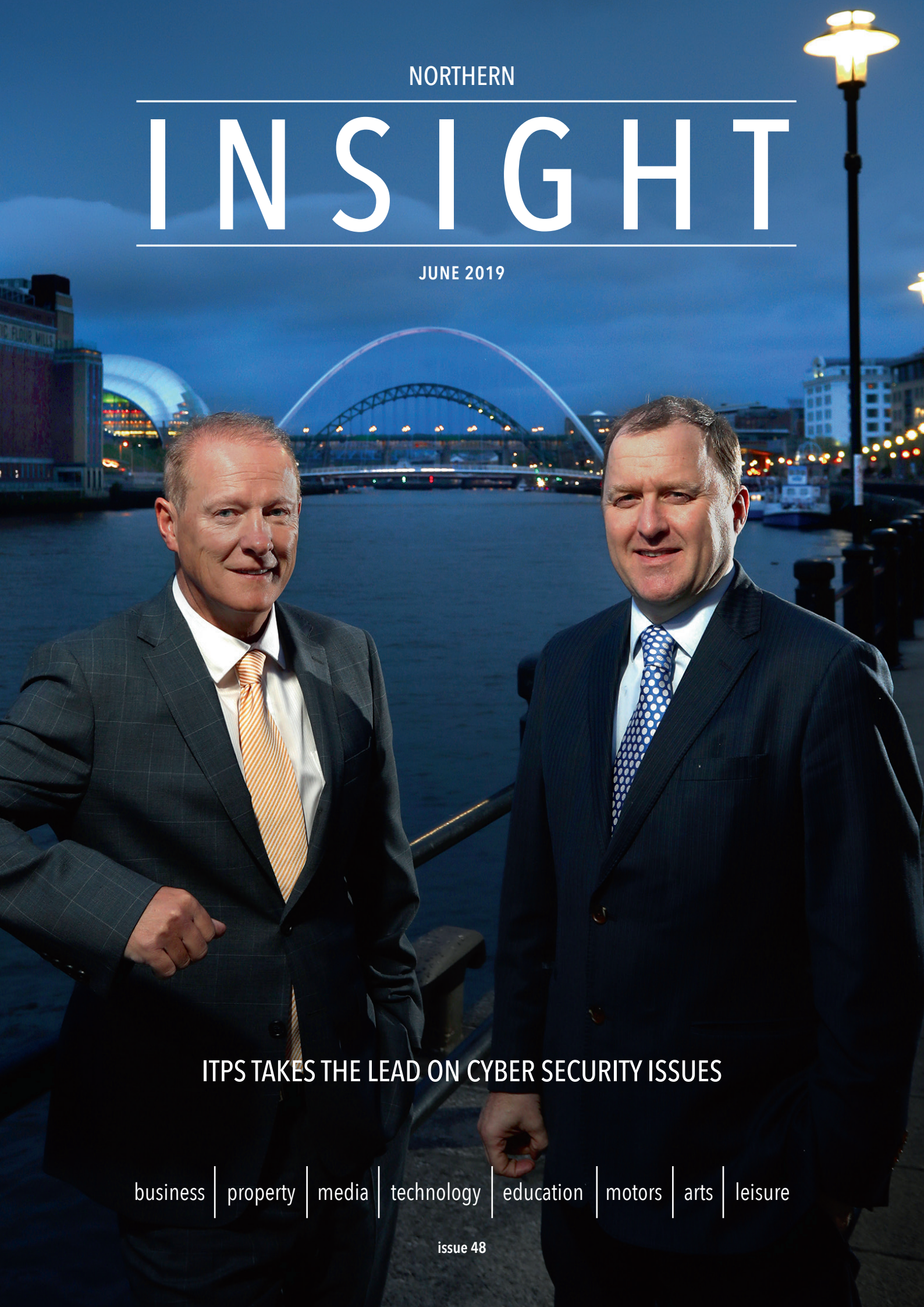
NORTHERN

INSIGHT

JUNE 2019



ITPS TAKES THE LEAD ON CYBER SECURITY ISSUES

business | property | media | technology | education | motors | arts | leisure

issue 48

MORE THAN JUST BUSINESS SPACE...



...IN SUPERB LOCATIONS

Dedicated to supporting companies, the BIC offers flexible and affordable office, lab and industrial space to suit businesses of all shapes and sizes. But that's not all.

Our programme of business and networking events and support from our resident business adviser, means you can focus wholly on starting and growing your business.







FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY

0191 516 6066 **www.ne-bic.co.uk**

#AskSB

What has the **EU** ever done for us?

- ★ 50 years of peace in Europe
- ★ Erasmus and overseas study
- ★ A home market of 500 million consumers
- ★ Cheaper flights
- ★ Tackling tax avoidance
- ★ Maternity and paternity leave
- ★ Stronger voice in the world
- ★ Consumer protection
- ★ Compensation for delayed flights
- ★ Investment in Arts and Culture
- ★ Cleaner Air
- ★ Paid holiday leave
- ★ Maximum working hours
- ★ Cheaper mobile calls
- ★ Visa-free travel across Europe
- ★ The right to work in the EU
- ★ Funding for our regions
- ★ Opportunities for young people
- ★ Funding for start-ups
- ★ 44% of our exports
- ★ Safer food standards
- ★ 3 million jobs
- ★ Lower prices in shops
- ★ The world's strongest animal welfare rights
- ★ Rights for part-time workers
- ★ Single market with no export charges or red tape
- ★ Product safety standards
- ★ Standards in the workplace
- ★ Europe-wide patent and copyright protection
- ★ Free healthcare across Europe
- ★ Cleaner beaches and waterways
- ★ Co-operation on counter-terrorism intelligence
- ★ Rights to equal pay for women and men
- ★ Protection against discrimination based on gender, race, religion, age, disability and sexual orientation
- ★ Strongest wildlife protection in the world
- ★ Investment and collaboration in science
- ★ European Arrest Warrant
- ★ Improved standards for farm animals

*Are you looking to inject some **common sense** into your brand? Talk to us*

@SilverBulletPR Hello@silverbulletmarketing.co.uk **www.silverbulletmarketing.co.uk** **t:** 0191 261 7422

Silver Bullet: marketing Silver Bullet: creative Silver Bullet: media



The new AGA Every Day series is available now at Walter Dix & Co, offering maximum flexibility and control, with iconic AGA style.





SAVE up to **£1,500** when you trade-in your old cooker – all makes accepted

2 years 0% Interest Free Finance or Buy Now - Pay in 12 months (*Terms and conditions apply)

YOUR LOCAL AGA EXPERTS SINCE 1931

At Walter Dix & Co, we specialise in quality range cookers, refrigeration, extraction and cooking equipment. Visit our Gateshead showroom to see our range of dedicated displays, or contact us today.

1 Stirling Court, Eleventh Avenue North, Team Valley, Gateshead, NE11 0JF

www.wdix.co.uk • 0191 482 0033

Walter Dix & Co

AGA and Range Cooker Specialists

AGA · ESSE · EVERHOT · KitchenAid · WOLF · LACANCHE · Falcon · LIVE WITH ILVE · SUB-ZERO · STOVES







FOREWORD

Welcome to the June edition of Northern Insight.

Our covers stars are tech experts ITPS who reflect on how digital transformation has changed the business environment.

In our popular Meet the Entrepreneur interview we talk to Matt Mavir, founder of Last Night of Freedom who has created a niche company delivering lasting memories for "stags" and "hens" on a national basis.

Social highlights include the 2019 Northern Children of Courage Awards and the Injured Jockeys Golf Day at Rockliffe Hall which I was fortunate to be a part of.

On our travels we also visit Banyan, a fantastic addition to Newcastle's leisure scene.

Thank you for your continued support for four fantastic years. We will continue to strive to bring you a publication the region can be proud of. Till next month...

Michael Grahamslaw, Publisher



CONTENTS

JUNE 2019

Business News 6-7

Cover Story 8-9
ITPS

Recent Appointments 10

Manufacturing News 26

Community News 56

Legal & Financial News 60

Property News 102

Technology News 138

Arts News 156-157

Leisure News 162

Business Lunch 168
Banyan

Comment With... 202
Barry Speker

CREDITS

Managing Director - Michael Grahamslaw
Design - Lu O'Rourke
Accounts Manager - Lisa Grahamslaw
Lead Photography - Simon Williams, Crest Photography
Additional Photography - The Bigger Picture Agency Ltd., Scarlet Butterfly Media, Gordon Taylor
Editorial Contributors - Jack Grahamslaw, Holly Grahamslaw, Barry Speker, David Fairlamb, Graham Courtney
Web Design - Mediaworks **Social Media -** Curtis Gabriel

www.northern-insight.co.uk facebook.com/northerninsight @NInsightmag

All photos are copyright MJG Publishing Ltd and are taken solely for use in Northern Insight. If you wish to purchase a photograph please contact Michael Grahamslaw on mjgrahamslaw@outlook.com Photo charges £50 for a single image, £295 for full buy out of a photo shoot. Advertising charges: There is a £25 charge for every set of amendments, following the first initial set of amendments, which are free of charge, for adverts designed by Northern Insight (MJG Publishing Ltd). Cancellations: If an advert is cancelled by the booker within a 7 day period prior to our print deadline, the advert will be charged in full, plus VAT.

Editorial
Editorial contributions should include a stamped addressed envelope. No responsibility is accepted for drawings, photographs or literary contributions during transmission, or while in the Managing Directors or Printers hands. Editorial must be received by the 15th of the month or no responsibility is accepted for errors.

Advertisements
Although every care is taken to ensure accuracy the Publishers regret that they cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage caused by an error in the printing or damage to, a loss of artwork, tranparencies or photographs. Complaints will only be considered for up to a week after publication. Advertising must be received by the 20th of the month. No responsibility is accepted for errors.

© 2015 Published by MJG Publishing Ltd

BLOOM IS FIRST PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL VALUE UK CERTIFICATE

North East-based Bloom Procurement Services has taken a major step forward in its commitment to drive social value throughout its business.

Bloom has been awarded Level One of the Social Value Certificate, following an extensive examination successfully evidencing that its business systems and processes assist it to measure, manage and maximise social value.

The Social Value Certificate is accredited by Social Value UK, the national network for social impact and social value.

Consisting of three levels, the certificate will take Bloom on the pathway to maximising social value in the way it operates. Having achieved Level One, Bloom is now committed to obtaining Levels Two and Three.

Catherine Manning, Assurance and Networks Manager for Social Value UK, said: "Bloom is the first procurement specialist to achieve the Social Value Certificate. Social Value UK is truly excited to be working with a pioneering organisation that is devoted to maximising social value."

Formed in 2012, Bloom is the exclusive operator of the NEPRO professional services framework on behalf of the North East Procurement Organisation. The NEPRO framework was set up to help the public sector buy and manage professional services spend whilst achieving better outcomes and improving value.

Specialising in bringing together buyers and suppliers, Bloom has over 6,500 suppliers registered, allowing them access to opportunities across over 315 public sector organisations. The company has already successfully completed over 4,500 projects from very small to multi-million pound opportunities across the public sector.



NORTH TYNESIDE BUSINESS FORUM RELEASES ANNUAL REVIEW AND STRATEGIC PLAN



It's been a year of success and optimism for members of one of the region's driving forces in business support and lobbying with more confidence and growth forecast for the coming 12 months.

Now in its tenth year, the North Tyneside Business Forum has just released its latest annual review and strategic plan for 2019/20 and has reported a positive picture for the many large and small businesses that it serves.

Set up to independently foster economic growth, employment, sustainability and corporate responsibility, the North Tyneside Business Forum has increased its membership by 35% with more than 1300 businesses now receiving regular information emails, access to events to enhance their business skills, organised visits to businesses and business to business networking opportunities.

Having a voice on behalf of North Tyneside businesses is an important role of the Business Forum, with the Chair and Management Group influencing decision makers and feeding back the views of members on key local, regional and national issues. Major consultations have included transport, finance, council procurement, health, education and tourism.

Looking ahead, the North Tyneside Business Forum has identified a number of key objectives for 2019/2020.

David W Bavaird, Chair of the North Tyneside Business Forum, explained: "It's vital to continue to work closely with our respected partners, the local authority, statutory bodies, funding organisations and business support providers to encourage additional economic growth, employment, corporate responsibility and sustainability in North Tyneside."

BRADLEY O'MAHONEY Public Relations
IF YOUR BRAND IS WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS WHEN YOU ARE NOT IN THE ROOM, WHAT WOULD THEY SAY ABOUT YOUR COMPANY?
www.bradleyomahoney.co.uk

A NEW ERA IN THE BATTLE AGAINST CANCER



One of the most advanced cancer centres in the UK recently opened its high energy proton beam therapy facility in Northumberland.

The first prospective cohort of patients at the Rutherford Cancer Centre North East are already undergoing assessment for proton beam therapy.

The Rutherford Cancer Centre North East has also formed a partnership with one of the region's leading cancer charities, Fighting Against All Cancers (FACT).

Proton beam therapy is a specialised type of radiotherapy used in delivering treatment to patients in a more targeted manner to reduce damage to peripheral tissue and organs. It can also help reduce unwelcome side effects.

Chris Land, Centre Manager at the Rutherford Cancer Centre North East said: "This is a landmark moment in the development of cancer care in the North East and is a significant step in transforming the way certain types of cancer are treated."



ITHICA FILMS CELEBRATES MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY

Middlesbrough-based Ithica Films is celebrating five years in business. The independent, award-winning film company creates cinematic film content for businesses.

Founded in 2014 by Managing Director Matt McGough and based in the Tees Valley's flagship Boho One building for creative and digital businesses, the firm provides high level film production with three edit suites, the latest in camera movement rigs and aerial drones.

In the five years since it was launched, Ithica has cemented its position as a leader in creative film-making, delivering over a thousand films for customers throughout the North East and across the world.

Matt said: "It's been a great journey for us so far. To start from nothing five years ago and to build the momentum, team and body of work that we have is incredible. The quality of the content we create has been increasing constantly and I'm excited about what we can make happen in the future."



LEADING BUSINESS SUPPORT AGENCY APPOINTS W NORTH

North East creative digital and tech business support agency Generator has turned to W North to support its regional and national communications efforts.

Generator has charged the Newcastle-based PR agency with handling its ongoing communications, promoting its upcoming programmes and initiatives and assisting the organisation with positioning the North East nationally as a place of creative and digital excellence.

Jim Mawdsley, CEO of Generator, said: "In W North, we have found the ideal agency to support our ambitious plans and champion this region's collaborative approach to successful growth. The North East has a dynamic creative digital and tech sector and we believe that W North is perfectly positioned to help support its growth."

W North has recently celebrated two years in business and in that time has already become the top PR agency in the region, winning the CIPR NE Outstanding Consultancy award for 2018/19.

NORTH EAST TALENT PARTNERS EXPAND TEAM

North East-established SEAO Talent Partners has expanded its team by 50% in the six months since its launch.

SEAO, which supports organisations with talent strategy, end to end recruitment, assessment centres and outplacement, has recently welcomed two members to its team, taking the business to a team of six whilst further expanding its service offering.

Heather McCready has joined the team as talent acquisition coordinator for client services whilst Stephanie Stewart has joined the team in a brand-new role, as talent acquisition partner with a focus on candidate support.

Heather will sit within the organisation's end to end recruitment team, working on behalf of SEAO's clients as their internal recruitment team, which includes answering the careers hotline.

Stephanie will use her vast recruitment experience to support candidates to find and secure their next role, working with businesses to source the individual who best reflects their brand values.



BRADLEY O'MAHONEY Public Relations

DON'T KEEP YOUR GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. LET US UNLOCK YOUR BRAND AND SHOW YOU OFF TO THE WORLD.

www.bradleyomahoney.co.uk

TAKING THE LEAD ON CYBER SECURITY ISSUES

A lot can happen in two decades, and as tech experts ITPS move into their 20th year of trading, managing director Garry Sheriff highlights how digital transformation has changed the business environment and put cyber security at the top of the agenda.

"Anyone who has been in business for 20 years will understand the massive changes that have taken place in that time," he said.

"There has been a transformational shift in the way technology is delivered. Back in 2000 an average IT infrastructure meant having to invest large amounts of capital in buying hardware and software, housing it on your own premises in an expensively kitted out environment, and then spending a lot of time, money and manpower on running it.

It's widely understood that the world's data now doubles every two years, and society's reliance on increasingly complex technology and a data-driven approach, has seen our core activities of providing managed IT solutions and services gradually evolve into the role of educators too.

We're now a business approaching £20m turnover, with a 140-strong team. Strange as it may sound, we don't focus our efforts on selling our services. Instead we set out to educate and inform, helping organisations understand the myriad of choices out there, and the long term implications of those choices. Our ethos is that if you don't really understand something you can't make an informed choice about it."

While the business's headquarters are in Gateshead, it services a worldwide client base and has built up an enviable profile among the IT community over the years, as Garry explains: "It's gratifying to be recognised as leading technical experts by our customers. As our ambassadors, they are a big factor in selling ourselves to new clients.

Like any other business we keep our finger on the pulse of what's happening in and outside our industry, constantly monitoring emerging trends and planning our strategic growth around them. Over the last decade we have expanded our cloud offering, established our own £4m data centre, and consolidated our reputation as cyber security experts. All of which has helped us to take the business in exactly the right direction, which is to continue to deliver effective services for our customers.

One of the big factors in any organisation's success is its ability to listen. The more we understand a client's priorities and plans, the better we can advise them. There is so much choice around the best way to structure a cost effective, future-proof ICT infrastructure, and those choices can be bewildering, particularly if an organisation lacks a high level of in-house IT expertise. Often businesses are driven down a route based solely on cost, which whilst delivering potential savings, may be the wrong solution. Ironically this can be an expensive mistake to rectify.

In recent years the growth of cloud – in other words internet-based services - has been a real game-changer. It has transformed IT into a service-based model where clients can shape the size and scope of the service they need, which ultimately delivers much more business confidence and better value for money.

There are as many models as there are organisations. For instance we have clients who range from start-up businesses needing a simple 24/7 support arrangement, through to large corporates and financial institutions that opt for a full on or off site managed service.

The growth in the managed services market can be put down to the client retaining control, even while we assume responsibility for everything from creating the strategy through to implementation and support. The aim is to become embedded as part of the client's team, removing the headache and cost of creating and maintaining a state of the art infrastructure and in-house staff with the required expertise."

The rapid rise in data centre services has also played its part in ITPS's growth. Around 40,000 square metres of data centre space is now added in the UK every year, making it Europe's largest third party data centre market.

ITPS was ahead of the curve when it announced its own £4m North East data centre in 2014, with a raft of clients lined up and waiting to house their ICT infrastructures there. Such was the demand, a second data hall was created in 2018 and data hall 3 is already on the cards.

"Our data centre is unique in that as well as our constant investment in a highly secure, high speed communications network with direct links to the UK's main communications hubs, it has a 230-seat fully equipped workspace recovery facility that can be used to house staff in the face of business interruption, or used as extra project space when needed," says Garry.

"From the client's point of view all the risk and the necessary investment in IT rests on our shoulders rather than on theirs, which gives them a real degree of confidence that their systems and data are in safe hands."

In the past business interruption meant fire, flood and accidents but increasingly the threat is cyber-based. Security and the risk of cyberattack now rank as the biggest concern among businesses across Europe, North America and Asia, and the growth in cloud services has only increased the risk. Every organisation is under constant attack, and as users become more mobile the risk increases and the threats get smarter.

Cybercrime has been transformed from an IT issue to a strategic risk issue that directors and senior managers cannot afford to ignore. A startling amount of organisations don't see it that way until they are attacked, and their systems and data are locked and held to ransom for many thousands of pounds.

"At our popular cyber security briefings there regularly comes a lightbulb moment when we physically show someone how 500 online attacks a day are being made on their business," adds Garry.

"The old traditional security solutions are not enough to protect today's organisations. Business owners need to be constantly asking questions about security and making sure all the latest tools and current expertise are being applied to defend their interests. Awareness and education is key, ignorance is the enemy.

Experts forecast that by 2025, data will double every 12 hours. When big data combines with poor security, a business can be on its knees within minutes.

While ITPS will continue to be the team people turn to when no one else can help, we would far rather work alongside them to prevent and mitigate disastrous situations.

As the saying goes, 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.'"

It's an old adage that has served this North East business well, and will no doubt continue to underpin its growth as it looks to a bright future.


ITPS
itps.support@itps.co.uk
0191 442 0250
To the customer,
YOU
are the company.
Integrity.
Quality.



MINCOFFS SOLICITORS BOLSTERS COMMERCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT OFFERING

Leading commercial law firm Mincoffs Solicitors is strengthening its offering to commercial and employment clients with the addition of two new hires.

The firm welcomes newly qualified solicitor Martha Craven to the employment team and paralegal Alex Young to the Commercial team. The new appointments will reinforce an already strong commercial offering, including employment, corporate, litigation and commercial property to clients in the tech sector and the wider business community.

Antony Hall, Partner and Head of Commercial at Mincoffs, commented: "We are very happy to welcome Martha and Alex to their respective teams here. They're both settling in very well and will add additional strength to our technology and commercial transaction capability."

NEW SALES MANAGER AT RAMSIDE HALL



A County Durham hotel has enlisted one of the region's most respected sales and marketing managers.

Sarah Barber has joined the team at Ramside Estates as Group Sales and Marketing Manager, where she will be responsible for growing revenue across all areas of the company's hotels.

In a career spanning more than 20 years, Sarah has held senior sales roles at some of the hotel industry's leading brands, including Marriott, Swallow and Hilton.

Sarah's new role will see her looking after sales for Ramside Hall Hotel, Golf and Spa and its sister hotels, Hardwick Hall and Bowburn Hall.

John Adamson, Owner of Ramside Estates, said: "I am confident Sarah will be an asset to the business as we continue to drive it forward."

NEW SIGNINGS AT NUFC

One of the UK's most famous football grounds has boosted its catering, events and hospitality team with two new signings.

Newcastle's St. James' Park stadium, home to Newcastle United Football Club and one of the city's leading conference and event venues, has appointed Sean Brown as catering services director.

A keen Newcastle United fan, Sean brings more than 20 years' experience to the position having held senior roles at hotels and conference venues across the UK.

Supporting Sean will be fellow new recruit, Jenny McNamee who, in her new role as meetings and event sales manager, will oversee and develop the venue's corporate and leisure business.

Jenny brings a wealth of experience in the sector having worked as sales coordinator at Sunderland AFC's Stadium of Light stadium.



HEAD OF DEBT RECOVERY APPOINTED AT ST JAMES' SQUARE

Law firm St James' Square has announced the appointment of Colin Churchward as Head of the Debt Recovery department at the firm. Colin is a debt recovery specialist with over 12 years of experience in the field.

Colin said: "I've watched the firm grow from strength to strength over the last two years and I knew I really wanted to be a part of it. I'm really looking forward to getting started and contributing to the firm's continued success."

St James' Square also recently announced plans to double in size over the next twelve months due to increasing demand. Colin's appointment is part of the first phase of these ambitious growth plans, with more announcements to be made over the next few months.



TWO NEW PARTNERS BOOST MUCKLE LLP'S EDUCATION TEAM

Two experienced lawyers working across the education sector have been promoted to partner at leading North East independent law firm Muckle LLP.

Jill Donabie has over 16 years' experience and specialises in complex employment and HR issues with an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by schools, colleges and universities.

Robin Adams has 20 years' experience as a commercial lawyer. In addition to the extensive work he does within Muckle LLP's commercial team, Robin acts for schools, colleges and universities on commercial transactions.

Following their promotions, Robin will lead the firm's advice to its higher education clients whilst Jill will lead on school client services.

synergi
YOUR MODERN PARTNER FOR BUSINESS CHANGE
COLLABORATION | AUTOMATION | SECURITY | INSIGHT | OPERATIONS
0191 477 0365 enquiries@synergi.it www.synergi.it @Synergi_IT


Andrew Sllver and Alice Ackroyd

WHEN TO CHANGE HOW YOU LEAD!

You're passionate about your business, have been involved in everything and are thriving on being able to make things happen. Growth means you now have far more to deliver, more customers to satisfy and need more people to make it happen.

Is it becoming more difficult to juggle all the plates? Have you dropped a few in your attempt to be the chief juggler? Sound familiar?

Time for change

As Founder or CEO you will have focussed on achievement, results, providing inspiration and setting out a vision but having been there from the start you will also know the ins and outs of your business and you will naturally be involved in, or drawn to the detail.

With your head in the detail how will you see the bigger picture? How will you pick up what's happening in your industry, the trends and innovations? Who spotted the clock ticking for retailers on the high street and who exploited the opportunity, think House of Fraser & Boohoo.

There naturally comes a point where you can't be involved in everything and the need to delegate and manage others to do becomes more and more necessary. One model by Greiner, which highlights the stages of business growth, warns leaders to be careful to avoid some crises along the way.

A Crisis in Leadership, quickly followed by a Crisis in Autonomy!

These come about as the business grows and you can no longer juggle all the plates. However, your emerging management team can help you avert these crises. By developing their capability and expertise or by introducing an expert means you will no longer need to have all the answers, can share the pains of growth and perhaps focus on what you really enjoy (which, coincidentally, is probably what you are also very good at!)

Watch out for the next crisis – a Crisis of Autonomy. Your team will need autonomy to do their work. Listen to them, be willing to question and challenge but then trust them to act.

In the words of Steve Jobs - "It doesn't make sense to hire smart people and tell them what to do; we hire smart people so they can tell us what to do."

No one style makes a great leader

Great leaders know 'which club to take out the golf bag for which shot.'

You can develop smart people by choosing different styles depending on the situation and their level of knowledge or experience.

Let's say you're an expert in product development and you need to develop that talent in someone else. They don't know what they don't know so this calls for a Directive style, providing specific instructions to grow their skills.

What happens if you continue to direct as they become more competent? It's likely they will find it stifling and demotivating. You then need to switch to a Supportive or Coaching Style, enabling them to be self-sufficient and setting them up for success without your ongoing intervention.

'You can't teach people to trust – it's a feeling' – *Simon Sinek*

The spin off of building capability and relinquishing control builds trust. McKinsey found that four behaviours account for 89% of leadership effectiveness and being supportive is top of the list.

Supporting others, by being authentic and showing a sincere interest in those around you builds trust and inspires people to overcome challenges and find their own solutions, a rewarding experience for both parties!

If the time has come to change how you lead perhaps the greatest challenge will be a change in 'mindset.' You are going to have to break some long-established ways of working. We are habitual animals so changing how we work is difficult. Talk to others who have been on your journey. Perhaps identify others who can provide an external perspective and be that critical friend, but remember...

Be the change you want to see in your world.

Alice Ackroyd is the Leadership and Development Associate for 360 Growth Partners who identify, coordinate and make the adjustments businesses need to accelerate growth. For more information go to www.360growthpartners.co.uk or e-mail start@360growthpartners.co.uk

EXCLUSIVE BUSINESS & NORTHERN INSIGHT LUNCH CLUB

BOOKING NOW FOR MONDAY 24TH JUNE...



Speaker - GARRY SHERIFF -

ITPS

Venue - Jesmond Dene House, Newcastle upon Tyne
Date - Monday 24th June, 12 noon
Price - £50pp to include a two-course lunch and coffee

Garry Sheriff started his working life as a kitchen porter having left school with no qualifications.

Now he heads up a business with an annual turnover of £20m and a team of 140 ITPS is one of the North's most successful companies – Find out how Garry achieved this and why martial arts has become his passion.

BOOKING NOW FOR MONDAY 1ST JULY...



Speaker - SIMON BOURNE -

The Hand Dyed Shoe Company

Venue - Wynyard Hall, Stockton-on-Tees
Date - Monday 1st July, 12 noon
Price - £50pp to include a two-course lunch and coffee

Last year Simon Bourne spoke at our July lunch event in Newcastle and it was emotional.

Since then Simon has won a major retail award, Klarna Smooth Stores initiative, had a visit from a celebrity and moved to new premises. We can't wait to hear the story one year on.

At our lunch events you will enjoy meeting a network of peers, develop and grow your personal contacts, access a talent pool of experts, exchange ideas and information, develop your business through new ideas and build a trusted network of friends – all over a great lunch.

Limited places available - contact Linda Hitman to reserve your space, Linda@exclusivebusiness.net

We are taking a break for the summer and return to Newcastle on the 16th September and Tees Valley on the 7th October.

JESMOND DENE HOUSE
NEWCASTLE - UPON - TYNE

WYNYARD HALL

www.exclusivebusiness.net

www.northern-insight.co.uk

INSPIRING CONVERSATION & CONNECTIONS OVER A FINE LUNCH WITH EXCLUSIVE BUSINESS & NORTHERN INSIGHT

EXCLUSIVE

BUSINESS

Great minds, stimulating conversations, join us at The Exclusive Business Lunch.

Inspiring speakers, valuable connections, relaxed and enjoyable.

A new way to create valuable business connections.

For more details visit: www.exclusivebusiness.net or to book a place - email Linda@exclusivebusiness.net

JESMOND DENE HOUSE
NEWCASTLE - UPON - TYNE

NORTHERN INSIGHT

WYNYARD HALL

INSPIRING CONVERSATION & CONNECTIONS OVER A FINE LUNCH WITH EXCLUSIVE BUSINESS & NORTHERN INSIGHT







RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PEOPLE

Our business lunch events are a platform for people who understand the value of meeting new people to grow and extend their networks. They are also social and fun with a great lunch and exceptional speakers.

Photographs from our recent Tees Valley lunch event with Fred Howie of Howie White Executive Recruitment at Wynyard Hall.

www.exclusivebusiness.net















INSPIRING CONVERSATION & CONNECTIONS OVER A FINE LUNCH WITH EXCLUSIVE BUSINESS & NORTHERN INSIGHT

RECRUITMENT TIPS FROM AN INSIDER

Here at Howie White, we'd like to think we know a thing or two about recruitment, and along the way have picked up a few tips that we thought we'd share.


David Taylor

Know what you are looking for – sounds simple, but it goes beyond the job title. Ensuring that you have a clearly defined role along with required experience and qualifications makes the recruitment process smoother and simpler. This will also help to ensure that your trusted recruiter can offer the best possible short list for interview.

Fully brief your recruiter – when working with new clients, at Howie White, we want to get an understanding not just of the role to fill, but the culture in which the new employee is to fit. We also work to gain an understanding with you of 'needs' and 'wants' for the role.

Take Your Time - If the process is too quick, you won't always get the best candidates, too slow and you run the risk of losing exceptional candidates to another business.

Have Strong Branding – in recent times, online presence is gaining more and more importance, it allows the business to shine and demonstrate its accolades but also allows a candidate a keen insight into the business which can determine their interest.

Cultural fit – this is a term that is gaining in usage and is becoming quite vital to both employers and employees. It is starting to become as central to employers to recruit the candidate that not only fits the role but the company.

Mishandling unsuccessful candidates – this is something we hear quite often. There seems to be a growing trend for both employers and recruiters to avoid giving feedback to unsuccessful candidates. In some instances, it may have been a long process that has required great effort from the candidate, and they deserve to understand why they have not been successful in securing the role. With the feedback, be honest but sensitive. If it was just a cultural fit, tell them so.

Involving employees in the recruitment process – This can be very beneficial. It can alleviate some pressure from senior management and allows you to gain a second opinion from a different angle.

Plan for the Future – plan ahead when recruiting, look for a candidate with a great reputation in the market, one who has made good decisions and furthered their career. Recruit each position with the mindset that they are the future of your business.

www.howiewhite.co.uk


Fred Howie


David Taylor

Fred Howie has worked in the recruitment industry for thirty years. He established Howie White Resourcing in 1999 to provide an alternative to database recruitment agencies. The business has now completed more than 750 assignments across a wide range of industry sectors and disciplines throughout the UK, Europe and further afield.

We don't have a huge number of clients we work with. We are not a mass recruiter and have no ambitions to be one. The vast majority of our clients are repeat customers and many have worked with us since day one of the business.

"We value relationships." Simple as that.

No more square pegs in round holes...

Contact us today on 01642 535 000 or info@howiewhite.co.uk



GOING NATURALLY NATIVE!

Naturally Native is a project that will save the water vole, one of Britain's most charismatic mammals, from extinction in the North East of England.

Water vole numbers suffered a dramatic decline in the late 20th century and sadly that trend continues today; without intervention water voles will be lost forever.

And, in our native North East they are on the very brink of survival.

So, to announce that Karol has been appointed to spearhead a National Lottery Heritage Funded education and engagement strategy aimed at winning over support for, and appreciation of, our fluffy waterside friends is, for me, a tremendous privilege.

It may be a surprising thought but helping save water voles begins well away from the riverbank. It begins in our classrooms, pubs and restaurants, on the bus, and in our living rooms.

It has to begin in our community, and it begins with understanding.

By their very existence, local communities can inadvertently, positively or negatively, impact on the work of wildlife conservationists.

A supportive community, appreciative of the environment can make a massive difference to an initiative like Naturally Native. Community endorsement unlocks support from politicians, organisations and funders. It whets the emotions of volunteers and garners support from both landowners and industry.

On the other hand, communities that are not engaged, are often open to misinformation. They present a clear and ever-present danger.

Outside of a loss of habitat, the greatest threat to the water vole is the ferocious, yet beautiful, non-native American mink. These indiscriminate, mass killers were released into our river streams by well intentioned, but ill informed, animal liberation activists. Mink have gone on to wreak havoc and have decimated our indigenous river populations. From kingfishers and ducklings, to coots and water voles, nothing on the riverbank is safe.

So on the one hand, we have a simple tale of friend vs foe. But without knowing how many water voles there are, where they are located and where they are under threat, how can we know where to focus our efforts? To ensure the greatest chance of success, we need an urgent assessment of the health and strength of our water vole communities.

As I mentioned, in our region the water vole is on the brink of extinction. For most people, their one chance to see a water vole is on the pages of Kenneth Grahame's much loved classic children's tale, The Wind in the Willows, artfully disguised as 'Ratty'.

Whilst the mink's trail of destruction is clearer to see, in the case of the water vole the tell-tale signs tend to be a small pile of nibbled grass, angle-cut at a tell-tale 45 degree angle, close to the water's edge, latrines' of rounded, cigar-shaped droppings may also be spotted or small burrows in the riverbank. Small signs to spot even for engaged volunteers looking to support a broader campaign.

So, whilst not without its challenges, for me, delivering an effective education and engagement strategy is not just a privilege, it is vital.

A huge amount of resource and effort will be going into Naturally Native's initiative.

We need to win over the hearts and minds of all our stakeholders, be they politicians, funders, members of the public or school children.

With co-ordinated backing and the support of Durham, Northumberland and Tees Valley Wildlife Trusts, along with a growing partnership of other local organisations, it can be seen that engagement, through education, is central to helping achieve Naturally Native's ambitions.

Why should we care about animals that are about to go extinct? Why should we care about a fluffy animal most of us have never seen? Why should we be bothered about what the rest of our community thinks? These are the questions to which good answers should be given. And, this is what we at Karol aim to achieve in our education and engagement strategy.

Let's love and protect our fun-loving, fluffy, friends. Vote for the Vole!

To discuss how Karol's award-winning insight and creativity can help raise the profile of your businesses, please contact Stefan Lepkowski on 0191 2657765 or Stefan@karolmarketing.com @KarolMarketing



Karol's managing director Stefan Lepkowski gets voley excited at news of Karol's appointment to work with Naturally Native.



Pete Wilkinson and Nicola Cook

The Big Interview...

PUTTING ACTIONS INTO WORDS

It doesn't matter what sort of business you own or work in, there are always problems. Many are foreseeable...most aren't. The tricky bit is dealing with those problems or, even better, anticipating them.

Being involved in business can be a very lonely place and there are times when you are desperate for some help or advice.

That's where people like Nicola Cook and Pete Wilkinson come in.

They are not just inspirational speakers, they are the sort of people who can help you solve problems.

Both Nicola and Pete have their own successful businesses. Nicola runs Company Shortcuts, www.companyshortcuts.com a sales acceleration agency offering a range of offline and online services that helps mid-size companies overcome one of the biggest inhibitors to growth – successfully scaling-up their sales effort, or what Nicola describes as the business's 'Sales Engine.'

Pete runs Reclaro...www.reclaro.com a performance management tool for ambitious CEOs and their teams. Reclaro's software aligns a company's workforce and focuses everyone on knuckling down and taking consistent action towards the business's goals.

It's all really clever stuff which is aimed at making you more efficient and helping you to keep your eye on the ball and therefore improve your sales, your growth and your profits.

Sometimes, all of this can seem rather bewildering, but that is where Nicola Cook and Pete Wilkinson have a massive advantage. Not only are they good at what they do, but they are also expert communicators, and they like to help people to be successful.

Which is a handy combination for anyone who might feel as though they're sinking in business.

"It might sound as though we're blowing our own trumpet when we say that Pete and I are two of the best business-focussed speakers in the country, but we have the awards to prove it", said Nicola. "We are both members of the Vistage organisation which basically puts CEOs, business owners and executives of small to mid-size businesses in touch with one another when they need some help. It has more than 22,000 members in 20 countries...and both Pete and I are heavily involved."

In April 2019, Nicola and Pete attended the Vistage annual awards, where all the Vistage Chairs and Speakers celebrate the previous year's achievements.

Pete Wilkinson came away with three awards, which came as no surprise really because he's been a top speaker for them for five years and has consistently won the 'Outperformer' category. The award given to speakers who have consistently scored the highest for their workshop content, delivery and relevance to the Vistage members. In other words, when you are asked to speak about a particular topic, you need to know your stuff while still delivering it in an informative but hopefully entertaining style. Pete clearly delivers massive value, which is probably why he was also awarded the 'Most Business Impact' award. The award voted for by Vistage members, for the speaker who's content has had the greatest business impact on their own companies.

Nicola is fairly new to Vistage, having only been accepted as a Vistage speaker at the beginning of last year, but she's already proving to be one of their leading speakers. She won the 'Best Newcomer' award, a highly contested category, so it's an incredible achievement and like Pete, she also picked up an 'Outperformer' gong.

What does all of this mean? To be totally blunt, it is fantastic that two entrepreneurs and professional speakers from the North East have racked-up a stack of awards from one of the leading business organisations in the World. Wow.

"Nicola and I both have successful businesses in our own right which means we speak from experience," added Pete Wilkinson. "We both have an ambition to support entrepreneurs that far extends beyond our speaking activities. Vistage simply gives us a platform to reach more business owners, allowing us to add even more value to those businesses in the entrepreneurial community who have the desire and the will to grow fantastic businesses. We, in our small way, continue to support them on that journey."

Do you think you could do with some help and advice from Nicola Cook and Pete Wilkinson? Well, first of all check out both of their websites. They make for fascinating reading and are packed with useful presentations, templates and downloadable content.

However, here's another idea. Do you think you are effective in how you go about business?

Not sure...or probably too afraid to answer truthfully? Pete and Nicola can help you find out quickly whether you really ARE effective in business...or not. They have created a clever website called Effectiveness Checker which takes you through a series of questions, scoring you between 1-5. At the end, you'll be given a percentage rating on your effectiveness levels.

Log onto www.effectivenesschecker.com

And don't cheat. Be truthful to yourself.

Nicola Cook and Pete Wilkinson....putting action into words.

www.reclaro.com **www.companyshortcuts.com**

PERKS OF THE JOB – WHAT ATTRACTS AND RETAINS TOP TALENT

BMC Recruitment Group's Principal Tech Consultant Hannah Williams has key advice on creating competitive job benefits in order to attract and retain top talent.


Hannah Williams

A key issue for the majority of businesses is talent and skills, specifically in recruitment. Finding the right person in order to grow your business is essential and securing skilled staff has become a serious issue. In today's competitive job market, candidates can afford to be selective. Employers need to understand their competition and offer more than just a salary.

Working on a Budget

Whether you are a start-up or a large global organisation, you will often work to a tight budget. Benefits are a fantastic way to increase the appeal of the salary package while staying within budget.

Job perks don't have to break the bank. In-house training, online courses and job-shadowing are low cost ways to add to professional development packages.

Project work itself is hugely important and can be enticing to many candidates. One of our clients offer the opportunity to work in their other global office locations for up to 2 weeks. Not only does this allow employees to further understand the business, it gives them a chance to enjoy a simultaneous culture break.

Strengthen Your Offer

In recent years we have seen clients offer a range of benefits such as allowing their employees to be in control of their own personal development and remote working. Some organisations celebrate company milestones with not just monetary rewards but office prizes. We've also seen some impressive perks from unlimited holidays, beer and pizza Fridays, dog crèches, pawternity leave and onsite gyms.

Highlight Long Term Benefits

Often our clients neglect to promote areas of their business which can be deemed attractive. When promoting your role, consider including hidden advantages such as premium office location, comprehensive pension packages, flexible working and other long-term benefits which help your employees thrive. These contribute towards boosting day to day job satisfaction which has a substantial effect on employee engagement and improved retention rates.

Competitor Analysis

Our work within BMC Recruitment Group covers technology, finance, executive search and sales and marketing, working with 8 of 10 of the top North East businesses. Over the years, this has given us terrific insight into what the industry and competitors are offering. Since the likes of Google and Apple, companies have wanted to emulate the job perks and environments of these successful businesses. Candidates have been keen to accept roles that are more socially enriching.

Job perks help your business to compete in today's fierce marketplace and is essential in attracting the best candidates, retaining your staff and optimising job performance. Candidates believe that top perks are worth working hard for, so make sure you promote what you can offer!

Let us know if BMC Recruitment Group can help you be competitive in the market or help with your recruitment needs.

Hannah Williams is a Principal Consultant in Tech at BMC Recruitment Group. The company is a trusted recruitment partner for leading businesses in the North East. Visit www.bmcrecruitmentgroup.com, call Hannah on 0191 640 3728 or email Hannah.Williams@BMCRecruitmentGroup.com



Simon Williams 07889 532545 • www.crestphotography.co.uk

INSPIRING LEADERS AND PERSONALITIES LEAVE THEIR MARK ON THE NORTH EAST AT ENTREPRENEURS' FORUM'S SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE



The North East business community were encouraged to 'make a difference' with their success at the region's largest entrepreneurial conference hosted by the Entrepreneurs' Forum.

One of the UK's most philanthropic entrepreneurs, Heather Mills, founder of VBites, addressed more than 300 business leaders at Together We Can Take On The World with her incredible story that has seen her overcome many adversities to become a pioneer in plant-based food products.

Brought up in Washington, Heather has invested millions in the North East with three manufacturing facilities for her family-run company, saving and creating hundreds of jobs in the process, which is the largest plant-based manufacturing operation in the world.

Heather, who lost her left leg after being struck by a police motor bike in her twenties, spoke about how charity and supporting others inspires her.

"Money doesn't mean anything unless you're making a difference with it," she said.

"If you're a true entrepreneur and get your family aligned with you, then you can have no fears to take that step that will make you successful. The limitation is always going to be cash flow, but we're going to make it happen. If I can stand here with one leg, you can stand here with two."

The conference's opening speaker, Jon Smith, spoke about how he overcame a stammer at the age of 15 to become a leading entrepreneurial sports agent working with the likes of Diego Maradona and the England National football team.

He has since established First Artist, a media, entertainment and events empire, and gifted entrepreneurs in attendance with a few 'tricks of the trade' in the art of negotiating – built on years of experience advising and brokering deals for global sporting stars.

Benjamin Mee, the man depicted by Matt Damon in Hollywood blockbuster 'We Bought A Zoo', also delivered an inspiring story filled with emotion about how he restored the fortunes of Dartmoor Zoological Park.

Jim Cregan also shared his experiences building Jimmy's Iced Coffee, which was created as a result of road tripping across Australia, into a household brand that is well-placed in supermarkets and petrol stations across the UK.

Popular North East businessman John Hays, of Hays Travel, rounded off the conference with an insight into his entrepreneurial journey, which has seen the Sunderland-based company grow to become the UK's best high street travel agent with annual sales of more than £1bn.

Hosted by BBC presenter, media personality and illustrator Alfie Joey, the conference took place at the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead. It was sponsored by event partner North East Growth Hub, as well as Sullivan Brown Resourcing Partners, Visualsoft, Park Commercial and Durham City Incubator, with MAKE it Sunderland sponsoring the conference brochure.

Together We Can Take On The World is one of the highlights of the Entrepreneurs' Forum's extensive calendar of events, which brings together more than 300 leading entrepreneurs from across the North East for a day of inspiration.

James Robson MBE, Chairman of the Entrepreneurs' Forum, said: "Our conferences are a major part of our calendar of events and this year's Together We Can Take On The World was another fantastic day.

"It brought together many of the region's business leaders and entrepreneurs, providing them with plenty of food for thought, which they can apply to their own enterprises and hopefully help to drive forward growth and job creation to further support and strengthen the North East's economy.

"I'd like to thank our line-up of inspirational speakers for sharing their experiences and stories over the course of the day, as well as our sponsors and partners, who have helped make it a success."

For further information about future Entrepreneurs' Forum events, email info@entrepreneursforum.net or call 0191 500 7780.

EDUCATION
WITH
EMPLOYMENT
EDGE

GATESHEAD
COLLEGE

YOU DON'T NEED HOGWARTS TO FIND WIZARDS.

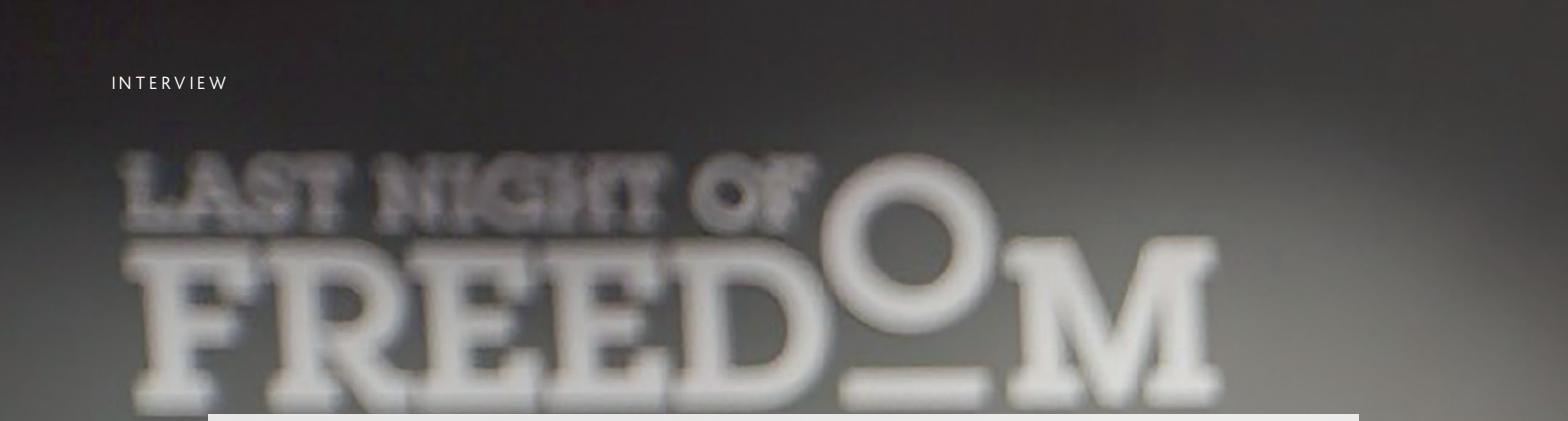
We give our students the skills you need to keep your business thriving. They're smart, inquisitive, confident and more than ready for the world of work.

#HARDWORKWINS

Want to know how industry placements and apprenticeships can help you?
Let's talk.

WWW.
GATESHEAD.
AC.UK

0191 490 2258
employers@gateshead.ac.uk



An Entrepreneur Interview with...

MATT MAVIR

Founder of Last Night of Freedom

Taking inspiration from Newcastle's vibrant nightlife, Matt Mavir, Founder of www.lastnightoffreedom.co.uk, has created a niche company that specialises in delivering lasting memories for 'stags' and 'hens' on an international scale.

The business provides an all-round, comprehensive service for stag and hen parties across the UK, in Europe as well as in Las Vegas.

Now in its 20th year, Matt is focused on delivering continued growth and embarking on new projects to strengthen the company's brand and following. He explains all in the latest Entrepreneurs' Forum member interview.

Tell me about your background in business.

I had various jobs throughout my time in education, but no real business experience until I set the company up during my third year at Manchester Metropolitan University.

How was Last Night of Freedom founded?

I took a year out of university and spent that time in Newcastle because I really liked the city. After seeing the nightlife in the city, I suppose I put two and two together linking the nightlife with hen and stag dos, and that was the inspiration behind starting the company.

It was back in 1999 during the dotcom boom when people were getting funding for any good idea with '.com' at the end of it! I played a lot of sport, but was injured, so I had quite a bit of free time and ended up creating a website just out interest.

I needed a topic and being a student at the time, I thought I could write about the vibrant nightlife of Newcastle, which then got me thinking about stag dos. My initial idea was to write a website that would get enough traffic to attract advertising space.

In my first six months, I made about £23, which I was really chuffed about! And then one day about five or six emails came in, which gave me the confidence that I was on to something and I began selling stag and hen weekends through an agency, and the business has grown ever since.

In your own words, what is it that the company does?

We provide people with a solution for their stag or hen weekends, all the way from advice and the inspiration to the weekend itself, including organising the travel and accommodation, and much more.

Last Night of Freedom currently operates 70 locations throughout the UK, in Europe and in Las Vegas.

What is your proudest moment with Last Night of Freedom?

We've done a lot of things over the years and it will be nice to celebrate our 20th anniversary later in the year, in November.

For me, though, it was the moment when things really started to get serious for the business. It was in 2013 and, up until that point, we had been setting up other companies and sites, but that year was the defining moment that saw all our efforts go into Last Night of Freedom.

We really started to make strides, doing more market research, branding sessions and other initiatives that have contributed massively to our growth.

Is there a particular mistake you have made while in business? And how did you overcome/learn from it?

Loads! In the early years, we signed some contracts that came with good financial arrangements, but real stringent terms that actually nearly crippled the business. So, I've learnt to pay even more attention to the fine print on contracts.

We're also very reliant on search engines and in the past we have pushed SEO a bit too far and got our fingers burnt! Nowadays, we have reined ourselves in a bit more than we used to.

What is your USP?

We try to do everything right and as well as can be done. Our industry can be seen as a murky one, so we try to buck that trend.

We ensure that our staff are paid well, so, for example, we signed up to the living wage years ago, became ABTA registered and fully compliant, so we're not cutting any corners.

How has the company grown and what do you attribute this to?

Probably the defining moment for the company in 2013, when we focused solely on Last Night of Freedom, as opposed to having different irons in the fire.

Sometimes multiple enterprises and ideas can become too hard to manage, but since we took the decision, we haven't looked back.

Do you live by/do business by a certain motto?

Profit is the aim of the game but it's important to treat everyone fairly in the pursuit of it – customers, staff, suppliers and partners. I want to be able to look myself in the eye and know I did things the right way.

What are the future plans of Last Night of Freedom?

Recently, we went further up the supply chain in the industry and became shareholders of Honeypot House, in Newcastle's Bigg Market. It is part of a £300,000 project that has seen the conversion of flats into themed apartments for stag and hen dos.

We'll be looking to progress this project and extending our core services as we aim for further growth.



Matt Mavir is a member of the Entrepreneurs' Forum, a group of like-minded people who come together at inspirational events to share best practice, create valuable connections and help each other to grow their businesses. For more information, visit www.entrepreneursforum.net



SOUTH TYNESIDE OFFSHORE SECTOR HUB ATTRACTING GLOBAL BUSINESSES

South Tyneside is raising its profile with international businesses thanks to the emergence of a growing offshore 'hub' within the borough.

One Trinity Green, in South Shields, has seen the growth of a number of offshore businesses taking advantage of its mixed workspace and services as well as utilising the borough's strong strategic location to boost their offshore sector.

The South Tyneside Council business centre, currently houses an array of international offshore businesses including: Catalage, Tilone, Magellan and McAusland Turner who have chosen the borough as their UK base.

Reece McAllister, Clients and Projects Director at Catalage, said: "Having extensively investigated the other options available across the North East, the incubation space at One Trinity Green was the ideal fit for our growing business."

Catalage provides operational, strategic and commercial support for international offshore companies wanting to access the UK market as well as UK businesses looking to expand internationally.

TEESSIDE'S FACTORIES OF THE FUTURE TAKE SHAPE

Architects are shaping the factories of the future on the multi-million pound park that is set to bring hundreds of jobs to the Tees Valley.

Around 180,000 sq ft of factory space is being designed specifically for the tenants of phase one of TeesAMP advanced manufacturing park.

Now the team behind the designs – which will be home to the next generation of UK manufacturing – have spoken about the creation of the first 14 buildings.

Mark Barlow, co-founder and project architect at Logic Architecture, explained: "It's a real privilege for our team – who live and work in Tees Valley – to play such a strategic part in shaping our industrial future.

"Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley has such strong manufacturing heritage – we've built half the world – from the ironworks that once stood on the TeesAMP site to the former shipyards on the Tees.

"TeesAMP will be the catalyst for an industrial renaissance in Tees Valley, and it's on us as architects to make sure we create an industrial home that will stand the test of time."





CONTRACT PREPARES THE WORK FOR IAMP

Work that will prepare the ground for future phases of one of the country's most significant manufacturing hubs is now underway after a North East construction firm was appointed.

Henry Boot Developments (HBD) on behalf of IAMP LLP has awarded a contract for infrastructure works for its 150-hectare manufacturing park to North East headquartered Esh Civils, a delivery arm of Esh Construction. The contract will see design, construction and installation of the infrastructure required to support the first phase of development of the IAMP and involves the delivery of highways, drainage, utilities, landscaping and environmental mitigation work. The works will be managed by HBD on behalf of IAMP LLP and is expected to take around 12 months to deliver.

It will pave the way for further building on site, after it was announced that the first unit had been snapped up by French headquartered SNOP.

WHP ENGINEERING SECURES SIGNIFICANT FW CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Tyneside-based WHP Engineering Ltd has secured major investment from the Tees Valley Catalyst Fund, managed by FW Capital.

WHP is an engineering company specialising in the design, construction, integration and maintenance of hygienic cleanrooms, laboratories, containment facilities, sterile processing environments and process plant manufacturing facilities.

This is its latest round of finance after investment from Enact, the SME Fund managed by Endless LLP, in September 2016. Enact targets transformational investment of up to £5 million into lower mid-market corporates that have a robust business model but are facing capital constraints, strategic challenges or operational issues.

Subsequent strengthening of the management team and board has seen the Gateshead-based business significantly grow turnover and successfully deliver a number of projects for blue chip clients such as Rolls Royce, GSK and Siemens. The business now stands as a 90-strong team of planners, designers, programmers, engineers and highly-skilled, technical experts and support functions.



The **B2B** Marketing Specialists

HORIZONWORKS

T 0345 075 5955 www.horizonworks.co.uk

SK CLICKS WITH NE EXPO AUDIENCE

Leading photo experience company, SK Click Events, has experienced a boom in business following a successful exhibition.

Owner Kirsty Calvert attended the North East Expo held at Kingston Park Rugby Club, and she has been blown away by the response to two of their nine newest products.

Taking photo experiences to the next level, SK Click has nine free standing, eye catching and easily branded products, that create fun at every event, whilst also boosting social media and catching data in a GDPR compliant way.

During the North East Expo, Kirsty demonstrated the beauty of their SK Glam Clam, coordinating it with the SK Mosaic, building it into a photo of the Tyne Bridge taken by Simon Williams of Crest Photography.

Kirsty explains: "The SK Glam Cam is ideal for corporate events and we knew people would be interested in seeing the Mosaic build through the day with lots of images we either took with the Glam Cam or pulled through from #NEExpo.

"But we were absolutely blown away – at times we were three deep on the stand, luckily we were staffed with three of team on hand to demonstrate how the products work and make sure as many people as possible had their photo taken."



As well as the high level of interest on the day, the last week has been the busiest SK Click have had since launching onto the scene with its new products earlier this year. Within days the company had a tranche of proposals for corporate events this year to provide and a number of photographers keen to link up for use of the mosaic at events they are photographing.

Marc Gordon of Fresh Events, who organise the NE Expo and the Tees Business Show, said: "When I first met Kirsty and she was explaining the SK products to me, I was a little hesitant thinking it was just photo booths. I am so glad I listened and she brought the products to the NE Expo as it brought them to life for not just me, but many attendees and other exhibitors – the technology is outstanding and I recommend anyone holding a corporate event to build the cost of SK Click into their budget.

"This was an ideal case study of how the Expos we organise support business and boost companies profiles. We are looking forward to Kirsty and the team demonstrating her products at the next Teesside Business Show on October 3rd at our new venue, Wynyard Hall."

More information on the SK Glam Cam, SK Mosaic and the other products is available on www.skclick.co.uk

NO DRAMA FOR SOUTH SHIELDS THEATRE COMPANY'S REFURBISHMENT AFTER PAINT DONATION

One of the region's most popular theatres has benefited from a generous donation from one of the world's biggest manufacturers of paint.



Alex Wardle, Process Engineer at AkzoNobel Ashington with Ray Spencer MBE, Executive Director of The Customs House.

The Customs House in South Shields, currently celebrating its 25th anniversary, gratefully received a donation of over 300 litres of Dulux paint from AkzoNobel Ashington to help towards its refurbishment programme.

The riverside-based Customs House, which houses a 439-seater theatre, 145 seater studio/cinema and a busy restaurant and gallery space, welcomes almost one million visitors each year who come to enjoy the theatre's variety of performances including plays, musicals and comedy.

AkzoNobel heard about the amazing work the theatre does to support local community groups, charities and non-for-profit organisations, who depend on the theatre as a vital meeting place. The paint is being used in the renovation of the theatre's public areas from front of house through to the community meeting rooms.

AkzoNobel is committed to bringing colour into people's lives through a variety of community engagement projects, showing the world that AkzoNobel Cares.

Alex Wardle, Process Engineer at AkzoNobel Ashington, said: "We are thrilled to support The Customs House as they play an integral role in the local community and mirror our own responsibility to create inspiring living spaces for people to enjoy.

"We were proud to find out that our gesture helped to encourage five other local businesses to follow suit and donate towards the cause. We are happy in the knowledge all of the visitors and patrons using the theatre will benefit from the donated materials and the building will look amazing for years to come."

Ray Spencer MBE, Executive Director of The Customs House, said: "We are absolutely delighted that AkzoNobel was able to support The Customs House in its 25th anniversary year. It certainly has an impact to our visitors and artists coming into our building to see such a bright and welcoming foyer thanks to the company's contribution."

For more information about AkzoNobel, visit www.akzonobel.com





AMF
ADVANCED MANUFACTURING FORUM
HORIZONWORKS

AMF Marketing Club: Organisational Culture and the Role of Marketing

THE VOICE OF MANUFACTURING IN THE NORTH EAST



THE AMF'S MARKETING CLUB IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HORIZON WORKS

We recently saw the return of the increasingly popular Advanced Manufacturing Forums' Marketing Club event held in conjunction with strategic marketing partner Horizon Works.

Held at Miller UK's headquarters in Cramlington, Barry Robison, Marketing Manager at Miller UK gave an impressive and insightful presentation highlighting the importance of organisational culture and the role that marketing plays. Following this there was an informative Q&A session with Barry and Samantha Vassallo, Managing Director of Horizon Works.

Guests were then treated to a fascinating tour of Miller UK's manufacturing facilities.
















Marketing
that is clear,
connected and
purposeful


40 YEARS OF




MILLER








Proud of our Innovative Products
MILLER


MILLER


MILLER




LER



Newly appointed Group Managing Director, Craig Swinhoe, with New Executive Chair, Dave Crone.

OMEGA PLASTICS GROUP APPOINTS NEW GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR

As the business enters an exciting chapter at its new flagship headquarters in Team Valley, a new Group Managing Director has been appointed at Omega Plastics Group.

Craig Swinhoe has taken over the reins of the plastics injection moulding and tooling group from Dave Crone, who has held the position since 2006.

With a broad range of experience leading businesses and developing and executing group strategy, most recently as Group Managing Director of Quantum Pharma, Craig was identified as the best fit for the role.

Craig's appointment is part of a strategic succession plan for Dave Crone and his fellow shareholder and former chair, Chris Thompson. Dave Crone will move into the role of Executive Chair, where he will work with and provide support to Craig and transition to a part-time role. As executive chair Dave will also continue to utilise his significant engineering experience to provide technical and operational support to the Group's key customers operating across the automotive, FMCG, healthcare and building products sectors, as well as seeking new opportunities and or technologies. Chris Thompson will continue to support the Group in a non-executive role.

"This is the start of an exciting new phase for the Omega Plastics Group," said Executive Chair, Dave Crone.

"Craig's appointment is part of a succession plan for myself and Chris. We have excellent technical engineering skills throughout the business but Craig will bring a different and complimentary strategic and commercial skillset and approach to build upon our business strategy and help drive OPG forward."

With over 15 years' experience as a corporate lawyer/partner, at two of the North East's most prestigious law firms, most recently as a Partner at Muckle LLP, Craig made the move into company management in 2015.

"Chris and I have known and worked with Craig for over 15 years as an adviser and having worked alongside the OPG team on a consultancy basis since December, Craig already has a good feel for the heartbeat, key drivers, markets and people within the business. His vast experience including leading another multi-site manufacturing business and his background and skillset will bring an exciting new dynamic to the Group," Dave added.

Craig, who is married with two daughters, is now in-post and is already using his knowledge and experience to start shaping the business' core growth strategy.

"I'm delighted to have been appointed to this role during an exciting period at Omega Plastics Group," Craig commented.

"The move to Team Valley earlier this year and the opportunities that this has afforded the Group already in the form of new contract wins has been absolutely fantastic. It is my job now to harness this success and work with the fantastically talented teams at Omega Plastics and Signal Plastics to build on the momentum.

"Dave, Chris and the team have done a great job over the past 13 years to grow the business from an SME with six employees to where it is today as a multi-million-pound turnover North East Company of the Year winner, with over 110 employees at two enviable manufacturing facilities. I look forward to working together with Dave, Chris and rest of the team to help OPG reach new heights."

The Omega Plastics Group provides a range of low to high volume rapid tooling and specialist multi-use plastic injection moulding services. The Group has enjoyed continued growth since its acquisition of high-volume plastic injection moulding specialist, Signal Plastics, in 2015.

In December 2016, the group relocated Signal Plastics to a larger 42,700 sq ft factory unit in Bentall Business Park, Washington and invested over £1 million in new injection moulding presses and overhead robotic equipment. Earlier this year, the group merged its two Omega Plastics sites in Blyth and Hartlepool into a new 45,000 sq ft facility on the Team Valley Trading Estate providing more than double the capacity of the two sites combined and new Group headquarters.

For more information, visit www.omega-plastics.co.uk

NORTHERN
SKILLS GROUP

EXPERTS IN **APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINING**

Supporting over 2000 businesses across the North East, find out how we can help your business grow through apprenticeship and training solutions.

HOW WE CAN HELP

- Apprenticeships
- Work Placements
- Free Distance Learning
- Technical Training
- Leadership & Management Courses

Plus more!

03453 40 40 40
www.northernskills.co.uk

AVID TECHNOLOGY ANNOUNCES NEW CHAIRMAN



L-R: AVID Technology Group's new chairman Andrew Hodgson with founder and managing director Ryan Maughan.

Award-winning automotive clean-tech firm AVID Technology Group in Northumberland has appointed one of the region's most prominent business figures, Andrew Hodgson, as its new non-executive chairman with immediate effect.

AVID Technology is a pioneer in the field of vehicle electrification and hybridisation. From its HQ in Cramlington, the company designs, manufactures and exports electric motors and powertrain components for next generation hybrid and electric vehicles.

Mr Hodgson has held various chief executive and senior board positions in high-end engineering businesses, including Soil Machine Dynamics (SMD), Spirit Aerosystems, Airbus and BAE Systems. He is also the Chairman of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and received an OBE for his services to manufacturing and the regional economy in 2015.

Ryan Maughan, AVID Technology MD said: "I am absolutely delighted to welcome Andrew to the AVID team. He brings a wealth of knowledge from his highly successful career building and scaling high growth technology focused businesses.

"I am looking forward to learning from his experiences and working together to further accelerate the growth of AVID.

"There is a fantastic opportunity to scale the AVID business right now, creating a true global leader in electrified powertrain components and a major employer in the region as the automotive market shifts to electric power."

Welcoming his new appointment, Andrew Hodgson said: "I am thrilled to join the AVID board, I've known the company for a number of years and when the opportunity arose to join Ryan's team, it was too good an opportunity to pass up.

"My focus and experience lies in high growth, high-tech businesses. Carbon reduction and climate change are major global issues and the electrification of vehicles is a huge opportunity. I am excited for the future of the business and believe that we are very fortunate to have a company with the capability, capacity and expertise of AVID based in the North East, and I look forward to the challenge of helping to drive its continued growth."

AVID exports its products and services into mainland Europe, the US and Asia. Its customer base includes high performance passenger car manufacturers and motorsport, alongside heavy-duty trucks, buses and off-highway machinery manufacturers, including AB Volvo, Caterpillar, Cummins, Jaguar Land Rover, McLaren Automotive, Paccar and Scania.

The company's rapidly growing reputation as one of the most advanced and skilled businesses in the electric vehicle sector led to AVID being named a potential tech 'Unicorn' by international investment group GP Bullhound in 2018. Through its inclusion in the list, GP Bullhound says AVID has the potential to follow the likes of Uber, AirBnB and Spotify to massive growth, which could one day be valued at over $1bn.

To find out more about AVID Technology go to www.avidtp.com

WARMER NIGHTS, WHATEVER THE WEATHER

Summer is just around the corner and it's the perfect time of year to start considering how you can really make the most of your home this year.



We all know how unpredictable the British weather can be, so we want you to make the most of the warmer days and lighter nights.

At Conservatory Roof Supplies, we have the ideal solution for you. By adding a conservatory to your home, you can keep cool during the summer and warm during the winter; all the while adding value to your home.

Will there be a heatwave in November, or will we see snow in July? Ok…perhaps the British weather isn't that extreme; but our point still stands, whatever the weather is doing outside, our conservatories can make sure that you don't have to feel it inside.

We create conservatory roofs which are fully insulated with PIR boards, plaster boarded on the inside, with lightweight tiling on the outside. We finish it all off with an internal plaster skim to give your conservatory that high-quality interior finish that we know makes all of the difference.

A conservatory brings the pleasures of indoor-outdoor living, meaning you can be surrounded by your gorgeous garden, while staying sheltered from the unpredictable British weather. Just imagine, after a long day at work, coming home to a bright and spacious conservatory where you can relax, unwind and enjoy the last few hours of glorious sunshine. There really is nothing better.

The installation of a conservatory brings many more benefits including, additional living space. With effective year-round insulation, any interior vision you have is possible. You could use your conservatory as a lounge area, a dining room, or even a bedroom, whatever suits your needs.

If you've already got a conservatory, but it isn't quite fulfilling its purpose or is a little lack lustre, not to worry – we offer a full removal service to rid you of your old roof or conservatory and we can design, manufacture and install a brand new one. It doesn't even have to be a whole revamp; if you fancy hanging on to your original conservatory window frames, or just extending the room further, then we can work with that too.

If you're dreaming of sunnier days and summer home improvements, then visit our website www.conservatoryroofsnortheast.com, or call us today on 0191 427 0222.

holgate HR

Are you maximising your organisation's greatest competitive advantage?

Would you value professional, high quality and responsive HR support in your organisation?

At Holgate HR, we believe that your people are your competitive advantage. We have worked with a number of the region's most successful businesses over the last 10 years providing tailored services to meet our clients' exact needs - so if you would like to discuss any HR related matter facing your organisation, why not get in touch to arrange a free consultation?

10 Years of Providing HR Solutions

0191 236 1459 | support@holgatehr.co.uk | www.holgatehr.co.uk

Performance Management | Employee Engagement | Pay & Reward | Employee Relations | Investors In People | HR Software

IN CONVERSATION WITH...



CAROLINE DIXON AND ANDY HOLGATE

Founders of Holgate HR

How was Holgate HR formed?

Caroline: Andy & I decided the time was right to take the step and go out on our own after previously working together, combining our differing backgrounds and complementary experiences. We have never looked back since and are very proud to have thrived during our first decade. We will be celebrating 10 years in business with an event at the Biscuit Factory in July.

What was your background in business?

Andy: We both have an HR background and between us approximately 50 years' worth of experience, gained from working across a number of differing sectors. Having held quite different roles in the past, blending our respective skills within our own business has worked really well.

In your own words what do you do?

Caroline: In essence we support North East, national and international clients with their people needs, providing them with a professional, reliable HR resource to support their organisation. This makes our work really interesting and varied. It really is fair to say that there is rarely a dull moment!

What has been your biggest challenge?

Andy: Building a business from scratch and managing growth is naturally stretching, but enjoyable too. Taking the time within this to reflect and develop strategy in a more considered way can also be really challenging.

What is your proudest moment?

Caroline: It is difficult to single one out but I know we are extremely proud of our year on year growth. Equally, satisfying is our great client retention and the relationships that we've built and sustained over the past decade. Client feedback is hugely positive on a consistent basis.

Do you have a company USP?

Andy: As experienced and qualified HR professionals we can provide a huge range of services and tailor these accordingly to meet the exact needs of the client. We pride ourselves on being able to determine, in conjunction with each client, what the right solution is for them, based on what they are trying to achieve, the resources/budget they have available and our experience, knowledge and networks.

Tell us about your team?

Caroline: We have a lovely close-knit team of four with Andy and I ably supported by HR Administrator



Hannah Dixon (who we keep having to point out to clients is no relation to me) and Joe Roberts who works on business development. In addition to our strong team we also have an excellent group of Associates who help us to support differing client work, often bringing their own particular specialist expertise and added value.

How has the industry evolved in the past decade?

Andy: We are living in such uncertain and fast-moving times and as such reorganisation and change are a constant feature for many clients, who need to respond to developments in their respective sectors or changing competitive pressures. Advances in technology have also brought about significant changes to the way in which people work nowadays, when compared with a decade ago, and increasingly more of the products and services we offer to clients are digital. Essentially though HR is all about people, and at its core the need to support and enable organisations to get the best from those that work/volunteer for them, remains the same.

Do you like to do business by a certain motto?

We passionately believe in the saying that "people are an organisation's greatest competitive advantage!"

What are your future plans?

Caroline: Over the next 5-10 years we plan to grow the team, and to reinforce our building reputation and presence in neighbouring regions, as well as here in the North-East.

Who are your heroes and mentors?

Andy: Sir Alex Ferguson. To have achieved what he did so consistently over 20 plus years is a truly remarkable feat of leadership, tenacity and personal resilience.

Caroline: My family unit (and particularly my two daughters) for their support and understanding whilst we established and grew the business.

How do you like to unwind?

Andy: Anyone who knows me will know that I'm a bit of a workaholic, if I'm honest, but when I do take some downtime, I enjoy relaxing with family and friends and also love to travel.

Caroline: A glass of wine, eating out and decent holidays!

For further information visit the website www.holgatehr.co.uk



SEVEN TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS FROM EMPLOYEE SABOTAGE

Finding out that you and your business have fallen victim to sabotage is awful. Uncovering that the damage was done from the inside and it was an employee who caused it can be even harder to swallow.

After dealing with the initial shock and disappointment of the situation you'll want answers.

Why has this happened? How has it happened? And what needs to be done to make sure it never happens again?

It's possible that your risk analysis has typically been focused elsewhere until now. Such as keeping a keen eye on a bitter competitor or alerting staff to a vocally dissatisfied customer. Afterall, it's perhaps easier to accept that someone wishing harm on your business isn't on your payroll.

The unfortunate truth is that employee sabotage is a thing. The good news is that there are processes that you can put in place to increase protection.

Types of employee sabotage

You could be dealing with varying degrees of employee sabotage, such as:

- A disgruntled employee repeatedly acting up after missing a promotion.
- An online smear campaign caused by an employee with a grudge.
- An employee having a very competitive side hustle.
- A developer deleting crucial code during their notice period.
- An outspoken employee coercing others against the employer.
- A trouble making employee spreading gossip (often on platforms such as Slack or WhatsApp)

Each problem will require a case by case resolution. But there are approaches you can follow to manage them effectively, mitigate risk and help your defence should the problem lead to tribunal.

Tips to prevent employee sabotage

1. Start at the beginning. A thorough recruitment process can help to make sure you are hiring employees that are a good fit for your business. Comprehensive reference checks, a reliable interview process and employee vetting can highlight causes of concern early on.

2. Need to know basis. With information sharing in mind, it's wise to consider who needs to know what and how much. Updating managers and employees is beneficial but you'll also need to protect yourself when it comes to sensitive data.

3. Policies for protection. Policies are a good way to inform employees of your expectations and can help you to manage a difficult employee. Policies on social media use, conduct and data protection can all help to provide a solution in the event of employee sabotage.

4. A time and place for feedback. Regular reviews offer an opportunity to pick up on potential problems. You can use this time for feedback and to look for a resolution. Correct documentation is essential should you need to refer back to previous meetings.

5. Don't skimp on security. Change passcodes and revoke access when employees leave, or sooner if the situation is urgent. You'll also want to protect your online brand reputation. Use social media listening to watch for brand mentions and address any online grievances.

6. Company culture. An inclusive and diverse culture that promotes employee voice can keep you in touch with the overall well-being of your workforce. If trouble is brewing, it could be time to collect feedback or consider a team-building away day.

7. Be clear on the purpose of WhatsApp, Slack or other communication channels. It's common for businesses to set up work WhatsApp groups (or Slack) but if the content of the chat is not moderated, it is easy for it to become a place for misplaced chat. Employers can mitigate the risk by being clear what the purpose of the platform is, that it's understood and you are clear on what is acceptable and not. Failing to do so could leave you liable for any hurt caused (vicarious liability) or having to deal with grievances.

Whether you are in the midst of suspected employee sabotage or want to know how best to protect your business in the future, The HR Dept Newcastle can offer up some practical and pragmatic advice.

www.hrdept.co.uk

QUALITY NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION

Providing a personal approach to jewellery design

Clean, check & rhodium plate your ring, in just one hour **Only £15 per ring**



Beautiful wedding & engagement rings hand-made locally





Bespoke jewellery design by...

WHICKHAM JEWELLERS

Bishops Court, Rectory Lane, Whickham, Newcastle, NE16 4PA
0191 420 0144 • www.whickhamjewellers.co.uk



A GREAT BRITISH PUB

Situated in the charming village of Wylam, Northumberland. We serve proper, tasty and wholesome pub food, using the best locally sourced ingredients the season has to offer. Our menu changes daily and our Sunday lunch is delicious.

We are dog-friendly and have a wide selection of beers, ciders and cask ales. We also have a range of spirits and a fabulous wine list.

Come and relax in a friendly, cosy environment and enjoy our top-class hospitality. You can also enjoy food and drink in our beautiful beer garden, or why not stay over in one of our guest bedrooms?

Main Road, Wylam, Northumberland, NE41 8AQ
01661 854 538 ~ www.theshipinnwylam.co.uk



th

birthday

sachins restaurant • forth banks • newcastle upon tyne • ne1 3sg

www.sachins.co.uk



In a new series of features, we explore the dynamics of family life in business…

...Keep it in the family...

Barry Wilkinson, managing director at Park Electrical Distributors, has been working alongside his daughter, PR and communications manager, Rachel Wilkinson since 2013. Formed in 1990, Park is the North East's largest independent electrical wholesaler, with branches in Middlesbrough, Sunderland, Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle and Cramlington.

Barry Wilkinson
managing director

I am not from an entrepreneurial background, I was born and raised in Langley Park, Durham. My father, Robert, was a miner and my mother, Joyce, worked in a sausage factory. I was the youngest of three siblings by 18 years. By the time I was of working age, both my parents had retired.

Bringing Rachel into the business didn't initially cross my mind as she was carving a career in marketing and communications and her skill set didn't initially feel of value to Park Electrical. Rachel was working in Leeds and driving 160-mile round trip every day and I wished she worked closer to home and didn't have to drive so far. It's ironic that my parental instincts were the beginning of the realisation that her knowledge and skills were exactly what my company needed.

I made it clear from the outset there would be no favouritism, she would have to work hard and earn the respect from directors, management and co-workers. I'm pleased to say that after a shaky start, Rachel has grown into the role and has a natural flair for business and people.

Rachel has strong empathy levels and relates to all those she works with. This is a great skill and priceless in business, when it's accompanied with intelligence and hard work. Rachel is a breath of fresh air when it comes to modern business, her youthful approach and understanding of sales, marketing and commerce generally makes her contribution invaluable. Because of all these attributes, Rachel is mature beyond her years as a businesswoman and this is what I admire the most.

I would like to think Rachel has picked up traits from my character and personality that have stood up well for me over my 35-year career in wholesaling. I'm a people person and people are what make business work. It's important to show respect at all levels and always be honest, this will get you a long way and when you add in enthusiasm and hard work you have the ingredients of success. I'm sure Rachel has learnt this from me.

Rachel Wilkinson
PR and communications manager

Before I joined Park Electrical Distributors, I worked for Tunstall Healthcare, Yorkshire in its communications department. I was fortunate to travel all around the UK, Ireland and Europe meeting healthcare professionals and visiting patients, experiencing first-hand the benefits the telecare systems brought. I gained lots of experience writing case studies and press releases and worked closely with their marketing team. At this time I was living in Leeds having graduated with a degree in Public Relations.

However, I decided I wanted to get onto the property ladder and bought a house back in Durham (always been a home bird at heart), which meant I was travelling a lot! I was also ambitious and craving new challenges to progress my career. I had a few conversations with my dad, asking advice on my situation and we realised Park had never really utilised marketing as such despite how successful the business was. I knew it would only benefit the growth to introduce it.

Working with my dad has taught me not to rush decisions, to think about the outcomes and consequences but also not to be afraid to sometimes take the risk!

As a family, we are pretty good at leaving work at work although it sometimes spills over. My sister has told us off for talking business when we have been out for family meals a few times!

I admire many thhings about my dad and one being the unbelievable mental strength he has both in business and in home life. I've never known anything like it, and would hope that I can develop mine into even a fraction of the levels he possesses. His ability to understand people, relate to them, and know how to really bring out the best in them is such an important skill in business and the staff at Park are a testament to this. Finally, his knowledge, I can't think of anyone else I'd go to for advice on every aspect of my life whether it be business or personal. I know he's developed, learned and captured this knowledge over the years through self-teaching, learning from others and experiences. This is definitely something I try to do, always learn, and hopefully I'll be able to do the same for my children in the years to come.

www.park-electrical.co.uk


Michelle Rainbow

NORTH EAST MILESTONE REACHED AS BUSINESS LEADERS PARTNER WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS

Across the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, business leaders are volunteering their time and expertise to help local schools improve careers guidance for pupils.

Michelle Rainbow, Skills Director at the North East LEP, explains how the region's Enterprise Adviser network has reached a milestone.

At the end of 2015 we launched our Enterprise Adviser network, which partners North East schools with business leaders who help shape the delivery of careers guidance. Our Enterprise Advisers work closely with schools' senior leadership teams, helping to embed meaningful employer engagement into our schools and raising the standard of careers education for pupils.

This year, we're celebrating reaching a milestone in the programme: we now have 100 Enterprise Advisers, each of whom has been matched with a secondary school in our region. Every one of these people is making a real difference to the lives of children and young people in the North East, helping to make sure that they are prepared for the world of work and aware of the range of opportunities that await them.

The Enterprise Adviser network spans the region, from Berwick to Durham, and the Advisers play a crucial role in supporting schools to achieve the Good Career Guidance Benchmarks, which were originally piloted here in the North East and which now form part of the Government's Careers Strategy for all schools.

By piloting the Benchmarks in the North East, we saw first-hand the hugely positive impact that engagement with employers can have on outcomes for pupils. A relationship with an Enterprise Adviser is one way in which schools in our region are creating this engagement and embedding it into their practice. An Enterprise Adviser can be the key to bridging the gap that can exist between education and employment.

Of course, it's in all of our interests to ensure that the next generation has the skills and knowledge they need to enter the workforce or continue to further or higher education, or training. Top quality careers guidance is essential to social mobility, and it's one of the key ways in which we want to give all children and young people the best possible start to their working lives.

Our Enterprise Advisers tell us that they really value the opportunity to give back to their local area and to inspire young people about careers within their industries. In turn, we value our Enterprise Advisers' generous contributions of time, skills and expertise.

As a result, young people in the North East will be better informed when it comes to making decisions about their futures. They will understand the types of skills that employers are looking for, and we hope that they will be inspired by seeing examples of real careers they could go into in the North East, through their experiences of employer engagement.

An active network of 100 people who are committed to working alongside teachers and school leadership teams really is something worth celebrating. And we're always looking to build the network even further. Our ambition is that every school in the region will have its own Enterprise Adviser, so if you think that you could help a school to embed employer engagement into its careers education, then please do get in touch via our website.

To find out more about the North East LEP's Skills programmes, including the Enterprise Adviser network, visit www.nelep.co.uk

NORTH EAST LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP REVIEWS THE YEAR



Helen Golightly, Chief Executive, North East Local Enterprise Partnership

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has published its annual report, detailing its activities during 2018-2019. Helen Golightly, Chief Executive of the North East LEP, reflects on what's been achieved for the North East during the past year.

The last year has been a positive one for the North East, despite the current uncertainty around Brexit and how this will impact businesses here in the region. As you'll see in our annual report, we have continued to make good progress in our drive to create more and better jobs for the region, with more than 71,600 new jobs already added to the regional economy since 2014 – a significant stride towards our ultimate aim of creating 100,000 more and better jobs by 2024.

Our annual report gives you an overview of our five programmes of activity from within our Strategic Economic Plan. It demonstrates the positive progress made in each area and how, by working closely with our partners across the region, we're working towards fulfilling our long term vision for the North East economy. It also details achievements and milestones in relation to the three funds that we manage - Local Growth Fund, Enterprise Zones and the North East Investment Fund.

One of our key events this year was the launch of the updated Strategic Economic Plan for the North East. More than 400 people joined us on the day to hear how the Plan has been refreshed and updated to respond to our ever-changing economic climate. The Plan sets the strategic direction for our work and I was very happy to see so many of our partners there on the day to learn more about the Plan and how we can all act as advocates for the region.

Many North East businesses, business support organisations and entrepreneurs are also actively involved in our programmes, from Scaleup North East, which provides bespoke support to ambitious businesses which are ready to achieve the next level of growth, to the Enterprise Adviser network, which sees business leaders working together with school leadership teams to strengthen careers guidance for young people.

Representatives from the business, education and voluntary sectors also sit on our North East Brexit Group, alongside the local authorities and trade unions. The importance of forming a group like this was clear, and it's allowed us to have a collective regional voice and influence the national debate from a North East perspective.

Looking ahead, an important piece of work for us now is to develop the North East Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). As ever, this can't be done in isolation and we will be developing the North East LIS in close partnership with stakeholders in the region and with government. The LIS dovetails with the North East Strategic Economic Plan and focuses on opportunities to strengthen North East productivity and standards of living.

Putting together our annual report always provides a chance to reflect on what's been achieved and any challenges we've faced. It's a chance to demonstrate the breadth of our activities, which cover areas including innovation, skills and business growth, and which pinpoint sectors where we know the North East has the opportunity to demonstrate strong growth: energy, advanced manufacturing, health and life sciences, and digital.

There's space for every part of our business community to be involved in our work and help us to work together to achieve our aim of creating an inclusive, sustainable and strong North East economy. You can read our annual report and find out more about all of our programmes on our website – www.nelep.co.uk – and I hope you will join us in working towards an even stronger North East.

www.nelep.co.uk


John McCabe

REFLECTIONS ON THE NORTH OF TYNE MAYORAL ELECTION

By John McCabe

I've had a few weeks to reflect on my first foray into elected politics as an independent candidate for North of Tyne mayor...

I always understood but never accepted the arguments against the new North of Tyne Combined Authority. Nor have I ever believed the mayor would be without the powers to make a real difference to people's lives.

Jamie Driscoll has been handed a great opportunity to shape the future of our region and as somebody who lives and works here and with children learning here, I wish him every success. The mayor has his own mandate now but if I can help him or his team with any of the issues I campaigned on, I'm just a phone call away.

I took some persuading to enter the race but once I did, I never regretted the decision for a moment. It was hard work, much more so than I thought it would be and I discovered if as a candidate your every waking moment isn't consumed by the campaign you're really not doing it properly.

My campaign was overwhelmingly positive and it was based on a manifesto that was bold yet realistic.

I wanted to create a fairer, greener society underpinned by a stronger economy. I was committed to creating the conditions for business growth which would see more of our people into more and better jobs. I would have established the most comprehensive review of diversity, equality, social mobility and mental health ever undertaken in the UK. We would have smashed the barriers to people achieving their full potential and yes, by the end of my first term in office we would have seen a mental health counsellor in every school.

We had plans for more affordable, sustainable housing, support for first time buyers, improved digital connectivity and the long overdue, game changing investment we need in our public transport. And I would have built on this first stage of devolution in our region to attract more investment, further powers and a wider reach.

Jamie Driscoll is undisputedly the candidate with the mandate but I hope the response to my campaign and manifesto won't be overlooked.

In just eight weeks and from a standing start our campaign attracted a small army of volunteers. It was backed by people who had previously voted for one of the established parties but had grown disillusioned by politics. We won support from left, right and centre and were endorsed by people across the private, public and voluntary sectors.

We won more than 31,000 first preference votes and a big majority of second preferences. Added together, the first and second preference boxes against my name on the ballot paper attracted more crosses than those for any other candidate.

The issues on which I campaigned matter to people's lives and the powers at the mayor's disposal provide the opportunity to deliver fundamental change.

This campaign was always about those issues and while it's too early for me to know if I will ever run for office again, I will always remain committed to these causes.

I'm proud of the campaign and I'm grateful to everyone who contributed to it. This is my opportunity to express my thanks.

I'm lucky to work with some hugely talented people at Fusion. The business I created in 2013 is safe in their hands while I continue to champion causes close to my heart.

When the campaign started I had no idea so many people would volunteer so much of their own time to craft and help share our message. From the policy and strategy team, none of whom had ever worked on a political campaign before, to the volunteers who walked miles distributing leaflets, I am forever in your debt, thank you. Everything good about our campaign was down to you, anything that fell short was on me.

It was a privilege to run for mayor and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. What's not to love about spending eight weeks travelling across Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland listening and learning, sharing and campaigning? I'm optimistic about the future of our region. I hope the politicians who represent us will realise the responsibility they've been handed and will seize the opportunity before them. We all have an interest in that.

@john_fusionpr



Whether you have an existing business, looking to start a business or just want to talk business, we can help.

Your SME Centre of Excellence offers start up to scale up support including investment. Whatever your business needs contact the SME Centre of Excellence first.

Your one-stop for all business support!

Call: 0844 24 777 04 ● Email: team@smecofe.com


Ammar Mirza CBE

FEAR THE LAST FRONTIER

The single biggest barrier to personal or professional growth is fear.

Sounds strange but if you stopped to think about it, you would soon realise that it wasn't that you didn't know how to do something that prevented you from trying something new or that didn't know anyone at a networking event that you then decided not to attend, but more the fear of failing at a task or fear of not connecting with someone.

We have all experienced failure at some point and it generally doesn't feel good. The advent of mental health challenges, that seem far more prevalent now, can be directly linked to how we feel and how we fail.

Social media has changed how we engage and interact with one another, with this frenzied focus on being liked or getting shares and suffering from anxiety when we don't. For me it is anything but social. Unsocial media would be more appropriate. This age of living so publicly has made us even more conscientious of ourselves and amplifying the effects of failing. If someone tripped over, the people around them would probably chuckle and that would be it. Now it is captured and shared forever, reminding and reinforcing the negative feeling of this trivial fail in perpetuity.

There are a number of schools of thought that now encourage failure, as it is perceived as a route to success, and without it you will never succeed. However, I do not share this view as if you set-out at the start to fail, the likelihood is you will never succeed. For me the most important aspect is having a goal, having a plan to achieve that goal and then being single-mindedly focused on realising that goal. Desire, Direction and Discipline are part of the "Power of 3" methodology I have developed. Of course you may need to try different approaches to eventually realising success, but this should be seen as learning. When Thomas Edison was told he had 999 failures before he eventually created the lightbulb he responded "I learned 999 ways of not creating a light bulb, but I then realised the one way to do so".

How we approach and address failure is the be all and end all of success, especially as the fear of failure prevents us from even starting a task. The average time we will start something new before giving up is less than .2%, **we simply give-up even before trying!**

So what can we do to start addressing our fear? Especially when what we fear hardly ever materialises and we make the fear worse by constantly thinking about it. Keeping a fear list, writing down the things we fear is a great way of starting to tackle this issue. Alongside each fear write down what is the worst that could happen and then next to that what you can do to overcome this. Before you know it you will realise it isn't a big deal and certainly something that can be easily overcome. Let's make fear a thing of the past and fearless something we aspire to. It is when we get out of our comfort zone that we truly start to prosper. **Livelong and Fearless!**

Ammar Mirza CBE is the founder and chairman of Asian Business Connexions, Board member of North East LEP and holds various other positions across the private, public and third sectors.



ABC 10th Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony

in association with GREAT ANNUAL SAVINGS GROUP

The Power of 10

10 years of Connecting, Supporting & Promoting the whole community.

At the Gosforth Park Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne, Thursday 3rd October, 7pm until late.

An evening filled with fun, celebration and success.

Hear from the UK Indian High Commission, various dignitaries and previous award winners.

Enjoy a four course authentic Punjabi meal.

Experience a fusion of cultural entertainment.

Engage with some of the most successful Asian businesses and support organisations from across the North of England. Celebrate a commitment to diversity through an awards ceremony that recognises the significant and sustained impact of the Asian community across Yorkshire, North West and North East.

Support our local charity the PIE Project Trust that is helping transform the lives of future generations by developing their personal and professional skills.

Get your tickets early to avoid disappointment - only £75 each or £700 for a table of 10

Email events@abconnexions.org or call 0844 24 777 05 now!

Email: info@abconnexions.org | Web: www.abconnexions.org
The Beacon, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 9PN
Tel: 01912424892 | Twitter: @abconnexions

Tune in to ABC Show Business each Friday morning between 9-11am www.spicefm.co.uk

Only a limited amount of tables remain!

Previous supporters include:

GAINFORD GROUP · Northumberland County Council · Newcastle College · northumbria UNIVERSITY · 1762 · BREWIN DOLPHIN · Northumbria University NEWCASTLE · GREAT ANNUAL SAVINGS GROUP · INSIGHT · PIE Primary Inspiration through Enterprise · North East England Chamber of Commerce · yaba yorkshire asian business association Celebrating Success · SME Centre of Excellence · NORTHERN POWERHOUSE · UNISON the public service union · Armed Forces Covenant · FAB Federation of Asian Business · ABC Asian Business Connexions · Northumberland Northumberland County Council · AVEIKA Restaurant & Late Bar Dine · Drink · Dance · HUDSON All Day Eatery & Late Bar · BONBAR · County Hotel Newcastle · itv · NWABA











ABCURRY CLUB

The hugely popular sell-out ABCurry Club took place on Thursday 25th April at the SME Centre of Excellence in Ponteland. The Chair of the North East LEP – Andrew Hodgson – was the keynote speaker sharing details of the Local Industrial Strategy. Ammar Mirza shared details of the Primary2Prosperity Campaign. Guests enjoyed an interactive session alongside authentic Punjabi curry. The next event is taking place at New College Durham on the 13th June for more details contact **info@abconnexions.org**















IN CONVERSATION WITH...



SIMON DUNSTAN

Director, GT3 Architects

What were your career ambitions growing up?

My mum told me that apparently I wanted to be an architect from the age of four and would regularly tell everyone whilst out on walks in my pushchair. I had a brief dalliance with product design in my late teens, otherwise, it's been architect all the way for me.

Tell us about the inception of your company?

Timing is everything, apparently. So, it wasn't the most auspicious decision to start a new business in early 2008, just ahead of the worst global economic crisis in living memory. Ironically, the recession was good for us. As other businesses shrank, fractured and focused on survival, we grew, developed and thrived on the back of a fresh approach and a positive attitude.

What services do you provide?

We are a multi-disciplinary architectural practice offering a range of skills across a variety of sectors to private, public and third sector clients across the UK and now Europe. Our core skills include masterplanning, architecture and interior architecture but we also provide a range of specialist consultancy skills in brief writing, engagement and organisational performance.

What's your proudest business achievement?

Building a successful business full of such talented, committed people during the toughest economic climate and in my home city of Newcastle.

What challenges have you encountered?

Many! But mostly it has been about finding the right sort of clients with whom we share values, recruiting staff who share our culture and building a sustainable business.

How has the industry changed?

It has polarised. 95% of architects work in practices of less than 5 people on domestic projects in their local area. But the other 5% of practices turn over 50% of total industry income, are bigger and work on complex projects across multiple sectors, nationally and internationally. Experience at one end of the industry is not particularly helpful for the other. So, as a business and as employee, you have some big decisions to make about what sort of architecture you want to practise.

Who are your heroes in and out of business?

In terms of values and behaviour, my parents. It's important to believe in something and to stick to your principles in and out of business life. You have to be able to look yourself in the mirror every day. In business, there are a couple of former bosses who I won't mention by name. The first taught me the importance of a positive attitude as a tool to win and create work and motivate others, while the second showed me that an architectural practice can also be a successful business.

Is there a mantra you always aspire to do business by?

People Architecture – place people (not buildings) at the heart of our business.

Which fictional character do you most relate to?

I'd like to think Hans Solo but others will tell you that I'm probably more like Chewbacca!

How do you like to unwind?

Holidays, drinking, eating and watching sport counter-balanced with running (I despise it), squash (likely to kill me), 5-a-side (likely to kill someone else) and golf.

www.gt3architects.com

SALES IS A CULTURE NOT A DEPARTMENT

To some of my clients, especially those in the Scale-up phase of their business journey I must sound like a broken record, as I'm forever repeating this phrase; Sales *IS* a culture, *NOT* a department


Nicola Cook, CEO of Company Shortcuts.

I can't even claim ownership over this little gem of a phrase, as I first heard it spout from the mouth of my good friend, once business partner and serial entrepreneur Lara Morgan...and it's so true.

How many growing businesses attempt to solve their sales growth headaches, by implementing an expensive, often siloed Business Development Manager, or a team of Sales Reps, Account Managers and the like – only to realise six months down the line that they've burnt through all their cash, built a ginormous pipeline of potential deals – none of which have closed and find themselves having to make that person (or persons) redundant, and once again find themselves staring at the wall, wondering how it all went wrong.

I'm not saying that in order to scale your Sales Engine you won't need to employ skilled people and deploy them within your sales process – BUT what I am saying is that assuming that plan alone is the route to solving your sales growth headaches is a MASSIVE mistake.

The one differentiator in businesses that have successfully scaled beyond their initial start-up spurt – they have successfully built a Sales Growth Culture.

As Peter Drucker famously said, 'Culture eats strategy for breakfast.'

Ask yourself, does everyone in your business;

- Understand the quantifiable value of a customer?
- Understand what an ideal opportunity looks like, regardless of their role. They could be a person in warehousing, admin, marketing, purchasing, or customer services, it wouldn't matter, even if they never enter into a direct customer dialogue, they still know that customer wants, needs and how your company promise to fulfil that need
- Know what to do if they bump up against an ideal opportunity (especially outside of work)
- Appreciate that the customer pays their wages
- Delight in (and are rewarded for) activities that drive growth (and remember profit growth can come as much from cost saving and increased productivity than just focusing on growing the topline)
- Prioritise profit generating activities first

If you answered 'yes' to all of the above, then congratulations you clearly have 'sales' embedded within the beating heart of your organisation. If not, then here's some ideas to help you build that sales growth culture:

- Share the numbers (including profit) with the wider team. Obviously, you may need to clump together some numbers to ensure privacy of salaries etc. or show only high-level figures, but show everyone the true bottom line impact on a monthly basis
- Link achieving growth to some meaningful individual and team rewards. How will they be rewarded (profit share, additional days holiday, increased personal and team benefits) when the business collectively succeeds. Let them decide from a pick and mix list or a democratic process, then ensure you follow through
- Ensure everyone's individual Key Objectives include measurable activities (not just outcomes) that drive increased growth and profit. Hold accountable on a regular basis
- Introduce regular 'Lunch and Learn' sessions that share best practise, brainstorm ideas, and actively seek ways to improve your Customer Experience. Make this a team responsibility to own and deliver. Record the sessions, have them transcribed and add these materials to your Company Training Manual and Induction process for new starters
- Introduce a Learning Library of resources (videos, books, podcasts) and actively encourage individuals to invest in their own growth and personal development, both inside and outside their role responsibilities
- Ask everyone to write up a 1-page summary of every learning event they attend. Be that a networking event with an interesting speaker, a book or article they've read, or a podcast they've listened to, and ask them to make three or four recommendations as to how your company could adopt this learning and improve. Build it into your Lunch and Learn sessions to feedback to the wider team
- Introduce as part of your salary index a competency framework that requires someone to demonstrate how they coached and taught a particular skill or area of knowledge to another team member in order for them to be marked at the highest level of competency for that particular skill

Focus on building a Culture of Sales, rather than attempting to isolate your sales growth issues to one particular hire, person or team, and you will be paid back ten-fold for your efforts.

Get on the list to be notified of the next opening of Company Shortcuts Online Sales Academy www.companyshortcuts.com/neinsight

PEOPLE POWER 2019 CONFERENCE AWARDED FULL CPD ACCREDITATION

A new North East conference dedicated to staff training, skills development, HR best practise and workforce productivity has received full accreditation from the CPD Certification Service. This means that all delegates will receive a certificate of attendance – evidence that the event has contributed to their continuous professional development.

"People Power" takes place on 12 June 2019 at Northumbria University, one of the event's key partners. This lively and interactive conference and exhibition will enable employers to create workplaces where people thrive and organisations can achieve maximum success.

During the conference, regional and national experts will address a range of key employer issues such as health and wellbeing, internal communications, use of technology, staff recruitment and retention, absenteeism, training and skills development, apprenticeships, work/life balance, effective management, resilience and agile working.

Several large employers have been keen to join People Power and demonstrate the importance of workforce development within their organisations. Sabby Gill, Sage Executive Vice President and Managing Director United Kingdom & Ireland, will address the conference, along with Claire Sharp, Customer Director at Northumbria Water.

The full range of guest speakers can be viewed at www.peoplepowerevents.co.uk and includes:

- **Emma Rosen** – Author of "The Radical Sabbatical" after experiencing 25 jobs before her 25th birthday.
- **Paul Ferris** - CEO Speedflex. Award winning author of "The Boy on the Shed". Newcastle United's youngest ever player on his debut at 16.
- **Emily Pearson** – A visionary and thought leader in corporate mental health.

An exhibition will give employers access to the latest HR, employment, recruitment, training and skills advice – as well as information on latest funding available.

Other partners, exhibitors, supporters and contributors include: Scale Up North East, North East LEP, NESMA, Amacus, Our Minds Work, Cintra, Pro Training, Skills Forward, Square One Law, Peak Performance Partnership, Type and Test, Magma Effect and Six Seconds.

Vince Robson, Northumbria University's Business Development Manager, is looking forward to the event: "Enhancing workforce skills and capabilities is key to business growth and provides the platform for the region to compete economically in a challenging global climate. Northumbria University is delighted to host and contribute to People Power."



Mental Health expert Emily Pearson, MD, Our Mind's Work

Tickets cost just £65+VAT and include all conference sessions, lunch and refreshments. Charities, public sector and not-for-profit organisations can attend at the reduced rate of £35+VAT. Book online at www.peoplepowerevents.co.uk





CREATING THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW, TODAY

The philosopher, Alain de Botton, recently shared that "future talent is important for the most obvious but deep of reasons: because the collective flourishing and success of the nation depends on properly mining the talents and interests of the next generation."

And that future talent has historically been identified as being graduates.

University First

After working in graduate recruitment and development for 20 years, at several Financial Services firms that hail their graduates as their future leaders and workforce of tomorrow, it is apparent that despite budgets being smaller, there is still a large strategic focus on the attraction and development of university leavers.

Every year or two there was always a 'refresh' to ensure graduates are still the right talent pool and worth the large spend; that their development is relevant and still creates the right skills and behaviours needed for success in the firm. Should the programme be one, two or three years and will graduates stay for more than a year afterwards?

You may well be having that exact conversation this month. April and May are traditionally the end of the recruitment season and time to reflect on the following year's recruitment and confirm the programme starting in September.

Future-Focused Future Talent?

But what if, rather than just tweaking target universities or subjects studied, you were able to think about future talent more broadly? Are skills that are needed for the next five or 10 years and does your organisation have the necessary capabilities and behaviours to succeed in the future world of work?

This month, Accenture published their living business report in which they state that to be a thriving business in the next five years "organisations will need to have people who can continuously adapt to client needs, leverage and be comfortable with data and embrace new ideas and technologies."

Nothing about subject specific skills or 'polish' – the two main reasons many hiring managers cite for the value of hiring graduates into a business.

The questions that should be asked this year in the graduate season wash up is why graduates at all and what are my other options if not?

Because now there is another option: hiring school leavers into your own tailored Apprenticeship programmes.

Degrees of Evolution

Yes, this is a longer play. Apprenticeship programmes can be up to four years rather than the average two for a graduate programme. However, I see the longer term opportunity as a time to teach and embed those broader, culturally aligned skills and behaviours that will truly create your workforce for tomorrow. If you have a five-year strategic business plan, then running four-year bespoke early talent programme alongside it seems to be a great way to ensure that the organisation has the capability to deliver on its vision.

I'm not saying that no one will now hire graduates at all, but TMP Worldwide conducted a survey of 136 clients and 96% of them were considering Degree Apprenticeships in some form or the other. Whether that means they will actually maximise the opportunity can't be confirmed, but the conversation is surely worth having. Which roles, present and future, actually NEED a person with a degree to be successful? Could I grow someone into that role or will that role change in the next few years, so it is better to hire someone who has agility of thought and attitude with transferable skills?

Same Career, Different Route

We need to stop thinking of a school leaver or apprenticeship entry-level programme as the poor cousin to the well-known and beloved graduate programme, created for those who aren't good enough or rich enough for university.

What if this was a brilliant opportunity to find and develop the people and skills of tomorrow for your business? To maximise the true flexibility of learning and expectation. To create an orientation into the world of work and what that means to your organisation. A chance to embed your preferred behaviours and values, foster innovation and constructive challenge in the young minds that have come to learn and be developed.

Having an audit of the behaviours and skills you will need in five years' time and how you are going to get there would be a great way to start the discussion of creating a blended early talent strategy made up of both graduates and school leavers. Creating programmes that complement each other and using the flexibility of the apprenticeship modular model to even share some content with the graduate population to give a common language of learning and focus on the same skills and behaviours that you will need to develop in both populations.

For example, as part of a school leaver's foundation programme, apprentices could spend time in a developing country working on CSR projects while still gathering evidence to reflect working as a team, managing self, relationship building as well as the obvious, understanding the impact of CSR – all modules in the Level 3 Team Leader standard. Apprenticeships can be rotational; the coach gives them a consistency of support enabling the line manager to change and creating the ability to evidence learning in different ways.

Building Your Business from the Inside-Out

Knowing that your organisation has the luxury of time to identify and develop key behaviours and skills leads to a more holistic focus when designing an Apprenticeship, particularly for new talent, and in this broader landscape of development lies the opportunity to truly be creative, bold and specific.

So, it's time to start embracing Apprenticeships, not only to develop your future talent, but to support your workforce and learning culture.

RDA APPOINTS APPRENTICES AS PART OF BUSINESS GROWTH



L-R Jamie Patterson, Logan Liggins.

Due to increased business growth, award winning design and installation company RDA, based in Hebburn Tyne and Wear, has recently appointed three new apprentices in both its commercial and operational teams.

Jamie Patterson joins the commercial team to assist with ordering and estimating whilst working towards an EAL Level 3 NVQ Certificate in Building Services Engineering Technology and Project Management (QCF).

Logan Liggins joins the operations team as a Joinery Apprentice working alongside one of RDA's Site Manager's, shadowing and learning from him as well as undertaking an NVQ Level 2 Joinery Course.

Finally, Grace Maher, RDA's Administration Assistant is currently working towards an apprenticeship in Business Administration assisting with the admin, Health & Safety and office management.

Jamie and Logan who are both school leavers, are already seeing the many benefits an apprenticeship can provide.

Jamie said: "I have really enjoyed my first couple of months at RDA and I am finding the apprenticeship to be a great step to helping build my future. Not only am I gaining knowledge of the industry, but I am also getting technical experience, high-quality training and a recognised qualification. I am looking forward to continuing to work for RDA and gaining more experience."

Alex Bradley, Director at RDA said: "We have highly experienced and professional teams across all departments at RDA. As we continue to grow, we felt the addition of apprentices was an effective way to grow talent and diversify our workforce whilst developing additional motivated, skilled and qualified employees."

For further information on RDA visit www.rdalimited.co.uk or call 08448734993.



Kate Cooper-Fay

CXY PEOPLE

Great customer experience starts with your internal customer - your employees.

To be a leading organisation in delivering amazing CX, you must focus on your employees first. We have seen many great CX strategies fail due to unengaged employees. CX has to become part of your organisation's DNA, it is the backbone of your organisation's culture. Culture will always trump strategy!

Engagement comes from feeling good, just like CX; from passion for the company; from meaningful work; from attaching part of one's identity with their job. As leaders, you should intentionally help the brains of your employees to generate dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin which create good feelings for the organization. Dopamine (anticipation of reward) and serotonin (feeling good, well-being) and oxytocin (bonding, feeling connected to others). It is imperative you initiate this first, if you want transfer this to your customers.

It starts from the top: the CEO sponsors and leads every CX and EE strategy, with total commitment and buy in from the entire leadership team.

Typically, in most organisations, HR owns the cultural programs, so it is key that they are first looped into Employee Engagement (EE) so they can help support CX.

Fully engaged employees take the success of the organisation they work for very personally. It matters to them and gives them a purpose; it gives them an emotionally connected reason to turn up every day.

If an organisation has a fully engaged team, they are 50% more likely to become a leader in customer experience.

So how do you connect EE-CX?

- Ensure communications drive a sense of belonging, and boost positive feelings.
- Keep your team relevant through training and effective onboarding of new recruits.
- Consider the emotional touchpoints and the emotions your employees go through whilst on this journey with you.
- Create intrinsic motivation, celebrate and listen, engage the leaders of the organisation first; it must come from the top.
- Do not just hire on past experiences; hire people, personalities, and passion, who can be themselves.

Keep your team agile/fluid in a continuous state of great CX.

Clearly having a fully engaged team is critical to the success of CXY. I am therefore delighted to introduce you to some very CXY people, who have recently joined the CXY family. Ian Trotter as Sales & Marketing Director, Ian Thomson and Rachel Kershaw as Senior Partners, Garry Melvin as COO, and Jasmine Graham as Executive Administrator. I am sure you will enjoy working with them all as much as I do?

Having already assembled and identified our Leadership Board, we continue to acquire exceptional talent to populate opportunities that reflect our growing business requirements.

If you would like more information about joining CXY as a self employed senior partner, please drop an email to rachel@getcxy.com


Erin Kirtley

TALENT SPOTTING FOR DIGITAL SECTOR

Former digital designer Erin Kirtley stumbled into recruitment - even after encountering the bad and the ugly. As the regional manager of specialist recruitment consultancy Concept, Erin believes she represents 'the good' and is doing things differently to most.

How did your career begin?

After studying Interactive Media Design at Northumbria University, my first job was at fishing tackle manufacturer, Sonik Sports. I managed their website, social media and designed promotional material.

After a year, I decided to look at jobs in account management and approached several recruitment agencies for advice. Thankfully I came across Jo Carter, owner and founder of Concept Personnel. She helped me get the job as account manager at creative agency, Cargo Creative.

What was your view of recruitment back then?

Not great, I found most recruitment agencies I worked with didn't have a clue about the industry; they didn't make much effort to find the right fit, for me or the company and I felt pressured to attend interviews. I enjoyed working with Jo as she took the time to find out what I wanted, what I was good at and found me jobs to suit.

How did you get into recruitment?

After three years at Cargo, I needed a change. I spoke to a few people about opportunities and ended up chatting to Jo again; she was recruiting for a new consultant at Concept at the time. It was all a bit of an accident, but that's how I stumbled into the sector back in 2015, with absolutely no experience of recruitment.

Why Concept?

I'd always got on with Jo and liked the way Concept did business; they knew what they were doing, and it was a completely different experience to using other recruiters. We pride ourselves on taking the time and trouble to understand candidates and the companies we work with to solve problems, instead of just getting bums on seats. We're a specialist recruitment agency covering creative, digital and marketing jobs across the North East, Scotland and more recently from a new office in Milton Keynes, where Jo is now based.

How does Concept differ to other recruitment agencies?

Each of our recruitment consultants have experience of working within the creative, digital or marketing industry. We understand the creative process; the technical terminology and we know what kind of personality is best suited to the roles in which we recruit.

Another big difference is that none of our consultants work on a commission basis, we aren't sales focused or driven by targets. Instead we aim to make long lasting placements that suit the needs of the candidate and the client.

Tell us about your current role and any challenges.

I have been regional manager of Concept since April last year, managing the team of four in Newcastle and overseeing recruitment within the North East and Scotland. The position is a mix of recruitment, management and business development.

The biggest challenge to date was probably the cultural shift when I took on my new role. Moving from a friend of my colleagues, to the boss took some adjusting. It's my first management role, so has come with a bit of a learning curve. The team have been so supportive, we all work well together and having that longstanding relationship is really beneficial.

Tell us about the Newcastle team.

Steph has a history in PR and marketing and has been with Concept since 2008. She is an excellent recruiter, very thorough and genuinely cares about each client and candidate she deals with.

Lauren comes from a journalism and social media background; she had a little bit of recruitment experience before joining us last year and has gone from strength to strength.

Demi joined us as an apprentice in 2016 and bowled us over with her ability. She has worked her way up to office manager and is en route to obtaining her AAT Advanced Diploma in Accounting.

More information: www.conceptpersonnel.co.uk


Bryony Gibson

WHAT TO DO WHEN AN EMPLOYEE RESIGNS

Bryony Gibson, managing director of Bryony Gibson Consulting, shares her thoughts on the best way to handle a resignation.

It's said that, on average, you can expect a new recruit to stay with you for five years, depending upon experience and the industry you work in.

This figure is a lot lower when it comes to people under the age of 35, something Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends report confirmed recently when it reported that 43% of 'millennials' plan to leave their job within two years.

In the US, employment relationships are even shorter, suggesting the trend for regularly switching employer is here to stay. So, what do you do when someone tells you they've found a new opportunity they'd like to explore elsewhere?

Usually, it will take you by surprise, but your immediate reaction can have a huge impact on how you are remembered and spoken about as an employer for years to come.

My advice is not to fight, at least not straight away. If someone is a key employee, it's going to be difficult to hide your disappointment, but you need to resist the urge to criticise their decision.

I think it helps if you've taken a moment to think about what it would be like if one of your team hands in their notice. Having visualised the situation - whether you believe it's likely to happen or not - you will have a much better chance of keeping calm and staying in control.

In my experience, the majority of people are scared about telling their boss they are leaving. Often their fear overshadows the excitement of being offered a new job because they don't know how their employer will react.

As a leader and someone who has helped this person grow and develop their skills, you should try to put them at ease and show understanding. Remind yourself that their resignation isn't personal. No one turns into a 'traitor' because they've decided to take their career in a new direction.

If you can separate the short-term disruption to your team, hopefully, you will be pleased on a personal level that they've found something they believe will make them happier. Let them know this is the case. Thank them for their hard work and show the kind of gratitude they deserve.

If they are brilliant at their job, make sure you offer them the opportunity to come back if they change their mind in the future. You might be surprised at how many will return.

It's very important that you find out why someone wants to move on, so don't forget to plan a second catch up to discuss this as soon as possible, but with enough time for you to prepare for the exchange properly.

Between meetings, reflect on whether your team could operate differently. No one is irreplaceable and resignations give you a rare chance to consider whether your human resources can be restructured in a smarter way.

The true colours of a company - and a leader - are often defined during difficult situations but if you're mentally prepared and handle it professionally, you stand to not only gain the admiration of your soon to be ex-employee, but you'll get an ambassador for your business too.

If you want to recruit, retain and hire back great people you must show them that you are a responsible, flexible and dynamic employer. Someone who treats people with respect. Anything less than this at the end of their time will simply undo all that has gone before.

Employment is now a relatively short tenure compared to the days when people stayed in one job from the end of education to their retirement party. Whilst a resignation often feels like a disaster, when managed well, it's amazing how many people look back with hindsight and see the moment as the catalyst to better things for both parties.

If you work in tax & accountancy and are looking for a new challenge, or need someone to help drive the business forward, get in touch: **bryony@bryonygibson.com | (0191) 375 9983.**

WWW.BRYONYGIBSON.COM

BRYONY GIBSON CONSULTING
Jobs. Advice. Expertise.


James Blackwell

HOW TO HIRE 'A' PLAYER DEVELOPERS

A common problem shared by businesses in the region and often brought to our attention is frustration around the lack of top quality developers available and ready to work.

Thriving businesses are struggling to find candidates with the required skill-set and experience to join their teams and hit the ground running.

In my experience, there are five top tips to follow to build a talent pool pipeline to help alleviate this frustration:

1. Be clear on what you need

Define the role you're recruiting for clearly. Where will the candidate sit within your business? Where will they progress to within the next 12-18 months? What do you need them to bring/add to your business?

2. Build a candidate pipeline

One of the biggest reasons businesses are struggling to grow is due to the lack of talent available. Sourcing is a full time task. You need to be engaging with and meeting potential candidates on a daily basis. Your employer brand is just as important as your consumer brand.

3. Build a nurture funnel

Keep in touch with potential candidates. Once a month is enough, but it's important to make sure you're engaging with your ideal candidates at different touch points so you're front of mind when they're in the market and looking for a new role.

4. Offer something unique

To stand out, you need to make sure that working for your business is unique. Do you offer flexible or remote working? Do you work with cutting edge technology? Pin-point what will attract top talent to your business and play on it!

5. Sell your vision

An interview is very much a two way process nowadays. The job role itself needs to be as good a fit for the candidate as the candidate is for the role. Build the picture for your candidate so they can really visualise how they'll fit in with your business.

On reflection, all pretty simple factors that make such a big impact when attracting top talent to your business. Give it a try and measure the impact on your 'A' player hiring.

RJ RONALDJAMES
• THE NORTH EAST'S LEADING DIGITECH TALENT AGENCY •
We find the TOP 15% of Talent
It's the *way* that we deliver that separates *us* from the rest
0191 620 0123
INFO@ RONALDJAMESGROUP.COM
GOSFORTH, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE



MVS PUTS BEST FOOT FORWARD

Members of nautical charity The Maritime Volunteer Service (MVS) and their supporters have recently tackled a fundraising walk from the Tyne's North Pier to the South Pier and back.

The Northumbria Unit of the charity walked the 8 miles to raise funds to help run their two vessels which are regularly seen on the Tyne and other rivers in the region.

The aim of the MVS is to keep the country's maritime traditions alive. Practical training in seamanship, small boat handling, engineering and communications helps to achieve this.

Head of Unit, Volunteer Officer Angela Carrington said: "We are very grateful to everyone who took part in the walk and to those who helped us to raise more than £600 on the day."



MATFEN HALL HOTEL SERVES UP AFTERNOON TEA FOR PERCY HEDLEY PUPILS

A group of pupils from Percy Hedley School in Newcastle have been dining in style at Matfen Hotel, Golf and Spa.

The Key Stage Three pupils at the school, which educates children with additional needs, were invited to the award-winning Northumberland hotel as part of an enterprise project, which would culminate in them putting on a special afternoon tea at the school for their families.

Victoria Paterson, Sales and Revenue Manager at Matfen Hall, said, "It was an absolute pleasure to welcome the children and staff from Percy Hedley School. Our Kids Afternoon Tea option is really popular, and we're thrilled we were able to provide some inspiration for the lovely event they had planned for their families."



ROTARY MORPETH STEP UP FOR OUTDOOR GYM

Pupils from a Morpeth school are looking forward to exercising more thanks to a new outdoor gym which has been part funded by Rotary Morpeth.

The new outdoor gym has been built at Collingwood School and Media Arts College, a community specialist school, to encourage the students to enjoy the benefits of exercise and lead a fitter and healthier lifestyle.

The new equipment includes health walkers, step machines and arm and pedal cycles which the children will use during activity lessons and supervised sessions at break times.

Head teacher Richard Jones said: "We are grateful to Rotary Morpeth for their part in raising funds towards these wonderful pieces of equipment."



GIRLS ROCK LEADING NORTH EAST GOLF CLUB

25 girls have enjoyed a free taste of golf thanks to one of the area's leading golf clubs.

Tynemouth is one of only ten North East clubs participating in this year's Girls Golf Rocks, which is run by England Golf and the Golf Foundation.

Paul Whittaker, Manager of Tynemouth Golf Club, said: "The whole idea is to encourage as many girls as possible to give golf a go. It's a great sport and judging by how the girls enjoyed themselves, let's hope this is just the start for them."

The girls, aged between five and 13, were given a free introductory coaching session on all aspects of the game.



INTERGENERATIONAL SESSIONS AT ARTVENTURERS

ARTventurers, the award-winning art and creative play classes for babies, toddlers and children, has started intergenerational sessions with residents of a Whickham care home.

The classes allow elderly residents at Manor House Care Home to watch and interact with the session, with both people young and old getting a lot out of the activities.

Organiser Emily Miller said: "It's great to see how much stimulation and enjoyment it brings to the older generation as relationships start to build between them and the children. We've been working with Manor House Care Home since last year, running intergenerational sessions there on a monthly basis. The feedback has been fantastic and everyone is benefiting."

2019 Memberships Now Available!

• Full : £699 • 5 Day : £608 • Reduced fees up to age 25

Monthly payment plan and flexible memberships available

Beamish Park Golf Club, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0RH

Pro Shop: 0191 3701984 Office: 0191 3701382 E-mail: beamishgolf@btconnect.com Website: www.beamishgolf.co.uk







ARMED FORCES COVENANT SIGNING

The North East is an important region for the Armed Forces. Across the Armed Forces communities: Regular, Reserve, Veterans and Cadets, there is a great deal of pride in the part we collectively play is supporting those brave men and women who serve our great nation at home and abroad.

On 29th April, as part of the National Covenant Annual Conference, St. James Park played host to a mass Armed Forces Covenant signing, where 12 local organisations committed to their voluntary pledge not to disadvantage those who serve.

During their service our Seamen, Soldiers and Airmen develop great skills, that's one reason why so many employers see the Military as good for business.



















ENTREPRENEURS' FORUM SPRING CONFERENCE

A day of inspiration, learning, and making new connections, the Entrepreneurs' Forum recently welcomed over 300 business leaders to the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead for their spring conference, Together We Can Take on the World.

















MG EXPANDS WITH OFFICE MOVE

MG Financial Services has expanded rapidly over the last year, and after four years of trading from Cobalt Business park the company has invested in moving offices to accommodate further growth.



The team of six who specialise in mortgage and protection advice, as well as equity release, have moved to Mistral House on Kingfisher Way in Silverlink Business Park Wallsend.

The investment in larger office space will also create one more full time role in the coming year, allow more customers to benefit from the first class advice given by owner Martin Graham, mortgage advisor Nicola Cowan and equity release expert Steve Wilson. Martin said: "The opportunity came up to have four offices together in a wing of Mistral House, which is undergoing significant redevelopment and is looking very fresh and professional. The building has easy access and excellent parking. As well as giving us lots more space, it is a nice building for our customers to visit."

MG Financial Service secured over £50m of mortgages in the last financial year and is on target to beat that this year. The move and investment shows a confidence in the mortgage market for the region. Martin concluded: "We are seeing no apathy in applications and having pretty much no issues in getting lending through. The North East is still showings itself as buoyant and keen to keep moving or investing. That has given us the confidence to make this investment in growth and a new office."

Anyone interested in having their mortgage reviewed, talking about increasing or improving their financial protection or wanting to get on the property ladder should visit www.mgfinancialsolutions.co.uk

Fleming Court

A luxury care home in the heart of Jesmond



A luxurious, perfect setting for older people looking to maintain an independent lifestyle with the added peace of mind of discrete quality care and support.

Fleming Court provides short and long term care to older people so that they can maintain their independence in the heart of a thriving community.

For older people who have memory care needs, we have a dedicated community within Fleming Court, specially designed to meet the needs of a person who has developed a form of dementia. Our highly trained and dedicated team tailor care plans to the individual to help lead an active and stimulating lifestyle.

To find out more about our quality care, luxurious accommodation and hospitality services please arrange to meet Julie Baron, our experienced home manager.

To make an enquiry please call Fleming Court

T 0333 999 8676
A Burdon Terrace, Jesmond, NE2 3AE
W hc-one.co.uk

HC one The kind care company

CareQuality Commission Good

TOP 20 CARE HOME GROUP carehome.co.uk



LOCAL LAW FIRM REPORTS SIGNIFICANT GROWTH

A North East law firm is celebrating significant growth across several of its departments following a period of expansion.

Emmersons Solicitors, which operates offices in Gosforth and Sunderland, has announced that the turnover within its residential conveyancing department has increased by 14.6%, while its commercial conveyancing department has experienced a 33% increase in activity. The overall business has experienced an income increase of 43% over the last two years.

Jacqueline Emmerson, who founded the firm 21 years ago, said: "This is a very exciting time for Emmersons Solicitors as we celebrate this recent and substantial expansion. We've welcomed new clients and team members and had an overall outstanding year."

The firm's support of the local community includes its support of several different charities, including Armed Forces charity, the British Heart Foundation and Feeding Families North East.

Emmersons Solicitors has also been shortlisted twice for the Law Society Excellence Awards and gained its Lexcel Accreditation.



RETURNING ENTREPRENEUR LAUNCHES NEW BUSINESS

Andrew Gibson, a northeast entrepreneur who moved to America in 2009, has recently returned to launch a brand-new business venture in Lanchester, County Durham, with assistance from Durham city's leading law firm Swinburne Maddison LLP.

Called Shred Base, the new business provides confidential destruction of sensitive documents to companies. Andrew anticipates that the business will employ 20 people by the end of its second year.

The confidential destruction sector is well known to Andrew who has 30 years of experience, which began in 1991 with the launch of Securi Shred, the first mobile shredding service in the UK. Now, Andrew has purchased a five-acre site known as Malton Works.

Partner and Head of Conveyancing, Kate Stephenson, said: "We were delighted to hear from Andrew when he returned to the UK and with his newly acquired site now geared up for operations, we look forward to watching the growth of his business."



TLW SOLICITORS' PATRONAGE OF MEADOW WELL CONNECTED

North Shields based TLW Solicitors have announced their patronage of Meadow Well Connected, a busy community hub providing practical training, activities and support in the Meadow Well area.

As well as the TLW team getting involved in standalone fundraising events, directors Peter McKenna and John Burn have committed to the ongoing support of the charity's recently launched Positive Pathways project.

The Positive Pathways team meet regularly to plan activities and events focused on wellbeing and reducing isolation and loneliness within the Meadow Well community. With TLW's backing, Meadow Well Connected can now organise and deliver a wider range of activities, outbound trips and excursions which had previously been limited due to expensive transport costs.

TLW Solicitors is a niche litigation firm specialising in personal injury, professional negligence, financial and solar panel mis-selling claims. Established in 2000, TLW has worked with thousands of clients nationwide providing legal advice and support.

NATIONAL STAMP OF QUALITY FOR TEESSIDE ACCOUNTANCY FIRM

The UK's leading association of independent chartered accountants and law firms has placed a Teesside firm among the top practices in the country.

Stockton-based Baines Jewitt Chartered Accountants scored very highly in the UK200Group's External Quality Control Review, keeping the North East firm within the top tier of accountancy practices in the UK.

Adoption of the UK200Group standards, along with the high placing, means Baines Jewitt adheres to stringent quality control over its work. As part of the UK200Group review, professional work is analysed and graded against a numerical scale from 1 to 5 for both compliance and efficiency, where '1' denotes 'excellent' or 'very efficient'. Baines Jewitt received ratings of 1 and 2 across all areas.



Among the processes scrutinised and scored were accounts preparation; audit regulations and standards; investment business; controls and tax work.

"We are delighted to receive such praise. Each score confirms that Baines Jewitt operates its systems in compliance with UK200Group standards," explains Jed Lester, director, Baines Jewitt Ltd.

MAKING TAX DIGITAL FOR VAT
ARE YOU READY? FREE CONSULTATIONS



CS accounting
0191 487 9870 @csaccounting
info@csaccounting.co.uk
www.csaccounting.co.uk

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

SELF ASSESSMENT

PAYE COMPLIANCE

VAT COMPLIANCE

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

STATUTORY AUDITS

TAX PLANNING

REVENUE INVESTIGATIONS

CONTRIBUTION AGENCY

INVESTIGATIONS

VAT INVESTIGATIONS

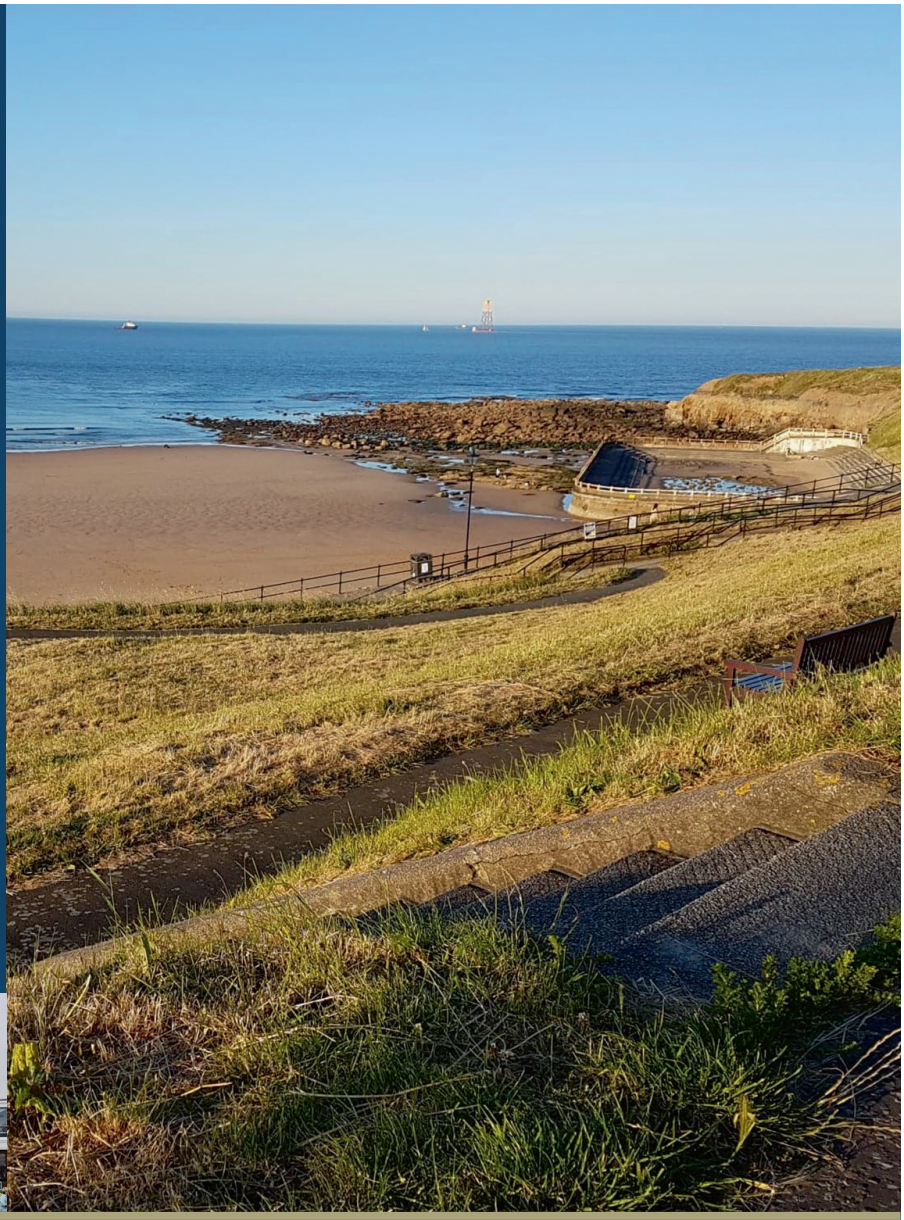
COMPANY FORMATIONS

BUSINESS START-UPS

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

FORENSIC ACCOUNTING

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS





The Coastal Accountants





ReadMilburn

& COMPANY

Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors

71 Howard Street, North Shields, NE30 1AF

0191 257 0355 info@readmilburn.co.uk

CASCADE INVESTS IN CUSTOMER CARE



Leading cash savings expert and fintech company, Cascade Cash Management, has invested in its client, partner and customer portfolio by extending the client services support team further.

Georgia Boddy is the latest to boost the numbers of the ever-growing team, joining as client services support assistant with a view to supporting clients in their account openings and ongoing monitoring.

In her role Georgia, 21, from South Shields, will be using what she has learnt in her recently completed Customer Service Apprenticeship qualification to support the Cascade client service account managers, Abby Turnbull and Emma Hutchinson.

Cascade Cash Management (Cascade) is an independent and transparent service created to generate enhanced cash returns and increase protection on deposits through professional cash management.

The Cascade team can administer funds through their unique portal on behalf of clients or depositors can use the portal to manage their own savings with the dedicated support of Cascade. Partners including IFA's, solicitors, attorneys, accountants and many more can also self-brand the product for presentation to their own clients.

MD, Dr Emma Black, explained Georgia's new role and the benefit to her team and clients/partners. She said: "Georgia has joined us at a crucial time when our deposits and client base is reaching an all new high. It is imperative that our client service managers have the extra support so that they can do the job to the best of their ability.

"We have created this role to help the team with what they need in place, including administration, checking the rates daily, opening new accounts, facilitating communication and ensuring that new client support is smooth from the word go. It is an important time for us and we are very keen that all clients, new and existing, get the best possible service."

Although this is Georgia's first role in finance, she has office experience, and is well versed in customer care and administration from previous roles. Georgia said: "I have been part of the team for such a short time but can't imagine working elsewhere already. I love working with numbers and thrive on feeling essential to a team. I would love to progress my career with Cascade to account manager and I am delighted that Emma has indicated that if I do well, there is the opportunity to progress!"

More information on the company and career opportunities is available at www.cascade.co.uk

READY FOR **BUSINESS**

And with offices filling fast!









Commerce House, the outstanding, iconic, grade II listed building in the heart of Middlesbrough is now fully refurbished and has released the last of its stunning office space. With rooms available for two to fourteen people.

With enviable facilities, Commerce House is the perfect opportunity for a head office, satellite office or to expand operations within the prestigious TS1 area of Middlesbrough in the heart of the newest regenerated location in the region. And now we have some great deals available for a limited time only!

To find out more and to take advantage of this offer, you'd better get moving!
Contact Christine Huntington on 01642 917 116 or Christine@commercechambers.co.uk

Your business can be part of the growing Commerce House community!

- IMPRESSIVE OFFICE SPACE
- BOARDROOM
- HOT DESKS
- BUSINESS LOUNGE
- MEETING ROOMS
- VIRTUAL OFFICE
- CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY





COMMERCE HOUSE
BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Commerce Chambers Ltd
Commerce House,
1 Exchange Square,
Middlesbrough TS1 1DE
t: 01642 917 116

commerce-house.co.uk



MORE THAN JUST OFFICE SPACE BEING APPLAUDED

Commerce House, the luxury Grade II listed building which has underwent a £1.2m renovation, has been applauded by the new Mayor of Middlesbrough, Andy Preston.

Taking to Twitter, Mr Preston tweeted on @Tees_Issues to commend the Commerce House team for "shining a light on the majesty of this bank-cum-office" development. He went on to say he'd like to see many more buildings in the area "receive the same treatment".

The renovation of Commerce House was started two years ago by owners, Commerce Chambers, and since its completion at the back end of last summer, has gone onto to establish itself in an incredible way.

As well as filling 95% of the office, with high interest in the remaining space, the organisation has attracted many hot-deskers, coworkers and virtual tenants.

It has also become the go to meeting space for those in Middlesbrough wanting to meet in upmarket surroundings, boosting their image with clients and making official business more pleasurable. Full catering is offered or just refreshments. Facilities manager at Commerce House said: "A prime example of people who regularly meet here is Middlesbrough City Council – they use The Chairman's Room when meetings require their full attention, so they are not disturbed by day to day council activity.

"We also have the business lounge and an events room, both of which are booked out regularly by both tenants and external customers."

Both the North East England Chamber of Commerce and Forward Ladies hold their regular monthly networking events at Commerce House.

Christine concluded: "Our virtual tenancy is going incredibly well. The businesses that employ our services include start ups, people who travel with business a lot and need post storing and calls taking; and business expanding into Middlesbrough without a full time presence here yet.

"As a virtual tenant you get to advertise our TS1 postcode, which has boosted business for many of our customers. It is very popular and with prices starting from £35 per month, its not really surprising. "

More information on the building and its services is available on www.commerce-house.co.uk

KEEPING UP WITH MTD

The government's plan for Making Tax Digital (MTD) has recently been activated since its announcement in 2015. As of April 1st 2019, we have officially entered the first stage of MTD.

It is now law that all VAT registered businesses with a turnover above the VAT threshold must submit their records digitally.

In summary, this means that all VAT registered businesses with turnover above the VAT threshold have to maintain digital records and send their VAT information to HMRC using third-party commercial software. For businesses registered for VAT but with turnover below the VAT threshold, they can opt in and file their VAT information via MTD, but it is not mandatory.

Navigating these changes can seem like a minefield at times, but each part of MTD has been designed to simplify the whole process, making it smoother to complete, and making it significantly harder to make mistakes when submitting tax, the likes of which cost the exchequer upwards of nine billion pound each year.

In order to make the transition as smooth as possible, HM Revenue and Customs have put certain measures into place, and there are certain things that you need to be aware of, as we navigate the new digital age of tax.

Foremost, it's important to remember that the new measures are not a "cliff-edge" deadline. The first returns under the new system won't be due until August for the majority of businesses, so there is still time to seek advice and support. Equally, there are a huge number of materials available online, including easy-to-use guides and advice leaflets, all published by HRMC.



Andrew Potts

If you still find yourself struggling, you're not alone. At a time where MTD is still relatively new ground for everybody, don't panic, our team are on hand to help make this a smooth ride for you and your business. Please visit our website at www.KPSimpson.co.uk or call 0191 420 0550.

Call us on 0191 420 0550 or email us at info@kpsimpson.co.uk.

Corporate & Commercial Business Solutions

Funding | Advisory | Investment

Corporate and Commercial Business Solutions Group is a commercial finance brokerage and business consultancy helping NE businesses achieve their aspirations. Whether it is fund raising, business system improvements or outsourced credit control and commercial debt recovery we can offer more than 50 years experience in assisting SME businesses.

- Cashflow Finance
- Business Loans
- Asset Finance
- Invoice Finance
- Short Term Funding
- Vehicle Finance
- Vehicle Sourcing
- Property Finance
- Business Consultancy
- Receivables Management
- Outsourced Credit Control
- Commercial Debt Recovery
- VAT & Tax Loans

Contact: Peter Cromarty - Director, Office: 0191 2111450 Mobile: 07715 409386 Email: peter@ccbsg.co.uk Web: www.ccbsg.co.uk
Yorkshire Chamber, 112-118 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 6SQ

DECODING THE CHARITY GOVERNANCE CODE

Charities are facing a crisis of trust. For all the progress made in setting governance standards and defining best practice, charities continue to be in the spotlight for the wrong reasons.



Lucy Robson

So what can be done to ensure that good governance in theory translates into good governance in practice?

The updated Charity Governance Code has been a measure of best practice since June 2017, operating as the stand alone reference point for charities implementing and maintaining their governance procedures. We are approaching the two-year anniversary of the update and yet the sector continues to experience scandals which could be avoided by stronger governance procedures. The knock-on effect of these scandals cannot be underestimated in terms of the impact on trust from donors and the general public alike.

In fact, last year trust in charities was lower than trust in the average man or woman in the street, according to Charity Commission research. Most people acknowledge that one such factor (scored at 8.3 out of 10 by respondents) to improve this trust rating is for charities to be well-governed and well-managed. Yet the factor of trust that people place in charities being well-managed is a mere 5.3 out of 10.

The self-professed aim of the Governance Code is, simply put, to assist charities and their trustees to reach the highest standards of governance. In this way, the Code is "deliberately aspirational" and intended as a tool to support organisations to continually strive for improved excellence in governance. It is not a legal or regulatory requirement. Applicable charities are encouraged to publish a brief statement outlining their application of the Code in their annual accounts based upon the "apply or explain" approach. Charities are not obliged to outline all aspects of recommended practice within their annual accounts.

RSM, in partnership with the Governance Code Steering Group, has undertaken a ground-breaking research project to get under the skin of how effectively charities are complying with the Charity Governance Code, which has brought to light some crucial insights. Not least of which, of the 85 charities in the sample only 44 per cent clearly actually acknowledged the Charity Governance Code at all within their annual reports. While a 'wait and see' approach has clearly been taken by some charities as they look to see for themselves the real impact of complying with the code on governance standards, in a sector increasingly under the public and media spotlight, how can such an important reference point for charities to govern themselves be so infrequently adhered to and evidenced?

RSM's research project revealed how, unsurprisingly, those charities who had evidenced compliance with the Code in their annual reports exhibited far better governance than those who had not referenced the Code. In fact, average governance ratings across all seven principles for charities which stated their alignment to the Code was nearly 10 per cent higher than those that did not acknowledge its adoption.

Charities of a larger income (£20m+) had a higher average governance score then their smaller counterparts, indicating that resource does play a significant part in organisations' ability to demonstrate compliance. Yet, charities in the £5m-10m bracket significantly outscored those in the £10m-20m band, which shows that charities of all sizes are able to demonstrate compliance with the code and seek to make impactful change to their governance frameworks.

The real-world implications of complying with the Code as demonstrated by the research are among other benefits, a more effective board structure, a better decision-making process and more clarity on their organisational purpose. Compliance with the Code and its principles also led to increasing accessibility for donors, as the charity operated as less of a ''closed shop''. As the Code has now been the industry governance standard for over two years and the benefits of compliance have been clearly evidenced, we would hope and expect more charities to seek to comply with the Code's aspirational standards, which deliver real change and could ultimately lead to providing a better service for their beneficiaries.

RSM

For more information on the Charity Governance Code and best practice for your charity, please contact Lucy Robson on 0191 255 7000 or lucy.robson@rsmuk.com or your usual RSM contact.

THE VALUE OF FINANCIAL PLANNING

By Investment Director, Simon Daykin

Financial planning is proven to have a wide range of benefits for those who use it. The advantages gained through the psychological coaching elements of holistic planning are in essence intangible, so sometimes difficult to quantify into pounds and pence. However, the tax efficiencies of using experts are not. For example:



Simon Daykin

1. Tax Relief on Pensions

The government has long encouraged saving for retirement via a variety of tax reliefs on pension contributions. Generally, people will gain more in tax relief when paying into a pension, than the tax they will pay when taking money from the pension in later life. This is certainly true for those who are advised by planners. Amazingly, the tax reliefs can be as much as 60% on contributions for some individuals.

In addition, people are living longer, the chances of reaching 75 are higher now than ever before. This is important as the death benefit tax treatment of a pension changes significantly after age 75.

2. At least £32,500 of Tax-Free Income with Financial Planning

By effectively utilising a range of investment types and wrappers, coupled with holistic financial planning, it is possible for an individual to draw up to £32,500 income per year without paying any tax (in the current tax year). The knock-on effect of this could be ensuring that your savings last longer through retirement, or that you can retire earlier than originally thought possible.

3. Claiming the Marriage Allowance

This simple tax reducer allows (under certain circumstances) the transfer of an extra £1,250 of personal allowance (current tax year) from a lower earner to their partner. Furthermore, for those couples in retirement with a DC pension income skewed in the favour of one person, this can have an additional benefit where phasing of tax-free cash is planned.

4. Avoid Triggering the Money Purchase Annual Allowance (MPAA)

Triggering the MPAA means that you are severely restricted in how much you can contribute to a pension in the future. It is triggered by withdrawing money from a pension in certain ways.

Many individuals, particularly business owners/self-employed, have fluctuating cashflows which means they may need to dip into their pensions before adding to them again in later years.

By careful planning, you can withdraw money from a pension and not trigger the MPAA. Following this route will allow you to benefit fully from the pension tax reliefs available and maximise your pension contributions.

The purpose of this article is to provide technical and generic guidance and should not be interpreted as a personal recommendation or advice. The value of investments can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount you invested.

PRISMATIC WEALTH

Providing private and corporate clients with bespoke, tailored financial solutions.

With over 30 years experience as financial planning specialists, Prismatic Wealth have the expertise to assist you with life planning, retirement planning and investments.

Retirement Planning:

- Pension Planning
- Defined Benefit Pensions
- Pension Consolidation and Transfers
- Pension Drawdown and Annuities
- Self Invested Personal Pensions (SIPP)

Life Planning:

- Estate Planning
- Protection Planning
- Reaching Retirement
- Pensions and Divorce

Investment Services:

- Investment Planning Advice
- Investment Review

To speak to us contact:

Tel: 01642 661600
Email: enquiries@prismaticwealth.co.uk

Prismatic House,
26 Falcon Court,
Preston Farm Business Park,
Stockton-on-Tees,
TS18 3TX

PRISMATIC WEALTH™

www.prismaticwealth.co.uk



L-R: Rebecca Kemp, Chris Maddock and Lee Muter

UNW CELEBRATES MOST SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT TAXES EVENT YET

UNW reminded guests that for all their Employment Taxes needs, they've got a friend in Lee, as they hosted their Toy Story-themed Employment Taxes and Law Update.

On May 1, UNW's Employment Taxes team, Lee Muter and Rebecca Kemp, were joined at Tyneside Cinema by guest speaker Chris Maddock, partner at law firm Muckle LLP.

Held annually, this year's event has proved to be the most popular one yet, with over 100 attendees from a wide range of sectors. These included Manufacturing, Property and Construction, and Charity and Not-for-Profit.

Following an early morning session of networking with breakfast provided, guests were welcomed into The Electra Room by the sounds of "You've Got a Friend in Me" from Toy Story. As they took to their seats, they were also gifted with treat-filled slinkies.

After the seminar was opened with an introduction by Mark Hetherington, VAT Partner at UNW, Lee was the first to speak. During his presentation, he discussed the National Minimum Wage, how employers can correctly calculate it, and informed them of the common mistakes that they can make. He also offered his insight into the recent updates on employment status and IR35 in the private sector, which prompted several questions from the audience.

Following Lee was UNW colleague Rebecca Kemp, who took to the stage to share her knowledge on Employee Benefits. This included a discussion on the advantages of Pension Salary Sacrifice schemes for employees, the future tax advantages of low emission vehicles, and Optional Remuneration Arrangements (OpRA).

Coming after Rebecca was Chris Maddock, who offered his insight on Employment Law to the audience. He spoke about the impact of Brexit on employment, employing EU nationals and the EU Settlement Scheme, as well as the "gig economy," which characterises a labour market fuelled by short-term contracts or freelance work.

Lee, Rebecca, and Chris then joined each other on stage to answer questions posed by the audience. Following this, Lee offered to speak to guests with any questions that they preferred to ask one-to-one.

If you would like more information on any employment tax related matters, please contact either: Lee Muter, Employment Taxes Partner, on 0191 243 6089 or at leemuter@unw.co.uk; or Rebecca Kemp, Employment Taxes Consultant, on 0191 243 6070 or at rebeccakemp@unw.co.uk

INCREASING VALUATIONS IN THE PRE-BREXIT MARKET

Contrary to popular belief, the current Brexit uncertainty has resulted in an investment market where funding appetite is higher than ever for the right business.



Ahead of the referendum there was increased fund raising activity among UK private equity funds, as fund managers were keen to avoid any uncertainty around their own business in the period following the UK leaving the EU.

This has resulted in a large number of freshly raised funds, and with several large funds still in the market for additional capital, the cash overhang in the private equity industry is now likely to be larger than it has been for many years.

The oversupply of capital has however been faced with a reduced demand in the market as business owners delay investment and growth decisions in the face of Brexit uncertainty. The inevitable result is that there is more capital chasing fewer opportunities and that good companies in the market have raised substantial amounts of capital at very strong valuations as competition among funders intensifies.

Although companies which rely heavily on exports or imports may face reduced funding appetite in the short term, businesses with a predominantly domestic business model will find that now is an optimum time to seek investment as investors are keen to deploy their fresh capital.

Cavu raised substantial amounts of private equity for clients during March across three deals which attracted strong interest and valuations from the private equity sector. The commonality between the transactions was that our clients operated predominantly domestic business models where any Brexit impact was likely to be marginal.

If you are considering accelerating your company's growth through an investment, this could very well be the perfect time to approach the market, despite any uncertainty of what will happen in October (our presumption is that it will go to the wire!).

www.cavucf.com

BUYING A PROPERTY? YOU SHOULD READ THIS...

We know how hard it can be when you've found the property you've been waiting for and the clock is ticking to make the sale, but your funds are tied up in other assets with an unknown date of sale.

If this is all too familiar to you, a bridging loan could be just the stepping stone you need.

With house prices soaring and banks withholding funding, an increasing number of borrowers are searching elsewhere for the funding they need to take the next step on the property ladder. Banks and building societies have not only grown more reluctant to lend in the wake of the financial crisis, but also take a lot longer to process loan applications. That's where a bridging loan can come to the rescue.

Bridging loans are short term finance alternatives which quite literally 'bridge' the gap between financial benchmarks. They are designed to help you complete the purchase of a property before you are able to complete the sale on your existing property or assets.

If you already have your eye on a new property but have to wait for the sale of your current asset to gain access to funds, then a bridging loan will help you complete your purchase before another bidder swoops in.

Bridging loans can be used for a number of property funding solutions, including buy-to-let and development. They're ideal for home owners, landlords, commercial property and amateur property developers, including those who want to purchase at auction where a mortgage is quickly needed.

At Advanced Funding Solutions we offer competitive rates and give you access to our comprehsive portfolio of international funders. Our customers benefit from an unparalleded choice of funding sources, including those specific to niche industry sectors. And, thanks to our size, market presence and the relationship we have forged with our funders, we can bring you the most competitive rates in the commercial finance market.

So, if you're in need of a funding solution to support you between financial checkpoints, then a bridging loan could be for you.



Chris Adlam

For more information, head to our website www.advancedfunding.co.uk for more information.

MAVEN LEADS £1.2M INVESTMENT IN HIVE HR



Hive HR team

The innovative employee engagement Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platform secured funding through the Maven VCTs and the North East Development Capital Fund, supported by the European Regional Development Fund and managed by Maven.

Maven provided £350,000 through its management of the North East Development Capital Fund, with £250,000 provided by Maven VCTs. The remaining £600,000 was raised from private investors, management, and via the Growth Capital Ventures co-investment platform. Funding will enable Hive to invest in its sales and marketing activities and create a number of new roles to deliver on its ambitious expansion plans, whilst continuing to roll out a number of exciting product enhancements.

Hive is a cloud-based platform (www.hive.hr) that supports the HR function of organisations to help them improve employee engagement and communication. Primarily through the use of surveys or in question format, the platform collates and analyses employee feedback in real time and on a continuous basis, which serves to continually evolve and improve the HR function within a business, as well as helping to clarify and implement new policies and services for their employees.

The business already boasts an impressive client list across a number of sectors, including banking, government bodies, property and education. These include Hermes, Shop Direct, Travelodge, Tarmac, River Island and various NHS and public sector organisations.

The cloud services market has grown rapidly in recent years and a paradigm shift is currently taking place with software increasingly being deployed via the cloud. This shift is particularly prevalent in enterprise software, and HR software in particular, with 28% of global HR enterprise applications being delivered on a SaaS basis in 2017, which is forecast to increase significantly to 86% by 2022.

Alex Marsh, Investment Manager at Maven, said: "The workplace is constantly evolving, and organisations must remain dynamic to ensure more than ever that they are keeping their employees happy, motivated and engaged. The Hive platform helps remove the additional burden this is creating for HR and leadership teams and is helping them respond better and more quickly to employee feedback to deliver initiatives and services to help retain and motivate staff in what is an increasingly competitive environment. John has built an impressive senior management team around him and we are delighted to support the business as it enters an exciting new phase of growth."

John Ryder, Managing Director of Hive HR, said: "Hive has grown quickly in the last three years with very little capital. The whole team are now excited about what we will achieve with the additional backing from investors and are really pleased to welcome Maven as part of this round."

One of the UK's fastest growing economies, the North East is home to a range of dynamic businesses with highly-skilled workforces and is recognised for its strengths in a number of key industry sectors. Growing twice as fast as the rest of the economy, over £28 billion has been invested in UK tech in the last five years.

A recent report highlighted the strength of the industry in the North East, according to Invest North East England, by 2020 it is estimated the region's technology space alone will be worth around £1.1billion. Now known as one of the fastest growing tech scenes in England, the North East's digital community is helping to drive the growth of the UK economy as a whole.

Maven is building a track record for backing other ambitious UK software companies, which includes the mobile app developer hedgehog lab, intranet pioneers Oak, compensation management software solution provider Curo, and CRM specialist ProspectSoft.

Contact Maven's local team today to find out how to access the finance or support your business needs to unlock its growth potential or visit mavencp.com to find out more.

MAVEN

www.mavencp.com

CREATING VALUE

Maven offers flexible debt and equity funding options to support dynamic SMEs across the UK, investing up to £15 million in a single transaction.

Maven funding can support a business at any stage of its growth cycle and cover a wide range of corporate activity including MBOs and buy-and-build strategies, as well as the provision of acquisition finance, development capital and replacement capital.



If your business is in need of finance to help unlock its growth potential, we may be able to help. For more information please contact:

Salvus House, Aykley Heads, Durham, DH1 5TS. T: 0191 731 8595

Earl Grey House, 75/85 Grey Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6EF. T: 0191 731 8590

Maven Capital Partners UK LLP is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, Firm Reference Number 495929

MOTHER KNOWS BEST

I write this just two days after my mother passing away. She was elderly (93) and suffered a "massive and un-survivable" stroke four days earlier.


Peter Rutherford

Why do I tell you this? To illicit sympathy? Certainly not. She lived a full life, and no-one goes on forever.

I am writing this because mother had utilised a very useful financial structure. This device ensures that the family benefits from the majority of her estate without waiting for or paying fees for probate. Indeed, by the time you read this, funds will have been dispersed to her beneficiaries.

So, what is this clever structure?

They have been available in English law for centuries, so it is not something untried and untested. It is a "Trust".

Because mother had put her main assets, including her house, into the trust, they were not part of her estate when she died. Those assets were owned by the trustees for the benefit of the beneficiaries of the trust, which included her, whilst she lived. As they were not part of the estate there is no need to be delayed by obtaining probate before distribution.

This was good forward thinking. Thank you, mother.

Another benefit of her taking this action was that, should she have needed care, the capital within the trust could not be financially assessed by the local authority. This is only true if she was not trying to deprive herself of her assets. She was not as she lived in the house for as long as she could and received the income from the investments when the house was sold so she could move in with family.

If she had been receiving means tested benefits, then the assets in the trust would not have affected her entitlement either.

We at Rutherford Hughes are great fans of trusts, of which there are many different types. They can serve many uses.

A trust is often used in Inheritance Tax Planning. Gifts can be made by the Settlor, that is the person creating the trust. They can retain some access to capital and income, dependent upon the terms of the trust.

Some trusts are very specific as to who should benefit, whilst others give discretion to the trustees to consider the needs of individuals within a group, which may not be the same for each.

Trusts are often established through a will and come into force upon death. The deceased can exercise some control "beyond the grave" through a letter of wishes addressed to the trustees. By way of example, it might be along the lines of "all income to my spouse and upon their death, to be shared equally between my children."

Another use would be to protect a young or immature individual from themselves and their own vulnerability. There are plenty of "predators and creditors" who will prey upon the innocent. Consequently, having more mature minds and eyes watching the wallet can be of comfort to a settlor.

Here at Rutherford Hughes, we always consider the use of trusts in financial planning. However, I have only touched upon some of their advantages and uses here.

If you or would like more information, or would like to discuss your own position, then please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague, David Hughes.

Peter Rutherford is a director at Rutherford Hughes Ltd. He can be contacted on 0191 229 9600
peter.rutherford@rutherfordhughes.com www.rutherfordhughes.com

Rutherford Hughes Ltd. is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Rutherford Hughes Ltd company registration no: 10431722. Country of registration: England. Office & Registered Office address: Collingwood Buildings, 38 Collingwood Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1JF.

NORTH EAST MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS – ARE CHANGES TO PENSION TAX RULES AFFECTING YOU?

Amanda Cowie, Director of Robson Laidler Wealth and NHS Pension Specialist discusses why the recent headlines are no surprise.

Has anyone noticed the increase in the number of articles lately relating to doctors and their pensions? Or is it just me? One of the more recent headlines this April was the British Medical Association warning the Chancellor that senior doctors would have to cut their NHS working hours if the recent changes to pension tax legislation were not changed. Consultants' leader Dr Rob Harwood said: "It cannot be right that doctors working extra hours to reduce waiting lists or cover rota gaps are then hit with additional tax bills greater than the value of the extra hours worked."

We see the anxiety that doctors face over this on a regular basis.

Over the past eight years or so there has been pressure for the Government to be seen to be limiting the amount that individuals can both have or save into a pension. This has led to a large number of changes in tax pension legislation and, to be honest, it has been difficult to keep up! Perhaps the most immediate and I would argue, most punitive, was the recent change to the Annual Allowance, which kicked in during the 16/17 tax year. In our office there was much head scratching to understand how the new rules would work in practice but, once we got our heads around it, we started to see 1. How difficult it was to control and 2. How a large number of our clients would be affected and have higher tax liabilities.

In addition to the complicated calculation, there is a further difficulty relating to the timing and provision of information from NHS Pensions. Often individuals are under the impression that if their taxable income isn't over £150,000 they aren't affected. If you have taxable income of £110,000 or above you need to get details of the growth for that particular tax year from NHS Pensions. They may not send it out to you automatically so you need to call them and ask – it takes up to 12 weeks for them to provide it to you so make sure you do this in plenty of time.

For GP's though, your information is typically a couple of years behind so you may need to look at the historical growth and put an estimate on your return. You can ask the Scheme to Pay if the likely tax is over £2,000 and if you don't know you can make an estimate by completing a Scheme Pays Election form – for the 17/18 tax year these need to be with NHS Pensions by 31 July 2019.

If you are concerned about this or any aspect of your pension and financial planning, please get in touch.


Amanda Cowie

Email Amanda Cowie: acowie@robson-laidler.co.uk or telephone: 0191 281 8191. www.robson-laidler.co.uk/wealth

WE KNOW /

THE FUTURE IS NOT JUST DOWN TO CHANCE.

When can I afford to retire?
Can I have the lifestyle I want in retirement?
How can I pass on my wealth to loved ones?
How will my partner manage if I were to die?
What about long term care?

Our expert financial planners know how to help shape the answers.

t: (0191) 281 8191 **e:** wealth@robson-laidler.co.uk
Fernwood House, Fernwood Road, Jesmond,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 1TJ
www.robson-laidler.co.uk



ROBSON / LAIDLER
WEALTH





TEES VALLEY COFFEE FIRM SECURES FUNDING FOR GROWTH

Tees Valley-based coffee company, Beanies Flavour Coffee, has secured investment from NPIF - FW Capital Debt Finance, managed by FW Capital and part of the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, to continue its fast growth following initial support from Tees Valley Combined Authority.

The Darlington firm, which manufactures 17 flavours in its premium freeze-dried, sugar-free coffee range, has seen sales of its 50g jars and individual stick sachets grow 50 percent in the last 12-months.

Available in over 30 countries worldwide, Beanies Flavour Coffee boasts products with less than two calories per cup. The products were also showcased in a recent TV advertising campaign which is due to be repeated over the next 12 months and set to further aid the company's growth.

John Evans, managing director of Beanies Flavour Coffee, said: "We intend to quadruple our turnover in the next few years with introductions of new products and extending retailers on the high street, over the internet and in the wholesale sector.

"We were very happy to have an experienced team of advisers around us that helped us to secure the funding for this next phase of growth. Our internal team is growing all the time and with the need for extra capacity, working capital is key at a time like this."

Amongst the North East advisers on hand to assist with the securing of funding was MHA Tait Walker, who aided with the fundraising from FW Capital and Muckle LLP who delivered the legal advice.

Commenting on MHA Tait Walker's work with growing coffee firm, Steve Plaskitt, partner at MHA Tait Walker, said: "It was a pleasure to help with the fundraise and find a deal structure that would work for all stakeholders. Beanies has a great management team and with backing from HSBC and NPIF - FW Capital Debt Finance it should be able to achieve its ambitious plans."

Investment firm FW Capital provides flexible finance to businesses in the North of England, from loans to support growth and expansion to property development loans. Specialising in SME finance, the firm manages a number of funds including The Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, the Tees Valley Catalyst Fund and the North East Property Fund.

Keith Charlton, at FW Capital, said: "At FW Capital we specialise in helping ambitious businesses based in the North of England to grow, by providing them with access to the finance they need to realise their potential.

"It's been a pleasure to work with the team at Beanies as they continue to expand their reach and build even further on the success they have already experienced."

Stuart Grieve, at North East independent law firm Muckle LLP, added: "John and his team have built a highly successful business with a fresh and innovative product and a clear vision for the brand, so it's been particularly pleasing to help structure a deal that will deliver greater growth for this ambitious North East business."

Ben Houchen, Tees Valley Mayor, said "The success and rapid growth of Beanies is a great example of the entrepreneurial spirit that I see so often when I visit businesses in the Tees Valley. I would like to congratulate John and the whole team on what they've achieved in a short period of time.

www.taitwalker.co.uk

TO MTD AND BEYOND

By Cyd Smith, CS Accounting



So after all the hype MTDfV is finally here and businesses have their shiny new digital software, to enable them to file their VAT returns.

All that fuss just for an API which you can't even see and (as long as it works) you would never know was there.

But that's not all you can do with this digital revolution. Take that shining example of construction above and here I must add my thanks to Oscar for letting me share this amazing engineering feat with you. It's always great to make a sale but do you know how much profit you have made on a particular job? If there are 18 red bricks and 2 window blocks and that crane on top looks pricey...Using the analysis function in your digital software you can assign all of those costs of a particular job to a project and produce a profit and loss account so you know how much profit you have made.

And don't forget the other costs. All those toddler labour hours, PPE, insurance, admin costs, snacks, consultants fees (you can't just knock up a construction like that without proper drawings and calculations) and everything else that has been spent in bringing this to fruition. All recorded by your digital software.

But on a more serious note digital software is not just for MTD. It can make your life easier in so many ways. By linking with your bank accounts it will automatically import transactions so you don't miss anything. If it's cloud based you can access it anywhere you have an internet connection and you can use your app to easily access information. You can raise an invoice while you are with a customer and take payment and you can photograph your petrol receipt before you leave the garage and record it in the software.

Keeping track of your sales is easy too. You can analyse them by product, salesperson, area, business type, distribution route etc. You can see details of what has been invoiced, which customers haven't paid and some software will even email a statement to those customers while you sleep peacefully.

By setting up products you can also keep an eye on stock levels and generate stock level warning messages. Stock will keep track of cost and sales prices with the ability to set different sales prices for say trade and wholesale. You can also analyse which products your customers buy so you can more effectively target your marketing.

If you are a voluntary organisation or a small charity it is very important to be able to keep track of your funds and also to be able to report on them. By using the analysis function in your digital software you can keep track of various funds and also run reports to show your funders how the money has been spent.

Then there's the reporting. Your software will have basic reporting built in so you can easily see information like outstanding supplier invoices or last month's profit and loss account. But you can do so much more with the facility to export to Excel or using Power BNI or...Don't get me started on reporting, I get quite geeky about reports!

There is also a whole array of apps related to specific businesses and requirements that will link with your software to help your business in all sorts of ways. So your digital software can tell you all about your business and give you whatever information you would like to have to make your business easier to run and more profitable. And if it's cloud based your accountant can also have 24/7 live access so they can keep an eye on how things are going or just help out if you get stuck on something.

Of course, that old saying applies – 'rubbish in = rubbish out' so you need to think about what you would like to know, what would be beneficial to you in running the business and then make sure that the system is set up to be able to give you that. That's the part that we love getting involved in.

If you would like to find out how to take your digital software to infinity and beyond contact CS Accounting on 0191 4879870 or email to info@csaccounting.co.uk.

IS ONLINE MORTGAGE ADVICE A REALITY? LONG LIVE THE MORTGAGE GEEKS!

As with most other industries the mortgage world has seen many technology driven changes over recent years. It is something that we constantly monitor to improve our own proposition.


Paul Hardingham, Director of Innovate Mortgages and Loans

Up until now there has been no real "Uber" moment which has turned the market on its head, with so called disruptive technologies finding it difficult to account for the many weird and wonderful requirements of lenders across the market.

A couple of recent launches have sought to provide "advice" by way of a decision tree system, but in reality each individual's circumstances vary hugely, so matching these to a disparate lending market is a huge task. Consequently, most of these new offerings require some kind of human touch to complete the process.

We can foresee a position in the near term where certain segments of the mortgage market with very straight forward (do they really exist?) circumstances and requirements may be able to utilise an online portal.

However, having delivered a mortgage in principle through this route what happens when something changes or goes wrong, who speaks with the lender, estate agent, solicitor, the valuer, accountant, damp proof/wall tie/electrics specialist to ensure that the purchase actually completes?

Can a remote presence with whom you have no personal relationship provide a calming influence/ shoulder to cry on to get one of the most important purchases anyone ever experiences over the line?

As ever, a one size fits all policy can cause issues and a human intervention, negotiation or even a sounding board for possible solutions will often be required.

All of that said, we would certainly promote carrying out some form of initial research online in order to determine which mortgage broker to use. Online tools, such as reading google reviews of previous client experiences can be very useful in narrowing down the options so that the person you engage with is the right person for you.

Technology certainly has its place and makes all of our day to day lives easier - in our own business we are constantly seeking to use new tools to publicise our services up front via our website, seeking out client testimonials/reviews to demonstrate our competency and the overall user experience whilst also streamlining our back office services - but in general we feel that you will be stuck with the greying mortgage geeks for some time yet!

Paul Hardingham and Tony Ibson are Mortgage and Protection Advisers at Innovate Mortgages and Loans. Both have over 20 years of experience advising individuals and businesses across the North East of England. They can be contacted for bespoke advice at paul@innovateml.co.uk or tony@innovateml.co.uk or call 0191 223 3514.

The purpose of this article is to provide technical and generic guidance and should not be interpreted as a personal recommendation or advice.

Your home is at risk if you do not keep up repayments on a mortgage or other loan secured on it.

ACCOUNTANCY FIRM SMASHES £100,000 TARGET FOR NORTH EAST CHARITIES

Accountancy firm Robson Laidler has raised more than £100,000 for North East charities and community groups following a record-breaking fundraising campaign.

Smashing its intensive four-year fundraising goal to raise £100,000 to mark its centenary year next year, the firm has exceeded this 18-months ahead of schedule.

Staff at Robson Laidler have raised cash donations as well as paid volunteer hours to assist more than 100 different charities in 100 different innovative ways, all reached in time for Robson Laidler's 100th year of trading in 2020.

Charities that have benefitted from the funds include Robson Laidler's Charity of the Year; Dementia UK, The RVI Tiny Lives Trust, the Freeman Heart and Lung Transplant Association, as well as a host of other local community groups and projects.

Staff at the Firm have raised cash via cake sales, dress down days, a fundraising ball, competing the Three Peaks Challenge and various raffles and tombolas to name a few.

Volunteer hours have also been used to undertake numerous community tasks such as, maintenance work at Summerhill Bowling Club in Newcastle, tidying community gardens, painting and decorating a Scout hut, which had been broken into and vandalized, a takeover of the St Oswald's Hospice charity shop in Gosforth and a sponsored walk in aid of Marie Curie Hospice in Newcastle. Staff have also used their financial knowledge to volunteer in schools and colleges giving careers advice in accountancy.



Heading up the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) team at Robson Laidler, Emma Thompson said: "To have reached this target 18-months ahead of schedule is entirely due to the tireless efforts made by the staff in our Newcastle and Durham offices who have supported our CSR team with the various fundraising ideas they have had over the past 33 months.

"I am delighted that we have reached a staggering £108,182.81. We have also assisted 127 different charities in 100 different ways.

"Our fundraising will of course carry on, we have a group 14 people doing the Coast 2 Coast in August, and 10 people doing the Great North Run a week later in September to raise funds for our 2019 Charity of the Year, Freeman Heart and Lung Transplant Association (FHLTA) as well as various fundraising days to help other nominated charities throughout the year.

"The support and generosity of our staff never ever fails to amaze me."

Robson Laidler MD Graham Purvis said: "In 2016 the directors set up a CSR group as part of Robson Laidler's overall purpose to improve the lives of our clients, people and communities. I am genuinely overwhelmed by the amount we have raised in such a short space of time and the amount of volunteering staff have done for these community groups and charities. This fundraising achievement typifies exactly what we are all about, and I am so proud of my team."

www.robson-laidler.co.uk

KEEPING FINANCIAL ADVICE IN THE FAMILY

For nearly twenty years, one Northumberland financial advice company has been entrusted with the money matters of three generations from the same family.


Duncan and Rebecca Scott

Duncan Scott and seven members of his immediate family have all used the services of Explore Wealth Management to handle their finances from investments, pensions, savings and even a property sale.

Duncan, aged 56, is a semi-retired business consultant, who has worked in the banking and financial sector for over thirty years. He used to live in Whitley Bay before moving to the Midlands to further his career.

But Duncan has always stayed loyal to his North East roots by continuing to holiday in the region and keeping his connection with Explore Wealth Management.

"We all have a trusting relationship with Explore Wealth. Their honest and caring approach to giving advice and guidance is always wonderfully refreshing," said Duncan.

Duncan is married to wife Rebecca. They have two children Sam, aged 18 and Hannah aged 16. Rebecca is a rehabilitation officer for people with blindness and visual impairment. They also have a Labrador retriever called Megan, who is a retired guide dog.

Duncan adds: "Knowing that your financial affairs are in safe hands really takes the pressure off especially at this stage in our lives, when making the wrong decisions could have detrimental effects deep into your retirement years.

"Explore Wealth keep us regularly informed about the progress of our investments, every step of the way."

The Scott family try to visit the region at least three times a year. They hire a holiday home in Beadnell on the Northumberland coastline, where they love to take long walks and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Explore Wealth have managed a wide selection of packages for Duncan and his family including savings advice for their two children, through to investment guidance for his sister, who works as a GP and brother-in-law, who runs his own business. Explore even helped with the sale of Duncan's parents' home.

For further information about Explore Wealth Management please visit www.explorewealth.co.uk or by calling 0191 285 1555.



David Downing

IN CONVERSATION WITH...

DAVID DOWNING

COO, Joslin Rhodes Lifestyle Financial Planning Ltd

David joined Joslin Rhodes in 2018, working to build on its already good position in the pension and retirement planning sector. I spoke to David about his career and how he plans to grow Joslin Rhodes, as well as do a bit of theatre work in his spare time.

What were your career ambitions growing up?

I didn't have any. It was only after I started working in the telecommunications sector my career aspirations took root. It was an industry with a lot of opportunities, so I worked my way up to general management. I'd like to say I set my sights on something in the beginning, but I really didn't, things just came along, and I grabbed the opportunities.

Who are Joslin Rhodes and what do you do?

We specialise in financial and retirement planning, helping people who've worked all their lives and are now starting to wonder – "When can I retire?" and more importantly – "Am I going to be okay when I retire?"

We guide them by asking – 'What do you want from retirement?' rather than simply giving them transactional advice. It's our job to help answer their big questions and show them everything's going to be okay.

How was Joslin Rhodes formed?

The company was formed almost twenty years ago by Neil Parker and started life advising on all the things you'd expect from a financial adviser – mortgages, insurance, etc.

However, when the pension regulations changed in 2015, people had the freedom to choose what to do with their pensions. Neil realised there were people who hadn't needed to make these decisions before and a new approach, which didn't focus on transactional products, was needed.

So, he created the Plan Happy process, which asks those lifestyle questions first – "What does retirement look like for you?"

Plan Happy is the process we take our clients through today.

What's your proudest moment?

In life it's that I played Mozart in Amadeus on stage, and honestly, I was terrified of doing it. But I loved it. It was such a fantastic role.

In business it's the outcome we get for the clients. We've had some clients who've worried themselves sick for years about retirement. When they finally reach out to us, we get to see their beautiful emotional journeys. They stop worrying and realise - "Yes, everything is going to be okay."

What makes Joslin Rhodes different to other Financial Advice firms?

When you walk in the door you can see we're different, it's very relaxed and homely.

However, the main reason we're different is our starting point isn't financial transactions, it's more about – "What do you want to do? What do you want your assets to do for you?"

A lot of people limit themselves by saying- "I'm going to retire therefore I'd better stop spending." And, when we've ran the numbers there are times we say – "You can spend more if you wish, you're fine."

It's the focus on the person rather than their assets that makes us different.

How has the Financial Services industry changed over the last ten years?

In my father's day you'd hit a certain age and start drawing money from your company or private pension, when you died it disappeared. You'd live your life around that income, that's just how it was.

The 2015 changes meant everyone could access their pension pot from 55, but any value over a certain amount required financial advice.

This meant a lot of working people now had to get financial advisers and many, like my siblings, had never needed one before, so this was difficult.

It's our job to present all the information and advise on individual circumstances so everyone can make informed decisions.

Tell us about the Joslin Rhodes team?

We're just like every other family, we're a mixed, diverse and fun group.

I've worked in many companies with core values, but you struggle to see them exercised. The one thing I love about this place is anyone can recite our core values:

- We tell it like it is
- We simplify to empower
- We champion the human outcome
- We give warmth & comfort
- We put WOW in everything we do

But more importantly, we live them. They're mainly about our clients but also about ourselves, they're part of everything we do.

What's the best business advice you've been given?

It was personal and business advice. When I was a young man, my father introduced me to the poem 'If' by Rudyard Kipling, and his advice was – "If it's going great or it's going bad, every month just read that poem and it'll put things into perspective." And I still do.

It talks of treating triumph and disaster the same. It talks of balance. There's always something for the situation I'm in at any moment where I can point and say – "There's the balance."

What does the future look like for you and Joslin Rhodes?

At some point, I'd probably say I've achieved what I wanted. But there's things we're trying to achieve here I'd really like to be a part of and be able to say – "Yes I helped make that happen."

For Joslin Rhodes, I see normal people like my brother and sister walk out of here content with their questions answered. And it's this we want to take to more people. Recently, we opened our Newcastle site and are looking at further satellite sites. We'd like to take what we do to as many people as possible.

What do you do when you're not at work?

I've been involved with the theatre since I was 26 and currently with The People's Theatre. I just love that place. I've done acting, directing, set building, working behind the bar, publicity, you name it.

And I'm afraid I've become a box-set junkie. It's dangerous to watch that first episode because eight hours later you've gone through them all. If there's an addiction that's it, but I'm trying to cure it.

What's your recommended read?

A book that always takes me into a world of fantasy is Tolkien's Lord of the Rings. The first time I read it I was 11 and understood about an eighth of it. Every time I read it, I see something else, it's a fascinating book.

Business wise, I'd recommend Traction and Rocket Fuel by Gino Wickman. They're books that show a set of concepts to help leaders improve their businesses. We use the EOS system here and I'd recommend those.

So why not pop in and speak to us at The Planning Rooms in Stockton or Newcastle. To book your free meeting or to find out more about us visit www.joslinrhodes.co.uk or call Stockton 01642 04 4914 or Newcastle 0191 249 3828.



RMT managing director Mike Pott (centre) with the firm's ten new recruits

RMT ACCOUNTANTS INVESTS IN EXPANSION WITH TEN NEW RECRUITS

RMT Accountants & Business Advisors is scaling up resources across all sectors of its business by bringing in ten new recruits.

The independent Gosforth-based firm has made the appointments in response to a stream of new business wins and growing demand from existing clients.

Lara Marshall and Suzanne Layfield have joined the firm's client services team in assistant manager and audit senior roles respectively, while Chris Ferguson and Chris Wray have both joined the firm's specialist recovery and insolvency team.

Liam Bell and Chris Renshaw are now part of the firm's technology support division, RMT Technology, and Patricia McGuiness is working within its outsourcing team.

Fred Anson has joined the business as a corporate tax assistant and Ollie Lamb and Olivia Nailon are both working in RMT's audit & accounts team.

Suzanne Layfield, who brings more than a decade's industry experience to her new role, says: "I was looking at a number of different options around the region, but as soon as I came through the doors at RMT, it felt right and the type of environment in which I wanted to work.

"The firm has a very good market reputation and the managers place a lot of trust in the team which allows us to get on with the job of delivering the services our clients need."

RMT provides the full range of financial and business advisory services through its accountancy, specialist tax, medical and healthcare, corporate finance and recovery and insolvency teams.

Founded over 60 years ago, it works with UK companies of all sizes both within and outside the North East, as well as a range of international clients.

Mike Pott, managing director at RMT, adds: "Activity levels in all our divisions are continuing to rise, and we need to ensure we have the right skills and resources in place to meet this demand.

"Recruiting highly capable and experienced staff for roles in which they can help our clients meet their commercial and personal goals while also developing their own careers is an essential part of our strategic growth plan.

"We're increasingly taking on greater responsibility for clients' business functions, such as payroll management, human resources and technology management, and with many firms not having access to this sort of expertise within their own ranks, it's something we expect to see even more of in the future.

"We will be looking to create more new roles as the year progresses and are excited about the opportunities ahead."

www.r-m-t.co.uk



L-R: Phil Smith, founder of Drilling Supplies, Adam Ballantyne of RMT Accountants and Jabad Jaigirdar of Millican Law

NEW ERA FOR DRILLING SUPPLIES AS ESTABLISHED GROUP RSK ACQUIRES BUSINESS FROM LONG-TERM OWNER

A North East drilling equipment supply business is moving into a new era after being acquired by one of the UK's leading providers of engineering, environmental consultancy and technical support services.

Drilling Supplies provides drilling equipment, rigs and associated equipment from a range of industry-leading suppliers through its headquarters in Burnopfield, Newcastle.

It was formed in 2007 after managing director Phil Smith started the business in his garage, supplying parts to drilling engineering companies and has grown into a national business supplying customers around the world, including RSK.

After owning the business for over a decade, Phil has sold Drilling Supplies to RSK. Long-term advisor Adam Ballantyne of RMT Accountants & Business Advisors worked with Phil on all aspects of the sale of the business, while legal advice was provided by Jabad Jaigirdar and Ella Doshi from Millican Law's team of Corporate Law specialists.

Phil Smith, Managing Director says: "Drilling Supplies holds a strong position in a range of markets throughout the UK, and the expertise and product range has been the key factor in the success that the business has enjoyed over the years.

"When we were looking at potential acquirers, the way in which we felt the business would look post sale and develop the team was our top priority. Having seen how well other companies have fared after being acquired by RSK, they became our preferred buyer as soon as we knew they were interested.

"RMT kept us fully informed as the sale process progressed, smoothed over any problems that arose and found solutions whenever they were needed - their professionalism and expert guidance has been absolutely invaluable."

Adam Ballantyne, Corporate Finance Executive at RMT Accountants, adds: "We had a significant amount of interest in Drilling Supplies from a number of potential buyers, but RSK's position and its ability to grow drilling supplies made them stand out as the best option.

"Having worked closely with Phil for many years, it's great to be able to reach such a positive conclusion for him and we're expecting to see Drilling Supplies flourish under its new ownership."

Jabad Jaigirdar, Partner at Millican Law, added: "With RSK being well-established in the drilling sector, this is an ideal acquisition to enable the continued scaling of Drilling Supplies, and the new management team clearly has the experience to take the company to the next level."

Alan Ryder, founder and chief executive officer of RSK says: "RSK has already developed a close business relationship with Drilling Supplies & Hire Services and I am excited to develop this relationship further now that it is part of the RSK group.

"RSK is gaining a fantastic business with which we see multiple synergies. Both companies will benefit from joining forces and the broadening of our in-house capabilities and the building on our strengths."

KEEPING UP WITH THE (DOW) JONES



Financial markets these days are very fast-moving: shares, exchange rates and commodity prices can all fluctuate dramatically on the smallest piece of news.

Keeping up with events that can impact your investment portfolio is, therefore, becoming ever more difficult and time-consuming. Using the services of a discretionary manager takes away the headache of constantly monitoring your portfolio, as it means that the manager - rather than the investor - takes the decision on what to buy and sell without seeking instruction from the investor.

It does not, however, mean that you give up all control of your portfolio.

You shouldn't think of discretionary investment management as something which will require you to be entirely passive. This is not the case at all. Rather, if you enter a discretionary investment management relationship you will be delegating the execution of an agreed overall investment strategy to someone with the right investment skills and experience – along with the backing of a full research team. You will still be well placed to see exactly what is being done with your money and how your wealth manager is performing against a target.

Your investment strategy will have been carefully worked out through a collaborative process of factors such as your long and mid-term objectives; your true attitude to risk and capacity for loss; how any existing investments might be optimised and so on. Once your wealth manager has a full picture of your financial circumstances and goals, they will then create a portfolio for you.

Gary Fawcett, an investment manager and divisional director at Brewin Dolphin, says the terms of engagement between the client and manager are the most important part of the relationship. "Years ago, you might just have been given a piece of paper to sign and then told that the wealth manager would do the rest. Now, it is a far more complex relationship. The manager will do a financial analysis, establish what the client wants to achieve, what risk they want – and can afford – to take, their time horizons and so on."

"When we have agreed the terms of engagement, we know the client's aims and objectives. We can then establish a benchmark which we will be measured against."

Discretionary management is very different to putting your money into an investment fund where investors will have no knowledge of the fund's activities beyond a simple annual statement of investment performance: discretionary management is a service, rather than a product. A bespoke portfolio will be created, reflecting the needs of the client and with input from research analysts and other experts on the team.

"Discretionary management is engaging and dynamic," says Gary. "There is more frequent dialogue and the investment strategy has to be evolutionary. We are looking after people's investments over a long period, and across multiple generations. Clients will move from the accumulation phase in their 40s and 50s to active retirement in their 60s and 70s and then to passive retirement in their 80s and 90s."

"They will want different strategies along the way and a discretionary manager will be able to achieve that in an evolutionary, rather than a revolutionary, manner. That means a regular review process is an integral part of the service."

www.brewin.co.uk

© National BBQ Week 2019

GO FOR THE GRILL & WIN A BARBIBOX WORTH OVER £60 WITH THE 23rd NATIONAL BBQ WEEK

The ever-popular, market-leading National BBQ Week returns for the 23rd time in 2019 with some amazing prizes. So here's your chance to win a BarbiBox full of gorgeous Barbi goodies worth nearly £60.

Launching on Spring Bank Holiday, Monday 27th May and running until 2nd June, National BBQ Week is once again promoting Gastro-grilling and Better BBQ'ing by encouraging family and friends to go for the grill, get the BBQ season going and enjoy the great British summer!

BBQ Brands

The 23rd National BBQ Week is supported by these leading brands:

Official Beer - Cobra
Brewed Smooth with all Food

Official Condiment - Hellmann's
Real good BBQ, Make it better with Hellmann's

Official BBQ Wraps - Mission Deli Wraps
Mission makes it possible

Official Cheese - Primula
Makes the BBQ

Official Sausages - Alf Turner
Our Quality is in our History

Official Fuel - Zip - Give your BBQ some zip

SPAM® Chopped Pork and Ham -
Sizzle Pork And Mmm™



BBQ Prizes

So, to enter the prize draw, just answer the following question: How old is National BBQ Week?

a) 13 years **b) 23 years** **c) 33 years**

To enter, please email you answer with the title "Northern Insight competition' to ***Antonia.b@nationalbbqweek.co.uk***
Competition closes on 14th June 2019.

BBQ Info

For everything you ever needed to know about BBQ, make sure to visit www.nationalbbqweek.co.uk for the UK's biggest selection of hints, tips, recipes and guides to being a Better BBQ'er. You can also enter the #BBQBaptas competition on National BBQ Week's social media and win major prizes, including £500 for the best entry! Enter on our Facebook page #NationalBBQWeek or through the website.

Competition Terms & Conditions: Usual Terms and Conditions apply – you must be over 18 to enter and there is no other prize alternative. Pack shot is representative of the prize only. Judges decision is final. Prizes will be received within 56 days of competition end. By entering you agree to contact from National BBQ Week by email with BBQ info and offers.

Do you need a helping hand to find the right mortgage for you?



innovate MORTGAGES & LOANS

We are your local mortgage and loans experts with over 80 years' experience specialising in:-

Mortgages for the self-employed
Placing declined applications
Parental assisted mortgages/FTB's
Second charge loans
Bridging finance
Buy to let
Releasing capital
Fixing/reducing outgoings

We offer an end to end personal service delivering independent whole of market advice – saving you time and offering bespoke solutions

Your home is at risk if you do not keep up repayments on a mortgage or other loan secured on it.

Contact us now for a no obligation review of your circumstances 0191 2233514 or info@innovateml.co.uk
www.innovateml.co.uk

YOUR EYE ON THE REGION...

CHRIS ADLAM

Advanced Funding Solutions is launching Bridging Loans On-line at the end of June 2019.

Did you grow up in the North East or did you decide to relocate here in later life?

Originally from London, moved to Essex, then aged 11, moved North, mum moved here, so at that age I wasn't allowed to get a flat of my own, so moved with her!

What do you think it means to be a businessperson in the North East of England?

It's perfect for me. Running Advanced Funding Solutions and now launching Bridging Loans On-Line (BLO), the North East has been a great place to grow. I love that although it is quite colloquial, the people are friendly, approachable and not afraid to spend their money. Personally, I believe in the velocity of money, meaning I love to spend my hard-earned-cash where it was made.

What is your favourite aspect of life in the North East?

The pace is so much more relaxed than down south in this region. That and the fact that everything is on your doorstep. Major airports, links to Europe, our beautiful coastline, the countryside and great places to shop like the Metro Centre also adds to the appeal of living and working here.

Do you have a favourite hotspot for a business meeting?

Rockcliffe Hall – because the location is very central, a well-respected North East businessman owns it, it's a stunningly beautiful place, surrounded by awesome views and the food is just off the scale. Definitely a firm favourite to meet there, and often try and make a day of it.

Where do you like to eat out in the region?

Peace & Loaf, Jesmond, run by Masterchef, the Professionals finalist David Coulson, is one of mine and Emma, my wife's, favourite places, closely followed by the French Quarter, Blackfriars and Café 21.

Where do you like to unwind within the North East?

Metro Centre is good for us as a family. With two girls, five year old Neave and Amy, eight months, it has it all. Shopping, arcades, variance of places to eat and drink etc. Once the kids are happy, mummy and daddy can then chill too, with a nice cocktail and a great choice of places to eat.

Are the people really friendlier?

100%. Having lived and frequently having to work 'daaan saaaf' I would definitely not argue with that comment. The North East people are not quite as guarded as other areas of the country and there is a warmth that cannot be experienced anywhere else in the UK, in my opinion.

What do you think is the best view in the North East?

Emma and I like the view out of How Do You Do restaurant in North Shields. You can see South Shields and all the boats and ships come in, whilst enjoying a nice meal, which is always a pleasure.

Do you think living and working in the North East offers the same opportunities as elsewhere in the UK?

Yes, now it does. We're as connected as anywhere else in the UK. Technology has moved on considerably, and, although people still like to meet face-to-face, a lot can now be done without actually leaving the house/office. We've just launched BLO and received FCA (Financial Conduct Authority) sign-off, we're now in a position to give the masses, that need specialised bridging loans, a service that they need, without costing the earth. Our aim is to be the first port of call when people require this specialism and make them truly understand what it is they are getting. We also want to ensure that both the lenders and our clients that we put together are both happy and don't consider going anywhere else, when they are in need of these types of services in the future.

Have you had any experience of working elsewhere and how did it compare?

Yes, worked plenty of other places, but now, as there are a lot of tech based businesses here, it's a doddle to do business with anyone in the world. It can also be a lot cheaper in the North East too, to both work and live, as we're still known as the poor relative, but let's keep it as our little secret, shall we?

www.advancedfunding.co.uk 0191 486 2089 The Quadrus Centre, Woodstock Way, Boldon Colliery NE35 9PF.



Chris Adlam

WHO SIGNED THIS?



Henry Mullen, dispute resolution lawyer at Muckle LLP, explains how unauthorised signatures can be legally binding, costly and more common than you think.

You discover a major contract has been signed by someone who is not expressly authorised to act on behalf of your business, and you haven't agreed the contract. What can you do?

It's a fairly common situation for organisations to find themselves in and it can have dire consequences if your business did not agree to enter into the contract, particularly if it's for a significant number of years, or value, or simply not in your interests.

Can the signatory's authority be denied? Can your business escape liability because the person who signed did not have actual authority? Or is the agreement likely to be binding regardless?

Is the signatory authorised?

In most cases it will be obvious if a signatory has actual authority to bind the organisation. Examples include formal powers of attorney, copies of board resolutions, or letters setting out the scope of someone's authority. Similarly, the managing director of an organisation will have implied actual authority to do everything that falls within the usual scope of their role.

However, even if they don't have actual authority, they may have implied or apparent authority to bind your organisation. For instance, they might hold a position that would normally have the authority to act on your organisation's behalf. This may be the case for people in financial, managerial or administrative roles and may depend on factors like the scope of their job role, the size of the organisation, the value of the contract and so on.

Examples of implied authority

As with most things that are implied, it can be nuanced and every situation is different. For example, an IT manager may have implied authority to enter into an agreement to replace an office server but may not have implied authority to enter into an agreement with a pension adviser to provide services to the company.



Henry Mullen

Alternatively, if someone would not normally be implied to have authority to bind the organisation, but the they are nonetheless "held out" (by words or conduct) as having authority, their signature may also be binding.

For example, a management committee of a running club informs a retailer that a particular club member will be handling the design and purchase of the club kit. In good faith, the retailer then signs a contract with that member to produce and deliver the goods.

Limitations on authority

Limitations on someone's authority to act are usually set out in your organisation's articles, partnership agreement, membership rules, board or meeting minutes, etc. However, your business is still likely to be bound by a contract even if the signatory exceeds a restriction in your governing documents or constitution, provided it was within the ordinary business of your organisation and the other party is acting in good faith.

Take the example of the running club above, which may be bound by the contract even if the club constitution states that a contract of that value must be signed by the chairman of the management committee.

Generally, the contract will only be binding if the other party did not know about the restrictions so their belief that the individual had authority is reasonable.

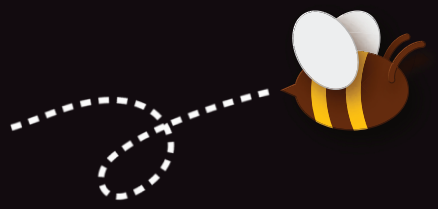
How to avoid unauthorised agreements

1. Ensure that your organisation has clear policies setting out who is authorised to sign contracts on behalf of your organisation and in what circumstances.
2. Give proper training to your people to ensure they are clear on when they can and can't sign on behalf of your organisation.
3. If your organisation is part of a group, make sure the correct organisation's name is on the contract to avoid binding another business within the group.
4. Make sure the other party knows who will be signing the contract, once agreed, and be clear about any limitations on what they are authorised to sign for.

This advice is by no means exhaustive and often these matters are heavily fact dependant. If you have any queries about your documents, or for a free consultation, please call Henry Mullen on 0191 211 7894 or email henry.mullen@muckle-llp.com

muckle LLP

Directors - don't flap. Buzz



The role of a director is a busy one. Take the sting out of all the legal responsibilities and liabilities, with our director duties training.

- Thursday 13 June
- Friday 13 September

Email events@muckle-llp.com, call 0191 211 7777 or scan this QR code to learn more.

muckle-llp.com

YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG TO WRITE A WILL

By Alice Clewes, Partner at
Hay & Kilner Law Firm

Making a Will, like clearing out the loft or getting to the bottom of the ironing basket, is one of those things that many people never quite get around to doing.


Alice Clewes

But unlike the latter two matters, not proactively putting your personal affairs in order can have long-term, difficult consequences for the loved ones that you leave behind when you pass away.

The need to make a Will tends to come into sharper focus as we get older, and healthy people in their thirties and forties might, perfectly understandably, feel like they've got plenty of time to sort this out in the future.

Sadly, none of us know what the universe has in store, and the sad case of Matt Tomon provides a clear illustration of why writing a will sooner rather than later is a good idea for all of us.

Mr Tomon was a very successful 38 year-old entrepreneur with two young sons from his first marriage. He had remained on good terms with his ex-wife Louisa Simonetta after their divorce and continued to support and stay close to his children.

He had remarried and appeared to be in good health, but in 2016, he died unexpectedly without leaving a Will, and so his second wife, Ruby Lovell-Tomon, received the whole of his estate, which was worth in excess of £5.2m.

This situation led Louisa Simonetta raising a challenge on behalf of herself and her two sons, which resulted in a lengthy and costly process that eventually led to a recent High Court decision on how Mr Tomon's wealth should be divided.

The Court heard that Mr Tomon and his first wife began a relationship around 2003 and started an IT company in 2005. They married in 2007 and had two sons, with Ms Simonetta staying at home to bring up the family. In 2013, they divorced and Mr Tomon shortly after married his second wife Ruby Lovell-Tomon.

Mr Tomon's IT company was sold for £5.2m shortly before his death and the proceeds were placed in Mrs Lovell-Tomon's bank account.

She argued the money was an outright gift to her, but Ms Simonetta's claim was that Mr Tomon had promised to buy her a "massive amazing house," to pay for his sons to be privately educated and to maintain his sons and Ms Simonetta while she retrained as a teacher.

However, by the time of his death, he had not yet bought the promised house and his second wife was left in possession of most of his estate.

A settlement was eventually agreed between the two sides whereby the sons would receive £950,000 between them and their mother was awarded cash and property worth almost £1m.

The Judge thought this a "reasonable and sensible compromise" of the case which prevented any protracted litigation, but noted that "such is one of the consequences of failing to make provision in the form of a Will or otherwise for your family…. the reality would be months, extending into years no doubt, of litigation."

In this case, a negotiated settlement was reached without full Court proceedings, but significant costs will still have been incurred, together with a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety for everyone involved - and all of it could have been avoided if a Will had been prepared.

It is a timely reminder that no one is ever too young to write a Will, so that their affairs are in order should the worst happen and that their wishes for how their loved ones are looked after are clear to everyone.

Hay & Kilner's Private Client Team are one of the largest and most experienced in the North East.
To discuss any personal legal issue, please contact us at Hay & Kilner Law Firm on 0191 232 8345. www.hay-kilner.co.uk

Straight talking,
hard working and forward thinking.
Since 1948.

Mincoffs

SOLICITORS



(L-R): Jennifer Boynton, John Morgan, Anna McGill and Gordon Brown.

TEAM SPOTLIGHT – CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL

For the second part of our Gordon Brown Law Firm Team Spotlight series, we caught up with the Corporate and Commercial team to hear more about how they can assist you in all aspects of corporate and commercial law, from buying and selling property and businesses to commercial property investing and leasing.

Can you tell our readers a little more about the services the commercial team provide?

We support businesses and commercial property owners across the region and nationally across a wide variety of services.

Alongside working with businesses on aspects such as getting legal structure right, review of commercial contracts and dealing with new investment and refinancing to name just a few of our services, we also work with landlords and property investors from dealings with their commercial properties and tenants to borrowing money for acquisition or re-finance.

We can also assist tenants in taking new leases and dealing with their landlords during a lease contract.

Everything listed above really does just scratch the surface and we can work with individuals to establish exactly what aspects of corporate and commercial law they need assistance with.

Who makes up the commercial team?

Partner and commercial property specialist John Morgan is head of our team and we have five other team members with many years combined experience. Legal support is also provided by Partner and business law expert Anna McGill, consultant and firm founder Gordon Brown, who has 40 years' experience in all aspects of commercial law, solicitor and commercial property and business specialist Jennifer Boynton, paralegal and property investment specialist Charlotte Munroe and paralegal Stephen McCaffery.

What will clients typically come to the commercial team for?

Generally, the services we have listed – but we have the skill and experience at the firm to deal with most legal issues that are likely to arise during the life of a company or business, whether in connection with premises, relationships between owners, raising funds for expansion or preparing for retirement.

Tell us something that we didn't know about the commercial team?

We're (almost) all North East born and bred (John is from Coventry but moved to Darlington when he was 10 so thinks he has lived that down and Charlotte is an unashamed southerner). We're proud of the region we live in – and the clients we serve here.

What motivates the commercial team?

Clients who come back to us time and again, the broad range of work we undertake and a friendly and supportive work environment. We all like what we do and particularly enjoy seeing our clients grow and develop with our support.

What does a successful week look like for the commercial team?

Our work is largely transactional so it's a good week when we're able to complete client sales, purchases or leases. We really enjoy seeing clients moving into new premises, or taking control of a business, secure in the knowledge that we've protected them in the small print of the paperwork.

What does the future hold for commercial law?

Commercial law is constantly changing – every government budget brings new issues to consider and react to. We work hard to be up to date and to make use of technology so that our clients can rely on us for the best, efficiently delivered advice to protect them and their businesses.

Lastly, who makes the best cup of tea/coffee?

It depends how quickly you want it! John will make you a good cup of coffee, but it will involve weighing out coffee beans, hand grinding and at least a fifteen-minute wait...

You can find out more about the commercial team at www.gblf.co.uk or call 0191 3881778.

WHO OWNS YOUR DIGITAL PHOTOS WHEN YOU DIE?

This is one reason to have a will.

The reasons for not having a will are commonly; "I'm too young", "I don't have anything to leave" or "it's not nice to think about dying".


Sue Shaw-Toomey

We completely agree with the last point and whilst this isn't a comfortable thought, we do believe it is worse to die not knowing what will happen to your assets after you have gone.

By writing a Will you can be clear about who your assets will pass to. It will also ensure that you can set out who will look after your children, who should carry out your wishes and any other personal wishes, such as if you want to be cremated or buried.

Without a will or a court order, digital photos and videos stored in the cloud die with the owner. If your partner has taken the photos of you and your family, you may lose all the photos as well.

It is also vitally important to draw up a Will or renew your Will if you get married/enter into a civil partnership, get divorced, if you have children from a previous relationship, have other relatives that you wish to benefit such as grandchildren or after you have bought a new property or obtained other expensive assets.

You may believe that you don't need a Will and that your family will simply inherit your assets. Whilst in some circumstances that may be true it is only in very limited cases where the law will apply to you in this way. If you die without a Will there are rules in place to decide what happens. This is called dying 'intestate' but these rules will not always deliver a result that you or your loved ones would have wanted. Sometimes, intestacy rules can cause your loved ones to miss out entirely and receiving nothing, or force them to pay a hefty inheritance tax bill that you could have prevented by making a Will. It may also leave someone in charge of your estate to attend to your affairs that you otherwise would not have wanted, for example an ex partner if you have minor children together.

One of the biggest issues of dying intestate is if you live with a partner but are not married/in a civil partnership. Under the rules, your partner would receive nothing at all, no matter how long you have lived together. The same goes for any children your partner may have (who are not your biological children/adopted by you) even if they were financially dependent on you; they would receive nothing. It also becomes problematic if you have children to a previous partner and re-marry, under the rules of intestacy your children could receive nothing at all or very little if you have substantial assets.

So, whilst you may not think so, in certain circumstances, it is extremely important to have a valid Will.

Toomey Legal are very pleased to announce that we are now able to offer Will writing services on behalf of all clients, new and old, as we have recently appointed Solicitor, Toni Spencer, who is happy to discuss your circumstances and provide advice tailored to your needs.

Call us on 0191 605 3710 to arrange an appointment.

LOOKING FOR A COMPETITIVE EDGE?

Make sure your business is up to the mark.


Helena Peat

Its best practice every now and again to step back and look critically at your business, identify its most valuable assets, and ensure that you have robust strategies in place to maximise those assets.

Think about what distinguishes you from your competitors. Why would someone covet your business?

Goodwill and Reputation

The answer is that the goodwill and reputation your business carries and that you have worked so hard to create and to foster is hugely attractive. So, how do you protect that goodwill and reputation, and leverage it to your advantage?

Goodwill in a business is symbolised by its brands, or trade marks. For instance, the goodwill of your trade marks represents their recognition with consumers, and the extra earning power that that recognition generates. Consumers want to buy goods and services from you because they identify with your trade marks and what they stand for.

A significant proportion of the value of your business lies in its intangible assets, in the form of Intellectual Property. These assets often include rights created by your innovation (which are protectable by patents, designs and copyright), but will always include trade marks - the names or labels that your customers crave. Desirable trade marks with associated goodwill provide their owners with entry to markets, freedom to operate, and a source of reliable revenue, and also substantially increases the value of the business with which they are synonymous.

Put simply, your trade marks make you money!

Focussing on protecting and enforcing your trade marks will give you a competitive edge.

So its important you clearly identify the brands that you own or use, recognise that they are not just words, but logos or slogans or labels, and implement an Intellectual Property strategy that builds your trade mark portfolio, and distinguishes your business from those of competitors. Here's a few things you could do:

- Ensure that, at the very least, your existing brands are adequately protected where you manufacture or sell;
- Identify market opportunities for new brands;
- Adopt trade marks that encourage consumers to choose your goods or services over all the other available options;
- Commit to searching new trade marks to prevent you from infringing third party rights;
- Register new marks;
- Employ watching services to identify infringements early;
- Enforce your rights to protect your product revenues and market position;
- Ensure that all important patented products are branded as a way of extending your monopolies beyond the life of the patents; and
- Seek to generate additional revenue through commercialisation and exploitation of your trade marks, including by licensing, franchising or assignment.

Reap the rewards

You are serious about your business, so consider your brands just as seriously. If you nurture and protect your brand, then your business will reap the benefits and that brand will contribute significantly to its value.

For more information, please contact Murgitroyd's Newcastle-based Trade Mark attorney, Helena Peat on 0191 211 3550.
www.murgitroyd.com



SD Legal Services Ltd provide a full range of quality process serving, investigation and Enforcement services all over the North East of England and throughout the UK via a network of trusted agents.

Contact Simon Darby on:
M: 07832 238441
E: sdlegalservices@btinternet.com

Suite 67
58 Low Friar Street
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE1 5UD

PO Box 67
Guisborough
Cleveland
TS14 7WY

DX :
60005 Guisborough

SD
LEGAL SERVICES
THE COMPLETE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING A WILL


David Smith

Following on from his article in our January edition highlighting the importance of making a Will, David Smith, a Partner and Head of Private Client at Sweeney Miller Law discusses the importance of making a Lasting Power of Attorney.

What is a Lasting Power of Attorney?

In Simple terms it is a legal document that allows you to appoint an Attorney who can then make decisions for you in relation to managing your financial affairs and dealing with your property (including selling your house). You can also make a Lasting Power of Attorney to appoint an Attorney to make decisions about your Health & Care if you cannot make these for yourself.

You mentioned two types of Lasting Power of Attorney what are they?

Yes there is one for financial decisions which is the most popular and if you have money in the bank, savings investments and/or own your own home then you should very seriously consider making one. You can also make a Lasting Power of Attorney for Health & Care decisions, whilst these are not as common as financial ones you should always consider if it would be beneficial to make one of these to ensure that the person you wish to make decisions regarding your Health & Care is legally able to do this for you if you lose mental capacity to make these decisions for yourself in the future.

What are the most important things to be aware of in relation to Lasting Powers of Attorney?

To be able to make a Lasting Power of Attorney you must be mentally capable so it is vitally important to set this up while you are in good health. If someone loses mental capacity due to a long term illness such as dementia or a sudden event such as a stroke and they have not made a Lasting Power of Attorney then the family may face a difficult, expensive and stressful time if access to savings is needed and if the house needs to be sold to pay for long term care then the family will have to make an application to the Court of Protection to be appointed Deputy. This situation is to be avoided as to appoint a Deputy it is a lengthy process (taking six months on average) and expensive (roughly four to five times more costly than making Lasting Power of Attorney for Financial Decisions).

Right I've decided I need to speak to someone about making Lasting Power of Attorney what next?

The best person to speak to is an experienced, qualified and regulated Solicitor and David Smith at Sweeney Miller Law in Sunderland has many years of experience as a Solicitor specialising in this area of law. David can be contacted at Sweeney Miller Law, Mowbray Villas, Mowbray Road, Sunderland SR2 7EA and on 0191 568 2050 or by email to david@sweeneymiller.co.uk the office is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and home visits can be arranged.

sweeney miller LAW

Sweeney Miller Law is a trading name of Sweeney Miller LLP authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority under SRA number 569467. Sweeney Miller LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England & Wales No OC 374687. VAT No 790057916 A list of members is available at the registered office.

Sintons
Law

www.sintons.co.uk

@SintonsLaw sintons-llp

businesses **grown.**

Generations of businesses have benefitted from our expert legal advice.

Whether you are a long established business, an entrepreneur or investor looking for the next opportunity, or just starting up, our expert team is here to help.

Clients and professionals single out our ability to deliver the highest quality of advice combined with exceptional personal service at a reasonable cost. We know the North East inside out as well as working across the UK and internationally.

With fifty experienced and specialist lawyers covering all key areas of commercial law, we have the expertise to handle complex and high value transactions.

Personal & Family | Business | Insurance Litigation | Healthcare

Sintons LLP is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.


Kidd & Spoo
Solicitors
Conveyancing and Property Law
Divorce and Relationship Breakdown
Wills, Trusts and Powers of Attorney
Family and Child Care

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

"The trouble with solicitors is that they don't talk to their clients...but we do."

That was the opening comment from Noel Dilks of Kidd & Spoor Solicitors in Whitley Bay when we called in to see him recently.

Noel was with his fellow director in the company, Nigel Miller who between them have been at the practice for approaching 70 years.

Kidd & Spoor have been around since 1870, but their growth over the last few years has been outstanding. They now have a team of 23 legal experts and assistants who can cover most areas of legal advice.

We thought we'd find out what Noel, Nigel and their team are up to a Kidd & Spoor.

What do you offer at Kidd & Spoor?

As a traditional legal practice we cover most areas such as residential and commercial property conveyancing, family law, estate planning, wills, powers of attorney and probate. Obviously legal matters can be very varied and complicated so, after a full and frank discussion with a client, if we feel that we can't help to the sort of standard that we expect of ourselves, we'll ensure that the client is passed to another solicitor whom we know will be better suited.

Is that the sort of thing that differentiates you from other firms?

Absolutely. We do know that some companies will do their utmost to hold onto a client and, in effect, learn as they go along. We won't do that. If we can't give professional advice in-house, we'll always make sure that the client isn't let down and goes to speak to someone who specialises in that particular field.

Is that perhaps a problem? Do people see a solicitor based in Whitley Bay as being inferior to one, for example, in the centre of Newcastle?

Some people possibly do, but just because a solicitor works in a big shiny office in the middle of Newcastle, doesn't mean that they do a better job. The fact that most of our business comes from referrals proves that when we get involved we do an outstanding job.

But surely, when it comes to legal matters, the price will be the same no matter where you go?

How wrong you are. It is much more cost-effective to come to a firm like Kidd & Spoor. You will invariably find that you enjoy one-to-one contact with our solicitors and legal advisors who will be doing the work on your behalf. We are very proactive, efficient and definitely more convenient. We're also on the end of a telephone or email and because we are situated in Whitley Bay you can easily find us. Don't be fooled by appearances.

Talking of appearances, it's very smart in here.

Our building has recently been totally refurbished to make it ultra-modern yet still friendly and intimate. We've been in this building on Marden Road since 1961 and we'd like to think that we are a recognised 'face' in the area. We're always more than happy for people to drop in for a quick chat over a cup of coffee if they'd like to discuss anything.

Is that the sort of thing that makes you different from a much bigger firm?

Definitely. As we mentioned at the start of our conversation, too many legal practices don't actually talk to their clients. It sounds daft but a thirty minute, informal chat can be invaluable. We believe in personal service; you're not just a number. Clients have to feel comfortable....something that is important to them AND us. It's why we have so many people coming back to us. Some families have been coming here for generations. As clients grow older, their legal demands change. We are a family friendly firm who communicate with our clients to build trust.

Is there one particular legal field that you feel you specialise in?

We are very fortunate that here at Kidd & Spoor we can cover most areas. Our specialised department which looks after the older client offers unrivalled service and expertise in Whitley Bay. However, Family Law is certainly occupying more of our time. We have two terrific solicitors who take care of anything family related. Jo Scott and Sue McArthur have a wonderful reputation for being caring, sympathetic and incredibly knowledgeable. If you have any legal matters concerning your family, please get in touch with them.

So, what's the future for Kidd & Spoor?

The legal world never stands still which means we will continue to evolve. Next year will see us celebrate 150 years as a legal practice but our desire to be a trusted legal practice which is part of the community and who believes in talking to their clients offering no-nonsense, clear, practical, cost-effective legal advice will be something that never changes.

If you'd like to contact Noel, Nigel or any of the team at Kidd & Spoor, call them on 0191 297 0011, email wb@kiddspoorlaw.co.uk or visit their website www.kiddspoorlaw.co.uk

Even better, drop in for a chat at their practice at 7 Marden Road in Whitley Bay.

LOST VOICE GUY TO HEADLINE FAST-GROWING LAW FIRM'S CHARITY BALL

An evening that is certain to get everyone talking!



Commercial law firm, St James' Square, has announced that it will be hosting its inaugural fundraising charity ball in aid of local children's charity, Heel and Toe.

The ball will be taking place at The Biscuit Factory on Thursday 10th October 2019 with the North East's very own Lee Ridley as the headline act for the evening.

Comedian Lee, also known as the Lost Voice Guy, won Britain's Got Talent, along with the nation's hearts, in 2018.

He delivers his unique stand-up routine through an iPad after being left unable to speak from his cerebral palsy.

Managing Partner of St James' Square, Paul Monaghan said: "We're absolutely delighted to announce that not only are we hosting the firm's first ever charity ball but that the talented Lost Voice Guy will be headlining the event. I was fortunate enough to see Lee perform his comedy a few years ago so I'm looking forward to seeing him again at our ball.

"Our target this year is to raise £40,000 for our brilliant Charity of the Year, Heel and Toe. We know it's a huge sum of money but we're all about making the impossible possible and the charity ball will raise a significant amount of our ambitious target."

Lee said: "I'm delighted to be performing back in Newcastle later this year for the St James' Square Charity Ball. I've seen some of the amazing work Heel and Toe do to help children with disabilities like mine so I'm pleased to be involved in what will be a very successful evening."

Heel and Toe is a North East charity that supports children with cerebral palsy and other physical disabilities.

The charity receives no government funding and relies solely on donations and fundraising to provide free conductive education therapy and other subsidised therapies to over 160 children from all over the North East area.

After winning the competition last year, the Lost Voice Guy visited Heel and Toe and was interviewed by some of the children about his experience on the talent show.

Amanda Tweedy, Fundraising Executive at Heel and Toe Children's Charity said: "Heel and Toe are absolutely thrilled to have been chosen as St James' Square's Charity of the Year 2019 and we are very much looking forward to the firm's exciting fundraising plans, especially the charity ball.

"Having the Lost Voice Guy as the headlining act for the evening is excellent as Lee is a huge role model for several of our children. He inspires them to not let their disability hold them back".

Joining Lee in the evening's entertainment is BBC Radio Newcastle's very own Alfie Joey and live music from premier North East band, Last Anthem.



Lee Ridley, visiting Heel and Toe shortly after winning Britain's Got Talent 2018.

St James' Square have had good cause to celebrate as of late. After celebrating a £1.6m turnover last year, the fast-growing firm has recently announced its plans to double in size over the next twelve months - not bad for a firm that turned two in March!

For further information about the St James' Square Charity Ball in aid of Heel and Toe and for details on how to purchase tickets, please visit sjs-law.co.uk/CharityBall2019 or contact Deb Ions, Head of Marketing on 0191 266 1297 or at marketing@sjs-law.co.uk

CHARITY BALL

Hosted by

St James' Square Law Firm in aid of Heel and Toe Children's Charity

Featuring

Lost Voice Guy

Winner of Britain's Got Talent 2018

with BBC Radio Newcastle's Alfie Joey
plus live music from The Last Anthem



Thursday 10th October 2019
at The Biscuit Factory

Tickets: **£60**(+VAT) **per person**

sjs-law.co.uk/CharityBall2019

Hosted by

St James' SQUARE LAW FIRM

in aid of

Heel & Toe Children's Charity

With special thanks to our sponsors

Harrison Centre for Social Mobility

Recite me

true potential LLP simple. effective. unique.

UB URBAN BASE LAND & NEW HOMES

rent to own with castledene

St James' SQUARE SPORTS MANAGEMENT



Damiano Rea, Director, Heaton Property

DARK AMUSEMENT AND NICE BISCUITS

Half way through 2019 and it seems every month I rail against tenant protection legislation that turns out badly when put into practice. Cynics in the lettings sector suggest this is a cunning plot to free up rental properties for the hard-pressed first-time buyer. But a three-storey mid terrace in Heaton is beyond the means of a first-time buyer.

The fact is, many landlords are simply cashing their chips and looking for other investments. A recent survey by website This Is Money indicates one in four landlords plan to sell in the next year. It predicts this will result in a 3% rent rise due to a shortage of rental properties.

The latest target is Section 21 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. Section 21 provides a relatively quick way for landlords to remove a bothersome tenant. The move was greeted with joy on social media as tenants believed this would give them security of tenure.

Mainstream media was quick to unearth tales of rogue landlords using section 21 to evict tenants who had complained to their Council. While these cases are reprehensible, they are a tiny fraction of the rental market where responsible landlords and their managing agents do all they can to ensure a smooth tenancy. But good landlords and reputable agents rarely make the headlines.

For good landlords there is an overarching imperative at work. It is called common sense. If a tenant is paying rent and looking after the property, why on earth would the landlord want to evict? On the contrary, a landlord will do all in their power to ensure a good tenant remains in the property, ideally for years.

Another factor missed in the media frenzy is, Section 21 can protect tenants from rogue landlords. If a landlord has ignored the Tenancy Deposit Scheme or tries to charge money unlawfully under the new Tenant Fees Act, they lose the right to serve a Section 21 notice.

In a fair and well managed landlord – tenant relationship, Section 21 should never be an issue. In fifteen years as managing agents we have never had to attend court to evict a tenant using this piece of legislation. Our secret weapon is Lavazza coffee and some nice biscuits. A resolution is always agreed about the time the biscuits run out.

But while the focus has been upon tenant protection, the rights of landlord and neighbours are ignored. Nobody wants an anti-social tenant. Councils struggle to act upon anti-social behaviour due to lack of resources and the threshold for convincing judges to evict a tenant creating anti-social behaviour is incredibly high. So, the small proportion of tenants who choose to ignore social norms may become unchecked should a landlord's ability to use Section 21 be removed.

I do hope this will be the last column I write this year where I report ill thought out legislation in our sector. I also hope to win the Lotto and be welcomed into the House of Lords. Odds on any of the three appear about the same. I leave the last word to writer and producer Charlie Brooker who said "The logical quandaries thrown up by well-meaning systems are clearly something I find darkly amusing".

www.heatonproperty.com

TRUE

SOLICITORS LLP

Get in touch today:

0191 260 6571

or email: team_conveyancing@true.co.uk
www.true.co.uk/conveyancing

Conveyancing that's right up your street

Fixed Fee, Stress Fee Conveyancing Services.

- Sale
- Purchase
- Shared Ownership Purchase & Sale
- New Build Purchase
- Help to Buy
- Remortgage
- Transfer of Equity
- Buy to Let

- Fixed Price
- No Completion, No Fee
- Free online quotation
- Efficient and proactive service
- Your own dedicated team member

THE LAW SOCIETY ACCREDITED Conveyancing Quality

"Absolutely everything was great about the service I received – especially communication and the speed in which TRUE completed the conveyance."
– Ms. J



Trustpilot

Fixed Fee Conveyancing. Free Online Quotation



HOME GROUP NAMED BEST SOCIAL LANDLORD

Home Group, one of the UK's largest housing associations, has been named social Landlord of the Year.

The major provider of high-quality housing, integrated health and social care, picked up the accolade at this year's RESI awards, recognising the top performing organisations and individuals in the property sector.

Judged by over 30 senior industry leaders, the Landlord of the Year award is open to all landlords with registered social-owned properties, including affordable rent, shared ownership and homes for elderly and vulnerable residents.

Home Group was singled out for its forward-thinking approach to social housing, including increased construction output and innovative initiatives, such as building and testing modular homes and introducing flexible renting models.

Mark Henderson, Chief Executive of Home Group, said: "This is such a fantastic accolade for us given our focus on creating high-quality social and affordable homes."



ACQUISITION AIDS DRIVE FOR THE TOP

As part of a drive to break into the development of rooftop homes, The High Street Group of Companies has bought a business which specialises in creating London penthouses.

The multi million pound deal delivers instant, award-winning expertise to the rapidly expanding, Newcastle-based property specialist.

First Penthouse, established in 1994 and based in Knightsbridge, has recently completed several prestigious rooftop extensions, creating luxury homes on top of existing buildings in areas such as Chelsea and St. John's Wood.

High Street Group Chairman, Gary Forrest, said: "We lacked the expertise to deliver projects and that is why we have acquired First Penthouse. The deal will significantly accelerate our involvement in this market place."

With its headquarters in Stockbridge House, Newcastle, The High Street Group of Companies is a leading financial and property group employing around 350 people in activities including large scale property development and construction, hospitality and leisure.



DURHAM ARCHITECT EXPANDS ITS TEAM

Following its recent relocation to new offices, one of the region's largest and longest established architectural and interior design practices, Howarth Litchfield, has made another new appointment to supplement the capacity of its talented team.

Following a very busy trading period with commissions from both existing and new clients, as well as a move to new, more spacious offices at Belmont Business Park, Durham, the role has been created as a result of natural expansion.

New architect, Cassie Burgess-Rose, brings with her experience in Building Information Modelling (BIM) technology and its integration with architecture as well as wide-ranging design experience. She demonstrated a passion for the role at Howarth Litchfield and will be encouraged to develop her skills with the firm at every opportunity as managing director, Jonathan Yates, explains:

"Howarth Litchfield has fully embraced the adoption of BIM (Building Information Modelling) and Revit across all its work so we were particularly interested in Cassie's experience to add to our teams. She is an exciting and talented architect and we are very much looking forward to helping her further develop her expertise. Over the recent past our business has been developing rapidly with a raft of new clients both within and outside of the region, and we know she will be a huge asset to our future expansion plans."

Adding her thoughts about the new role, Cassie said: "I am thrilled to be joining Howarth Litchfield's dynamic team at such an important time in its development. Our new office layout gives us a massive opportunity to work collaboratively and share our creativity, which is what really attracted me to the role. I am currently working on a range of projects including a college building, care home and a masterplan for a school, so I am pleased to have been able to make an early contribution to the firm's success."

With bases in Durham and London, Howarth Litchfield's multi-disciplined team provides architecture, interior design, surveying, management services and conservation management. Employing 28 staff, it is a multi award-winning practice and offers wide-ranging expertise spanning the education, residential, hotel and leisure, religious, industrial and healthcare sectors.

NEW AFTER SALES MANAGER JOINS LEADING CONSTRUCTION FIRM

One of the region's longest established construction companies Surgo Construction has announced the appointment of a new after sales manager.

With a wealth of experience, Dean Glendinning joins Surgo after spending 16 years working for a national construction company.

Dean's new role will see him take responsibility for the management of ongoing after sales care on projects following completion and handover, which is a key opportunity for Surgo to build stronger relationships with its clients. He will also coordinate contractors and site teams to successfully carry out snagging works when required.

Dean said: "It's great to join such a well-established company as Surgo. After speaking with others in the industry and learning about Surgo's reputation, I am excited to start my new role and work with my team to provide the continued level of after sales care clients have come to expect when working with Surgo."



Arkle&Sons Ltd
Building Contractors

Kingfisher BUILDING PRODUCTS APPROVED INSTALLER
HETAS
CROMAR PROGRP ADVANCED GLASSFIBRE ROOFING SYSTEM

- Kingfisher Approved Damp proof contractors
- HETAS Registered installers of Stoves & Liners
- Fully Trained GRP roof installers
- Extensions
- Plastering
- Roofline – Gutters, Fascias & Soffits
- Stone Masonry
- Plans can be sent via PDF to our email address
- All areas covered and all other building services offered

Ian Arkle – 07710693861
Stuart Arkle – 07710693860
Home – 01665 574604
Email – arkleandsons@gmail.com
Website - www.arkleandsons.co.uk

"A true local family owned business"



ON THE BEACH, BEADNELL






PRICE GUIDE: £950,000

This superb investment property, occupying an enviable position, overlooks the beach in the much sought after coastal village of Beadnell. The property has been successfully run as holiday let accommodation for a number of years and consists of three spacious apartments, one of which has three bedrooms and the remaining two having two bedrooms; two of the apartments enjoy stunning panoramic sea views. 'On the Beach' offers a wonderful location giving guests the opportunity to simply step out onto this beautiful stretch of sandy beach on Northumberland's Heritage Coastline and is therefore ideal for those purchasers looking to invest or there is the potential, subject to appropriate planning and permissions, to create a single dwelling as a stunning second home or main residence. Early interest is expected with viewings by appointment only.



Contact Sanderson Young's Alnwick Office on 01665 600170 gillian.greaves@sandersonyoung.co.uk www.sandersonyoung.co.uk

COASTAL PROPERTIES URGENTLY REQUIRED FOR WAITING BUYERS

AT SANDERSON YOUNG WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT THE BEAUTIFUL NORTHUMBERLAND LANDSCAPE. FROM THE IDYLLIC COASTLINE TO THE SPLENDOUR OF ROLLING DUNES AND MEDIEVAL CASTLES, NO-ONE KNOWS THIS BEAUTIFUL REGION BETTER. DUE TO UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND AND THE HIGH LEVEL OF SALES WE'VE SECURED, WE NOW URGENTLY REQUIRE PROPERTIES THAT ARE, OR COULD BE, SECOND HOMES OR HOLIDAY RENTAL PROPERTIES.

PLEASE CONTACT THE EXPERTS TODAY AT OUR ALNWICK OFFICE FOR A FREE, NO OBLIGATION VALUATION/APPRAISAL.

T: 01665 600170

E: ALNWICK@SANDERSONYOUNG.CO.UK

RIVERSIDE ROAD

ALNMOUTH



£799,999

BEACH COTTAGE

BEADNELL



£469,500

SANDPIPER COTTAGE

FENHAM LE MOOR



£295,000

THE COTTAGE

LESBURY



£250,000

THE MAINS FARM

WARKWORTH



£250,000

ST CUTHBERT'S COTTAGE

SEAHOUSES



£135,000

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

ON OFFER IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND

FOXTON GLADE

Foxton Glade, Lesbury

Foxton Glade is an exclusive development by Lindisfarne Homes of ten detached houses, located in a quiet cul de sac towards the edge of Lesbury village. These stylish and contemporary four and five bedroom family homes offer versatile accommodation finished to a high specification. Prices from £535,000



Roseate View

Roseate View, Amble

Roseate View lies in an idyllic location on the Northumberland coastline, in the delightful harbour town of Amble. Made up of seven townhouses and six bungalows, the properties on this development benefit from contemporary living in an historic town. Show home opening June 2019. Prices from £295,000



WATERSHAUGH GATE

Watershaugh Gate, Warkworth

This exclusive development by Lindisfarne Homes offers eight luxury detached family homes in the sought after coastal village of Warkworth. Finished to a high specification, with impressive living space, these stylish and contemporary 3 and 4 bedroom properties offer versatile accommodation. Prices from £495,000



THORBURN'S YARD

Thorburn's Yard, Seahouses

Four newly constructed homes enjoying a charming courtyard setting close to the harbour within the Conservation area of the popular fishing village of Seahouses, on Northumberland's Heritage Coastline. The properties are ideal for those seeking a main home, coastal retreat or holiday let investment. Prices from £325,000



STAMFORD LEA

Stamford Lea, Rennington

An exclusive development of four, individually designed, stone built dormer bungalows with stunning open views over the Northumberland countryside. These substantial properties offer versatile living spaces, designed to fully benefit from the natural surroundings, and well proportioned landscaped gardens. Prices from £299,950



All Enquiries: Sanderson Young's Alnwick Office T: 01665 600170 | E: alnwick@sandersonyoung.co.uk | www.sandersonyoung.co.uk











HOME FAB HOME IN NORTHUMBERLAND

We all know what a wonderful place Northumberland is to visit, but what about actually living there in a stunning, newly built home?

Well, that dream has now become a reality thanks to Lindisfarne Homes.

Lindisfarne Homes was set up twelve years ago by Howard Dawe, the former chairman of Bellway Homes. His son Nick, who also worked for Bellway, now runs the company.

"We are hugely proud of being a family that is Northumberland born and bred," said Nick. "We're from the area and we build homes in the area. We even use builders, electricians, plumbers etc who come from Northumberland, and we try to source as much of our materials from the area as well. It's also why we ensure that our homes are sympathetic to their surroundings and blend in with traditional Northumberland styles and colours."

Lindisfarne Homes currently have two sites where building is underway.

With only one plot remaining, there's Foxton Glade in the village of Lesbury which is close to Alnmouth. The ten stone built homes are close to the wonderful Northumberland coastline but within easy travelling distance of Alnwick, Berwick and Newcastle via the A1 and further afield on the East Coast mainline train service. The nearest station is only half a mile away.

A few miles further south, you'll find Warkworth and another of Lindisfarne Homes developments, Watershaugh Gate. This is an exclusive development of three and four bedroom luxury detached homes all of which have an open aspect to the rear and come with a long list of standard features including a fully fitted kitchen with Neff or Rangemaster appliances, underfloor heating for the ground floor, and a multi-fuel stove for the living area. The garage has a charging point for electrically powered cars. A show house will be ready for viewing during the summer.

Watershaugh Gate is only a short walk from Warkworth village centre with its good selection of facilities and, as with Foxton Glade, is close to wonderful, unspoilt beaches. The centre of Newcastle is around 45 minutes away by car. The view home will be open in July.

Both Foxton Glade and Watershaugh Gate are being marketed by Sanderson Young's Alnwick office.

Anything in the pipeline? Lindisfarne Homes is just starting to develop a new site called North Farm which is in the village of Rennington. There will be eight four-bedroom detached homes and two barn conversions. Prices range from around £375,000 to £450,000. Rennington is ideally situated being only minutes from the A1 yet close to Craster and the delightful Low Newton-by-the-Sea.

The company is also due to start construction of fourteen three and four bedroom homes at Barrasford in the Tyne Valley. Sales are due to start early next year.

Go on; move up to Northumberland, move up to Lindisfarne Homes.

If you'd like further details about Lindisfarne Homes, get in touch with Nick Dawe and his team via their website www.lindisfarnehomeslimited.co.uk where you'll be able to send an email.

WATERSHAUGH GATE

WARKWORTH, NORTHUMBERLAND

LINDISFARNE HOMES

















IMAGES FOR INDICATIVE PURPOSES ONLY



8 CONTEMPORARY LUXURY DETACHED HOMES WITH STUNNING VIEWS & ENJOYING GENEROUS GARDEN SITES

ACCOMMODATION INCLUDES 3 OR 4 BEDROOMS, IMPRESSIVE LIVING SPACE, FIRST FLOOR BALCONY OVERLOOKING THE GARDEN AND PATIO TERRACE, GARAGE & OPEN ASPECT VIEWS.

THIS EXCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IS LOCATED IN THE SOUGHT AFTER COASTAL VILLAGE OF WARKWORTH WITH ITS SANDY BEACH, HISTORIC CASTLE AND RANGE OF LOCAL AMENITIES. EACH PROPERTY BENEFITS FROM A CONTEMPORARY SPACIOUS DESIGN WITH FULL HEIGHT WINDOWS PROVIDING A LOT OF NATURAL LIGHT.

PRICES FROM £495,000

SANDERSON YOUNG

ALL ENQUIRIES TO SANDERSON YOUNG'S ALNWICK OFFICE:

01665 600 170

alnwick@sandersonyoung.co.uk

WWW.SANDERSONYOUNG.CO.UK



THE WALLED GARDENS

GOSFORTH, TYNE AND WEAR NE3 5AF

LUXURY SHOWHOME NOW OPEN
EVERY FRIDAY & SATURDAY 10AM-4PM

STARTING PRICE £695,000

x 4 x 2 x 3

The Walled Gardens, Gosforth is an exclusive collection of homes which sits within the grounds of Newcastle Racecourse, on a site extending approximately four acres. The Brandling Show Home is now open every Friday and Saturday moving forward.

The weekend launch event, held on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th of May from 10am-4pm, will also include free pizza from the vintage pizza truck and complimentary glasses of prosecco from 11am Saturday.

These eight, semi-detached, split level properties, available within the second phase of The Walled Gardens, provide homeowners with the height of luxury living thanks to several outstanding features. Each of the four-bedroom properties offer more than 2,300 sq ft of living space, private balconies overlooking the gardens and grounds, south facing gardens, a separate garage with parking for two cars and an eco-friendly sedum curved roof.

The ground floor offers a charming entrance porch, with a useful downstairs cloakroom, fitted with W/C and wash hand basin. Off the hall are two staircases, one taking you to the first-floor living room and the other to the lower ground floor, which opens to a generous kitchen and dining room. From here, the bi-folding doors open fully to take in the terrace and garden area.

The luxurious and modern fitted kitchen includes integrated NEFF appliances, an island unit with breakfast bar, Silestone surfaces, four ring induction hob, fridge, freezer and dishwasher. Off the kitchen there is a large cupboard which houses the washing machine and tumble dryer.

There are two bedrooms on the ground floor, the largest of which is served by an en-suite and benefits from a spacious walk-in dressing area. The final bedroom could be converted into an office study.

Back into the hallway and up the staircase takes you to the first-floor living room, which has a small terrace overlooking the garden and grounds beyond. This room also benefits from a delightful, curved feature Glulam beamed ceiling. Further steps lead up to two further bedrooms, the master being served by a generous en-suite and spacious dressing area.

The family bathroom is fitted with a double-ended bath, walk-in shower, an attractive basin set on a vanity unit and a W/C.

The Walled Gardens is only two miles to Broadway First School, two miles from Gosforth East Middle School and only a ten-minute drive to Newcastle City Centre.

For more information on this luxury, highly anticipated development please call 0191 284 2255

gosforth@bradleyhall.co.uk



Pure Inspiration

- Well known & trusted brands
- Biggest showrooms in the North East
- FREE computer aided design, planning & Survey
- Free Silestone or Granite worktops on Signature rigid built kitchens
- Over 250 bathroom & Shower suites and 50 kitchens on display at each store
- Over 30 years experience
- Just arrived - Beautiful new Heritage displays
- New in store - 1000's of designer tiles

Norham Road, North Shields, NE29 7TN • Tel : 0191 257 6511

Portrack Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 2HG • Tel: 01642 610 100

Tecaz Echo House, Pennywell Ind Est, SR4 9EN • Tel : 0191 534 7733

Opening hours:

Monday - Friday : 9am - 6pm • Saturday : 9am - 5pm • Sunday 10am - 4pm

Tecaz

www.tecaz.com





NEON LEASING SUCCESS AS TECH GROWTH UNDERPINS NEWCASTLE OFFICE DEMAND



The North East has seen one of the largest increases in Tech start-ups in recent years. Making sure we are offering the right working spaces to enable these growing companies to expand is a real challenge to the North East property industry, particularly with the creation of new high-quality space.

SMEs, those businesses with up to 250 staff, account for around 99% of Britain's 5m businesses. Creating the right sort of space for those companies can be a challenge. The choice for occupiers can be limited, particularly for those outgrowing services offices and wanting to put their own character on their office space.

As far as landlords are concerned, creating SME space involves additional cost in separation works and providing shared services, and risks lower end values. Valuers and institutional purchasers often struggle with buildings with multiple young companies on short flexible leases. This in turn can make feasibilities on new build schemes hard to justify.

However, the market is responding to the changes in demand with some landlords taking on a higher risk. The office market in Newcastle has been through a period of steady growth over recent months with a steady take up of good quality space. Quorum in north Newcastle has seen good take up of the new small suites in both the Neon and Q11 buildings. The smaller SME focused units, in a range of 600 to 5,000sqft (space for 6 to 60 desks) have seen good take up.

At the Neon building, six of the 15 units have been leased in the first six months since the scheme was launched. The amenity led offering with meeting rooms, concierge reception service and lots of breakout space has attracted a range of SME occupiers. The amenities including pool table, table tennis and a retro space invaders machine have been really popular with the new tenants including Wandisco, Contec and Thingco. This is part of the shift in property to the 'space as a service' approach where amenity, shared spaces and landlord services are as important as the office space itself.



Office take-up in Newcastle in the last quarter increased compared to Q4 2018. The largest letting was at Quorum with Utility Alliance taking 11,465 sq.ft at The Lightbox building, however the bulk of the lettings were at the smaller SME end with the average deal size below 5,000sq.ft. and this is where the market has been most active.

Demand has been driven by good jobs growth in Newcastle with increasing number of vacancies advertised. It has been reported by the recruitment website Adzuna, that there are five jobs for every person looking for work in Newcastle. This is a really strong signal about the strength of underlying demand. However, the level of vacancies is not currently translating into a fall in unemployment, which is again lagging behind the positive jobs growth across the rest of the country. It is a concern that we are still not delivering the skilled workers needed, and that further investment in skills and training is needed to fill these roles.

Many of these vacancies are in the fast growing digital tech sector, which in the North East now employs 30,000 people and has increased turnover by more than 25% in the last year to £1.26bn, making it the fastest growing tech cluster outside London. It is of vital importance to fill these roles to enable this rate of growth to continue.

This focus on recruitment and growth was evident at Quorum's recent Jobs fair, run in conjunction with North Tyneside council, which saw dozens of companies offering multiple roles. This attracted over 1,000 people coming to investigate the opportunities that are available for job seekers at the growing business community at Quorum.

Fergus Trim, Director with Broadoak, the Asset Managers at Quorum said: "The growth of SME companies, particularly in the Tech sector is of vital importance to the growing economy in Newcastle. Making sure we have the skills and also the right workspaces is crucial to helping these companies succeed."

The team at Quorum worked closely with Newcastle based architects Faulkner Brown to develop the concepts and design of the 15 new offices in the Neon building. The new suites enjoy generous break out space and shared facilities and an urban feel to attract younger fast growth companies and has already been shortlisted for an award at this years North East Property awards.

It introduces creative design within an environment which will allow businesses of all sizes to mix and collaborate with shared meeting rooms and spaces. The new smaller office suites offer growing companies the chance to establish and grow in a business park full of big- name occupiers including the corporate headquarters of Greggs.

It is hoped that these new Tech companies will continue to grow within the Newcastle cluster and perhaps one may become the next Sage.

www.neon-quorum.co.uk

Payments going up after your fixed term?

Talk to our team about re-mortgaging.

Bradley Hall
CHARTERED SURVEYORS & ESTATE AGENTS

We have access to thousands of the latest mortgage deals, some on an exclusive basis that can't be found online, with other brokers or even the banks direct.



0191 260 2000

mortgages@bradleyhall.co.uk
www.bradleyhall.co.uk

YOUR EYE ON THE REGION...

PETER BOWDEN

Head of Knight Frank Newcastle

Did you grow up in the North East or did you decide to relocate here in later life?

I'm a Geordie born and bred. I was born in the General Hospital, went to school here (Wingrove primary, then Dame Allans), Northumbria University (or Poly as it was then), and have worked all my life in Newcastle as well.

What do you think it means to be a businessperson in the North East of England?

The same as anywhere else. The pond that we fish in may be smaller than other regions, which is certainly true of the property market, but if you work hard, and are honest, then you have every chance of being as successful as you would be anywhere else. We have some fantastic local businesses.

What is your favourite aspect of life in the North East?

The fact that we have coast and countryside so close to our urban conurbations. Even the Lake District is relatively on our doorstep. The chance to escape is easy.

Do you have a favourite hotspot for a business meeting?

When our meeting rooms are all taken (or rather, I've forgotten to book one) Starbucks in Malmaison on the Quayside is my go-to place.

Where do you like to eat out in the region?

Broad Chare with clients; Akbars for curry; Mantra for Thai; Tomahawk for steak (the Yorkshire Wagyu is fantastic); Landmark for Chinese; and Riley's Fish Shack at Tynemouth on a nice day.

Where do you like to unwind within the North East?

Anywhere on the Northumberland coast. First choice would be Embleton. My nana and grandad lived there and I spent the six week summer holidays as a child up there. Grandad was custodian at Dunstanburgh Castle so I'd help him cut the grass and collect the entrance money - happy days!

Are the people really friendlier?

Regional stereotypes? Are scousers scallies?; Yorkshire folk miserable? Scots mean? Mancs can't dance?; Brummies thick?; well on that basis I'd probably say yes!

What do you think is the best view in the North East?

I'd go back to that view across Embleton Bay towards Dunstanburgh Castle.

Do you think living and working in the North East offers the same opportunities as elsewhere in the UK?

I remember two or three years ago some research came out that declared Newcastle as one of the 'happiest' places to live in Europe! I think they used measures covering health, education, training, public transport (and probably only interviewed people as they came out of the pub!). The one I think we don't score high on is opportunities for employment and, in particular, skilled employment, which brings higher rates of pay.

Have you had any experience of working elsewhere and how did it compare?

I've had roles where I've covered other parts of the Northern region (Leeds and Manchester) and a national role covering the UK including London, but I kept my base in Newcastle, and found that challenging. Unless you immerse yourself in the area and understand its politics, history and relationships, it is really difficult. I think of Newcastle as a bit of village compared to some of the other regional cities. Everyone knows everyone in the North East, you come up against the same people time and again and there is absolutely no point trying to be clever or disrespectful because at some point it will come back to bite you. What goes around, comes around.



Peter Bowden

THE GLORIOUS GOODRIDGE AT BISHOPS PARK

LINDEN HOMES' VIBRANT AND EXCITING NEW DEVELOPMENT AT BISHOP AUCKLAND IS PROVING POPULAR WITH HOMES SELLING QUICKLY, FROM PLAN, WITHIN THREE WEEKS OF RELEASE.



The glorious Goodridge.



A typical Linden Homes kitchen dining room.

The award-winning* housebuilder – with a mission to create a step change in the choice and quality of new homes in the region – is building a collection of two, three and four bedroomed properties at Bishops Park (DL14 8RG).

The first phase, with properties ready to move into within the next few weeks, comprises the two bedroomed, semi-detached Hardwick, starting at £209,995; the three bedroomed semi-detached Eveleigh, from £166,950; the three bedroomed detached Maddison, at £189,950 and the glorious four bedroomed Goodridge, on the market at £209,995.

A canopied entrance leads to a hall, which passes a large living room on the way to a fabulously equipped kitchen dining area, with modern, integrated appliances and access and views to the garden via patio doors. The ground floor also boasts a utility room, downstairs WC and integral garage.

Upstairs are three double bedrooms, the master with double ensuite shower, a single bedroom – which could double as a study or play room – and a pristine family bathroom.

Ideal for growing families, the Goodridge has been selected as one of the development's show homes, scheduled to open next month. For now, a temporary sales office is operating from a cabin in Douglas Crescent, Thursday to Monday between 10am and 5pm.

All Bishops Park homes will enjoy spacious layouts, contemporary features and appliances and a superior standard of specification – as present in all Linden Homes properties.

Well-placed for local schools, the development is also perfectly located for commuters – close to the A1M and just ten miles south of Durham and eleven north of Darlington. It is also less than two miles from local supermarkets and within walking distance of the banks and high street shops, bars and restaurants of the market town centre, ensuring that buyers will be well served by local amenities.

Known as the gateway to Weardale, Bishop Auckland is a bustling market town in the Vale of Durham, standing high above a meander in the River Wear, it enjoys commanding views across the surrounding countryside.

Sales Director, Tracy Iles, says: "Details of the beautiful homes available can now be viewed at our on-site sales centre and our team can talk visitors though all the options and assistance packages that can help people make their dream move.

"For example, those with a home to sell might want to find out more about Part Exchange,** which could help to speed up the buying process. For those who qualify, we can buy their existing property. Estate agents value the home, a price is agreed and the purchase made – paving the way for a speedy move to a brand new Linden home."



A Linden Homes living room.

Of course, for those who qualify, the government backed Help to Buy*** is available on all Bishops Park Homes – providing a 20% equity loan towards the cost, on which nothing need be paid for the first five years of living in the home.

For more information, or to register interest in these exceptional new homes, visit the sales office, call 01388 881565**** or visit www.lindenhomes.co.uk and search Bishop Auckland.

Help to Buy
Backed by HM Government



A pair of The Eveleighs.



A streetscene at the Bishops Park development.

* To see Linden Homes' award wins visit https://www.lindenhomes.co.uk/awards ** & *** Full terms and conditions of Linden Homes' Part Exchange scheme and Help to Buy are available on request. **** This call will cost 7p per minute plus a phone company access charge.



CAUSEY HEIGHTS | SUNNISIDE | GATESHEAD | NE16 5EP

MOVE IN FOR SUMMER WITH MORE HOME TO BEGIN WITH

HOME TO SELL?
RELAX, WE CAN HELP WITH OUR MY MOVE^ SCHEME.

We'll find an estate agent, agree a price and even pay their fees.

3, 4 & 5 bedroom homes from £229,950
SHOWHOMES NOW OPEN

Marketing suite and showhomes
open Friday to Wednesday 11am – 5pm & Thursday 1pm – 8pm

avanthomes.co.uk/causeyheights

*Specification varies on each plot. Please speak with your Sales Advisor for specification details. ^My Move scheme subject to Avant Homes terms and conditions, on selected plots only. Not in conjunction with any other offer. Please ask your Sales Advisor for full details. Prices and details correct at time of going to press. Image representative only and may include optional upgrades at additional cost.

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT?

- **BI-FOLD DOORS**
- **FLEXIBLE, DESIGN-LED LIVING SPACES**
- **EXCLUSIVE KITCHEN DESIGNS**
- **INTEGRATED APPLIANCES**
- **BOUTIQUE BATHROOMS**
- **FULL HEIGHT TILING**
- **CHOICE OF INTERNAL DOOR COMBINATIONS**
- **AND MUCH MORE INCLUDED IN THE PRICE***

DARE TO BE DIFFERENT™

AVANT homes

WORK STARTS ON REDEVELOPMENT OF ICONIC LAMBTON PARK



Newcastle architects Pod has seen work begin on its designs for one of the most prestigious developments in North East England

Building work has started on the first phase of one of the most prestigious developments in North East England, which has been designed by Newcastle architects Pod.

The move sees civil and building works underway on the new Eastern Village as part of the initial phase of the redevelopment of Lambton Park, the ancestral seat of the Earls of Durham. This will involve creating a new southern estate gateway that will set the scene for the future development of the historic site.

This Victorian character area will feature 69 luxury four and five bed terraced properties framing a formal boulevard as part of Pod's vision to regenerate one of the most significant historical locations in the North of England.

The first properties, which will be ready in late 2019, are part of an ambitious project that will eventually see hundreds of new homes, offices, shops and open spaces created on the 200-acre site, providing funds for investment in the estate's significant heritage assets and thriving community.

The sale of new homes will help to fund conservation work on a host of listed buildings across Lambton Park, including the restoration of the castle and the iconic Lamb Bridge.

Upwards of 500 jobs are linked to the housebuilding phase of the development, with further positions created as part of the wider regeneration of Lambton Park.

The news that building work has started is the culmination of several years of design, master planning and construction services work by Toffee Factory-based Pod in partnership with client, scheme developers Miller Homes.

Pod director Craig Van Bedaf said the project is a once in a lifetime opportunity to design new housing in an exceptional setting, which will deliver a vision for 21st Century classical living.

He said: "Our ambition for the first phase of housing at Lambton Park is grand and reflects our ability to fashion a sense of time and place from concept through to final delivery.

"Architectural excellence delivered through imaginative and contextual responses, has seen us draw on the plethora of individual features and the architectural language of the existing buildings; interpreting, incorporating and enriching these in our overarching design concept."

The project also sees the involvement of renowned architect and interior designer, Ben Pentreath, whose input has ensured the design is in keeping with the heritage of the estate.

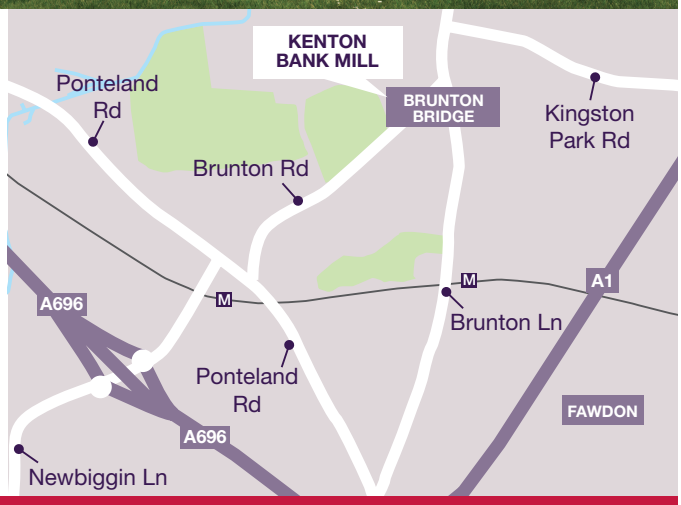
Craig Van Bedaf added that the long-standing partnership between Pod and Miller Homes will be pivotal in successfully delivering an architectural legacy: "Our partnership with Miller is built on trust, honesty and friendship.

"It's been critical throughout the design and planning process and will be key to delivering beautiful, distinctive homes, which will be of outstanding architectural quality, adding to the character of those already found elsewhere at Lambton Park."

More at www.podnewcastle.co.uk









JUST LAUNCHED

Our new development in Kenton Bank Foot is now open! Offering a range of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes in a range of styles. Book an appointment today to find out how we can help get you moving with our Part Exchange and Easymover schemes*!

Share your house proud moments at #TAYLORWIMPEY

Kenton Bank Mill, Brunton Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE13 8AF

Call 0191 9170 674

taylorwimpey.co.uk #taylorwimpey

Taylor Wimpey

We build the places you're proud to call home

Normal Taylor Wimpey terms and conditions apply. Images used for illustrative purposes only. Images include optional upgrades at additional cost. Prices correct at time of going to press. Offers available on selected plots and developments only. *Part Exchange – Offer available on selected plots only. Your existing home cannot exceed 70% of the value of the new home. Please speak to a sales executive for more details of this scheme. *Easymover – This offer is subject to status and is only available on selected developments and properties. It is not offered with any other promotion unless by special arrangement by us. Based on the existing home being valued by our agent and using the easymover scheme, agreed estate agents fees will be paid. Offer can be withdrawn at any time.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESSMAN HOMES IN ON BUSINESS CENTRAL

Darlington has become the centre of the world for global commercial consultant Garry Reeves who has made the town the base for his new company.

After 25 years of working and living overseas, the Reeves family have finally followed their hearts back to the town where Garry and his wife Gill grew up.

And after finding the perfect place to start up his company, Reeves Commercial Limited, Garry can continue to do business with energy industry clients in every corner of the world – from his new office at Business Central Darlington.

Garry said: "The beauty of having so many international clients is I don't need to be based in any single location. This way of working gave us the freedom to choose anywhere in the world to set up our business – and we decided to come home to Darlington.

"We've been away a long time, living and working in the likes of Indonesia, Vietnam, Brunei, Singapore and Norway, but feel this is where we belong. It's really good to be back."

Reeves Commercial currently employs three people in Darlington at Business Central and has a network of overseas assignees. The business specialises in providing commercial advice to the energy industry.



L-R: Matt Brown, Commercial Consultant with Garry Reeves, Managing Director

MEMORY OF MARTYN LIVES ON IN NEW SUNDERLAND PRINT BUSINESS



Donna Young ensures memory of Martyn lives on in new print business

The widow of respected Sunderland businessman Martyn Young has pledged to continue the work they began together, launching a company in his memory.

Two years after the tragic death of print company boss Martyn his widow Donna has set up a new business with ambitions to build on his legacy.

Print My Way uses Martyn's initials in its name but Donna says his influence will extend to much more than the sign over the door.

She said: "I came up with the name in recognition of what Martyn brings to this new business. He might not be here in person but he is built into everything we have and everything we do and we will carry on delivering the friendly and fantastic services Martyn was so well known for."

Donna and Martyn set up their first print company, First2Print at the North East BIC in 2007, building it into a multi-million-pound business before it attracted London-based Precision Print as a buyer in 2014.

The couple remained working for the firm until Martyn's fatal forklift truck accident in February 2017 at the company's site on Sunderland Enterprise Park.

She said: "I'm so proud of what Martyn and I built together. We had a brilliant business with a brilliant team and I know I can do that again. I've taken some time off to come to terms with what happened and there have certainly been some really hard times but now I feel strong and I'm finally looking forward to the future because I know it's what Martyn would want. He'd be proud to see me doing this.

BIC DIGS IN TO SUPPORT POLLINATOR PARKS

A project to support the survival of struggling pollinating insect populations, such as butterflies and bees, has been launched at the BIC.

Pollinator Parks, an initiative led by community interest company Climate Action North, saw volunteers planting 300 British native 'pollinator-friendly' wildflowers incorporating around 35 different species, on a meadow lawn area and in two flowerbeds at BIC in Sunderland.

A raft of scientific evidence has shown that insect numbers around the world are undergoing alarming rates of decline, with bees, ants and beetles disappearing eight times faster than mammals, birds or reptiles.

Climate North East Action Managing Director, Sharon Lashley, said: "Bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects are vital contributors to the beauty of our landscapes, our economy and our £100 billion food industry. The functions performed by pollinating insects is believed to be worth £690million each year to the UK's economy alone.

"The implications of losing this variety of pollinating insects will disrupt the web of life that supports us so it's vital that we take action now and rewild outdoor areas to introduce safe havens for them."

The Pollinator Park project, supported by the BIC and Sunderland Enterprise Park Management Company, introduces 'pollinator-friendly' wildflowers to create a sustainable environment for the struggling insect populations.



www.ne-bic.co.uk

The North East's Most Active Agents

Bradley Hall
CHARTERED SURVEYORS & ESTATE AGENTS

EC

Little just got BIG*

*We completed more commercial deals than any other agent in the region throughout 2018 - **including the big boys.**



0191 232 8080
www.bradleyhall.co.uk



BUILDING A BRIDGE TO YOUR FUTURE

with Seven Bridges Investment Management

Seven Bridges IM do things differently. They're not your normal Investment Management company.

Too often you will find that the person you are talking to is actually going to offer you a solution or package which has really come from another firm. They may have a partnership with a much bigger company or perhaps they are a subsidiary, but the big problem with this is that you will get the same sort of advice as hundreds of other Investment Management companies. Seen one.... you've seen them all.

Seven Bridges prides themselves on being totally, 100%, independent. Whatever advice is provided for you, it will be one-off, tailored completely to your requirements. They don't do off - the - shelf.

"Every client is different; therefore advice must be tailored for each individual client," said Managing Director and company founder, Ryan Parker. "It doesn't matter whether we are dealing with a single individual or a large company, everyone always has different circumstances that require different advice."

Seven Bridges IM place customer service at the top of their list. You will find that once your investment, retirement, protection or tax planning needs have been put into place, you will receive a regular update. With a lot of firms, this rarely happens. Some firms might give you a call or send a letter after a couple of years, but the guys at Seven Bridges IM will continually monitor your financial investments and keep you up to date, providing you with regular updates inline with your agreed review proposition.

"The financial world never stands still," added Ryan. "Financial markets keep changing, the Government invariably reveals new plans in every Budget, and the performance of various companies can affect stocks and shares, all of which can have a knock-on effect for the financial investments of our clients. Consequently, it's important that we always keep a very close eye on what's happening. We always want to ensure that our clients are kept up to date and informed of changes that may affect their investments moving forward. Similarly, our client's attitude towards their investment or retirement capital may well change over time and we must ensure that we maintain contact in order to manage client expectations."

"Finance is a black hole for many people. Often, individuals know they should plan for the future, or a company may be aware of their need to meet their legal financial requirements, but they have very little idea how to go about it. That's where we come in."

So, what happens when you contact Seven Bridges IM? First of all, get in touch to arrange a meeting. You can discuss a few basic details over the phone or via email to allow the guys at Seven Bridges IM to do their homework, and then put a date in the diary for a meeting. This will be a free personal financial review or, in the case of a company, a full study of what the company does and what it needs.

The meeting will be held at a time and place to suit you. Usually a review will start with a very broad description of your concerns and aspirations, before progressing to a thorough financial review.

At this point, Seven Bridges IM put wheels into motion. The team will carefully analyse your financial situation and what you are hoping to achieve. They will then provide you with a fully detailed financial report. This will be discussed face to face in a follow-up meeting. It is at this point where you need to make some decisions. Seven Bridges IM may well offer a variety of recommendations. These will be explained in simple, clear language and a strategy will be agreed upon. This can vary according to what sort of financial commitment you want to make and what sort of timescale you're looking at.

"Most people will have had it drummed into them that they need to plan for the future...but often they don't," said Ryan. "Succession Planning is particularly important because, sadly, we never know what's going to happen and when. It's also surprising that many people and companies frequently don't know how much they are worth or forget many assets that they have built up over time. It is the collation of this information that our review will discover to, in effect, put a safety net into place."

Go on; let Seven Bridges IM build a bridge to your future.

The best idea is to speak to one of the experts at Seven Bridges IM. Go onto their website... www.sevenbridgesim.co.uk and you will find all of their contact details...or give them a call on 0191 491 4119.





1st BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Hotel Indigo and Marco Pierre White Steakhouse Bar & Grill Durham, celebrated their first anniversary recently.

"We were delighted to celebrate the occasion with our friends and supporters. Our restaurant, bedrooms and coffee shop have been a huge success and we hope to continue to develop this momentum throughout the year".







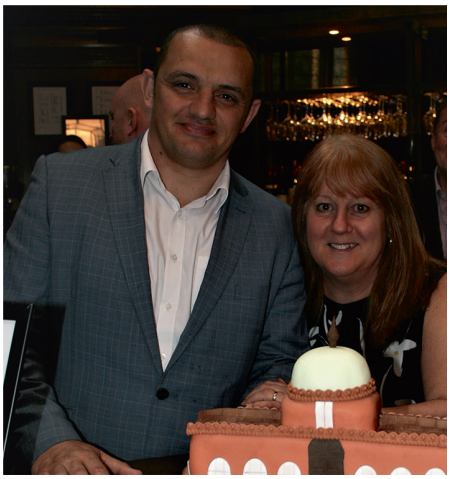














Photo: Chris Lisham who is in his fifth season as Club Photographer at Newcastle Falcons RFC.

Veronica pictured at The Rugby Players Association and Barclays Business & Rugby Event where she heard some smashing stories from rugby players who have successfully transitioned from the rugby field into careers ranging from banking to farming.

YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH!

By Veronica Swindale, managing director of nesma

The best thing in life has to be laughter and happiness, it costs nothing to be pleasant to people and it is very much appreciated.

I remember travelling to Edinburgh from Newcastle last year on the train to see the Rolling Stones at Murrayfield. The carriages were rammed, and the helpful conductor said 'so sorry for the squash, we seem to have Ed Sheeran in Newcastle, the Rolling Stones in Edinburgh and Beyoncé in Glasgow. If they had let us know they were coming, we could have put more trains on!'. I am sure they did know but this spot of humour in a particular situation diffused the atmosphere, and you had to laugh!

Laughter is an excellent tonic for us all (forget all those other taxable support mechanisms) and just might be the most contagious of all emotional experiences.

Again, on a tram to Murrayfield for a Six Nations match you could not breathe it was so squashed, and someone got on waving his ticket saying, 'Ahem seat L32 seems to be mine!' We all told him to get lost, and once again everyone laughed.

I hope that our Rugby Union visitors to Newcastle and St James's Park had an equally good time when they invested their whole weekend and travel and accommodation costs to 'come and see us' and enjoy the Heineken European Champions and Challenge Cup games. I know the play on the field will have been hugely entertaining and hope the weekend experience offered by our local businesses and hostelries left a positive impact with visitors wanting to come back again rather than saying 'no you must be having a laugh.' Once again big congratulations to the teams that worked together to bring this prestigious event to our city.

It's fun to share a good laugh, it's like a strong medicine and draws people instantly together. All the benefits of laughter also benefit business and the freedom to laughter seems not just right, but necessary at work.

So, I've experienced first-hand that tasteful humour can help companies stand out from the pack and if used correctly it can be an effective way to expand their customer experience. It's a human-centred value, and it's one every company should pay attention to as it really is vital to a healthy culture. It's a value that if used wisely people, both employees and customers, can actually feel the tangible difference and it contributes to our overall health and wellbeing.

If you're a champion of harnessing the power of people within your organisation, we can definitely recommend the People Power Event happening on 12 June at Northumbria University,

It is a unique event which will be jam-packed full of thought-provoking keynote sessions, seminars, practical workshops, live demonstrations, 1-2-1 advice and coaching sessions. As its name suggests, it is focussed totally on a range of crucial employer issues such as health & wellbeing, internal communications, use of technology, staff recruitment and retention, absenteeism, training and skills development, apprenticeships, work/life balance, effective management, resilience and agile working.

As Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "A sense of humour is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done."

Humour also fuels innovation and ideas too as ha + ha will often lead to aha! So, why not come and share some laughter and learning with us on the 12 June?

nesma
BUILDING MARKETING KNOW-HOW

Whether it's working on your current skill set or exploring a new area of expertise, nesma has all your marketing, communication and digital know-how covered.

T: 07734 222 254
E: hello@nesma.co.uk
W: nesma.co.uk



Creating content that delivers results

We work with leading regional and national businesses, producing beautiful publications loved by their customers and target audiences. Our clients make a big statement with the work that we produce for them. How would you like to do the same?

Contact us to find how out how achievable your own publication can be

offstone™

The art of communicating

Close House · Wynyard Hall · Your Move · Morgan Sports Car Club · United Carlton Print | Copy | Scan · Port of Tyne · Lloyd Newcastle

Telephone: 01661 844115 www.offstonepublishing.co.uk info@offstonepublishing.co.uk

CURTIS GABRIEL – THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND UK PRIVATE HIRE INDUSTRY

North East-based Social, Digital and Design agency Curtis Gabriel have achieved record breaking growth in the Private Hire Taxi Industry and have recently taken their industry-leading services over to the United States.


Matt Rose

We sat down with Matt Rose, the company's Section Manager for their Fleet Division, to find-out more about Curtis Gabriel's recent successes and plans for the future.

What is your role at Curtis Gabriel?

I'm the Section Manager for our Fleet Division, overseeing a team of seven Account Managers, ensuring we continue to deliver excellent results for our 76 private hire taxi clients.

What do you most enjoy about your role?

I love going out to meet clients. We have clients across the UK and the US and it's great to get out of the office, travel to see them in person and work together on providing the best possible impact on their business via the power of social media and digital marketing.

Tell us about the services Curtis Gabriel offer in the taxi industry...

Curtis Gabriel provide specialised recruitment and app download campaigns in the taxi and private hire industry, ensuring an almost instant ROI for the client. We also work heavily in integrating clients into the community, a huge asset when fighting off TNC's like Uber & Lyft.

Why is social media so important to taxi and private-hire fleets?

It is impossible to stay relevant and connected with your consumer base without social media. From dealing with complaints to community integration, bolstering your work force to improving automation – CG can cater for all.

What is your proudest moment since joining Curtis Gabriel?

My proudest moment at CG to date has been the launch of our services in the US. We are enhancing our stateside portfolio week-by-week, and it's great to work with and learn from like-minded individuals across the pond!

How has digital marketing changed in recent years?

Marketing is no longer about creating a one-way conversation with potential customers - it is about growing an engaged community around your brand and involving your followers in the discussion. Curtis Gabriel is one of the leading social media marketing agencies in the country, working with several international brands across a spectrum of industries.

Curtis Gabriel have specialist teams in the Hospitality, Private Hire and Corporate and Lifestyle sectors, and 2019 has already been a year of significant growth and expansion.







To find out how they can support your social media and digital marketing visit www.curtisgabriel.com or call their Newcastle office on 0191 340 3600

CURTISGABRIEL

SOCIAL, DIGITAL & DESIGN AGENCY

0191 340 3600 info@curtisgabriel.com CURTISGABRIEL.COM

CURTIS GABRIEL LTD Bulman House, Regent Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1DQ Find us on



HOW TO INTEGRATE YOUR DIRECT MAIL AND EMAIL MARKETING TO IMPROVE YOUR CAMPAIGN'S ROI?

Both email marketing and direct mail fall under the same category of direct marketing, however not many marketers know how to combine them effectively, and many more wouldn't have thought to.

Often email and direct mail are pitted against each other as they are relatively similar in terms of communication, and while both have their pros and cons, using them together provides the winning formula to maximise your ROI.

Keep it consistent

One of the most important things a marketer needs to do when using a multi-channel approach is to keep the branding and message consistent through all channels, while keeping it optimised for each platform. Studies show that brands who are consistent with their messaging enjoy 3-4 times more brand visibility, thus increasing brand awareness (Hazzard, 2017).

Not only should you keep consistent through branding, tone-of-voice and the overall message, you should also keep consistent through sending prospects to the same landing pages when utilising email and direct mail. Doing this through email marketing is easy, but through direct mail you can get more creative. Include QR codes, short URL's or even virtual reality to take prospects to your website. While you may think bringing a lead to your website through an offline channel won't bring results, direct mail is actually one of the most effective marketing channels to do so – recipients of mail spend 28% more online than those who did not receive printed materials (Gendusa, 2012).

Target non-responders

Email marketing is notorious for its low open rates. That's why it's important to follow up your email with direct mail - this could be as simple as a postcard or as creative as a one-piece mailer. According to the DMA, direct mail achieves a 4.4% response rate, compared to 0.12% for email, this means that your chances of a purchase is greatly increased through using direct mail as a follow up, rather than another email (Pulcinella, 2017). By getting in front of your audience through this channel you are able to establish a relationship with a whole new audience who don't respond to email.

Stagger your campaigns

You also shouldn't bombard your recipients with messages, you need to carefully place out each communication so as to not spam the reader. Spam accounts for more than 14.5 billion email messages globally per day, with 36% of them being advertising-related (SpamLaws, 2018), don't be one of them. Make sure that the recipient has had an appropriate amount of time to digest the last communication sent. For example, if your recipient has recently abandoned their shopping cart, you want to send them an email as soon as possible, but the next message should be released a few days after, once the recipient has had time to think about the purchase or need reminding about it, by sending this in the form of a mailer, you are able to build trust with the recipient, which will lead to a higher ROI.

Target cart abandoners

Talking about cart abandonment, targeting cart abandoners through email and direct mail is an excellent way of improving your retention rate. 46.1% of all cart abandonment emails are opened, therefore it is imperative to use this platform first. However when following up a second time it's more important to use direct mail - 92% of young consumers say they prefer direct mail to other media when making marketing decisions (Joseph Merritt, 2016). So if you've found a few days have gone past and your recipient hasn't opened your reminder email, send them a postcard, a one-piece mailer, or a brochure.

For example, if your recipient has left various bedroom furniture or accessories in their basket, send them a bedroom brochure that relates to their choices or offer them a discount on the selected items. Alternatively if your prospect has left a woman's jacket in their cart, send them a one-piece mailer with outfits and accessories that would match the product abandoned – helping prospects imagine themselves wearing it, and therefore increasing the chance that they complete the purchase.

"92% of young consumers say they prefer direct mail to other media when making marketing decisions" - (Joseph Merritt, 2016)

By using both email and direct mail you are able to combine the swiftness of email with the trust of mail – this gives your company more credibility and allows you to reach your audience in different ways, giving them plenty more opportunities to interact with your brand and more routes to purchase.

MetroMail are able to offer a wide plethora of direct marketing services, including direct mail and email that will allow you to stand out from the crowd and improve your overall ROI.

www.metromail.co.uk


MetroMail
mailing solutions
Release your
creativity...
...With MetroMail
0191 301 1700
enquiries@metromail.co.uk
www.metromail.co.uk

ASK SILVER BULLET...

WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNT FROM BOEING'S FALL FROM GRACE?


John Dias

I think there's two main lessons to be learnt from the Boeing air crashes and the company's response to these, one of which concerns PR and Crisis Management but the other has to face some far deeper underlying economic and social problems.

On October 29, Lion Air Flight JT610, a Boeing 737 Max 8 en route from Jakarta to Pangkal Pinang in Indonesia, crashed into the sea 13 minutes after take-off with 189 people on board. There were no survivors. The aircraft had come into service earlier that year in August as one of 11 the airline had purchased, the model being launched in 2016 and one of the fastest selling planes in Boeing history. Despite the fact that the pilot and co-pilot had over 11,000 flight hours between them, several international media, including the BBC, raised doubts over the airline and its staff whilst Australia told government workers and contractors to stop using the airline until the investigation findings were published.

Boeing expressed sympathy for the victims and families and stated it was ready to provide assistance to the investigation. On November 28, after the flight recorder had been recovered, the preliminary report into the crash stated that pilots reported a "flight control problem." It also focused on airline maintenance and training.

Fast forward to March 10 this year and Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 from Addis Ababa to Nairobi, another Boeing 737 Max 8, crashes six minutes after take-off with 157 people on board. Again, there were no survivors. The 'black box' flight recorder, however, was quickly recovered and showed clear similarities between the two tragedies.

Whilst Boeing's reaction was similar to the earlier disaster, other organisations reacted faster with Ethiopia, China and Indonesia leading the rush of countries to suspend operations of all 737 Max 8 aircraft on March 11, pending results of the investigation. On March 12, however, despite the fact that virtually all other countries had by now also suspended flights of the aircraft, the USA's FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) confirmed their confidence in the aircraft as did the US-based Southwest Airlines and American Airlines.

It was not until a day later that the FAA, via US President Trump, ordered the grounding of 737 Max 8 & 9 aircraft. Finally, also on March 13, Boeing announced it was suspending deliveries of the aircraft but, unbelievably, was continuing production. It would not be until April 4 that Boeing would finally admit the problem which was globally revealed as their MCAS (Manoeuvering Characteristics Augmentation System) software which had been designed to prevent stalls by keeping the aircraft's nose down.

The results have included a multitude of legal actions against Boeing, the cancellation of orders worth billions of dollars and the virtual annihilation of the company's reputation.

The Crisis Management and PR lessons are clear here. Boeing had the opportunity to react after the first accident but by choosing short term profit over longer term reputation and safety and staying silent, had lost control. The situation was exacerbated by their failure to take responsibility or to communicate with worried customers and end users at all or to show any empathy. They had opportunities after both disasters to react with speed, honesty and sympathy but failed to take them.

However, digging a little deeper into the tragedy, reveals a more disturbing story which had begun back at the Paris Air Show in 2011 when Europe's new Airbus 320neo (New Engine Option) had picked up record orders, including 260 from American Airlines, Boeing's US soulmate on whom they had depended for years for substantial orders annually.

Boeing's response was classic short term fix. Rather than invest in the development of a new aircraft, they adapted the existing 737 with more fuel-efficient but considerably heavier engines. To compensate for the altered pitch of the planes, they developed sensors and software that would automatically alter the wings to keep the plane stable. Crucially, no manual override was built into the system and Boeing began to market the new planes as part of the successful 737 family rather than acknowledge the wholly different flight characteristics which required special training which was neither offered nor provided...

Now at this point, most would imagine the FAA would step in until it's realised that as part of the Republicans' privatisation war on state bodies like the FAA, over 1,000 Boeing employees were now seconded to the FAA – the foxes were guarding the chicken coop. To 'Big Oil' Big Pharma' and all the other excesses of corporate America, which some wish to come to the UK, could be now added 'Big Air' – corporate giants running unchecked with huge profits for the few but tragic consequences for many.

Do you need some assistance with your marketing, PR or design? Do you need to review your strategy or do you want to know how we can help your business? Talk to us. Email your questions anonymously to us today hello@silverbulletmarketing.co.uk or Tweet us (not so anonymously) @SilverBulletPR.

SarahHallConsulting



PR and marketing that will turn your business around

Contact Sarah Hall - sarah@sarahhallconsulting.co.uk / 07702162704
www.sarahhallconsulting.co.uk


Christian Cerisola

NEWCASTLE DOES WHAT IT DOES BEST – IT WELCOMES THE WORLD IN STYLE

Did you catch it? I did. I got the bug. The one which swept through Newcastle last month. For seven days, there felt like a relentless energy to the city. Moreso than usual. It's that feeling that comes with being in Newcastle when we're on show to the world.

The upshot, as usual, was that Newcastle is even better than even its own residents thought at being the most welcoming, friendly and collaborative city in the UK. For years we've lived in the shadows of other Northern cities when it comes to national and international profile.

It started with the European finals weekend when more than 100,000 rugby union fans descended from all parts of Europe, not least France, Ireland and the South of England to celebrate a carnival of rugby and cheer on their teams. The police reported just one rugby-related arrest across that weekend. Even that naughty chap was collared for being in possession of something that he thought would, well, make the party that much better.

What was so pleasing was to see the sheer volume of visitors underline just how brilliant the city was at hosting such a weekend. Of course, we've seen it before with Rugby League and its Magic Weekend, but such was the success, there have been serious suggestions from those high up in the game that domestic Rugby Union needs to now seriously look at Newcastle as a viable alternative to Twickenham in order to see how one venue can create such a positive and celebratory weekend-long atmosphere.

It somewhat masks other domestic issues one feels needs sorting for these types of events. Not for the first time, a relatively flaccid 'street market' became a feature, ironically placed just yards from the brilliant, diverse, historic and vibrant Grainger Market. Someone high up in Newcastle, please take note that this is the market visitors would have loved to have seen.

Just when we were catching our breath from that, the business world was pitched straight into the launch of Newcastle Start Up Week with top regional, national and international names taking to the stage all week to impart their wisdom and advice to a keen crowd who'd arrived from all across the UK. Some from even further afield.

Before that week was out, Herb Kim's Thinking Digital festival attracted tech and digital thinkers from all over the world. This has become an international fixture of note. Within these two events, we saw the launch of the inaugural North East Digital Festival. Newcastle Start Up Week and Thinking Digital became just two events that will now feature under this banner in future years. With collaboration the name of the game, dozens of interested parties and business representative groups combined to put on what will become a packed fortnight of events and talks. This is a fixture that's only going to get bigger and better each year.

At W, we were lucky enough to be a small part of these events. We've partnered the team at North East Digital Festival to assist with their launch, we had team members take to the stage at Newcastle Start Up Week, and in Banyan Bar and Kitchen, we had a client who helped the Saracens squad and staff celebrate in style on the night of their victory.

During this incredible seven days, we then saw Newcastle listed as one of the leading global cities for scale up growth in areas such as AI and ecommerce. Los Angeles trailed in our wake.

This sort of energy and recognition puts Newcastle on an incredibly positive - and crucial - national and international footing. We're not great at talking up ourselves, we're a region that just does our thing. This has to change if we're going to survive and thrive in what looks like an ever more challenging future.

Christian Cerisola is head of W North, part of W Communications www.wnorth.co.uk @WCommNorth

GET brindled

Valued Guaranteed, Return Inevitable...Get Brindled, Get Recognised

PR	SOCIAL MEDIA	CRISIS MANAGEMENT	EVENTS
MEDIA TRAINING	AUTHOR AND SELF PUBLISHER AGENT	BUSINESS SUPPORT	CHARITY SPECIALIST

www.getbrindled.com | antonia@getbrindled.com | 07702214391

Marketing and communications skills for everyone.

nesma is a Study Centre offering professional qualifications in marketing, communications and digital marketing alongside individual and team development programmes.

CIPR ACCREDITED TEACHING CENTRE

Seven qualifications designed to give you the knowledge, confidence and resilience to thrive in public relations including the new CIPR Specialist Diploma in Digital Communications.

CIM Accredited Study Centre

Five professional marketing qualifications and a variety of CIM Training courses to help you stand out in the market and open up doors to your future including the Masters Degree Level Marketing Leadership Programme.

DIGITAL MARKETING INSTITUTE

Two industry validated digital marketing courses to boost your career prospects and to equip you with the latest skills.

We also have an impressive range of shorter courses which run throughout the year.

nesma
BUILDING MARKETING KNOW-HOW

Talk to us about what you want to achieve.
T: 07734 222 254 E: hello@nesma.co.uk
WWW.NESMA.CO.UK



ESH GROUP MARKS 20TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A REBRAND BY MEDIAWORKS

Mediaworks has recently completed a rebranding project with Esh Group to celebrate the firm's 20th anniversary. This wholesale brand refresh will help reinforce the construction leader's market position in the North East as it continues to expand its operations in Yorkshire and the Humber.

It was the first time the Group had undergone a refresh and was part of a group-wide improvement programme which included investment in technology and a redesigned digital platform. It has helped to 'rationalise its business brands' and develop its image to present something new to clients, local supply chains, and communities, as it continues to grow by maintaining a healthy financial position.

Mediaworks recognised that, as custodians of a family business with over 150 staff shareholders, it was important Esh retained its heritage while creating a fresh new image that personifies its forward-thinking, modern and dynamic Group.

Through strengthening the core values of the brand, Mediaworks worked closely with Esh Group to restructure its website and ensure a clear representation of the full range of construction services offered.

Darush Dodds, Esh Group's Head of Corporate Affairs, said: "We have worked closely with Mediaworks throughout our brand refresh and relied on their team of experts during the development of our new website – we're all very pleased with the results – delivering on time and within budget while making the whole process as seamless as possible. A great team effort all round."

Mediaworks will also be working closely with the Group to discuss the new approach across its marketing collateral, to ensure that it stands out against competitors and offers true value to its customers in person.

www.mediaworks.co.uk

IS YOUR BUSINESS ON THE MEDIA'S RADAR?

Imagine being the go to person when the media needs an expert. Well. Now you can with Highlights PR's new RADAR exclusive membership.


Keith Newman

RADAR is a 12-month members subscription with a low monthly payment with many PR benefits.

So, what are these benefits? Well, apart from being on a list of experts sent to the media on a regular basis, we also include the following:

- A dedicated private RADAR Facebook page.
- Up to 2 hours per year crisis PR management advice.
- A guaranteed business interview on Radio Northumberland's Business and Lifestyle show.
- RADAR client feature in the Highlights PR newsletter (3500 circulation plus social media)
- Exclusive RADAR club special offers on PR, media training, social activities and more.

What could this mean for you? Well, let's look at some examples of how RADAR has worked for my clients.

We've had a lot of BBC radio interviews including sales guru Victoria Fleming giving tips on how to beat the salesmen at their own game, James Palmer from New Thinking giving advice on how to cope with the pressures of Christmas and the UK's best blacksmith Stephen Lunn appearing on BBC TV's Country File after a RADAR meeting with a BBC Newcastle interviewer. Imperial Claims also featured in the May edition of Northern Insight Magazine.

These are just a fraction of our successes and if you would like to be part of this exclusive group, please contact me for more details.
Keith@highlightspr.co.uk 07814 397951 www.highlightspr.co.uk



Call Keith now
on 07814 397 951

@highlightspr

www.highlightspr.co.uk

HIGHLIGHTS
PUBLIC RELATIONS

P.S. Free torch for every new customer (lol)

HOW TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

As someone who manages multiple social media accounts for clients on a daily basis, friends often ask me, 'you must be on your phone all of the time.' The answer is no.


April Bowden

At a time when smart phones are an extension of our arms, putting our phones down without checking e-mails or double tapping photos seems like a near-impossible task. But if you're managing your own social media pages, do you really need to be as social and 'on it' as everyone suggests you should be? The answer is no.

Don't get me wrong, I love scrolling through my social media pages. Seeing food related posts, #ootd's or just catching up with announcements from friends, fills me with joy. But you can get easily distracted.

Although social media is inherently social, and encourages us to connect with hundreds of people, whether we know them or not, this kind of interaction can actually waste our very precious time. Don't get me wrong, interaction and engagement is part of growing a page but it needs to be done strategically before you get sucked in.

According to Global Web Index, internet users are now spending an average of 2 hours and 22 minutes per day on social networking and messaging platforms.

Social Media can be a total drain on resources if you don't use it correctly. You can put in hours per day crafting the perfect Tweet, pinning things on Pinterest for your customers, or publicising your latest viral video on Facebook.

While going completely cold turkey and deleting yourself from all socials may not be everyone's style, or the best idea especially when social media is largely an excellent resource to connect with your target market. I use my time efficiently on social media to ensure I am engaging with the correct people to help grow my brand and discover new content.

Here's the tips I follow to ensure I am maximising on growth without being distracted:

Delete your social apps

It's amazing how much social media can be done on desktop rather than your phone. Posting on Facebook, tweeting and posting on instagram can all be done therefore you can delete the apps from your phone to eliminate the chance to get sucked in to further distractions. Yes, it's easy to click on an app and interact that way but before you know it you're looking at your cousins - best friends - ex boyfriends - sister's long lost relative who's just been to Ibiza for a week...you get me?

Of course, deleting social media isn't going to solve all your productivity problems. After all, in our digital landscape, there's always room for a replacement; you can get distracted by other apps and websites just as often as you can with social media.

Limit your time

In 2018, Facebook and Instagram allowed users to cap their time spent on the social networks. The new tools will allow users to monitor how much time they have spent on each platform, set a time limit for their daily usage, and mute notifications for a set period of time. Whereas it doesn't stop you from using it, it will notify you if you have gone over your intended usage time. You will soon become aware how much time you spend on it per day and if it's been beneficial.

Leave your phone behind

We're all looking for instagrammable moments, and taking a snap at every possible moment. If it's not on social media, it didn't happen, right? Enjoy the moment and leave your phone in your pocket, or even better not attached to your body.

Disable your notifications

I have actually turned off all notifications. I shouldn't have to be a slave to my phone. Nothing serious is going to happen in the time you are away from your phone. I often turn my phone on Do Not Disturb mode. It means my phone is on silent, and my notifications don't come through until I want them to. Yes, I might miss a call but I can easily return it. Plus, we're in 2019 who calls anyone these days? Notifications can be replied to when you're actively online.

Messaging

In recent years, customers sliding into your DM's is all becoming too familiar and is a great way for instant interaction. However, many SME's don't have the time to answer emails, calls and DM's. Simple techniques like auto responders, chat bots and out of office responses are great ways to provide instant information without having to be online.

Stop being available

Yes, our personal phones are 99% of the time connected to our social media accounts therefore you feel more 'available' and likely to respond. However, setting parameters that you are only available between certain times is likely to give you breathing space and a chance to step away from socials.

As someone who manages a hell of a lot of social media pages, and has been for almost five years now, these tips help me keep focused, on the ball, efficient and get my clients results.

What's your thoughts? Tweet me: @play_thefield

NOT A FAN OF COMMITMENT?

Searching for a no strings attached package that's going to enhance your profile?

Your perfect match has been found in Pay-as-Hugo!

PR • Social media • Content marketing



HARVEY HUGO&
PUBLIC RELATIONS | SOCIAL MEDIA

HARVEYANDHUGO.COM
01325 486666

TRACK 6: **IT'S EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANT**

Ladies and gents, this is the moment you've waited for, been searching in the dark, your sweat soaking through the floor. For the sixth instalment of the hospitality insight, we are helping you understand how to sell your business online in a world where lifestyle and persona trumps features and services.

It's everything you ever want, It's everything you ever need, And it's here right in front of you - well, that is if your website is doing the correct job. Over the years of working in the hospitality sector, you could say we have a fairly good handle not just the industry as an operational standard, but an in-depth understanding of how customers within it emotionally connect with a brand. With that in mind, I want to focus on how you attract more customers, engage them while on-site and in-turn generate more online sales for your business.

For the purpose of this track, let's run the scenario you are a high-end hotel situated outside of a city or town. Your appeal comes directly from the services you offer and passing trade is something of a shortfall. So how do you influence and engage a new audience of influencers?

Let's start with attraction. We need to get potential customers from social media channels and search engine results to your website and make a booking. You're a high-end hotel so "£89.00 last minute deals" are out of the question, and not to mention 'off-brand', while "like, share and comment" engagement campaigns are both overdone and tarnished with bad press. The easiest and most effective way is to "sell the lifestyle, not the product".

In the Instagram age of social media, consumers are now looking at the lifestyle your hotel will give them and the social appeal it will have when they discuss, share or check in with their friends. We live in a world where taking pictures of our food and drink is sexy, where spa check-ins and hot dog legs are the hubs of social envy and where digital detoxing is now a thing. You need to embrace this as an organisation and encourage your customers to share the lifestyle that you can offer. Whether you're a luxury hotel, a quirky bar or a one-off restaurant, your social media feed should be littered with inspirational images and empowering language to engage your audience. Customers don't react to "book a room", but they do connect with "stay, relax and unwind", ultimately we are saying the same thing, but the latter is focused on an emotional connection rather than a quick sale.

Next up is retention, getting them onsite is the easy part, now we need to get them through your sales funnel and qualify them as a lead or an actual room booking. Your website is an operational facet to your business (we have previously covered this in Track 4 of our hospitality insight), it's not just about having a booking facility, it should be an educated and well thought out process to help you generate income, online. When we start a web project with our customers, we go through a phase called 'discovery', this helps us map out a user journey, identify the failover points and guide people to the most profitable areas of your site unbeknown to them.

One of the sales tactics we use is through imagery, we want customers to feel immersed in your world and with each new click feel like they are discovering something new. This paired with simple, clean navigation to help them feel in control, will allow customers to dive deeper into your website always feeling they have an out. Irrelevant of the sector, there is nothing worse than being on a website or in a booking process where you don't feel you can get back to where you started, am I right?

Retaining customers is about showing them snippets of the things they want and easy access to the tools that allow them to have it, which in this case is booking a room. Did you know, our data shows that 28% of direct room bookings come from an impulse purchase off the back of a strategic campaign rather than a planned visit.

Finally, it's the delivery. You have worked this hard to attract them, they have made the commitment to you and the ball is in your court to deliver. So many hotels either undersell and over-deliver which is an easy fix through a new digital presence, but the harder one is when hotels oversell and under-deliver, this then requires a more operational focussed approach.

You and your staff need to share the same vision for the brand. Exceptional service doesn't cost a penny if you already have the infrastructure and in most cases, service talks louder than the product you are offering. You are statistically more likely to forget a bad meal than bad service, plus the latter has a more influential impact when people start talking.

To master delivery, you need your new customers to become ambassadors of your brand, if they are affiliating themselves with it, their friends will and so on. They will share, like and comment, not because of a competition, but because of genuine interaction. Their friends become your friends and the cycle begins again.

To find out more about our data and insights program and how they could help your business, give one of the team a call.



Image Credit: Unsplash

Track 1: Hotel, Motel, Holiday Inn
Track 2: Hello! Is it me you're looking for?
Track 3: Oops!... I did it again
Track 4: I believe in miracles
Track 5: Ah, push it - push it real good
Track 6: It's everything you ever want
Track 7: We're gonna have a party tonight
Track 8: What's cooler than being cool?
Track 9: Some will win, some will lose
Track 10: Don't believe me just watch
Track 11: You've got a friend in me
Track 12: Start spreadin' the news



Written for Northern Insight by
Adam Hill, Founder of Creativehill
The Hospitality Specialists

creativehill.co.uk
01325 566 119
hello@creativehill.co.uk

Wriggle

How do I

How do I **get my business to the top of Google?**
How do I **get my business to appear on Google Maps?**
How do I **implement a robust and future proof SEO strategy?**
How do I **implement a content strategy?**

Google Search I'm Feeling Lucky

Press Enter to Search

Wriggle Marketing: Helping Businesses Achieve Their Digital Goals
https://www.wrigglemarketing.co.uk/
The Digital Marketing Agency in Newcastle Which Advises Clients On Digital Marketing, SEO, Social Media, Web Design & Web Development. Get In Touch For Your Free Consultation.

wrigglemarketing
LEAVING THE RIGHT IMPRESSION

www.wrigglemarketing.co.uk

Tel: 0191 285 6128 | tickleus@wrigglemarketing.co.uk



COLLABORATION IS KEY, SAY SOFTWARE START-UPS

One of the North-East's most successful tech-focused business centres is showing how collaborative working can lead to start-up success

In the heart of Sunderland city centre, the £10m Software Centre has helped support hundreds of businesses since it first opened its doors and rolled out its pixel patterned carpet back in 2013.

As one of two tech focused council-run centres - the other [Evolve Business Centre] dubbed "Sunderland's Silicon Valley" by The Guardian – The Software Centre is home to a growing community of creative, digital and technology high-growth businesses ranging from web designers to game innovators, app creators, TV production companies and marketing and communications experts.

At the heart of the centre's success is the collaborative spirit instilled into tenants by organisations such as Sunderland Software City, Digital Catapult North East Tees Valley and Sunderland Digital, a networking group led by Consult and Design.

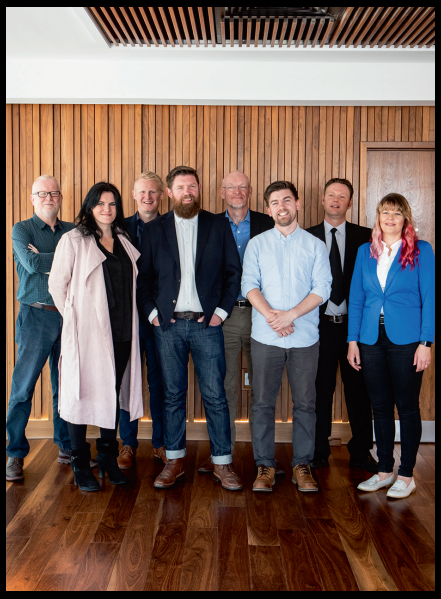


NORTH EAST IT HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS PROVIDER CLARITY INFORMATICS REBRANDS TEAMNET

North East-based Clarity Informatics, an international leader in IT healthcare solutions, has launched a new brand identity for its leading web-based compliance platform GP TeamNet.

Now known as Clarity TeamNet under the new brand, the web-based compliance and sharing platform is designed specifically for GP practices and practice groups. The platform supports those working in the primary sector with everyday practice management and CQC compliance.

Originally developed by Russell Mulcahy ten years ago as a bespoke intranet for his wife's GP practice, TeamNet was acquired by Clarity Informatics just over two years ago. In the time since, it has seen an increase of nearly 375% in coverage across England and has quickly grown to become one of the leading solutions on the market. It is now used by over 20% of GP practices across the country.



BUSINESS LEADERS UNIFY BEHIND SINGLE REGIONAL STATEMENT

After years of working independently, a collective of leading organisations representing the creative digital and tech sector across the North East have, for the first time, joined forces to create a clear message - One Region. One Sector. One Statement.

Led by Generator, the collaborative effort sees 12 leading business organisations commit to promoting the North East's creative digital and tech sector in a consistent and unified way.

Launching this morning at North East Digital Festival, the goal of the statement is to provide a unified voice which will put the North East on the map and deliver a clear message on a national and international level. Its purpose is to position the region as an innovative place to live, work and inspire the next generation.

IT COMPANY TEAMS UP WITH NEWCASTLE UNITED EXECUTIVE CLUB



ITC Service commit to supporting the North East through Executive Club partnership

ITC Service have partnered with the Newcastle United Executive Club to provide the IT support business with significant brand exposure at St. James' Park. Based in South Tyneside, the partnership reflects the company's local pride, with their logo being displayed to 50,000 supporters at every Newcastle United home game.

Formed in 2006 by Peter Anderson and Christopher Potts, ITC Service now provide support to more than 400 businesses, with most of their clients being based within the North East. Employing a team of 38 staff, the business is well-reputed in the Tyneside area, having grown an extensive customer list through word of mouth referrals before joining the Newcastle United Executive Club.

ITPS
MANAGED
IT SOLUTIONS
& SERVICES

0191 442 8300
contact@itps.co.uk
www.itps.co.uk



We can remove the headache and cost of creating and maintaining a future-proof infrastructure, delivering business confidence and better value for money.

Make sure your **systems and data** are in safe hands - talk to our **experts** about:

- **Cyber Security**
- **Connectivity & Hosting**
- **Cloud Services**
- **Data Centre Services**
- **Managed Services**
- **Business Continuity**
- **Unified Communications**

0191 442 8300

contact@**itps**.co.uk

www.**itps**.co.uk

ITPS MANAGED IT SOLUTIONS & SERVICES







INDUSTRY EXPERTS JOIN FORCES TO MANAGE THE RISK OF CYBER SECURITY

IT experts ITPS played host to one of a series of cyber security events at DCCC last month. The company joined forces with Cisco, OMG Security, Mincoffs and Cheviot Insured to highlight the real live security threats to businesses today and the measures companies need to take to combat and manage these risks.



















Sunderland Software City

Are you a startup or SME in the North East LEP area?

Speak to us to find out how we can help you grow your business.

info@sunderlandsoftwarecity.com

www.sunderlandsoftwarecity.com @SunSoftCity

EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional Development Fund









MUCKLE RUNNING SOCIAL

Muckle LLP's first Running Social got off to a flying start when over 50 North East business people attended. The independent law firm's event kicked off with a short talk, a tutorial on running technique and a warm-up, led by fitness experts David Fairlamb and Joel Brannigan. Runners then took part in a 3k or 5k run along Derwent Walk followed by food, drinks and chat at Swalwell Cricket Club. Partner Charlotte McMurchie commented: "Muckle Running Social is a wonderfully positive way to bring people together because it's fun, physically and mentally rewarding and mutually inclusive of age, gender and ability. The feedback has been fantastic."













PICK A PROCESS...ANY PROCESS

By Justin Short, Chief Technology Officer, Synergi.

It might sound like the start to a Paul Daniels magic trick, but in today's digital world business processes are more intelligent than they've ever been. The rise of automation brings huge potential for organisations, not just to better manage the many processes that run their business, but to truly transform and thrive in the digital economy.

So where do you start? Well, identifying key processes can be a useful start. But before we dive in it's important for us to understand and consider the full range of capabilities that a modern process automation platform provides and how these might align to our own processes.

At Synergi, we partner with global process automation experts, Nintex, for this exact reason. The Nintex platform brings together five key process management features that scale gracefully, enabling us to help smaller regional organisations as well as national and global companies achieve process excellence.

Process Mapping: In my April column I wrote about how creating process maps allows complex workflows to be presented as a simple, visual map, helping all participants to understand processes. Much of the value in process mapping is understanding the current state of processes and how they connect and relate to each other, building a foundation from which we can illuminate the effects of change and successfully plan for a streamlined and effective future process. Process mapping enables visibility, accountability and collaboration - three essential ingredients for developing a culture of process excellence.



Justin Short

Automated Workflow: Whilst many organisations are digitising manual or paper-based processes, this doesn't always mean that they are as efficient or effective as they could be, especially when it comes to elements like approval tasks which are often manual and cause delays. Graphical low/no-code process design empowers full automation of processes but using tools that process owners and business users are comfortable with.

Robotic Process Automation: Often, once a workflow has completed, there are high-volume, manual, repetitive steps which are required. For example, updating systems of record. The Nintex platform extends into RPA, enabling 'bots' to be created and managed (once again in a low/no code designer) that automate these steps, interacting with applications through their own interfaces and removing the need for humans to re-key data or complete repetitive tasks.

Document Generation: Eliminating paper-based processes is all well and good but often we need documents to be a key output of our process, whether that's contracts, letters, reports, orders etc. Manually creating these each time is often hugely time consuming. Document Generation automates and streamlines these outputs as a seamless part of the workflow, including the ability to obtain legally binding digital signatures along the way.

Process Intelligence: Once our processes are automated and efficient, they become the equivalent of our body's nervous system to the business and the ability to track, visualise and analyse how processes are running over time becomes critical to understanding the health, performance and efficiency of our processes, highlighting or alerting any anomalies or risks.

Organisations investing in process management platforms can bring these five key elements together, not just to keep up with competitors but to overtake them; to differentiate themselves within their markets and drive innovation. Contact me directly at justin.short@synergi.it if you'd like to chat more about how your organisation can achieve process excellence with Nintex (in the words of another great magician)..."just like that".

www.synergi.it

EVERYONE HAS AN INTRANET,
BUT IS YOURS TRULY EFFECTIVE?

Ask your modern partner for business change.



COLLABORATION
A modern intranet should facilitate easy collaboration and organisation of teams.

SHARING
Publish news, page templates, open positions and more. Utilise an easy and effective search tool.

MOBILE
Responsive user experience on web and mobile browsers or on a mobile app.

CUSTOMISATION
A modern intranet should easily fit your corporate branding - even without coding.

EVENTS
To attend one of our modern intranet events and webinars, contact our team today.

synergi

0191 477 0365 enquiries@synergi.it www.synergi.it @Synergi_IT

BUSINESS LEADERS AND EDUCATORS GATHER TO FOCUS ON DIGITAL AND TECH SECTOR AT THE NHSG GOVERNORS' DINNER



Patricia Alexander, Chair of NHSG Governing Board.



Jim Mawdsley Head of Digital Union was Guest Speaker at the NHSG Governors' Dinner.

The Digital and Tech sector was the focus of a recent Dinner held at the outstanding facilities of Newcastle High School for Girls (NHSG) in Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne. Hosted by the School's governors, the annual Dinner, now in its third year, has been firmly established as a key event in the NE calendar.

Guests at the NHSG Governors' Dinner included many of the most influential people in the region and they were welcomed by Chair of the NHSG Governing Board, Patricia Alexander, MD of the NE based social lender Shared Interest.

She explained: 'The aim of the NHSG Governors' Dinner is to enable the School to showcase its fantastic work as well as to look at ways that business and schools can work together to nurture young people in the region. Guests very much valued being able to hear the views of the next generation and NHSG Sixth Form pupils who were seated at each table, providing the girls with an impressive opportunity to learn from some of our region's best talent.

"Our theme for the evening was Innovation in the Digital Age and we were also particularly delighted to welcome Jim Mawdsley as our Guest Speaker; he's an outstanding ambassador for the digital and tech business in the region, and at the forefront of many ground breaking projects."

Before Jim Mawdsley took to the floor, guests at the Dinner heard from Michael Tippett, who was appointed as Head of NHSG in September 2018. He set out his vision for the school explaining that 'the School's mission is to educate the future leaders and shapers of the world'. Turning to the digital and tech industry, Michael Tippett expressed his frustration at the very low percentage of women currently working in the tech industry and how schools and businesses must work together to bring about change.



Michael Tippett, Head at NHSG.

He said: "I see the role of NHSG as educating the women who will have the drive and capacity to shape this sector. I don't just want our pupils to go on to be the end users of tech, I want them to be at the forefront of shaping its development."

He added that the role of school was to "encourage more girls to follow their interest in technical and digital areas so that they can have an equal voice and place at the table".

Guest Speaker Jim Mawdsley, CEO of Generator and Head of Digital Union, in his address talked of the huge change in the digital and tech sector in recent years and that of how he is blown away by the technical and digital innovation in the region. He expressed that all businesses were now built on tech, citing END clothing as a phenomenal example in the NE of how digital and tech platforms have been the key to "astronomical growth".

Talking on the next generation of innovators, Jim impressed upon the guests the need for creativity.

He said: "Creativity is the most important aspect of innovation. Pupils need to be encouraged to think outside of the box so they can learn to take that same approach into the work place. Being creative and employing free thinking is the key because the reality is that if you don't disrupt yourself someone else will."

He added: "All roads will lead to tech so don't be scared of embracing it!"

For further information on Newcastle High School for Girls please visit www.newcastlehigh.gdst.net


Your daughter.
There's nothing
little about her.
Your daughter is extraordinary.
She deserves extraordinary
opportunities, at Newcastle
High School for Girls.
Junior and Senior School
Open Week
Monday 10th June -
Friday 14th June
Book your visit
newcastlehigh.gdst.net
T: 0191 201 6511
NEWCASTLE
HIGH SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS
GDST

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PRIMARY SCHOOL

What you need to know before you choose your daughter's school.

League tables and historic Ofsted reports are not the be-all and end-all of choosing the right school and there are different drivers depending on whether your daughter is 3, 7, 10 or 15. The key answers every parent needs to know about a school are (a) will she be happy there and (b) will she be successful? There is a wealth of evidence that shows that the most important aspect of school life are the relationships a child builds with their friends and teachers.

How relevant are these 'relationships'?

When a child feels secure she is able to take risks, it is only by moving outside our comfort zone that real learning can happen. How a child feels when in school impacts on their overall experience and what their outcomes and achievements are. If they feel loved, safe and happy they will explore their world and create the amazing experiences that live with them for the rest of their lives.

What makes Westfield different, why is it such a special place to be?

Our academic performance is obviously central, but it's our ability to bring out the best in everyone that is really important. All our girls have particular talents: some may be academic, some sporty, some creative, some have superb people skills. It is our job to give the girls as many opportunities as possible to discover their talents then develop and celebrate them. Some of our girls may need more nurturing than others but all our girls are challenged to be the best they can be. At Westfield we build ambitions for the future, open a girl's mind and make sure each girl knows how important she is as an individual.

Every girl is different, every girl is unique.

At Westfield, our deliberately small classes mean that every girl receives individual attention; she is not just another face in the sea of a big class or a huge year group. Our class sizes mean that your daughter is our focus – every day, every term, until the day she leaves us. We are also non selective – we look beyond what a girl can achieve in an entrance test to what she could achieve in her life.

When considering a school for your young daughter it's important to look beyond the classroom. Are there green spaces to play in, are there plenty of creative opportunities to help her grow and develop, does the school feel happy? At Westfield our teaching styles and extra-curricular activities complement the girls' academic achievements and help them grow and flourish. The corridors are genuinely filled with laughter at Westfield, come along and see.

At Westfield, we welcome girls from a large variety of backgrounds and at any stage of their educational journey. Typical entry points may be at Reception, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9 but, as a small school, we work hard to ensure that girls settle into school life at whatever point they arrive.

Happy and settled girls achieve more, they gain more confidence to tackle things that they may not have imagined possible before and furthermore, they are far more strongly armed and prepared for their journey beyond school.

When they leave us, our girls are successful, rounded individuals who are accepting of others and comfortable with themselves. They are confident in public situations without being brash and they carry their successes with humility and determination.

Development and building foundations for the future

Westfield school was founded in 1960 to provide a positive alternative education to what was on offer at the time – we believe we are still doing that. We are currently in the middle of exciting new developments as a brand new STEM facility is being constructed and we are due to start work on a new art and design facility. Our Junior classes will be moving to a purpose-designed new space within the main school site from September leading to a totally seamless educational journey from nursery to Sixth form.





www.westfield.newcastle.sch.uk




David Tickner

PREPARING PARENTS

By David Tickner, Headmaster at Newcastle School for Boys

I spend the evening reading my daughter set questions in Spanish. I have a limited understanding of the questions I am reading out. Her room is strewn with books, folders and revision cards. It is the night before her first GCSE exam: Spanish speaking.

Over the 25-plus years of my teaching career, I must have been involved in helping to prepare hundreds of pupils for public exams but this is the first time as a parent.

Her answers to a whole series of prepared questions, only some of which she will be asked in the following day's exam, seem mostly fluent and plausible although I don't really understand their content, much less how they will be judged by her examiner.

Occasionally, she stumbles over a question, becomes tongue-tied or lost for words. She laughs but only partly out of self-consciousness or anxiety. I am relieved to hear her laughter. She feels she has worked hard in the run-up to her GCSEs. She has certainly expressed this to us, her parents, many times. I believe her whilst reminding myself that sixteen year olds and adult professionals may define hard work differently.

This scene is not one of pre-exam domestic bliss - of a confident, high-achieving and well-prepared child with a pristine but balanced work ethic supported by her two teacher-parents cruising the highway towards stellar results. We have trodden the twisting and difficult path familiar to many families. It is unevenly paved by a great deal of angst - by encouragement, nagging and negotiation.

I feel reassured and proud - not for the grades my daughter will achieve – but for the sense of proportion she appears to have about these exams and their outcomes. She understands, I hope, that it is important to do your best and to achieve the best results you can but also that exam results do not define us as individuals.

GCSEs and other exams are hard but parenting is perhaps the hardest test of all - one in which there are no easy answers.

Final places for September 2019 are available in some year groups. To discuss your son's admission into the School or to arrange a visit, please contact admissions@newcastleschool.co.uk, 0191 255 9303 or visit www.newcastleschool.co.uk


NEWCASTLE
SCHOOL
FOR BOYS
LEARN ACHIEVE DEVELOP
Scholarships
available
into Year 3
FINAL
PLACES
available for September 2019
newcastleschool.co.uk

OURSELVES IN THEIR SHOES?

By Kieran McLaughlin,
Headmaster at Durham School.

We were all shocked to see recently the pictures of Notre Dame Cathedral in flames after a devastating fire.


Kieran McLaughlin

It started early on Monday evening in the roof, famously referred to as 'the forest' because of the number of trees used to make the wooden beams, and quickly spread to the spire and other parts of the cathedral. Within hours, the spire had fallen, burned to a cinder, and the rest of the cathedral was in serious danger of collapse.

However, owing to the work done by the French firefighters (not acting under the advice of Donald Trump), the blaze was under control by the early hours of Tuesday morning and completely out later that day. Although the extent of the damage is still not yet known, much of the building has been preserved as well as, of course, the hundreds of priceless artefacts and treasures contained within it.

What struck me however, both whilst the cathedral was ablaze and afterwards, was the extent of the reaction of the French public to the fire. On Tuesday night, thousands amassed outside to hold a vigil for the cathedral, singing hymns, mourning and praying. Emanuel Macron, the French president, cancelled his planned public address to make a speech to the nation, promising to rebuild the cathedral of Notre Dame to make it "even more beautiful than it was" within five years.

To understand the extent of the reaction, one only needs to look at history of the cathedral. Its construction began in 1160s and it has borne witness to the trials and tribulations of French history; it saw Henry VI crowned as ruler of France in 1431 as well as royal weddings, theological battles and the rigours of two world wars, all of which left the building largely unscathed. It also, of course, forms a crucial part of the iconic views of Paris, the city of romance and countless marriage proposals have no doubt been made in its shadow. Watching such an embodiment of the permanence of a nation burn and its spire collapse is profoundly shocking to any French person.

Paris though does not have a monopoly on iconic cathedrals. Much closer to my home in Durham we have our own thousand-year-old cathedral, inextricable in its history from the history of the city. It too is a building which is instantly recognisable to its neighbours and which forms the backdrop to the best views of Durham.

How would we react if a similar tragedy struck our, and the nation's, most beloved building. I suspect it would have a similar effect on us as the fire in Notre Dame has had on the French. Durham Cathedral isn't just part of the city, it represents it; anyone who lives in the area has a deeply felt connection with the building. It has been part of life in the region for a thousand years, since Lindisfarne monks made the journey with the body of St Cuthbert to a hill island on a bend in the River Wear. According to legend, Cuthbert's coffin became immovable and the monks took this as a sign to build their monastery and cathedral there. A building such as that feels as perpetual as the rock from which it emerges but events such as the fire at Notre Dame serve as a sobering reminder that ultimately nothing is permanent.

But, as ever, when tragedy strikes, we can be measured according to our response. Fundraising to restore Notre Dame began almost immediately and has reached a staggering total of one billion euros. Whilst some have criticised spending so much money on the project when there are many other deserving causes, it speaks volumes that people are prepared to go to such lengths. This, as much as anything else about the cathedral, indicates the strivings of spirit, to recreate something even more beautiful than has gone before. Often, we show ourselves in our best light in our darkest hours.

For further information about Durham School, or to arrange a visit, call 0191 731 9270, email admissions@durhamschool.co.uk or visit www.durhamschool.co.uk

THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN

By Simone Niblock, Headteacher, Durham High School for Girls.

If you are old enough to remember the dawn of the new Millennium, do you think back on your teenage years and blush with embarrassment about your decision-making?

Note to my teenage self: that corkscrew perm was never going to suit your hair type...Over the past two decades, neuroscience has been addressing the adolescent mind, and a variety of theories have emerged as to why teenagers behave so differently from children and fully-grown adults. An excellent TED talk by Sarah-Jayne Blakemore - *The Mysterious Workings of the Adolescent Brain* - clearly explains the latest findings, as does the recently-published book *The Teenage Brain* by Frances E Jensen.

So, how does this new research affect our understanding of teenage behaviour? Teens are notorious for risk-taking, and it has been discovered that this is possibly because the striatum and other reward-sensitive elements of the brain are extremely active in the teen years, whereas the pre-frontal cortex that controls reason and judgement is slower to develop. However, a positive development is that the teenage mind craves stimulation and so makes more connections between the striatum and the hippocampus - the area of the brain associated with memories - than fully-fledged adults. This, in turn, makes recall-facilities more vibrant and gives teenagers, on the whole, better working memories than adults. This makes great sense to me: during my mid-teens, I could learn the periodic table with consummate ease, whilst memorising the back catalogue of The Smiths at the same time. With age has come experience, but I do mourn the loss of my indefatigable ability to learn huge chunks of information. In my late teens, I read *Beowulf* in the original Old English; nowadays, I can barely remember my conversational Spanish phrases to navigate my way around Alicante bus station. So, those of you who are tempted to criticise teenagers for their annoying habits and sheer daftness at times: remember that you were once like them and that, in many ways, they are far brighter than you might give them credit for, just as you were probably underestimated by the older generations before you.


Simone Niblock

We regularly hold Open Mornings and I would like to invite you to our next event on Saturday 8 June 10.00 - 12.30.
For further information or to arrange a visit, please contact enquiries@dhsfg.org.uk, call 0191 384 3226 or visit www.dhsfg.org.uk

IF IT DOESN'T CHALLENGE YOU, IT WON'T CHANGE YOU

Entrepreneur Olivia Lockey is owner of Northumberland's luxury wedding venue and glamping site, Northside Farm in Horsley.


Olivia Lockey

Successfully running a family-run business and juggling being a mother of three girls, she believes that if your work doesn't challenge you, it won't change you to be the best version of yourself.

I am the most surprised out of everyone that I am where I am at the age of 30 giving out my own experience as a business woman. When the idea of this column was put in front of me everything inside shouted 'No, you can't do that!'

I was a teenage mother who had only just started my A-levels when my first daughter was born and by the time I graduated from University, I was pregnant with my third daughter and in between that, my husband and I had set up our original glamping business.

For my close friends and family who know me well know that I have encountered more than my fair share of challenges in life and yet for some reason I keep on challenging myself even more to succeed.

I constantly set myself goals to work towards and the journey along the way, I have to admit, is sometimes painful and I often ask myself why am I putting myself through this again? Why did I start this? It is at times like these that I remember one of my most favourite quotes: The most difficult roads often lead to the most beautiful destinations.

I look back to where we started to what we have now achieved and it is then that I remember why I started the challenge in the first place and I just put my head down and plough on. Some people say they don't know how I do it but the truth is I don't know how not to do it! I have three daughters watching me as their role model and relying on me. Some days the steps are small and other days they are huge leaps but as long as you are going in the right direction then for me, that's an achievement.

This is the same in our business. We get asked 'will you ever be finished expanding and creating new ideas, do you ever just want to stop and enjoy what you have?' I believe it's not that we don't enjoy what we already have, it's that we realise that in business if you stand still you actually fall behind. Our brains are constantly creating new ideas and we are genuinely excited about implementing them, seeing what we can create ourselves and what unique offerings we can provide for our clients.

We have a passion for what we do and I will be honest, it's not always easy. We face challenges everyday coming from all different angles and unexpected things will always happen but we have learned to realise that we cannot control everything. So we embrace the challenge knowing that we are learning and gaining experience from it and once we have overcome it, the rewards will be waiting.

www.northsidefarm.co.uk

Newcastle Preparatory School

FOR GIRLS AND BOYS AGED 3 -11 YEARS EST. 1885

NPS makes learning irresistible



THE PLACE TO BE

Here at NPS we provide a warm, caring environment in which children experience success, both academic and extra-curricular, whilst growing in confidence and self-esteem.

Some places available for Years 3-6 for September 2019

Bursaries available

NPS offers wonderful learning opportunities so please visit and experience the very best in Primary education.

Please arrange a visit so that you can absorb the special atmosphere in our forward looking school where all children thrive

Headteacher: Ms Fiona Coleman. 6 Eslington Road, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4RH Tel: 0191 281 1769 **www.newcastleprep.co.uk**

Fed up at paying over-the-top dealership prices for paint and body repairs?

FGS

COMPLETE VEHICLE CARE ACROSS TYNESIDE

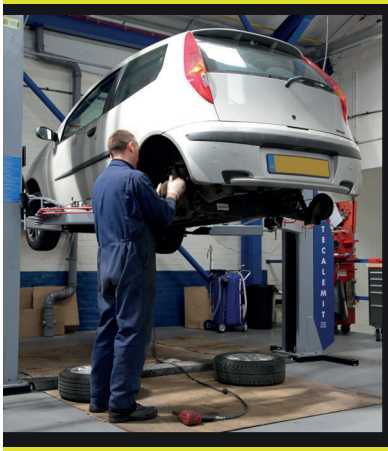
Did you know we are an approved paint and body repairer for Audi, Seat, Skoda, Volkswagon, Peugeot, Alfa, Jeep, Fiat, Chrysler, BMW and Mini.

All jobs are carried out by our team of specialist technicians, using only the highest quality equipment, tools and technology required to restore your vehicle back to its original condition. Let's face it, it's the smallest of scratches, dents, faded paintwork and wheel scuffs that make your motor look, well, a little tatty, but the smallest number of cosmetic repairs can bring your car back to its former glory.

And, if you're worried that the work carried out by us doesn't come with a manufacturers warranty, you'd be wrong. In fact, for a paint job we offer a lifetime warranty. On top of that, we guarantee to beat any genuine dealership quote, so what are you waiting for and more importantly - why pay more?

We cover you for all eventualities, from the smallest of dents and scratches, including bumper and plastic component damage, to accident restoration and alloy wheel refurbishment. Whether it's minor or substantial body repairs, we will work to get you back on the road within the fastest turnaround time.

If you have been unlucky enough to have been involved in a road accident, you will want to ensure that your car is restored to its original condition in the shortest time possible and with our team working on your behalf, you can be assured that you'll be back on the road in no time.







To find out more, or for a consultation about how we can help you, please don't hesitate to contact us on 0191 272 2322 or log onto our website: www.fgsgarages.com

T & C's apply. Not all repairs will carry a lifetime warranty please check with the manufacturer's terms & conditions.

BMW · Audi · Alfa Romeo · MINI · Jeep · FIAT · ŠKODA · Volkswagen · PEUGEOT · CHRYSLER · SEAT



ESTATE OF THE NATION

There's something about the Audi A6 Avant. It's hugely popular and, with the arrival of the latest big Audi, the car's dominance in the premium estate market is set to continue.

Top Gear magazine called it…."Another crushingly good effort from Audi. The new A6 Avant is a one-stop shop for family life."

High praise indeed. So, let's see what the fuss is all about.

At the moment there are four engines available… two TFSi petrol and two TDi diesel. The 2.0 litre, 4-cylinder, 201bhp diesel is available with front wheel drive and quattro all-wheel drive. All of the other engines get quattro as standard. A 7-speed automatic gearbox also comes as standard across the range, although the 3.0 litre 6-cylinder 282bhp diesel engine gets an extra cog.

If you prefer petrol power, there's the choice of either 2.0 litre 4-cylinder 242bhp or 3.0 litre 6-cylinder 335bhp power plants. You can guarantee that in the not too distant future, S and RS models will arrive. Every A6 Avant has a mild hybrid system which harvests power when the car is coasting and then uses it to give the engine a boost, but don't be surprised if a full hybrid or even a PHEV is in the pipeline.

As you'd expect, the 3.0 litre engines are seriously quick. Both units will reach 60mph in around 5.5 seconds, while the 2.0 TFSi isn't far behind at 6.2 seconds.

If economy is the name of your game, the 3.0 litre diesel will manage 48.7mpg, but the star of the show is the 2.0 litre quattro TDi which gets close to 65mpg. Bearing in mind that the Audi A6 Avant is a sizeable car, this is an astonishing figure.



Emission figures are also low which make the 2.0 TDi particularly attractive to business users.

Oh, and don't be fooled into thinking that the smaller engines might not be up to the task of hauling along a fully loaded A6 Avant. They have serious grunt from low revs and will be a terrific workhorse and family holdall.

In terms of trim, there are three choices: Sport (from £41,275) S-Line (from £44,635) and Black Edition (from £46,735). Every A6 Avant gets satellite navigation, climate control, acoustic glass to keep out exterior noise, powered boot hatch, heated leather front seats, DAB radio, a pair of touch screen which control just about everything but mean you can leave the sat nav map in view while adjusting something like the heating. To be honest, you don't need to dip into the extras brochure.

And every A6 Avant….well every Audi across the entire range actually…comes packed with safety kit, most of which you will be totally unaware of until you need it.

The S-Line trim will appeal to anyone who fancies a more sporty ride. You get front sports seats and sports suspension included, plus some really stylish alloys.

At the top of the current range there is the Black Edition model which, as the name suggests, removes external chrome trim, fits even bigger alloy wheels and adds dark tinted privacy glass. It looks really cool.

The only additions we'd recommend are adaptive dampers because then you can adjust the ride and handling characteristics according to your mood and, if you intend using the Avant with a hefty load on a regular occasion, air suspension would also be handy.

The Audi A6 Avant is one of those cars that will do whatever you need it to. If you want to take the family on holiday, it will carry five people in comfort and cope with all of their baggage. If you need it to work for its living, the Avant will rack-up colossal mileages thanks to its enviable reliability record. It'll even tow up to two tonnes,

Shopping trips, the school run, commuting, holidays, load lugger and, yes, taking your garden rubbish to the tip, the Audi A6 Avant will tick all of those boxes.

It will become part of the family or a key part of any business.

No wonder Autocar said that the Audi A6 Avant… "…might be the best estate car in the world."

We wouldn't argue with that.

www.lookers.co.uk/audi

Audi on demand
Available at Newcastle Audi

Booked a trip? Book an Audi.

Book now at **uk.audiondemand.com**

Newcastle Audi
Scotswood Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 7LA
0191 2264577
lookers.co.uk/audi





AUTISM PLAY COMES TO LIFE IN MOVIE FOR REILLY

The story of a young autistic boy and his family's experiences of coping with the highs and lows of the condition is set to become a major movie set in the North East.

Originally a blog set up by Cramlington mum Christine Stephenson, 'The Life of Reilly' documented her frustrations at the way that people constantly judged her son Reilly and the family while out and about. At the same time, writer and actress Alison Stanley was working on a play on the same subject and they joined together to ensure they could make maximum impact.

The Life of Reilly CIC was set up by Christine, Alison and Kelly Best, the companies much needed counsellor, all mothers of very different autistic sons with very different experiences. The aim of the company is to raise awareness of autism and make people think about their attitudes towards it.

The Life of Reilly play looks at autism from the viewpoint of a North East family with much of the storyline derived from the personal experiences of all three families.

In July, production will commence on the movie version of the play produced by Newcastle-based TryLife Films and will take place across the region with North Shields being the main location for the family.

The team are now actively fundraising for production costs. Already, Newcastle businessman Rob Armstrong has donated £10,000 to the fund and a gala ball is planned for this month at the Gateshead Hilton Hotel.

BOB'S FATHER'S DAY GOLDEN TICKET

It's going to be another Father's Day by the telly for one Gateshead pensioner who is one of Sunday for Sammy's biggest fans.

Last year, 77-year-old Bob Burdis was delighted to discover a special golden ticket inside the Sunday for Sammy 2018 DVD cover entitling him to four free tickets to the forthcoming 20th Birthday Show on 23rd Feb 2020.

Bob's daughter Nicola Devlin gave her dad the DVD for Father's Day as he is such a big fan and says he never tires of watching the three-hour long music, comedy and variety spectacular.

Sunday for Sammy is a celebration of North Eastern culture staged to raise funds to support the next generation of North Eastern performers with training, expenses and equipment.

The 2018 DVD contains appearances from the cast regulars with surprise guests including Brenda Blethyn and Johnny Vegas and a crowd pleasing duet between Joe McElderry and Jersey Boys singer Ryan Molloy performing 'Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me'.

Show producer Ray Laidlaw said: "If anyone deserves this, it's Bob. He's an avid fan and has supported the charity since he went to the very first show in 2000. The DVD is a great Father's Day present and while this year we can't promise any free tickets, we can guarantee a fantastic viewing experience that any dad would be delighted to receive."



Sunday for Sammy at the Utilita Arena
SUNDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY 2020
UTILITA ARENA NEWCASTLE (MATINEE & EVENING)
TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
VISIT SUNDAYFORSAMMY.ORG FOR MORE INFO
It's THE Geordie command performance!

Blagdon Gallery
Showcasing the North Easts finest art
Milkhope Centre, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE13 6DA Tel : 01670 789944 www.blagdongallery.co.uk



NEW PRODUCTION COMPANY JOINS TEAM FOR PLAY INSPIRED BY SIR BOBBY ROBSON

A hat-trick of partners are helping to bring the story of football legend and former Newcastle United and England manager Sir Bobby Robson to life on stage.

Recently formed Quayside Productions has joined The Customs House and Ion Productions to bring Bobby Robson Saved My Life to The Customs House in South Shields and Tyne Theatre in Newcastle, ahead of a national tour.

The play, written by Jarrow-born poet and playwright Tom Kelly, focuses on the late Sir Bobby's legacy.

Focusing on three very different individuals and the ups and downs life throws at them, it promises to be a heart-warming, inspirational and uplifting piece that celebrates not only Sir Bobby's life, but the impact he had on so many.

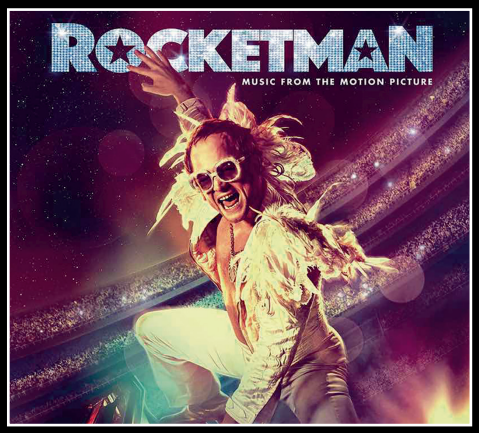
Charlie Richmond, Director of Newcastle-based Quayside Productions, said: "Quayside Productions are delighted to be co-producing Bobby Robson Saved My Life. Just like Sir Bobby, we want to create a lasting legacy that will inspire generations for years to come."

As part of the play's development, people are being asked to upload a video to social media of themselves describing Sir Bobby in three words, using the hashtag #3wordsforBobby. A number of famous faces have already done so.

Bobby Robson Saved My Life runs at The Customs House from 16-20 July. Each performance will raise funds for the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation to help find more effective ways to detect and treat cancer.

RECORD OF THE MONTH – 'ROCKETMAN' SOUNDTRACK

Accompanying Taron Egerton's blistering performance in the motion picture Rocketman comes the soundtrack featuring a number of hits from Elton John's back-catalogue. The film follows John's early days as a prodigy at the Royal Academy of Music up to his eventual musical partnership with Bernie Taupin and world dominance as a music artist.



As well as featuring Egerton singing some of John's classic tracks, the Rocketman soundtrack also boasts a brand new song performed by the actor and the musician. '(I'm Gonna) Love Me Again' was written by John's long-time songwriting partner Bernie Taupin and plays out over the film's credits.

WHAT'S ON THIS JUNE?

A Thousand Splendid Suns
June 1 -15
Northern Stage T: (0191) 230 5151
www.northerntage.co.uk

Motown The Musical
June 4-22
Theatre Royal Newcastle T: (0844) 8112 121
www.theatreroyal.co.uk

The King and I
June 5-15
Sunderland Empire T: (0844) 871 3022
www.atgtickets.com

Bill Bailey
June 8
Utilita Arena T: (0844) 493 6666
www.utilitaarena.co.uk

Leo Sayer
June 8
Sage Gateshead T: (0191) 443 4661
www.sagegateshead.com

Nick Lowe
June 13
Sage Gateshead T: (0191) 443 4661
www.sagegateshead.com

Kris Kristofferson
June 17
Sage Gateshead T: (0191) 443 4661
www.sagegateshead.com

Thriller Live
June 20 – 21
Sage Gateshead T: (0191) 443 4661
www.sagegateshead.com

Kinky Boots
June 25 – July 6
Sunderland Empire T: (0844) 871 3022
www.atgtickets.com

The B-52's
June 29
Sage Gateshead T: (0191) 443 4661
www.sagegateshead.com

The West End Bhangra Musical
June 30
Theatre Royal Newcastle T: (0844) 8112 121
www.theatreroyal.co.uk

Listen to the Northern Insight Business Show on Radio Northumberland
NORTHERN INSIGHT
radio NORTHUMBERLAND
www.radionorthumberland.com

MEET THE ARTIST...



Edwin Blackburn is a Northumberland artist specialising in maritime artwork. Ahead of his forthcoming exhibition at the Blagdon Gallery he spoke to Michael Grahamslaw about his career so far.

Did you always want to pursue a career in Art?

I suppose I did yes. My father was a keen amateur painter and photographer who encouraged me as a child and my native Northumberland gave me great inspiration and immediate access to endless subject matter.

Tell us about your career path so far?

In my early working life I became a draughtsman and my initial work was very draughtsman like, pen and ink drawings depicting local Northumberland scenes. I then moved onto the mediums of watercolour and pastel.

In the early 80s I did a series of colour lithographic prints of Northumberland, Durham and the Lake District which sold in great numbers and led to me forming a trading company with business partners. Whilst this led to further publications and great commercial success I had moved away from what I wanted to achieve as an artist so after several years I wound the business up.

The 1986 Tall Ships Race proved to be a turning point from which I concentrated on being a marine artist. My work has subsequently been seen in private collections throughout the UK and numerous countries worldwide. In the 90s I extended my interests to include American maritime history.

What do you most enjoy about your work?

The whole experience is incredibly therapeutic but putting the finishing touches to a painting and bringing it to life is always a very special moment.

What are you currently working on?

My forthcoming exhibition at the lovely Blagdon Gallery which will include scenes of the Northumberland coast and, as it's centrepoint, the Tall Ships leaving Blyth.

What is the most challenging aspect of your work?

Deciding on the subject matter is difficult. Also trying to find a different angle or mood to make a picture more moody and atmospheric is sometimes difficult.

Who are your heroes in the world of Art?

J. W. Carmichael was an amazingly talented Artist from Newcastle who worked in the shipyards and did some wonderful marine painting.

How do you see the world of Art evolving in the next 5-10 years?

Whilst I prefer traditional art and detailed, representational work trends are becoming more abstract and I see that continuing in the next decade.

How do you like to unwind?

Walking in Northumberland and the Lake District and listening to electric folk music.

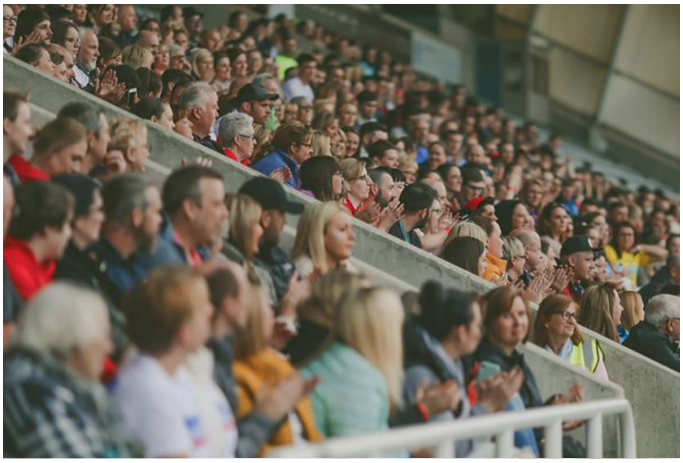
Edwin will be previewing his latest work at the Blagdon Gallery on Sunday 1st October with the exhibition continuing to the end of November.

For further information visit the website www.edwinblackburn.com



Edwin Blackburn







18 MONTHS IN THE MAKING

1076 PEOPLE TAKING PART

A NEW UK RECORD

APPROXIMATELY £150,000 RAISED FOR THE CHARITIES INVOLVED

Tuesday 30th April saw the largest mass participation charity firewalk that the UK has ever witnessed at Newcastle Falcons Rugby Ground.

Organised by Danny Mitchell of Change Fundraising Ltd along with Challenge Northumberland and UK Firewalk.

Danny's idea was to create an event that would allow ANY charity or cause to be part of it without having the financial risk or stress of organizing the event. It was meant to level the playing field to allow the small, often overlooked charities to compete with larger charities.

To stand there on the night and see so many different charities coming to take part and meet so many amazing people raising vital funds for what they cared about was a truly humbling experience.

We missed out on the World Record this time BUT we will be launching the event for 2020 so register your interest very early via danny@changefr.co.uk

If you would like to chat to Danny about how he can help your cause create exciting events give him a call on 07817412524.







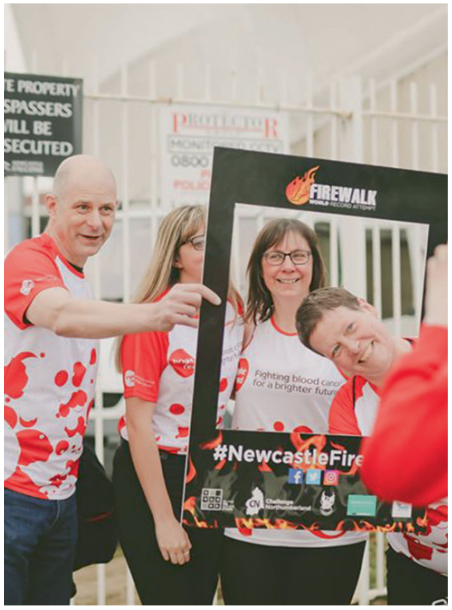




Photography: Media Borne






FIREWALK
#NewcastleFire


FIREWALK
MEDICAL TEAM
#NewcastleFirewalk
Challenge Northumberland


FIREWALK
#NewcastleFirewalk
Challenge Northumberland


FIREWALK
#NewcastleFirewalk




FIREWALK
#NewcastleFirewalk
CHARLIE & CARTER FOUNDATION





NEW NORTH EAST PUB IS ON A STICKY WICKET

A leading North East leisure group has proved it is on the ball, with its latest sports-themed acquisition.

Ramside Estates, which owns Ramside Hall Hotel, Golf and Spa, Hardwick Hall Hotel and a range of bars across the region, has taken over the lease and transformed the former Austin's restaurant at Durham Cricket Club.

And the newly named Sticky Wicket has recently opened its doors with a new, family friendly menu after a complete refurbishment.

The new menu includes a range of traditional favourites such as bangers and mash and fish and chips, along with American-style grazing and sharing dishes for people to enjoy while watching sport with friends and family.



CLOSE HOUSE CHOSEN TO STAGE BRITISH MASTERS FOR SECOND TIME

One of European golf's most prestigious tournaments will return to the North East in 2020 when Close House, a championship venue in Heddon-on-the-Wall, 10 minutes from Newcastle city centre, stages the British Masters for the second time.

Hosted by resident Tour star and former World Number One Lee Westwood, the event will return to the North East (30 July – 2 Aug 2020), having previously hosted the British Masters in 2017.

Lee Westwood said: "I'm delighted to announce that the Betfred British Masters is once again going to be at Close House. Hopefully we will get another great field and I am sure it will be a great spectacle like it was a couple of years ago."

TOP RESTAURANT CELEBRATES ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY IN STYLE

The North East's most celebrated restaurant is set to mark its tenth anniversary in style, with a series of special events.

The two Michelin star restaurant The Raby Hunt at Summerhouse near Darlington first opened its doors in 2009 and has since gained an international reputation.

Now, the restaurant will be open for a classic Sunday lunch on 11 August, when guests will be able to enjoy a five-course meal prepared by chef/owner James Close.

The restaurant will also join forces with Champagne Deutz, one of the leading French champagne houses, on 7 July. James has created a special, five-course meal based around French classic dishes, with each course complemented by a different glass of champagne.

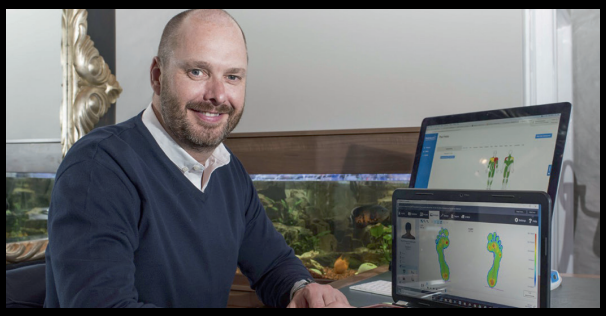


HEXHAM SPORTS PHYSIO RUN OFF HIS FEET

It's been a very busy period for physio Paul Hobrough, who operates his practice Physio & Therapy in Hexham, and the next few months will have him literally run off his feet.

Just back from a stage appearance as the official physio for the London Marathon, Paul is using his expertise in running and physiotherapy to teach the world the latest developments and techniques.

Paul has been invited to present at the International Society for Medical Shockwave Treatments in Beijing, China, and is the first ever to be invited to the prestigious event from the UK. He will also fly to South Africa to teach the use of Shockwave Therapy to a host of allied medical professionals.





"To eat well in England, you should have breakfast three times a day."
Somerset Maughan

Breakfast served all day, every day!



Willi's Café Jesmond

23-25 Clayton Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne 0191 212 1123

Macdonald Linden Hall Golf & Country Club





Macdonald Linden Hall Golf & Country Club are proud to be hosting the PGA EuroPro Tour in July and sponsorship packages are still available 2nd - 5th July 2019.

SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

From only £1,999

Including:

Two teams in the Linden Hall pro-am, plus one team in one other EuroPro.

Company signage on TV Holes

Over 800,000 impressions & views on social media and website per event in 2018

Broadcast on Sky Sports

Personal social media campaigns

Banner on the PGA EuroPro Tour website

Signage boards & banners around the event

PGA® europro tour

For more information call **01670 500011** referencing EuroPro Sponsorship

GOLF AT MACDONALD HOTELS & RESORTS

OUT & ABOUT WITH THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS RAILCARD







The Family and Friends Railcard (F&FR) includes friends because the children you travel with may not be your own. My children are all adults now, but It is possible to travel with someone else's child (5-15) to get discount from the adult fare.

To give a local example, on an off-peak journey from Yarm to Cramlington, the fare is £28.80. But with a child using the F&FR, the fare falls from an undiscounted adult and child fare of £43.20 to £24.50. In other words, it is cheaper to travel standard class with a child than without one.

I therefore borrowed a family friend, 12 year old Daniel, to make a day trip to Scotland, and after some consultation on a trip to Edinburgh we decided to go a little beyond and try the boat trip in the Forth Estuary and Deep Sea World at North Queensferry, either side of the iconic red Forth Bridge.

We had two advance tickets, out with Cross Country from Newcastle, returning with LNER. It's perfectly legal to mix and match like that since the tickets are issued as two singles. We managed to get to and from the Scottish capital for under £20. A separate return to North Queensferry (£4.95, saving 85p), delivered us first to Dalmeny, a small station above but close to South Queensferry. We walked down the road into the small town, then east along the coastline towards the towering Forth Bridge to Hawes Pier, virtually beneath it, where our comfortable vessel the Forth Belle awaited for a trip to see the three bridges and Inchcolm Island.

As it was out of season we could not land on the island, where the jetty was being repaired, but we saw plenty of bird and sea life, including seals lying on a navigation buoy. I had a Dalwhinnie Winter's Gold whisky from the bar (following a previous visit there for this column) and Daniel enjoyed a cola. I must say the sound system on the boat was first class: a mixture of recorded material, with sensible use of sound effects, and live commentary. We went under the two road bridges (opened 1964 and 2017), and the Forth Bridge (1890) with trains running across frequently.

Daniel calculated it was 122 steps up to Dalmeny station, plus a further 14 up and 12 down, and we took a train over the bridge to North Queensferry, which was well signposted and all downhill to the Deep Sea World, an aquarium famous for its collection of large sand tiger sharks. Opened in 1993 in a disused quarry, its main attraction is the 112 m (367 ft) long transparent acrylic underwater viewing tunnel, which is one of the longest of its kind in the world. We were delighted to be offered a special visit behind the scenes to see how fish are propagated and look over the viewing tunnel. In 2005, the aquarium opened a new seal enclosure, housing resident seals as well as injured ones rescued by the SSPCA.

Only buses run over the older road bridge now, so we made our way to the Ferrytoll park and ride (strange name: no ferry, no toll!) for a surreal ride on a solo Stagecoach express, where we were the only vehicle visible on the bridge, to Edinburgh and our train home.

www.deepseaworld.com www.forthtours.com
Alex Nelson, nationalrail.com



Let **nationalrail.com**, based at **Bishop Auckland station**, help you use the most energy efficient mode of transport, with new Azuma trains now running on the East Coast Main Line.

Plan and book your travel in the UK and Europe with **nationalrail.com**, and get advice on your corporate rail travel needs from **alexnelson@dunelm.org.uk**.

National Rail Bishop Auckland Ltd, DL14 7TL

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Mark Young, Head Chef at Horton Grange Country House Hotel, holder of one AA Rosette.

RACK OF LAMB - Ingredients

4 racks of lamb
(2 pairs of best ends), French trimmed
4 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
a big stalk of rosemary needles stripped off and roughly chopped
8 tbsp light olive oil

Method

Season the racks of lamb with salt and pepper first then scatter the garlic and rosemary over the top, and drizzle with the olive oil. Leave to marinate for at least 4 hours.
Preheat the oven to fan 200C/conventional 220C/gas 7.
Season the lamb generously with salt and pepper. Heat a large, heavy frying pan over a moderately high heat and brown two of the racks well on the meaty sides for about 1-2 minutes, then turn and brown the other sides for a further 1 minute. Finally, brown the ends briefly so that all of the exposed meat is seared. Remove and repeat with the remaining two racks.
Place the racks in a large roasting tin, and roast for about 8 minutes for very pink meat, 17-20 minutes for medium and 25 minutes for well-done.
Transfer the lamb to a warmed plate and allow to rest for about 5 minutes before carving, then carve and serve.

Fondant potatoes - Ingredients

150g/5oz butter
4 potatoes, peeled, cut into barrel-shapes using a cookie cutter
75ml/3fl oz chicken or vegetable stock
2 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed lightly with the edge of a knife
2-3 sprigs fresh thyme
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

Method

Heat the butter over a medium heat in a saucepan. When the butter is foaming, add the potatoes and fry until deep golden-brown on one side, about 5-6 minutes. (Do not move the potatoes as they cook.)
Turn over the potatoes and cook for a further 5-6 minutes, or until golden-brown on both sides.
Carefully pour in the stock, then add the garlic cloves and thyme sprigs,
Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
Cover the pan with a lid and reduce the heat until the stock is simmering. Simmer the potatoes until tender, then remove the potatoes from the pan using a slotted spoon and keep warm.

Sweet potato Puree - Ingredients

4 medium sized sweet potatoes
50g butter

Method

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6.
Put the potatoes on a baking tray and roast in the oven for around 45 mins or until a knife inserts easily into the flesh.
Allow to cool a little, remove the skin and any harder bits of the potato, place in a food processor with a knob of butter and blend until smooth.

Lamb Shoulder - Ingredients

1 onion, cut into 4
1 large carrot, cut into 4
2 sticks celery, roughly chopped
2 garlic cloves, smashed
2 sprigs fresh thyme & 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
1.5kg/3lb 5oz boneless lamb shoulder
2 tbsp olive oil
400ml/14fl oz lamb stock

Method

Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6. Place the onion, carrot, celery, garlic, thyme and rosemary in the bottom of a large, deep roasting tin. Put the lamb on top and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with the olive oil and pour the stock in the bottom.
Roast for 30 minutes uncovered. Then lower the temperature to 160C/140C Fan/Gas 3. Cover the roasting tin with aluminium foil and cook for a further 4 hours.
When the lamb is very tender, remove it from the cooking juices and allow to rest. Keep warm until ready to serve.

Pickled Courgette - Ingredients

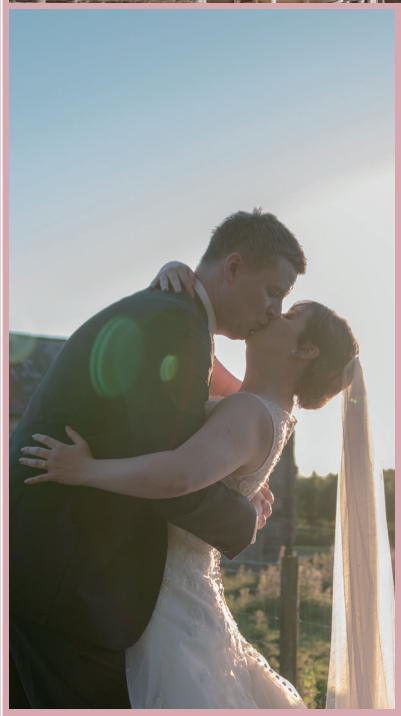
1 courgette, (small)
2 tbsp of olive oil
2 tbsp of white wine vinegar

Method

Cut the courgette into thin ribbons and marinate in the oil and vinegar. Set aside to marinate for 30 mins, then Drain the courgette ribbons, place on a metal tray and Grill for 1 minute.







HORTON GRANGE

COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL & RESTAURANT





Privately Owned, Exclusively Yours

Horton Grange Country House Hotel is an elegant and intimate Grade II listed Country House offering a distinctive mix of contemporary and traditional decor set in 4 acres of beautiful grounds in Northumberland. The House and grounds can be exclusively yours to provide the perfect venue for your perfect day!

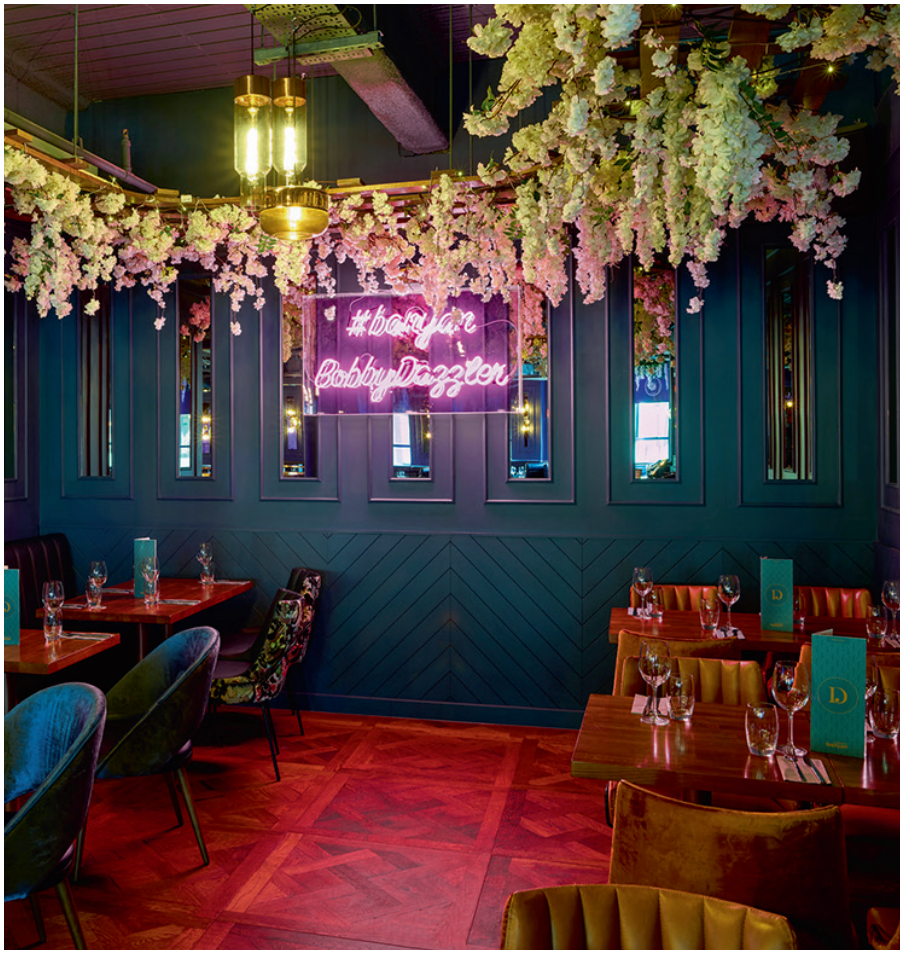
Your Fairytale wedding for £3,495

40 day & 80 evening guests. This fabulous offer includes exclusive venue hire, food & drinks for your guests and the Bridal Suite on the night of your wedding and it is available 7 days a week throughout 2019 on any dates we have left.

Wedding Open Evening

Visit our Wedding Open Evening on Thursday 20th June, 5:30-8pm (Free admission)

Horton Grange Hotel, Berwick Hill Road, Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6BU
T: (01661) 860686 **E:** events@hortongrange.co.uk **W:** www.hortongrange.co.uk









BANYAN BLOSSOMS IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

By Michael Grahamslaw

It hasn't taken long for Banyan Bar & Kitchen to put its stamp on Newcastle. Following a glittering launch event a few months ago, the venue has slotted seamlessly into the City's eating & drinking scene - all from its prime location in the heart of the city.

The venue, which occupies the former Jamie's Italian site, is at the centre of the shopping and socialising hub and offers quality, locally-sourced food alongside an inventive cocktail offering.

Banyan is the ninth venue in an independently-owned portfolio which also boasts successful ventures in Leeds, York and Harrogate whilst this new site is the first of its kind in the North East.

Hugely intrigued by this new concept, I took a few hours out of my working day to meet my son Jack, to assess whether this tree-inspired venue is one bearing fruit.

The action is split over two chic, spacious floors with food & drink available on both. We were sat in the main dining area downstairs whilst upstairs (which is also available for private functions) often opens up to accommodate busier weekend trade.

Visitors of Jamie's will note a stunning refit awash with rich tones of gold, teal and brown and characterised by exposed filament bulbs and a densely interwoven ceiling pattern. Upstairs, a sprawling pink neon tree feature makes for one of the city's most insta-worthy shots whilst downstairs, large windows afford views across monument and down Grey Street.

Banyan packs style in abundance then, but what of the food? And, the drink?

Well, Banyan offers over 30 cocktails – a heady mix of signature specialities and classic-inspired favourites. Jack chose the latter with a '64 Old Fashioned whilst I chose a Cuban Culture – Bacardi Cuatro shaken with Aperol, blood orange liqueur, lemon and sugar which brought a daydream of Havana to a drizzly day in the toon.

The kitchen is open from 10am daily with breakfast and brunch options available. Its main menu is a neat selection of starters, sharing platters, sandwiches, steaks, burgers, main plates and a choice of salads & 'powerbowls' – for the health-conscious diner.

To kick off, the Banyan platter offers much variety and is a great sharing starter. This included Bang Bang chicken skewers drizzled with satay sauce, fried baby squid, Japanese bread crumbed Brie wedges, crispy duck spring rolls, panko bread crumbed king prawns, beetroot houmous, vegetable crudités, marinated olives and warmed pitta bread.

Following on, Jack chose the 10 oz sirloin steak, done well here and served with handmade triple-cooked chips, crispy onions and a peppercorn sauce. I opted for the trademark Banyan skewers, paired with a warmed wrap, sweet chilli sauce and a house salad.

Other eye-catching plates included the Thai Red Curry, chicken spirelli, Geordie bangers & mash and the pan-fried chicken schnitzel. Dishes are internationally inspired and are sure to cater to a variety of appetites.

Though replete, we couldn't leave without sampling a sharing portion of "Geordie S'Mores" as recommended by the venue's super-friendly restaurant manager Emma. Toasted marshmallows and berry compote provided the filling in a marvellously decadent double chocolate cookie sandwich. We were also pleased to find a home on the menu for Di Meo's ice cream – Whitley Bay's "Champion of Champions" award-winning ice cream parlour.

It appears that Banyan offers everything you want from a modern, city-centre bar & kitchen; an eclectic menu, creative cocktails and super service. The Banyan tree has found its Northern roots.

For more information, visit arcinspirations.com/banyan-newcastle


Loganair
Scotland's Airline
Where next?
Now serving you on
Newcastle ⇄ Brussels
Business day-return schedules
and frequent flyer rewards
Book now at Loganair.co.uk
or via your business travel provider

A LITTLE BIT OF PEACE AND LOAF THIS FATHER'S DAY

Father's Day is fast approaching and it's time to start planning how you're going to spoil your Dad, the way he deserves. A new pair of socks and a tie are tried and tested favourites, but this year they're just not going to cut it. We have something that's sure to give your dad the peace he needs.

Nestled in the heart of Jesmond, Peace and Loaf offers a fine dining experience, serving up sensational, seasonal menus, prepared and designed with only the freshest and most locally sourced ingredients.

Owner of two AA Rosettes with a mention in the Michelin guide, Peace and Loaf creates meticulously crafted dishes inspired by classic British cuisine. With MasterChef: The Professionals finalist Dave Coulson at the helm, the restaurant boasts creative and fresh dishes which define quality fine dining.

And, to save you from any uncertainty as to where to take your amazing Dad for Father's Day this year, we'll let you in on a little secret…their renowned and unrivalled Sunday lunch will make an exclusive appearance this Fathering Sunday, 16th June – an opportunity not to be missed!

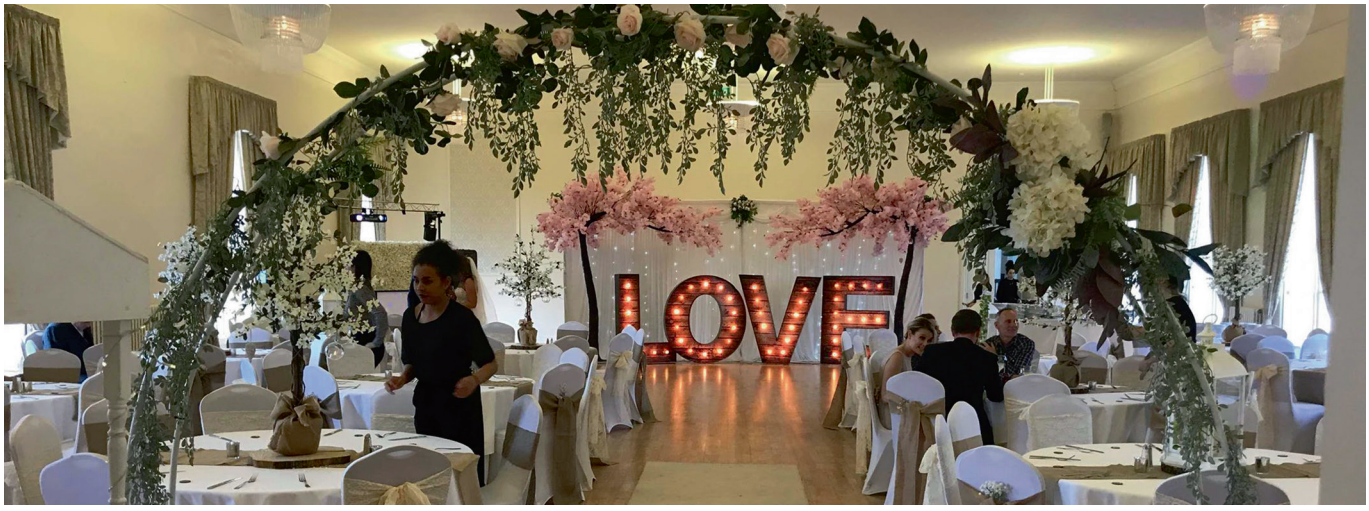
The Sunday roast, which has been Michelin recommended and recognised as one of the best in the UK by the Observer Food Monthly, is refined and elegant but doesn't skimp on any of the trimmings. A meticulously prepared celebration of traditional British fare served up to Dad on Fathering Sunday, will always be a winner. And, whilst he says he doesn't have favourites, we're pretty sure this will edge you to the top spot.



As always, tables are filling up fast so book now to avoid disappointment. To book, visit www.peaceandloaf.co.uk or alternatively call 0191 281 5222.

IT'S A SUMMER CELEBRATION

Grab the balloons, the cake and your best party outfit, we're heading to the Quayside Exchange!



It's summer, which can mean only one thing for the Quayside Exchange… it's officially wedding and party season! Set to play host to couples tying the knot, families gathering to celebrate milestones and babies brightening the venue for baby showers and christenings, the Quayside Exchange events team are hard at work to make sure that everything is perfect for every client's special day.

If it's almost your turn to say your vows and you're planning your wedding for next summer, then look no further than the Quayside Exchange. The Grade II listed building's interior is just as impressive as its exterior, with a number of gorgeous function rooms to suit every taste and wedding party size.

Not just a wedding destination, the Quayside Exchange is also the proud host to many a milestone and life event. The Vault Suite is complete with access to a riverside terrace, where you and your intimate party can relax in the sunshine and celebrate. Or, party the night away in the elegant Grand Room, boasting Georgian windows and stunning views over the River Wear. This room is sure to impress your guests, no matter whether you're hosting a party, a conference or a birthday celebration.

If summer has you eager to start planning your next special event, then the Quayside Exchange should definitely be at the top of your list.

For more information, give them a call on 0191 514 4574 or visit their website at www.quaysideexchange.co.uk

fratelli

ristorante ▪ bar ▪ café

Bell Villas, Ponteland, NE20 9BE

01661 872195

Sunday - Tuesday: 10am - 9pm
Wednesday: 10am - 930pm
Thursday - Saturday: 10am - 10pm

Hot drinks served from 10am
Food served from 12pm

fratelliponteland.co.uk

Find us on Facebook @fratelli.ponteland



TWO DIFFERENT TASTES OF ITALY



CICCHETTI BAR

SIGNOR PROSECCO

25 King Street
Quayside
NE1 3UQ

0191 2614415

Thursday: 5pm - 10pm
Friday - Saturday: 12pm - 12am

signorprosecco.co.uk

Find us on Facebook @signorprosecco

EVERYONE'S A CELEBRITY AT HARBOUR VIEW


Kim Tserkezie


Ray Laidlaw


Si King, Hairy Biker



Malcolm Mcdonald



Ant

Waseem Mir, manager of the award-winning Harbour View Restaurant in Seaton Sluice tells us why his fish and chips bring in the celebrities and how every customer, famous or not is given the very best in customer service.

"It's not unusual to see huge queues of customers lining up for their takeaway meal or having to wait for a table in our restaurant and myself and my team really appreciate that.

"Customer service is so important to us as we want to give the very best dining experience as well as the finest quality food every time a customer visits us. That is why we treat everyone like a celebrity. Everyone is important to us and we enjoy seeing familiar faces coming back week after week. Sometimes, we do get celebrities in and although we never make a fuss of them as we believe everyone should be allowed their privacy, it is great for our staff and customers to see them.

"Recently, we've hosted a visit from Ant Mcpartlin and his family for their Saturday night takeaway. He was lovely and took the time to chat to our customers while he was waiting for his cod and chips. We're delighted that he decided to visit us with his family. He even posed for a selfie with our staff member Sharon.

"Si King, one of the famous TV chefs from the Hairy Bikers dropped in for a takeaway too and when he saw that we were hosting a charity event for The Maritime Volunteer Service, he kindly took the time to say hello. Other regulars include Newcastle United legend Malcolm McDonald, ex Lindisfarne drummer Ray Laidlaw and actress and presenter Kim Tserkezie who now runs her own TV production company called Scattered Pictures. We've even recently had an Australian TV crew from National Geographic make a short documentary about us.

"We are very honoured that stars such as these pop in for their food but our real stars are the general public some of whom travel many miles for their award-winning fish and chips.

"We look forward to seeing you soon at The Harbour View. You never know who you might see there!"

The Harbour View, 1-3 Beresford Rd, Seaton Sluice, Whitley Bay NE26 4DR. www.the-harbour-view.com

BEADNELL TOWERS HOTEL AND THE TOWERS KITCHEN, BAR & TERRACE OPENING ITS DOORS AFTER COMPLETION OF £3M REFURBISHMENT PROJECT



Front: David Wilson, Beadnell Towers
Back row L-R :Matthew Flinders RMT, Ayden De Beer RMT, John Morse and Denis Frucot, Beadnell Towers

The popular and historic Beadnell Towers Hotel and Towers Kitchen, Bar and Terrace located on the Northumberland coast is set to throw open its doors after the completion of a £3m refurbishment.

With a welcoming bar and large open plan eating space, it's perfect for friends and family, not forgetting the four-legged variety. Go along for breakfast, drop into the bar for lunch, and stay for dinner; the Towers will be open all day, serving a seasonal menu of thoughtfully chosen local food and drink.

Beadnell Towers now features 18 individually-designed bedrooms, five of which are dog-friendly, and there are interlinking room options for the perfect family holiday.

Around 30 people have been recruited to work at the hotel, mostly from surrounding communities, and a further ten new jobs are expected to be created.

Denis Frucot was appointed last year as General Manager and has overseen the refurbishment of the venue.

Denis trained in France and has spent over 20 years managing some of the leading hotels in the UK; he brings a wealth of experience and expertise, while RMT Accountants & Business Advisors have worked with the management team on the financial aspects of the project.

The hotel, kitchen, bar and terrace is set for its official opening in June, although it is already welcoming its first guests and customers.

The team behind the refurbishment are local business partners David Wilson and John Morse.

John Morse says: "There is nothing quite like Beadnell Towers in the area. When the opportunity arose to buy it, it was clear The Towers had great potential and that encouraged us to acquire the building and set about bringing the property back to its former glory through this major refurbishment.

"Each of the bedrooms has been individually designed around these original features, while the bar and kitchen offer both formal and casual dining options, based around a modern British menu.

"We're very close to some of the country's best beaches and so have created a relaxed and informal bar which customers can feel welcome to visit straight from the sand without worrying about meeting any dress codes.

"We're very excited by what's been created over the previous 18 months, and it's especially pleasing to have had so much local support for the project.

"RMT is renowned for its work with some of the best-known names in the regional hospitality industry, and the insight that this experience has brought to this project has been extremely valuable."

Ayden De Beer at RMT Accountants adds: "It's been wonderful to see the management team's ideas for the new Beadnell Towers being realised over the last 18 months and they have created a fantastic venue that we're certain will quickly become hugely popular both within and outside the region."

For more information on Beadnell Towers and The Towers Kitchen, Bar and Terrace please visit www.beadnelltowers.com

WE CATER TO YOUR EVERY NEED...



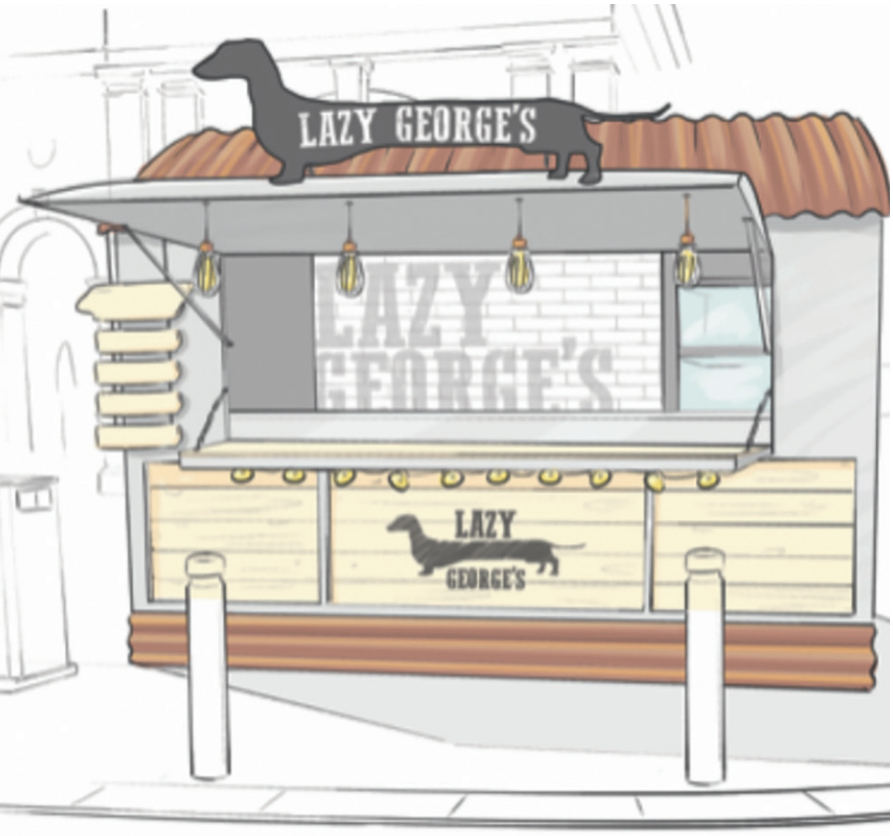
We are a family owned and managed company who together have over 25 years in the catering and manufacturing industry. Our hands on experience in the outdoor catering sector gives us great insight into the every changing needs of the mobile caterer.

We take time to listen to your needs and always go the extra mile to meet them. Your unit will be unique to you, visually and functionally. We will do all we can to help you stand out from the crowd and give you a head start in making your business a successful one.



We employ a loyal team of craftsmen who have many years of experience between them and our attention to detail is such that we see clients return to us time and time again. We manufacture bespoke catering units using high quality materials to a very high standard, at competitive prices.

Our customers include: • **Apartment group**
• **Ramside event catering** • **Angel of Corbridge**
• **Longhorns ...to name a few!**







CATERING UNITS

For further information contact CateringUnits.co.uk

Unit 28, Team Valley Business Centre, Team Valley, Gateshead NE11 0QH

Tel: 0845 5195065 **Email:** info@cateringunits.co.uk



THE PERFECT RETREAT FOR YOUR MEETING OR EVENT







Langley Castle

NORTH EAST HOTEL OF THE YEAR 2018

Langley Castle Hotel Langley-on-Tyne Hexham Northumberland NE47 5LU. T: 01434 688888 www.langleycastle.co.uk manager@langleycastle.com



TEA FOR TWO

By Michael Grahamslaw

Perhaps no dining experience reflects English gentility better than Afternoon Tea which makes Wynyard Hall Hotel the perfect venue.

Sir John Hall's 19th century stately pile oozes Victorian elegance and boasts a 2AA rosette Wellington Restaurant characterised by high ceilings, ornate cornicing, grand pianos and walls bathed in regal gold.

Inside the gentle murmur of conversation and clink of bone china creates a unique atmosphere whilst the Wynyard team have devised a menu which offers something to suit all tastes.

I pitched up recently with The Duchess (my wife Lisa) to review the experience.

After a warm welcome, we were seated in a prime window table which offers view across the hotel's surrounding greenery.

The offering includes a tantalising selection of finger-cut sandwiches, light fluffy scones, dainty cakes and savoury pastries.

The hotel has also partnered with luxury tea experts, Newby, who have helped created an extensive tea menu well beyond your typical English breakfast. Expect to find the likes of 'Silver Needle' white tea – a delicate, slightly creamy



drop from China's Fujian province – alongside Milk Oolong, Newby's premium tea, floral with a creamy caramel aroma. Many are loose leaf teas which make for a quaint, totally authentic experience.

What followed would be a tribute to three-tiered indulgence. Savoury treats include coronation chicken flatbread sandwiches, a farmhouse egg & cress brioche bun, a salmon & wye valley asparagus tarte and posh pork sausage roll.

Buttery scones arrived with a grand helping of jam and cream whilst a range of cakes and sweet pastries had been carefully crafted in-house by the hotel's team of patisseries.

All of this can of course be paired with a glass of fizz – with a choice of four available – for those looking for a true touch of luxury.

If like me, your tastebuds are more savoury, there's also the option of a Gentleman's afternoon tea which features a selection of sandwiches and savoury pastries. This included salted beef & pickle rye bread sandwiches, raised breed pork pies and a ham knuckle terrine. With the option to pair with a glass of single malt whisky, this was an inventive reworking of the classic formula.

It would appear then that the Wynyard team have got afternoon tea down to a fine art. A unique setting to sample this Great British past time.

For more information, visit www.wynyardhall.co.uk/dining



NEW NEW BENGAL

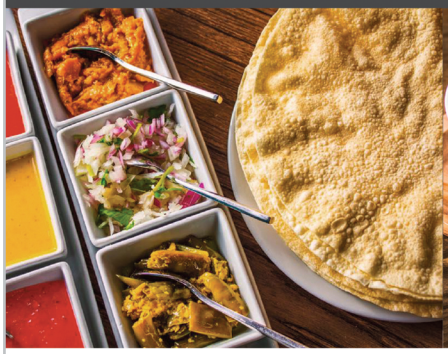
Indian food with attitude

Our menu is filled with some seriously tasty treats, from exceptional curry classics to unique and exclusive Indian dishes, partnered alongside an extensive selection of expertly chosen wines and locally brewed beers.

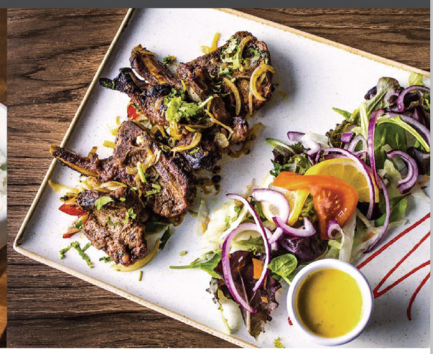
With great customer service at the heart of our ethos, the team at New New Bengal will remember you by name and serve your drinks and food just the way you like them.

NEW NEW BENGAL - *serving fine Indian cuisine for more than 30 years*

BOOK YOUR TABLE NOW







232 High Street, Gosforth, Newcastle, NE3 1HH • Telephone : 0191 284 1295 • Email : info@newnewbengal.com
www.newnewbengal.com







BUSINESS FACILITIES APLENTY AT HOLIDAY INN WASHINGTON

By Michael Grahamslaw

Having an important business pitch South of the Tyne early one morning, I decided to hole up for the evening at the Holiday Inn Washington. This longstanding North East Hotel has always been a firm favourite of mine and caters well for the discerning business traveller.

Of course belonging to a stable of impeccable credentials, the hotel offers both comfort and luxury and continues to go from strength to strength under the management of Paul Mandeir.

Located just a stone's throw away from the A1's junction 64, the hotel is easily navigated. In addition to being a prime County Durham outpost for meetings and events, the hotel offers deluxe accommodation perfect for those working away.

Eager to avoid the teatime rush, I'd got down there nice and early was pleased to find a host of business facilities on site. The 5th and 6th floor executive rooms are all tastefully furnished and are also very well equipped which enabled me to play out the remainder of my working day.

My room for the evening would include; a large writing desk, free high-speed internet, a flat-screen plasma TV, a comfy office desk chair, a modern-spec power shower and also enough tea and coffee to satisfy one media hack's latent caffeine addiction.

Thoroughly content, I beavered away for a highly productive couple of hours before deciding to grab a bite. The hotel's bar and lounge areas are open throughout the day and offer a relaxing space to enjoy a drink or light bite. The restaurant meanwhile offers diners a more upmarket option with some very reasonable dinner, bed and breakfast packages available for business travellers.

"Traders" the hotel's very own eatery is a lovely bright and airy dining room where guests can enjoy modern British cuisine alongside international comfort food favourites. You get the choice of both the a la carte and the lounge menu and guests are free to mix and match as they fancy.

This was classic hotel fayre at its very best and I was seemingly spoilt for choice, settling in the end on the Tandoori chicken salad followed up by the obligatory 8oz Sirloin steak with peppercorn sauce and all requisite fixtures and fittings. As I knew from experience, the food at the Holiday Inn is wholesome, tasty and wonderfully nourishing which was very much the case again here.

In addition, the service was incredibly friendly and attentive throughout. There's a great team ethic underpinning the whole place which is a real credit to Paul.

Totally replete, I retired back to my quarters to have a quick browse of the papers before settling down for a serene night's sleep.

The following morning, I practically leapt out of bed and bounded downstairs for an award-winning Holiday Inn breakfast. There's a broad selection of cooked items on the buffet alongside a range of continental classics, fresh baguettes and buttery pastries. Everything is uber-fresh and delicious and really provides a nice ballast for the day ahead.

Though it may not be your immediate choice, The Holiday Inn Washington has an awful lot going for it. If, like me, you're a travelling business executive or you're simply looking for a change of scene, this hotel is a quality outfit which cannot be overlooked.

www.hiwashingtonhotel.co.uk







From £119 per couple

Includes full access to our luxury spa facilities, an evening meal for two, plus bed & breakfast.

BOOK NOW USING **PROMO CODE 'HOT'** OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS.

WWW.THECAIRNCOLLECTION.CO.UK/STAY-DINE-SPA

Redworth Hall Hotel, Surtees Road, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 6NL | 01388 770600

MEET THE OWNER...



NICKY TUCKER

Owner, Eslington Villa



What were your career ambitions growing up?

Growing up I changed my mind a lot! At some stage I wanted to be a nursery nurse then a teacher but always had an interest in interior design. I knew I wanted to be successful and my favourite subject at school was business studies. Owning a hotel was never on the agenda though.

Tell us about your current role?

As many small business owners will tell you I wear many hats in this role and no two days are the same. Every day brings new challenges and opportunities.

Whether it's looking at marketing strategies, networking, meeting a bride and groom to be, designing a new bedroom and bathroom refurb, HR, or helping out in housekeeping. Wherever I am needed, I am there!

What are you currently working on?

Trying to raise the profile of the hotel as well as increasing wedding sales. I am busy planning a wedding showcase in June which will hopefully help.

Tell us about your team?

The majority of my team have been with us for years. They really are the best and one of the reasons for buying the hotel. I think our clientele would agree with me and the fact that they care about the customer experience makes my job easier.

What is the best piece of business advice you have been given?

Remember you'll always regret what you didn't do rather than what you did.

What advice would you give to your 18 year old self?

Confidence is everything! Stop comparing yourself; resist the urge to focus on your flaws and instead think about all of your redeeming qualities. Be confident in yourself – you got this girl!

How do you unwind outside of work?

I like to check out the competition (my excuse for eating out). Holidays are a big part of my life and I just love to escape to the sunshine. Luckily I have a few holidays planned for this year.

Favourite Book/TV

I could not choose between *A thousand splendid suns* and *the Kite Runner* both by Khaled Hosseini. Neither are light reading, they are extremely heart-wrenching from start to finish.

I love any TV about interior design/home renovation but have to admit to being hooked on Suits and Million Dollar Listing, New York and Los Angeles.

www.eslingtonvilla.co.uk



maldron HOTEL NEWCASTLE

MEETINGS MADE EASY





Meetings Made Easy at Maldron Hotel Newcastle

- 4* hotel with city centre location
- 4 air-conditioned meeting rooms, all with natural daylight
- Complimentary WiFi
- Dedicated break out area with bean to cup coffee machine
- Open-air courtyard
- Day delegate rates available from £23pp

maldron HOTELS

17 Newgate Street, Newcastle, NE1 5RE
+44 191 640 9500
events.newcastle@maldronhotels.com
maldronhotelnewcastle.com

mary ann rogers gallery

Rig and Furrow

an exhibition of new paintings by Mary Ann Rogers

Mon 24 June- Sunday 30 June •11am-5pm
(see website for preview details)

Vibrant wildlife and landscape
painting, prints, cards and luxury gifts

mary ann rogers gallery, West Woodburn, Hexham, Northumberland, NE48 2SE
(clearly signed from West Woodburn)

Please note, gallery now open mon, tues, thu, fri 10am-4pm also **every** Sunday 2-5pm

www.marogers.com • 01434 270216

LBK, THE GO-TO PLACE









Tucked among the imposing buildings on Newcastle's Queen Street is a business that is making a huge impact on the UK's hospitality business.

When you're in one of the North East's most stylish bars and you're excited about the stylish, quirky or downright elegant glass that your cocktail is served in then chances are its down to London Bar and Kitchen.

For leisure outlets which want the latest trends in bar and restaurant ware, LBK is their go-to place.

From its base on Newcastle's Quayside - and one in Watford serving the south - the company is widely recognised as being ahead of the game in terms of supplying everything that bars need to make a lasting impression on their customers.

It's no longer just about what you drink, it's the way it's served which has become equally important to leisure outlets if they want to ensure they keep a tight hold on their customers.

It's a fact recognised by Daniel Hoey of LBK, which is why his team work tirelessly to identify trends and to ensure that the company is widely known as the go-to supplier.

It's also why the company have tied up a range of exclusive deals with bar trade innovators and are able to provide equipment which adds a huge sense of theatre to the experience of buying a drink.

Think a system which instantly creates cocktails which arrive pouring out dry ice, a gun which imparts flavour into a drink and every conceivable shape of cocktail glass known to man.

Or how about a coffee machine that can imprint a photograph in the foam? Just some of the latest products that the company is able to offer.

According to Daniel, the third generation of the family-owned business, their success is down to the quality and variety of goods they offer, the unique products they can source and their competitive pricing.

"We are very aware of current trends and what our clients are likely to be asking about so we can anticipate and source stock," he said.

"We do extensive research about the product ranges and the fact that we have such a big showroom means our clients can actually come and see what is on offer."

The rise in interest in cooking from the general public has also seen the company cater for home chefs who want the best knives and elegant crockery to showcase the fruits of their labour.

In the professional world, the growth in interest in spirits such as gin has seen an increase in sales of "trees" which can house a number of glasses and make a real visual impact.

The same goes for the company's extensive cocktail ranges with everything from treasure chests to Tiki-inspired glassware.

"We pride ourselves of being ahead of the game and offering items that simply can't be found anywhere else," said Daniel.

For further information visit www.londonbarandkitchen.com www.lbk-ncl.co.uk LBK, Queen Street, Newcastle.


Hilton
NEWCASTLE GATESHEAD
Celebrating our most dynamic year yet.
100
YEARS OF
Hospitality
The 100th Year VIP Experience
EVENTS.NEWCASTLE@HILTON.COM
0191 490 9727







THE NORTHERN CHILDREN OF COURAGE AWARDS 2019, GATESHEAD HILTON

The event, brought by St. James's Place Charitable Foundation, hosted by Anna Foster to honour deserving young people in the North of England. There were 11 awards in total, split into two age groups, 12 and under and 13-17 year olds and a Team award.

Each award category winners story brought a tear to the eye along with a lot of inspiration through adversity.

Guests were entertained by Harpist Lizzie Higgins in the reception. In the main event there were dance act Ruff Diamond and the very talented 13 year old Amelia Saleh who performed 7 songs.

Thanks go to our award sponsors, Clarke Mairs LLP, Shiremoor Press Ltd, The Morpeth Practice, PSG Wealth Management, Pure Panel Management, Plus Group, Rutherford Cancer Care North East, Inspire Financial Management, Guthrie Financial Planning Services Ltd and St. James's Place Charitable Foundation.

A huge thank you to everyone who made this year's such a success, we look forward to seeing you all again next year.















Dan Aziz Photography


inspire:
Rutherford
PLUS
WINNER


inspire:
Rutherford
PLUS
WINNER






Rutherford
inspire:
PLUS
WINNER






Rutherford
WINNER


WINNER


inspire:
Rutherford
WINNER




inspire:
Rutherford
WINNER

MARCO PIERRE WHITE
STEAKHOUSE BAR & GRILL

SERIOUS ABOUT STEAK

Affordable glamour & understated elegance at Steakhouse Bar & Grill Newcastle



MARCO PIERRE WHITE
ESTD 1961

0191 300 9222 / INFO@MPWSTEAKHOUSENEWCASTLE.COM

MARCO PIERRE WHITE NEWCASTLE @MPWNEWCASTLE

WWW.MPWRESTAURANTS.COM



CREATING MOMENTS TO LAST A LIFETIME

At Matfen Hall, sophistication and serenity come together to create a truly elegant setting for your unique day.

It's the little things that make lasting memories, so we're here to take care of your finishing touches, from flower arrangements to car hire, music to mouth-watering delights.

Book an appointment with us and start dreaming up your wedding day.

Only at Matfen

CALL US ON 01661 886 500
OR DISCOVER MORE AT MATFENHALL.COM

Photography: **Sean Elliot Photography**

WEDDINGPHOBIA!

It is an actual thing and not to be confused with Gamophobia; the fear of commitment or the irrational fear of marriage.



Michelle Jones

Weddings can scare the living daylights out of people. As a guest we experience an element of wedding phobia; we all get to that phase in our life when we dread another invitation falling on the doormat, the average expense for an individual guest to participate in a wedding hit £500 in 2018! But the persistent, uncontrollable, irrational fear a couple can feel is significant; being on show, standing up in front of everyone but most relevant of all, the expectation that has developed over hundreds of years of tradition. So many people choose not to get married, granted some just don't believe in marriage but others? I have learnt over the years, it is not the act of marriage that concerns them, most people have lived as a married couple for years but have never made it 'official'. So, why not get married? It comes down to that one word 'wedding' and the connotations it throws up plus all that expense, time, stress and effort, so they give way to the fear and say they'll do it in a few years or it's not for them or the times not right.

I have planned weddings for many years with a diverse collection of amazing clients, some of which came to the planning of their wedding after many moons together following years of discussion, to wed or not to wed. I also plan weddings for couples facing terminal illness, couples who have always wanted to get married but never had the 'wedding' but in facing the knowledge they will part wish to be tied together forever.

I meet many people with weddingphobia quite often, they like the idea of marriage but aren't keen on the wedding bit. Marriage is a mindset and is not for all but for most of us we wish to be legally bound to our partner in the act of marriage, however, many struggle with that huge hurdle. So, let's remove the 'wedding'. We live in an abundant era, so much choice and versatility that we can create our own story exactly how we wish. As a wedding planner I constantly bring people back to the ceremony, this is the 'wedding' and the element that bonds you in marriage. The ceremony is the only element you require along with a couple of witnesses and a registrar/priest. The rest of the day or period following doesn't have to be a huge traditional celebration or change who you are for that day or be this big show and display in front of everyone you know. Although I am doing myself out of a job here, you can literally get married in your lunch hour, kiss and hop off together into the sunset to enjoy your happily ever after. Want the big shebang but hate the thought of it, again remove the wedding tag, filter the word wedding from your thoughts and create your union exactly how you wish to celebrate it. Forget what is expected and forget about tradition; go forth and make your own wedding rule book and dissolve the fear.



The Thomas's Wedding - their way!

07751564684 michelle@mjweddingplanner.co.uk www.mjweddingplanner.co.uk



STEPHENSON

PERSONALISED TAILORING FOR MEN

Experience the art of luxury
made-to-measure tailoring
in heart of Newcastle

What ever your sartorial style
our Savile Row experience,
will enable us together,
to create your perfect
tailored garment

Book an apointment today

607 BAMBURGH HOUSE
MARKET STREET
NEWCASTLE
NE1 6BH

07495 645 345
WWW.STEPHENSON.ES
GREG@STEPHENSON.ES

Dytham JEWELLERY DESIGNERS

PROPOSE
WITH A RING
LIKE NO
OTHER



WWW.DYTHAMJEWELLERY.CO.UK

0191 253 1043 info@dythamjewellery.co.uk 15 Front Street, Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, NE25 8AQ

IT'S GETTING HOT IN HERE!

Warmer weather and longer daylight hours often means the thought of attending a stuffy gym becomes further and further from your mind – it's around now that panic sets in about looking good for your holiday.



David Fairlamb

Has all the resolutions, gym work and sensible eating that you promised yourself through the winter paid off or has it come down to a last minute focus?

This will ring true for many people, however the good news is, it's never to late to make changes and look good for your holiday. Here are a few ideas to get you motivated and scorch some calories in the great outdoors:

Stairs – find some steep outdoor stairs and after a good warm up - power up or quick walk, depending on your fitness level and walk down as a recovery. Repeat 6 – 12 times. A brilliant heart rate and fat burner workout.

Beach/Grass sprints – Try to find a flat joint friendly surface with a bit of give eg beach or grass. Mark around 40-80 metres and after a decent warm up, work on your speed with short sharp sprints, walk back as you recover. Look to complete 10-20 times.

Lamp posts – Seek a good route that has regular lamp posts, focus on your speed and technique for two lamp posts, followed by a slow jog for four. This type of training keeps your heart rate high throughout the session and as you never fully recover between the sprints is excellent for endurance as well.

Paddle Boarding – A great form of exercise and is becoming more and more popular. This is excellent for increasing core strength, balance and is surprisingly tough on your breathing when you really go for it! Of course being out on the water also gives you a great sense of freedom and will leave you invigorated.

Beach Bootcamp – My Tynemouth, Beach Bootcamps are hugely popular and cater for all, ages, sizes and levels of fitness. There is no competition with anything we do as everything is geared on a set time, therefore you can work as hard as you feel. Of course the sheer beauty of Tynemouth, Longsands makes it one of the best places to train in the North East.

Exercising outdoors makes you feel fantastic as it boosts your levels of the feel good brain chemical serotonin, giving you more energy and motivation. Studies also show those who train outdoors workout for longer. Factors such as varied terrain and wind resistance also play a part in improving your fitness and burning more calories.

With the North East boasting some of the most beautiful, beaches, country side and parks in the country, you are spoilt for choice for new places to train and supercharge your metabolism leading up to your holiday.

DAVID'S SUMMING UP

We are so lucky to have so many beautiful places to train in the North East - feel invigorated by training outside and scorch a load of calories. It's never too late to make changes to look and feel fantastic on holiday this summer.

www.davidfairlambfitness.co.uk

DURHAM CRICKET T20 BLAST 2019 FIXTURES

Friday, July 19:
Durham Cricket v Northants Steelbacks

Wednesday, July 31:
Durham Cricket v Leicestershire Foxes

Friday, August 2:
Durham Cricket v Lancashire Lightning

Sunday, August 11:
Durham Cricket v Notts Outlaws

Thursday, August 15:
Durham Cricket v Worcestershire Rapids

Friday, August 23:
Durham Cricket v Yorkshire Vikings

Tuesday, August 27:
Durham Cricket v Birmingham Bears

GET YOUR BLAST TICKETS FOR 2019

BY VISITING DURHAMCRICKET.CO.UK OR CALLING THE BOX OFFICE ON 0844 499 4466.

HIGH HEELS AND BACK PAIN – THE HIDDEN OFFICE EPIDEMIC!

By Claire Hawes, Director and Osteopath



As musculoskeletal specialists, osteopaths are trained to assess the biomechanics and structure of the body and give feedback as to the potential causes of back pain as well as provide a diagnosis.

In reality the cause of back pain is often elusive, the case history and assessment of the structure and function of the body give us some clues as to what is contributing to the picture and there are usually multiple factors from the more recent history of a person, right through to their birth. However, there is one common factor that I come up against regularly with a fair proportion of my business clients - high heels! This footwear item is a fashion and power statement with 31% of women wearing them for work daily (in the US). The Spine Institute reports that heel wearing has decreased by 20% from the mid 80's to the mid noughties, but it is still a common footwear item for 49% of 18-29 year olds who wear them every day.

For some of the ladies who enter my office for treatment for their lower back or neck pain, the evidence that their shoe choice has on their spines and the rest of their body's is quite clear. Although as mentioned there are often other contributing factors such as a sedentary and desk-based occupation which simply adds the postural problems which result from footwear. But why is it that when these ladies leave knowing that their shoes are contributing to their spinal problems, are they still reluctant to change their footwear? The reality is the answer is complex, but there are factors such as self esteem and confidence of which feelings can be enhanced by what we choose to wear.

Here's the science bit. When we wear shoes which are raised at the heel we must compensate for the shift forward that our weightbearing would encounter – and we compensate for that by having to pull ourselves backwards. This means that our lovely lower back curve is greatly exaggerated, because if it didn't, we'd just fall forwards, we also push our chest out to help balance this shift in weightbearing. Added to this compensation for forward weightbearing, we have the tightening of the dreaded hip flexors (my clients will often hear about these). These muscles adapt (as all of our body does) to the predominant postural strains we put on them. When we are sat at our desks all day long, these muscles become shortened effectively pulling our lower backs forwards and down when we stand up – the same strain which results from wearing heels – so we can't get away from the fact that office work and high heels are a bit of a problem for our spines.

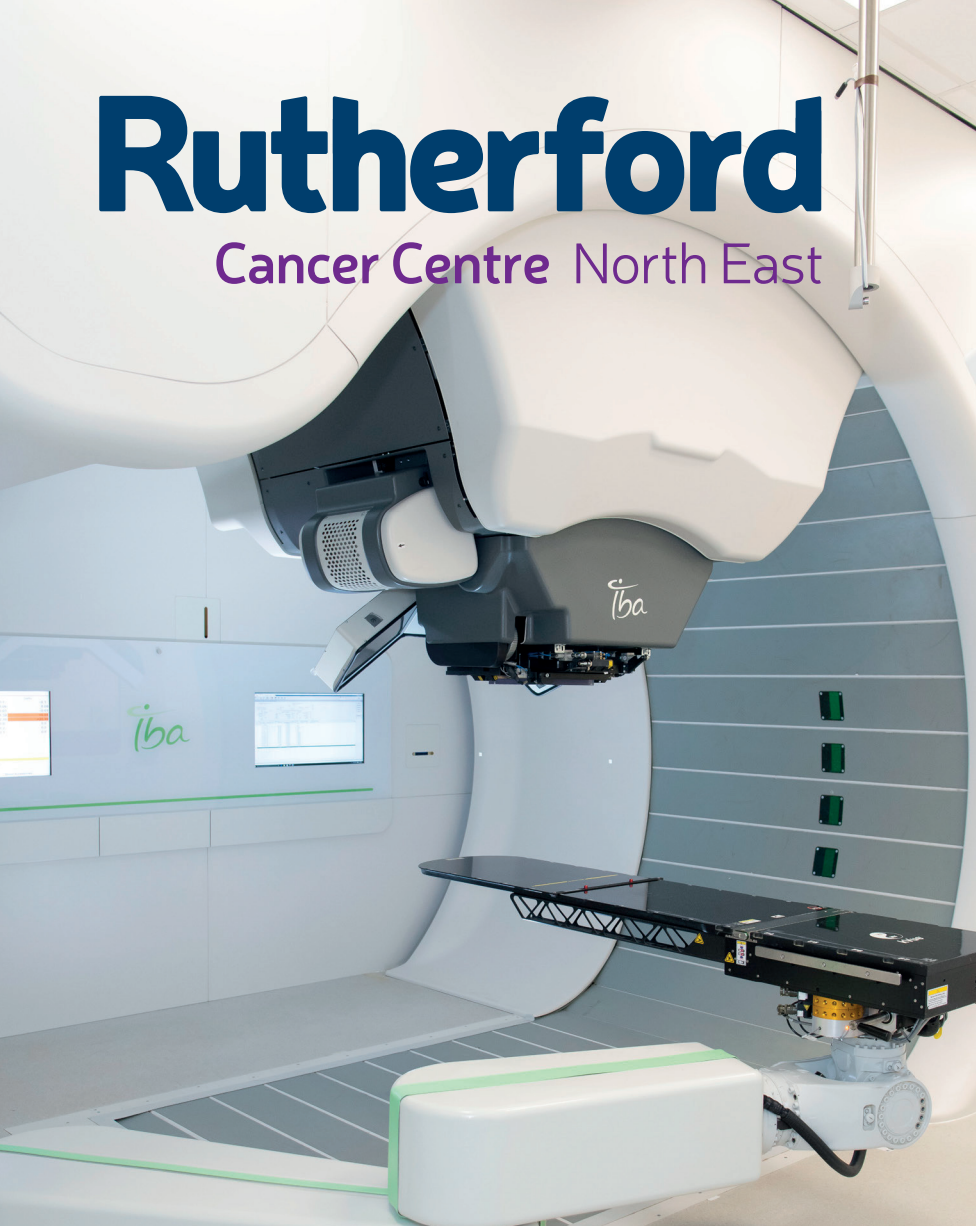
If you really want to wear heels for work, then here are some tips:

- Choose an inch lower when you buy new ones – higher the heel, the more the compensation.
- Choose a wider heel – stilettos are the worst, more surface area causes less pressure.
- Make sure you do Pilates or yoga regularly to align your body and relax muscles.
- Can you wear heels less often? Flats for the office, heels for meetings?
- Walk in your breaks preferably in flats to loosen up your joints and muscles.
- Have your spine and posture assessed by an osteopath – that way problems can be spotted earlier!

Claire Hawes, osteopath and senior musculoskeletal practitoner can be seen at Back to Balance, Newcastle Business Park, call 01914661441 for appointments (evenings available), £10 off initial consultation when you mention this article at booking. www.back-to-balance.co.uk

Rutherford

Cancer Centre North East









TRANSFORMING CANCER CARE.

The first high energy proton therapy centre in the North East, now open for referrals.

The Rutherford Cancer Centre North East, situated in the Earth Balance site in Northumberland provides a full range of oncology services, including high energy proton therapy.

proton therapy | radiotherapy | chemotherapy | immuontherapy | MRI diagnostic imaging | supporitve care

For further information

0800 210 0402

therutherford.com

ON THE TEE BOX - TYNEMOUTH GOLF CLUB





Setting - Spital Dene, Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear, NE30 2ER United Kingdom

Length of Course - 18 hole, par 70, (White tees - 6,183 yard) designed by Willie Park in 1913.

Course Type - Parkland

Facilities - 18 holes, Practice Range, Putting Green, Chipping/Bunker Practice area, Restaurant, Bar, Buggy Hire, Golf Shop, Function Room (for hire), Changing rooms with showers etc.

Longest Drive - Par 5, 8th hole

Toughest Hole - 12th Hole 547 Par 5

Signature Hole - 4th Over the ravine

Competitions - Monday, Seniors Comps. Tuesday, Ladies Comps. Wednesday, Mixed Gender Stablefords. Friday, Juniors and Corporate/Charity Days. Saturday, Mens Competition. Sunday Mixed Gender Comps and Social Golf.

Prices - Range from £30 peak to £15 off-peak times for 18 holes. £16 - £10 for 9 holes

Membership - £739 for a "Full Membership" plus there are other options including a "Flexible Membership" from £242, "Intermediate Membership (21-29) from £264, "Junior Membership" from £99.

A Word from the Pro...

Tynemouth is a relatively flat par 70 course. The distinguishing feature being a ravine through the centre of the course which comes into play on 11 of the holes on the course. There are some tricky holes, with the toughest arguably being the 547yd par 5 twelfth. The fairway narrows at about 240 yards from the tee, demanding accuracy from the big hitters. Overall Tynemouth provides a good test for players of varying golfing ability.

Contact Details – Paul Whittaker, Manager. Phone:- 0191 257 4578. Email:- secretary@tynemouthgolfclub.com


REVLON
COMING SOON
SO BEAUTIFUL Hair
BOUTIQUE BEAUTY SALON GOSFORTH
Chair rentals available, flexible terms and conditions.
For more information and all enquires please contact
Sarah or Amanda on 0191 284 7733 or 0191 213 1111
Join the SO Beautiful team
Unit 1A The Old Globe Theatre 6 Salters Road Gosforth Newcastle NE3 1DJ



DAVID'S GOT THE FIT FACTOR

You may assume that fitness trainers are a similar bunch. It doesn't matter whether they're standing in front of a room full of people or working as a personal trainer, surely they all do the same thing.

Wow....how wrong you are.

You discover that major error of judgement as soon as you begin having a chat with David Fairlamb. To say he's enthusiastic about fitness is arguably the biggest understatement going.

David has been a personal trainer for over 20 years and sort of fell into it by accident when some of his friends, fellow students and teammates spotted that he's got a talent for devising interesting and effective training regimes.

"I played rugby union at school and also did well as an 800 metre runner." said David. "I did so well that I was awarded a scholarship to attend Long Beach Academy in California. It was fantastic. The outdoor life and the warm, sunny weather really suited me because I've always enjoyed outdoor activity. The only snag was that I picked up a back injury which meant i couldn't compete at the very top level. I had to adjust my training routine and suddenly discovered that people liked to join in. Before I knew it I had a crowd of people following my instructions."

Consequently, when David returned to the UK, he decided to keep the personal trainer idea going.

And he's blossomed.

He would initially do one-to-one sessions with a client on only a couple of days per week, but things steadily grew. It has now reached the stage where he has three private personal training gyms and eight trainers working with him. Last year he built the UK's only private, self-contained, floodlit outdoor gym. He's even got his own range of fitness clothing.

One of David's most successful ventures is his Beach Boot Camps which he runs on Tynemouth's Longsands beach. There are five sessions every week, although by far the biggest is between 9 - 9.45 on a Saturday morning when he has a huge turnout every week.

However, David isn't just about keeping people fit via regular exercise, he has also devised various campaigns to help educate people about what is good...and bad...for your body.

One of his most successful campaigns is called Sugar Clean Lean.

"This campaign has been running for over 15 years and the results have been staggering," said David. "We all eat far too much sugar. Sometimes we don't know we're doing it because it's hidden in various products and I believe it's the number one factor behind obesity. I've written well over 500 articles for newspapers and magazines and have appeared on numerous TV and radio shows, all talking about Sugar Clean Lean. I try to educate people in a fun and informative way. This has led me to undertaking motivational talks with local companies and organisations such as MuckleLLP, Stantec, Northumberland Water, Flowserve, Northumberland and North Tyneside Councils. Companies and local authorities are keen to ensure that they have a fit workforce but, more importantly, a workforce that is educated and can control their health and wellbeing including of course their sugar intake."

There's no stopping him. In 2011 he set up The Great North Fitness Revolution whereby people had to make a pledge to change a couple of things in their daily life and over time the cumulative results could transform their lives. It sounds simple but can take a lot of willpower to make that change. His scheme has been so successful that it received praise from the government Health Minister, Andrew Lansley as a step forward in the health of the nation.

He also set himself a challenge. As part of the Great North Fitness revolution he launched a campaign to take eight people and promised to change their lives within twelve weeks, he called it the Fit Factor. He had over 600 applicants but eventually whittled it down to eight.

"Some of them were on the point of going into hospital for a gastric band operation. They were desperate to lose weight. They all followed my Sugar Clean Lean programme and I'm delighted to say they all lost a considerable amount of weight. Overall, the group lost a total of 32 stones and all of those who were booked in to have a gastric band fitted, cancelled their operations."

In other words, David Fairlamb knows what he's talking about and he's got the success stories to back up the facts.

He took the success of the Fit Factor into his own business and runs similar six week body transformation groups throughout the year and has over 100 people enrolled. All sessions are conducted with a maximum of seven people. It is non-competitive; people are merely encouraged to do whatever they can. However, everything is monitored. All clients are given a food diary and receive a body composition analysis assessment every two weeks

"It's a medical self-help process really," said David. "I encourage a healthy lifestyle and try to educate people into how to consistently look after themselves. I'm even doing cookery classes to show clients how to make delicious, healthy meals. I'd also like to see the national curriculum include topics on wellness, health and weight control."

There really is no stopping David Fairlamb.

If you'd like to get involved and see how your life can be transformed log onto www.davidfairlambfitness.co.uk
You can email David at: info.dffitness@gmail.com or call him: 07713640899
You can follow him on Twitter: DF_Fitness, Instagram: davidfairlamb_Fitness and Facebook: davidfairlambfitness







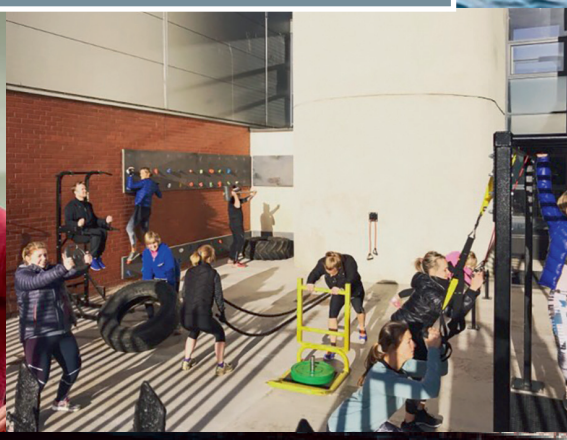
David will be speaking at our Business Lunch Club on September 16th, 2019.

For booking information contact Linda Hitman on linda@exclusivebusiness.net or Michael Grahamslaw on mjgrahamslaw@outlook.com
www.exclusivebusiness.net

INSPIRING CONVERSATION & CONNECTIONS OVER A FINE LUNCH WITH EXCLUSIVE BUSINESS & NORTHERN INSIGHT















GOLF DAY RAISES £4620 FOR INJURED JOCKEYS FUND

A charity golf day hosted by Sir AP McCoy OBE at Rockliffe Hall on Monday 29th April, raised £4620 for the Injured Jockeys Fund.

Alan Shearer CBE, Sean Quinlan and Andrew Thornton were among some of the golfers taking part in the event, which was won with an impressive 103 points by Graeme Preston, Ryan Thompson, Phil Martin and Malcolm Walker from the Brian Ellison Racing Club in Malton, North Yorkshire.

Jack Berry MBE, Vice President of the Injured Jockeys Fund, also attended the event and a number of former jockeys who have benefited from the charity took part.

The Injured Jockeys Fund was founded following the devastating accidents of Tim Brookshaw and, a few months later, Paddy Farrell in the 1964 Grand National. Both falls resulted in severe paralysis which immediately ended their careers. The Injured Jockeys Fund has since spent over £18 million in helping over one thousand jockeys whose injuries have forced them to give up riding – providing care, compassion and financial help.

Twenty teams of 4 competed with Gary Welford and Alan Midgley winning Nearest the Pin, Alain Cawley winning Longest Drive and only 7 players beating the Pro.

Guests enjoyed a two course dinner in the evening and a raffle took place to raise additional funds for the Injured Jockeys fund, with prizes including an overnight stay with dinner, spa treatments and a round of golf, Spa Days and Afternoon Teas at Rockliffe Hall, plus a 1/12th share in a horse from Hambleton Racing.

Eamonn Elliott, Chief Executive at Rockliffe Hall, says: "The Injured Jockeys Fund Golf Day was a huge success. The sun shone for us and everyone had a fantastic day while raising much needed funds for a very worthy cause. It was a pleasure to host this important event with so many big names taking part."

www.rockliffehall.com












ROCKLIFFE HALL









HIGH GOSFORTH PARK IS RACING AHEAD

Did you know that Newcastle Racecourse is home to the world's first and only all-weather, totally floodlit, straight mile horse racing track.

Use that at the next pub quiz.

It's one of the reasons the popularity of Newcastle Racecourse with owners and trainers has increased dramatically since the all-weather track was unveiled three years ago. It was the first all-weather track to open in the North of England. Naturally, that means there are more races and therefore more chances for folk to go along to High Gosforth Park and enjoy a cracking day or evening out.

The all-weather track sits alongside the traditional turf track. The jumps course remain unchanged, meaning that Newcastle can now host racing in just about any sort of conditions the British weather wants to throw at it.

Put it this way, in January of this year, there were eleven meetings… three over the traditional jumps course and eight on the new all-weather track. The majority of the all-weather meetings take place in the evening and, thanks to the magnificent floodlighting, is a terrific spectacle.

Leading from the front are Executive Director David Williamson and General Manager Paul Elliott.

Paul is one of those invaluable people to have at any business for the simple reason that he's done a wide variety of jobs at the same place.

"While I was in 6th form at school and then when I was a student at Northumbria University, I used to work part time at Newcastle Racecourse in the events section," said Paul. "I can tell the current staff how to set out tables, because I've done it. I can tell them how to serve drinks and then tidy up after something like a wedding or craft fair, because I've done it. However, what all of that experience gave me was an insight into what went on face-to-face with the general public, but also how these happen behind the scenes."

Paul left university and rather going straight into a career, took a year out to do some travelling. He went to Australia.

"I'm a keen cricketer, I still play for Morpeth as a spin bowler, and played a load of games in Perth. It was great fun but, all good things come to an end….bit like my spending money… so it was time to return home. I spotted a job at Newcastle Racecourse as Events Supervisor. I applied and was successful."

Paul has now been at High Gosforth Park for thirteen years and has graduated through the parent company's racing development programme. He became Operations Supervisor, then Operations Manager and finally to his current role as General Manager.

He's busy, not only on race days, but also with numerous events like weddings, craft fairs, conferences, business seminars and even student events. Christmas parties are an extremely hectic time for everyone at the course bearing in mind that there are also six race days to organise in December.

The increased success of Newcastle Racecourse in recent years, plus backing from the course's owners, the Arena Racing Company (which also owns courses at the likes of Doncaster, Windsor, Bath, Chepstow, Brighton and locally at Sedgefield) means that developments are in the pipeline.

"Now that we have our all-weather track, it's time to invest in the facilities which the general public use when they come to Newcastle Racecourse," added Paul. "All of the buildings, bars, restaurants, conference facilities and public areas will be updated over the next year or so. It will mean the raceday experience will be even better and allow us to expand our conference and events business."

But of course, Newcastle Racecourse will still really be about one thing. Horse racing.

The Northumberland Plate meeting is coming up on the rails…27th - 29th of June. It's not only the highlight of the racing calendar in the North East, it's one of the biggest and most important racing events on the UK racing calendar. This year's Plate Day promises to be bigger than ever thanks to Madness appearing later in the evening.

When it comes to a massive splash of glamour, nothing beats Ladies Day (Saturday 27th July). Almost 20,000 'beautiful people' will be there to enjoy what is not only a wonderful social occasion but also a cracking day of racing.

And then, on Saturday 30th November, some of the best horses across the UK and Ireland will be at Newcastle for the Fighting Fifth Hurdle. The last two years has seen the race won by Buveur d'Air, who has twice won the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham.

Tickets and hospitality packages are available for all of these meetings plus of course any of the other racedays and evenings.

Paul and one of his team will soon get you racing.

For more information go to their website www.newcastle-racecourse.co.uk or give them a call on 0191 236 2020.



Paul Elliott

COMMENT WITH...

Barry Speker

barry.speker@sintons.co.uk



I had the pleasure of attending a recent Citizenship Ceremony for 47 new British Citizens at Newcastle Civic Centre. This was together with Councillor David Cook, the Sheriff of the City and preparing to be the new Lord Mayor.

We had a discussion about special events occurring in his tenure and I reminded him that 2019 will mark the 50th anniversary of Newcastle United's last silverware, the momentous Fairs Cup win in 1969. Although David being from Sheffield was a Blades fan, he became a follower of the Magpies on arriving at Newcastle University in the 60s - and we shared that we were both at the 1969 Final against Ujpest Dozsa.

What a great opportunity for David to announce a momentous commemoration in the City and to celebrate what very good memories Newcastle United supporters need to remember winning anything. "Twas the Summer of '69".

Hidden away in Jesmond Road East is the wonderful new Hancock Gallery where you will find a remarkable exhibition of the works of Alexander Millar. He is of course one of the UK's most celebrated contemporary impressionists.

On display are many pieces not seen before, paintings of his famous old gadgies, sculptures and his remarkable portrayals of the Peaky Blinders; not to mention the stunning portrait of Michael Jackson. Well worth a visit.

A great coup for the area in the announcement that the British Masters Golf Championship is returning to Close House in 2020. Well done Graham Wylie and Lee Westwood for bringing this off. It was a fantastic success here in 2017 and this should be an encouragement to have more national events staged in the north east. Incidentally, why did the Turner Prize not return?

Very sad news of the death of Doris Day at the age of 97. She was married four times but had only one child. However this was sufficient for her to be able to offer some sage advice on parenting: "Wrinkles are hereditary. Parents get them from their children".

This year's Fickling Lecture in the Newcastle University Insights series featured Dr Henry Marsh, Neurosurgeon and author. His book 'Do No Harm: Stories of Life, Death and Brain Surgery' is an international best seller and has been translated into 34 languages. Copies of his latest book 'Admissions' were Ali's available for signature.

Dr Marsh gave an amazing insight into the complexity and often unscientific processes as well as his insight and compassion in life and death operations and how to deal with some tragic outcomes.

Credit to Israel in hosting a stunning Eurovision Song Contest in Tel Aviv, the 64th annual competition. 41 countries have participated in an event which, although regarded by many with derision and cynicism, is an opportunity for widespread international bonhomie and good natured competition despite some dubious partisan voting.

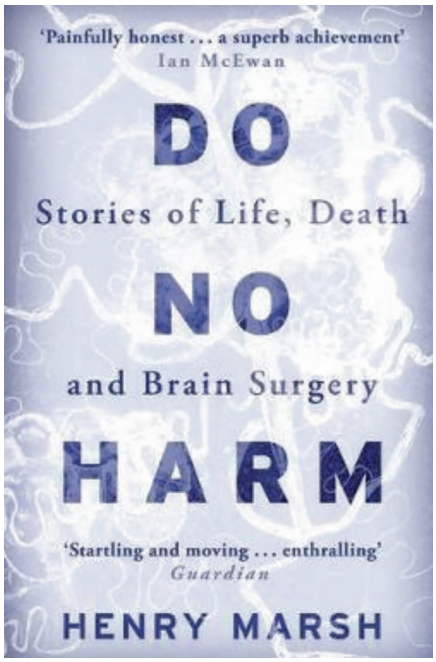
It was reassuring that the usual suspects who want to ban Israel from everything failed in their attempts. Madonna resisted all attempts to dissuade her from being there to perform her new single 'Future'. A more catchy headline might have been 'Madonna returns to Bethlehem'.

Vegans are now claiming to be the latest victims of discrimination and persecution. They may be in line for specific protection. Perhaps a new European Directive is due, and such Directives appear likely to affect us for some time. Veganism may be the recommended lifestyle for all, to reduce cancer, heart disease, lowering carbon emissions by reducing meat production and consumption, alleviating animal cruelty and generally saving the environment, the world if not the universe.

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church 150 years ago stressed abstinence from alcohol, tobacco and meat. Leo Tolstoy espoused vegetarianism in his quest for godliness and asceticism.

We may all need to learn the new language - veganaise, aquafaba, seitan and sosage, and develop a liking for a Buddha Bowl. Or am I being veganaphobic?

> ***"...Wrinkles are hereditary. Parents get them from their children..."***









NEWCASTLE UNITED GOLF CLUB

Affordable Golf in the heart of Newcastle

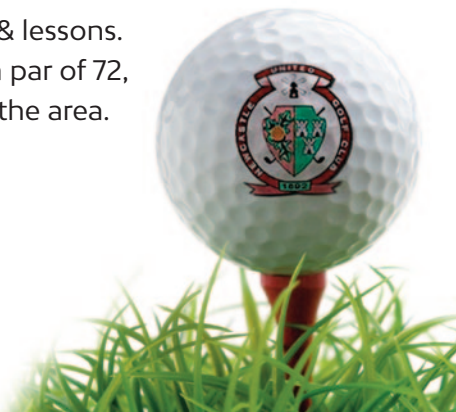




SUMMER GOLF MEMBERSHIP AVAILABLE WITH FULL PLAYING RIGHTS.

It's YOUR local club - beautifully situated only 5 minutes drive from the city centre on the Town Moor. Newcastle United Golf Club is regarded as one of the premier clubs in the area.

A great course with a warm, friendly welcome and a superb clubhouse, club shop & lessons. The mature course measures just over 6,600 yards from the medal tees and with a par of 72, the course is a joy for beginners and pros alike on some of the longest par fives in the area. If you want to take up golf or get back into playing, we're the club for you.



Please call **0191 286 9998**

or email **info@newcastleunitedgolfclub.co.uk**

KARPET MILLS

THE NORTH EAST'S NUMBER ONE

QUALITY CARPET & FLOORING RETAILER

- BESPOKE DESIGN & PLANNING
- FAMOUS LUXURY BRANDS
- TRUSTED EXPERT ADVICE
- SPECIALIST FITTING SERVICE

"Visit us for good old fashioned service, the very latest products and lowest prices... guaranteed"



Joel Dickinson,
Director, 6th Generation

Kingston Park	Gateshead	Hetton-le-Hole	Hexham	Benton - NEW
8b Airport Ind Est	Tyne Bridge Retail Park	1-5 Market Street	43 Gilesgate	2a North Tyne Ind Est,
NE3 2EF	NE8 1EJ	DH5 9DZ	NE46 3QB	NE12 9SZ
Tel: 0191 271 6576	Tel: 0191 478 3049	Tel: 0191 526 1770	Tel: 01434 600 100	Tel: 0191 259 9662

www.karpetmills.co.uk

ulster carpets www.ulstercarpets.com | alternative flooring | HUGH MACKAY carpets | moduleo Design Floors | Creative Floorcoverings & Rugs by CRUCIAL TRADING | Brintons | Axminster carpets Beautiful British Design | Cormar CARPETS