



Insight

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The Journal of the

WARRINGTON CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

in association with
VR VALE ROYAL
The heart of Cheshire



Bents crowned best garden centre in the UK

BENTS Garden & Home has been announced as the winner of the GCA's Destination Garden Centre of the Year 2023 award, a title which recognises Bents as being the best large garden centre in the UK.

Bents were presented with the title by the Garden Centre Association (GCA) at a prestigious award ceremony held in Blackburn, and following an intensive annual audit, which records scores from over 200 garden centres throughout the UK.

It is the seventh time Bents has held the award, which recognises quality standards throughout the Centre, not only of products and departments, but also people and

services. The annual audit is a prerequisite to membership of the GCA, and takes place with no prior notice, ensuring standards remain high throughout the year.

Matthew Bent, MD of Bents Garden & Home commented: "There are many awards available within our industry, but this really is the big one. It is not one that requires a written submission or entry fee; instead the audit is something that is a fundamental requirement of our membership of the GCA.

"We have a great family of colleagues who work extremely hard at all times and this award is a fantastic way to thank them for all their input, especially after

what have been a challenging few years."

Bents received a spot visit by the GCA auditors in spring 2022 and recorded one of the top scores in the country, which saw them awarded Best Garden Centre in the North West. The Centre then received a further spot check in the autumn to be re-audited resulting in the UK's highest result and presentation of the prestigious industry award.

Amongst the categories to be acknowledged by the audit were the Centre's product range and quality, disabled facilities, sustainability, Garden Care department, Fresh Approach Restaurant, houseplants

and seasonal plants

Tammy Woodhouse from the GCA said: "The GCA audit and subsequent awards are extremely important within the industry. Centres don't pay to enter or put themselves forward; our members are all visited by our inspectors with no prior knowledge of the exact date so we can ensure standards remain high at all times.

"We are delighted for Bents. It is a fantastic achievement and even more impressive when up against such strong competition."

The award also sees Bents being acknowledged as a Garden Centre of Excellence, one of only 10 in the country.

Sky is the limit for DV8 Designs

WARRINGTON based concept design specialists, DV8 Designs, have once again been appointed to work with Aspire Airport Lounges, following a series of successful rebrand openings of the prestigious airport lounge brand, owned by Swissport.

Aspire lounges offer space and amenities that ensure each visit is a rewarding and relaxing experience. The team at DV8 Designs worked alongside the Aspire brand guidelines and drew from their extensive experience of designing high-end restaurants and boutique hotels, creating a sophisticated yet comfortable space where passengers can work, relax and socialise, resulting in an award winning Aspire Lounge in Edinburgh and London Luton, and DV8 achieving finalist status in the Mix Interiors Mixology Awards 2021.

Graham Allen, Head of Aspire

Lounges UK & Ireland said of the appointment: "Aspire is delighted to be partnering once again with DV8 Designs on the redevelopment of our lounge at Belfast City Airport. This exciting project will enable Aspire to maximise use of the space and modernise our facility to meet and exceed the expectations of our guests. DV8 consistently recognise the need to tailor each project to ensure the ever-changing travel needs of our guests are met and ensure that Aspire remains a market leader of Airport Lounges. Our lounge at Belfast City will be designed with our new identity at its foundations; recognisably Aspire with a distinct sense of place."

North-West based talent and owner of DV8 Designs, Lee Birchall said of the reappointment: "We are delighted to once again be partnering with Aspire to create

a truly premium lounge service in line with the Aspire vision, whilst also integrating the unique geographical characteristics of Belfast and the surrounding region. Our design team enjoy the strong working relationship with

Aspire, having a degree of creative freedom to bring our latest airport experience to life."

Aspire are Europe's largest brand of airport lounge and serve over 7 million customers worldwide.



From the Chief Executive

Stephen Fitzsimons



A recent survey from management consultants I'd never heard of forecasted the Warrington economy to stagnate through a lack of investment.

I'm sure these clever analysts get paid a lot of money to research from afar, however this is not the feedback we are hearing from local companies. Maybe it's the start of spring, the arrival of the entrepreneurial Hong Kong community or echoes of our industrial past, however it feels like Warrington is back investing and full of confidence.

The Hive on Sankey Street is an excellent example, and it's transformed itself more times than Madonna! Most of us remember it as TJ Hughes, however the original

Co-operative hall on the top floor is a reminder of its grandiose past. It's been re-launched as a multi-retail & leisure complex, with shops, restaurants and bars. The initial £5m investment is hardly indicative of a static economy!

I was delighted to host a dinner for local business leaders at the fantastic Treasury Building in Palmyra Square. The Bank of England's North West Agent took us through their economic outlook and the rebranded Department for Business & Trade updated us with the latest export figures. Our members are trading strongly, however they did all share the issues that we've been hearing for the last couple of years – high energy prices, staff shortages and post-Brexit bureaucracy.

We also held a social event at the neighbouring Vandals Restaurants for about 60 Chamber and Business Exchange members. This time three years ago we were cancelling all our face to face meetings and it still feels liberating to be able to network freely once more.

It was an honour to represent the business community at the 30 year anniversary service for the Warrington bomb. I was about to write that it seems inconceivable for the younger generation to experience this incomprehensible terror, however it's only six years since Manchester was attacked. In 1993, business and the community came together to pick the town up and move forward, despite the pain. We saw this

again during the pandemic when companies did all they could to fight Covid-19, despite suffering greatly themselves.

We've had a dark few years and the UK economy is still some way from recovery, however Easter is a time for renewal and I'm feeling very optimistic. Some might even say that this is our year ...

Enjoy your chocolate, Stephen

Entire town of Warrington among winners of Marketing Cheshire Tourism Awards

THE whole town of Warrington was given a special recognition award at the Marketing Cheshire Tourism Awards 2022/23.

The awards recognise excellence and outstanding achievement by local businesses and individuals working in Cheshire's fantastic visitor economy.

At a glittering ceremony at Warrington's Halliwell Jones Stadium, the winners in 17 categories were unveiled in front of around 250 tourism and hospitality sector guests.

Winners included The Ice Cream Farm which scooped the Resilience and Innovation Award with judges noting the Tattenhall attraction had managed to "keep the show on the

road" in the face of the pandemic and "had come out stronger".

Chester Zoo got its paws onto another award, named Best Tourism Marketing Project of the Year, for its The World in a Day activity which allowed visitors to learn more about its global conservation projects.

The Unsung Hero Award went to Mark Gough at Mottram Hall Hotel who was described by colleagues as "the rock of our housekeeping department" and The Swan at Tarporley was named Pub of The Year with a judge concluding its friendly staff made people feel "like individuals rather than just another customer".

And in a move kept under wraps until the night, the whole town of

Warrington was given a Special Recognition Award (see attached video link) for its contribution and commitment to inclusion with examples cited by judges ranging from The Foodbank Weekends at Gulliver's World to Warrington Disability Partnership's annual Disability Awareness Day 'DAD' at Walton Hall Park.

Warrington Wolves' participation in the Physical Disability Rugby League, the diverse work of LiveWire which includes award-winning dementia-friendly buildings and services, a menopause awareness programme and walking football; and The Run Through Foundation's Warrington Running Festival were among other examples cited. Some of winners will go on to represent Cheshire in

the national VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2023.

Trevor Brocklebank, Chair of Marketing Cheshire and Deputy Chair of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership said: "We know the visitor economy contributes greatly to the region's prosperity and tonight was all about shining a light on the individuals and organisations that continue to make Cheshire and Warrington a fantastic place to live and visit.

"With the night being hosted in Warrington it was also fitting the town received a special recognition award for its unflinching commitment to promoting inclusivity in its innovative initiatives and events programmes."



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Stephen Fitzsimons, Chief Executive

Specialist business bank celebrates broker partnerships with return of awards



■ The winners celebrate at the end of the evening with Redwood Bank co-founder and CEO Gary Wilkinson (second left) and host, comedian Angela Barnes.

THE “special relationship” between a leading specialist business bank and its brokers has been cemented and celebrated with the return of an awards ceremony.

Redwood Bank, which has offices in Letchworth, Hertfordshire, and Warrington, hosted its 2023 Broker Awards in Birmingham to recognise the importance of partnership working.

Real Property Finance picked up the top prize of Broker of the Year as the awards made a return after being forced to be put on ice because of social distancing restrictions through the pandemic.

Leon Marklew, Director of Business Development at Redwood Bank, said: “The special relationships

we have with our brokers are a key part of our business. We nurture long-term, successful partnerships that mean our customers receive the best possible service.

“Brokers have a vital role to play at Redwood Bank as they introduce their clients to our products, knowing that we provide simple, common-sense and fast lending decisions.

“We have built strong and long-lasting relationships with all our finalists. They continue to show dedication, commitment and loyalty to us with deals carried out with exemplary professionalism, making them worthy of recognition.”

New categories were added for this year, including the light-

hearted Longest Running Deal. The full list of winners at the event, held at the Varanasi restaurant in Birmingham was:

- Largest Deal – Sterling Professional Finance
- Credit Award – BH Financial Services
- Quickest Deal – Elite Mortgages
- Longest Running Deal – New Leaf Distribution Limited
- Commercial Broker of the Year – Watts Commercial Finance
- Residential Broker of the Year – Real Property Finance
- Broker of the Year – Real Property Finance

Andy Churchill, director at Real Property Finance, said: “We were delighted to be able to accept the 2023 Residential Broker of the Year, and the overall Broker of the Year, awards at the Redwood Bank event. They are great accolades to receive in what are challenging market conditions in our industry.

“We really enjoy our working relationship with Redwood – they show a flexible approach to supporting our clients, with keen pricing and getting a good understanding of what the borrower really needs by way of funding support.”

The Bank started the awards in 2020 to reward the successes of the brokers it has worked with over the previous 12 months.

Kemtile brings single source hygienic flooring expertise to Foodex 2023

WARRINGTON-based Kemtile, one of the UK’s leading specifiers, manufacturers and installers of hygiene flooring and specialist drainage solutions, will be exhibiting at Foodex Manufacturing Solutions, the UK’s premier trade event for the food and drink processing, packaging and logistics industries.

From 24-26th April 2023 at NEC Birmingham, on stand G49, Kemtile will showcase their ‘single-source’ flooring and drainage solutions designed to meet today’s stringent Food and Beverage (F&B) requirements.

With over four decades of experience in the industry, Kemtile will offer individual advice on flooring and drainage systems focusing on fit-for-purpose solutions providing the quality, durability and longevity required in busy F&B processing

environments.

As a division of Stonhard, Kemtile offers an even more extensive portfolio of products, many of which have HACCP certifications. Kemtile’s expertise has been called upon by industry brands such as Greggs, ingredients giants Blends, and Scotland’s newest distillery Glen Mhor in Aberdeenshire.

Jamie Cook, Director of Kemtile, commented: “Foodex is a key event for us. It’s a fantastic opportunity to meet our existing customers and new ones, championing the benefits of working as part of the Europe-wide Stonhard Group with access to many bespoke flooring solutions.

“The three-day event will also allow us to demonstrate our experience of an increasing number of turnkey projects for leading brands in the industry.”

On the Kemtile stand, attendees will be able to see a range of high-quality products from Kemtile’s partner companies such as Polysto, the leading manufacturer of composite HACCP designed kerb systems, which are exclusive to Kemtile in the UK, and the German-engineered Wiedemann Technik stainless steel drainage

systems.

Jamie added: “We are looking forward to getting back to this important food and beverage show after a number of years away and using it as a platform to start new conversations with customers across the UK around hygienic flooring and drainage requirements.”



Mark Thompson takes chairman's role at company he founded

MARK Thompson – founder of Warrington-based Mark Thompson Transport (MTT) – has become chairman of the company as part of a strengthening of the senior management team at parent company Kinaxia Logistics.

A series of key appoints have been made as Kinaxia positions itself for the next phase of its ambitious growth plans.

Richard Smith has joined Kinaxia as managing director of the groups Primary sector – succeeding Mark Thompson.

As chairman of MTT, Mr Thompson has taken on a group-wide procurement role.

Historically, all 13 Kinaxia companies have procured locally and Mark will now bring together the purchasing process on a group-wide basis.

Paul Givelin has been promoted from group projects director to take on a broader role as commercial director. He joined Kinaxia last year and his newly-created role sees him take responsibility for Kinaxia's account management and project implementation, as well as ensuring the group continues to deliver a standard, high-quality service to all customers.

Phil McBean has been promoted to a new role of group network

director as Kinaxia continues to integrate its distribution businesses following the restructure. He was previously operations director at Kinaxia company Panic Transport, which is based in Rugby.

Kinaxia is a top 15 UK logistics group employing more than 1,800 staff nationwide and has a fleet of over 850 vehicles which transport goods for the retail, leisure, food and drink and manufacturing sectors.

The group, which has its HQ in Macclesfield has 2.7 million sq ft of warehouse facilities nationwide, offering contract packing, e-fulfilment, returns management, storage services and a complete

distribution service. Group revenues for 2022 reached a record level of over £200m.

Chief executive Simon Hobbs said: "We have created a number of new senior roles in line with our growth strategy as we look to continue our expansion during the coming years.

"Mark will keep a watchful eye over the MTT business while focusing on procurement across the group, which is a huge opportunity to capture the economies

of scale available across our 13 regional operating businesses and to bring greater flexibility and innovation into our purchasing agreements."



■ Richard Smith, Mark Thompson, Paul Givelin and Phil McBean.

Industry chiefs welcome Government's £20 billion investment in low carbon technology

CLARE Hayward, chairman of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, has welcomed the Government's £20 billion commitment in carbon capture and storage technology.

She said: "We are absolutely delighted by the Government's commitment in carbon capture and storage technology.

"This is a huge vote of confidence in the decarbonisation of industry.

"Cheshire and Warrington have ambitious targets to reach Net Zero."

The Government's announcement gives the go-ahead for five North West projects involving major partners in Hynet – the low-carbon energy project. Hynet's infrastructure will store and distribute locally-produced low-carbon hydrogen, enabling

industry to switch away from natural gas.

It will also capture and store carbon dioxide emissions from industry

The game-changing project has the potential to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 10 million tonnes every year by 2030 – the equivalent of taking four million cars off the road.

HyNet will also create and safeguard thousands of local jobs, as well as attract inward investment across the region.

The HyNet consortium more than 40 major industrial partners, including aluminum recycling giant Novelis, based in Latchford, Warrington.

Ms Hayward added: "Cheshire and Warrington has ambitious

targets to reach Net Zero – we have the skills base to drive forward HyNet, build a regional low carbon economy and create the green jobs for the future, making the region a world leader in low carbon technologies and

innovation."

The Hynet proposals involve delivering low carbon hydrogen, produced locally and piped underground to major industrial users.



United Utilities graduates tackle key water sector issues through CEO Challenge 2023

GRADUATES at Warrington-based United Utilities have begun their endeavours for this year's CEO Challenge, with the aim of tackling some of the water sector's key issues.

The challenge gives five groups of graduates a problem each to investigate over the course of the year. Working with United Utilities colleagues and external partners, it encourages them to use their skills and learning to find and embed innovative solutions to challenges that are faced by the company and the wider industry.

The five challenges for 2023 are:

Team 1: Find and fix – How can we prioritise our collective efforts on leak reduction?

Team 2: Store more – How can we optimise our wastewater network capacity?

Team 3: The emission mission – How can we measure greenhouse gas emissions from a diverse supplier base?

Team 4: Keep the lights on – How can we make our sites more energy resilient?

Team 5: Happy homes – How can we influence house builders to change their home design with water in mind?

Nicole Shaffi, Innovation Performance Manager at United Utilities, said: "Our annual CEO Challenge is a real highlight of the year for our graduates, giving them the chance to put their problem-solving skills to the test and then propose, develop and instigate new solutions to some of the issues we face.

"The challenges they've been tasked with this year, from reducing leaks and emissions, to enhancing energy resilience and

network capacity, will give them the chance to use our established innovation process to seek out new methods and technologies, to build relationships and forge new partnerships, and put their education and experience into practice outside of their daily roles.

"Every year our graduates amaze us with their creative thinking, so we can't wait to see the ideas they come up with and put them into use."

The groups have already been getting their teeth – and brain cells – into the problems and will spend the coming weeks refining the issues, hosting initial brainstorming sessions, and meeting with those who are already dealing with the challenges. They will go on to explore potential solutions to the problems and put their ideas to the test through practical trials,

helping them to develop new processes and campaigns that will be put into use at United Utilities to bring benefits to customers and the company.

Teams are assessed throughout the year, and at the end of the challenge will present their work to a panel of senior leaders who will select the winning team based on which group has shown the most innovative behaviours.

"Everyone really is a winner at the end of the challenge," Nicole continued.

"The graduates get a great deal of personal and professional development from the programme which will help them in their future careers. They are able to gain additional skills in a safe space which encourages them to fail in order to learn and grow, and

also build new networks and relationships, including in areas they don't normally work in.

"For United Utilities, the CEO Challenge brings a wealth of innovative new ideas, many of which become reality and help enhance our work to support a greener, stronger, healthier and fairer region as we provide great quality water and more.

"The challenge is not only about finding solutions to our problems – it also supports our efforts to inspire an innovative culture throughout the company so that we have the skills, behaviours and competencies needed to solve the problems that are still to come."

To find out more about graduate roles at United Utilities, visit: www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/careers/graduates/



Four new lettings following refurbishment at Taylor Business Park

FOUR new lettings have been announced at Taylor Business Park at Risley, Warrington, including new offices for Cancer Research UK.

The new lettings total over 57,700 sq ft of space following a comprehensive refurbishment programme.

McQueens Dairies has leased a 19,022 sq ft unit at Taylor Business Park, with other units being let to Cancer Research UK (12,818 sq ft), civil engineers Amco Giffen (12,325 sq ft) and Grosvenor Power Solutions (7,730 sq ft). B8 Real Estate acted with the landlord Ribston on the lettings.

A fifth unit comprising 57,764 sq ft is currently undergoing refurbishment and due to complete in the next month.

All but one of the units were previously occupied by materials handling specialist Jungheinrich.

The refurbishment programme, which began in early 2022, was project managed by Cushman & Wakefield and was best in class including new roofs.

Located within a few miles of the M6, M56 and M62 motorways, Taylor Business Park comprises 285,000 sq ft of industrial space on a 55-acre site. It was acquired by Ribston in 2018.

Adam Morgan, asset manager at Ribston, said: "These recent transactions show the continued occupational demand for good quality, well-located assets. It's pleasing to welcome new businesses to Taylor Business Park as well as working with our

existing tenants to secure their property needs."

Will Kenyon from the agency team at B8 Real Estate, added: "We had strong interest from potential occupiers from the outset and are pleased to have secured

lettings on all four units on or before practical completion of the refurbishment work and at strong rents. Taylor Business Park has become a popular location, with well-maintained properties and excellent connectivity links."



All-electric bus fleet will arrive next year – one of biggest in the UK

TOWN Hall chiefs at Warrington have given the green light to proposals that will result in the town having an all-electric bus fleet next year.

The council's cabinet has approved to amended plans for the town's Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) scheme.

This means the council can now move ahead with the project to replace Warrington's Own Buses' entire fleet of buses with electric vehicles.

A total of 105 buses will be delivered during 2024, one of the highest number of electric buses to be introduced by any town or city in the UK, replacing the whole fleet.

The council was successful in securing the largest funding award made from the Government's ZEBRA scheme in 2021, to support the replacement of Warrington's Own Buses' fleet of diesels with new electric buses, as part of the work to introduce greener and cleaner transport options throughout the borough.

A significant financial contribution to the ZEBRA scheme will be made by the council, with its funding commitment supporting the vision to transform bus travel in Warrington.

The current economic climate has posed challenges to the project, and the council, working with the government and the bus company, has responded to this with the remodelled scheme. This includes the adjustment of the number of buses to 105 to match the post-Covid requirement, and an increase in the overall budget to deliver the scheme, which is needed due to price increases caused by the current high rate of inflation.

With government content with the remodelled plans, and approval granted by cabinet, Warrington can now move forward with the project to deliver a fleet of buses fit for the future.

Cabinet member for transportation, highways and public realm, Cllr Hans Mundry said: "I'm delighted that cabinet has now given the go-ahead to our remodelled ZEBRA scheme. This investment will be transformative for bus travel in our borough, enabling us to provide environmentally friendly, modern and attractive bus services for everyone.

"Delivering a truly green bus system will bring huge benefits for Warrington, significantly improving air quality and supporting our ambitions to decarbonise our transport system as we work towards a zero-carbon future.

"At the same time, delivering one of the highest numbers of electric buses in the UK will put our town at the forefront of delivering

sustainable, zero emissions public transport, further enhancing our reputation as forward-thinking location to live, work, and do business.

"Crucially, this significant investment in the town's bus company, will make a huge difference to local people, helping make our buses more reliable and attractive and keeping fares low, which we hope will encourage many more people to choose this mode of transport."

To maximise the benefits of the ZEBRA funding, the council has committed to an enhanced partnership with all local operators. Alongside Warrington's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), the enhanced partnership will see the council engaging with all bus operators in Warrington, ensuring high standards are set out in terms of:

- State-of-the-art vehicles, with the highest standards of quality and accessibility.
- Clear targets for journey times and joint reliability improvements, to be reported at least every six months.
- Identifying where bus priority measures are needed.

Chairman of Warrington's Own Buses, Cllr Cathy Mitchell, said: "If we want to move forward with tackling the climate emergency and encouraging people to change the ways they move around our town, it's vital we invest in the future of public transport. Cabinet approval of these amended plans is another important step forward.

"The ZEBRA project – and the introduction of one of the largest fleets of electric buses in the UK – gives us a fantastic opportunity to deliver greener and cleaner transport and transform perceptions of bus travel, supporting our work to drive growth in bus usage in our borough.

"At the same time, the overall improvements delivered through our enhanced partnership with bus operators and our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), will ensure that the introduction of our new fleet of electric vehicles is just one part of a much wider package of measures designed to drive up the quality of bus services across the board."

Ben Wakerley, managing director at Warrington's Own Buses, added: "This is great news for Warrington. As well as the clear environmental benefits it will bring, the introduction of our electric fleet will dramatically improve the quality of our services, building on the slashed fares we have already introduced and improving reliability and punctuality.

"Around five million bus journeys take place in Warrington each year. The introduction of new, modern, environmentally-friendly



buses which are fit for the future, will provide a better experience for customers, bringing more passengers, taking cars off the road and helping to alleviate congestion.

"Warrington's Own Buses is financially sound and on course to deliver a profit this year. I'm delighted that we are moving forward with the ZEBRA project, which gives us even more confidence in improved sustainability for our company in

the coming years."

Finishing touches are currently being made to Warrington's new bus depot – an important project in Warrington's Town Deal programme – with the depot due to be handed over to Warrington's Own Buses for occupation in the coming weeks. The new depot will be equipped with electric vehicle charging infrastructure, ready to house the new fleet of zero emission buses when they launch next year.

Business training provider receives CIPS approval

A LOCAL Professional training provider has been granted Study Centre approval as part of the companies 5-year growth plan.

S.L. Procurement Solutions Limited is a training company delivering Procurement and Supply chain training for professionals who want to gain their CIPS qualifications.

The training provider decided to apply for approval with CIPS – and now have the accredited stamp of approval for the delivery of CIPS qualifications, and hosting exams for their learners.

The company have been working in the region since their inception in 2019 and seen vast growth in the region with a huge need for learners wanting to study with the centre.

The approval means that the training company, that delivers modular CIPS training courses in the region have now got plans to develop satellite centres at its multiple classroom sites across the UK.

Stephen Lovatt, Director of S.L. Procurement Solutions Limited said, 'We do so much work with professionals and businesses in this region. Not only the modular CIPS courses for learners, but moreover there's a huge demand for procurement and supply chain consultancy work, with much focus on sustainability, the cost of living and recession. It's imperative that businesses and it's dedicated professionals are equipped with all the knowledge



and skills to navigate these really difficult times. As a CIPS approved centre we are now able to bring our classrooms sessions that seal of approval from CIPS.'

Stephen continued 'We set this achievement as part of the 5 year business plan and so it's a real delight to see it come to fruition for us as a team. We are now setting our sights on approval for all our classrooms across the UK'.

This means that the training company are now listed as an approved provider of CIPS' qualifications at:

- Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply
- Level 5 Advanced Diploma in Procurement and Supply
- Level 6 Professional Diploma in Procurement and Supply

'We are excited to get started with our new accreditation and to welcome even more learners throughout the region' Stephen added.

Launch of iconic building 'The Hive WA1' offering flexible office solutions

ONE of Warrington's most iconic buildings in the heart of the town centre has been redeveloped into 'The Hive WA1,' offering flexible office solutions above a new shopping arcade.

Home to Nectar Co-working space, this new hub, in the historic former Co-op building on Sankey Street, offers businesses a range of flexible office solutions with options for open workspace, temporary offices from 2-16 desks, conference rooms, private booths and meeting rooms. Whether you need a spot to focus on an individual project or a larger space for team collaboration, make sure you go and experience their warm atmosphere and endless possibilities.

The Hive members benefit from a wealth of opportunities for collaboration, networking and increased productivity. Office spaces are available for either private meetings or shared working environments, with rates starting at just £150 + VAT per month. All-inclusive packages include access to shared infrastructure equipment and utilities, receptionist services, refreshments and parcel acceptance service. They also boast a podcast studio set up for both audio and video recording, perfect for digital content creation.

Moreover, they understand that businesses often require flexible working hours and conditions; this is why they offer short term leases on all our office spaces so you can upgrade or downsize your

space according to the needs of your business without being tied down by an inflexible long-term contract.

The first-floor office space phase one at The Hive is now complete and has been occupied by a number of businesses including: Grosvenor Capital Group, ISupply, MJ Group, bedigital, Leisure TV Rights.

Lisa Buckley, CEO of Leisure TV Rights "I am so happy to be working in the centre of Warrington, my home town. Nectar Offices provide a great environment for myself and my colleagues to work in a variety of ways that ensure we stay productive and collaborative."

Ben Rafferty, Operations Director at The Hive "There's been tons of enthusiasm since we launched Nectar Offices, and it's great to see such a wide variety of businesses coming through the door. We are excited to launch our next expansion and can't wait to see what businesses will be joining us."

Stuart Dicken, Principal Consultant at bedigital "I have been a home/remote worker for well over a decade now, I have just completed my first week working from Nectar Co-Working Offices in Warrington and I must say there is something to be said mentally for walking in and out of an office every day to help you switch on and off"

At Nectar Co-working Space, business owners can rent a space

to suit their needs with no long-term commitment. Co-working space provides flexibility in an ever-changing and uncertain world and is projected to rise by 13% annually around the world.

To make life even easier at The Hive WA1, there's plenty of parking available close by as well as great connections to public transport hubs. With fair pricing, flexible membership plans and

all the amenities you need for your business to flourish, it's the perfect place for Warrington entrepreneurs and professionals looking for a space that allows them to work uninterrupted. Go visit them today and see how Nectar Co-working Space can help take your business operations to the next level.

For all enquiries and rate card see: www.nectaroffices.com



Warrington gym raises funds for two defibrillators

CROSSFIT Warrington based at Kingsland Grange has successfully raised enough money to install two new defibrillators in the community.

Owners Sarah Lunn and Sian Edwards initially set out to raise £1,000 for the vital equipment on their JustGiving page, with donations coming from local business owners within Kingsland Grange, the local area and their very generous members.

Their efforts were noticed by another locally situated business, Crest Medical, who supply first aid and medical supplies. Incredibly they doubled the fundraising efforts to supply an additional defibrillator and cabinet from their local Community Fund.

Sarah and Sian said: "We originally set out to secure funding for one defibrillator to situate outside our gym."

"However, our efforts were noticed by Crest Medical and incredibly,

they doubled our fundraising efforts!"

Freya Watkins, head of people at Crest Medical, said: "We are pleased to use our community fund to help people have access to these brilliant pieces of technology."

"It is our responsibility to help the community and we are always happy to support local projects in any way we can. Defibrillators save lives."

Sarah and Sian added: "We decided to situate the second defibrillator outside La Beau Fleurs, as one of our main beneficiaries they are keen to support local initiatives and they have a great central location for this life-saving piece of equipment."

Rachel Peers owner of La Beau Fleurs said: "We were absolutely bowled over by the tenacity and generosity of CrossFit Warrington and Crest Medical, whose fundraising efforts and donations

have been incredible."

"To host a defibrillator at such a central, visible and accessible part of our local community is a real win for the whole of Woolston."

In addition, CrossFit member David O'Brien of OBD Electrical based in Woolston, stepped forward and offered to fit both of

the defibrillators.

The new defibrillators can be found at: CrossFit Warrington, Unit 14, Greys Courts, Kingsland Grange Industrial Estate, Woolston, WA1 4SH

La Beau Fleur, 24 Manchester Road, Woolston, WA1 4AD



Local caring superstar lends a healing hand

A CARE professional from local home care company Home Instead Warrington and Lymm has proved the benefits of drawing on her background in yoga and meditation to enhance the wellbeing of her clients in helping them to relax and stay calm.

When she started working at Home Instead Warrington and Lymm in November, Kerry had a bright idea to draw on the techniques and her passion for yoga into her role as a Care Professional. Combining both of her passions has given her an increased sense of purpose and fulfilment, and it's safe to say that clients have benefited from it hugely.

Having practiced yoga for over two decades, Kerry knows full well the benefits that such a holistic approach can have on people's physical and mental health.

Kerry said, "I am hoping to introduce some of aspects of my background to many more of my client. There has been an incredible improvement in my clients' physical and mental health since I started helping them with

the basic principles behind yoga during care visits.

"The deep breathing techniques help the clients to be more present, helping them to let go of the past and not to worry about the future. I enjoy working with individuals because I love connecting with my clients on a deeper level. I can't even put into words how privileged I feel to be able to spend time with my clients; they have taught me so much! I love hearing their stories and no two days are the same!"

A Home Instead Warrington and Lymm client commented, "I love it when Kerry comes round. Kerry's breathing techniques have helped me feel more calm and less anxious. She has really helped me cultivate peace and has taught me how to accept anything that life throws at me. I can't praise her enough. I hope that other people like myself adopt this approach: they won't regret it!"

For more information on Home Instead and the services they offer including specialist dementia care, please visit: <https://www.homeinstead.co.uk/warrington/>





Sellafield contract gives £250m boost to the northern economy

TWO north west companies have won a share of a £249m contract to supply steelwork to Sellafield.

Severfield Nuclear and Infrastructure and William Hare have been appointed key delivery partners with the Sellafield Programme and Project Partners (PPP).

The 17-year framework will see the Bolton and Bury based firms provide steelwork to major projects on the Cumbrian nuclear site.

Sellafield is one of the largest infrastructure projects in the north, supporting 60,000 jobs.

The birthplace of the UK nuclear industry, the site is now focused on nuclear decommissioning and waste management.

PPP was mobilised in 2019 to transform Sellafield Ltd's major project delivery.

The latest contracts are part of its Multi Project Procurement model.

This encourages long-term collaboration throughout the

supply chain, enhancing project delivery and maximising economic and social impact.

Martin Chown, Sellafield Ltd Chief Executive Officer, said:

"Our purpose is to create a clean and safe environment for future generations.

"Excellence in major project delivery is a key enabler.

"Through PPP we're creating a strategic and sustainable approach to project delivery. This provides stability for our supply chain, unlocks investment in our communities, and delivers value for UK plc.

"It's great to see two more north west companies joining us as key delivery partners. I look forward to seeing how their expertise and innovation can help drive forward our major project delivery."

Peter Hogg, head of supply chain for PPP, said: "We're delighted to be growing our PPP team with the arrival of yet more long-term partners.

"They will work together with our delivery teams to design and implement best-in-class solutions."

The steelwork package is the fifth key delivery partner supplier framework to be awarded by PPP.

This framework includes structural steelwork, steel frames, general steelwork, secondary steelwork, structural metalwork, general metalwork, metal decking, metal walkways, and edge protection.

Severfield Nuclear and Infrastructure is part of Severfield PLC.

The company has multiple sites in the UK and an annual capacity to produce around 300,000 tonnes of fabricated steelwork.

Stuart Mitchell, director of Severfield said: "We're delighted to have been awarded a place on the PPP framework to deliver structural steelwork major projects over the next 17 years.

"Severfield has been present on the site for over 13 years having worked on multiple major projects.

"This secures Severfield's future on the site and gives us the opportunity to bring the people, governance and innovation that has made us the largest structural steel contractor in the UK to the PPP.

"We also look forward to working closely with the PPP teams and other partners to make sure the PPP is a success for the site, the contractors and the local community."

William Hare, part of the William Hare Group, is a world-leading steel business providing value engineered steel solutions to some of the world's most innovative and sustainable construction projects.

Craig Arnold, director at William Hare, added: "We welcome this opportunity to consolidate 40 years' experience at the Sellafield site with the integration of our bespoke, optimised structural delivery process into the PPP strategy.

"This will bring both value and certainty of outcome into Sellafield projects as well as opportunity and support for the local community.

Customers and colleagues help water company raise £52,000 for Macmillan

CUSTOMERS and colleagues have helped Warrington-based United Utilities to raise £52,000 for Macmillan in the last 12 months.

Tough Mudder, rowing and cycling challenges are just some of the ways that the water company's colleagues have helped to raise the cash. Customers have also contributed this year through the company's Get Water fit app.

Macmillan has been United Utilities' charity partner since 2017 and the company has now raised more than £400,000 for them.

Adrienne McFarland, people director at United Utilities said, "Our colleagues always go the

extra mile to find new ways to raise money and this year has been no different.

"There have been some fantastic challenges completed by various teams and this has been matched by the generosity of our customers through their donations.

"Macmillan is a great cause that makes a real difference to the communities across the region we serve."

Megan Kong, senior fundraising manager at Macmillan said: "We are so lucky that United Utilities staff chose us as their charity of choice and it has been a pleasure to work alongside them.

"We're thankful to colleagues and customers who raise as much as they can for those living with a diagnosis across the region. We will continue to work alongside them, encouraging them and

reminding them of the huge impact they're having in helping us to do whatever it takes to support those living with cancer. Thank you!"



Global brand opens third office space at Birchwood Park

BIRCHWOOD Park has announced that multinational home appliances and consumer electronics company, Haier, has expanded its presence on the park further with its state-of-the-art training activation centre.

Haier Europe has been manufacturing highly customisable, tailor-made home and kitchen appliances for over 30 years, and includes brands such as Candy, Hoover and GE Appliances within its portfolio. Haier Europe now has three units at Birchwood Park.

The expansion of Haier's presence on the park strengthens Birchwood Park's credentials for being a home to technology and innovation, and demonstrates the park's ability to provide flexibility in office and warehouse requirements to exactly meet its occupier's needs.

To mark the official opening of the new training academy, the Chief Executive of Warrington Council, Steven Broomhead, was in attendance.

Andy Lane, Service Director at Haier Europe, commented: "Haier Europe's new unit at Birchwood Park is a training activation centre, where skilled engineers will be trained in the company's latest products and technology. This training will enable them to provide a top-class service when our customers call us with any

queries.

"This is Haier's third unit in Birchwood Park and we are delighted with our latest expansion. We look forward to training our engineers in this new unit and we are delighted to be centering these units in Birchwood Park as we continue to grow our strong relationship with the Park."

Haier UK has been an occupier at Birchwood Park since November 2018. The new Training Activation Centre follows a new Brand Activation Centre in 2020; the deluxe showroom comprising separate sections for Haier, Hoover and Candy brands, a chef's theatre for cooking demonstrations as well as 140 appliance models from the group's expansive product portfolio.

Like Birchwood Park, Haier is dedicated to providing wellbeing support and services to its staff. The Park's amenities, including the on-site gym, green open spaces and various food and drink options across the site have successfully supported Haier in recent years attract and retain both a talented and happy workforce.

Martin O'Rourke, Commercial Director at Birchwood Park, added: "For years, Birchwood Park has had an exceptional relationship with Haier UK and we are delighted to once again support the business with its

continued growth, this time opening a training academy right here at the Park.

"We're looking forward to seeing the quality of training Haier provides to its engineering staff in its new facilities, and we'll always be on hand to accommodate any future expansions and updates".

The Park recently welcomed a number of new occupiers to its business community, including global environmental services provider Tradebe and Engineering experts SEMP. Both businesses have taken up office space in Chadwick House, located at the heart of Birchwood Park.

Birchwood Park is also set to bring 161,000 square feet of warehouse space to the region with its latest Cavendish warehouse development. This will give both new and existing occupiers, like Haier Europe, the opportunity to expand or even take up another space to let should they need it.

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

For further information about Haier UK, click here: www.haier-europe.com/en_GB



Housebuilder makes a splash with sponsorship of Warrington Swimming Club

HOUSEBUILDER David Wilson Homes has sponsored the training kit of the Warriors of Warrington Swimming Club to help ease the costs of its resources.

Established by a group of parents in 1972, the Warriors of Warrington Swimming Club is a competitive club with over 200 members aged six and upwards. The club caters its training to all skill levels, starting from basic skill development to those progressing through to National Qualifiers.

Having recently participated in the Warriors Swim Camp 2023, a number of club members travelled to Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands for an unmissable life experience, and over 22 hours of immersive swimming to advance their skills.

Darren Ashley, Head Coach at Warriors of Warrington Swimming Club said: "We're really grateful to David Wilson Homes for the sponsorship of our training kits. It's given the team a real sense of unity, especially during our 2023 Swim Camp."

"The camp was a real success with all members learning valuable lessons to help them progress to becoming well-rounded and experienced swimmers ahead of

the British Trials in April."

The Warrington Swim Warriors are based close to David Wilson Homes' Orchard Meadows development in Appleton Thorn, and the support of the club is a another part of the housebuilder's outreach in the local community.

Rob Holbrook, Managing Director

at David Wilson Homes North West, said: "We are thrilled to be sponsors of the new training kit for the Warriors of Warrington Swim Club."

"We are committed to creating a positive impact on the surrounding areas in which we build and are pleased to have been able to

contribute to help the club. We wish the Warriors of Warrington the very best in all future competitions and hope it continues to leave a positive impact on the members of the team."

To find out more about the club, visit the website at Warriors of Warrington Swimming Club



KDM Group gets BM Trada seal of approval on manufactured fire doors

SINCE the Grenfell Towers disaster, we have seen much-needed changes to regulations and a drive for certification to show that manufactured & installed construction products are fit for purpose, fire doors being one of them.

With more stringent tender requirements and requests for certification, KDM wanted to close the loop and provide our customer base with the additional peace of mind that KDM Group's manufactured and installed fire doors have been independently certified with the Q-Mark rating by BM Trada. This is a formal recognition of commitment to quality and best practices in the manufacturing & installation of fire doors.

It is a legal requirement for fire door manufacturers to demonstrate that their products can resist the passage and spread of fire, but the Q Mark Scheme ensures that the fire doors are installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or appropriate Building Regulation guidelines. Should the fire doors not be installed properly their fire resistance capabilities can be seriously compromised.

According to BM Trada's website, the scheme aims to provide the following:

- Raise the ongoing standard of installation of fire doors.
- Ensure the product's fire resistance capabilities are maintained.
- Ensure the product's service life is maximized through correct installation.
- Provide peace of mind that the Installer is suitably qualified and that their work is continually assessed by an independent body.
- Provide specifiers with the means to demonstrate that the installation meets the required standard.

Pete McQueen, Production Director, noted "KDM pride ourselves on the quality of our manufacturing, craftsmanship and installation of our goods. We wanted to emphasise this, and partner with an industry-recognised accreditation, which led us to BM Trada 'Q-Mark' Scheme. We felt this scheme not only supported us but showcased the commitment and due diligence for both the manufacture

and installation of our fire doors. Thus, providing peace of mind to our customer base that our doors not only meet the fire-resistant requirements but are certified throughout the process.

Mark Jones, Executive Director added, "With the Q Mark scheme, we can guarantee the integrity of

the door giving our clients comfort that doors provided by KDM meet the current building regulations. We always aim to provide our customers with a turnkey solution which minimises the number of suppliers and contractors they need to engage which hopefully leads to cost savings for our clients.



Warrington oil and gas technology provider's ongoing benefits of P&A campaign success

WARRINGTON-based BiSN, a leading supplier of downhole sealing solutions to the global oil and gas industry, recently caught up with representatives from Aker BP regarding the successful 30-well Plug and Abandon (P&A) campaign conducted in the Valhall oilfield in 2020.

Extensive testing over the past two years reveals that BiSN's Wel-lok™ technology has delivered as promised.

Technology paves way for drilling and safely operating new wells for next 30 years

Aker BP, a major global operator, needed to safely plug and abandon 30 wells in the Valhall field in the North Sea. To achieve this, BiSN partnered with Aker BP to deploy Wel-lok technology to create safe and cost-efficient Wel-lok plugs. Not only did this provide a permanent plug and abandonment solution, it allowed for new wells to be drilled and operated safely for the next 30 years.

"As part of the success story, we are monitoring the same wells today and we're proud to say that out of the 30 wells today there is no leakage," said Kjetil Vadset, Senior Drilling Engineer, Aker BP.

Testing and qualification of Wel-lok technology for use in the North Sea

For two years prior to commencing the campaign in 2020, Aker BP and BiSN carried out a joint testing program at BiSN's Houston location to ensure Wel-lok technology was the safest, most cost-effective option.

As a result of completing this rigorous testing programme, BiSN Wel-lok technology received acknowledgement of consent for use, including DNV-GL verification and PSA (NORSOK) evaluation of bismuth.

"Qualifying Wel-lok technology for use in the North Sea and securing a long term partnership with Aker BP were two major priorities for BiSN at the time," said Paul Carragher, Founder and CEO of BiSN. "We are looking forward to continuing to develop a one team relationship with Aker BP on their forthcoming P&A campaigns."

Deployment of Wel-lok technology for 30 wells saves time, reduces costs

The active campaign that took place in 2020 provided 30 environmentally-friendly permanent seals in the Valhall oilfield. By implementing Wel-lok technology over traditional cement, it is estimated that the campaign saved approximately three months of rig time, or approximately \$2,000,000 per well.

As part of the campaign, BiSN

delivered the largest bismuth plug ever deployed to date. Produced at BiSN's UK facility, the tool weighed in at 33,191 lbs and sealed up to 30 inches in the wellbore.

"We're very proud. The operation has gone beyond expectations. We planned and hoped for 72 hours per installation. We're down to 33 hours per installation just now," said Kjetil Vadset, Senior Drilling Engineer, Aker BP.

Developing safe, permanent sealing technology for multiple applications a top priority

BiSN continues to refine and develop Wel-lok technology for

a variety of well intervention, completion, and plug and abandonment applications. Currently Wel-lok technology has been commercially applied to 11 different applications, including water shut-off, cement repair, packer repair and plug and abandonment.

"BiSN has stepped up big time. They have developed a portfolio of smart systems for P&A applications, packer repair, water shutoffs, you name it," added Egil Thorstensen, Senior Engineer P&A, Aker BP. "They now have a fleet of products that can be utilized for almost any application."



Langtree out on the grid for Warrington Youth Zone

A TEAM of budding Lewis Hamilton's from Warrington-headquartered property company, Langtree, has taken to the track to mark its support for Warrington Youth Zone – almost a year after the popular facility opened its doors.

Eighteen drivers faced off on the grid at Teamsport's Warrington Go-Karting racetrack on Sluthers Lane in a team-building event come mini-fundraiser.

The team raised £500 amongst themselves, with Jonathan McIlhinney, group senior property manager, emerging as the overall winner.

"We're a founding patron of the Youth Zone but we are always looking at other ways that we can support it, both financially and otherwise, and this was just a great way for us to mix some downtime with our team together with that commitment," said Langtree chief operating officer Malcolm Jackson.

The charity provides over twenty activities every single day for young people aged 7 – 19 (up to 25 with additional needs) from its base on Dallam Lane. These include film and multi-media

courses, cooking and life skills and boxing and martial arts. In its first year the Youth Zone team has:

- Signed up 7,864 members
- Attracted 55,527 visits
- Helped an average of 300 young people per day
- Recruited 111 team members
- Mentored 20 Young Leaders

through a team of 120 volunteers who have kindly donated their time

Commenting on its success, Paul Griffiths from the Youth Zone said: "This is a great example of how Warrington's corporate community has embraced what we do and how we add value to the town's young people. The number of volunteers speaks for itself, and we're keen to encourage more people to pitch in

and support us."

Langtree group chief executive John Downes sits on the board of Warrington Youth Zone and said: "This is one of the most significant charities in the town and worthy of all our support. Its impact is remarkable, and we will continue to support it how we can, and we'd encourage other businesses to look at how they can help it achieve its aims."



Warrington manufacturers urged to apply for fully funded fast-track digital leadership programme

MADE Smarter has launched a new fast-track leadership programme to help Warrington SME manufacturers accelerate their digital transformation.

In just three months, the 'Leading Digital Transformation' programme will turn participants into digitally-informed, empowered leaders, armed with a bespoke digitalisation strategy.

The funded solution has been designed by Made Smarter's North West Adoption Programme, the government-funded initiative to increase technology adoption among SME manufacturers, and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU).

It will be delivered through a blend of face-to-face workshops, online webinars, case studies and site visits to smart factories, including Print City, MMU's 3D additive and digital manufacturing hub, where participants will see technology in action.

Heading up the programme is Dr Ann Mulhaney, Senior Enterprise Fellow for the Centre for Enterprise at MMU, an expert in organisational transformation, strategy and innovation, leading change and employee engagement.

Leaders will walk away with a set of practical tools, a strategy for digital transformation and an offer to access further support from Made Smarter, including funding for new technology.

The new programme is available by application to manufacturing businesses with less than 250 employees, a turnover less than £36M or balance sheet less than £18M, and a significant part of their operations based in the North West.

With places limited, it builds on the success of Made Smarter's trailblazing leadership initiative which launched in 2019 and went on to equip 60 business leaders with the vision and the skills to pursue smarter manufacturing.

Donna Edwards, Director of Made Smarter's North West Adoption Programme, said: "Manufacturing leaders have endured an incredibly difficult few years, steering a course through the pandemic and facing up to new challenges such as rising energy prices, supply chain disruption and labour shortages.

"Technology and a digital strategy is important for SME leaders so they are better equipped to deal with current and forthcoming challenges and opportunities.

"The Made Smarter leadership programme was the first of its kind and developed a generation of digital leaders. We are confident that our new fast-track, funded Leading Digital Transformation programme will have an even greater impact, supporting a new generation of leaders to make the most of opportunities that digital transformation can offer."

Ruth Hailwood, Made Smarter's Organisation and Workforce Development Specialist Adviser, said: "After four years with our finger on the pulse of manufacturing, Made Smarter understands what SME leaders want and need.

"This programme focuses on strategy and how to identify critical priorities for taking a business forward, as well as highlighting where digital tools can help. It examines the business from the top floor to the shop floor, capturing real perspectives about their readiness for digital transformation.

"It has been designed to be flexible for manufacturing leaders to fit around their busy schedules, allowing them to take time out of their business to reflect on the bigger picture and share ideas, experiences and opportunities with their peers in manufacturing."

Mandy Parkinson, Director of Centre for Enterprise at Manchester Metropolitan University, said: "MMU is delighted to collaborate with Made Smarter on this new leadership programme which will provide fast, focused support to business leaders at such a critical time.

"Since 2015, we have supported more than 2,000 SMEs in areas including growth, innovation and resilience and we are looking forward to seeing the difference our range of expertise will make to more businesses across the region."

Registration to join the programme, which starts on March 30th, is now open.

For more details on the visit: www.madesmarter.uk/adoption/develop-your-digital-leadership/leading-digital-transformation-programme-nw/



■ Dr Ann Mulhaney, MMU, Ruth Hailwood, Made Smarter, Mandy Parkinson, MMU.

Local companies show support for young karting prospect

LOCAL businesses are helping Warrington youngster Luca Narraway live life in the fast lane.

Now Luca who started karting in 2018 aged just 5 years old, is on the lookout for more sponsorship as he sets his sights on racing in Europe later this year.

He has already secured the backing of Warrington businesses Real5networking, Radio Warrington and the Staffing Experts.

His dad Lee made the mistake of taking him to drive a kart for his 5th birthday and karting has taken over all family life from that moment on much to the dismay of his mother, Kathryn.

Luca took to the sport very quickly and was on the podium for his first

11 races driving in the COMER C50 Bambino class.

In 2019 Luca went National and competed in the Bambino Karting Championship IAME Class and then again in 2020 when Luca was the winner of the inaugural Superone/BKC IAME Bambino race held at Clay Pigeon in Dorchester, he also qualified on Pole for all but one of that season's races and narrowly missed out on winning the championship.

In 2021 Luca moved into the Cadet class for ages 8-12 and competed in the LGM championship gaining a second place heat in round 2 at PFI.

2022 saw Luca move into the British Karting Championship, this was a big step and provided him with a real challenge as this is the highest level of Karting in the UK.

He also competed in Cheshire Kart Club Northwest Championship which he won by winning 5 out of 6 rounds.

For 2023 Luca will again be competing in the WERA Tools British Championship and he has moved in to the new intermediate IAME Watersnail class for 10-13 year olds.

The British Championships take place at 5 outdoor race circuits around the UK, Larkhall in Scotland, GYG in Wales, PFI in Lincolnshire, Rowrah in Cumbria and Shennington in Oxfordshire.

The commitment that Luca has to give to compete in this demanding sport is huge, he trains on a pro level simulator at home every day, works with a sport psychologist and is in the Kart 3 weekends out of 4 rain or shine (and sometimes snow)

Luca is a Warrington Boy, proud of the town and looking for more Warrington business to partner with him on his journey – His family want to take the message to the rest of the UK that Warrington is a great place to do business and the Town is vibrant, modern place that supports the development of local children in sport.

The sport is expensive, and the family typically spend between £15,000 and £25,000 a season depending on how many rounds they compete in and they are also looking to race in Europe later this year.

They are looking for partners to help with these costs. Team fees, tyres and parts form the biggest

expenses. With accommodation and fuel being the other main costs.

- Spares & consumables - £2,400
- Entry fee's – £3,600
- Hotels - £1,300
- Team Fee's - £3,500
- Tyres - £3,600
- Chassis - £1,000
- Race suit - £600
- Testing and practice - £2,000
- Engine - £3,000
- Engine Rebuilds – £1,000
- Total - £22,000

Meanwhile Luca has also been invited to join the Young Racing Drivers academy which is run by Jamie Horner, the brother of Christian Horner of Red Bull, this would provide Luca with the best training and coaching available at their state of the art facility in the Cotswolds. The YRDA are a feeder to the Red Bull Junior program so this would put him right in the shop window so to speak.

Any amount of support helps and some of Luca's school mates have contributed a little which was amazing. He even took his kart into school and drove around the playground to give them a flavour of what he does.

Luca has been on Warrington Radio a couple of times and has a good social media brand with thousands of followers on linkedin, Instagram and facebook

The sponsors have generated over £60,000 in the last twelve months from posts associated with Luca.

If you or your business would like to help Luca, please visit <https://gofund.me/42b115ab>



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May 17th 2023

Please email your news stories and pictures to the Editor at our email address:

info@warrington-chamber.co.uk

Redwood Bank signs sponsorship deal with Warrington rugby league giants

A SPECIALIST business bank's logo will be proudly displayed on the sleeves of a Super League rugby side when the new season kicks off.

Redwood Bank has signed a two-year deal with Warrington Wolves, as the club aims to improve on its 11th position in the last campaign.

Gary Wilkinson, CEO and Co-Founder of the Warrington-based bank, said: "We couldn't be more delighted to agree this sponsorship with 'The Wire' as they prepare for the start of a new season."

The Bank will feature on the left sleeve of shirts worn by the first team, reserves and under 19s throughout the season, which starts on Thursday 16 February.

The club, where comedian and The Last Leg presenter Adam Hills regularly pulls on a jersey for the Physical Disability Rugby League side, will start their bid for honours at home against Leeds Rhinos.

Gary said: "Warrington Borough Council is one of Redwood's significant shareholders, and we have a strong staff presence in our Warrington office, so we are very pleased to be able to strengthen further our links with the community. The Wolves have

a passionate following and it's important to show that we share that passion.

"When the opportunity came along to be part of the Warrington Wolves journey, we simply couldn't say no. We care about our roots and want to be able to give back and show that we are a part of the community."

Since its inception in 2017, the Bank has loaned more than

£170 million to people and properties based in Warrington and the North West, representing approximately 31 per cent of Redwood Bank's lending. This compares to an industry average of 10 per cent – underlining the Bank's commitment to its roots.

Warrington Wolves CEO Karl Fitzpatrick said: "We are thrilled to partner with Redwood Bank as our sleeve sponsor for the 2023 season.

"Their commitment to supporting and investing in the local community aligns with our own values, and we are grateful for their support. A great example of this is their generosity in donating 10 memberships to our Help a Child be Part of the Pack scheme, which is fantastic to see. We look forward to working together this year."

For further information, visit www.redwoodbank.co.uk



■ Warrington Wolves CEO Karl Fitzpatrick, Redwood Bank's Head of Marketing Zoe Cuthbertson and Head Coach Daryl Powell.

Warrington's Young Traders Market

Saturday 20th May

Warrington Market, 2 Time Square, WA1 2NT



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