [spiraxsarcoengineering.com/sustainability/one-planet](https://spiraxsarcoengineering.com/sustainability/one-planet)



# Sustainability in Business

## We can all make a difference

The actions of businesses have significant impacts on the communities they inhabit. Not just in terms of the products and services they offer or the jobs and opportunities they create, but also in terms of the environment. In recent years, sustainability has become a key focus that has underpinned many companies' business strategies, but where do you start if you haven't already? Who is responsible within a company? And how big does a business need to be before they start thinking about sustainability?

As the world's first creative communications agency to achieve certification for ISO 20121 and ISO 14001, we set ourselves high standards to maintain. We take a leading role in looking after the environment and our communities with a range of sustainability methods that can have a real impact on the ROI for our clients. While we take pride in being the first agency to gain sustainability standards and certifications in our industry, it took planning and team-wide efforts to get here. The journey of sustainability is a time-sensitive one, and DRPG's has been underway for over 13 years.

Being a live event provider, we noticed first-hand the amount of single-use items being thrown away along with out-dated building methods and materials used within the

exhibition sector, so we could easily identify areas to improve on. It warranted change and meant something to the people that run events as well as our audiences that attend them.

There are other corporate social responsibilities that may benefit from a company that isn't necessarily about the environment. The common mistake is a waste of internal resource and business time to tick the sustainability box due to the noise around environmental efforts today, when sometimes a company does not justify a whole sustainability investment. A company should be recognising their impact authentically and this starts with the people.

Recent years have shown dedicated sustainability teams being implemented across the corporate landscape, larger companies have experts to solely maintain sustainability policies and continually look at ways to improve their impact on the environment, which isn't always viable, especially for SMEs.

Often decisions about the ways to be more sustainable within your business come from the top. In effect, you're told this is what we're imposing as a business now and this type of enforced situation isn't really going to engage people. We need to be conscious of our own actions personally,



and as a business. But this relates to all aspects of working, from the products and procedures in place to support execution and efficiency of your services. This can be looking at the type of materials you use and how you dispose of them.



## Working together for a better future

**W**e knew the knowledge was within our teams, as they are the ones who are out delivering our services like events, shooting videos and building stage sets on a daily basis, so we asked every department to come up with their own initiatives. Ideas were varied, but some really stuck. For example, in our print department, the bleed line for printing was set at 10mm as a default. By rolling material back into the printer after a job was finished, we reduced the amount of paper waste and, over time, reduced cost.

In production, a lot of batteries are used for microphone packs as we can never allow power to get lower than 50% when producing a live event. So, instead of these batteries being neglected and disregarded, we reuse them within the office in things such as tv remotes and calculators. This has had a massive impact on savings and waste.

If a business is just starting to explore their impact on the environment, then they should not be afraid to ask for guidance. DRPG have been working with Syntiro for over a decade, developing and implementing a robust sustainability management system, a framework for integrating sustainability practices into our daily operations. These activities range from traditional recycling, reducing single-use plastic at events and improving

carbon neutrality, to rigorous health and safety inspections of our warehouse operations, contributing to the circular economy using recycled input materials and managing our suppliers and venues to diverting waste from landfill. All of this is reported against as part of our annual auditing process.

As part of our milestone 40th Anniversary celebrations, we challenged ourselves to really push the boundaries and lead the way by launching our CSR Charter for 2020. This has become part of our culture and drives our business forward, helping us continue along our sustainability journey. But we've only just scratched the surface and there is still so much more to achieve and do.

In 2021 we have established the CSR Charter review, our annual progress report on the sustainability objectives set out in the Group's 2020 Charter. At the same time, we welcomed HRH Prince Edward to DRPG's studios in Worcestershire to commend the team on its rapid and continued response in upholding the highest standards of health and safety during the pandemic which enabled many clients to continue their own communication efforts to their organisations. He was invited to plant a tree to mark the occasion, alongside members of our sustainability team who were onsite creating a new initiative to

“ Your sustainability agenda can be a great engagement tool and help support behaviour change for your business. ”

encourage biodiversity and increase environmental awareness on the 4.5 acre studio complex.

In summary, your sustainability agenda can be a great engagement tool and help support behaviour change for your business. It has a positive impact and can help bring your company values and brand purpose to life. Everyone can play their part – be it supplier, customer or employee. It shouldn't be something we wait for government to impose upon us. It needs to be led by a want and need to do good driven by passionate people. 

**drp<sup>g</sup>** [www.drpgroup.com](http://www.drpgroup.com)



# Gloucestershire College Goes Big and Launches GC Zero!

An ambitious project that will drive decarbonisation and deliver net zero campuses has recently been launched at **Gloucestershire College (GC)**

It is the first college in the country to drive decarbonisation, having pledged to be carbon zero by 2030 – 20 years ahead of the UK Government’s commitment to 2050. This means the carbon it generates running all three of its campuses in Cheltenham, Gloucester and Cinderford will be 100% offset by the carbon it saves operating renewably and responsibly.

To give you some idea of the task, it takes the equivalent of 13 million kettles being boiled to run Gloucester Campus every single day. The equivalent of 63 million hours of continuous Xbox play, or 17.7 million miles in an electric car.

GC doesn’t take that task lightly and has been planning for GC Zero with Hillside

“Becoming carbon zero is the biggest and most important goal we can have.”

Environmental Services – the sustainability and environmental management experts – since February 2020.

In October 2021, GC welcomed guests from Local Government, environmental organisations and forward-thinking businesses to its Cheltenham and Gloucester campuses to officially break ground.

The ceremonies made a big noise – quite literally – as Cheltenham MP Alex Chalk started the drill rig at Cheltenham Campus, and GC Governor and Randall & Payne LLP Partner and Head of Business Advisory, Will Abbot, did the same at the Gloucester Campus. GC’s new T Level construction students and carpentry apprentices attended to learn more about GC Zero and the county’s sustainability goals.

Alex Chalk commented: “Decisive action to drive down carbon emissions is essential if we are to curb global warming and meet our legal targets. I congratulate Gloucestershire College, and I am delighted that the Government has contributed £2.8million to support this important ground source heat pump project.”



Matthew Burgess GC Principal and CEO

Gloucester MP Richard Graham added: “Building a Greener Gloucestershire is a goal that we all share, and I’m delighted that Gloucestershire College is aiming to be carbon neutral by 2022/23.

Renewable energy will be increasingly important to all of us as we seek greener solutions so it’s good to see GC leading the way in the local education sector and investing in emerging technologies.”



## The Journey to GC Zero

### Stage 1: Audit

February 2020

Hillside identified GC's sources of carbon emissions and developed a reduction strategy covering building energy use, transport and goods consumption. Energy was established as a significant, and the most controllable, source of emissions – and the foundation of GC Zero.

### Stage 2: Funding

July 2021

GC successfully gained grant support from the UK Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme via Salix – securing £2.8million of investment for the £4.8million energy retrofit. The remaining cost will be covered by savings made from switching to renewable energy and selling surplus energy back to the grid.

### Stage 3: Electrify Heating

October to December 2021

Drill 40 boreholes (each 200m deep) into campus car parks, to install heat pumps that warm the buildings via renewable electricity – using less electrical energy than the heat they produce.

### Stage 4: Install Solar Panels

November 2021 to February 2022

Solar panels will generate green energy on site to fuel the heat pumps and produce GC's own renewable electricity.

### Stage 5: Optimise Energy Use

January to February 2022

Battery storage and smart energy controls will be installed to balance energy needs to use power at the most economic times, including producing heat overnight and storing surplus electricity.

“Decisive action to drive down carbon emissions is essential if we are to curb global warming and meet our legal targets.”

Alex Chalk MP

By the end of 2021, the complex piece of machinery will deliver the first milestone. – drilling 40 boreholes (each 200m deep) into its car parks, to install heat pumps that will harness natural heat from the earth and provide a source of renewable energy; minimising its dependency on combustion-based fossil fuels.

GC Principal and CEO, Matthew Burgess, said: “Becoming carbon zero is the biggest and most important goal we can have. Within less than 10 years all our campuses will be match fit for carbon zero. In the meantime, we will continue to engage and educate our staff, students and the wider community on the importance of acting now for climate change, and how we can all work together to help save our planet.”

Russell Burton, Founder of Hillside Environmental Services, added:

“Colleges hold a unique and powerful platform in their communities. Our experience suggests that students, staff, employers and business partners are all looking for help and support to understand what can be done to combat climate change. The project that Gloucestershire College has embarked upon is a deep and meaningful move away from fossil fuels and a beacon for its communities to follow in addressing the climate emergency.”

Once the ground source heat pumps are installed, the next steps are to install solar panels at both campuses to enable the College to generate its own renewable energy. This is followed by battery storage and smart energy controls, as well as improvements to GC's transport links, resources and curriculum. 

## What's Next?

These changes will make a lasting impact. GC is leading the way for FE colleges by taking action that will combat climate change for good. It will reduce its carbon footprint by 63% in year 1 – and by following the decarbonisation of the UK national grid by 95% in 2030.

The world needs to change. Young people want change. It's our time to listen and step up for climate change.

GC is working on making positive changes to its curriculum, transport links, goods consumption and more.

Sign up for the GC Zero newsletter [here to stay up-to-date at www.gloscol.ac.uk/gc-zero](http://www.gloscol.ac.uk/gc-zero)





# Cutting the Carbon Footprint



C2S talks to an exciting entrepreneur at **The University of West England, UWE Bristol**, about the future of food distribution

**J**amie Taylor is the Founder of an exciting new start-up called The Greener Greens Co and a Team Entrepreneurship Student at the University of the West of England (UWE).

Jamie has been on an exciting journey over the past 12-months. He is currently being supported by Innovate UK EDGE, successfully joining their Pitchfest program, and is a finalist for the Silicon Gorge Investor Showcase. Earlier this year he represented his university in the

Santander Entrepreneurship Awards and was also recently featured on the BBC's Countryfile Harvest special.

Perhaps his most exciting achievement to date is the installation of a 40-foot, container based vertical farming unit at UWE which is growing and supplying fresh leafy greens, herbs and salads directly to students and staff at UWE, as well as retail outlets in Bristol. Having this unit at UWE makes it the first university in the

U.K to leverage modular vertical farming to reduce supply-chain food miles and single use plastic.

The technology is provided by a fast-growing Bristol based company called LettUs Grow who build modular, container based vertical farming technology that uses 95% less water and 99% less space than conventional land based farming. These vertical farming units provide 24m<sup>2</sup> - 48m<sup>2</sup> of growing area and houses a four-tiered vertical grow-bed. The



Container based vertical farming technology that uses 95% less water and 99% less space than conventional land-based farming.

growing process uses a software that automates LED lighting, temperature and water vapour. Nutrients are delivered to the plants via atomisers that spray a nutrient-dense fog onto exposed roots (a technique called 'aeroponics'). Due to the low energy LED's and timing of light cycle, these units use low amounts of electricity and also use very little water due to the water cleaning/ recycling process makes it a sustainable and environmentally friendly alternative to land-based farming.

“ We all want to help the planet by buying local and living more sustainable lives. ”

The Greener Greens Co Products include baby leaf salads such as Rocket, Pea Shoots, Spinach, Pak Choi. Various herbs such as Coriander, Basil, Parsley, Dill and other small sprouting plants such as micro Broccoli, Burgundy Amaranth, Red Veined Sorrel and Mizuna. These take

between 9-30 days to reach harvest. These type of products are not typically found in retail outlets and have been specifically designed with high-end chefs in restaurants and on-board superyachts.

Jamie's long term vision is to commercialise this innovative farming technology in a way that both simplifies the way these high-end chefs buy their leafy greens and micro-herbs while drastically reducing the associated food miles and carbon footprint of current supply chains.

### Jamie explains

We all want to help the planet by buying local and living more sustainable lives. Unfortunately, the things we want are not always readily available from local suppliers. However, technology from companies like LettUs Grow are enabling food producers like me to grow much nearer the point of consumption. Therefore, removing huge unnecessary food miles and reducing waste by optimising the value chain growing what people need, where they need it.

Jamie and his technology team are also building an app that provides live food availability in an e-commerce style app that allows customers to see what is

growing in their container farms, so they can place orders and receive deliveries from farm-to-plate in hours, rather than days.

Jamie also says, We believe in a future that absolutely needs localised food production and low food mile supply chains. Our plan is to be pioneers that close the technology gap for modular vertical farming by building a global network of these container farms around the world. By connecting and integrating socially and digitally with local communities, we can make it easier for people to receive fresher produce while positively contributing to global climate change. 🌱



**Business Team Entrepreneurship at the University**

[www.courses.uwe.ac.uk/N191/business-team-entrepreneurship](http://www.courses.uwe.ac.uk/N191/business-team-entrepreneurship)

# C2S - What We've Been Up To

Post lockdown we run an extensive calendar of online and in person events. These include our monthly online focus events, along with leader boardrooms, Sporting and networking events. All our events can be viewed on our website [www.circle2success.com/events](http://www.circle2success.com/events), we hope you will join us to be part of our business community.

C2S is a business network that delivers high quality events and marketing support for business leaders across the South West. We have a hybrid approach to events that includes online and in person and tackle current business issues, challenges and provide an environment for continued learning collaboration and future thinking.



C2S Leader Boardroom In Person Event with BPE



C2S HR Focus Monthly Online Event

## C2S Events include



- HR Focus Online
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- Sustainability Focus Online
- Leader Boardrooms Online and In Person
- C2S Digital Online Networking
- C2S Leaders Lounge Online Catch Up for Leaders
- Workshops Online and In Person
- C2S Socials and In Person Sporting Events

Join us and be part of our business community.

If you would like to come along as our guest, please contact us to book your place.

[www.circle2success.com/events](http://www.circle2success.com/events)

Tel: 03300 536186

Email: [info@circle2success.co.uk](mailto:info@circle2success.co.uk)



C2S Leader Boardroom In Person Event with Investec



C2S Leader Boardroom with Campbell Macpherson and Christina McKenzie at the Lygon Arms



Cheese Club



Annual C2S Golf Day October 2021



Annual C2S Golf Day October 2021, Guest speaker Mark Stewart, CEO of Stewart Golf



Cheltenham Cricket Festival July 2021



Cricket Festival July 2021

# Marketing's New Kid on The Block is Here to Stay

The world is changing every day and with it people's habits evolve. Influencer marketing – a term that was once a trendy buzzword – has now cemented itself firmly as a mainstream form of digital marketing

The past couple of years have seen people spend more time than ever on social media and other digital platforms. It should therefore come as no surprise that influencer marketing has soared in the past year. The industry was worth \$1.7 billion in 2016 and is projected to reach \$13.8 billion in 2021. So, whether you're a start-up or established company – there is no better time to be getting involved in influencer marketing.

But what exactly is influencer marketing and why is it good for your business?

Despite the term 'influencer' seeming like a new concept, influencers have actually been around for a long time. We used to be primarily influenced by celebrities and top athletes, but social media has changed the game. Influencers are now anyone who has curated a social media following within a particular niche. Niches can be anything from fashion and gaming to beauty and business.

Influencers are trusted by their followers as experts within their niche, which can be a lucrative opportunity for both the influencer and the brands they work with. This form of marketing is perceived to be more authentic as people trust the influencers they follow to share their honest views on everything from products to restaurants. Influencers engage with their followers by producing content which, when associated with a specific brand, increases brand awareness and turns their followers into potential customers for the brand.

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Topo, Director of GreatWorqs

which, when associated with a specific brand, increases brand awareness and turns their followers into potential customers for the brand.

You only need to look at Nicki Minaj to see this in action. In a recent Instagram post, Nicki was pictured wearing pink bedazzled crocs. Within a few hours, the website crashed after a 4,900% increase in Crocs

sales. The stats speak for themselves, with companies seeing on average \$5.78 ROI for every \$1 spent on influencer marketing.

GreatWorqs is an influencer marketing agency that specialises in helping companies who dream big to achieve incredible results. Their team cultivates targeted influencer marketing campaigns to suit the needs of any business.





“ Influencers are trusted by their followers as experts within their niche, which can be a lucrative opportunity for both the influencer and the brands they work with. ”

way of taking videos and creating photos to advertise things within their niche. This also allows for some different and unique content being created about your brand.

As a brand you will still have control over the brief and the message you would like the influencer to express. Though you should avoid any micromanaging in order to allow and encourage influencers to work creatively.

**4 Quality over quantity**

At first thought it would make sense to choose as many influencers as possible in order to reach as many people as possible. But to get the most out of influencer marketing you want an engaged audience that are really interested in the niche you are within.

This is measured through engagement rates. Engagement can be defined in many different ways such as how many likes each post gets on average, how often links are clicked, how many comments or shares posts get. On average a 'good' influencer will have an engagement rate of around 2% but can range up to and beyond 10%. Booking these influencers will have a much larger impact for your brand and allow for the highest ROI.

There are so many ways that influencer marketing is changing the world of marketing and it is here to stay. 

GreatWorqs was started over three years ago and works globally with a range of companies across many verticals from John Lewis and BodyShop and Tony's Chocolonely.

Tope, Director of GreatWorqs, gives us his top tips on what to consider when looking to enter into influencer marketing:

**1 Identity your niche and audience**

There is an endless range of influencers out there, covering every niche possible. You need to be clear on your target audience. This allows you to narrow down the type of influencer and the type of content being produced.

Some key questions to consider:

- What is the age, demographics, interest and location of your target audience?
- What platform does your audience use – Instagram, TikTok, Facebook or Youtube?
- Do they prefer longer, video content or quick still images?
- Is your audience looking for lots of information on the brand or aesthetic pictures?
- Does your niche overlap with other niches? E.g. lifestyle with fashion

Having this definition will make it much easier for you to strategise your campaign to achieve the best results. Agencies, like GreatWorqs, have the expertise to help businesses answer these questions and locate talent that fits your specific criteria to hit your campaign goals.

**2 Set aside a reasonable budget**

Last year, 65% of marketers increased their budget and 89% of them believed that the ROI from influencer marketing was comparable to or better than other networks. In order to make the difference to your visibility and sales you need to set aside the right amount of budget to pay for the right influencers. Many companies have even started to create their own marketing budget purely for influencer marketing.

**3 Allow for the influencers to have some creative control**

Within normal marketing campaigns, the brand has full creative control. When it comes to working with influencers it is important to allow them to create content that fits within their branding. The marketing will then seem as authentic as possible as the influencer has spent time cultivating their specific

**For more information:**

**E: [jake@greatworqs.com](mailto:jake@greatworqs.com)**

**[www.greatworqs.com](http://www.greatworqs.com)**

**LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/great-worqs](https://www.linkedin.com/company/great-worqs)**



# Is Your Website Fit for Purpose in 2022?

By Megan Griffiths



Megan Griffiths, Marketing at  
Brace Creative Agency, [brace.co.uk](http://brace.co.uk)

Gone are the days when a brochure website would adequately serve your business's and customers' needs. So much so those days are now in fact a distant memory. In a new age of agile web development and improved user experience, your website needs to offer more, much more, which begs the question - is your website fit for purpose in 2022?

Year on year, the world of websites grows and evolves, meaning the goalposts for scoring a successful website change. From new Google algorithms to changes in user behaviour, it is crucial to make sure that your website reflects these changes by being continuously improved and having its SEO strategy maintained.

## Core Web Vitals

In May 2021, Google introduced their new ranking factor, Page Experience - a group of signals that have been developed to measure the user's experience when navigating a website. This takes into account the speed of the website, how fast the website reacts to user interaction and much more. The update brings home the vital message that the users are the most important component when building a website - from the way it's developed down to the way pages are laid out.

From May 2021, if your website hasn't been built with performance in mind, it's time to change your mindset, making 2022 the perfect time to ensure your website passes the Core Web Vitals test. Since the update has been rolled out, we have seen considerable ranking drops in websites that don't pass the Core Web Vitals test, which is why we recommend trying to ace it as soon as possible to avoid a decline in your website's placement in searches.

## Access All Areas

Is your website easy to update yourself? The ability for companies to quickly react to market changes on their website via a CMS, rather than having to go through a web developer, can make the difference between a good website and a great website. This is because part of making your website fit for purpose is keeping its content and images up to date. This was particularly the case during early stages of the pandemic where we saw our customers who did adapt their content appropriately receive some fantastic results.

If your website's content is no longer relevant or you are unable to offer thought leadership via your blog, your users could switch off. Not to mention, your competitors could have better, more up-to-date

content so will rank higher than you on search engine result pages.

## Marketing Magic

Is your website geared up to run marketing campaigns? A huge part of making sure your website is fit for purpose in 2022 is your ability to market it. This includes keeping your messaging on social media consistent with that of your website, linking your ads to impactful and engaging landing pages and tracking your website's performance regarding your campaigns. With some experts saying that social media is killing the website, collaboration with your social media platforms is key.



## Your 2022 SEO Checklist

### Seamless User Journey

When designing, developing and maintaining a website in 2022, it is integral for you to think about what your users want rather than what you want. To do so, you need to really understand your users' intent and manage the user journey for each persona accordingly.

The easiest and most straight-forward way to review and understand user intent is to type a specific keyword on the Google search box and analyse the results. Once Google gives you the top results, you should go through them to determine if they are brand focused on pages and blogs. Take note of this, and next time you come up with content for your website, ensure you give it a similar approach.

### Terms and Conditions Apply

As our understanding of users grows, their understanding of us and how we use their data has increased too. As seen on Dragons Den, the success of Sam Jones's launch of Gener8, a browser extension that enables people to take back control and monetise their data, and Google's removal of cookies, people are becoming more and more aware of how to avoid being tracked. Under GDPR legislation, a person's data is their property. Therefore, we have to be careful in using it to track their online behaviour, particularly in regard to where profit is made. This should be reflected on your website to ensure you are GDPR compliant. 

### User intention

When developing your 2022 SEO strategy, you need to focus more on your target audience. Put yourself in their shoes – what are they likely to look for when searching your brand online? What will attract them to your website?

### Quality links

Google will always have the mentality that "if other people trust this website, we should too". This means that you should devise a link building strategy and stick to it, focusing on building quality links to increase trust and drive website traffic.

### Accessibility

The importance of website accessibility is only going to grow in 2022, making it an important focus for anyone who wants their website to rank highly on search engine result pages.

### Quality content

Throughout all of the developments in the world of SEO, one thing remains the same – the fact that content is king. Thanks to past Google's algorithms, the meaning of quality content has been transformed, providing guidelines for how your website's content can positively impact its ranking. Now, even video content can improve your SEO.

### Voice search

Approximately 58% of consumers already use voice search when looking for local business information. With this in mind, the best thing you can do for your business is to optimise your website for this change in user behaviour.

### Technical SEO

Since Google introduced its new Core Web Vitals, the importance of seamless user experience and website speed has become paramount. This means that you should incorporate them and the new "page experience" ranking factor into your SEO strategy.

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# Welcome to C2S.TV

We are delighted to bring you more C2S.TV interviews with business leaders and experts in their field.



Competitive Advantage of a People Strategy with HR Solutions and DNA

HR Solutions & DNA



Jake Pinnell and Jessica Dallard

Learning & Development and Marketing Executive

The Development Manager Ltd (TDM)



Stefano Pucello – International Trade Advisor

C2S.TV Talks to Stefano Pucello about the support available to both experienced and novice exporters.

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C2S Question Time

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C2S Question Time

The monthly opportunity to catch up with experts in their field.

L3 HarrisTechnologies, BetaDen, Move Property Sales and Lettings, Laithwaites Wines





# The Care Culture

**J**ulia Everard from Saracen Care reflects on the challenges of COVID-19 and celebrates the successes.

Saracen Care is Outstanding! It's official and has been for the last two inspections by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We're also really proud to be finalists in the Great British Care Awards for the South West in the categories of Employer of the Year, Dignity Champion and Best Newcomer. There is anticipation for the Gala Night to hear the results – but, more than that, to celebrate being nominated in three areas that are at the heart of what we do, in spite of all the challenges thrown at us since March 2020.

Really, we are celebrating PEOPLE – their resilience, their ability to adjust, their desire to "continue to do everything well" (a Saracen mantra) and loving what they do with the opportunity to make a real difference to people's lives.

What is our business? We enable working age adults to live their best lives! Adults who have so much to give to their community and wider society. When we describe our business, it's usually what we don't do that is our opener – we don't look after the elderly in Care Homes.

Saracen Care supports people with a learning disability, autism, acquired brain injury or mental health condition to live as part of their community in houses and streets no different from our own. We teach life skills, keeping a household, budgeting

finances, planning and cooking meals – learning the skills of sharing with other people. The joys of shared celebrations and achievements. Alongside participation in a host of activities in the local area and beyond.

We specialise in providing community settings for young people moving from a residential educational placement at the age of 18 or moving from the family home. These changes can be significant, and we operate a partnership approach with all stakeholders – including the commissioner of services (local authority/ NHS), families, primary care and at the centre, the individual coming into our care.

We continue to grow, delivering 5000 hours of support per week across Gloucester, Cheltenham and Swindon. However, our marketing budget is focussed on attracting people of all ages and backgrounds and experiences to come and work for Saracen and be part of something quite special.

Press a button for a latte and serve a cake from the cabinet at a café? Or enable someone to make their own coffee working towards them doing it unaided; share in the joy of baking a cake together and surprising the other housemates at teatime.

Wait on tables at the local restaurant? Or plan, shop and cook Sunday lunch with someone we support and see the love in the family when they are invited to join.



“ I feel valued and thanked for my hard work and commitment to the company. Saracen Care is such a buzzy, happy, positive place to work, I feel very fortunate to enjoy coming to work. ”

“ Saracen value staff, taking care of their wellbeing, ensuring they have a good support network to debrief. ”

“ I am always made to feel like I matter. ”

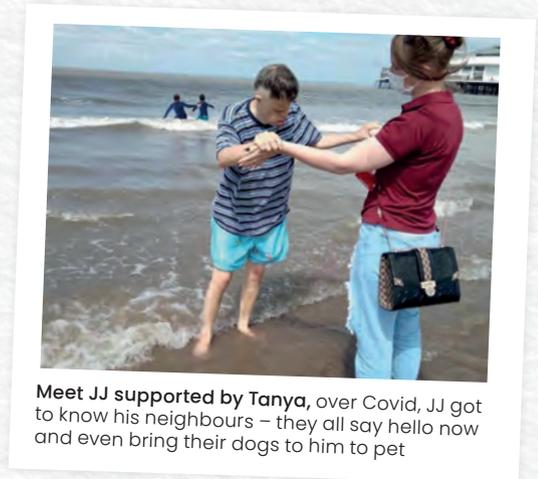


# My Journey

## Tanya Coleman

I began my Saracen Care Journey with no formal care qualifications and have to date achieved a Level 3 Diploma and an honours degree, progressed from a support worker to Deputy Manager, all within three years. This is testament to Saracen Care for their dedication, promotion and investment in their employee's development. I learned and grew, and asked lots of questions along the way, most famously 'why?'. The support and mentoring I received, particularly in reflective practice, meant that each promotion was sustainable. I now have the skills to support my own teams in their development – and that feels great.

“ There is such a sense of purpose with this job, that can touch everyone in society. ”



Meet JJ supported by Tanya, over Covid, JJ got to know his neighbours – they all say hello now and even bring their dogs to him to pet

People grow and flourish in our settings with the help of dedicated teams – we receive heartwarming feedback; but for us, it's the feedback we receive from our staff.

Training and onward development runs through the company, and we believe in providing a career path – eight out of the twelve current Care Managers have been internally promoted. For me, it's all about continuous improvement. As Managing Director and owner, I am about to complete the QuoLux GOLD course, which has made me make time for strategy and numbers – I didn't think we needed KPIs, and never got round to budgets, forecasts and really interrogate the numbers. Sharing these more widely with my Senior Management Team has been transformational, enabling

continued growth throughout COVID-19. Having benefitted personally as well as from a company perspective, I wanted to provide a leadership and development opportunity for my Senior Management Team – and they are embarking on a bespoke seven-month course and are revelling in the learning and positive changes they are already putting in place.

Covid remains a challenge, but I don't want to look back and bemoan the last 18 months. Saracen Care is looking forward and we are actively seeking people who enjoy helping other people and would relish an opportunity to enable adults to 'live their best lives' to come and be part of our team. 



Interested in a career in care? – talk to us 01242 515162 or visit our website or find us on Indeed. Opportunities in Gloucester, Cheltenham and Swindon.

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# Keeping Businesses Safe, Secure and Connected

We spoke to C2S members **GBE Converge** about their growth across the UK and expansion into Europe in a post-Brexit economy and during the Pandemic, as well as their partnership with fellow C2S members

**G**BE Converge are led by founder Jason Buttle. The business has diversified its offering from initially being an engineering business (the 'E' in GBE) to a multi-faceted group of companies offering sometimes complex fire, security and IT products and services.

Spanning the largest of enterprises to start-up businesses, the scope of the customer base is wide and varied, but when you understand how the business has been carefully formed around the core operations, it is easy to see that the organisation has been built to be resilient.

## The business splits its operations into three main trading areas:

- Firstly, covering large construction projects working with tier one contractors
- Secondly, supporting new and existing customers with fire and security projects and maintenance
- Finally providing IT infrastructure and network projects and supporting businesses with managed IT services

All three aspects of the business interact with shared projects and customers.

## European Expansion Continues Despite Brexit

With UK offices in Dronfield (Sheffield), Waterloo (London) and Head Office in Gloucester, the business saw expansion pre-Brexit with the acquisition of HKE in the Netherlands to aid the growth of its work in Hyper Scale Data Centres across Europe. The addition of partnerships with businesses in Germany and Finland has cemented GBE Converge as one of the major fire and security businesses in both the construction industry and end-user business.

Whilst selling cloud services to end-user IT customers, GBE Converge have been providing life safety and access control systems to fulfil the increased requirement for Hyper-Scale Data Centres for the large cloud vendors like Google, Microsoft and Amazon.

With builds happening both in the UK and Europe, this has seen European expansion for the group in recent years with the pre-Brexit purchase of a fire and security business in the Netherlands enabling the business to become 'Brexit Protected' and have used the acquisition to continue the expansion of operations across Europe.

## Growth Through COVID-19

The business directly employs over 135 people, with over triple that figure engaged on a contract basis. With revenues expected to top £35million in 2021, the business grew during COVID-19. Although Brexit had its challenges, work in Europe has continued to expand. Luckily GBE Converge were classed as an 'essential' business during the pandemic because of the life safety and IT systems that they supply. So, although it was very much business as usual, the way that business was conducted was constrained – as it was for most businesses. Additional expense was required for the use of PPE for employees as well as the knock-on effect of those who caught Covid and had to self isolate.

## Keeping Regional Roots Is Important

GBE Converge is proud to partner with fellow Circle2Success members AMAG Technology based in Tewkesbury who provide physical access control, identity management and integrated security solutions.

AMAG recently presented GBE Converge an Eagle Award for winning the most New Logos



(i.e. new customers), and part of the many enterprise-size access control projects that AMAG has been utilised by GBE Converge is in the Co-Location Data Centres.

“GBE Converge continue to work closely with one of our key partners AMAG in the UK and Europe. We are delighted to have supported the AMAG team at the recent European Data Centre awards in London and we look forward to continuing to develop our partnership as both our businesses grow internationally,” said John Thornley, Sales Manager, GBE Converge.

As well as working with AMAG as a key supplier, GBE Converge also count many Circle2Success members as loyal customers across the group’s portfolio of services, including maintaining fire and security systems at Cheltenham Racecourse and providing IT managed services for Prima Dental.

EDF has been a customer of GBE Converge for many years with various projects undertaken such as wireless network refresh and currently a new door access control system. Both projects are/were fully project managed with all services provided from design through to handover to the relevant teams with EDF.

Other regional organisations that rely on GBE Converge include the Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust which covers the county at various sites. GBE Converge is the IT managed service supporting the trusts IT infrastructure and

“ GBE Converge continue to work closely with one of our key partners AMAG in the UK and Europe. We are delighted to have supported the AMAG team at the recent European Data Centre awards in London and we look forward to continuing to develop our partnership as both our businesses grow internationally. ”

network from the GBE Converge network operations centre as well as IT resource at the HQ at Edward Jenner Court. Over the past six years, GBE Converge has delivered several successful IT projects including implementation of network security, a wireless network refresh and a complete server and storage refresh when the new trust was formed following a recent merger.

Finally, GBE Converge are working with businesses which are building out the regions reputation for being THE cyber hub for the UK. Both by supplying cyber security projects and services such as penetration testing and vulnerability scanning. The business also provided project works at the excellent Hub8 facility in the Cheltenham Brewery quarter and more recently the new incubation off-shoot of Hub8 at the Cheltenham Campus of Gloucestershire College.

### The Future

As you can see, a resilient and diverse business operating locally, nationally and throughout Europe providing safe, secure and connected products and services. The future looks bright as GBE move into 2022 and beyond.

**gbe : converge**

T: 08451 220884  
[www.gbeconverge.com](http://www.gbeconverge.com)



## Strong Relationships are Important to AMAG Technology

**A**MAG Technology is a market leader in Physical Access Control, Identity Management and Integrated Security Solutions. They deliver a powerful, unified and open security platform, Symmetry, that empowers businesses to effectively secure their facilities, meet compliance and have peace of mind. Symmetry's scalable security solutions provide operational insights and intelligence to improve business today and tomorrow.

AMAG Technology work closely with their business partners and were recently pleased to present fellow C2S members GBE Converge an Eagle Award for winning the most new logos (customers) in 2020. AMAG Director of Sales for the UK & Europe, Chris Parry, presented GBE Sales Manager, John Thornley, with the award in person at their headquarters in Gloucester. The strong partnership with GBE spans many years and sectors including commercial, industrial, public sector and data centres.

We look forward to our continued success, working together to explore new markets and joint opportunities," said Chris Parry. "Many thanks to the entire GBE team for making this happen."

“ We look forward to our continued success, working together to explore new markets and joint opportunities. ”



John Thornley & Chris Parry, GBE Converge

AMAG's Symmetry Security System and GBE Converge Secure Iconic London Building 70 St Mary Axe - now better known as London's Can of Ham - is a stunning, semi-elliptical property that provides 28,000 square metres of office space over 19 floors, arranged above a double-height foyer on the ground floor. It is engineered for a forward-looking London that welcomes innovative businesses that shape the future.

The building, located in an area that is fast emerging as one of the most vibrant parts of the City of London, required an enterprise-level Security Management System. They selected AMAG Technology's Symmetry Access Control software integrated with Symmetry CompleteView Video Management. GBE Converge worked closely with the 60-70 St. Mary Axe security team to help select and deploy the system.



### Challenge

- Client requirement for an enterprise-level security management system.
- Landlord managed system required easy deployment of either separate or integrated new tenant systems in the future.

### Solution

- GBE Converge were involved with the system selection and recommendation process where AMAG's Symmetry Access Control system was the perfect solution due to the comprehensive features and benefits the system provides.
- Deployment of integrated Symmetry Access Control and Symmetry CompleteView Video Management platform.

### Result

- The flexible new Symmetry system deployed with easy future expansion capability into either landlord or tenant areas.
- The system delivers a powerful Video and Alarm Management functionality for the landlord's security staff as well as providing safety for the staff, tenants and visitors. 📍



## AMAG's Symmetry Access Control System Secures DPD Netherlands

**D**PD Netherlands is part of the international DPDgroup. As the largest player in the European parcel-shipping market, DPD transports 7.5 million parcels every day to more than 230 countries worldwide. Driven by year-over-year volume increases, DPD needed to expand its facilities footprint. However, each of its eleven depots had different security systems and instalments.

AMAG's Symmetry solutions were necessary to improve DPD's bottom line, but they were also integral to its ability to operate efficiently. With the Symmetry solutions DPD is seeking to further extend compliance to TAPA requirements, but also to make security processes and installations more integrated. TAPA sets worldwide benchmarks for supply chain and security resilience. TAPA Security Standards provide guidance, processes and tools to reduce loss exposure, protect assets and save costs. Logistics Service Providers, like DPD, seek to obtain TAPA certification to comply with customer requirements.

In addition, due to the nature of the parcel-shipping industry where a wealth of essential client information is stored and shared between its locations, it is important for DPD to limit the risk of data breaches. The ability of DPD to secure IT server rooms in its warehouses is vital to safeguarding the personal information of its millions of customers across country lines.

### DPD Received TAPA Certification By:

- Installing cameras at two DPD locations Eindhoven (with 250 cameras) and Amsterdam (with 120 cameras), allowing multiple stakeholders to streamline processes. The security team can now work alongside the health and safety teams by reviewing camera footage to investigate both security and safety incidents in real time.
- Installing AMAG's Javelin Smart Card Readers in five of its current 11 depots: Eindhoven, Rotterdam, Etten-Leur, Veenendaal and Amsterdam. Each location has between 15 and 40 card readers, at almost all, if not every entry point. The readers allow security personnel to control,



monitor and track employee access from any location. This implementation was essential to enhancing and streamlining DPD's automatic security operations. Additionally, it allows DPD to assign certain rights to an employee's badge and terminate their access, adding an extra layer of security to these vital areas such as IT server rooms and avoiding unwanted access from former employees.

DPD's hubs required two different intruder detection systems, based on when the facilities were open. Symmetry Access Control was a perfect match for both situations. Most of DPD's depots close on Sundays and therefore required the Galaxy intruder system integrated with Symmetry to alert authorities of an intrusion when no physical security guards are present. However, AMAG's

Symmetry M2150 controllers were used as the Eindhoven hub intruder panel as the facility remains open every day of the week - meaning security officers do not need to be alerted every time someone opens a door. Both detection systems were unified across locations allowing security personnel to track and respond to intruders efficiently. 

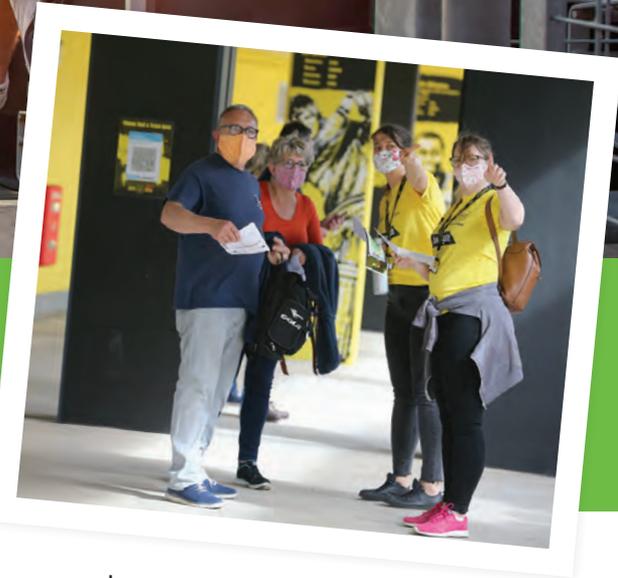


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## Living with COVID-19 in First-Class Sport



The successful operation of a first-class cricket club depends almost single-handedly on the availability and delivery of a live cricket experience to fans, partners, sponsors and our wider international audience

**W**hen the world – and professional sport as we know it – ground to a halt in March 2020, the very thing that makes Gloucestershire Cricket tick was taken away in an instant. With the outbreak of COVID-19 came a range of unprecedented challenges, changes and shifts in the way we operate as an organisation.

Live sport is for the fans, and it's just not the same without supporters who cheer from the stands and create a memorable match day experience for not only each other, but also the players on the pitch. Going from having packed crowds at Bristol County Ground in 2019 to not having any fans in the stadium at all in May 2020 when the season finally got underway behind closed doors, was probably the hardest change of all to get used to. Adapting to the new world when fans could not come to watch in-person, we took the cricket to the fans. Over the last year, with an enhanced live streaming set-up, we recorded 1,850,000 views from

people who logged on to watch The Shire. We wanted to make sure we were there for our fans during such difficult times, which is why, during the first lockdown, our staff and players carried out personalised calls to certain members to have a chat and brighten their day.

Huge adaptations were made in the background. Off the field our players and backroom staff had to re-invent how they train, prepare and deliver as a team. The players' willingness to carry out individual training, in the isolation of their homes during the worst stages of the pandemic, is another example of the extra demand COVID-19 placed on the squad.

While we were finally able to welcome half-capacity crowds back into the ground to watch Gloucestershire in May 2021, followed by full crowds in July, Coronavirus meant we had to completely re-write the rulebook for how we operate on a match day. From socially-distanced seating plans and sanitation areas, to track and

trace protocols and face mask policies, a match day experience in 2021 felt very different to how it did in 2019.

But as the pandemic grew older, we as a club grew wiser and more familiar with how to deal with the challenges posed by COVID-19. One of the biggest decisions was whether or not to go ahead with the Visit Cayman Islands Cheltenham Cricket Festival in July 2021 – a 149-year-old tradition and the centrepiece for the club's delayed 150th year anniversary celebrations. Fortunately for us the festival, aligned with the Government's relaxation of COVID-19 regulations in the UK, meant we were allowed to host a full capacity sporting event. Despite this, however, the club chose to host the festival at 75% capacity – 3,800 fans instead of 5,000 – to ensure we could deliver a safe, Covid-secure and enjoyable Cheltenham Festival for everyone. Thanks to the protocols put in place to keep people safe, such as sanitation stations,



face mask recommendations and a fully open-air event, no cases of Covid were reported or linked back to the two-week Cheltenham Festival.

It's true that the pandemic created an immensely difficult environment to run a professional cricket club, but it's also true that these extraordinarily hard times helped the club leap forward in many areas, including in our digital communication and sponsorship offering. Since March 2020 we've enhanced and grown our distribution of e-newsletters and have held virtual events including quiz nights, wine tasting and sponsors' breakfasts, to make sure our fans and partners feel as close to the club despite the cycle of lockdowns and restrictions. When it came to supporting our sponsors, many of whom had signed up for match day exposure in the form of signage and shirt sponsorship, the club had to adapt once again to offer a digitally-led offering. 2021 also saw the return of crowds, greater engagement from our partners and allowed for many hospitality events to slowly return. This included our end of season awards, sponsor expo and upcoming Christmas wine tasting.

As the pandemic drags on many things that we first implemented back in 2020

will remain into 2022. There's no denying that the last 18 months have been difficult, but we can be proud in knowing that we're stronger and closer as an organisation that we were this time two years ago. We're excited to be playing in Division One next season, with a new Head Coach and the club's first ever Performance Director, Steve Snell, who will lead the overall cricket department to deliver sustainable success on the field. We're a club on the up, with more sponsorship opportunities, a talented playing squad and an ambition to make 2022 a year to remember for Gloucestershire Cricket.

As we embark on a new Glos era in 2022, we're thrilled to be able to offer our fans a bigger and better Cheltenham Festival than ever before as well as a sold-out T20 match between England and South Africa at Bristol County Ground in July. The growth of our cricket has led to the expansion of sponsorship and partnering opportunities with the club, as we look to add to the Gloucestershire family for what promises to be another exciting year for the Shire.



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# 20 Years of RE Recruitment: The Multisector Recruiter

## Celebrating Success

**T**wenty years is a long time. It's a fifth of a century, the average lifespan after retirement and the length of Sir Robert Walpole's tenure as prime minister in the 1700s, a record!

It's also the trading years to date of RE Recruitment, the UK's fastest-growing, privately-owned recruiter, as identified by The Recruiter's much-revered FAST 50 league table this year.

Let us take you on a time travel experience and look at our journey back to the future of successful multi-sector recruitment.

### Back in the day

It's 2001; mobile phones have those buttons that hurt your thumbs, and 0.8% of people in the UK stated their religion as 'Jedi' on consensus forms. It's also the year when Richard East, founder and chairman, had to decide between renting an office or buying a minibus to get his staff to work. After borrowing £700 from a friend, the minibus won, and the office had to wait for another year – RE Recruitment was born and on the road.

Initially starting as a hospitality recruitment agency, RE Recruitment widened its reach in 2003 and delved into the industrial and food production sectors. This side of the business booms, taking the company national the following year with a UK-wide account with an international logistics company.

In 2005, Richard recruits James Gibbs as a consultant, and after negotiating choppy waters together through 2010, James became an official partner thanks to his unwavering loyalty and commitment.

2011 turns out to be a defining year, as the company had survived near insolvency the year before. Unphased, Richard bravely branches into other sectors to improve resilience. The second office opened in Hereford, and recruitment offerings are broadened with the inception of Safehands Recruitment, focusing on health and social care sectors, in 2013.

Over the next 5 years, a rapid expansion into a wide array of industries follows, and

many brands, including Gallant, Ambrose, Catercrew, RE and Safehands Recruitment. Richard felt like he had a mountain of business cards and too many hats on the hat stand, so he consolidated the brands into just two: RE and Safehands Recruitment.

2018 sees the alignment of a new brand message and structure focused around 'Expect More'. Guiding Principles emerge that represent the consolidated companies – collaborative, authentic, loyal, integrity, brave, resilient and empowered – and sum up the journey to date and future to come.

### Multi-sector recruitment resilience

The last 18 months have shown there are many benefits of not putting all of the proverbial eggs in one basket. Richard says: "A few years ago, there were lots of specialist recruiters around in transport, IT, accountancy, legal etc., and I've always argued that multi-sector agencies were looked down on a bit for not specialising.

We've continually aimed to emphasise the point that we do specialise; we specialise in recruitment. I admit, I'm not an IT or legal expert, but I'm a recruitment expert because that's my chosen career. If you want to put someone on the moon or hire a refuse collector, we will get you who you want, as we're the recruitment specialists."

The pandemic forced us to batten down the hatches, and we had to scale back some divisions, most notably hospitality and catering, as the country shut up shop. On the flip side of this coin, several other divisions snowballed, such as health and social care, transport, food production, technology etc. Because of our multi-sector strategy, we were able to divert resources to other areas, enabling us to not only survive the fallout but grow through the process. .

### The future of RE Recruitment

Our future is to keep refining our ability, agility and resilience, which means investing in our team and client and candidate relationships. We constantly aim to reinforce this vital message with our clients to aid their recruitment strategies



**Richard East**, founder and chairman, RE Recruitment

– be a good employer with prospects, and the talent will come to you.

It's important to us that our people remain confident and realise their value to the broader economy; Richard states that "we want our team to understand that they have such an impact on local economies and should realise just how professional they are. They might not be qualified to lawyer standards, but that doesn't mean they don't work to the same standards and determination. Recruitment is a team effort between recruiter, client and candidate. We must share goals and work collaboratively to achieve them to be successful."

So, in summary, our broadness enables our resilience; our entrepreneurialism allows our innovation; our bravery empowers our adaptability when the going gets tough.

The multi-sector recruiter has many benefits, should be respected and is here to stay. After all, when the world stops turning in your specialist recruitment area, as it did for so many from March 2020, where do you turn to survive? 📍

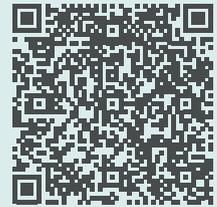


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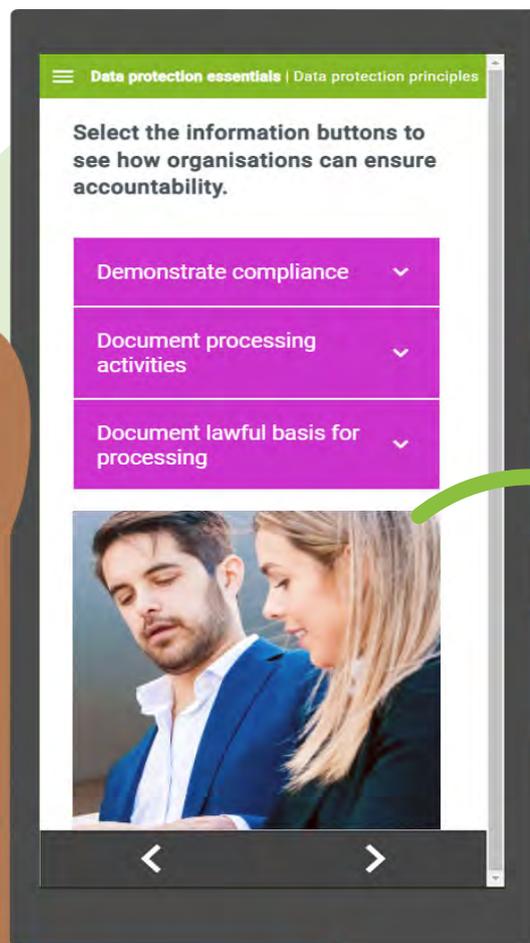
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Richard Muller • Managing Director • Prima Dental Manufacturing Ltd • [www.primadental.com](http://www.primadental.com)



**R**ichard Muller started his career in the dental industry over 30 years ago, joining Prima Dental in 1998 as Sales and Marketing Director. Promoted to Managing Director in 2000 he has led the transformation of the Prima business from a £5m business to an international group delivering revenue of £36 million in 2022. The key to success

has been a clear understanding of the world marketplace and its requirements backed by investment in the latest technology and the support of a committed team. Continuous growth and a passion for export sales has always been major driver of in his career.

Russell Marchant • Vice Chancellor & Principal • Hartpury University And Hartpury College • [www.hartpury.ac.uk](http://www.hartpury.ac.uk)

**R**ussell Marchant graduated from the University of Edinburgh with a degree in agriculture and has spent over 40 years in land-based education, during which time he gained an MBA.

He is the current Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Hartpury University and Hartpury College in Gloucestershire. The campus covers more than 360

hectares, is the world's largest equine education facility and regularly wins national titles in rugby, football, netball, rowing and golf.

Since Russell took over the reins in September 2012, Hartpury has successfully received Taught Degree Awarding Powers and in September 2018 received University title.



Hayley Parker • Director • OPS-BOX Ltd • [www.ops-boxgroup.com](http://www.ops-boxgroup.com)



**A**s founder of OPS-BOX Group, Hayley is passionate about supporting businesses to achieve their potential. She has over 20 years' experience working in the UK and internationally both as an employee for Lloyds Banking Group, and as a consultant providing interim management to SMEs.

As well as being successful working directly with

businesses as a relationship manager, corporate financial adviser and area director, Hayley has also held senior operational roles where she led and motivated teams, delivering compliance and regulation along with large-scale and complex projects. She has a very clear and precise understanding of the challenges that businesses and their owners face.

Christine Jackson • Partner • BPE Solicitors • [www.bpe.co.uk](http://www.bpe.co.uk)

**C**hristine joined BPE in 2021 and is a Partner whose practice grew out of City firm Hogan Lovells where she qualified and worked in the IP, IT and Communications team during the 'Dotcom' bubble. After enjoying long term secondments to a couple of major brands in the communications and retail sectors, Christine continued to flourish as a private practice solicitor over the next 20 years.

At BPE, Christine has taken the lead for the Technology Division, through which she is responsible for driving collaboration between the multiple specialisms offered by the BPE Technology team and supporting further growth in this area.



Nathan McLoughlin • Managing Director • McLoughlin Planning Ltd • [www.mplanning.co.uk](http://www.mplanning.co.uk)



**N**athan established McLoughlin Planning in 2009 focusing on a simple objective: to get results for clients by providing high quality planning consultancy.

Based in Cheltenham, but working nationwide and drawing on over 25 years of experience, Nathan has been pivotal in winning planning permission for a wide range of developments, from strategic

promotions and commercial premises to private developments and rural projects.

His reputation for integrity, ability to think innovatively and the respect he has gained has developed a growing business, thriving on personal recommendations from clients and industry colleagues.



Mark Porch • Director • Omega Resource Group • [www.omegaresource.co.uk](http://www.omegaresource.co.uk)



My career in recruitment started when I joined an independent start-up business as a Recruitment Consultant, where I headed a further 4 branch locations in the Midlands. I then headed up the South Region's branch network for Prime Time Recruitment. Joining Staffline in 2013, I took responsibility for a business acquisition

in the South West and subsequently took on full responsibility for the entire Staffline UK branch network. Following the acquisition of Omega Resource Group in 2018 I stepped across to head the business at the end of 2019 to help integrate and develop the business's next phase of growth during 2020 and beyond.

Jonathan Rathbone • Head of the Corporate and Commercial Team • Hughes Paddison Solicitors • [www.hughes-paddison.co.uk](http://www.hughes-paddison.co.uk)

Jonathan Rathbone is head of the Corporate and Commercial team at Hughes Paddison. Jon joined in 2017 with over 15 years' previous experience working in private practice for national firms as well as acting as Group Legal Counsel for Mulberry Group PLC. Jon also designed the Pourty Easy-To-Pour Potty, one of the bestselling potties in the UK, establishing a successful business

selling children's products to the likes of John Lewis and Amazon.

Jon draws from his experience setting up his own business and working in house for Mulberry to take a pragmatic approach and help clients to address their risks and optimise their opportunities.



Graeme Thurman • Commercial Director • Citizen Communications • [www.citcom.co.uk](http://www.citcom.co.uk)



Graeme oversees all the commercial activities within the business and maximising all opportunities for the successful development and future of Citizen.

Citizen is a full service creative marketing agency based in Kidderminster. With over 30 years of product launches, marketing campaigns, building brands and advertising businesses using every media under the sun we have picked up a thing

or two along the way. If you have a new business, service, or product to launch and you're not sure how to position it, the right messaging or your go-to-market strategy, we can help. We pride ourselves on our ability to deliver eye-catching and meaningful design and creative work for you and your customers on time, on budget and on brief. You can have the flashiest website but if you don't have a clear marketing strategy it means nothing.

Michael Newnham • Director • Quantum R&D Tax Ltd • [www.quantumtax.co.uk](http://www.quantumtax.co.uk)

Mike is a founder and director at Quantum R&D Tax Ltd, a specialist R&D Tax Credit consultancy. At Quantum, Mike heads up the technical aspects of the claims process. The company has SME clients across all sectors, including engineering, IT, food, construction, and agriculture.

A Materials Engineer by background, Mike has worked in R&D and innovation throughout his career, having held senior positions at Rolls-Royce Aero-Engines, and

ABB Power Generation, and was Engineering Director Bowman Power Group, where he led the design, development and introduction of the UK's first micro-turbine based Combined Heat and Power system.

The company focuses 100% on R&D and is passionate about helping companies to innovate and thrive. Mike has a deep knowledge of the scheme, having been claiming since the scheme started in 2000.



Paul Dyer • Managing Director • QBD • [www.qbd.co.uk](http://www.qbd.co.uk)



Paul Dyer is the Managing Director of QBD, a full-service digital marketing agency that helps growing businesses of all sizes to reach more, attract more and achieve more.

Paul is an experienced entrepreneur with a strong track record of starting and building successful online businesses. He's a highly skilled digital marketing and SEO professional, with vast expertise in sales & marketing strategy, sales

management and strategic partnerships. He also specialises in helping other businesses identify how they can grow through having a great website and a digital presence that ranks well and generates new business.

He bought QBD outright in 2010 and has since overseen its growth and transition from a traditional web developer to a full-service digital marketing agency.

Richard Neale • Director • OPS-BOX Ltd • [www.ops-boxgroup.com](http://www.ops-boxgroup.com)



**R**ichard has a natural ability to support business aspirations having worked with a wide range of clients of all sizes and across many sectors. He has over 35 years' experience in the financial sector working for Lloyds Banking Group and has worked exclusively in the commercial sector since 1995.

As well as fulfilling roles as a relationship director and a business development director, he has also managed commercial banking teams. Most recently he acted as a conduit and reference point for businesses of all sizes seeking commercial funding solutions from £25K to £10M across the wider market.

Alison Townsend • Director of Marketing • Hazlewoods • [www.hazlewoods.co.uk](http://www.hazlewoods.co.uk)

**W**ith over 25 years marketing experience across both B2B and B2C, Alison has led growth and brand awareness campaigns in regional, national and international markets.

Alison cut her marketing teeth working for complex global organisations in London - Deloitte & Touche and SITA Airline services. She was promoted through

the ranks, using her strong management and communication skills to co-ordinate work across numerous teams and countries. Now as Director of Marketing for Hazlewoods - accountancy and business advisers to regional and national clients - Alison is channelling her marketing skills to continue to grow the firm's brand presence and its business development capacity.



Jo Bewley • Partner • BPE Solicitors • [www.bpe.co.uk](http://www.bpe.co.uk)



**J**o is Head of Property Services and the Commercial Property Team Leader at BPE Solicitors. As an excellent client-facing lawyer with over 20 years' experience Jo advises the team's and some of the firm's most significant clients and has been instrumental in growing the healthcare work undertaken by the Property team and by the wider firm. She specialises in GP surgery developments and was instructed to advise on the

creation of two Super Surgery in the county in 2020, and to act in respect of a funder of a third.

In addition to the healthcare specialism, Jo works on all elements of property transactions from acquisition to disposal as well as securing finance funding by working with private clients and banks. She also leads the largest team at BPE and, as Training Principle, is responsible for the recruitment, training and wellbeing of the firm's trainee solicitors.

Natalie Bell • Growth and Partnership Director • AccXel • [www.accxel.co.uk](http://www.accxel.co.uk)

**N**atalie is the Growth and Partnership Director at AccXel. She has used her legal skills as a qualified Barrister in her construction career to date, having built a new development region in less than two years for Kier Living, with a GDV of £250m. She has expertise in land acquisition, joint ventures, affordable housing and construction. Natalie is a passionate advocate for women in construction,

especially at board and Senior Management level, and was Chair of Women in Property South Wales in 2019. Having worked in both house building and construction at National and Regional companies, Nicola and Natalie have first-hand knowledge of the skills and resourcing challenges facing the construction industry, and how these challenges can be addressed through a sustained and cohesive approach between industry and education.



Alasdair Garbutt • Partners • Willans LLP Solicitors • [www.willans.co.uk](http://www.willans.co.uk)



**A**lasdair Garbutt is a partner in the Chambers-rated commercial property team at Willans LLP solicitors. He handles a wide range of work in this area, including sales and acquisitions, development transactions, landlord and tenant, security work including lending and refinancing, and property management matters.

He works with many large national as well as local clients, advising on all of their real estate needs and is "recommended" by The Legal 500 UK for

his expertise. Alasdair has a particular passion in working with local businesses, whether they be corporate office occupiers, owners of industrial estates or local coffee shops and restaurants.

He has carved out a reputation for supporting them with their property portfolios UK-wide, comprising of retail office, industrial/storage and operational premises. He is also a trustee of Cheltenham Open Door - a local charity which helps vulnerable people.



Steve Mason • Director, CTO and CEO • Nova Blue Technologies • [www.nova-blue.co.uk](http://www.nova-blue.co.uk)



Steve is a richly experienced and highly accomplished executive business leader and cyber expert. Over Steve's 20-year career, he has become an expert in all aspects of cyber; from the more mainstream cyber security through to the more specialised cyber warfare and offensive

cyber. A truly visionary executive leader, Steve has deep expertise in all aspects of business leadership and management, as well as business change, human resource management, executive team development, business development and growth, and business strategy and direction.

Neil Rogers • CEO • Digital NRG • [www.digitalnrg.co.uk](http://www.digitalnrg.co.uk)

Neil Rogers, originally from South London, met his wife and now business partner, Kathryn at University in Bristol in 2001 and has loved everything the South West has to offer ever since. Neil has worked with 1000's of locally based companies as well as National UK organisations and global brands across all elements of digital

marketing. Neil is highly passionate about all things digital and this knowledge and passion has clearly been passed down to the amazing team at DNRG. With no investment over the years, the DNRG business remains as independent and agile as ever.



Chris Mould • Corporate Audit & Advisory Partner • Crowe • [www.crowe.co.uk](http://www.crowe.co.uk)



Chris specialises in large corporates and manufacturing businesses. He has presented and written articles about global business opportunities as well as the challenges facing the manufacturing sector. Other Partners in Cheltenham specialise in family businesses, property and construction, professional practices, non profits and private wealth.

Crowe UK is a national audit, tax and advisory firm with multi-disciplinary specialist teams providing all-round service to clients of all sizes. The firm is the UK member of Crowe Global, the 8th largest accounting network in the world.

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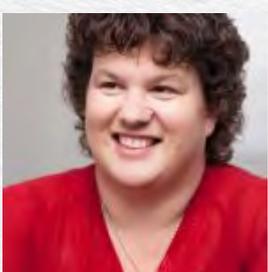
George Tatham-Losh • Director • Move Property & Lettings • [www.move.uk.net](http://www.move.uk.net)

Since founding the business in 2009, our founder, George Tatham-Losh has become well-known locally as THE go-to specialist for property investors and professional landlords. He regularly speaks at industry events and is generous with his expertise and unique advice on how to maximise yields - in any market. Born and raised in Cheltenham, George knows the area intimately, as does his team of

results-focused letting and management specialists. Together they help landlords build and manage smart investment portfolios delivering exciting returns for their large and loyal client base. Why not join them?



Catherine Green • Director • WSP Solicitors • [wspolicitors.com](http://wspolicitors.com)



Catherine Green is the Head of WSP Solicitors' Litigation team and has 20 years' experience in litigation work, specialising in business and property disputes.

Catherine has been working in this area since she qualified and has helped many individuals and a great deal of businesses of all sizes. She qualified as a solicitor in 1998 after attending Cardiff University. Catherine completed her training

contract with Stevens and Bolton and then worked for various firms. She moved on to join WSP in 2008, and became a Director in 2012.

Businesswomen's Network, one of the largest women's networks in Gloucestershire, for over 7 years. Having lived in Stroud for the last 10 years, Catherine feels that she is firmly rooted in the community.

Mitch Bracey • Director • White Light Hosting • [www.whitelighthosting.co.uk](http://www.whitelighthosting.co.uk)



**P**ioneering the idea of the portfolio career, Managing Director of White Light Hosting Mitch Bracey is compiling all of his skill-set for success. White Light Hosting is your go-to hub for hosting – it’s what makes your website visible on the internet. Without hosting you’re stuck between a rock and a hard place. They provide fast and reliable plans that is tailored to you. White Light Hosting also provide endless arrays of domain names to give your business a home online. This is one of your best opportunities to get your brand out there with a website domain name to remember.

White Light Hosting also provide endless arrays of domain names to give your business a home online. This is one of your best opportunities to get your brand out there with a website domain name to remember. It’s the driver to help direct your customers to your website and of course your business. And, when you’re in need of a marketing plan for your business once you’ve got the essentials covered, then Mitch can assist with that too along with the expert help of team Brace.

Neil Douglas • Director & Founder • Viper Innovations Ltd • [www.viperinnovations.com](http://www.viperinnovations.com)

**F**ounded by Neil Douglas and Max Nodder in 2007, Viper Innovations is a Portishead based company that designs and supplies electrical cable integrity monitoring equipment and analytics software for the subsea and rail industries. A high level of investment in R&D has resulted in an average annual growth rate of 25%. Export sales

account for over 50% of revenues. Neil is a direct descendant of Sir Isaac Newton’s grandfather and so science and engineering runs in the family.



Anne-Marie McTavish • Director of Business School • University Of Worcester • [www.worcester.ac.uk](http://www.worcester.ac.uk)



**A**nne-Marie McTavish joined the University of Worcester as Head of the Business School in 2018-19. She is a leading expert in Location Independent Working and Technology Enhanced Flexible Working, and has recently led funded projects worth in excess of £600,000 on business implementation of LIW and its management.

Alongside this she has worked with major commercial and public sector organisations helping prepare for and maximise LIW introduction, while advising on a national and European government level on flexible working practice both during a 20-year global consultancy career and in her academic roles.

Michael Donaldson • Director • The Value Innovator • [www.thevalueinnovator.co.uk](http://www.thevalueinnovator.co.uk)

**I** started my working life at Procter and Gamble, on day six I was given the responsibility for improving the performance of a £3m business. During my time there I learnt how to run this business based on purpose, values and principles.

On that solid foundation I developed my expertise as an innovative strategist, detailed implementer and leader of multi-disciplined teams to deliver strategic,

operational and behavioural change; including sales growth, effective marketing, business exits, post-acquisition integration, company harmonisation and profitable business growth.

30 years employment with leading companies selling bars of soap to bars of gold, taught me about strategy and challenge.



Ben Jordan • Chief Growth Officer • Digital NRG • [www.digitalnrg.co.uk](http://www.digitalnrg.co.uk)



**B**en Jordan is the Chief Growth Officer at DNRG and heads up the business development team as well as overseeing all operational activity within the business. Based out of the DNRG HQ in Bristol, Ben is instrumental in driving the agency’s growth forward and also works with our strategic partners. DNRG works with Google and

Facebook but we also believe in working within business communities at a local level. Ben can be seen at many a network event building new relationships from our sponsorship network group at Swansea City Football Club to the exciting new partnership with C2S.



Laurie Bell • CEO • The Cheltenham Trust • [www.cheltenhamtrust.org.uk](http://www.cheltenhamtrust.org.uk)



Laurie recently joined The Cheltenham Trust as its new CEO. The Cheltenham Trust manages Cheltenham's most iconic and historic buildings including The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum, the Town Hall, Pittville Pump Room, Leisure at and the Prince of Wales Stadium. As a registered charity, the Trust contributes to the social, cultural and economic value of the town. The iconic venues offer unique and exclusive space for meetings, events, social banqueting, concerts, entertainment

and conferences in the heart of Cheltenham. The trust now in its fifth year delivers a programme of arts, leisure, sport and cultural events and activities.

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Kerry Waite • Head of Strategic Marketing • QBD • [www.qbd.co.uk](http://www.qbd.co.uk)

Kerry Waite is Head of Strategic Marketing at full-service digital marketing agency QBD.

Her role is to help businesses achieve their growth objectives through a wide range of services, from marketing review & analysis to strategic planning & implementation, and reporting &

analytics to campaign marketing. Having worked across a broad range of industries and for a variety of businesses, from large global companies to smaller SMEs, she possesses a depth of knowledge and experience that she's able to bring to QBD.



Michael Chitterton • Owner/Director • Manor by the Lake • [www.manorbythelake.co.uk](http://www.manorbythelake.co.uk)



I have over 30 years' experience in both the property business and the service industry, owning and operating wedding venues, hotels and care homes. My first property purchase, in 1985, was a one bedroom flat and since then I have undertaken a wide variety of property projects in varying locations

- from Gloucestershire to Suffolk, various London and Essex boroughs, and Moscow, Russia. When I passed my driving test two days after turning 17, I became one of the youngest people ever to race at Brands Hatch! My hobbies, when I have time, include collecting classic cars and playing golf.

Dan Bullock • Director • QBD • [www.qbd.co.uk](http://www.qbd.co.uk)

Dan Bullock is a director of QBD, a full-service digital marketing agency that helps growing businesses of all sizes to reach more, attract more and achieve more.

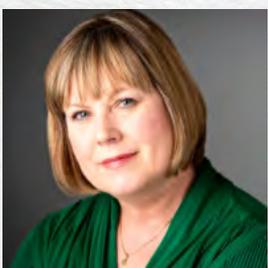
An experienced creative and business development professional, Dan joined the firm as a junior programmer and has worked in a variety of roles

across the business to develop his knowledge and understanding of the industry.

His strengths lie in being able to bridge the gap between the technical and creative worlds and look at how that can be applied to business to help clients solve their challenges.



Helen Ridler • Director • Belford House HR Limited • [www.circle2success.com/members/belford-house-hr](http://www.circle2success.com/members/belford-house-hr)



Independent HR consultant specialising in Workplace Investigations. Clients come to me when they have complex or higher risk situations to investigate. Some have no one internally who can carry out an investigation objectively as they have been involved in the case in some way before. Some lack capacity or specific investigation expertise.

A workplace investigation may involve sensitive issues and allegations against senior staff. An external investigator may then be the preferred option. Those involved may find it easier to talk openly to an independent person who is not part of the organisation they work for.



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## Start the conversation

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**Audit / Tax / Advisory / Risk**

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