

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR SHROPSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JULY/  
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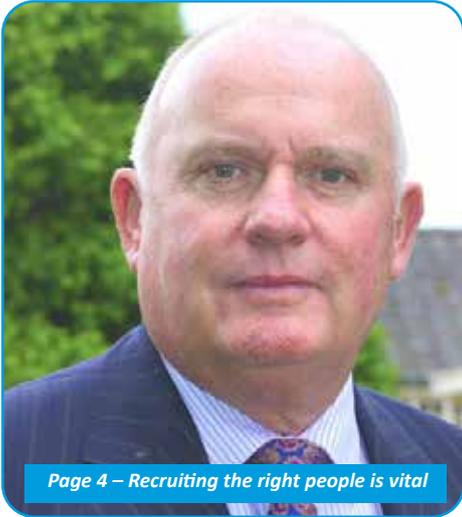
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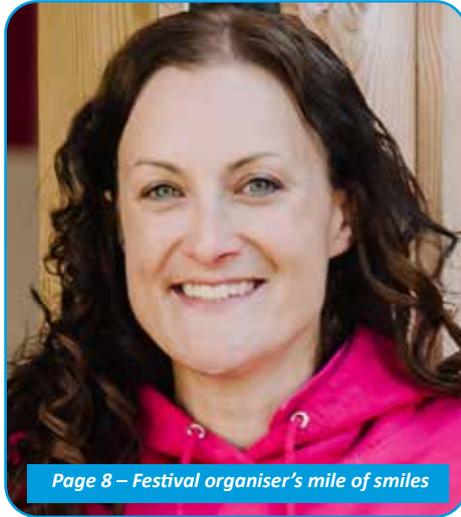
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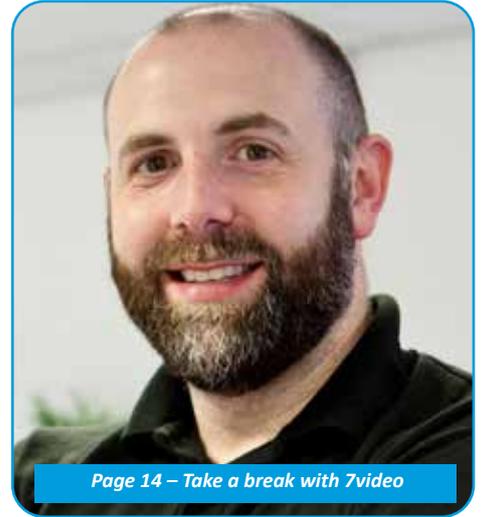
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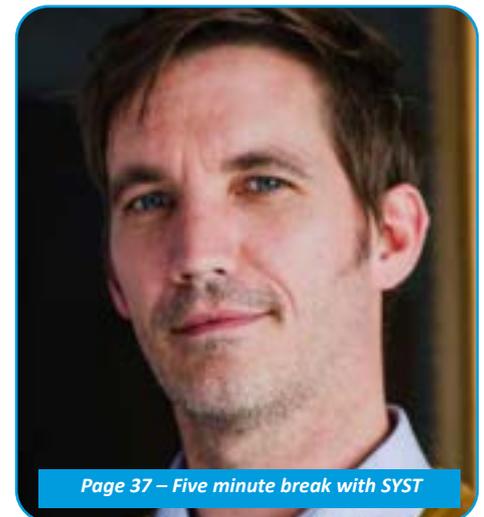
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The deadline for the September/October edition is Friday, July 23rd. Publication date is Friday, August 20th. Please note: due to the ongoing situation and the effects of COVID-19 on our business community, some events and activities mentioned may no longer be going ahead. Please check on each businesses own website for further clarification. All photos were taken before the Covid-19 pandemic.

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# Recruitment will shape our future

**A**s we hit the halfway point in the year, there are two strong messages coming from business, the need for people and cash. Recruitment is a real issue as businesses return to near normality and activity continues to grow.

It is true, that we all want the complete rounded employee, skilled and ready to go when we have a vacancy, however expectations need to be tailored to what is available within the job seeker marketplace. As part of our response to this, your Chamber has taken the lead on behalf of the Marches area in submitting a bid for funding to deliver the governments Local Skills Improvement Planning. Working in collaboration with our colleges and other representative bodies, this is a fantastic opportunity for the voice of business to shape skills provision in the future.

In the short term, it is clear that there is a need for upskilling and retraining of existing workforces through

a different approach. With 90% of our businesses employing 10 people or less the time away from the business for long stretched out training is not available. We are seeking to deliver and signpost to short high-impact upskilling provision covering 2-4 hrs per session – affordable in both time and money.

In support of the future workforce, your Chamber is an established Kickstarter Gateway, the largest in the Mercia region, we have over 800 vacancies for young people in our portfolio and this is growing every day, if you're not already involved in giving our young people a chance, then get in touch and we will show you how.

As we approach the end of many government support schemes, it is clear, access to finance will become an important tool to support business and employment growth, our Chamber finance finder accessed through our website is there to help, take a confidential look and see how it can help.

*With 90% of our businesses employing 10 people or less the time away from the business for long stretched out training is not available. We are seeking to deliver and signpost to short high-impact upskilling provision.*

**Richard Sheehan**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Shropshire Chamber of Commerce

# Solar power on its way to Bridgnorth

**A** Shropshire firm is enhancing its reputation as an environmentally-friendly champion by turning to solar power at its newest site.

TG Group is committed to operating in a sustainable and responsible manner at all its locations, and now its growing Bridgnorth presence is set to welcome a whole raft of 152 photovoltaic panels on its roof.

The project is a partnership between TG Electrical Services – who are managing the overall installation – and Caplor Energy, which is part of the Caplor Group based in Herefordshire.

TG Electrical Services manager, Chris Lloyd, said: “We’re delighted to be working with Caplor who are renowned for their award-winning renewable energy projects and it’s great for our team to be able to work on our own builders’ merchants building at Chartwell Park. Thanks to Caplor’s advice and expert knowledge, we believe the figures show we will recoup our costs in just over three years which is excellent news and it will help us to achieve our aims to tread as lightly as possible on the environment around us.”

Neil Evans, from Caplor Energy, said: “Rising energy costs and climate concerns are becoming increasing threats for businesses, consumers and communities. We are all responsible for the environment we live in and can take control of our future by choosing sustainable and informed ways to power our

From left, Neil Evans (MD of Caplor), Dave Poole (manager of TG Builders’ Merchants Bridgnorth) and Chris Lloyd (TG Electrical Services)



homes and businesses. We’re very pleased to be working alongside TG Electrical Services to deliver their Bridgnorth solar installation, and we believe it will help them to make a real difference to their energy costs and to the environment around them.”

The 57.76kWp system will be installed on the builders’ merchants branch on the Chartwell Park site which sits alongside TG Group’s latest concrete plant.

It will save the equivalent of 28.5 tonnes of carbon which is a sizeable contribution towards TG Group’s aim of reducing its carbon footprint as far as possible.

“We’re conscious that our Bridgnorth site is growing fast, but with every new development, we have the environment in mind – and in fact, because we were able to design and build the concrete plant from scratch, we have been able to create facilities that suit our requirements perfectly,” said Chris.

As part of the Bridgnorth project, TG Group received support from the Marches Renewable Energy Grant scheme which allows eligible applicants to apply for a 50% grant towards new installations of renewable technologies.

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Dave Courteen, left, The Shrewsbury Club's managing director, and club manager Alvin Ward in the newly-refurbished gym

## Giving back to the community

At Wenlock Water, the Directors all believe in giving back to the community, more so during the past year with the Covid Pandemic.

The company are proud sponsors of multiple initiatives across several charities and non-profit organisations annually. They actively support 3 main charities – these are Action Against Hunger, Hospitality Action and Springboard.

Across Shropshire, they support many local charities by supplying water for healthy hydration at various fundraising events. Many of the events are sporting activities – perfect for the many keen amateur athletes at Wenlock Water. These include cyclists, runners, rugby players and footballers. In fact, one of the Directors, Matthew Orme, set himself a challenge of cycling to work every day in May – and was joined in the challenge by member of staff Emma Richards.

They also work with Crossbar coaching – an organisation that takes sports into schools, encouraging children to enjoy sport and have fun whatever their ability, partner with Worcester Warriors' Junior Rugby Camps and Warrior Community Foundation, and also Sponsor Trailhead Shrewsbury and Clee Hill Cycle teams

In the past year Wenlock Water have donated bottled water to:

- The Prince Rupert Hotel on behalf of the Arc Homeless Charity
- The Redwood Centre, Shrewsbury
- Water to go with packed lunches (school meals in half term) delivered to Stretton Parish Centre.
- Water to the vaccination centre at Ludlow Race Course. They also had a race named after the company as a thank you. It was the 6th race on the 4th March meeting.

Also, Sue Michaels in the office has sent books to India for a library and has been crocheting blankets for Shropshire charities during the lockdowns.

Several local schools also receive free water in order to keep students hydrated.

For more information please visit the website at [www.wenlockwatercoolers.co.uk](http://www.wenlockwatercoolers.co.uk)

# £255,000 gym transformation wows members

**The Shrewsbury Club has further invested in its facilities by completing an impressive £255,000 transformation of its gym.**

Members have enjoyed the opportunity to exercise in the newly-refurbished gym, which has also been extended, since the club reopened in April.

An extensive new range of state-of-the-art cardiovascular and resistance machines have been introduced, with the refurbishment also including new flooring and redecoration to give it a fresh new feel.

Dave Courteen, managing director of The Shrewsbury Club, said: "It's all part of our commitment to providing our members with the best possible experience.

"We know the importance of continuing to invest in our facilities, and that's why we pressed ahead with our plans despite what's clearly been an exceptionally challenging 12 months financially.

"The gym refurbishment is another illustration of our determination to bounce back from being closed for much of the last year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's been fantastic for our members to see the transformation and enjoy spending time in the gym."

Upgrading the gym is the latest investment made by The Shrewsbury Club

to offer the best experience to more than 4,000 members. Since the first national lockdown last March, the club has invested £490,000 in new projects including the opening of a popular #BASE outdoor area and an outdoor yoga pod.

The additions have enabled the family-friendly health and fitness club to offer an even wider range of classes.

Members have been able to use the outdoor exercise facilities and outdoor tennis courts at the Sundorne Road venue in Shrewsbury since the first lockdown restrictions were lifted at the end of March.

The club has now returned to normal opening hours with the majority of the facilities, including the spa, the swimming pool and vitality pool, now allowed to reopen, with Covid-secure guidelines in place.

Mr Courteen said: "We know the importance of continuing to invest, even when times have been difficult.

"We very much value the support of all of our members.

"We kept in touch with them during the three national lockdowns to provide as much support as possible through the periods when we have had to close.

"We offered online classes and live streaming programmes, which generated lots of positive feedback and proved to be popular.

"Our dedicated and committed team have loved welcoming our members back."

# Third anniversary for HR specialists

**A specialist Shropshire HR firm is marking a successful three years in business by announcing news of a further expansion.**

Award-winning The HR Dept Shropshire was launched by Niamh Kelly in May 2018 to provide human resources and employment law support to small and medium sized businesses.

During that time the firm has continued to see an increasing demand for its services, taken on more staff, expanded with the launch of sister company The HR Dept Wrexham and Chester and supported the local community through a sponsorship deal to back Wrexham FC's female section.

Ms Kelly is currently recruiting for another HR consultant and a candidate off the Kickstart programme while the latest expansion will see her join forces with Lee Monroe of The HR Dept Abergavenny, Brecon, Blaenau Gwent & Cwmbran with a move whereby the expert duo will cover the Mid Wales region.

"It's been an incredible three years and I really couldn't be more pleased with the way things have gone," she said. "We have filled the need to provide businesses with a quality HR and employment law support programme - and we haven't stopped there!"

"The expertise, experience and solutions we provide are an essential part of how businesses operate in today's world and as more companies realise that, the greater the demand for our services.

"During the last three years I have taken on staff to help meet this demand and am in the process of recruiting another HR consultant and Kickstart employee, which will help us to meet the needs of an ever-growing client base.

"The move to launch The HR Dept Wrexham and Chester with the area's own designated office and senior HR consultant Laura Bray was the right decision at the right time and has already proved to be a valuable asset to businesses in that area.

"That success and the continued success of The HR Dept Shropshire has sparked a further expansion into Mid Wales. Fellow The HR Dept franchisee Lee Monroe provides an exceptional service and it will be a joy to work together.



Laura Bray, Niamh Kelly and Aleesha Skett

"We are both getting so much work from our respective areas that it's just a logical progression to meet in the middle and share the missing part of the jigsaw, bringing our expertise to Mid Wales."

The HR Dept Shropshire won the Start-up Business of the Year category at the 2019 Midlands Business Networking Awards and has been a two-time finalist at the National Business Women's Awards.

"It's onwards and upwards at The HR Dept Shropshire and I'm delighted at what we have been able to achieve with local businesses in and around the county and with our move into Wrexham and Chester," Ms Kelly added.

"I like to think we are playing a significant role in the communities we serve and the businesses we support - especially during the last 12 months. Businesses have needed us more than ever to navigate their way through furlough, closing businesses, starting new businesses and the Government guidance which has been overwhelming for many.

"It's been a wonderful three years and I would like to thank the ongoing efforts of the team and continued support of our clients - we are extremely optimistic about what the future holds - not just for my business but for the businesses we are working with - they have worked so hard and deserve every success as the world of business bounces back." For more information about The HR Dept email [Niamh.Kelly@hrdept.co.uk](mailto:Niamh.Kelly@hrdept.co.uk)

## Farm shop's online range

Shrewsbury's Battlefield 1403 Farm Shop, Butchery and Café have added to their services - where customers can now purchase a growing selection of their home made and locally sourced produce via their website, either for home delivery or to collect from the shop. Delivery is initially available in SY1, SY2, SY3, SY4 and SY5 postcode areas, with plans to expand this to other areas soon.

During the Covid pandemic, Battlefield 1403 offered a home delivery and collection service, which proved extremely popular with many customers. This new offer is simply an extension of that.

'The response to our telephone and email ordering service during the pandemic was incredible', says Jeremy Jagger, Managing Director, 'So we feel that the time is right to extend this further and we can now offer customers an easy to use portal via our website to order our produce. It is particularly important to me that the Online Shop is enjoyable and easy to use and navigate - for both customers and staff and I feel that we have achieved this. In particular, orders for fresh fruit & vegetables and meat from the Butchery have far exceeded our expectations.'

The Farm Shop offers a great range of fresh seasonal produce, home-grown or locally sourced in Shropshire. All have low food miles, full traceability and great taste. Seasonality, freshness and high standards of production are really important to them. They also sell delicious home-made fayre lovingly created in their own kitchen and bakery, which includes hearty soups, breads, fresh ready meals, desserts, cakes and traybakes.

They use their own beef and lamb - whenever possible - which is reared on the Albrighton Estate and then prepared and cut on site by their own knowledgeable butchers.

Why not find out for yourself by visiting [www.battlefield1403.com](http://www.battlefield1403.com)?

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# Performers needed for smiles in county town

**S**hropshire Festivals will be holding a free event in Shrewsbury on Sunday, July 25 2021 to spread some happiness through the town.

'A Mile of Smiles' will take visitors on a walk through Shrewsbury where performers and acts will be tasked with generating smiles along the way. The events company are seeking out performers, entertainers, musicians, and acts to put themselves forward for the event.

Not only will the event generate some long-awaited fun in the town, but it also aims to entice visitors back into Shrewsbury to support performers who have had a challenging time during the pandemic. The mile will finish at Shrewsbury Quarry where local acts, theatre groups, and musicians will be performing on a live stage.

Beth Heath, aptly titled Director of Fun for Shropshire Festivals, said, "This event is all about celebrating culture and finally being able to bring the fun back!

"We will be raising money for the charity Climbing Out on the day, who help people rebuild confidence and motivation following a life-changing trauma, injury or illness. We felt this was particularly relevant as we all try to find a new way forward after such a challenging time.

"It will be fantastic to have a live, cultural event in the town, supporting lots of performers who have had zero income from live gigs during the pandemic. If you are interested in getting involved, please get in touch!"

The free event has been made possible



Director of Fun, Beth Heath, with performers at Shropshire Drive-in last year

with funding from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund and support of Shrewsbury BID.

If you would like to put your performance act forward for the event, please contact Beth Heath by email via [Beth@shropshirefestivals.co.uk](mailto:Beth@shropshirefestivals.co.uk) letting her know how you will be able to provide smiles for the event!



Beth Heath at Shropshire Festivals HQ

## Hub launched to help businesses improve staff wellbeing

Local health and wellness coach, Laura Butler, has launched a new on-demand online hub to help businesses improve wellbeing in the workplace.

Laura is an accredited health and wellness coach who has 15 years experience in the health and wellness industry, having coached thousands of private and corporate clients worldwide. She has set the hub up to offer an affordable solution to businesses, to help their employees develop their sleeping, eating, self-care and mindfulness habits to improve overall wellbeing and motivation. The service will provide a mixture of content including webinars, blogs, videos, and two live monthly training sessions with accredited health and wellness coaches.

Laura says the hub has been set-up to help businesses look after their staff who need support more than ever following the pandemic.

She said, "Employers now understand the importance of looking after their staff's mental wellbeing, but they either don't know

where to find the right resources or they think that support will be costly and take staff out of the office for training. Our service is affordable - from as little as £10 per month, and it can be accessed at times to suit your business. We simply want to motivate and inspire teams by strengthening healthy behavior with our range of low-cost online tools."

Last year 15.9 million days were lost to sickness absence in the UK due to stress, depression, anxiety and other mental health problems and it is estimated that poor mental health among employees costs UK employers between £42bn - £45bn every year.

Laura adds, "Following the challenges of the last year we all want to do more to support our wellbeing, but we aren't always sure where to start.

"The Wellness Hub offers bite sized, accessible coaching that can be easily integrated in to your life to make consistent improvements - without being overwhelming. Taking care of our wellbeing isn't a one off activity to tick a box; it is something we need

to keep working on, to cultivate healthy habits around looking after ourselves.

"We believe that an investment in wellness will create a loyal, engaged and happy team, with reduced sick leave, and an increase in performance - there is so much to gain!"

The business has already secured a stream of partnerships, which includes Paycare, Shropshire Festivals and Zen Communications, as well as a Californian business.

Laura has partnered with local start-up 'techtimetype' so any business that signs up to the hub has access their resources that help people have a healthier relationship with tech to aid productivity and happiness.

Any business that signs up to the hub before the end of June will also receive free tickets to the Wellbeing Festival, which is taking place in Shrewsbury on September 11, 2021.

For more information on signing up to The Wellness Hub visit [www.wellbecoaching.co.uk/the-wellness-hub](http://www.wellbecoaching.co.uk/the-wellness-hub)



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# Grant adds to baker's sweet success story

Duncan McGregor at the new premises of Planet Doughnut



**One of Shropshire's best-known bakeries is creating new jobs after receiving nearly £115,000 from a grant programme supported by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership.**

Shrewsbury's Planet Doughnut bakery has moved into a modern new production base in the town and taken on new staff after receiving £114,800 from the Marches Building Investment Grant (MBIG).

Duncan McGregor – who set up Planet Doughnut in 2017 with his wife Samantha – said the move to the new bakery in Battlefield was a crucial part of its latest expansion drive which would see it moving to 24-hour production and creating more than ten jobs by the summer.

"We expect turnover at the bakery to reach £750,000 this year and to be employing 32 people there. The move to the new production base is vital to help with that growth," said Duncan.

"We have exciting plans for the future based around increasing wholesale distribution of pre-packed doughnuts with both major and independent retailers and a number of other initiatives."

The bakery supplies Planet Doughnut's retail outlets in Shrewsbury and Telford.

"The extra production capacity we now have means that we have room to grow further and we are looking forward to continuing the success we have enjoyed over the past four years," added Duncan.

"The grant from MBIG has been a huge help towards the cost of the new bakery and the process of applying for and obtaining the funds, with the support of the Marches Growth Hub, was very straightforward."

The MBIG programme offers grants of up to £150,000 to help meet

the cost of building new premises or extending and reconfiguring existing ones. It is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and supported by the Marches LEP and Marches Growth Hub.

Programme Manager Caroline Cattle said: "Planet Doughnut has made a huge impact on the area in just a few short years, and we are delighted to have been able to help with the move to the new bakery on Knights Way on Battlefield.

"The move means that the bakery can continue to expand and create new jobs and even more people can enjoy the taste of its products."

Gill Hamer, Marches LEP chief executive, said: "I am delighted that we have been able to help Planet Doughnut in this way. The company has quickly become a well-known name throughout the region and the move to a new bakery can only help build on that success."

The MBIG programme, which is delivered by Herefordshire Council, meets up to half the cost of successful applications, meaning that projects costing up to £300,000 could secure a grant of £150,000. The scheme covers B2B businesses and does not include retail, social welfare or agricultural companies.

Herefordshire Council is the accountable body for the MBIG scheme. Full details are available from the team at [mbig@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:mbig@herefordshire.gov.uk) or by calling 01432 261511.

The Marches Growth Hub Herefordshire can be contacted at [business@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:business@herefordshire.gov.uk)

The Marches Growth Hub Shropshire can be contacted at [marchesgrowthhub@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:marchesgrowthhub@shropshire.gov.uk)

The Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin can be contacted at [enterprisetelford@telford.gov.uk](mailto:enterprisetelford@telford.gov.uk)

# Face-to-face – celebrating the end of lockdown

A Brand-New Monthly Networking and Business Growth Meeting For Entrepreneurs In, and around, Telford.

Starting in July, an exciting and new type of Networking and Business Growth Meeting is starting in Telford that's guaranteed to help your business to grow.

Run by Entrepreneurs Circle, the largest organisation in the country that's dedicated to helping businesses grow and Chamber Member David Mack, these unique and very different events look set to become the highlight of the month, every month, for ambitious business owners in and around Telford.

## Not Just Networking

The brand-new meetings include a featured content session each month where

experts share a practical tactic or strategy that you can use in your business to get more customers right now and grow!

Some of the most switched-on business owners from all over Telford and beyond will come together to share what's working right now in growing their businesses and you too can join them.

"To be selected to run the Telford group is a great honour – helping businesses in particularly business owners begin to realise their dreams has been a real passion of mine" said David Mack from Trinity CPD Training Ltd. "The chance to support business in their growth journey is a real privilege"

David, an experienced business coach and facilitator, has been training businesses and running mastermind groups all round

the country for the last 20 years. "To support a group of owners in Telford has been a long standing goal of mine"

The group will meet at the Buckatree Hall Hotel, a well know venue of great character just besides the Wrekin.

## Join The Telford Meeting

Members range from start-ups to multi-million pound businesses.

What they have in common is their ambition to grow!

There are limited places - and a number of bursaries are available to join free of charge and they will be offered to suitable businesses on a first come first served basis.

For more information email

David david@yourgrowthpartner.co.uk or call David on 07974721559

# Meeting the needs of private patients

**S**hropshire Chamber members **Summerfield Healthcare** are marking five years of working with patients across the county and beyond.

The private healthcare firm has clinics in Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton and first opened its doors in 2016.

Founder Grant Charlesworth-Jones launched the business to meet the needs of private patients in the county, and after five years he will step back from his Medical Director role as the company expands.

He said: "Traditional private medicine has been insured or very expensive and Summerfield Healthcare was launched with the aim of meeting the needs of everybody.

"We have worked to grow and offer a wide service from GP appointments to minor surgery and have worked hard to support our patients - especially over the last 18 months.

"Now, as we enter a post-COVID world and the NHS is under pressure, private healthcare has a role to play in providing an alternative route to the services and help people are looking for."

The company has welcomed Dr Joe Pearson as a new Clinical Lead and Medical Director alongside existing Director Dr Vivake Roddah.

Dr Pearson said: "I have been an NHS GP for 17 years and am really looking forward to my role in Summerfield Healthcare.

"We are able to give patients the time and the healthcare both in a holistic way to ensure good health and also in medical need.

"I am looking forward to working with the team and taking them forward over the next five years!"

To mark the anniversary, and to ensure that those who may not want to put further pressure on the NHS still have their needs



Founder Grant Charlesworth-Jones has welcomed Dr Joe Pearson as a new Clinical Lead and Medical Director alongside existing Director Dr Vivake Roddah

addressed, Summerfield Healthcare is offering a complimentary healthcheck with every private healthcare appointment booked in for a date up until the end of July.

"Preventative healthcare is very important and this is a role we really do want to play our part in," adds Dr Pearson.

"Healthchecks are very much like an MOT and work in much the same way as the MOT

and annual service does on our vehicles - it is important to keep an eye on what our bodies are doing so that we can prevent future problems."

More information about Summerfield Healthcare, one of the businesses under the Ryminster Medical Services umbrella, can be found on their website at <https://www.summerfieldhealthcare.co.uk/>

# Mediator welcomes new voucher scheme



Esther Evans, of Wace Morgan Solicitors

A Shropshire family mediation specialist has welcomed a new scheme which means people can now access £500 of legal assistance to help them solve children issues.

Esther Evans, of Wace Morgan Solicitors, one of the county's largest law firms, explained that the government initiative meant that vouchers were now available to help separated families.

"The government is investing £1m in family mediation to support people to settle issues relating to children following parental separation," explained Esther, who has worked as a qualified family mediator with Shrewsbury-based Wace Morgan for nine years.

Under the scheme, the Ministry of Justice will provide contributions of up to £500 per family, with mediation being provided by Family Mediation Council Accredited mediators, such as Esther.

The fund will reduce the costs of mediation for at least 2000 families.

"I very much welcome this new scheme which will be of real help to parents who wish to agree arrangements for their children in a conciliatory way for the benefit of the whole family," said Esther.

"It will help separated families agree solutions that are best for their children, taking into account what is going to be important for them as they grow up.

"Family mediation is a proven cost-effective way to resolve differences following separation. This voucher scheme will make it even more accessible and will help families resolve issues for themselves, without having to go to court."

Family mediation is a process in which an independent, professionally trained mediator helps parents work out arrangements for children and finances following separation. Mediation can also be helpful when previous child arrangements need to change, particularly as children grow up.

For more information about this press release or family mediation please contact Esther Evans at [esther.evans@wmlaw.co.uk](mailto:esther.evans@wmlaw.co.uk) or on 01743 280147.

# Sights on national expansion

**Z**oom! 1hr Delivery are expanding their rural delivery solution to a national level, to compete with major food delivery players. The business was founded by two Shropshire born and bred men, and operates from Shrewsbury.

The disruptive delivery service achieved an annual turnover of £665,000 in 2020 with an order growth rate of 108% from 2019. They boast over 70,000 app downloads and have already made over 250,000 deliveries, with an average order value of £25.60 and average delivery time of 24 minutes.

In the three years that Zoom 1hr has been operating, it has remained completely bootstrapped. They currently have an investment campaign open through Seedrs, the UK's leading crowdfunding platform, and have already raised over half a million pounds. The company will use the first round of investment to help the business mobilise in new areas, develop their online technology and payment management, expand their team, and move into new premises. They anticipate creating approximately 120 jobs and apprentice positions.

Co-founder, Dave Hamlet, has an accomplished career in the UK's food and beverage industry, having previously held the position of Commercial Director across the UK and Ireland for drinks brand Monster. He has used his extensive experience to secure a partnership with heavy weight brand, Co-op, with others in the pipeline.

Mr Hamlet said, "Right from the start I saw a huge potential in what Zoom 1hr could accomplish, and having achieved annual growth year-on-year since inception, I'm delighted my instinct was right!"

"Winning the contract to become the third national last-mile delivery partner for Co-op created an opportunity to expand our own services across Wales and bordering English counties last year. 2021 sees our sights set on expanding further across England, Scotland and Wales, partnering with thousands of British businesses. With the right investment, our national rollout plan will thrive."

Zoom 1hr believe major food delivery players have left huge swathes of the population outside major cities underserved. Rural areas and towns are a key target for the business.

Kevin Williams, Zoom 1hr Founder, said, "We have carved out a place in a rapidly growing marketplace by targeting areas that have so far been underserved by our competitors, by covering a larger



Zoom 1hr's Co-CEOs Kevin Williams and Dave Hamlet

radius for delivery. We believe these areas are the places where delivery solutions are needed more than ever."

Zoom 1hr recognise their drivers' 'worker' status and offer paid holiday and other benefits required by current law, in a pointed move to rise above competitors in the gig economy who have been embroiled in addressing issues of employment law. Zoom 1hr were one of the first delivery services in the UK to offer this to their drivers.

Mr Williams adds, "We are also leading the pack by being the first app to offer delivery of more than just food. We are empowering independent retailers with a solution to deliver groceries, shoes, homeware, flowers and more, in less than an hour. Consumers want retail in a faster, more efficient way now and we can provide just that. Online shopping is here to stay and waiting a week or more for a purchase just isn't going to cut it in 2021.

"At Zoom 1hr, we are on a mission to become the UK's hyperlocal, last mile delivery service and we are incredibly excited to see our national rollout vision come to life this year!"

# Making a social impact

**A** Shropshire based business has recently been rewarded by the British Business Bank as runner up in their Social Impact Business of the Year Award, as judged from a pool of over 11,000 start-ups created during the pandemic.

Tanki, an environmentally friendly, plastic free, non-blocking toilet paper which is designed to remove one of the leading causes of blockage can add this latest recognition to it's current haul including the Innovation Award from Maritime UK as well as being a National Finalist with the Rural Business Awards.... despite only making the first batch in October.

Tanki twin ply is manufactured with an innovative water lamination technique to eliminate the need for glues, which the UK flushes down the drain at a rate of 22,000 tonnes per year.

With the company going from strength to strength, co-founder Mark Collins says,

"Originally we wanted to create a toilet paper for use onboard 5 star cruise ships where a balance between preventing blockages and providing a high-quality product for passengers needed to be maintained.

To our surprise we now have customers all over the country using our product in their yachts, caravans, macerating toilets and all "wonky bogs" in between!"

His colleague, Matt O'Crowley adds,

"Our base in Shrewsbury is fast becoming Tanki Town and we are so excited about the next months and years ahead.

I'm already thinking about how we could wipe bottoms in space... but until then it would be fun to see Tanki in every troublesome toilet in the UK!

"We are currently seeing great sales online and in our local stockists, but we are really keen to make Tanki more widely available on shelves."

Matt might have lofty ambitions, but after starting a toilet roll



company on a shoestring and gaining the attention of national institutions already, perhaps the sky isn't the limit?

<https://www.einpresswire.com/article/542359882/loo-roll-recognised-as-leading-social-impact-business-by-british-business-bank>



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# There's always a solution to find

Pete Sims



**7video Ltd is a media production company based in Shrewsbury. Specialising in Film, Animation, Drone and Timelapse. Working with clients across the UK and into Europe, producing content for websites, social media, training and presentational use. Pete Sims is the owner.**

**Who is someone you admire, and why?**

I have always looked up to my father. He started his own business as a civil engineer and with hard work was successful. This knowledge has added to the ongoing support I've had from my family while building 7video to where we are today.

**Tell me three pet hates?**

Littering, bad manners and bad customer service!

**What's a typical day like for you?**

With a young family it is usually an early start which helps get me focussed for the day ahead. At 7video no day is the same. Either with client meetings, film shoots, editing, supporting the team or general admin tasks. But this is what I love about running a business.

**Do you have any skills or talents that most people don't know about?**

I am a big shark enthusiast and have been lucky to dive with many different species including the Great White.

**If you could be anywhere, where would you be?**

Bora Bora.

**Flashback to when you were 10 years old. What did you want to be when you grew up?**

A pilot flying jumbo jets.

**If we went to 'happy hour', what would you order?**

Long Island Ice Tea.

**Finish this sentence. On Sunday mornings, you can usually find me...**

Making pancakes with my children.

**How do you want people to remember you?**

A creative who loved to laugh and make others smile.

**What do you think are the best skills that you bring to your job?**

I am personable and understanding. I'll always look for a solution to a problem and never give up.

**Name three words that best describe you.**

Passionate, Determined, Happy.

**How do you think your colleagues would describe you?**

As someone who is easy to talk to, supportive but does love a good moan.

**What do you want to make sure you do before you die**

Visit Bora Bora and see that my children are happy.

**What's a goal you have for yourself that you want to accomplish in the next year?**

Go on a foreign holiday.

**What are your highlights or lowlights of your career so far?**

Highlight is winning the Small Business of the Year award last year. Lowlights would be Covid.

**What publications do you regularly read?**

Local press, inside housing, The E Myth.

**What are you happiest doing, when you're not working?**

Gardening and spending time with the family.

**What are some causes you care about?**

Charities - Parkinsons UK.

**What do you do with friends and family in your spare time?**

Walking, bbqs, going out for meals and drinks (when allowed).

**What would be your personal motto?**

Don't take yourself too seriously and there's always a solution to a problem.

# Can insurance assist cash flow?

**O**n March 1, 2021, the new VAT domestic reverse charge, known as the 'reverse charge' came into force for many construction sector companies, changing the way in which VAT is collected within the building and construction industry.

The new rules affect all building and contracting suppliers who are not supplying zero-rated goods and services, covering constructors, demolition companies, builders, specialists in pipelines, sewers and mains, heating, lighting and ventilation installers, painters and decorators and many more businesses within the building and construction sectors.

Now, instead of invoicing and collecting VAT, suppliers of building and construction services, who are VAT registered and whose businesses are reported under the



Construction Industry Scheme, will have to allow the receiver of those services to be the one to pay the due VAT to HMRC. Whilst a supplier will still show the VAT due, by detailing this on their invoice, it will be the customer's responsibility to pay the tax authority.

It is thought that some sub-contractors could be required to pay more attention to their cash-flow management because of the change, as some will have relied on the VAT-to-pay element of their cash at the bank as working capital that could be utilised before the due payment was made. These construction and building sector businesses are being urged to review their trading terms, to try to ensure that they receive their payments on time, and to keep a watchful eye on their cash-flow systems and levels of liquidity.

Cash flow is a major cause of business

failure, which is why Trade Credit Insurance is a popular choice of insurance cover within the construction sector, where late payment is frequently an issue. Trade Credit Insurance will help protect cash flow and liquidity, helping a business trade and grow with confidence. It will also step in should a bad debt be experienced.

Trade Credit Insurance proved a lifeline for many construction businesses caught up in the 2018 failure of construction giant, Carillion, demonstrating the value of this type of insurance.

With the new VAT regulations providing current uncertainty for many construction and building businesses, we recommend that you contact us to discuss the different types of Trade Credit Insurance available. We will also be able to offer advice on insurance policies that can provide you with legal assistance, should HMRC bring any legal actions against the business.

For more information about trade credit underinsurance or our other products call Nigel Kennedy on 01686 626019.

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# What now for Shropshire Youth Support Trust?

The Shropshire Youth Support Trust (SYST) is a charity set up to prevent or relieve poverty by providing support for young people, from disadvantaged/marginalised backgrounds, to realise their potential and work towards financial and social independence.

We support them in all aspects of business start-up and self employment to create their own job or to gain additional skills, confidence and build self-esteem to get or work towards employment.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, SYST are aware of how people's lives, jobs, and businesses have been adversely affected by the virus. During the pandemic, the charity has continued to help people achieve their dreams and gain instrumental skills to be adaptable and increase their resilience and emotional wellbeing. All this has been achieved by partnering up with professionals and experts who have helped us to deliver much needed support.

Richard Nuttall, Chief Executive of the charity, has commented: "We have been very fortunate to have had the support of some incredible coaches and mentors over the years and the last 15 months. It has been a difficult time for most people, so to have had support for these business and wellbeing professionals is something we ourselves and our beneficiaries are very grateful for."

A new area of support services has been a series of wellbeing and mindset support. Lisa Avery and Julie Bricknall each have delivered several workshops for the charity and have received glowing feedback. "Both Lisa and Julie have been fantastic to work with, they have helped elevate SYST to new heights and in the process form new

opportunities for our charity to work with young people whose mental health has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic"

Although SYST's Wellbeing programme has been instrumental in recent success the charity's mission remains the same.

"The goal is to empower our clients to achieve their dreams, lead fulfilling lives, and kick start their journey towards economic independence."

This is achieved by the ASYSTED business programme. A modular programme which aims to get young people into a position where they can become socially and financially independent, and in some cases, creating jobs for others in the local area..

Since starting in 2015, SYST has helped 190 businesses start up and has created over 250 jobs in the process.

The next chapter for SYST is to help even more people in need of support.

Over the next 12 months the charity aims to increase their beneficiaries by helping to create 50 -60 new jobs.

The goal is ambitious but achievable and people can help the charity by donating to them through their JustGiving (<https://www.justgiving.com/syst>) page or through their partnership page on TSB's (<https://fundraising.tsb.co.uk/branches/telford>) website.

Please note that this is a one-off payment, so if someone wants to donate they can do so but be as generous as possible.

If you wish to know more about what SYST offer please head over to their website at <https://www.systbusiness.co.uk/> or you can email them at [hello@systbusiness.co.uk](mailto:hello@systbusiness.co.uk)

# Travel agent makes top of industry list

**A**s overseas travel becomes tantalisingly close to returning, a travel agency in Shrewsbury has something else to celebrate after being listed as a top 50 travel agency in the UK and Ireland.

Industry bible Travel Trade Gazette recently named Peakes in their power list of top agencies. Peakes was one of just three agencies in central England to earn a place in this prestigious list.

More than 400 travel agencies and branches put themselves forward for consideration for TTG's Top 50 list, from which a shortlist of 100 finalists across 20 categories was devised. Each regional finalist was interviewed by a TTG journalist at the start of the year, to assess their customer service, expertise, business performance, and efforts to give back to the local community, with particular attention paid this year to their handling of the Covid-19 crisis.

TTG editor Sophie Griffiths said, "Now in its sixth year, our TTG Top 50 Travel Agencies initiative sees us scour the UK and Ireland to find the hardest-working, most committed and most successful travel agency businesses in the land.

"Against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic, travel agents have been tested to their limits over the past 12 months.



Claire Moore, managing director

But the nation's best agencies have shone particularly brightly, working tirelessly – often for little or no reward – to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of their customers. From repatriating huge volumes of travellers from

around the world at the start of the crisis to battling for refunds on their behalf for months on end, their worth really has been proven.

"Each agency that earned a place in our Top 50 list this year worked hard to impress our judges and should feel incredibly proud of what they have achieved."

Claire Moore, managing director at Peakes Travel Elite, adds, "We are thrilled to have made the list again - which we have been included on every year since 2017!

"After what has been the most difficult of years in the travel industry, it has been lovely to receive recognition for our hard work and response to Covid-19.

"We are continuing our appointment only service to ensure social distancing is possible for our staff and customers. By booking an appointment in advance we can select the most suited travel agent for our customer's holiday needs.

"We have access to first-hand information regarding the new traffic light system and will continuously monitor updates to keep on top of any changes to the green, amber, and red country lists, to keep our customers informed. We work with Covid-19 secure properties and trusted tour operator partners globally to ensure we can offer safe and enjoyable holidays."

You can get in touch with Peakes Travel Elite by calling 01743 233234 between 10am and 2pm Monday to Saturday, or email [sales@peakestravelelite.co.uk](mailto:sales@peakestravelelite.co.uk)



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# Law firm bids farewell to long-serving lawyers

A number of changes are taking place in the partnership at Lanyon Bowdler, with the firm saying goodbye to some long-serving colleagues.

Family law specialist, Colin Spanner, who was originally a partner with Morgans before their merger with Lanyon Bowdler in 2007, and David Foden, who led Lanyon Bowdler's residential property team for some years after the firm merged with Longueville Gittins 2010, are both retiring at the end of April.

Head of the clinical negligence department, Kay Kelly, is also retiring at the end of April, and is delighted to announce that Beth Heath, who trained with the firm, is taking on the role as head of department.

Meanwhile, Dawn Humphries is to become head of the personal injury department to replace Neil Lorimer, who is stepping down as department head but remains with the firm as a partner to concentrate on managing his caseload of catastrophic injury cases.

Managing partner, Brian Evans, said the changes signalled a new chapter in the firm's history.

He said: "Kay, Colin, David and Neil have a huge amount of experience between them and we owe them a great deal of thanks for their dedication over the years.

"Kay has an excellent reputation in her field and has built Lanyon Bowdler's clinical negligence team into one of the leading departments in the country.

"Colin is a greatly-respected family lawyer, and is particularly well-known in South Shropshire and Herefordshire for his excellent work with a wide range of clients.

"David led our residential property team for some years, before stepping down as the overall department head in order to set up a



Colin Spanner, Kay Kelly, Neil Lorimer and David Foden

new residential property team for us in North Wales, which has won praise from clients and estate agents alike for its proactive service throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

"All three have been long-established partners in the firm and we want to place on record our thanks and warm wishes for their future.

"Neil Lorimer has a superb national reputation for his expertise in dealing with serious injury cases. I want to thank him for his leadership of our hugely-respected personal injury team and presiding over many years of growth and development of the team.

"We are delighted that, despite stepping down as department head and handing over the leadership role to Dawn Humphries, he will continue in his role as a partner and concentrate on achieving good outcomes for his clients.

"We are fortunate to have a high-calibre of staff in the firm, and our new head of clinical negligence, Beth Heath, and Dawn Humphries, head of personal injury, are well placed to help lead us through the next chapter in Lanyon Bowdler's history."

David led our residential property team for some years, before stepping down as the overall department head in order to set up a new residential property team

## It's a positive move for legal team

**A** Shropshire firm of solicitors is celebrating continued business growth with an office move helping to prepare it for future recruitment.

With offices based across Shropshire and Mid Wales, PCB Solicitors' entire Dawley team has moved from the town where it has been based for over 20 years, to the top floor of Trevithick House on Stafford Park 4, Telford.

The move will provide the facilities and space required to grow its team, and enable it to expand its service offering to a larger regional audience, with additional support to the wider business community as well as families and civilians.

Danny Smith, Partner and Head of PCB's Criminal Department, said: "We chose Trevithick House because of its accessibility, being based just one mile from the nearest motorway and train station, as well as its fantastic range of facilities and meeting space.

"During lockdown we've worked hard to continue delivering the service we're known for in a covid-secure way and have invested heavily in technology to ensure that we can continue to do so. We're looking forward to meeting people again face-to-face when the right time comes, but we have the infrastructure in place now — alongside the facilities at our new office — to continue offering virtual or face-to-face meetings for clients near and far."

The entire Dawley team will be based at the new site including all from the crime team, consisting of Danny, James, Jenny, and Rachel, two members of the Family team — Sammie and Richard — and probate lawyer Rachel Stokes who attends the office on a regular basis.



Back row, Sadie Allen, Julie Bowman, Jennifer Richards, James Ashton; Middle row, Samantha Millea, Layla Blackmore; Front row, Danny Smith

Despite the challenges that 2020 presented to many businesses, the Dawley team is growing and will be recruiting for a conveyancer in the coming months. Company-wide, PCB Solicitors plans to recruit across various departments within the firm over the next 12 months.

Richard Sheehan, CEO of Shropshire Chamber of Commerce which is the landlord of Trevithick House, added: "We're delighted to welcome the PCB Solicitors team to the building and hope that it provides all the facilities that they need to continue flourishing as a business."

PCB Solicitors LLP is a modern partnership,

with offices in Shrewsbury, Church Stretton, Craven Arms, Knighton, Ludlow, Telford, and Clun (by appointment only).

While they have origins back to 1860, the firm is forward-looking and offers a full range of legal advice for both individuals and businesses, including property, family advice and childcare matters, wills, trusts, probate and estate planning, accident and personal injury, litigation, criminal law and corporate and business law.

For further information about PCB Solicitors' complete range of legal services, please contact 01952 403000 or visit the website [www.pcbllaw.co.uk](http://www.pcbllaw.co.uk)

# All aboard for award-winning growth

**A**viramp Limited, a Telford based, family owned manufacturer of access and loading ramps has won the Queen's Award for Enterprise as a result of its exceptional revenue growth in international trade over the last three years.

Aviramp branded portable passenger boarding ramps are transforming the civil aviation ground handling industry and are fast becoming an industry standard, due to its delivery of greater passenger safety, boarding experience, equality and inclusion, as well as offering zero carbon emissions through its environmentally sustainable 100% solar powered models.

Additionally, its sister brand 'Alloy Ramps' is a leading design and manufacturer of access and loading ramps to a raft of UK and overseas sectors, including warehousing, logistics, construction, leisure, retail, hospitality, rail and maritime.

As will resonate with many entrepreneurs, Graham Corfield, CEO, took huge risks in order to deliver his Aviramp concept to market.

His initial idea was sketched on to the back of a beer mat during a skiing holiday in France, after witnessing the airport chaos caused

by multiple ski accidents, which restricted the boarding of these passengers onto aeroplanes by stairs.

If only a ramp were available to help board these passengers, which would ease congestion, reduce boarding bottlenecks and maintain a constant passenger boarding flow? It was from here that Aviramp's patented passenger boarding ramp design was initially conceived.

The Aviramp product range remains focussed on providing: improved passenger safety, dignified boarding for all passengers; and environmental sustainability. Aviramp's ground support equipment offers dignified boarding to all passengers, regardless of their physical mobility. This is achieved by its 360-degree patented ramp design, ensuring that all ramps are accessible by both foot and wheelchair.

Furthermore, the ramp's gentle slope gradients deliver optimum passenger safety, which significantly reduces the risks of accidents when compared to stairs.

Aviramp's environmental sustainability mandate, no less, has led to important developments in its manufacturing processes. Aviramp limited responded with the introduction of its solar-powered portable aircraft boarding ramp range, which eliminates the need for airports to use diesel powered high lift trucks, known as ambulifts, for boarding disabled passengers.

By investing in the Aviramp solar powered ramp range, airports and operators are demonstrating their efforts towards becoming a more sustainable and greener industry, by preventing thousands of tonnes of CO2 emissions per year being released into the atmosphere by each Ambulift.

Aviramp continues to innovate, and its growth is on an upward trajectory yet again. The Queen's Award recognition has positively reinforced its position as a leading manufacturer in aviation ground support equipment, and as a turnkey solution for all access and loading ramp requirements.

Graham Corfield said: "We are delighted on winning this prestigious award. It feels like a huge victory for the whole team, each delivering vital roles in the business; all of whom are passionate ambassadors of the brand, as are our clients."



## QUEEN'S AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE

### Q1.) How does a winning business seek to benefit from achieving a Queen's award?

A) The prestige of this award brings so many benefits, especially to a company like ours. We won the Queen's Award for International Trade, and export is such an integral part of our growth strategy and brand amplification. Moreover, it is great for our customers who have invested in our products over the years, and our much valued staff too, who work tirelessly for the business. What is more, 'British Manufacturing' still means a great deal overseas, and is so synonymous with innovation and quality, therefore receiving this prestigious 'royal approval' positions Aviramp among the very best, both at home and overseas! So its huge positive impact on our business, our people and our future growth cannot be emphasised enough! I think we won't feel the full impact for some time to come!! It will be ongoing.

### Q2.) If you could give one piece of advice on how to follow in your footsteps, what would it be?

A) Remain true to yourself! If you believe you have a worthwhile product, just keep the faith, invest the work, and it will pay off! So many people wrote Aviramp off in the early days, due to its innovation and its confrontational nature to demand change, now it is fast becoming an industry standard! So just keep plugging away would be our advice! Believe in the product and believe in yourself! It will pay off and come good in the end! A marathon can be savoured, far longer than a sprint.

### Q3.) What did winning the award mean to your business and staff?

A) The impact has just been phenomenal! It really does help to reinforce our positioning globally and the staff are ecstatic. It has given them such a boost and reaffirms all the great work they contribute to the business. The award belongs to each and every one of them.

### Q4.) Did you win the first time you applied?

A) We did! We entered for the very first time, and we won!!! We had thought of entering for the innovation category too, but decided on international trade, due to the the exponential growth we had experienced in those three short years. Aviramp as a brand and business, literally did take off! (Forgive the pun!) Now, our products are operational all over the world. I hope our story will inspire other entrepreneurs and innovators to strive ahead. I think that should be the legacy of any Queens Award winner!

## Proud recipients of the Queens Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2021.



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# Waste and environmental services

**A**s the UK's market-leading provider of outsourced services to drive the circular economy - including waste and resource management, recycling services and environmental compliance - Reconomy is one of only two West Midlands-based companies to be awarded the 2021 Queen's Award for Enterprise in the category of Innovation.

In recent years Reconomy's revolutionary business model has transformed the management of housebuilding, construction, commercial and industrial waste across the UK. The company is utilising market-leading digital technology to manage waste more efficiently, transparently, safely and with greater consideration given to the environment and sustainability.

The waste and environmental industries have long garnered a reputation for being antiquated and 'analogue' in their business practices, with very little consideration given to exploring new ways of working. Reconomy has tirelessly sought to change this, and through continuous innovation has successfully digitised the process of managing waste from end-to-end. This not only benefits Reconomy's customers, but also its extensive supply chain, helping them to meet evolving customer demand, improve their own profitability, and allow for cost-effective growth.



These digital processes have included the development of unique and exclusive supply chain integrations through Reconomy's digitalXchange, which provides a truly automated transfer of waste movement and associated compliance data. Reconomy's suite of smartphone apps have further advanced its technological position by driving automation across previously manual operational processes, as well as offering digital ordering and invoicing capability.

Reconomy works with thousands of UK businesses, from SMEs through to large blue-chip companies, helping them to manage their waste in a responsible, sustainable, and cost-effective way, using technology to further enhance the customer experience.

From its offices in Telford, Shropshire, Reconomy co-ordinates over 150,000 waste movements every month across its group of companies and annually manages over 3m tonnes of waste.

During the last five years, the company

has experienced an unprecedented period of sustained growth. In 2020 the company claimed 47th spot in the Sunday Times PwC Top Track 250 list – leaping 150 places from its 2019 position.

Paul Cox, CEO of Reconomy, said: "Receiving the Queens Award for Enterprise is an incredible honour for everyone associated with Reconomy and a landmark day in the journey of our business. It is the most prestigious, sought-after award that any UK business can receive, and an incredible testament to the hard work of all our people.

"The development and roll-out of new technology underpins every aspect of our business model, and this award acknowledges our continued commitment to innovative thinking. It demonstrates that we are not only at the forefront of the outsourced services industry, but are also a leading light across all sectors as we pursue our ambition to be the leading provider of technology-enabled services to drive the circular economy."



## QUEEN'S AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE

### Q1.) How does a winning business seek to benefit from achieving a Queen's award?

A) The Queen's Award for Enterprise is such a prestigious and highly regarded accolade that any winning business will benefit from it hugely. Our goal is to use this award as a platform to further engage with people, demonstrate our credentials and explore exciting new opportunities as we pursue our ambitions to be the leading provider of technology-enabled services to drive the circular economy.

### Q2.) If you could give one piece of advice on how to follow in your footsteps, what would it be?

A) Make sure that you engage all your key stakeholders thoroughly. The entry form is not for the fainthearted, so unearthing all the relevant facts and statistics needed, and then joining up the pieces of the puzzle to put together an engaging entry requires a real team effort.

### Q3.) What did winning the award mean to your business and staff?

A) It's a great validation of all the hard work that our staff have contributed and has been very good for morale. The last 12 months have presented many unexpected challenges but winning this award is a wonderful validation of our efforts to put technology and innovation at the heart of everything we do

### Q4.) Did you win the first time you applied?

A) Yes, we did. We had been thinking of entering The Queen's Awards for Enterprise for some years but were very mindful of the level of commitment involved in preparing an entry. We therefore waited until we felt we had a particularly compelling story to tell to give ourselves the best possible chance of winning.

# Changing lives, creating futures

**Since 1995, Shropshire based Landau, has been delivering supported employment services to those with learning and physical disabilities, individuals with mental ill health, long term unemployed, and young people.**

Helping more than 3,000 people a year across the Midlands and beyond, Landau has now received recognition at the highest level after being awarded a prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise for its work Promoting Opportunity (through social mobility).

In 2020 it became a Centre of Excellence for its IPS service for those with enduring mental health problems and has also been recognised by independent research organisation, The RAND Corporation, becoming the highest scoring RAND reviewed service in the UK.

Chief Executive Sonia Roberts said: "It is an absolute privilege for Landau to be recognised by Her Majesty for our achievements and is a testament to the outstanding work of every Landau employee and volunteer.

"It is their passion and drive that enables us to achieve so much. "Our services are focused on individual interventions, meaning we get to know every person that walks through our doors to understand their personal aspirations.

"We develop a pathway to learning or employment, building on existing skills and strengths, so that we can help them achieve their goals."

Alongside receiving the Queen's Award for Enterprise, Landau is challenging businesses to put talent before disability through its WeSeeYou initiative.

Organisations are being asked to become disability confident employers, provide training for staff, make workplace adjustments, and adopt a 'talent first not disability' culture to drive inclusivity.

Companies can sign the pledge throughout 2021 to commit their support.

Sonia added: "This pledge is a significant step in achieving greater workplace diversity nationally and we hope businesses will show their support.

"Around 8.4 million working aged people in the UK have a disability, including those with a mental illness or learning disability.

"However, alarmingly, only 52% of these people are in paid employment.

"Providing training to show how staff can support people with mental illness or a learning disability can instantly create more inclusive work environments."

For more information and to sign the pledge visit the website [www.landau.co.uk](http://www.landau.co.uk)



Landau trainees Rowena Clarke (left) and Shelbie Webb (right) with tutor Julia Wright



Sonia Roberts, Chief Executive of Landau, which recently won a Queen's Award



**Landau**  
changing lives creating futures



## QUEEN'S AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE

**Q1.) How does a winning business seek to benefit from achieving a Queen's award?**

A) Winning the award means worldwide recognition, greater press coverage, increase in pride in employees, service users and wider stakeholders throughout our business.

**Q2.) If you could give one piece of advice on how to follow in your footsteps, what would it be?**

A) Our advice would be to ensure you collect evidence to support your entry.

**Q3.) What did winning the award mean to your business and staff?**

A) To receive a Royal endorsement for the work we do was a huge boost to staff morale & we are collectively incredibly proud of our achievement.

**Q4.) Did you win the first time you applied?**

A) Yes, we are delighted that we won first time!



**01952 245 015**

**[www.landau.co.uk](http://www.landau.co.uk) [admin@landau.co.uk](mailto:admin@landau.co.uk)**

# Supporting reading and inspiring change

**UK EdTech company Scanning Pens Ltd. has been recognised for their outstanding successes in the field of international trade with a Queen's Award for Enterprise. With a year of uncertain business futures behind us, it's appropriate to celebrate expansion and growth in any form, but when that growth comes in the form of a vital contribution to the global neurodiverse community it's important to recognise the positivity narrative that comes alongside it too.**

Created in 2003 by Oxford Brookes graduates Jack S. Churchill (CEO) and Toby Sutton (COO), Scanning Pens is a dedicated EdTech company supplying text-to-speech devices to people with dyslexia. They're also committed to raising awareness of dyslexia worldwide and supporting people whose daily lives are impacted by literacy differences with their Succeed With Dyslexia movement, which aims to promote and celebrate dyslexia positivity on an international scale.

Scanning Pens devices represent a huge quality-of-life change for neurodiverse people, and work by allowing users to scan through and listen to texts via an audio feedback system. It's an approach that works on a number of levels: removing the need for in-person readers and modified texts, they make reading an independent act, accessible anywhere for anybody.

A Scanning Pen can also unlock the idea of reading for pleasure, and help people who struggle with reading able to engage with texts in the same way that a neurotypical person might. It's a simple premise, but an important one: a Scanning Pen provides its user with dedicated reading support and inspires the confidence to make reading a part of their life.

Now in its 55th year, the Queens Award for Business is considered one of the highest awards for enterprise in the country.

A win for Scanning Pens truly exemplifies the extent to which attitudes towards neurodiversity are changing worldwide - we're at the centre of a fast-paced shift towards greater acceptance, support and appreciation of neurodiverse talent both in education and in industry.

A dedicated EdTech company being recognised by an institution as prestigious as the Queen's Award is a huge step toward inclusivity on so many levels- but it also represents something bigger. It's a rallying point; not just for the neurodiversity community, but for an international business world that's dedicating itself to accessibility and change - it celebrates the diversity at the heart of innovation, and champions a post-Covid recovery that makes the world better than it was before.



## QUEEN'S AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE

### Q1.) How does a winning business seek to benefit from achieving a Queen's award?

A) To receive a Queen's Award for Enterprise is a huge honour. The well-recognised Queen's Award will raise our company's profile in the UK and galvanise our overseas exporting work. Scanning Pens is a fast-growing education technology business and to have this, the most prestigious business award, will allow us to more easily open doors with partner organisations. We can also fly the Queen's Award flag at our offices, which is exciting!

### Q2.) If you could give one piece of advice on how to follow in your footsteps, what would it be?

A) Think out of the box and think wider than your sales revenue. Corporate social responsibility is just one way you can broaden the appeal of your company. Making a difference to the community that you're involved in has many knock-on positive effects for all, and earns you the respect and loyalty of your customers, essential for a growing company.

### Q3.) What did winning the award mean to your business and staff?

A) For over fifty years the Queen's Awards have been right there at the forefront of business, celebrating the best and brightest. To be able to count ourselves as one of those definitely prompted a toast or two. This is a big win for the whole team at Scanning Pens, and proves again that we're a dynamic and positive company to work for and to work with. We're lucky to have such a dedicated team across the world who make a difference every day supporting the literacy of both children and adults..

### Q4.) Did you win the first time you applied?

A) Yes! It was our first-ever application to the programme, but unfortunately now we've set a precedent. Some businesses out there have won more than one Queen's Award, and we'd certainly be keen to join their ranks in the future.



**SUPPORTING READING AND INSPIRING CHANGE: SCANNING PENS WINS QUEENS AWARD FOR BUSINESS**

UK EdTech company Scanning Pens Ltd. has been recognised for their outstanding successes in the field of international trade with a Queen's Award for Enterprise



-  Increases independence & confidence
-  Multiple built in dictionaries including Oxford Primary Dictionary
-  Enhances comprehension & literacy skills
-  Works with all existing textbooks
-  Perfect for students with reading challenges





 44 (0)20 7976 4910
 [www.scanningpens.co.uk](http://www.scanningpens.co.uk)

# Liz is sailing ahead with new sustainable business

**A** Shropshire woman's love of sailing has led her to build a business selling sustainable products.

Liz Senior, who lives near Shifnal, has won numerous national sailing trophies and has a passion for the ocean.

She has now launched a new firm, LS Branding, selling eco-friendly promotional merchandise, including an award-winning drinking bottle, which is helping to clean up the environment.

"Sailing is a big part of my life and I am very concerned about the amount of plastic polluting the sea," said Liz.

"When I decided to set up my new company selling sustainable branded products the first item we chose was the 'Ocean Bottle', which is fully recyclable. What we really love is that a significant proportion of the proceeds from each sale funds the collection of ocean bound plastic, to the equivalent of 1,000 bottles for just one Ocean Bottle sold.

"This got me thinking about the environmental impact of the whole promotional market place and I wanted to ensure that all our products have a low carbon footprint and are not contributing to the 'plastic problem'. We have since worked with carefully selected suppliers to create a product catalogue which is part of the solution, not the problem, and whilst helping brands to really stand out."

LS Branding was launched with the help of a Step Up for Business programme run by Bridgnorth business consultancy Good2Great.

The initiative, which helps existing companies to grow, as well as new start ups, comprises eight master classes as well as individual coaching, structured support and added help where and when needed.

"Liz followed the programme enthusiastically and accurately and it really paid off – we look forward to seeing her business fly," said Sally Themans of Good2Great.

The Step Up Business Programme is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and managed by Telford & Wrekin Council on behalf of partners Shropshire Council.

Liz added: "With the support from Good2Great we have followed our values and our company ethos, which is to supply sustainable items and merchandise."



*The team at Pipekit celebrating the past and looking to the future*



*Liz Senior with one of the Ocean bottles*

## The annual prom must go on

Staff at Derwen College, near Oswestry, are appealing for a kindhearted individual, group or local business to sponsor the college's annual student prom.

Every year, staff at the Gobowen college for young adults with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) organise an end-of-term prom to celebrate all the hard work shown by students during the academic year. For many students, this will be the last time they get to wear their best party clothes and celebrate with their friends in style before leaving college.

All students missed out on the traditional prom last year because of lockdown rules, but a successful virtual prom was held instead. However, staff are keeping fingers crossed for a return to normality this summer and are planning to hold a fantastic event for students to remember forever.

The prom takes place on Friday, July 9th with a 'Breakout Festival' theme, celebrating the end of lockdown. Organisers are looking for the loan of



*Prom student band*



*The prom dance*

6-10 bales (they will be returned after the prom); bunting and anything else that may add to the festival feel.

Prom organiser Helen Owen said: "We really want this prom to be a fun and exciting event for our students but our budget is very small. Normally, staff hold fundraising events throughout the year to help pay for extra-curricular events, but Covid-19 restrictions has meant all but a few of our fundraising events have been cancelled. This means there is very little money to spend on this year's prom."

"With so many charities across the UK struggling for funding, we realise we

are very lucky in many ways. Our students have been kept safe, happy and secure during their time at Derwen College, and their learning has been kept on track. But for many students, this will be their last prom and we want it to be wonderful as possible."

"We really would appreciate any support at all to make Derwen College's 2021 Prom a night to remember," she added.

For more information, or to get in touch with Derwen College, please contact Anna Evans, Fundraiser or Helen Owen on 01691 661234.



# Solution each step of the way

**The challenges facing today's food and beverage industry are more complex and diverse than ever; temperature control, hygiene, speed of logistics, safety, while minimising the risk of incidents and ensuring timely deliveries are just some factors that companies juggle daily.**

Thankfully with nearly 50 years' experience, EFAFLEX have designed an array of high-speed industrial doors that overcome every element along the food chain journey, with their range of interior and exterior doors, using opening mechanisms that either spiral, fold, or roll up.

How can EFAFLEX help – downtimes can be costly, so versatility, functionality and durability are some of the reasons cited by leading food producers and their supply chain when choosing an EFAFLEX solution; upgrading and replacing old roller shutters or sectional doors in place of energy saving, insulated options with a multitude of activation methods such as remote control, or laser scanners. The combination of safeguarding users, speeding up logistics, and reducing energy costs are the key design factors built into every EFAFLEX model.

EFAFLEX UK Managing Director, Darren Turrell explains, 'Hearing statistics such as the door opens at 4 metres per second, or we use on the highest quality components to ensure durability, trip off the tongue, but there's nothing quite like seeing an EFAFLEX door in motion. The speed, the quality, and the durability. Returning to Foodex

gives us the opportunity to demonstrate the product and discuss how our bespoke doors options can help each and every customer.'

On their stand (FF21) visitors will see three of the most popular models used in the food and beverage industry. The TK-100 thermal door is a unique one-door solution for deep-freeze areas as it delivers exceptional insulation properties and perfect for environments  $\pm 30^{\circ}\text{C}$ . A practically hermetic seal that provides constant temperatures to prevent condensation or buildup of frost. The TK-100 is perfect for deep freeze and blast freeze zones.

Alternatively, the fabric, roll-up easy clean curtain (EFA-SRT EC®) with its space saving design and easily removable covers is ideal for internal applications that require the highest levels of hygiene for example within food processing.

Move along to the production loading area or warehouse facility, and this is where the turbo spiral door comes into its own. Opening at speeds of up to 3 metres per second and capable of up to 200,000 operating cycles per year, it features crystal clear acrylic glass laths for increased visibility and user safety.

Many of the high street supermarkets and their supply chain have come to rely on EFAFLEX with clients including Budweiser, Carlsberg, a leading crisp manufacturer, and a rapidly expanding meal kit supplier!

From source to fork, EFAFLEX have an industrial door solution for every step of this journey.

Find out for yourself why EFAFLEX is quickly becoming the door of choice for food and beverage industry by visiting stand FF21 at FOODEX, 5-7th July NEC.

## Commercial property firm secures new tenants for large Telford site

Halls Commercial Property are delighted to announce that acting on behalf of international supplier to the automotive industry, MAHLE, have secured the letting of the commercial complex located at Halesfield 25 in Telford.

The large industrial complex comprises a single storey production/warehouse facility with two storey offices fronting Halesfield 25, extending to over 21,000 m sq including a new extension of almost 2,800 m sq.

The new tenants are HYVE Solutions, a leader in the deployment of hyperscale digital infrastructures. In partnership with customers, Hyve designs and manufactures purpose-built server, storage, and networking solutions to meet datacentre demands for today and beyond. Hyve Solutions is a wholly owned subsidiary of SYNEX corporation based in Fremont, CA.

Neil Thomas, Director of Manufacturing Operations for HYVE Solutions commented: "HYVE has been growing fast in the UK over the last few years and with it the need for additional Warehousing it now operates multiple offsite facilities. The new site at Halesfield offers us the opportunity to consolidate our offsite Warehouse activities in close proximity, all under one roof with the scope to expand further on the UK operation, in due course."

James Evans, Head of Commercial at Halls commented: "I'm pleased to have been able to find a suitable tenant for the previous MAHLE site in Telford. It is a fantastic size complex with modern facilities and located in one of the principal commercial centres in Shropshire, it will lend itself very well to meet the needs of HYVE Solutions and their plans to expand operations further in the UK."



James Evans

# Tenants need to make their own arrangements

Tenants of rental properties in Shropshire could be falling foul of their lease conditions when it comes to taking out the right insurance cover.

A survey of 1,000 tenants across the UK was carried out by Nationwide, and the results showed that only around half have any contents insurance in place.

And now, Martin Pitchford, from Henshalls Insurance Brokers in Newport and Shrewsbury, has said that the 48% of tenants without cover was the equivalent of just over 2.1m households across the UK.

"Many renters are under the misapprehension that it's the landlord's responsibility to arrange contents insurance, and others avoid taking out cover because of the cost in an attempt to bring down their monthly outgoings.

"But in fact, this haphazard approach to insurance could leave many tenants in breach of their tenancy agreements even though a large percentage of renters said they didn't know whether cover was required as part of their lease agreement or not."

Martin said in recent months, landlords had started to clamp down on tenants and a large majority were now asking to see proof of contents insurance before they allowed a tenancy contract to be signed.

"It's very worrying that so many tenants don't have this cover in place and that such a large percentage believe their landlord would have to arrange cover to protect their belongings if they were lost, stolen or damaged.

"It can be easy to dismiss contents insurance as unnecessary, particularly if you are renting a partially furnished property. But the value of your own possessions can be deceiving. If you have a television, laptop and phone, these three items alone could run into four figures.

"And your contents are your sole responsibility – nothing to do with



Martin Pitchford,  
from Henshalls  
Insurance Brokers

your landlord – so it's up to each tenant to make sure they're covered by the right kind of policy.

"Don't think that skipping insurance will save you money either: it may seem like a cost you could do without initially, but in the long term, not having cover in place could cost you far more."

# Manufacturer sees sales boom in UK and beyond

**Leading Shropshire manufacturer, Fabweld Steel Products, has reported a positive start to 2021, with a 30 per cent increase in sales thanks to export orders and a boom in online shopping.**

The Telford based manufacturer says it has experienced the year-on-year rise in the first quarter of 2021 with much of the growth attributed to an increase in international orders and a boost from key customers in the UK. The upsurge follows on from an active 2020 that saw its exports rise to 20 per cent of total sales.

Managing Director, Richard Hilton, said many of the sectors FSP supplies are beginning to see recovery after the coronavirus crisis.

"A portion of our sales so far this year is credited to UK-based builders' merchants, which are seeing an increase in custom as lockdown restrictions have been eased and infrastructure and construction projects recommenced.

"We've also seen an increase in demand for steel products for online retailers like Amazon that are experiencing a boom in sales and therefore need to increase their warehouse capacity."

FSP offers a wide range of fabricated steel access covers, drainage solutions and sector specific products, as well as bespoke manufacturing services, which has helped forge it as a key supplier in the industry. This, in turn, has resulted in an increase in demand from international customers, including orders from new markets.

Richard added: "We were proud to secure an increase in exports in 2020, which is set to continue throughout 2021. We're experiencing an increase in sales from customers in France and have secured our first orders from countries such as Israel and Sweden.

"It's fantastic to see the construction sector experiencing a recovery following the lockdown restrictions we all experienced over the past year, with many orders being made for brand new developments or extensions to existing infrastructure."

FSP has supplied its products to major infrastructure projects including the Old War Office renovations in London, the Middlewood Locks project in Manchester and the highways project between the A1 and M11 motorway.

For more information, visit [www.fsp.co.uk](http://www.fsp.co.uk) or call 01952 581430.



FSP Managing Director Richard Hilton outside its Telford HQ



Leading Shropshire manufacturer, Fabweld Steel Products, has reported a positive start to 2021, with a 30 per cent increase in sales

## Trainee project manager

Trainee project manager for the Marches Centre of Health Excellence, based at the University of Wolverhampton's Telford Campus, is Ben Harris; a Construction Management Degree Apprentice.

The 21-year-old from Wolverhampton, is creating a career pathway in construction through his part-time apprenticeship at the University of Wolverhampton, funded by his employer, Overbury, through the Apprenticeship Levy.

Ben works on site as part of the team, meeting with sub-contractors and suppliers across mechanical, electrical, joinery, furniture and technology integration, as well as learning to manage the company's robust health, safety and practices.

While at college he attended an Overbury talk on its 'Foundation Programme' and was offered a place for two weeks' work experience on site – and loved every minute.

He said: "I knew I wanted to work within buildings but didn't understand the options available within construction. Attending the work experience opened the opportunities available and I realised that I really enjoyed the practical build, working with a team of people and understanding the complexities of completing a project to the highest of standards.

"There's lots of support on offer, both at the University and at Overbury, and the work ethic and routine are really preparing me for a career post-graduation. The best part is the network of contacts I am gaining and all the hand me down knowledge from the experts, it's invaluable.

"The idea that I can study at University and gain a degree while also working towards my career with Overbury is amazing. It was never something I'd considered as an option leaving school and I can't express how great it feels that an employer has put their belief in you and gives you an opportunity to progress.

"The Construction Management course is fantastic. I would highly recommend it to anyone looking to come into project/construction management. They offer a chance to gain knowledge to bring into your day to day job and a chance to showcase your knowledge within the realistic assignments set."

## Good news for commercial landlords

Commercial landlords across Shropshire can now benefit from a "super tax deduction" that had previously been denied to them.

Francesca Hutcheson, Tax Director at Dyke Yaxley Chartered Accountants in Shrewsbury and Telford, said the good news followed a change of heart from the Government.

"The super deduction policy was announced in Chancellor Rishi Sunak's Spring Budget as part of the Government's drive to encourage firms to take risks and unlock some of the capital they may have built up during the Covid pandemic.

"But the new rules, that will apply for the next two years, originally only covered companies spending on new plant and machinery, while commercial landlords were specifically excluded.

"Now, following pressure from the tax and property professions, the Government has announced a welcome U-turn, which is great news for landlords of commercial properties."

Francesca said after the change in the rules, "background" plant and machinery in a let property was now eligible for the "super deduction".

"Background plant and machinery includes items installed in buildings that have the sole purpose of making the building useable. So most expenditure on integral features such as heating, lighting, electrical systems, and lifts, or items like sprinkler systems, blinds and moveable partitions will now be eligible for the enhanced tax relief.

"We're very pleased to see the rules have been changed and that commercial landlords can now take up the additional help. It's a move that levels up the situation and is a welcome relief after such a difficult and challenging year for everyone."

Francesca said the "super deduction" was almost the same effective rate of relief for big businesses when the main rate of Corporation Tax increases to 25% from April 2023 – assuming there is no extension to the planned two-year time limit.

But she warned that smaller businesses with lower profits could be better off by bringing their spending plans forward in order to make the most of the deduction criteria.

"Commercial landlords who may be unsure of their eligibility for the new tax benefit should seek expert advice before they take any action as the criteria is very specific," said Francesca.



Francesca Hutcheson

# Sun always shines on SBLTV

**D**o you want to showcase your business on the telly? Well, the award-winning team behind Shropshire Business Live TV can make it happen.

The monthly business-to-business streaming service, which is gaining a growing following, is a joint venture between Shropshire Business, Yarrington, and Shropshire Live.

In its first season, the show has spotlighted some of the county's big business talking points including the future of tourism and hospitality, broadband connectivity, the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan.

In addition to welcoming a wide range of studio guests, the team has been out to all corners on the county, including industrial estates in Oswestry and Market Drayton.

In April, the team set up base at Blists Hill Victorian Town to turn the spotlight on tourism and hospitality, while the May edition included a spotlight on the retail industry, which was filming at several sites around Shrewsbury.

And for the June show, education and training was the key topic, with a combination of studio chats, and on-location interviews at locations such as Telford College.

Among the Shropshire businesses offering top tips and advice in regular 'Ask The Expert'



Praveen Chaudhari from Lanyon Bowdler chats to co-host Chris Pritchard about the commercial property market

spots are law firm Lanyon Bowdler, and Nick Jones from Throgmorton Associates.

There is also a regular series looking into the management training programme at Shropshire's reigning Company of the Year, Aico of Oswestry.

Carl Jones, editor of Shropshire Business and co-host of SBLTV, said: "We're delighted with the feedback we've had for the show since our launch.

"We've been seeing our following grow with every episode – both watching live, and on catch-up.

"Our aim is to serve up a mix of news, views, advice and debate which is directly relevant



Ludlow Brewery is among the local companies which have been spotlighted in the SBLTV studio during the first series

to the Shropshire business community – and we'd love to hear from anyone else who fancies joining our Ask The Expert group, or is seeking creative ways to showcase their products or services."

The monthly show is live streamed on the final Thursday of each month.

The final show of the first series will be broadcast at the end of July, with the team then taking a break in August before returning for a second series in September.

- For more information, send email to [info@sbltv.co.uk](mailto:info@sbltv.co.uk), or visit the website at [sbltv.co.uk](http://sbltv.co.uk) – where you can watch all the previous episodes on catch-up.

# Mental health at top of the agenda

**T**elford College has added its support to a new mental health charter, launched by Shropshire Chamber of Commerce.

The charter has been created to recognise employers who are going the extra mile to look after the welfare of their staff. By signing up to the charter, Telford College pledges to adopt three key principles:

- Engaging with and embracing the mental health agenda
- Reducing the stigma surrounding mental health in the workplace
- Identifying and providing sources of information and support regarding mental health

Graham Guest, Telford College's principal and chief executive, said: "We cannot afford to underestimate the toll which the Covid-19 pandemic has taken on young people's mental health.

"Not being able to see their friends, coupled with nationwide uncertainty around exams planning, and the general restrictions on family life, have left their mark. Telford College is working hard to create an environment where it's OK to say you are not OK – and to ensure there is always someone to talk to.

"We encourage everyone to look out for early signs of mental health



Telford College principal and CEO Graham Guest signs Shropshire Chamber of Commerce's mental health charter

problems, and make sure that students know we are here to support and listen to them.

"All around our campus you will see reminders of our #BeKind campaign, which highlights the importance of taking the crucial first step of acknowledging and talking about our mental health. We also give all our staff and students access to a free mental health service called Togetherall.

"It provides users with a place of safety without judgement for people to support each other, offering clinical expertise and peer-to-peer support through a healthy community that is monitored 24 hours a day."

Richard Sheehan, Shropshire Chamber of Commerce's chief executive, said: "Everyone in the workplace has a right to an environment which promotes good mental health and wellbeing. And from an employer's point of view, it's a win-win situation, because a happy employee is a more loyal and productive employee."

# Guard against cyber attacks

A Shropshire website company is going the extra mile to make sure its customers are protected against the increasing risk of cyber-attacks and data theft after receiving international recognition for its security procedures.

Bridgnorth-based Clickingmad has been awarded the International Standards Organisation (ISO) 27001 security certification across all its operations.

It is one of the most stringent certifications to achieve and is considered the global gold standard in information security.

Managing Director Shaun Carvill said he was extremely

proud to have been awarded the certification.

"We have worked extremely hard to ensure all our processes, procedures and management systems meet the requirements of this global standard," he said.

"It's an arduous — yet crucial — process given the increasing volume of cyber-attacks and rising costs of data breaches across the globe.

"Information is at the heart of everything we do and protecting it is of paramount importance to us.

"While many businesses may work to the ISO 27001 framework for best practice, not all organisations receive official accreditation, so we are delighted to be going the extra mile for our customers."

Clickingmad has been designing and developing websites for a range of businesses for more than 20 years.

For more information on the services offered by Clickingmad visit <https://www.clickingmad.com/> or email [info@clickingmad.com](mailto:info@clickingmad.com)



Shaun Carvill

# Walking the walk – workplace wellbeing

Rising rates of stress and burnout mean all organisations are increasingly having to focus on workplace wellbeing. Most companies will profess to be supportive of employees with physical and mental health worries, yet widespread presenteeism, staff concealing their reasons for taking sick leave, and overtime increases suggest there is more work to be done.

Rhiannon Williams, Head of Agency at Zen Communications, looks at why words and actions are equally as important when it comes to helping raise the health and happiness levels of staff:

"At Zen, we know having an open and inclusive atmosphere where team members can be honest about what's going on for them at any time, as well as feeling comfortable talking about their concerns, is at the core of any meaningful wellbeing programme. Keeping that ethos when team members are mainly working from home involves lots of check ins, and we've had to be smart about how we do that. We use a self-rated number system so we can track how employees feel from week to week, and we also run personal one-to-one and group check-ins too.

"It's important for us to be able to recognise when colleagues might be struggling, to have the tools to be able to respond appropriately, and a range of benefits which actually work for our team to offer. In addition, we've chosen

to implement true flexibility by abolishing the traditional working day, and having no specific requirements or constraints around working locations – empowering our staff to work when, where and how they want, as long as it works for them, the agency, and our clients.

"Crucially, we also recognise that whilst we can absolutely manage certain elements of employee wellbeing ourselves, our core area of specialism is language and communications, and so we rely on external experts when it comes to more specialist support. We've worked in partnership with the fabulous Paycare for the past five years, providing our team with access to an employer-paid health cash plan which enables them to claim back everyday healthcare costs, and make use of the fantastic training offered by Wellbeing Manager Kerry B Mitchell and her team.

"With most members of the Zen team parents to young children, having the opportunity to speak to a medical professional in the evening, middle of the night, or at weekends via the MyPocketGP app is absolutely invaluable.

"And knowing that other support is available – from a 24/7 confidential helpline and counselling service, to discounts off everyday purchases – gives us as an employer peace of mind that we're supporting our team to ensure optimum care of their physical, mental, and financial health.

"Looking after our team in this way is also a hugely effective HR tool meaning not only does it help us keep the amazing talent that we have, but we're also able to attract additional talent to the business – people want to work for us because we genuinely care about each and every individual here. And, it's helped us from an external perspective too, seeing us shortlisted and win multiple national and regional awards in recent years.

"In addition to all of the services that we have access to through our Paycare policy, we've also benefitted hugely from the Mental Health First Aid training the team provides. From the employee perspective, the content delivered has helped our team identify and bring conscious awareness to how they're feeling, and has provided encouragement to them to talk openly about their mental health.

"From an employer's perspective it's certainly given us the confidence to initiate conversations around mental health and has provided us with the vital tools to support our team when they may need it most.

"Committing not only to talking about workplace wellbeing, but also having effective health benefits in place, means we can confidently say we're doing right by our people. While we'll always be looking at ways to increase our wellbeing offering year-on-year, we're most certainly already talking the talk and walking the walk."

# Enreach expands in the UK with new acquisition

**Enreach, the fast-growing European unified communications group, has further strengthened its position in the UK telecommunications market with the acquisition of Pace Telecom.**

Established in 1993, Pace Telecom is a leading communications provider specialising in business telephony, mobile and broadband and helps over 1,000 customers to work more efficiently and productively.

The addition of Pace Telecom by Enreach, supported by pan-European investment company Waterland, continues Enreach's expansion into the UK market and is consistent with its wider growth strategy to create a best-in-class product offering paired with an unbeatable customer experience.

The acquisition of Pace Telecom follows the formal launch of the Enreach UK brand earlier this month and is another important milestone in the group's UK plans this year. Pace Telecom is a natural fit for Enreach, having been a customer of Enreach for Service Providers for a number of years, specialising in cloud telephony.

By the end of 2021, Enreach expects to have launched an ambitious product roadmap to the UK market, covering its comprehensive group-wide portfolio including CCaaS, Chat AI, EPOS and multi-channel sales solutions, as



well as further upgrades to its proprietary cloud telephony solution, Enreach Contact.

Duncan Ward, CEO Enreach UK, said: "By adding Pace Telecom to Enreach here in the UK we are able to further improve on the products, services and the overall experience we provide our customers. Pace Telecom has been a partner of Enreach for Service Providers for several years and, with the team already confident taking our cloud platform to market, we are certain that we can build on this success. Together we will focus on our portfolio of cloud solutions, broadband and mobile, as well as the new products, integrations and platforms we are set to launch over the coming months. We are delighted for Pace Telecom to be joining us on this journey and for the expertise the team will bring."

Jamie Hughes, CEO Pace Telecom, said, "I am excited to see Pace Telecom join Enreach at such a pivotal time of growth and innovation for the group after being a partner for many years. At Pace Telecom, we have almost 30 years' experience in helping our customers to

become more flexible and efficient through our solutions and joining Enreach will only help their businesses to grow even further. We look forward to achieving maximum success as part of Enreach."

Jamie Hughes will step back from the business with immediate effect and the Pace Telecom brand will be phased into Enreach over the coming months. Pace Telecom's management team and wider staff will add further capabilities to Enreach UK and ensure a smooth transition.

Enreach is a European UCaaS leader with a strong presence in the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain and Denmark providing collaboration technology and telecoms services via its resellers, service provider partners and direct brands. All businesses contribute to intelligent, integrated IT and communication solutions that ensure optimal communication and workflow between organisations. Enreach's mission is to give businesses access to the best communication and collaboration tools with an easy, user-centric interface built around their specific needs and systems. The group's products put powerful features in reach of every business, no matter the industry or size, so their employees can focus on getting amazing things done. Enreach is active in over 25 countries and has 950 employees working across 18 different European offices.

For more information about Enreach, please visit: <https://enreach.com/> or about Enreach UK, visit: [www.enreach.com/uk](http://www.enreach.com/uk)

# News, views and opinions

Times have been tough for the local business community these past few months – but Shropshire Business magazine is still showcasing dozens of success stories.

In its latest edition, the team turn the spotlight on the four local companies which won a Queen's Award for Enterprise, one of the highest accolades in UK business - Aviramp, Landau, Reconomy and Scanning Pens.

There's also a special report on the fabulous Tech Severn conference which took place in June, organised by Shropshire HR, live streamed from Shrewsbury, and featuring a glittering list of expert speakers.

Editor Carl Jones has also been for a look round the iconic Flaxmill in Shrewsbury to see how work is progressing, as the clock ticks down to the first offices being made available.

He said: "We've got quite a few stories in our July-August issue involving construction work, which shows that companies are still pressing ahead with infrastructure investments – and that Shropshire firms are picking up high-profile contracts.

"There's also a look at what the Government's £22 million-plus investment in Telford's Station Quarter is going to mean for the town – those involved closely with the project say it has the potential to have a greater impact than Southwater."

The award-winning magazine also includes the usual mix

## Bigger and bolder than Southwater...

By Chris Austin

**E**ven bigger and bolder than the Southwater development. That's how plans to regenerate Telford's Station Quarter and other parts of the borough have been described by civic leaders.

The £22 million-plus investment in Telford's Station Quarter is a natural fit for Enreach, having been a customer of Enreach for Service Providers for a number of years, specialising in cloud telephony.

At the heart of the submission is a vision to build a new workplace for an increasing digital world.

The Town Deal Board made the case for investing in communities as a vital factor to sustainable economic growth - ensuring Telford can continue to thrive with challenges ahead.

The investment will offer huge potential to boost the town's economy and to the people who live there. The partners say, as both towns have distinct histories and heritage and will embrace areas with economic potential.

Wynne, chair of the Telford Town Deal Board, said: "This is a great piece of news and a real boost for the town."

The plan has been put together with a transformational impact on Telford. This is a significant investment in the town's future and a real boost for the town's economy."

Chris Austin, leader of Telford & Wrekin Council



An artist's impression of the new Station Quarter



Graham Wynne, Chair of the Telford Town Deal Board

Wrekin Council added: "This is a great piece of news and a real boost for the town."

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Chris Austin, leader of Telford & Wrekin Council

## Coming soon in Shropshire Business magazine



Two years ago the Prime Minister announced that the Towns Fund would support an initial 101 places across England to develop Town Deal proposals to drive economic regeneration and deliver long-term economic and productivity growth. A Town Deal is an agreement in principle between government, the lead council and the Town Deal Board. It will set out a vision and strategy for the town, and what each party agrees to do to work towards this vision. Each of the towns selected to work towards a Town Deal also received accelerated funding last year for investment in capital projects that would have an immediate impact and help places "build back better" in the wake of Covid-19.



Towns Deal Board members Graham Guise, Paul Hillier, and Patsy Morgan

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Colourful new ranges are available from Chrisbeon



Craig and Richard Hughes from Chrisbeon

# It's a bright future for all

**T**here's a renewed optimism in the air as the country continues to unlock and Chamber Patron Chrisbeon is eagerly anticipating this brave new world with the launch of extremely colourful new product ranges including desks, chairs and other office equipment.

The long-awaited return to normality also means Chrisbeon has been able to welcome back visitors to its Telford showroom - a vital part of the customer service the firm prides itself on.

It's an important time for firms seeing a return of staff to the workplace with many looking at replacing office furniture, upgrading, or simply feeling a change of scenery is a good idea to begin a bright new future.

And there's also good news for those who are still working remotely with a range of colourful furniture and other supplies designed to be functional, practical and guaranteed to brighten the post-Covid mood in the home office.

Richard Hughes, Partner at Chrisbeon, said: "It's an exciting time as we can all finally think about a return to normality. Offices are continuing to welcome staff back and there is an end in sight to the awful situation everyone has been forced to endure over the last 15 months or so.

"We are delighted to have reopened our Telford showroom and are enjoying the face-to-face contact we are once again able to have with our customers - albeit still within social distancing rules for the time being.

"There really is no substitute for people being able to view our products and try them out if they wish before they buy. Our new ranges are in the showroom, extremely colourful and there is an emphasis on breakout space.

"Post-pandemic, employers are looking to create a great space for their employees as they head back to the workplace - many of whom have experienced illness or loss over the past 15 months.

"I am sure open spaces will continue to be a feature of offices as firms look at the best way of utilising the room they have available, and there is no doubt that some employees will feel more comfortable working, for the time being at least, socially distanced from colleagues.

"Those working from home are also looking to brighten up their workspace and make it functional but also an attractive place to be - especially if they have gone from a busy office to working permanently at home.

"Colours are important in an environment

where we spend so much time and bright vibrant colours feature heavily in our new range - something which will help brighten the day and make people feel a whole lot better.

"We have been busy fielding calls about our new products, answering enquiries about

the other services we provide and welcoming people to the showroom. The future is looking really promising!"

For more about Chrisbeon's new range, visit the showroom on Stafford Park or call the team on 01952 292606.

## Headline sponsor of Oswestry 10K run



Aico will be lead sponsor for the run, organised by Adrenaline Sporting Events

Aico are pleased to announce they will be the headline sponsor of this year's Oswestry 10K Run and will continue to support local events organisation specialists, Adrenaline Sporting Events, throughout 2021 and 2022.

Adrenaline Sporting Events is responsible for the organisation of running and cycling events in Shropshire, Mid Wales and North Wales for people of all ages and abilities, and subsequently supports a selection of great charities.

As part of their Corporate Social Responsibility initiative, Aico focus on Business Enterprise, building relationships with local companies in order to contribute towards sustainable futures for their communities. This year, Aico are proud to be the headline sponsor of the Oswestry 10K Run with a local charity, Hope House, being selected as the race's Charity Partner.

Every member of Aico will participate in at least one of this year's sporting events. Pedal the Borders, Pedal Pushers and Midnight Ride will all begin at Aico's headquarters, where Aico colleagues will be on-hand as volunteers.

Alan Lewis, Founder of Adrenaline Sporting Events comments: "I'm thrilled to be extending our relationship with Aico for not just this year but also for 2022.

"The partnership has gone from strength to strength since 2019 and we are extremely grateful to Aico for the support.

"In 2021 we have three great bike rides starting and finishing from the fantastic facilities at Aico. We will also have Aico as the headline sponsor for the Oswestry 10K in October.

"We look forward to seeing team Aico at the events and can't wait for the events to start in June."

Matthew Small, Commercial and Finance Director for Aico says of the sponsorship: "We are very pleased to be the headline sponsor of the Oswestry 10K Run and to offer our further support to Alan and his team over the next two years.

"Adrenaline Sporting Events are a great local organisation who share many of the same values as Aico, with the aim of making positive contributions to our local communities; we are delighted to extend our working relationship."

Earlier in the year, Alan Lewis featured in Episode 2 of Aico TV. Alan was interviewed by Matthew Small, and they discussed the history of Adrenaline Sporting Events and the charities the organisation has supported as a result.

To learn more about Adrenaline Sporting Events and to register for any of their upcoming events, please visit: <https://www.adrenalinesportingevents.co.uk/>

To watch the Adrenaline Sporting Events interview on Aico TV, please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/h?v=8uRaVTU1r00>

# Lanyon Bowdler becomes a corporate member

Law firm Lanyon Bowdler has signed up to Shropshire Chamber of Commerce's new Corporate membership package.

The Corporate level is designed for senior managers and directors wanting to recognise and achieve their full potential as leaders – and professionals keen to support their company in the most efficient and effective way possible.

It includes a programme of 12 senior management training programmes a year, priority access to Chamber events, and a host of other advantages such as corporate video hosting, publicity and sponsorship opportunities.

Lanyon Bowdler is an award-winning legal firm operating across Shropshire, Herefordshire, North Wales and the Midlands. It has seven offices, including Telford, Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Ludlow.

Marketing director Amanda Jones said: "The sense of community between businesses in Shropshire has always been strong, and that community has never been more important than over the past 12 months.

"Shropshire Chamber plays a big part in building this supportive environment, which is integral to how we do business in the county.

"Not only that, but the Chamber ensures we are not inwards-looking - so many businesses here in Shropshire

do fantastic work across the UK and overseas, and the support of the Chamber is instrumental in Shropshire consistently punching above its weight.

"We are delighted to become Corporate Members of Shropshire Chamber for all of these reasons and more. We look forward to continuing to support our clients to help them cope with challenges so they can flourish now and in the future."

Mia Carter, director of membership at the Chamber, said: "This suite of masterclasses provided to our Corporate level members focus on nurturing modern-day leaders to make their mark.

"They also help them to realise their organisation's strategic objectives by shifting the way they communicate, motivate, innovate and performance manage.

"Our team of experts are at the cutting edge of leadership development. They will share and explore the latest thinking, inspiring you, no matter the level of your experience, to gain the skills and confidence to raise your game and lead high-performing teams."

For more details about the Chamber's Corporate membership package, see [www.shropshire-chamber.co.uk/membership/join-us/membership-levels/corporate-new-level/](http://www.shropshire-chamber.co.uk/membership/join-us/membership-levels/corporate-new-level/) or call the Chamber's membership team on 01952 208200.



Mia Carter

# Pilot project that's helping unemployed back into work

**S**hropshire Chamber of Commerce is running a pilot project to help unemployed people back into work – by creating their own professionally filmed and edited video CVs.

It is offering 30 fully-funded places on its 'People Portal' programme, which includes two days of job-hunting coaching and a chance to record a video CV.

"Shropshire Chamber is in a unique position to connect individuals with businesses in the county, and that is what People Portal is all about," said the Chamber's director of business, Ruth Ross.

"The aim of this exciting service is to help local employers find their next team member, whilst supporting job seekers to find their next role through written and video CV applications.

"We will be running an initial pilot project for our People Portal programme next month, and are seeking unemployed volunteers to test it out.

"What's in it for them? The chance to enhance their CV and fine-tune their suitability for employment opportunities with local companies, with fully-subsidised expert support and advice."

This programme will be spread across two days, Day one will concentrate on how to write a CV, and present yourself in an interview and on camera.

Day two will then be the time to record a video CV, with guidance and support from the Chamber's team of experts.

*Candidates are coached on how to best convey their skills and abilities in the most appropriate way, before producing a presentation to use as their own virtual CV*



Ruth added: "People Portal is all about streamlining the processes leading up to interview, so employers can identify the right candidates to fill the positions.

"It uses video as the prime method of capturing an individual's skills and abilities, rather than more traditional paper-based documentation.

"Candidates are coached on how to best convey their skills and abilities in the most appropriate way, before producing a presentation to use as their own virtual CV.

"The videos can also then be uploaded onto the Chamber's People Portal website so prospective employers can view the candidates, and decide whether they are right well before any interview stage."

For more information, or to register, see [www.shropshire-chamber.co.uk/training/pilot-programme-opportunities/](http://www.shropshire-chamber.co.uk/training/pilot-programme-opportunities/)

# It looks like remote and flexible working for many is here to stay

**More than 70% of businesses say some of their staff will continue working from home over the next 12 months, a new survey has found.**

But Shropshire Chamber of Commerce believes employers are becoming increasingly aware of the impact which long-term home working could have on team morale, or the mental health of employees.

The British Chambers of Commerce carried out a survey to investigate expected employment patterns, and found that 72% of businesses will have some staff working remotely for at least the next year.

Ruth Ross, Shropshire Chamber's director of business, said: "Not all sectors have been able to embrace remote working to the same degree since the start of the pandemic.

"Mental health and wellbeing of employees were cited by more than half the companies surveyed as a barrier to remote working – making it more difficult to foster a team spirit within the business.

"Others mentioned requirements for face-to-face contact with staff or customers, and the need for physical presence to operate equipment as barriers.

"We know only too well ourselves, through events such as our 'netwalking' get-togethers and our first corporate golf day, that Shropshire companies hugely value face-to-face contact."

The British Chambers of Commerce figures show that over two thirds of businesses are now offering remote working to employees.

Four in five professional services companies, such as finance and law, have been able to offer working from home, compared with 61% of manufacturers and 54% of hospitality and retail businesses.

Ruth added: "Flexitime or staggered hours are now being offered by more than a third of employers, according to this survey.

"However, when asked what they considered barriers to implementing remote working in their businesses even



further 55% quote staff morale or mental health and wellbeing.

"There are also practical reasons such as poor internet connectivity – something which many rural and remote Shropshire businesses will no doubt be able to relate to."

She added: "Businesses need to attract the best people with the skills they need to be successful, and in many sectors these people will expect a degree of flexible working."

British Chambers of Commerce head of people policy, Jane Gratton, said: "During the pandemic, many employers have learned how to manage and motivate people working from home.

"They've also experienced the advantages of an agile workforce, in terms of diversity, skills and productivity.

"It's vital that businesses have access to clear guidance, information and best practice resources to help them embrace the broadest range of remote, workplace and flexible working options as we emerge from the pandemic.

"These results show that nearly three quarters of firms will now continue to benefit from a remote working option during the coming year.

"But it's clear that some firms and individuals are facing barriers to remote working with many employers concerned about the impact on team morale and employee wellbeing."

*It's clear that some firms and individuals are facing barriers to remote working with many employers concerned about the impact on team morale and employee wellbeing*





Curtis Langley from The Movement Centre



Julia Allinson from Smallwoods

# Free membership provides support to the third sector

## Charities and not-for-profit organisations across the county have begun taking advantage of a free membership offer from Shropshire Chamber of Commerce.

The Charity Membership Fund is being delivered in conjunction with Enterprise Flex-E-Rent, McPhillips and Aico - three 'ambassadors' who have all donated to the fund to support the third sector.

"The past year has been particularly tough for many charities, with the Covid-19 lockdown cutting off vital income streams," said Mia Carter, Shropshire Chamber's director of membership.

"So, we felt this was the perfect time to create an opportunity which would make a positive difference to local charities, at a time when it will be of maximum benefit.

"The fund gives these organisations access to our essential level membership, which includes a host of benefits such as HR, tax, legal services and health and safety support.

"It also entitles them to a wide range of discounted training programmes, and attendance at six Chamber's network club sessions of their choice."

To qualify for consideration, the organisations must have a Shropshire postcode, and an annual turnover of less than £1 million.

All applications will be assessed and considered by the Ambassadors panel, who will make the final decision.

Several groups have already been welcomed onto the programme, including The Movement Centre in Gobowen, and Small Woods Association, based at Coalbrookdale

Allsports Coaches Coaching Academy CIC, Empathy for Special Children, Hands Together Ludlow, Telford & Wrekin Council for Voluntary Service, The Clifton Community Arts Centre Ltd, and the League of Friends at Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Hospital in Gobowen are also on board.

The Charity Membership Fund has a limit on the number of memberships that it can provide, and will close for applications for the current year once the limit is reached.

But there are currently still vacancies. More details are available at [www.shropshire-chamber.co.uk/membership/join-us/charity-membership-fund/](http://www.shropshire-chamber.co.uk/membership/join-us/charity-membership-fund/)

Neal Hooper, managing director of Aico – reigning Shropshire Company of the Year – said: "As a patron of the Chamber we are always seeking ways to support them, and of course Shropshire business in general.

"Aico in the Community was launched a few years ago to bring a great focus on our CSR initiatives.

"By becoming a Chamber Ambassador we are able to be involved with a number of causes that are important to us."

David Wauchope of McPhillips said: "We are a Shropshire-based company with the vast majority of employees based within the county. This is an opportunity for us to support local causes within our own community, and hopefully give a little bit back where we can.

"Quite often people in need don't know where to start looking for support; if we can put a platform out there where people can approach us for support, then that has to be a good thing for our county as a whole, and

means we can direct support where it is needed and can be effective."

Tom Macdonald of Enterprise Flex-E-Rent added: "Enterprise has a proud history of supporting our local communities, and the opportunity to partner with the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce aligned perfectly with our ongoing commitment to support good causes in the Shropshire region.

"We know that many of our employees have benefited from the fantastic work that local community groups do, and in recent years we have built strong relationships with many charities in the local area. We are looking forward to continuing this as an Ambassador in 2021."



# Helping businesses manage their cashflow as they start to reopen

## Cash is king – how businesses can take control of their outgoings

**The impacts of the pandemic will be felt well into the future but for now, businesses are taking their first steps in gradually reopening.**

Coffee shops and cafes are welcoming customers inside, hairdressers and beauty salons are switching on the lights and workers are starting to return to the office.

Despite these first steps, trading will continue to be difficult for some time, especially for small- and medium-sized firms. These are the ones who will have seen their cash flow significantly hit and are now looking for all the help they can in trying to budget and plan for the future.

### How businesses can avoid spending more than they have to

In these uncertain times, many businesses are looking for ways to save money and maintain a healthier bottom line. The good news is that getting a smart meter for your business is a small change that could make a big difference.

A smart meter can help businesses take control of their energy bills as they enable accurate, not estimated billing. Meaning, they only pay for what they use – helping to take the stress out of budgeting.

We all want to work smarter not harder. Smart meters send your gas and electricity readings directly to your energy supplier so you don't have to!

### Manage your environmental footprint

It is also important to bear in mind that it's everyone's responsibility to become more conscious of their environmental impact.

Regardless if your business has three employees, or three thousand, we all should be aware of how much energy we're using and a smart meter is a simple way of doing this.

A smart meter is a positive step in taking control of business outgoings and if your firm has 10 employees or less your business could be eligible.

To find out more, contact your energy supplier or broker. It could be one of the best calls you make this week.



## Inspiring the next generation

Magna International continues to grow its Cosma Casting Plant in Telford. Set in 20,500m<sup>2</sup> at the T54 Business Park, Cosma Casting UK provides lots of opportunities for people looking to work in a high-tech industry that is a key driver of the UK economy. Magna is a global company that employs over 157,000 people worldwide, all focused on delivering superior value to our customers through innovative processes and World Class Manufacturing.

Cosma Casting UK are now in its fourth year of operations and produce advanced lightweight aluminium structural components using Magna's patented vacuum die-casting process. Leveraging 70 advanced robots and some of the largest diecast machines in the world, these structural aluminium castings are an important building block for the next generation of all-aluminium and multi-material vehicle architectures. There are currently over 300 personnel on site but are still in a growth phase and expect this figure to continue to grow.

Cosma Casting UK are keen to inspire the next generation and believe in investing and teaching the younger generation. "We're not just taking on skilled workers, we're training people and taking on apprentices. We encourage innovation, involvement, and teamwork and want to encourage people to come



Magna Cosma Casting 4,400ton Die Casting

and work with us" said Ben Goater, General Manager of Cosma Casting UK.

They offer Apprenticeships in various areas of the business, including the maintenance and tooling divisions. Sam George and Jacob Blakemore are coming to the end of their 4- year apprenticeship in maintenance and are about to start their full-time career with us. Kris Holder, Maintenance & Facilities Manager, said "taking on apprentices is important for

us at Magna. We have a lot of state of the art and highly automated equipment to maintain.

"By taking on apprentices and investing in their education and development we ensure we can tailor their skills sets specially to meet the requirements to maintain our assets".

For more information on careers at Magna Cosma Casting UK, please email [ccu\\_sh\\_hr@magna.com](mailto:ccu_sh_hr@magna.com)

# Bolstering law firm's team

A Shropshire law firm is "investing in its people" with the recruitment of two individuals to help develop its team.

Lanyon Bowdler has appointed a learning and development manager in a newly-created role, along with an IT training specialist, as part of a growing team to support the firm's staff.

Debbie Brooks, Lanyon Bowdler's HR manager, said the appointments were part of a long-term strategy to develop the firm's back-office team.

She said: "We are delighted to welcome Emma Harrison as our new learning and development manager, and Cliff Parker as a dedicated IT training specialist.

"Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we have seen demand increase across many areas of the firm over the past 12 months.

"As well as recruiting into our various legal departments, we have made it a priority to build our team of support staff, who are vital to the continued success of the firm.



Emma Harrison and Cliff Parker

"It's all part of a long-term strategy to invest in our people, which underpins the efficient and professional service our lawyers provide for our clients."

Emma Harrison said she was looking forward to building on Lanyon Bowdler's reputation as an award-winning training legal practice.

"Lanyon Bowdler is well known for its commitment to its training programme, and has an enviable reputation for being

an outstanding firm for trainee solicitors," she said.

"I am really excited to be here and look forward to working with our trainees, and indeed all of our staff to help them develop their skills."

Cliff Parker said his job was to make people's lives easier by helping them to understand the firm's IT systems.

He said: "I've worked in IT most of my life and worked in the legal industry, both purely in IT technical support and then as a trainer, for some 13 years.

"I'm responsible for taking people through their IT inductions when they join the firm, and I help new starters with the daunting challenges of learning new IT systems.

"I joined Lanyon Bowdler at the end of 2020 and have found it's a great firm to work for - and very supportive. There's very much a 'family firm' feel here.

"I really enjoy the challenges of working in IT, helping staff with their queries, and trying to make their lives that little bit easier in using IT systems."

# Cancer charity welcomes new member to its ranks

**The Lingen Davies Cancer Fund which raises vital funds for cancer patients throughout Shropshire and Mid Wales has welcomed a new member to the team and unveiled exciting plans for future growth.**

Anna Williams – a former reporter for the Shropshire Star group - has taken on the role of Communications and Fundraising Officer for the Lingen Davies Cancer Fund which supports cancer patients and their families from throughout the area. The charity raises money for the Lingen Davies Cancer Centre at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital which treats hundreds of local cancer patients every day. The current appeal will provide a new CT Scanner at the Cancer Centre, as well as part-fund an extension to the facility.

Helen Knight, Development Manager for the charity, said: "It's a really exciting time for us here at Lingen Davies, we are delighted to welcome Anna to the team and know that she will continue to build on the excellent reputation we hold in the community.

"Like many charities we have been impacted by the pandemic but we truly believe that it is now time to push forward and build on the work done to date. We are building on our events programme now that restrictions are easing, and we have some really great ideas in the pipeline. All donations and fundraising goes towards our current appeal to fund a much-needed extension to



Anna Williams, communications and fundraising officer for the Lingen Davies Cancer Fund

the Lingen Davies Cancer Fund, as well as a new CT Scanner, which will ensure more patients can receive the care and treatment they need.

"We are proud to be the area's main cancer charity serving cancer patients and their families throughout Shropshire and

Mid Wales. We have a wonderful team of supporters but are always happy and keen to talk to anyone who may be considering fundraising for us," she added.

To find out more about the work of the Lingen Davies Cancer Fund visit the website at [www.lingendavies.co.uk](http://www.lingendavies.co.uk)



Amelia Ebdon, director of marketing UK

# Senior leadership team appoints UK marketing director

**B**usiness communications provider, Enreach, has further expanded its senior leadership team with the appointment of a new Director of Marketing UK.

Amelia Ebdon accepted the promotion to Director of Marketing UK after 3 years as Marketing Manager at the company which provides cloud phone systems, broadband, mobiles and IT services to businesses across the country.

Ebdon is now responsible for the growth of the Enreach brand in the UK as well as staying ahead of industry trends

and communicating effectively with the providers' customers and partners. Ebdon and her team will be taking control of the UK arm of the European group's marketing activity.

Speaking of the promotion Duncan Ward, Chief Executive Officer Enreach UK, said "We're delighted to have welcomed Amelia to the senior leadership team. With 4 years' experience at Enreach, and many invaluable years of marketing experience before that, this is a pivotal appointment

as we continue on our journey to become an industry leader in unified communications."

*I'm thrilled to have accepted the role of Director of Marketing UK. This is an incredibly exciting time of growth for Enreach, having recently rebranded.*

Amelia Ebdon said of her promotion, "I'm thrilled to have accepted the role of Director of Marketing UK. This is an incredibly exciting time of growth for Enreach, having recently rebranded and announced our acquisition of Pace Telecom, and I can't wait to build the brand and launch a whole host of game-changing new products in the months ahead."

# Harriet joins expanding commercial agents team

Harriet Shakeshaft pictured with James Evans at Halls Commercial Property



Shropshire's leading commercial property agents Halls Commercial are pleased to announce the appointment of Harriet Shakeshaft into their Shrewsbury office as a commercial property surveyor.

Halls Commercial property have continued to provide property services and advice throughout the pandemic, and have seen a very busy first quarter of the year. Harriet joins the team having recently completed her RICS APC in October 2019. She brings with her a wealth of industry experience, previously working for a commercial property firm in Chester.

"I am delighted to be joining Halls Commercial in the agency and professional team. James and his team are great and I'm looking forward to working with them all. I am thrilled to be taking up this opportunity and am looking forward to developing my career further and meeting new people in the industry."

Harriet is originally from Shropshire and carried out her earlier studies at Shrewsbury high school, before going on to attend university at Birmingham. Outside of work Harriet enjoys spending her time skiing and playing tennis, she also has a passion for cooking.

James Evans, Head of Commercial at Halls commented: "I'm thrilled to welcome Harriet into our team, I'm sure she will be an invaluable addition as we continue to grow regionally and nationally. It has been a difficult year for all, but I'm proud to say that Halls Commercial team adapted and continued to provide an excellent standard of customer service to our clients, which in turn has seen demand for our expertise increase and the need to expand our team. I very much look forward to working with Harriet, and seeing the team grow from strength to strength".

# New manager for care home



Rhea Paller is appointed manager of Montgomery House in Sundorne, Shrewsbury

**One of Shropshire's biggest care homes has strengthened its team with the appointment of a new manager.**

Rhea Paller has taken the helm at Montgomery House – a purpose-built, 90-bed care home in Sundorne, Shrewsbury.

Operated by Shropshire's largest independent, not-for-profit care provider Coverage Care Services, the home provides residential, nursing, respite and specialist dementia care for older people.

Rhea brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role having previously held senior nursing and management positions with another care provider in the Shropshire area.

And, despite the ongoing difficulties brought about by the coronavirus pandemic and the wider challenges continuing to face the care sector, she is determined to make sure that Montgomery House remains the care home of choice for people living in the local area.

"I absolutely love it here and feel extremely settled already," she said.

"It's been fantastic getting to know all the staff and residents over recent weeks and an absolute delight to welcome back our first visitors in such a long time.

"The caring nature of the team here at Montgomery House shines through every aspect of its hard work and I feel privileged to have been extended the opportunity to lead such a dedicated and compassionate group of individuals."

Rhea is looking forward to implementing a range of new projects at the home to support the health

and wellbeing of residents but more than anything she's hoping a return to community life won't be far away.

"Montgomery House has an important role to play in the local community and we are all hoping that we are through the worst of the pandemic so that we can, in time, start to gradually welcome members of the wider community back into the home in a safe and controlled way," she explained.

"We don't quite know when this will be yet, and we will of course be guided by the Government and our local public health teams at all times, but we're keeping our fingers crossed that we can slowly progress towards re-establishing our links with the community after such a long time."

*Originally from the Philippines, Rhea came to the UK as a trained nurse in 2010 to complete a postgraduate degree in International Nursing at Hertfordshire University*

Originally from the Philippines, Rhea came to the UK as a trained nurse in 2010 to complete a postgraduate degree in International Nursing at Hertfordshire University.

Whilst studying for her degree she worked part time as a carer and it was during this time she developed her passion for working with the elderly.

After graduating in 2014, she moved to Shropshire to undertake a placement on the NMC Overseas Nursing programme with a private care provider.

After successfully becoming a registered nurse, she then quickly rose through the ranks to senior nurse, then deputy and eventually a management and leadership role, looking after several large care homes.

Montgomery House is currently accepting new residents, for more information visit the website <https://www.coveragecareservices.co.uk>

# Achieve by learning from your failures

**T**he Shropshire Youth Support Trust (SYST) is set up to prevent or relieve poverty by providing education/training and several services to help people optimise their potential and work towards financial independence by setting up their own business or finding viable employment.

Throughout this pandemic, we are aware of how peoples lives, jobs, and businesses have been affected by Covid-19. We have continued to help people achieve their dreams and gain instrumental skills to be adaptable and increase their resilience and emotional wellbeing.

Our Mission is to empower our clients to achieve their dreams, lead fulfilling lives, and kick start their journey towards economic independence. We support and encourage our clients to make transformational and even life-changing choices to achieve success.

SYST manager Richard Nuttall answered our questions.

**Who is someone you admire, and why?**

My Wife, she is the most kind hearted and thoughtful person I know. And she copes with me.

**Tell me three pet hates?**

Micro management, untrustworthiness and my pets getting under my feet (thought i would add an actual 'pet' hate).

**What's a typical day like for you?**

Exercise, breakfast with family, then chaos...lol.

**Do you have any skills or talents that most people don't know about?**

Actor, dancer (most genres), nose flute.

**If you could be anywhere, where would you be?**

Somewhere in warm weather by the sea with my family.

**Flashback to when you were 10 years old. What did you want to be when you grew up?**

Astronaut or marine biologist.

**If we went to 'happy hour', what would you order?**

Guinness, Jack Daniels.

**Finish this sentence. On Sunday mornings, you can usually find me...**

... nowhere, because I am hiding.

**How do you want people to remember you?**

In a good way....I hope.

**What do you think are the best skills that you bring to your job?**

Passion, coaching and empowerment.

**Name three words that best describe you.**

Passionate, energetic, (sometimes grumpy)

**How do you think your colleagues would describe you?**

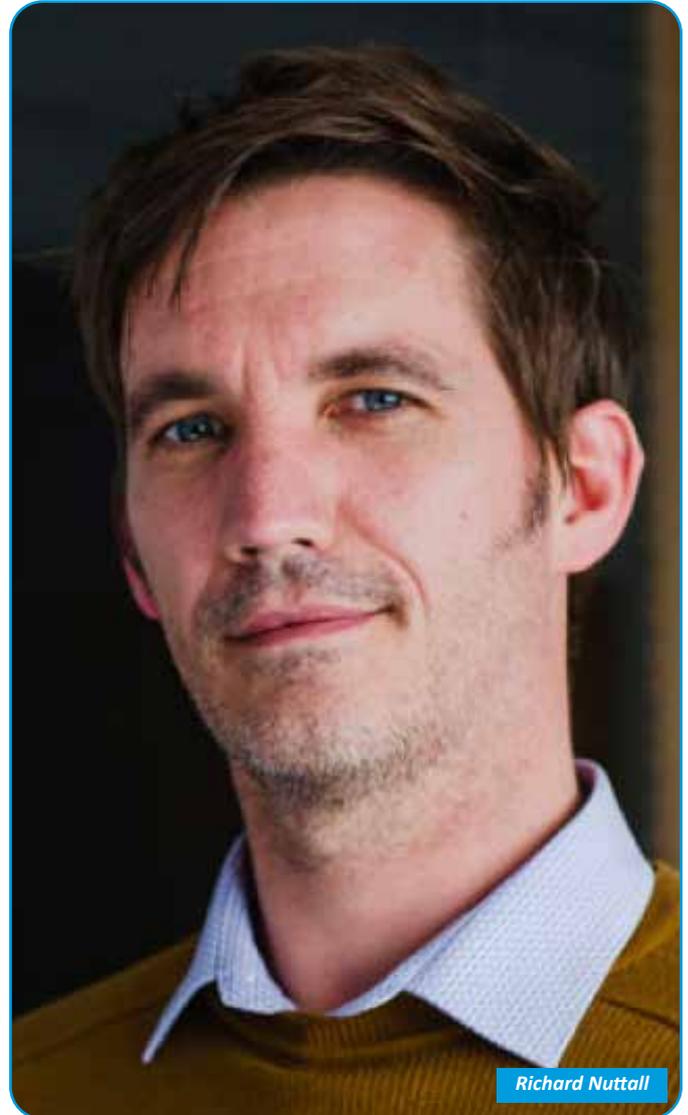
Afraid to ask them.

**What do you want to make sure you do before you die?**

Live.

**What's a goal you have for yourself that you want to accomplish in the next year?**

Complete and pass my Masters degree



Richard Nuttall

**What are your highlights or lowlights of your career so far?**

Highlights have been seeing individuals I have supported/coached to grow and develop, particularly some who have struggled with mental health. their anxiety being so bad they could not leave the house, but to then see them out and actively engage with people to promote themselves and their business gave an overwhelming sense of pride in them and our team.

**What publications do you regularly read?**

Various

**What are you happiest doing, when you're not working?**

spending time with my family, reading, exercising

**What are some causes you care about?**

Youth and Environment

**What do you do with friends and family in your spare time?**

Chat, walk, bike rides, games, days out, and lots more?

**What would be your personal motto?**

Failure is not failure, it is learning. Believe you can do anything.

# First social housing Passivhaus scheme for area

**T**he first ever social housing scheme in Powys to reach Passivhaus standard has been completed. Pave Aways Building Contractors has handed over the seven energy efficient homes in a £1.3m development it built in Sarn, near Newtown, to Powys County Council.

The homes - four two-bedroom bungalows, two two-bedroom and one three-bedroom houses - have all been certified to Passivhaus standard, the method of advanced low-energy construction. Final air tests in the bungalows revealed 0.27 air changes an hour with the houses registering 0.49, below the maximum of 0.6 air changes per hour required for Passivhaus certification.

The properties were built with heat recovery units to utilise the excess heat that is produced to warm the properties, thereby incurring lower heating bills. Each home also has 4.2 KW of photo voltaic roof panels to generate electricity. Pave Aways also built the county's first ever Passivhaus school for the council - the new Welshpool Church in Wales School that was finished in November last year.

Managing Director Steven Owen said: "To have been able to deliver this ground-breaking project for Powys has been a privilege and we hope the tenants will be happy in their new homes. This is undoubtedly the way forward for new housing stock and an important step in tackling issues around climate change and fuel poverty. From an industry point of view, it's been a valuable learning curve for our team and sub contractors, bringing new skills to the region."

The Passivhaus housing scheme was developed by Powys County Council's Affordable Housing Team and will help the council deliver one of its aims of Vision 2025 - to build 250 new homes by 2025.

Nigel Brinn, Powys County Council's Corporate Director for Economy and Environment, said: "These homes will not only help to cut carbon emissions but ensure tenants will have lower energy bills."



Pave Aways site manager Tom Ford and Construction Director Jamie Evans at the new Passivhaus homes in Sarn

"The council is making real progress with its ambitious target of delivering 250 new homes by 2025 and this scheme contributes to that target. The scheme has also provided a boost for the local economy with local sub-contractors and the supply chain being supported by the work."

The project brought additional benefits for Powys with more than £1.1m spent locally, 10,500 hours of work provided on site and 4,900 hours spent on apprentices and training time through its employees and the supply chain.

Steven added: "One of our priorities is to ensure our projects have a wider reaching effect than just an economic one. The delivery of these new homes has had many benefits for the community in Mid Wales that will have a lasting legacy. New skills learned, training delivered and support to community groups have been just some of the side effects of this build."

## Ensuring everyone can access workplace perks

A recent discussion on LinkedIn about a shift in focus when it came to workplace perks caught our eye, writes Anthony Burns - Commercial Director of Paycare, the not-for-profit Health Cash Plan and Training Provider. The topic originated from an article which appeared in the Financial Times, as a result of their research which had shown 'in office' perks such as snacks, gyms and football tables may not be as sought-after as they once were.

Instead, benefits which are going to improve employee health and wellbeing are high up on the agenda - in fact, according to Glassdoor 60% of employees now place more emphasis on perks which relate to their physical and mental wellbeing and almost 90% would be more likely to apply to work for a company which took care of its employees.

This really isn't a huge surprise given the global pandemic we have all been through, but it does mean that companies who focused on the office being the epicentre of employees' working lives may now need to rethink their Workplace Wellbeing strategy - especially if working from home is likely to be a long-term arrangement within their organisation.

So, how do companies offer perks which will actually benefit their teams, without those who are working flexibly missing out? Here are just five ideas which can be implemented to ensure you're on track when it comes to the future of workplace wellbeing:

**Access to online content:** Empowering your team with knowledge about their wellbeing helps them manage their health and happiness going forward - and now with video call technology such



Adding pieces to the puzzle

a big part of our working lives, it's easy to ensure everyone has access to online content which will benefit them. Our own free monthly e-clinics have been so well received and feedback shows they are helping teams to learn more about specific areas of interest relating to mental health - and we've also launched online mental health training too and continued offering downloadable resources!

**Flexible hours:** Lots of us have got used to working from home, and as the world opens back up, it's not necessarily a perk we want to have taken away. Where companies are able to offer long-term flexibility, it's definitely worth considering not just where you're asking staff to work, but also when. If you don't need them to be at their desk from 9am til 5pm, then enabling them to manage their own time is a benefit which doesn't cost the company but is highly regarded by many employees.

**Work it out:** If you were lucky enough to have access to gym equipment at your office pre-pandemic, then it's time to think about how and where employees might be exercising these days. Offering money off a gym membership, at-home equipment, or access to online exercise programmes are all worthy considerations (and we can state that from first-hand experience as our Paycare Perks which offer discounts on all sorts of products including health and leisure items are incredibly popular!).

**A listening ear:** The physical, mental and financial strains of the past 18-months have hit all of us hard and are likely to have an impact for a while yet. That's why including an Employee Assistance Programme in your Wellbeing Strategy is incredibly important, to give your team someone to talk to round the clock whatever they're struggling with.

**What they need:** The wellbeing needs of each company are different, whether you're a small team of previously office-based staff now working from home long-term, or a large team working within a manufacturing environment, for example. That's why employee liaison is so important. You might think you know what your team would ask for when it comes to perks, but if you haven't asked in a while then do make sure you incorporate employee feedback into your future plans. It sounds incredibly obvious but it's something that lots of managers don't do!

If you're after some more ideas, why not check out our guide to Workplace Wellbeing - and make sure to get in touch if you'd like to talk about how we can support your employees' with their health and wellbeing needs!

# New members to engage with

## CHIRK

**Now Display**  
01691 680833  
LL14 5DG

## CLUN

**Empathy for Special Children**  
07495 947987  
SY7 9AG

## EDGBASTON

**Aquarius**  
0121 622 8181  
B5 7SL

## IRONBRIDGE

**Protech Future Ltd**  
01952 433123  
TF8 7BN

## LUDLOW

**Hands Together**  
**07956 222999**  
**SY8 1NL**

## OSWESTRY

**Cambrian Heritage Railways Ltd**  
01691 728131  
SY11 2BA

## Oswestry Community

**Action Qube**  
01691 656 882  
SY11 1RB

## PSM Kitchens

01691 664252  
SY11 4AD

## The League of Friends

**RJAH**  
01691 404401  
SY10 7AG

## SHREWSBURY

**Dairi-Pak Ltd**  
01939 260342  
SY4 1LS

## Little Rascals Foundation

01743 240258  
SY2 5TF

## Pathfinder FX Ltd

02034 882475  
SY1 3GA

## Protecture

01743 636 562  
SY2 5ST

## Sanders Financial Ltd

01743 627345  
SY1 1XL

## Shropshire Mental Health Support

01743 368647  
SY2 6BL

## The Roy Fletcher Centre

01743 341300  
SY1 1JE

## TELFORD

**Allsports Coaches Coaching Academy CIC**  
07816 514140  
TF2 9FY

## Christians Against Poverty

07910 779 345  
TF2 8RJ

## Full Fibre Ltd

01392 793127  
TF3 3BJ

## Glaston UK Ltd

01952 677971  
TF1 7AF

## Telford & Wrekin Council for Voluntary Service

01952 240209  
TF1 1JP

## The Anstice

01952 567280  
TF7 5BD

## The Clifton Community Arts Centre Ltd

01952 743377  
TF1 1BY

## WELSHPOOL

**Invertek Drives Ltd.**  
01938 556868  
SY21 8JF

## Severn Transport Ltd

01938 532500  
SY21 7DF



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