



# Insight

magazine

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The Journal of the

**WARRINGTON** CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

*in association with*  
**VALE ROYAL**  
The heart of Cheshire



# Local firm fly in to top three percent of UK security companies



**FAMILY-run security firm, CDX Security Group recently landed a spot in the top three percent of the sector's UK firms, following a successful audit from the Security Industry Authority (SIA).**

The Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS), commissioned by the SIA, aims to protect the public and employees within the security industry through a framework that sets, improves, and monitors operating standards. Firms are marked against seven criteria and must consistently demonstrate excellent service delivery and sound business management.

Warrington-based CDX Security

Group, who have been in operation since 2012, demonstrated excellent levels of compliance in all areas and scored an impressive 131 points out of 145, placing them in the UK's top three percent security firms, a two percent increase on their 2021 result. The audit included interviews with key senior team members, front line security teams and customers to understand the processes and procedures in place and to gather any feedback.

Elliot Roddy, Group Operations Director at the firm, said of their recent success: "We've continued to work really hard to ensure our working practices are second to

none, and to gain a 2% advantage on our 2021 audit is fantastic news for CDX and our customers."

"We pride ourselves on the standards of our team and our company values, and achieving these scores is testament to the team's dedication to CDX. With the launch of CDX Aviation, fantastic audit results and a win at the Warrington Business Awards all achieved in 2022, we're looking forward to what 2023 has in store."

Areas of good practice highlighted in the audit included the internal audit procedure put in place by CDX Security Group to score themselves against the ACS

standards, any scores below the highest mark are identified and improvements outlined, their community initiatives for promoting careers in the security industry via local schools were also highlighted by the audit.

CDX Security Group was founded in 2012 and is a family run business based in Birchwood, Warrington. They recently launched their Aviation service focussed on airport security and related services and were successfully announced as Large Business of the Year at the Warrington Business Awards this October.

## Decorated shoes help homeless put best foot forward with mental health

A GROUP of homeless people in Warrington are choosing to express themselves through the power of art and creativity.

Residents at The Salvation Army's Lifehouse (hostel) in Warrington have picked up their paint brushes, and unintentionally also their confidence, and have created a range of decorated shoes in a bid to boost their mental health, using art as therapy.

James Lee House, located on Brick Street within the town, has a strong programme of activities for its residents, all with a creative spin following research that art has therapeutic benefits. The art sessions also allow residents to develop their strengths, believe in themselves and strive to release their potential in everything they choose to take part in.

Assistant Support Worker Debbie Lyon, who is also a freelance art teacher and is behind the idea said: "We wanted to create a

positive activity that allowed residents to explore their creativity and escape their experiences whilst also having fun at the same time.

"Every pair of shoes has a story to tell, they have changed people's lives in some way and have been a part of someone's story at one point. Some may have belonged to refugees, business workers, single parents or children and might have been one step away from finding themselves in landfill but we have stopped that, recycling them and using them as a positive outlet to boost mental health which is so important for everyone, especially those that have experienced such crisis in their lives as homelessness."

The residents are decorating the shoes to tie in with major events such as The Queen's Jubilee and have plans in the future to exhibit the shoes for the public to see and enjoy.

James Lee House has been part of Warrington for more than five decades and provides 54 beds for men and women over the age of 18 experiencing homelessness in and around Warrington. Run by The Salvation Army, the Lifehouse celebrated its 50th anniversary in

July 2018.

The Salvation Army hostels are known as Lifehouses as they provide specialist support and guidance to help residents tackle the complex reasons that led them to homelessness and help them end this cycle.



# From the Chief Executive

Stephen Fitzsimons



THE financial markets have thankfully stabilised since the last edition and we can consign "Trussonomics" to a very short chapter in the history books.

However, the Resolution Foundation estimate that remedial activities cost the government up to £30 billion, making the subsequent Autumn Statement more severe than it should have been. Indeed, apart from some positive developments on business rates, there wasn't much in there to encourage our members. It's going to be a challenging couple of years, however there is still plenty of positivity, including Therm and C6 Energy Reduction Systems who are locating to the International Business Centre from the 1st of January.

Thank you to everyone who

attended the Warrington Business Conference in October, a joint event between the Chamber, Warrington & Co and the Business Exchange. It's already become the premier conference in Warrington and is a great opportunity to hear from local businesses, politicians and the latest regeneration activities. We'll share the highlights video when the excellent Ludovico delivers it to us. The Chamber will also be organising the Warrington Property Review, pencilled in for the 21st April. The Council has been hosting a review of the year's property deals for 25 years and it's testament to the strength of the Warrington economy that an event like this can be sustained every year.

One of the biggest attractions of Warrington as a business location is its geography and the transport

connectivity that comes with it. Not many places can lay claim to three motorways, the West Coast Mainline, a Ship Canal, two international airports and a port in the same way that "Greater" Warrington can. However, the Northern Powerhouse Partnership (NPP) has written to the new Transport Secretary to highlight the dire state of the region's railways, with service cancellations doubling since 2015. Warrington is served by the struggling Avanti and has lost services from the timetable changes that were necessary because of infrastructure restrictions in Manchester's Oxford Road corridor. Travellers with little confidence in the trains are returning to their cars and we are seeing motorway congestion returning to pre-Covid levels. The Chamber fully supports

NPP's ambition to tackle regional transport inequality.

It may sound premature if you read this in early December, however Merry Christmas to everyone who celebrates and happy holidays to those enjoying a break. We'll see Warrington at its aesthetic best in the next few weeks so let's get out there and enjoy it!

Take care,  
Stephen

## Foreign Exchange traders expand to Birchwood Park

**BIRCHWOOD Park, the north west's largest out-of-town business destination, is delighted to welcome FX Cartel to the park. BE Group and JLL were the acting agents for Birchwood Park.**

FX Cartel provides education and training to those working in the foreign exchange trading space (also known as FX trading), which involves the conversion of one currency into another. FX is one of the most actively traded markets in the world, with individuals, companies and banks carrying out billions worth of forex transactions every single day.

FX Cartel has quickly established itself as a leading education provider within the foreign exchange trading space. The new office space at Birchwood Park will be home to over 30 traders, in addition to more than 600 members that FX Cartel will be training remotely across the globe.

The location of the Park, coupled with the on-site facilities were leading factors behind the relocation – in particular the on-

site gym, which the team believes will provide a great wellbeing service once settled in at the new office.

FX Cartel founder Sebastien Dubois commented on the move: "We're delighted to continue our expansion at Birchwood Park. As well as being a hotbed for entrepreneurship, to be situated right in the heart of the North West region and close to the M62 will be a great benefit for our team."

"As well as the location, the various amenities and high-quality office space will only improve the wellness of our entire workforce, which is something we know Birchwood Park prioritises amongst its occupiers. As a company, wellbeing is also something we care very deeply about, so to have our own ambitions so closely aligned with the Park's own culture made the decision to move that much easier."

Birchwood Park Commercial Director Martin O'Rourke also added: "It's great to have our first foreign exchange traders here at Birchwood Park, something we're all excited to learn more about

when the team are settled in at Bridgewater Place.

"Like FX Cartel, we champion workplace wellbeing here at Birchwood Park and we're proud to hear those the Park's facilities, including the various food & drink outlets available to our occupiers and visitors alike, were driving factors behind the move. We hope to see members of the FX Cartel team both nationally and across the globe visit our Park in the coming months."

FX Cartel is now in the process of fitting out its offices at Bridgewater Place, one of the Park's most stylish office blocks, accompanied with elegant landscaping and waterworks surrounding the offices.

To find out about the diverse range of office spaces available at Birchwood Park, please head to <https://www.birchwoodpark.co.uk/space-to-let/> or call the team on 01925 851536.



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Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive



# Health screening venture launches at Sci-Tech Daresbury with over £1m investment

**A NEW diagnostic health screening venture has been established at Daresbury science and innovation campus with an initial investment of more than £1m.**

Sankey Biolabs based at The Innovation Centre at Sci-Tech Daresbury, is headed by laboratory manager Frank Whitfield, who leads a team of biomedical scientists and support staff. New staff will be recruited as demand grows.

The Sankey Biolabs laboratory provides diagnostic blood testing services to a range of companies, organisations and occupational health specialists, with a focus on the health and wellbeing of employees nationwide.

Its initial array of blood testing profiles ranges from immunity screens for blood-borne viruses such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV, through to health screens such as kidney, liver and lipid profiles, as well as specific tests for cardiac risk, pre-diabetes and vitamin D deficiency.

The laboratory is offering results on the same day that samples are received.

Frank said: "We pride ourselves on providing a quality service to an expanding client base, delivering reliable and timely diagnostic information through pathology testing solutions across a number of disciplines, including serology, clinical biochemistry, haematology and molecular biology.

"Increasingly, people want to make informed decisions about their lifestyle, and employers are consciously looking to invest in the health and wellbeing of their workforce.

"Sankey Biolabs has been established with these market opportunities in mind, as we recognise that a healthy and motivated workforce will reduce absenteeism and improve productivity."

Frank added: "We have ambitious growth plans and we are well-positioned to expand and react rapidly to client requests by offering bespoke testing opportunities in niche markets.

"We've made a strong start and are actively looking to expand our offering, by providing our services to the life insurance sector, sexual health clinics, private GP surgeries

and, in due course, directly to individuals."

The Innovation Centre is a state-of-the-art 24,000 sq ft building which is home to around 80 science and technology-based businesses.

John Leake, business growth director, Sci-Tech Daresbury, said: "We're thrilled to welcome Sankey Biolabs to our campus. Frank spearheads a company that combines sharp business

acumen with scientific innovation to address a key unmet need that will help companies develop better wellbeing strategies for their workforce.

"I'm confident an exciting period of growth lies ahead for the business, and our Home for Life ethos means Sci-Tech Daresbury is the perfect location for Sankey Biolabs to expand as demand rises from its target markets."



## Market Manager scoops prestigious national Lifetime Achievement Award

WARRINGTON Market manager Andy Ward has been presented with another prestigious national award, after receiving the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) lifetime achievement award, for his accomplishments during a 31-year career.

Andy's award follows in the footsteps of being named Market Manager of the Year in 2021 – one of numerous awards received by the showpiece market.

Judges praised Andy for his major contribution to the industry over the past three decades. Previously working in markets in Wakefield and Sheffield, Andy retired in 2015. He then worked as a Consultant Market Manager for Market Place Management Ltd, successfully managing two indoor markets for them, in Derby and Market Harborough.

Andy then came out of retirement, returning to local government when Warrington Borough Council appointed him as Market Project Manager to oversee the design and build of their (now multi-award winning) indoor market and food court. At the end of his temporary four year contract he was asked to stay and manage the market permanently, as he made

Warrington his home.

During his career, Andy has been an ardent champion and mentor for the market industry and those who work in it. Passionate about sharing best practice Andy has been involved with NABMA for over 25 years. He is regarded as a leading expert in market rebuilds, giving freely of his time and expertise to other local authorities and consultants involved in improving their market offer. He also provides mentorship for colleagues within the market industry.

Andy said: "This award is for everyone involved with Warrington Market and reflects the work gone into making Warrington Market one of the best in the country. It's also a testament to how well we have reacted, post-pandemic, to get the market back up and running to a level that far surpasses the level we were at before the pandemic hit.

"It's wonderful to see the market going from strength to strength as a popular, vibrant venue, enjoyed by so many people from Warrington and beyond. Receiving this national recognition from my peers is the icing on the cake!

"Of course, none of this success could have been achieved without the dedicated, hardworking and talented Warrington Market team and our traders, so this award is definitely dedicated to all of them too."

Warrington Borough Council's Cabinet member for economic development and innovation, Cllr Tom Jennings, said: "This national award – the latest success story for Warrington Market – is well-deserved. Andy's dedication, expertise and innovation have been crucial in making the market a first-class destination which we can all be proud of.

"Andy has been a long-standing

supporter of markets, he is passionate about delivering a vibrant and welcoming venue which is playing a key part in the recovery of our town centre."

The main market is currently open 9am – 5pm, Monday to Saturday whilst the Cookhouse food hall is open 11am to 7pm Monday to Thursday, 11am to 11pm Friday and Saturday and 10am to 7pm on Sundays

For more information about what's happening at Warrington Market, visit [warrington.gov.uk](http://warrington.gov.uk), email [markets@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:markets@warrington.gov.uk) or follow on social media @warringtonmkt







## BGEN outlines commitment to recruit, retain and support more female employees

**WARRINGTON-headquartered BGEN, a specialist in multi-discipline engineering solutions, has outlined plans to support the recruitment and retention of female employees across the business.**

Central to the company's commitment is the creation of a women's forum to drive meaningful change across the business. At the same time, the company has launched enhanced adoption, maternity, and shared parental leave packages, and signed up to the industry-backed 'Inspiring Women' pledge, to help create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment.

"Women are underrepresented

in our industry, and while we may not be able to fix this problem overnight, we're determined to play our part," says Robin Whitehead, chief executive at BGEN. "We have talented female employees across our business, and with their help, we're keen to make our business a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment."

The BGEN women's forum has been established to identify and fully understand attitudes around women in engineering as well as looking at issues regarding representation of women in the wider industry. The forum is open to all female employees.

One key outcome of the women's

forum to date has seen BGEN launch enhanced packages for adoption, maternity, and shared parental leave. Eligible employees will now receive 29 weeks on full pay, followed by 10 weeks on statutory pay. This is a significant uplift on the industry standard package of six weeks on 90% full pay, followed by 33 weeks on statutory pay. In addition, the packages include optional paid 'keep in touch' meetings and a phased introduction back to work.

"We believe these enhanced packages are at the forefront of what companies in our industry are offering their employees," said Michelle Stott, HR Director at BGEN. "In determining these

enhanced packages, we looked at the support offered by other leading national and international companies outside of our industry."

To support BGEN's focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, the company has also signed up to the industry-backed Inspiring Women in Construction and Engineering Pledge. The Pledge is a commitment from organisations to strive for a more inclusive industry, improve business environments for women and champion equal representation on boards.

For further information on BGEN and career opportunities, visit Careers – BGEN ([b-gen.co.uk](https://b-gen.co.uk))

## Warrington industrial unit let at record rent at Gateway 49 Trade Park

A NEW-BUILD trade unit developed by Network Space Investments in the heart of Warrington has been let at a record rent at the Gateway 49 Trade Park.

The 5,100 sq ft unit was let within a month of practical completion at a headline rental of £15 per sq ft, a record rent for the estate and wider Warrington market. B8 Real Estate acted as sole letting agent for estate owner Network Space Investments.

The occupier Würth UK Ltd, a leading supplier of trade assembly products and fasteners and part of the German-based Würth Group, signed a 10-year lease on the property.

Situated on Kerfoot Street just off the main Winwick Road A49 dual carriageway into Warrington, the unit was built to shell specification

with 6.5m eaves, glazed frontage and secure loading and parking area adjacent to the entrance of the trade park.

The build team included Bansco Limited as the main contractor, architect Frank Shaw Associates Limited and RS UK Associates Ltd as project manager.

The estate is now fully occupied, and a planning application has just been submitted to Warrington Council for a similar new-build unit on the last remaining plot on the estate, which is expected to be built in 2023.

Anthony Mellor of B8 Real Estate's agency team said: "With the industrial market entering more uncertain times, this record letting demonstrates demand is still there for good quality buildings in prime locations such as Warrington. To secure a tenant so quickly after

practical completion is testament to the positive fundamentals in the sector."

Tom Dawson of Network Space Investments added "Gateway 49 has been developed by our business over a 20-year period

and has always been a remarkable success, with strong occupier demand and market leading rental levels. We are delighted to welcome Würth, they will be an excellent addition to our already very strong tenant line up."



# United Utilities welcomes 88 apprentices and graduates as class of 2022

**WARRINGTON-based United Utilities has welcomed its class of 2022, with 88 apprentices and graduates starting roles with the region's water company this month – the biggest group the company has had for a single intake.**

The new employees, 59 apprentices and 29 graduates, were welcomed to the business at a special induction day in Haydock, where they got to know each other and find out more about what United Utilities can offer as they develop their careers.

The new recruits are employed in roles right across the company, and as they develop their careers they'll be involved in everything from fixing leaks and ensuring treatment works run efficiently, to helping customers with their bills and managing the company's catchment land.

The 59 apprentices include several in water and wastewater roles such as mechanical field service engineers, process controllers, and process operators, and there are others joining the income and billing and developer services teams, and

taking on roles as tanker drivers and data or finance analysts.

The 29 graduates joining the business are heading into roles across finance, project management, engineering, land management, digital services, and water treatment. There are also new graduates joining as Future Leaders across water and wastewater treatment, water network, central operations, bio resources and environment, planning and innovation.

They have already embarked on their first challenge with a residential trip through The Outward Bound Trust. This gave them the chance to get to know each other and take on some leadership and team activities, including hiking to the summit of England's highest mountain, Helvellyn.

Julie McGovern, Head of People at United Utilities said: "We're delighted to welcome our new apprentices and graduates and look forward to working with them to deliver great water and more for the North West.

"Our new starters bring a wealth

of talent and enthusiasm to United Utilities and have already demonstrated their skills and passion during the recruitment process, so we're sure they'll have successful and exciting careers ahead of them."

Faith Osisanya, a graduate mechanical engineer, said: "I discovered that United Utilities were doing a lot for diversity and inclusion, and that attracted me to the company.

"Everyone was so friendly, and they were willing to show me the whole water process – and that made me interested."

Graduate Aritra Das commented: "I found out that United Utilities is really inclusive, it takes people from diverse backgrounds, and most importantly, they don't hire people solely based on their technical abilities.

"United Utilities really consider your personal skills which you can take elsewhere and are transferable towards your life, and that's what really made me apply to them."

Apprentices at United Utilities are able to earn while they learn, studying Apprenticeship Standards which are endorsed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and the Department for Education, while also gaining hands-on experience. They get to work across different areas of the business relevant to their role, and benefit from a variety of personal development opportunities. The company also supports Green skills, and e8ight of the apprenticeship schemes are classed as Green apprenticeships.

For graduates, United Utilities offers a tailored programme to provide recruits with the business and technical knowledge required to become future leaders. They benefit from first-class training and support alongside an in-depth understanding of their chosen area and the chance to make a tangible contribution to live projects that are benefiting the entire region.

To find out more about working at United Utilities and see the current vacancies, visit: [www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/careers](http://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/careers)



## Use your industry knowledge to tutor the next generation in your spare time

NATIONAL training provider, Learning Curve Group (LCG), are contracting associate tutors to mark learners' work online. LCG is looking for people with vocational expertise acquired through brilliant careers to pass their knowledge on to beginners in the subject. If this sounds like you and you like the sound of earning extra income whilst helping to transform lives through learning, an associate tutor role at Learning Curve Group is perfect for you.

There are vacancies in a wide range of industries in the North West including: Childcare, Health and Social Care, Functional Skills, Construction, Security, Taxi, Customer Service, and Rail.

Associate tutors predominantly undertake the marking of assessments completed by online

learners in a range of fully funded Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications. As an associate tutor, you are self-employed and work on behalf of LCG, the model of this delivery is ad-hoc which means you choose when you can take on a course, working around your other commitments.

We are looking for people with a sector relevant Level 3 qualification and occupational competency in the sector you are applying to. We strive to develop our people, so even if you don't meet the essential criteria, we strongly encourage you to apply.

As an equal opportunity employer who are committed to diversity and inclusion, we positively encourage applications from all suitably qualified and eligible candidates.





# Warrington digital twin helps explore the pathways to net-zero



AS part of the Innovate UK-funded project REWIRE, a virtual 'digital twin' of Warrington has been created to help identify the energy, carbon and cost-efficiency measures required across the town's buildings and energy systems to deliver a net-zero future.

The project to identify the data-informed pathways to net-zero was led by charity Pure Leapfrog with input from Warrington Borough Council. The council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and is working on a variety of initiatives to shape and guide its journey towards net-zero emissions.

Working with consultants from climate technology firm, IES, a digital twin model of the borough made up of 29 separate areas was created using data from various sources including the Council itself, the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) database, and local distribution network operators.

The various data streams fed into the development of the digital twin and included details such as geo-located building geometry, building use and age, building characteristics and electric network infrastructures.

This information from each of the 29 areas was individually modelled in IES's masterplanning and urban design tool, Intelligent Community Design (iCD). This tool analyses and monitors how the community may evolve over time and tracks the environmental impact of any changes such as population growth, the installation of renewable energy systems and changes to the massing and form of buildings.

These 29 models were then collated into one single digital twin hosted on IES's Intelligent Community Information Model (iCIM) platform, which connects

each of its digital twin simulation tools.

## Residential retrofit simulation

Using EPC data to gather information on 50,000 residential properties within the borough, including build characteristics, age band, main heating system and gross floor area, archetype models were created of four main types of homes: detached houses, semi-detached houses, terraced houses and apartments.

These models were then used to create a holistic view of the area integrating electricity, heating, cooling, waste heat networks and shared energy links across buildings. From this, supply and demand from buildings and community assets were assessed to determine the flexibility required across the study area to balance demand and evaluate 'what if' scenarios for intelligent operation.

Three retrofit scenarios were considered in the model: basic which included cavity wall and loft insulation; an intermediate level which included basic plus solid wall insulation, and a full retrofit entailing upgrading buildings to current standards of Part L of the Building Regulations 2013, such as floor insulation, improved glazing and reduced infiltration rates of outside air.

The basic retrofit of one neighbourhood would cost around £500,000 to implement and save £77,000 in energy costs over the 500 buildings, paying itself back in six and a half years. The cost of the full retrofit would be approximately £5,000,000 and save £180,900 in energy costs annually with payback taking around 30 years. These payback times represent energy costs at the time of the work being carried out which have since seen a significant increase, meaning that

payback time for retrofit measures would be greatly improved since then.

## Decarbonisation scenario simulation

Using the results for the three different retrofit scenarios, approaches for full decarbonisation of the district, could be simulated. This was initially assessed for two different neighbourhoods of around 500 homes and potential energy savings of up to 56% were identified.

The most optimal solutions for decarbonising were found for each area. The measures identified were: the installation of domestic and commercial air source heat pumps and district heating, domestic PV with battery storage and the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

This has enabled the creation of bespoke pathways to net-zero with optimal strategies for each area depending on specific criteria such as the most prevalent built form and construction materials, spare capacity on the local substation, and the availability of off-street parking.

In one neighbourhood, the basic retrofit, following the installation of district heating, air source heat pumps and mass PV and community storage, would result in a 41% annual energy cost saving, worth £583 per household. The maximum retrofit scenario along with the same interventions would see a 56% reduction in energy costs per year, equivalent to £795 per household at the time the simulations were run in 2020.

The overall cost of the interventions would be £2million to £5million per neighbourhood depending on the retrofit scenario, but this doesn't take district heating systems, domestic heat pumps or EV chargers into account, which

could all add to costs significantly.

Using the digital twin simulation of two neighbourhoods within the borough, it was demonstrated that once all interventions were applied, an annual saving of 2,000-2,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> would be possible. This would result in both these neighbourhoods becoming net zero with only a very small amount of carbon offsetting required.

Warrington Borough Council cabinet member for sustainability and climate change, Cllr Janet Henshaw, said: "A shared central database and interconnected tools have allowed data and analysis to be easily shared between key stakeholders within this project, laying out some pathways for potential future decarbonisation.

"Using the model to full effect will allow the Council to see various possible optimisation scenarios and understand the potential return on investment for associated decarbonisation initiatives."

Fergus Ross, ICL project manager at IES, said: "Working with Warrington Borough Council on the REWIRE North West project has shown how we can quantify energy-saving measures and support local councils in seeking to secure investment in decarbonisation initiatives. These models are easily replicable to any UK city and hold a huge amount of potential in bolstering the country's progression towards net-zero, so we really hope to see more councils implementing this kind of technology."

For more information, visit [www.iesve.com](http://www.iesve.com)



# Rainforests and game reserves inspire students

**YOUNG biologists studying at Priestley College have experienced an inspirational visit to some of the most ecologically diverse parts of the world.**

Priestley took 20 students to Ecuador where they worked with conservationists and veterinarians to rehabilitate animals while a party of 13 travelled to Eswatini to learn about local culture, tracking animals and identifying species.

"It was the most incredible, eye-opening experience I have ever been a part of," said former Penketh High pupil Sophie Weston, who spent her time in Ecuador.

Each trip was on location for nearly two weeks carrying out research, working with animals and absorbing local culture.

In Ecuador, Priestley's students spent a week at YanaCocha Animal Rescue Centre where they trained and fed animals and worked with conservationists.

Their second week was spent at an ecological reserve in Tamandua where the focus was on conservation techniques and working with local tribes.

Among the highlights was a jungle hike to visit waterfalls and seeing a collection of weird and wonderful animals along the way.

In Eswatini students learned about local culture, how to track animals and identify species while in their

second week at the Mbuluzi game reserve they found out how to set Sherman traps for rodents that were later studied by scientists.

Among those collecting data on this trip was Reece Delamere, who also studies Environmental Science alongside Geography at Priestley College.

The experience, he said, had confirmed he would like to work in conservation after university.

"I always thought it was marine conservation that I was interested in, but now I am going to keep my options open," said the former Penketh High pupil.

The trips were organised by Biology Tutor Louise Naidu who said the experience had enriched the lives of those who took part and given them invaluable entries for their university applications and CVs.

She has now secured funding which will allow the trip to go ahead again next year, creating more opportunities for another cohort of aspiring biologists.

"The feedback we've had is that this was a life-changing moment for many of those who took part and that is what college is all about," she said.

"This is something they will never forget and I have no doubt that many of these students are the conservationists and ecologists of the future."



■ Priestley Biology students enjoyed memorable moments in both Ecuador and Eswatini.

## New Lymm nursery set to open in December



WORK is continuing at pace at Back to the Garden Childcare's new nursery on Statham Avenue in Lymm, with practical completion confirmed for later this month.

Build at the £2m project is well underway with the building now watertight, which means the team of contractors and tradesmen on site are busy working on the interior of the nursery, ensuring the project edges closer to completion over the course of the coming weeks.

When complete, the nursery will provide 90 places for children aged three months up to five years. There will also be local job creation, with 30 employees required, including a nursery manager, nursery practitioners, chef and a number of apprentices to name a few.

Expertly designed and purpose-built with an innovative outdoor space, focusing on all-season learning and exploration inside and out, Back to the Garden Childcare's curriculum, incorporating forest school, ensures natural, child-led learning through play is at the heart of the nursery.

With the project taking shape, founder of Back to the Garden Childcare, Jeannie Pickering, says:

"Work on site is progressing well and with just weeks to go until practical completion, the nursery is really starting to come together and looks superb. Working in partnership with McGoff Construction, the nursery has been designed meticulously with every last detail carefully considered, allowing the team to deliver outstanding care to the children in a safe, stimulating and stylish environment."

Back to the Garden Childcare in Lymm will officially open in December, with the first few children already signed up. It is the second nursery for the company, which is part of the award-winning McGoff Group.

Jeannie concludes: "We are very much looking forward to welcoming the children to the new nursery in Lymm. The setting is stunning and the design fantastic. It is a very exciting time for the company as we open our second nursery, building on the success of our flagship nursery in Altrincham."

For further information regarding the new nursery in Lymm, please call 0161 388 2424 or visit [www.backtothegardenchildcare.com](http://www.backtothegardenchildcare.com)

**The High Sheriff of Cheshire's Awards for Enterprise 2022/23** in partnership with University of Chester

Welcome to the High Sheriff's Awards 2022/23. I urge you to consider the details of these prestigious awards and encourage you to consider applying in one or more of the categories.



Award entries now open!

### The High Sheriff's Awards for Enterprise categories and their sponsors are:

- High Sheriff's Award for excellence in enterprise: University of Chester
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- High Sheriff's Award for digital innovation
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# Talos360 marks next major milestone as it partners with LDC

**WARRINGTON-based Talos360, an award-winning provider of human capital management (HCM) solutions, has chosen to partner with leading mid-market private equity firm LDC to support the next stage of its growth journey.**

The company, which was co-founded by Stephen Rundell and Tomas Coulter in 2009, is one of the UK's fastest growing HR technology providers. Its proprietary recruitment and engagement technology helps businesses to better attract, recruit and retain talent, and it is a trusted partner to more than 700 businesses. Customers range from SMEs to blue chip organisations, and include household names such as Easyhotel, The Entertainer, Homebase, Graham & Brown and Purplebricks.

Talos360 has become a market leader in SaaS talent solutions through the quality of its product and the service its team provides. It has also built a reputation as a people-first business through its commitment to supporting employees. This was independently recognised earlier this year when Talos360 was named the fifth best workplace in tech by Great Place to Work.

Today, Talos360 employs more than 120 people at its headquarters in Warrington. It has grown rapidly in recent years, ending 2021 with increased revenue of 56% – which includes a 94% increase in tech revenues – and is on target to finish 2022 with a turnover of more than £10m.

LDC is backing the existing management team, led by CEO Janette Martin and Co-Founder Stephen Rundell, to support their organic growth strategy and explore complementary acquisitions. Financial details of the transaction are undisclosed, and it provides an exit for existing investor Tristan Ramus and his team at Twenty20 Capital.

With LDC's support, Janette and the team will be able to further invest in product development and continue to evolve its proposition for the benefit of new and existing customers. The partnership will also enable the team to create further opportunities for employees and it plans to create more than 50 new jobs by 2025.

The investment was led by John Clarke, Investment Director at LDC in the North West. He was supported by Investment Managers Camilla Greenwood and Grant Goodwin, and Dale Alderson, Partner and Head of LDC in the North West.

Both John and Dale will join the board as Non-Executive Directors, alongside Chris Herrmannsen, Founder of global talent acquisition and management business Ochre House, who joins as Non-Executive Chair.

Stephen Rundell, Co-Founder of

Talos360, said: "We're really proud of the business we've built, and I'd like to thank Tristan and the team at Twenty20 Capital for helping us to get to where we are today. As we look to the next stage of our strategy, we see huge potential for continued growth and with the team's track record and sector expertise we're confident LDC is the partner to help us tap into this."

"We also wanted a partner who would be a good cultural fit. Our people are our most important asset and to have a partner that mirrors the characteristics we look for in our own employees – caring, genuine and down to earth – was key for us."

Janette Martin, CEO at Talos360, added: "I am incredibly excited about our partnership with LDC. We share a passion for developing people-first, high-growth businesses and I can't wait to have the team join us at the boardroom table. From day one, it was clear that LDC is an investment partner that backs management teams and supports their strategy, which is exactly how we want to work."

"I'm so proud of what we have achieved so far and there is no doubt that we have an incredible opportunity ahead of us. Our amazing team is brimming with ideas, and we're looking forward to what we can bring to both existing and new customers. To have a partner that will add value and support us along the way is exactly what we were looking for."

John Clarke, Investment Director at LDC, said: "Talos360 is a fantastic business and the management team's strategy of putting its people and customers first has enabled them to build an enviable proposition within the market. There's a real opportunity to build on this, enabling the business to support more customers with their talent strategies, and we're looking forward to supporting Janette, Stephen and the wider team on their journey."

LDC has a strong heritage of supporting the growth of HR SaaS businesses. The private equity firm successfully backed the growth plans of workforce management software specialist Mitrefinch, helping the management team to double revenues and increase employee numbers by 64 per cent during its four-year partnership. It also supported HCM software solutions provider CIPHR during a four-year partnership, helping the management team to double its headcount and drive a compound annual revenue growth of more than 25 per cent.

Janette Martin has recently been named one of LDC's Top 50 Most Ambitious Business Leaders of 2022. This follows her being recognised as The Optima Talent Tech Leader of the Year at The TIARA Talent Tech Star Awards, where Talos360 was also awarded The Talent Tech Scale-Up Award in recognition of the company's growth.

Houlihan Lokey (Dominic Orsini, James Grundy, Matt Doyle and Ben Levett-Dunn) both originated and acted as lead adviser on the transaction, providing corporate finance advice to Talos360.

Legal advice was provided by Addleshaw Goddard.

LDC was advised by GP Bullhound (corporate finance) and DWF (legals).



■ LDC Co-founder Stephen Rundell and Talos360 CEO Janette Martin.

## Flexible workspace set to open at Daresbury Park



A NEW Regus flexible workspace is opening on the key business development site, Daresbury Park, near Warrington.

The space will provide 11,000 sq. ft of shared hybrid working space for customers in a convenient and accessible location – ideal for local residents seeking a better work-life balance, but also close to the M6 and M56 for workers on the move.

IWG's new Regus Daresbury Park will open early next year and provide workers with desk space, private offices, meeting rooms, a business lounge and parking spaces. Customers will also have access to IWG's entire global network, including over 300 locations in the UK and 3,500 globally allowing them to work from the most convenient place for them.

Daresbury Park will offer workers with access to on-site amenities including a coffee shop, restaurants, and leisure facilities such as a spa and swimming pool. The 225-acre site is already home to numerous international businesses and is equidistant to both Manchester and Liverpool,

with their respective airports just 20 minutes away.

Data from IWG shows the popularity for workspaces in locations outside of city centres has continued to grow strongly, with the number of people using IWG locations outside of city centres growing by over 30% in 2022.

Mark Dixon, chief executive and founder of IWG, said: "We have been at the forefront of hybrid work for decades, empowering people to work more productively and conveniently in locations closer to home, or on popular travel routes. This year, we have seen a continued rise in demand for flexible office space outside of city centres and our new location is a direct response to this."

"Daresbury Park is a prime location due to its proximity to both residential areas and travel hubs, catering for local workers as well as those on the go. It also provides a range of leisure amenities for workers to enjoy within close proximity of where they will be working".

# Council Chief Exec thanks Warrington bank for 'helping to rebalance economy'

**A WARRINGTON specialist business bank, celebrating its fifth anniversary, has pledged to continue investing in its people and customers as it targets the next five years.**

Redwood Bank, which achieved profitability for the first time in 2021, believes its approach is exactly what British SMEs want and need.

The Bank has loaned more than £155million to people and properties in Warrington and the North West since launching in 2017. This represents approximately 33 per cent of Redwood Bank's lending, way ahead of the industry average of 10 per cent for this region.

Gary Wilkinson, Co-Founder and CEO, said: "We showed throughout the pandemic that we have a robust business model that can enable organisations throughout the North West to keep growing. We are part of this community and we want to continue to deliver to this important region."

The award-winning Bank, which marked its fifth birthday with official celebrations for staff, continued to lend to businesses during the challenging COVID-19 period when high street banks were reluctant to.

Its loan book increased by 14 per cent to £370m during the year to December 31, 2021 as it stepped in to support businesses that were struggling to find the necessary funding. The Bank made a profit before tax of £2.2m, following a £1.7m loss the previous year.

Redwood will continue to support growth by increasing resources

to support both lending and savings customers, but also in specialist areas such as IT, risk and compliance.

It is investigating expanding into adjacent asset classes that leverage existing relationships to ensure it continues to demonstrate strong growth.

The Bank is also committed to supporting numerous initiatives and charities and has appointed a Director of ESG to ensure it has the resources to truly make a difference.

Gary said: "We have proved that we are doing the right thing. And

we want to continue to do the right thing. Our first five years have thrown up challenges that no-one could have predicted, but we rose to these challenges.

"It was sink or swim, and we didn't just swim, we gave a performance Adam Peaty would have been proud of. And that has set us up for the next five years.

"We reported our first profit in 2021 and have continued this momentum into 2022.

"We have big aspirations for Redwood Bank. We will ensure that the resources are at hand to truly make a difference for our

stakeholders. By investing in our people and customers we will continue to deliver excellent levels of customer service as we enter the next phase of our growth."

Professor Steven Broomhead, Warrington Council Chief Executive, said: "Redwood Bank is making a great contribution to levelling up in Warrington and the North West as well as helping to rebalance our economy by sector and geography. The growth of their offices at The Base demonstrates the cementing of the bank as part of our community."

For further information, visit [www.redwoodbank.co.uk](http://www.redwoodbank.co.uk)



■ Redwood Bank CEO and Co-Founder Gary Wilkinson, Warrington Council Chief Executive Professor Steven Broomhead, Redwood Bank Chairman Mark Winlow

## Primas Law continues to expand its employment law team

WARRINGTON-based legal practice, Primas Law, is continuing to expand its employment law offering with two new appointments.

The practice, which recently announced its move into Liverpool, has seen rapid growth in its employment law services with new clients joining the roster across a range of sectors.

Just seven months after appointing its new Head of Department, David Walton, and nationally recognised employment Partner, Danielle Ayres, the practice has welcomed two new additions to its employment team.

Holly Navarro joins Primas Law as an Employment Solicitor with experience across a variety of employment matters including settlement agreements, contract and policy drafting and Tribunal support advising both employees and employers.

Primas' team of employment specialists will now also be

supported by a dedicated Executive Assistant, Rebecca Bloxsome, who has joined the team with over 15 years of administration experience.

Since announcing its move into Liverpool, the practice's employment team has started working with a host of Liverpool-based clients including healthcare brand, DAM Health, one of the UK's leading medical test providers.

David Walton, Primas Law's Head of Employment, said: "Just seven months after joining the Primas team to head up our employment offering, I'm thrilled to have made two key appointments to support the department's rapid growth.

"A lot of our employer clients are very active at the moment in taking steps which impact their staffing bodies, and which in turn require our services. In particular, recruitment and retention appears to be more critical than ever, and clients are calling upon our help in connection with

issues associated with hiring new staff, and taking steps to retain their existing employees. We've seen a significant recent increase in instructions around employment contract preparation and exploring innovative ways to attract and incentivise staff.

"It's a really exciting time for us, particularly as Primas settles into its Liverpool office base, and new clients are coming to work with us from a broad range of sectors including retail and leisure, manufacturing, finance, aviation

and education.

"That's why we're thrilled to welcome our new recruits to the practice and our employment offering. Both Holly and Rebecca bring with them fantastic experience to compliment our existing team and have a clear commitment to providing quality client service, in keeping with what Primas and the employment team stand for."

For more information, visit [www.primaslaw.co.uk](http://www.primaslaw.co.uk)





# Festive fun for all the family at Bents

**THE displays are open, Father Christmas has arrived and the festive season is in full flow at Bents Garden & Home at Glazebury where there's lots more festive fun still to come.**

Father Christmas's Chief Elf is hosting a number of Tiny Tot Parties especially planned for little ones aged between 1-4. Featuring Christmas craft activities, musical instruments, dancing, stories and songs, Bents' Christmas Elf will make this a special festive occasion for all the little ones in attendance.

The fun will take place on Tuesday 6th, 13th and 20th December starting at 9.30am.

## Festive Tea with Father Christmas

Once again Father Christmas has pencilled some extra time in his diary and will be at Bents every Thursday and Friday evening to enjoy a festive experience with his friends. Children from 4 years can join in the fun with a festive meal, singing and story-telling, party games & a special gift for each child.

Festive Tea with Father Christmas will take place in the Fresh Approach Restaurant's family area from 4.30 pm – 6.30 pm from 2nd December.

## An Exclusive Evening with Russell Watson

One for the grown-ups! Bents is delighted to welcome back the truly sensational Russell Watson for an exclusive evening of entertainment. An exquisite 2-course dinner will be served whilst Russell Watson performs, up close and personal, his spectacular concert of career

highlights including Christmas classics.

Russell's career has seen him perform for some of the world's leading figures. From Presidents to Popes and Emperors to Queens plus a number of prestigious sporting events, and now at Bents Garden & Home on Thursday 15th December from 7pm!

## Action for Children

Bents is once again proud to be supporting Action for Children, hosting a dedicated collection point located outside the Children's Boutique. To help support this fantastic cause simply drop a new and unwrapped gift at the collection point and all donations – along with £1000 worth of toys and treats from Bents – will be distributed within the local community. Every donation, big or small, will make a huge difference, and will help bring a little happiness to so many young lives this Christmas. The final date to donate a gift is Sunday 18th December.

In addition to Bents' festive events, Father Christmas is in residence and will be walking around the store every day until December 24. And Bents' Winter Food Market is also open from noon every day through to Christmas Eve with late night opening and live entertainment every Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, until 8pm.

Further information about all events and activities, including menus, timings and booking details can be found online at Bents Garden & Home.



# Royal appointment for fashion designer

WHEN talented fashion designer Isabelle Pennington-Edmead embarked on her career she could hardly have believed it would lead to an audience with Royalty.

However, that's exactly what happened as the former Priestley College student met Prince Charles just weeks before he became King.

Their two meetings took place at Dumfries House to discuss a new womenswear collection she had been involved with that was designed in London and Milan, but manufactured in Scotland at The Prince's Foundation headquarters.

"He said he was very proud of what we were doing and seemed interested by the design process," said Isabelle.

"I was really nervous to meet him and address him correctly, but as soon as I spoke to him I was put at ease because he's very warm and friendly. I also met the late Queen Elizabeth when I was a child so it was exciting I was going to be meeting the future king too."

The project brief was to create a womenswear collection celebrating circular design using innovative features like QR codes and carbon tracking. It also celebrates more traditional

techniques of small batch production and craftsmanship.

The designers took inspiration from the gardens at Highgrove, something Isabelle had done before while at Priestley College only then it was the beauty of Arley Hall's gardens that were her muse.

"We actually worked in a similar way when designing at Highgrove as we did on the Arley Hall project," said Isabelle, who studied Textiles and Fine Art.

"We walked around the grounds taking photographs for inspiration and doing observational drawings. It was also a similar time of year so all the gardens were similar autumnal colours."

Isabelle, a former pupil at Bridgewater High School, worked in London at the YOOX Net-a-Porter Group offices with three other British artisans.

They partnered with four artists in Milan and during the collaboration she visited Italy to source fabrics and trims. Throughout the project they worked with Carbon Sink to ensure their impact was offset.

All the artisans relocated to Scotland to manufacture the collection and were mentored by the likes of Patrick Grant, Gabriela

Hearst and Giuliva Heritage.

"One of my favourite things about the experience has been meeting some amazing people, which has been great for industry contacts, but I have also made some friends for life.

"I am so pleased with the manufacture skills I have perfected from being on this programme and I now know I can produce clothing made at luxury standard."

The collection is available exclusively on Net-A-Porter and Yoox, 50% of the recommended retail price from sales will

be donated to The Prince's Foundation charity.

Isabelle said her time at Priestley had helped her to reach where she is today.

"Priestley felt like it embraced students even if they aren't academics like myself and encouraged creativity and careers in the creative industry," she said.

"Studying Art Foundation at Priestley helped me to build a strong, diverse portfolio. It also changed my perspectives on art and allowed me to look at it differently."



■ Isabelle meeting King Charles when he was still Prince of Wales do discuss her fashion collection.

# Facilities management firm welcomes new MD

**WARRINGTON** based facilities management firm, **phs Compliance**, has appointed **Tracy Burtwell** as the new Managing Director.

phs Compliance is one of the UK's leading providers of facilities management and compliance services. It works with over 35,000 business sites across the country providing everything they need to stay safe and compliant, including electrical testing services and electrical vehicle facilities.

Former Managing Director Dan Lee has been promoted within the phs Group and is now Group Managing Director, responsible for overseeing all phs specialist divisions.

Tracy joins phs Compliance with over 12 years of experience in the service industry and a reputation for transforming businesses and securing long-term growth.

Prior to joining phs Compliance, she spent four years as sales director for a leading data provider in the legal sector. Before that, she was sales director for one of the UK's leading recycling, renewable energy and waste management companies, and VP of Sales Europe for the commercial and retail arms of a global electrical equipment installation and maintenance business.

Speaking about her appointment, Tracy said: "After several years away from the service industry, it feels like I've come home again. I'm looking forward to bringing my global electrical expertise into the

business and nurturing as much organic growth as possible.

"It's a great time to be joining phs Compliance. Following a challenging time during the pandemic, when our teams were unable to enter buildings to carry out vital maintenance and testing services, the business has been flourishing as we get back out there and ensure our customers are compliant.

"We are also expanding into adjacent markets, including electric vehicle charging, as we continue to find ways to provide the best value and service to our customers.

"My focus will be on engaging with our key customers and continuing to build solid partnerships with them. Understanding our customers challenges means we can find the best solutions for them.

"We are lucky at phs Compliance to have the best team in the business so I will be looking at ways to continue developing our great people and building on the fantastic culture within the business."

With over 50 years' experience, phs Compliance is fully accredited by all leading industry regulatory bodies and has the largest team of specialist statutory testing operators in the industry with over 400 engineers. Each year it carries out around 14 million compliance inspections.

It provides statutory electrical services including testing (including PAT tests and fixed electrical testing), fire safety testing, inspection services, maintenance, remedial work and EV services.

It also provides specialist electrical and mechanical project services, including design, supply and installation for everything from power to lighting. It is part of the phs Group.



## Wain Group's double investment in Warrington

HOUSEBUILDING and property company, Wain Group, has completed a double investment into Warrington with the purchase of a new office and extensive refurbishments to its existing Wain Homes North West headquarters.

Wain Group has acquired Fontwell House, a modern 13,223 sq.ft two-storey office on Trident Business Park off Daten Avenue in Birchwood.

The new Group headquarters will also house property, regeneration and strategic land company Wain Estates, as well as the Wain Homes Hub – the centralised support functions for all regions of Wain Homes, including marketing, IT, design, procurement and finance.

Completing the double investment, Wain Homes has undertaken a full refurbishment of its North West office at Kelburn Court in Daten Park.

The property, which has had Wain Homes' new branding applied, now features a 'townhall' area for team meetings, socialising, rest and relaxation and more open plan space with soft furnishings and homely decor to allow greater collaboration between teams.

Will Ainscough, Wain Group executive chairman, said: "Birchwood is Warrington's primary office location and is an ideal base for the Group.

"Fontwell House offers all the services and amenities you would expect in a 21st Century office with first class facilities making it a desirable place to work and giving easy access to our regional Wain Estates developments and regeneration projects. It also serves as an efficient base for our Wain Homes Hub, which provides essential support services to all four Wain Homes regions.

"We also took feedback from our Wain Homes North West team and undertook a full modernisation of Kelburn Court in order to provide them with the most comfortable and well-equipped facility.

"Having access to the very best, modern office space is incredibly important to the wellbeing of all our team and makes us an attractive proposition for talented people looking for the next steps in their careers."

In total, nearly 100 people will be based in the two offices, a number set to increase as the company delivers its strategy for growth.

Wain Homes has 15 live new homes developments across the North West with a number of new sites set to launch in early 2023.

Wain Estates currently has £1,600m GDV of development

land under ownership and £650m GDV of land being promoted for third party landowners and is continuing with the complex regeneration of Carrington Estate, one of the largest regeneration projects in the UK





# North West takes centre stage as Heathrow reveals £400m regional boost

**A NEW report details Heathrow's value to the North West, including Warrington firm ATG Airports, as part of its support that see it delivering a £400 million boost to economies across the UK.**

The report includes a case study on one such business. Headquartered in Warrington, ATG Airports has become a leading supplier of airfield ground lighting for both the civil and military sectors. Founded in 1993, ATG now employs 56 employees in the North West region and has worked directly with Heathrow for the past 25 years to manage the airport's complex lighting systems. ATG also benefits from Heathrow's air freight capacity to supply their technology to a global customer base, working with airports from Eastern Europe to Asia.

Andy Sole, Strategic Development Director at ATG Airports, said: "The size of Heathrow provides us with a reference site that is globally recognized and helps promote our business and attract new customers"

The study, which contains new research by consultancy Frontier Economics, reveals Heathrow is Britain's "most valuable port" with more than £200m in trade and investment generated by business passengers flying to the North West via Heathrow in 2019.

It also charts how in 2021, as Britain emerged from the pandemic, more than £153 billion of non-EU exports and imports travelled through Heathrow while visitors travelling through the airport went on to spend £400 million in towns and cities across the UK.

The report: 'Heathrow: Sustainable Growth, Global Connectivity', charts the part Britain's hub airport plays in the UK aviation sector's £12 billion annual boost to the British economy.

And it details the importance of the global hub airport model to the regional growth of regions like the North West which is home to passengers and businesses who rely on aviation trade routes.

The report also shows that Heathrow and the aviation industry plays a significant role in supporting businesses with access to global markets and creating jobs in the North West, with:

- 66,000 jobs directly generated in the aviation sector across the North West.
- Leisure visitors travelling to the North West through Heathrow spent £37 million in 2019 alone.
- International students spending over £450 million in the North West each year, supporting almost 4,000 jobs in the region.

Heathrow CEO John Holland-Kaye welcomed the findings of Frontier Economics. However, he said growth could not come at any cost and reconfirmed Heathrow's goal by 2030 of cutting carbon emissions in the air by up to 15% and at least 45% on the ground compared to 2019.

John Holland-Kaye, Chief Executive Officer at Heathrow, said: "Aviation is a force for good in the world, boosting the UK's regional economies and lifting millions out of poverty through trade and tourism. But these social and economic benefits cannot come at any cost. Climate change is an existential threat to aviation and the planet

and our industry must play its part by taking fossil fuel carbon out of flying. This is so that regional economies like the North West can continue to benefit from Heathrow and the aviation sector.

The publication of the new report follows the launch in early 2022 of the Heathrow 2.0: Connecting People and Planet strategy.

The strategy sets out how the UK's only hub airport is driving forward net zero aviation and ensuring the local area remains a great place to live and work, including ambitious new actions and plans on net zero, air quality, noise pollution and waste.



**■ Andy Sole, Strategic Development Director at ATG Airports**

## Data tech adoption driving Cheshire SME manufacturers' growth ambitions

SME manufacturers in Cheshire are using data and system integration technology as the driving force behind their digital transformation and growth ambitions, new analysis from Made Smarter reveals.

More than half (18) of the 31 technology projects supported by Made Smarter's North West adoption programme focussed on digital technologies which connect disparate systems and unify data residing in different sources.

As a result of integrating systems and consolidating data sources, business leaders have achieved real-time visualisation of their processes, been able to spot trends in production and labour, correct maintenance and quality issues, and minimise safety, business risk and operational downtime throughout their production.

Others are adopting robotics and process control automation, Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), using sensors to collect critical production data to gain valuable insights about the efficiency of operation, additive manufacturing to reduce waste and fast track prototyping, while some are using immersive technologies to add value to their services.

Meanwhile, early adopters who have already captured data are now focussed on analytics and artificial intelligence to get more insight and value from their manufacturing operations.

Among those reaping the benefits are Precision Card Services (PCS), a Macclesfield-based manufacturer of recyclable and eco-degradable plastic cards for household names

including Harrods and Cineworld, invested in a bespoke solution that can read a card, check against a data file in real time, and then encode it. The investment resulted in a £1.5m contract and a raft of new customers.

Alain Dilworth, Programme Manager for the Made Smarter's North West adoption programme, said: "Data and analytics are central to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, so it is encouraging that so many of this region's makers are embracing the opportunities that these tools offer.

"Capturing the data from across their processes and bringing it all together in one place is a vital first step for many manufacturers looking to solve problems and recognise opportunities. It also becomes a platform for the next step, one which some are already taking, is to analyse the data using artificial intelligence.

"Over the last four years Made Smarter has supported 2,500 businesses with grant funding, skills training and leadership advice. We are keen to start more conversations with SME manufacturers about how we can help them."

For further information visit [madsmarter.uk](http://madsmarter.uk)



**■ Alain Dilworth**

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# 25 years of easyJet flying from Liverpool John Lennon Airport

EUROPE'S leading short-haul airline, easyJet, are celebrating 25 years of flying from Liverpool John Lennon Airport!

The first flight from Liverpool for the famous orange brand took place on 27 October 1997, with Nice the destination.

There have been many memorable moments over the past quarter of a century, and they have shared some of their favourites to mark the occasion!



■ easyJet crew join Everton and Liverpool football legends Graeme Sharp and Brian Hall ahead of the 200th Merseyside Derby



■ easyJet UK Country Manager, Ali Gayward, with CEO John Irving



■ easyJet founder, Stelios Haji-Ioannou, pays a visit to Liverpool Airport in the late 1990s



■ Celebrating 20 years of easyJet flying from Liverpool John Lennon Airport at a special event, held at the Crowne Plaza, back in 2017



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# Priestley footballers raise the bar

**PRIESTLEY'S footballers continue to show they are leagues ahead of their competitors after securing eight places in the county squad.**

Six of those selected for the Cheshire Schools U18s were also called up for England trials including first year, Joe Sacharewicz, who made the final round.

Priestley's first team captain Elliot Whalley, who studies A-Level PE and BTEC Business, said their success was down to the professionalism instilled at Priestley.

"Our coaches really put the time in," said the former Culcheth High pupil.

"They have prepared diet plans for all of us and always keep us grounded and working hard."

Priestley's success on the pitch has built in recent years under the guidance of Dan Jordan, Head of the Football Academy, and former professional academy coach Josh Greaves.

Last year they won the North West College's leagues one and two and reached the national final, losing narrowly 2-1 in a match played at Doncaster Rovers' stadium.

Declan Scallan, who also plays in Priestley's first team, said: "We want to go one step further this year and win the whole thing."

"We have a lot of talented footballers here at Priestley, but we

also have personality and you need that at the trials to help you stand out."

Priestley are well positioned to make another tilt at this year's

league titles and face Cardinal Newman College in the next round of the national cup.

"I'm thoroughly enjoying my football at Priestley," said Joe, who

is studying BTEC Sport.

"The coaches treat you with respect and that's why we are doing so well."



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