Chamberink Magazine ISSUE NO.24 WINTER 2025

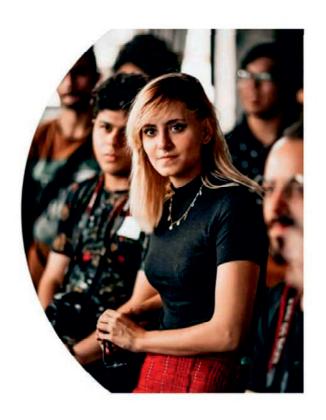


CHAMBER LAUNCH MONTHLY NETWORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MACCLESFIELD FC



News and views from Chamber members





At The Hollin House Hotel, Jackson Lane, Bollington, SK10 5BG

The Business Club, proudly sponsored by Harts Chartered Accountants, Orbit Developments, and North Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, is a dynamic networking event that seamlessly blends professional development with social interaction. Insightful speakers deliver inspiring talks, offering valuable industry insights and expertise.

Attendees are treated to a fabulous two-course lunch, creating a relaxed atmosphere conducive to networking.

The Business Club is just £31 per ticket and is booked via Eventbrite.

2025 Events

Weds 19th March

Weds 18th June

Weds 17th September

Weds 26th November









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items for the next issue of Chamberlink should be sentmatt to reception@northcheshirechamber.co.uk by APRIL 15TH 2025

North Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Enterprise

 $\underline{reception@northcheshirechamber.co.uk}$

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Chamber patrons







WELCOME FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A very happy New Year and welcome to the January 2025 edition of Chamberlink Magazine. 2024 was a tumultuous year that saw an unprecedented 60% of the world's population participating in elections, with economic issues dominating the agendas. The focus on economic stability and growth underscores the vital role that businesses play in our communities. Perhaps the most appropriate word for 2025 is 'uncertainty': Challenges are likely to persist as the Labour Government's policies take effect from April and talk of tariffs and trade wars, alongside the continuing war in Europe, dominate the international agenda.

Additionally, major international summits, such as the G20 and COP28, are set to address pressing issues like climate change, economic inequality, and geopolitical tensions. Our region is likely to press ahead with plans for a Mayoral Combined Authority for Cheshire & Warrington and we'll all have to get to grips with advancements in technology, particularly in artificial intelligence and renewable energy as these factors are expected to drive innovation and transform industries.

In the face of these uncertainties, our local businesses remain resilient, finding innovative ways to thrive and contribute to the economy. North Cheshire Chamber of Commerce is committed to supporting our members through these turbulent times by providing resources, networking opportunities, training and advocacy at local, regional and national level. As we look to the future, it is essential that we collaborate and share insights to overcome the hurdles ahead.



Together, we can turn challenges into opportunities, ensuring that our businesses not only survive but flourish in an ever-changing economic environment.

January is a great time to reflect on the successes of last year and to ensure we have robust plans in place for the year ahead. Many years ago, as a young Sales Director, I was advised to focus on those things in my control and not to waste energy on issues I could not influence. It was sage advice. Wishing you all a successful 2025.

Terry Hayward
Chief Executive

UPCOMING EVENTS

16th January -

Thriving Under Pressure: Managing Workplace Stress with Thrive4Life at Champneys Mottram Hall

21st January -

Kick-off Breakfast Networking at Macclesfield FC

22nd January -

Cheshire East Speed Networking at Nantwich Town FC

30th January -

Networking Breakfast at AstraZeneca

6th February -

Netwalking: Building connections in the great outdoors. Venue TBC

12th February -

Networking Knutsford at The Tea Rooms, King Street, Knutsford

20th February-

Social Media Workshop with Gumpo. Venue TBC

Visit www.northcheshirechamber.co.uk/events for further information about all NCCOC events and how to make a booking or contact reception@northcheshirechamber.co.uk

NEWS FROM OUR PATRONS

ASTRAZENECA OPENS ITS DOORS FOR FAMILY FUN DAY



On Saturday 14th September, AstraZeneca Macclesfield opened its doors for a celebration of the employees who work there and all things STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.)

Almost 2,500 AstraZeneca employees, family and friends enjoyed a whole range of activities throughout the day including "Mad Science" shows, lab tours, experiments galore, face painting, birds of prey demonstrations, self-powered Scalextric racing, robots, individual and group challenges – and there was even a visit from

Marty McFly and Doc Brown!

Annette Lewis, Training & Development Lead said: "We are passionate about STEM engagement because, by sharing our excitement about what we do here, we support education in our local community and beyond."



"We already have people in our business who first experienced AZ through work experience opportunities. Our people also relish the opportunity to be ambassadors for STEM and for AZ, inspiring children and young people to develop a lifelong interest in science and an understanding of the breadth of careers that exist in our industry."

Claire Crook, External Supply Lead at AZ said: "My seven-year old declared it 'the best day ever!' Thanks to everyone involved in organising it and all the volunteers who helped out on the day."



LADIES IN BUSINESS ORGANISED BY HARTS LIMITED & ANTHONY COLLINS SOLICITORS

Ladies in Business is a quarterly meeting of women, who get together for networking opportunities with both regular and new faces in the local business community.

At these events we hold a raffle to raise money for our chosen local charity, which this year was Smile Group and we are pleased to hand them a cheque for £450.

Smile Group was set up in 2011 by two new mums Natalie Nuttall & Ruth Williams who both had first-hand experience of perinatal mental health challenges and identified a gap in community support.



THE BUSINESS CLUB ORGANISED BY HARTS LIMITED, ORBIT DEVELOPMENTS AND NORTH CHESHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Business Club is a lunchtime networking event, held at Hollin House Hotel quarterly during the year. We have a wide variety of speakers at these events and there is a 2 course meal served, where we rotate between courses which helps to maximise networking opportunities, all local businesses are welcome.

This is a not-for-profit event, but over the last couple of years we have accumulated a small surplus on each ticket sold, therefore we are delighted to announce we have £500 to donate to a worthy cause.

The group organisers have decided to donate these funds to ROAR (Reach Out And Recover) for the Christmas Day Lunch they supply, prepare, and serve to over 100 people within the local community. Some of these people are homeless, some are lonely and some just don't have the funds available for a Christmas Lunch.

Based in Macclesfield, ROAR is a recovery housing project offering a safe, secure and stable 24 hour supported environment for people to reside. Those who access the service are shown

compassion, given hope and a place where they can begin to believe in themselves. They empower people to take control of their lives and help them to develop practical skills whilst working in the community. They work in partnership with other community-based organisations in order to give the people within ROAR the best opportunity at addressing their issues, and in turn, prevent reoffending. Those who follow the programme are offered a pathway to a new life. From early stage 24-hour support, toward supported accommodation and finally, their own independent tenancies. If you would like more information about either of these events, please contact Nina at NHarrison@harts-ltd.com





No, this is not an invitation to join a protest march!

But as everyone will be well aware, October subudget brought a raft of tax increases directed at businesses and their owners. Very few will be unscathed by the rises. So if you have not already done so, you should take the opportunity to assess the impact on your business and on your personal situation...

By Chris Bentley
Director at Harts Accountants
T: 01625 669669

National Insurance and employment costs

The government hopes to raise £24bn from increasing employer National Insurance Contributions by 1.2% (to 15%) and by reducing the threshold above which contributions are payable from £9,100 to £5,000 effective April 2025.

This might not sound a major change at first sight. But it does mean it will cost around £650 a year more to employ someone for 20 hours on the minimum wage, or around £925 a year more for someone on a salary of £35,000 (the national average).

We have calculated the additional cost for a number of our clients and for those with more than a handful of employees, the additional tax charge is often 2-3% of total payroll costs. Businesses in sectors which have a large number of lowly paid, part time employees, are particularly affected (eg retail, hospitality, care sector). For the worst affected businesses, the tax rise could conceivably be 5% of current payroll costs.

In addition to this, April also sees an increase in the National Living Wage by 6.7% to £12.21 per hour for those over 21, and 16.3% to £10.00 per hour for those aged 18-20.

It is important all businesses review their budgets for 2025 and have plans in place to cover these increased costs, whether that is by way of reducing costs or by increasing sales prices or both.

Business Property Relief

If you died unexpectedly tomorrow, the value of your trading business will normally pass to your heirs without giving rise to an inheritance tax bill. From April 2026 this will not necessarily be the case.

Farmers have gained media attention. But the change affects successful business owners too; if your business is worth more than £1m then you too are likely to be affected. In the worst cases, your heirs could be forced to choose between an emergency sale of the business (almost always at a poor price), closing it down to realise

cash, or selling the family home. There is time to review succession arrangements between now and April 2026 to protect your heirs, the business and your employees.

Possibilities might include revising wills to ensure a married couple each pass on £1m of business assets free of inheritance tax. They might also involve handing on assets to the next generation and looking to survive 7 years, or for the younger business owner in particular, considering insurance to cover the tax liability in the event of an unexpected death.

In summary, business owners can no longer assume their business is free of inheritance tax. Working with your lawyers and financial advisors, now is the time to review the position and put in place arrangements to reflect the new tax environment.

Pensions and inheritance tax

At the moment your pension should be outside your estate for inheritance tax purposes. This changes for deaths from April 2027, not just for the part of the pensions built up from Budget Day, but for the entire amount.

Assuming you reach 75, when your heirs draw the pension funds, they will also continue to be subject to income tax on the withdrawal. This is in addition to the inheritance tax charge.

In the light of these changes we are recommending that clients use the coming months to review their pension arrangements. A review should cover both the approach to existing pensions and ongoing contributions. The impact of the changes extends beyond tax so it is important any review is undertaken in conjunction with your financial advisor.

About Chris Bentley

Chris heads up the specialist Tax and Forensic departments at Harts Accountants. For further information contact Chris on **01625 669669** or email **CBentley@harts-ltd.com**

BEYOND LAW GROUP

BEYOND LAW CORPORATE LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR 2024

Beyond Law Group's specialist practice, Beyond Corporate Law, continues to disrupt the regional legal landscape as it is named Corporate Law Firm of the Year at the eminent North West Dealmaker Awards 2024

Beyond Corporate Law was announced the winner of one of the Dealmakers most competitive award categories – "Corporate Law Firm of the Year" – having been shortlisted among some of the region's largest national and international law firms.

As a disruptive corporate practice which prides itself on not getting excited about the commercially irrelevant, Beyond Corporate entered the market in 2017 and has developed a highly regarded and disruptive corporate, commercial, real estate and disputes practice, establishing itself as the leading boutique corporate and commercial practice in the North West.

Having acted for some of the most prominent entrepreneurs in the region, the award win shines a light on the calibre of Beyond Corporate's client portfolio and the scale of transactions the team continues to lead on. The team acts for national and international clients who value a more proactive approach from lawyers who understand how the commercial world really works.

An experienced and highly regarded judging panel described Beyond Corporate as working with the mentality of "underdogs" and praised the team for its impact on the North West dealmaking landscape, with special recognition for the team's involvement in one of the largest and most

significant corporate transactions in the region this year; Onex Partners investment in Morson Group, with Beyond Corporate advising the selling shareholders.

The panel also commended Beyond Corporate for its overall growth and key client wins across all teams and were impressed by the external initiatives the business is undertaking within the Manchester region, such as its collaboration with Manchester Fashion Institute and Manchester Law School's to launch a pilot programme delivering pro bono legal support for aspiring young fashion entrepreneurs.

Beyond Corporate now joins the shortlist for Insider's UK Dealmakers Awards 2025, bringing together the winning regional Dealmakers from across the country to crown the 'Champion of Champions'.

Beyond Corporate is the specialist corporate and commercial practice of Beyond Law Group. With a current portfolio of three award-winning, specialist practices (Beyond Corporate Law, McAlister Family Law and Home Property Law), the Group's vision is to build national boutique practices for both corporate and consumer legal services.

<u>James Corlett</u>, Managing Partner of Beyond Corporate, commented: "The Dealmakers Awards are the pinnacle of the region's professional services calendar. For a niche corporate and commercial practice to be shortlisted among the largest national and international law firms across the region is virtually unheard of. To then go on and win is groundbreaking.

This is a massive achievement for the whole Group and testament to the hard work of its dynamic and talented teams across both Beyond Corporate and the Group as a whole. To be recognised on this scale is an unbelievable achievement and thoroughly deserved by the teams. We hope this success for Beyond Corporate will provide a strong platform for future success."



BEYOND LAW GROUP -AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES CORLETT

Beyond Corporate continues to disrupt the regional legal landscape as it is named Corporate Law Firm of the Year at the eminent North West Dealmaker Awards 2024 - having been shortlisted among some of the region's largest national and international law firms.

Here, we speak to Beyond Corporate's Managing Partner, James Corlett, on the continued growth and success of Beyond Corporate and the vision for the practice in 2025 and beyond.

Firstly, huge congratulations on the award win. How are you and the team feeling?

As you can imagine, the team is elated. For a niche corporate and commercial practice to be shortlisted among the largest national and international law firms across the region is virtually unheard of. Beyond Corporate only entered the market in 2017 and were by some stretch the smallest law firm in the shortlist so we didn't want to go in with too much expectation...

To hear Beyond Corporate's name called out was incredible and a very emotional moment for the team that have worked so hard over the course of the last 7 years. For Beyond Corporate to be recognised on this scale is an incredible achievement and so thoroughly deserved – I could not be prouder of the team.

The feedback from clients and contacts across the professional space in Manchester and further afield has been a real boost for the team and I've been humbled by some of the congratulations received from other law firm leaders across the region, which is a real credit to the legal community here.

What do you feel has led to Beyond Corporate's success?

A number of factors come into play but most importantly, our people are our greatest asset and integral to our success. We have invested heavily in recruitment over the last 12 months, but we have also put the development of homegrown talent at the forefront of our business strategy. This has enabled us to grow all our specialist teams and subsequently broaden and diversify our client portfolio.

We are the most credible alternative to the large corporate national firms based on the quality of our corporate and commercial practice and authenticity in providing commercially experienced partner-led service. We continually



punch above our weight with the calibre of clients we work with and the scale of transactions we lead on, acting for some of the most prominent entrepreneurial businesses in the North West.

What makes Beyond Corporate stand out from other firms in the region?

People like that we do things differently. Whilst most law firms in the region are housed in high rise glass buildings, our HQ is a renovated warehouse in the heart of Castlefield. We want to provide our people and clients with something totally different, with a nod to our northern roots and working-class DNA.

Our mission is to challenge the traditional – bringing human connection to a profession which has historically been viewed as staid and lacking empathy. Our view is that being good lawyers isn't just about being good at law but being connected commercially and emotionally with all of our clients and putting service for our clients at the forefront of everything we do. I think that's what sets us apart.

What is the vision for Beyond Corporate and the wider Group in 2025 and Beyond?

We are rapidly achieving our vision of being the goto corporate/commercial practice in the North West. We have a very strong existing team plus a recruitment pipeline which will enable us to bolster our existing service offerings (corporate, commercial, real estate, construction, litigation and employment) as well as introducing new, complementary service lines.

Our immediate priority is to grow our presence in and around the North-West and also our relatively new London offering, through both organic and acquisitive growth. Feeling excited about what is to come would be an understatement!

WELCOME TO NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS

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Offer a complimentary mentoring session to members.

WELCOME TO NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS



BLAZE HILL LTD Prestbury www.blaze-hill.co.uk

Blaze Hill helps our clients by auditing their networks to highlight any risks and vulnerabilities with their computer systems. We will advise on current threats and how to mitigate cyber risks. We help businesses prepare for Cyber Essentials and their cyber security journey.

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www.lawternative.co.uk

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Offer a 10% discount for chamber members.



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DAME SARAH STOREY VISITS KING'S



Dame Sarah Storey told young pupils at King's Infant & Junior Division about her lifelong determination 'to be the very best version of herself.'

You could hear a pin drop as the most successful Paralympian of all time and a legend of paracycling with 30 medals including an astonishing 19 Golds, told the pupils about her incredible journey. Born without a functioning left hand, she overcame bullying at school, to launch an amazing sporting career, first as a swimmer and then as a cyclist, winning Paralympic titles and World Championships from the ages of 14 to 46.

All the way she ignored those saying she wouldn't succeed just trying hard and following a process driven approach to forge her own path; for example, when told by her first swimming coach she had started too late at the age of 10. Then later in life transferring to the totally new sport of cycling to then make the Olympic squad training for the Games in London.

Her last endeavour was, perhaps, the most incredible when at the age of 46 she won two cycling Gold medals in Paris in the summer, beating a much fancied, home-based 19-year-old in the process.

Talking with a beaming smile, Dame Sarah told the special assembly "You need to be mentally resilient. You need to make a decision and then back your own decision all the way.

"However, always remember even in an individual sport, you are always a member of the team and everyone in the team is equally important. It is not just the person in the saddle or the one that scores the goals that counts: everyone has a role to play in a team and supporting roles are every bit as important."

Increasingly, a cogent, powerful and highly influential advocate for the development of the Paralympics movement and equality of opportunity between men and women, Dame Sarah can be seen toiling up and down the Cheshire highways and byways, from her home near Macclesfield. Such is her conditioning and determination, that she is even still considering competing at the Los Angeles Paralympics in 2028 when she will be 50.



Rachel Cookson, Principal of King's Infant & Junior Division, said: "Our pupils were absolutely spellbound listening to Dame Sarah as she gave them an invaluable lesson in determination, self-belief and team-work, all key qualities we want our children to develop and value.

"Dame Sarah is a huge supporter of The King's School and we are incredibly fortunate to have her speak to pupils on the back of the World Championship and, just weeks before, the Paralympics in Paris."

Dame Sarah is pictured with School Captains Luca Williams and Olivia Saxton, with Charlie Storey in the middle, wearing the two Paris Gold Medals and the rainbow jerseys and Gold medals from the World Championships.

AUTAC ACHIEVES ADR APPROVAL FOR VEHICLE CABLES





Macclesfield, UK - Autac, the UK's leading manufacturer of retractable cables and coils, is proud to announce it has achieved ADR approval for its specialised range of vehicle cables (0.75mm² to 6.00mm²). This certification, granted by TÜV, ensures the cables meet the rigorous safety standards set by the UNECE European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR).

This approval highlights the exceptional performance and reliability of Autac's cables, making them ideal for vehicles transporting hazardous goods.

Key Features of Autac's ADR-Approved Cables:

1- Extreme Durability: Designed to perform between -40°C to +85°C and tested for abrasion, UV. and chemical resistance.

- 2- Enhanced Safety: Certified flame-retardant and tested for high electrical stress.
- 3- Reliability: Proven through rigorous environmental and long-term heat ageing tests.
- 4- Flexibility: Compliant with ISO standards for bending and flexibility.

This milestone strengthens Autac's position as a trusted partner for OEMs and distributors worldwide, delivering exceptional quality and safety in the automotive sector.

https://www.autac.co.uk/





Having set up a Business Working Group, Bollington Town Council was delighted to put on a lunch event at Kira Bistro & Lounge Bar in Bollington on Wednesday 13th November with the support of North Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. The event was well attended by a broad range of businesses based in the town, from sole traders in diverse areas from Finance to Psychotherapy, through to larger employers in light industry such as Tullis Russell, Slater Harrison and Cutlers. Bollington's fantastic hospitality sector was represented too.

The Town Council Working Group was set up to increase Councillors' engagement with local businesses, as key stakeholders in the town's life. It is essential that the Council understands the positive reasons for businesses basing themselves in Bollington and the challenges they face in maintaining and growing their businesses.

It was fantastic to hear how much our beautiful town is appreciated as a great place to live and work. But there were common themes on some big challenges facing businesses. The isolation felt by sole traders, or those working from home. The difficulty in finding suitable premises, both for start ups and those looking to expand. The ongoing



challenges with transport; parking pressures, large vehicle access for the industrial businesses and the loss of trade for hospitality following bus route reductions.

The Business Working Group will take all these discussions on board and do what we can going forward to create support networks, facilitate more events for networking, signpost to business help from Cheshire East and other bodies. And most of all increase our visibility and engagement with our amazing business community. We look forward to the next event.

Cllr Dickie Fletcher

Chair - Bollington Town Council Business Working Group



CHESHIRE NETWORKING EVENTS GETS NEW NAME



Cheshire Marketing are super pleased to announce the rebrand of the Cheshire Business Networking events to Platinum Business Networking to give more prominence and increased brand awareness. We host face to face and zoom events to help businesses build connections and make valuable business contacts.

With 2025 coming, this is a great time for businesses to look at the marketing projects to keep visible and keep in front of people's minds. We offer a range of advertising services to help you reach potential customers in Cheshire including leaflet distribution to prestigious areas.

Next 2 events coming up for 2025

31st January - How to generate leads on Facebook workshop 11am-12 1 hour via Zoom. £45 to attend or £25 for the recording. Email kerry@cheshire-directory.co.uk

11th February Platinum Speed Networking - Cheshire via Zoom 10-11.15am. A time productive way to have lots of 1to1's with business owners without leaving the house. A great way to build business connections. Pay as you go.

For updates feel free to join the Small Business Community Facebook group where we share the highs and the lows, celebrate success as well as support each other. It is also a great opportunity to network and be part of more networking opportunities available.

A big thank you to the Chamber for all their support and we are pleased to have renewed another year. Feel free to follow on Instagram and Facebook @cheshiremarketinguk

www.cheshire-directory.co.uk kerry@cheshire-directory.co.uk

NEW STATUE CELEBRATES THE WORK OF ALICE KAN

To mark <u>National Engineering Day 2024</u>, the <u>Royal Academy of Engineering</u>, in collaboration with visual artist <u>Kelly Anna</u>, unveiled a first: a modern statue of a living engineer, to inspire a new generation into the profession.

According to PSSA UK (Public Statues and Sculpture Association) only about 3% of statues in the UK are of non-royal women, and none celebrate modern engineers. The striking new statue of a Macclesfield-based engineer Alice Kan, of Kan Do Ventures is not encased in traditional bronze or marble but in a modern and vibrant style.

This year, the Royal Academy of Engineering aims to inspire a new generation to see themselves reflected in engineering by honouring Kan as a contemporary engineer who played a pivotal role in the manufacture of the COVID-19 vaccine and is now working on vaccines for Ebola.

The initiative comes at a pivotal moment for the engineering profession. With women still making up only 15.7% of the UK engineering workforce—down from 16.5% in 2023—the lack of visible role models is seen as a key factor in why fewer women are considering a career in engineering.

Alice Kan said about her statue: "Being honoured in statue form is a very unique experience and not something many people can say. I really hope my statue encourages people to understand more about engineering, what engineers do and why it is a great career for anyone who's got a curiosity for wanting to make things work better."

Alice.Kan@Kandoventures.com



Using the QR code you can bring the statue to life through augmented reality.



KAT UK TO SAVE TWO LOCAL JOBS

The growing demand for windows and doors in and around Macclesfield, has provided KAT UK with a unique opportunity to support the local community and preserve jobs.

Maccplas, a well-established supplier of building products, was a trusted resource for tradespeople and homeowners alike for a number of years. However, following its recent administration, the news that Stuart and Alison were facing job losses was met with great sadness. With their extensive industry experience, they have been familiar faces to many in the local area.

In light of this, KAT UK is pleased to announce that, due to the ongoing growth in demand, it has been able to offer Stuart and Alison employment, effectively saving two valuable local jobs. Their wealth of experience will be a significant asset to the team as KAT UK continues to expand its presence in the area.

Since the opening of KAT UK's Trade Counter in June 2022, the company has become a popular destination for local window and door installers to



call in. The Trade Counter offers a welcoming space where installers can discuss projects, request quotes and complete order confirmations, while enjoying a hot beverage, especially appreciated during the winter months.

The showroom at the Trade Counter features a variety of products, including flush casement windows, uPVC sliding doors, casement windows, and a steel-look door. Homeowners are also encouraged to visit and explore the product range before finalising their orders with their chosen installers.

You are welcome to call into our Trade Counter, which is open from Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm,

no appointment is necessary. We look forward to meeting you.



BEYOND THE OFFICE CREATING BETTER LUNCHTIME

OrbitDevelopments

At Orbit, we are always asking how we can evolve the tenant experience and reimagine lunchtime for our business park communities, aiming to create an environment that supports productivity, wellbeing and connection.

Something that we have been doing for several years is hosting monthly food trucks at our business parks. These events not only offer tenants a fresh variety of lunch options but also provide local food vendors with an opportunity to showcase their offerings and gain more business. This has proved very popular with tenants and food traders alike, and we've been lucky to forge some long-standing relationships with some of our vendors.

In Tytherington, we are lucky to have the Middlewood Way on the doorstep, so we developed a guide with walking routes that tenants can follow on their lunch breaks. This has inspired Netwalking – a unique way for our tenants to connect, network and learn about other businesses

on the park, as well as getting some fresh air and exercise. We use the on-site café as a starting and ending point, further fostering a real sense of community on the business park.

In addition, we've installed outdoor seating areas, with wildflowers and beehives to come next year. These spaces encourage tenants to step away from their desk and recharge in nature, returning refreshed and ready to continue with their workday. This underscores Orbit Developments' commitment to transforming office spaces into thriving workplaces. By prioritising tenant and well-being and engagement, we are striving to be a landlord that enhances the work-life experience.



HEALTH INSURANCE FOR SELF-EMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS



Around 13% of the UK working population is recognised as self-employed but the majority I speak to don't have any health insurance or critical illness cover. The most common reason for this is because any expense can seem like an inconvenience when you're self-employed. But just think about what you would do if you became ill. That's exactly where private medical cover comes in and I'm here to show you why it's an investment not an expense.

What does self-employed health insurance cover? Just like standard health insurance, self-employed health insurance helps to pay for private treatment if you become sick or injured. It isn't there to replace your income if you can't work. But it does mean you can avoid NHS waiting times and access treatment quicker, with the aim of getting back to work quicker. This can prove essential for self-employed professionals who ultimately don't earn money if they don't work.

Different providers will cover for different types of illness so it's important to weigh up your options. But typically, you'll receive cover for a range of health conditions, including some existing and chronic, private GP appointments, hospital visits, and maybe cancer and mental health treatment, amongst a few other things.

The benefits of health insurance for self-employed individuals. As mentioned, if you're self-employed and are unable to work because of illness, it's likely that you'll want to get treated as quickly as possible. Private health insurance provides access to private medical care, which is often much more efficient compared to the NHS.

As well as shorter waiting lists, private hospitals are also renowned for their personalised care. You may also be able to access new medication and advanced treatments which can help you to return to work faster. Not to mention, you can choose where you're treated, when and who by - all of which can make the experience less stressful.

Is health inurance tax deductible for self-employed individuals?

If you're a sole trader, you can claim any expenses associated with insurance as tax-deductible. If you have a question about your own set-up, don't hesitate to get in touch and our team can advise.

Alternative types of insurance for the self-employed Private health insurance isn't the only available cover. Many of my self-employed clients take out <u>income protection</u> (which pays a regular income if you're unable to work due to illness or injury) and life insurance (which provides your loved ones with a lump sum if you were to die).

The best thing about any type of insurance is that you can find a policy that works for you - and together we can even cut out what you don't need and instead choose a plan that suits your lifestyle and working requirements.

It might not cost as much as you think either. While there are various factors that determine the premium you'll pay, including age, lifestyle, and medical history, I work with several providers and will try to get your <u>policy within budget</u>. Some of my clients even pay as little as £5 per month!

Invest in yourself as a self-employed professional Over the past 20 years, I've worked with all types of individuals to find the right level of cover for them, and this includes many self-employed professionals who previously had nothing in place. There's no fee payable when you get in touch, and I can even take care of renewals if you already have insurance but want to get it cheaper. So, in short, there really is nothing to lose.



OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE CHAMBER

2024 has been a whirlwind of activity for the Chamber Team. It's been wonderful to see so many of our members joining us at various events. Here's a look back at what we've accomplished and celebrated together since the last edition of Chamberlink:



Monthly Kick-off Breakfast: Business Networking at Macclesfield FC Held at Bar Twenty-Seven

This monthly breakfast highlights the club's achievements, including its academy, community initiatives, and hospitality services. With engaging speakers like Tommy Taylor of Sales Sharks and DJ Darren Proctor, attendees left inspired and connected.



Networking Breakfast with Art Fair Cheshire

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of Art Fair Cheshire, this special networking breakfast at Macclesfield Town Hall offered attendees a sneak preview of the exhibition. The fair, which raises significant funds for East Cheshire Hospice, showcased incredible art while fostering community and business connections.

Chamber Golf Day at Cavendish Golf Club

We hosted our annual Golf Day at the stunning Cavendish Golf Club against the picturesque backdrop of the Peak District National Park.

The event brought together businesses for a fantastic day of networking and friendly competition. Teams took on the challenge of 18 holes on one of the region's most scenic courses, enjoying the perfect blend of business and pleasure. Beyond Law Group emerged as the winning team, closely followed by Knights Professional Services in second place.



Presentation Skills with The Charisma Coach, Sally Ann Smith at Cottons Hotel & Spa

This dynamic workshop transformed attendees' presentation skills with two interactive sessions. Participants learned the secrets of charismatic presenting and filmed their own introductory videos with live feedback, leaving with enhanced confidence and communication abilities.



Breakfast with the Experts: Economic Update at Alderley Park

This insightful event at Glasshouse, Alderley Park, featured economic updates from Thomas Barker and Daniel Mahoney of Handelsbanken. Attendees gained valuable perspectives on the economic outlook for the next 6-12 months while networking in a stunning, innovative environment introduced to us by Mark Julian of Bruntwood Sci-Tech.



Unlocking Employment Law and Inclusive Recruitment

Held at Knights PLC in Wilmslow, this event offered valuable knowledge on employment law updates and inclusive recruitment strategies. Warren Moores, Senior Associate at Knights PLC, discussed upcoming employment law changes, while Marie and Yasmin from Synergy Recruitment emphasised the importance of accessible recruitment for neurodiverse candidates.



Securing Your Business: Five Essential Cyber Security Measures

In this informative session, Adam Gleeson and Adam Myers from CyberLab shared five easy-to-implement cybersecurity measures designed to protect businesses from approximately 80% of cyber-attacks. Dan Giannasi from the North West Cyber Resilience Centre also offered expert advice on fortifying cybersecurity defenses, providing attendees with actionable insights to enhance their security posture.



Decoding Difficult Workshop with Nick Robinson at Shrigley Hall

Author and executive coach Nick Robinson delivered an engaging and interactive breakfast workshop based on his new book, The 9 Types of Difficult People. Attendees explored practical strategies to improve workplace relationships and team dynamics by understanding and managing challenging behaviours. With over two decades of executive coaching experience, Nick's insights resonated deeply with participants.



The Business Club - November at Hollin House, Bollington

In partnership with Harts Chartered Accountants and Orbit Developments, our Business Club lunch featured Chris Bentley from Harts as the keynote speaker. Chris shared key insights from the latest budget update, leaving attendees with valuable takeaways.



Monthly Network Knutsford at The Tea Room, Knutsford

Continuing our popular monthly networking breakfasts in Knutsford, we gathered at The Tea Room every 2nd Wednesday of each month. These sessions have become a staple for local businesses to connect and share ideas over a delicious breakfast.



Christmas networking lunch at the idyllic Champneys Mottram Hall Hotel

Guests were welcomed with a glass of fizz and delicious canapes, providing the perfect opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new contacts. This was followed by a fabulously festive two-course meal.

Festive attire added to the cheerful atmosphere, and attendees came prepared with their own cracker jokes to keep the laughter going-helping to spare everyone from Terry's infamous repertoire!



15% discount for chamber members

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BENNETTBROOKS CELEBRATED DUAL APPOINTMENTS TO STEP CHESHIRE BRANCH COMMITTEE

We are delighted to share the news that Anthony Whittaker, Client Director and Trust and Estates specialist at bennettbrooks Chartered Accountants, has been appointed Chair of The Cheshire Branch of the Society of Trust and Estates Practitioners (STEP). Anthony, who brings a wealth of experience and dedication in trust and estate planning will guide and help shape the future of STEP C heshire for its members.

In addition to Anthony's appointment, we are also pleased to share that Caroline Barrett, a Technical Director at bennettbrooks who specialises in Estate Tax, has been appointed to the STEP Cheshire committee as the Student Liaison Officer. Caroline's expertise and commitment to the industry will contribute to the branch's ongoing success in supporting STEP's student membership in the local area.

Anthony's appointment as Chairman highlights his standing within the profession, as well as the trust placed in him by the members. With almost 20 years of experience in advising clients in Trust and Estate matters, Anthony's leadership and guidance will drive the continued growth of the STEP Cheshire branch.

Anthony commented on his new role: "I am honoured to take on the role of Chairman of STEP Cheshire. Our local STEP branch plays a crucial role in encouraging professional development and providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and expertise. I look forward to leading our dedicated committee and continuing to serve the trust and estates community in Cheshire."

Caroline's new role on the committee marks a significant opportunity to contribute to the future direction of the local STEP branch. Her appointment reflects her reputation as a trusted practitioner in trust and estates matters.

As experienced Trust and Estates Practitioners both Anthony and Caroline provide tailored advice to individuals and families navigating the complex tax issues related to estate planning, inheritance and wealth management. They work closely with clients to offer personalised strategies to meet their unique circumstances, ensuring efficient tax planning and the smooth transfer of wealth across



generations.

Yvonne Wood, Managing Director of bennettbrooks said "I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to both Anthony and Caroline on these well-deserved appointments with STEP Cheshire. This recognition highlights the exceptional expertise we are proud to offer around trust and estates planning. At bennettbrooks, we are committed to providing our clients with the highest level of specialist advice, and these appointments reinforce our ability to support clients through the most complex of financial challenges. We are thrilled to see Anthony and Caroline recognised in this way.

Bennett Brooks & Co Limited was established in 1991 and provides accountancy and audit services, tax advice, payroll, corporate finance, forensic accountancy and IT support to businesses across the UK. They employ 185 staff and have eight offices located across the North West and North Wales.

www.bennettbrooks.co.uk

TRAFFORD FIT BUSINESS GAMES



Friday 14 March 2025

We are excited to announce that fitness gym Trafford Fit are holding the first Trafford Fit Business Games in aid of The Christie Charity in March 2025.

Trafford Fit Business Games is a fitness event for everybody, no matter your fitness level, offering a great opportunity to get your team fitter, healthier, and more energised – all while supporting cancer patients and their loved ones.

Teams will focus on their strength, endurance, fitness, and teamwork in training before the showcase competition where each team will take part in 3 workouts.

Enter a team of 4 (2 men and 2 women), boost your team's wellbeing, and showcase their progress in a fun and friendly competition against local businesses.



Book now <u>via</u> The Christie website (just search Trafford Fit Business Games) or email <u>christie.appeals.companies@nhs.net</u> for more information.

To sign up you must pay a registration fee of £200 - 100% of the registration is donated to The Christie Charity.

HOGBENS CHARTERED SURVEYORS



Hogbens Chartered Surveyors bring over a decade of expertise to our surveying services. Specialising in residential and commercial properties, we provide a comprehensive range of services, including Level 2 Homebuyers Surveys and Valuations, Level 3 Building Surveys, Commercial Building Surveys, Schedules of Condition, and Dilapidations. Our services are tailored to suit the individual needs of each client.

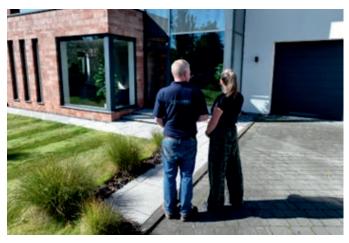
In recent years, we have expanded our offerings to cover Macclesfield, Cheshire East, High Peak, South Manchester, and Stockport. This expansion is a direct result of the high-quality service we provide, which has significantly increased demand. To manage this growth, we are excited to announce the recruitment of a new residential surveyor and a trainee surveyor.

Warwick Rudd joined the practice in August as a residential property surveyor, bringing enthusiasm and a commitment to detailed inspections and pragmatic advice. Lindsay Dennis, who joined in September as a trainee surveyor, has a strong background in residential property management

and energy assessment, with nearly 15 years of industry experience.

To enhance our operations, we also hired a full-time administration assistant, Jenna, in July. Jenna has streamlined business processes, making our service more efficient and friendly.

2024 has been an exciting year for Hogbens, marked by growth and new team members. We look forward to continued success and working with clients in 2025.



EXPLORE PREMIUM ALUMINIUM DOORS



THE ART OF PERFECTION

Spitfire Doors, a leading supplier of high-end aluminium entrance doors, invites you to visit their impressive showroom on Snape Road in Macclesfield. Featuring over 20 beautifully designed entrance doors, the showroom showcases a variety of styles, including decorative stainless-steel inserts, a broad selection of colours, biometric fingerprint access, and LED lighting options.

In response to rising energy costs and growing environmental concerns, investing in energy-efficient doors is a crucial step towards sustainability. Spitfire Doors offer exceptional U-Values, which help reduce heat loss, prevent draughts, and decrease overall energy consumption.

Spitfire's aluminium doors are built to last, with durable profiles, high-quality hinges, multi-point security locks, and precision-engineered steel hardware. Standard features include triple-glazed,

laminated glass units, ensuring maximum security and reliability. Their doors undergo rigorous testing to meet the highest standards in security, ease of use, and performance.

Every Spitfire entrance door is designed to provide optimal strength and security, meeting PAS 24 standards, offering homeowners peace of mind knowing their property is well-protected.

In addition to entrance doors, the showroom also features a selection of stylish aluminium bifolding and sliding doors. The showroom is open Monday to Friday from 8 am to 4 pm, with Saturday visits available by appointment. While appointments are not necessary during the week, it is recommended to call ahead to ensure a showroom expert can dedicate time to demonstrate the full range of products.

www.spitfiredoors.co.uk



FOREST DISTILLERY CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE SUCCESS



Forest Distillery Ltd, based in Macclesfield Forest, is thrilled to announce that it has been honoured with the Growth in New Markets Award at the Insider Media North West International Trade Awards. This prestigious accolade recognises the company's successful expansion into new international territories, including appointing distributors in Sweden and Denmark, and the exciting launch of its Earl Grey Forest Gin in Canada.

The awards ceremony, held at The Midland Hotel in Manchester, was hosted by the charismatic Sameena Ali-Khan and organised by Insider Media, with support from sponsors such as Thinc, NatWest, and HURST Accountants. Lindsay and Karl Bond, the founders of Forest Distillery, were delighted to accept the award, presented by Andy Rogers, Sector Sales Director at Insider.

Forest Distillery, renowned for its handcrafted gin and whisky made from local and wild-foraged ingredients, has earned a stellar reputation for innovation and quality. This latest achievement underscores the company's commitment to growth and sustainability, while showcasing the unique charm of the Peak District and Cheshire on an international stage.

For more information about Forest Distillery's award-winning products, visit theforestdistillery.com







KING'S STUDENT WINS PRESTIGIOUS ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP





King's School Sixth Form student Finlay Buckley is hoping his Arkwright Scholarship will take him into tomorrow's world.

Brilliant Year 12 academic Finlay, who got 11 GCSEs, including four 9s and five 8s, earned one of 200 top engineering scholarships from over 2,000 applicants nationwide.

As well as winning £250 for each of his two years in King's Sixth Form, Finlay believes winning the award will bolster his CV and create a vast range of networking opportunities. He said: "I don't particularly want to pursue the traditional route of a university degree, but rather a degree-apprenticeship with a top national company. That way I get the same academic qualification with hands on work experience, which I believe will be more useful in any future career."

The Engineering Scholarship is named after one of the great pioneers of the Industrial Revolution, Derbyshire entrepreneur Sir Richard Arkwright, who invented the spinning frame and the water frame and had factories across the North West supplying textiles to the world.

To impress a distinguished panel of judges, Finlay first completed a formal application, then sat a two-hour exam in which he designed a mini snowgritter to help keep pathways clear, before getting selected for an interview where he had to give a presentation.

He said: "I based the snow-gritter on a lawnmower, adding an inertial governor on the shaft and

replaced the blades with a disk to create an even distribution."

He also designed a sports ball target-return mechanism using a combination of nets and gondolas to send the ball to the player with he or she able to practice without trudging around the court.

Finlay, who has been operating state-of-the-art lathes since he was just 10, has a fascination with complex machinery and has taken tours of the Boeing factory in Seattle and the Airbus factory in Toulouse. He also co-piloted a light aircraft at the age of 12.

Finlay is currently studying A Level Design Technology, Maths, Further Maths and Chemistry and has a range of ambitions including city based architecture, helping to design and build sky scrapers in the confines of the urban sprawl and, perhaps, also designing the next generation aerospace engines.

Finlay, who plays ice hockey for the Manchester Storm Academy and captains the King's School 2nd XI field hockey team, will go to Newcastle upon Tyne to receive his award and meet prospective engineering company recruiters later in the Autumn.

King's students have won the Arkwright Scholarship seven times since it was introduced in 1991, with Finlay's success is the first since COVID. Design and Technology teacher Gareth Steele, who is the King's School's Arkwright coordinator, said: "Finlay combines both immense engineering and technical creativity with exacting attention to detail and hard work."

He added: "The Arkwright Engineering Scholarship, the most esteemed of its kind in the UK, opens doors for aspiring engineers like Finlay, empowering them to shape the future with innovation and excellence."



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preventbreastcancer.org.uk/build-to-beat



Using Science to Save Lives

Thermmark

THERMMARK WINS SPECIALIST SIGNAGE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR 2024

We are thrilled to announce that our dedication and hard work have been recognised yet again! We have been named Specialist Signage Business of the Year 2024/25 by CorporateLiveWire, cementing our position as multi-award winners in the industry.

This recognition is a testament to the creativity and commitment that our team pours into every project.

The CorporateLiveWire team shared their glowing feedback:

"...it is interesting to see the consistent, positive feedback you continue to get. The team again felt you were the strongest entrant in the category and we are pleased to recognise your hard work."

These words mean a lot to us and inspire us to keep raising the bar in our field.

Showcasing Our Impact

Winning this award highlights not only the expertise of our team but also the relationships we continue to build with our clients. Over the past year, we have delivered solutions for businesses across various sectors, opening up new applications across industries for our products all the time.

What's Next?

As we look forward to an exciting year, we'd love to partner with even more businesses that want to make a bold statement!

If your business needs high-quality, expertly crafted signage to make a lasting impression, we're here to help! Contact us on 0330 124 2750 or sales@thermmark.co.uk.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to celebrate more milestones!





The Cheshire East Business Support Initiative

Start, Sustain and Succeed.

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

The following events will be taking place in January 2025:

Tuesday 14th January

South Cheshire Economic Update
- Cheshire College South & West, CW2 8AB

Thursday 16th January

Thriving Under Pressure: Managing Workplace Stress with Thrive4Life - Champneys Mottram Hall, SK10 4QT





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











For more information and bookings for the Cheshire East Masterclasses, please visit https://www.tickettailor.com/events/cheshireeastchambers



Supported by Cheshire Constabulary and the Police & Crime Commissioner's Office, we want to protect Cheshire businesses against online crime. Our training and guidance will protect your business, data and assets.

Using the Proceeds of Crime funding, we are delivering a fully-funded programme (worth £500), which gives any business in Cheshire access to the following for free;

- Security Awareness Training
- 1-2-1 Cyber Security Consultation
- Cyber Security Policy Templates & Guidance
- Incident Response Plans

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